

CCSM PINE TREE

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SUNDAY CELEBRATIONS

“This spiritual revolution rests upon a simple insight: God is the ground, the grounding, that which grounds us. We experience this when we understand that the soil is holy, water gives life, the sky opens the imagination, my roots matter, home is a divine place, and our lives are linked with our neighbors and with those around the globe. This world, not heaven, is the sacred stage of our times.”

—from *Grounded*, by Diana Butler Bass

- SEPTEMBER 9** HOMECOMING SUNDAY. *A Spiritual Revolution*. Penny Nixon.
- SEPTEMBER 16** *How's Your Soil?* Penny Nixon.
- SEPTEMBER 23** *Holy H₂O*. Penny Nixon. SPECIAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING.
- SEPTEMBER 30** *Consider the Stars*. Penny Nixon.
- OCTOBER 7** *Finding G-d in Food*. Penny Nixon. WORLD COMMUNION SUNDAY.
- OCTOBER 14** *Who Is My Neighbor?* Penny Nixon. PICK-A-PARTY SUNDAY.
- OCTOBER 21** *The Good Common*. Penny Nixon.
- OCTOBER 28** *23 and Me*. Penny Nixon.
- NOVEMBER 4** *Spiritual DNA*. Penny Nixon. ALL SAINTS SUNDAY.
- NOVEMBER 11** *The Habit of Inhabiting*. Penny Nixon.
- NOVEMBER 18** *Around the Table*. Penny Nixon.
- NOVEMBER 25** *Practice Makes Perfect*. Penny Nixon.



congregational meeting



Special Meeting!

CONGREGATIONAL VOTE: REVISED BYLAWS AND NEW LEADERSHIP SLATE

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 23
AFTER WORSHIP IN THE SANCTUARY

Your presence is needed! We'll hold a special meeting to 1) **VOTE** on the revised Bylaws, 2) **ELECT** our new leadership team members, and 3) **EXTEND** the term of that team to approximately 15 months to bring our business calendar in line with our fiscal calendar.

If you have not reviewed the proposed Bylaws or attended one of our Bylaws events this summer, annotated copies are available in the Narthex and our website:

ccsm-ucc.org/ccsm-governance-initiative

More info on the meeting format will follow.



Congregational
Church of san mateo

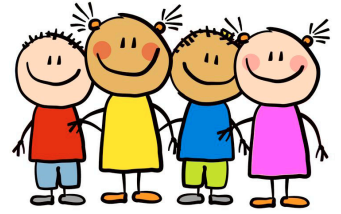
225 TILTON AVENUE, SAN MATEO, CA 94401
650 343-3694 | CCSM-UCC.ORG

CHILDREN, YOUTH & FAMILIES

WHAT'S COMING

CHILDREN'S CHURCH:

This fall, the children continue with regular Children's Church with one innovation: on first Sundays they will have music with Julie Berk in the Community Room!



MID HIGH YOUTH

Sunday Morning Gatherings
after the Children's Message

Youth Group, 1st & 3rd Sunday evenings
Youth Room, 6:30-8:00pm:

September 16

Oct 7 & 21

Nov 4 & 18

Dec 2 & 16

Jan 6

COMING OF AGE RETREAT (Off-site):

March 23-24

SENIOR HIGH YOUTH

Sixty Minutes:

every second Sunday during Worship

Youth Group

2nd and 4th Sunday evenings, 6:00-8:00PM

September 9 & 23

October 14 & 28

November 11

December 9

Confirmation Retreat October 20-21



Thomas DeLoach leaving

It is with sadness that we announce that Thomas DeLoach, who we had hired as Youth Director, resigned his position. While both Thomas and we were very excited about his taking the job, just a few weeks in we realized it wasn't a fit for either of us. We parted amicably and we wish Thomas well as he pursues the publication of his book as well as his next ministry.

Kibbie is working with the youth at this point and many volunteers have stepped up to help this fall. We will continue our search for the right person. Please keep the youth ministry in your prayers. Part time positions are very difficult to fill because of the cost of living in this area. Our youth program is up and running and the youth are still engaged, thanks to the creativity and hard work of Kibbie as well as our willing volunteers.



Church lawn transformed by the High Schoolers. Can you find the volleyball?

SEPT 8TH

RISE FOR CLIMATE JOBS + JUSTICE

CALIFORNIA



JOIN OUR CCSM CONTINGENT & ADD YOUR VOICE!

On Saturday, September 8, thousands will march in San Francisco for the largest climate action the West Coast has ever seen. There are sibling actions taking place on every continent of the world. Come join CCSM's contingent for this global day of action for climate justice!

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 7: SIGN-MAKING

6:30 p.m in the Buckham Room

Sign-making supplies will be provided

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 8: MARCH

Meet at 10AM at Millbrae BART station

(East end of the ticket purchase platform)

The march starts at 11AM from Embarcadero Plaza and ends at Civic Center

Bring your whole family! Please bring signs!

Co-sponsored by CYF and MSJ

If you have any questions, please contact Kibbie at kibbie@ccsm-ucc.org



A beautiful altar created by the Liturgical Arts team in August, evoking water



God's Garden of Forgiveness by Andrea Bruek

Forgiveness Garden

**SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 15, 10:00AM-NOON
LOCATION TBD.**

Plant your own Forgiveness Garden with Dakota. Please bring your own pot; plants and dirt will be provided. Then take your creation home to enjoy.

We will unearth what needs to be forgiven and plant new opportunities for forgiveness. Come deepen your faith and find God in the dirt.



Pick-A-Party — 20th Year!

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 14

Our annual CCSM fundraiser is soon approaching. Mark your calendars for October 14 when you will get to "pick" your parties. Long before then, Jennifer Jacoby-Yeh and Carol Henton, our Pick-A-Party organizers, will be collecting party offerings from the congregation. Put on your thinking caps and join in this beloved effort which combines fun, fellowship and important funds for CCSM.

Send a draft description of your party offering to carolhenton@aol.com or jjacobyeh@yahoo.com.

THIS IS OUR CHURCH

...AN UPDATE FROM THE WEDNESDAY GATHERINGS

Dear sisters and brothers,

As you know, it has been 18 months now since the Wednesday Gatherings (our Spanish service) officially started—with two people attending. Today the Wednesday Gatherings (WG) are now officially at 68 members! Of course, they don't all show up at the same time, and half are children and youth. On any given Wednesday, we average between 40-50 in attendance, and out of that number 16-20 are children and youth doing a variety of activities in the Buckham Room. It has been such a beautiful sight to witness a group of people, 90% from North Central San Mateo, gather in a space they never imagined themselves stepping into. Now more than ever, they have embraced the space and are more and more calling it their home, their church. This means we are heading in the right direction as a church—moving away from being identified as a primarily white church, and striving to become more than a homogenous faith community in a diverse neighborhood with a large Latin American presence.

Adding a Spanish service on Wednesdays means we are swimming against the tide by embracing not only another service, but another culture. This, I believe, embraces God's multiracial vision of the world for us. Of course, this work comes with challenges. It would be easy to remain separate congregations, to see ourselves as two separate faith communities, as two churches. However, it's important to note that our goal, when starting this new service, has always been to do whatever it takes to be one church, a church for all people. A church with more than one service, a church that meets not only on Sunday mornings, but also on other days and other times—but is still one church.

I want to share with you one example out of many I could choose about how members from the two services joined together as one church.

On June 15, on the front lawn of our church, members from both the Sunday and Wednesday services gathered for a press conference and vigil to honor the life of Claudia Patricia Gomez Gonzalez, a young

It would be easy to remain separate congregations, to see ourselves as two separate faith communities, as two churches. However, our goal has always been to do whatever it takes to be one church, a church for all people.

Guatemalan woman who was shot dead by Customs and Border Protection (CBP) in May as she was making her way to the U.S. to work to pay for her education. The youth and one of the adults from the WG, Rev. Penny, and myself shared how our faith values uphold the inherent worth and human dignity of each person. We expressed that our church, as a faith community, condemns the immoral and inhumane treatment of people, whether such treatment takes the form of CBP indiscriminately killing migrants, or tearing away migrant children from their families and placing them in cage-like "holding facilities." This press

conference/vigil was the first time both services came together to speak against injustice and it illustrated that it is possible to come together to fight for the common good whether you speak only English or only Spanish. The first step is just showing up.

The WG is another service in the life of this church. It is not another church; it is not Jorge's church. These children and youth are not Jorge's children and youth. It is the church of this people, just as it is on Sundays. My prayer is that we continue to create events that will bring both services together not only in times of crisis, but also when it's time to laugh together, to share joy with one another, to break bread together.

There will be a variety of opportunities to connect together in the fall, in our ongoing exploration of figuring out how to be a church for all people. Two events to keep in mind are **DIA DE LOS MUERTOS** on November 3, and **LAS POSADAS** on December 15. I am grateful to serve as a pastor of the Congregational Church of San Mateo/ Iglesia San Mateo and I look forward to continuing together to expand our worlds.

Peace and blessings!

Jorge



A Beautifully Expanding Vision

by Sandra Soto-Grondona, CCSM member and member of the Latino Ministry Team

A year and a half ago, starting a Spanish service at church was one of CCSM's wild visions. With the help of Jorge, some of us decided to join this dream and became part of the Latino Ministry Team (LMT). Little by little, the Spanish services, known as the Wednesday Gatherings (WG), began to see a consistent amount of growth, **and were also consistently filled with hope, faith, and community, all around shared meals.** The WG always end with dinner cooked in collaboration, reinforcing the meaning of community. Wednesday evenings have also packed the rooms with children and laughter. Some of us have experienced a bit of these kids' tireless vitality through fun games and quests. One of the LMT's hopes has been that the children and youth from the WG would become more involved in our general community events despite cultural differences. Well, it seems that time arrived sooner than expected.

This summer, children and youth from the WG and Sunday services went together to Camp Cazadero summer camp, near the Russian River. From the WG, about five elementary school children, eight in middle school and one high schooler participated, along with a couple of adults. From the Sunday service, about twelve children and youth met and shared adventures with those from the WG for the first time. **For many from the WG, camping or being away in nature was a delightful first-time experience;** many of them shared their unforgettable experiences with me. I met with kids both before and after camp, trying to capture memories of their participation while it was fresh in their minds and hearts.

Two sisters, Kimberly (12) and Ashley (13) spoke with me before they left, and I asked if they had ever stayed overnight without their parents. Ashley said that the only time was when her little sister had surgery and they'd had to stay with relatives for a few days while her parents were at the hospital. I asked if they had specific hopes for the camp, and they told me they didn't know what to expect, but they knew it would probably be very fun! **She also told me she had never slept in a sleeping bag.**

Jonathan (12) told me he hoped for two things: to eat a lot of marshmallows and meet other boys his age. "And staying away from my parents won't be a big deal!" Kenneth (12) felt conflicting



feelings before camp. He said he felt "happy and not happy at the same time." Lesly (9) told me she did not know what to expect. **But she quietly added "Perhaps... I will learn more about God."** She confided that she had never attended a summer camp, but she had a book which described one in detail.

After camp, I encountered some of the children again and I smiled as I listened to their accounts. The sisters and Jonathan were so happy to have met many new friends, such as Jacob, Taylor, Mercy, Addy and Ainsley, and more. **When I met them, the WG kids were making art with CCSM friends.** They were all laughing together and began telling me bits and pieces of their camp experience in both Spanish and English. I learned that Jonathan had had a stomach ache, and I wondered if it was because of too many marshmallows or homesickness.

Many of the younger children told me they loved watching stars at night; they also spoke of some anxiety. Lesly told me that camp was more fun than she could ever had imagined, but she was a bit homesick. What Neysin (10) liked the most was the big swimming pool. He said the best happened his last day, because he was thrilled to see a snake! And while **Kevin (8) had slept in a bunk bed, with dad on the top bunk, and got to eat the head of a turtle-shaped bread,** he also complained of getting a knee scratch. Perhaps their stories can be summarized by the legendary traveler Anthony Bourdain: *Travel isn't always pretty. It isn't always comfortable. Sometimes it hurts; it even breaks your heart. But that's okay. The journey changes you; it should change you. It leaves marks on your memory, on your consciousness, on your heart, and on your body. You take something with you. Hopefully, you leave something good behind.*

It seems that these summer memories comprise a chapter of the WG's own journey, revealing its future potential and inviting us all to foster visions, dreams and expectations. I hope these memories will be impressed in the hearts of the children and youth for a long time to come, and that they continue making more friends as **the WG and Sunday ser-**

ices continue to be one faith community together, sharing experiences, service, and spiritual development on our eclectic paths to God.

LIFEMOVES BREAKFAST

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 27, 7:30-9:00AM •
HYATT REGENCY (SFO)



CCSM is proud once again to be a member of the Host Committee of the LifeMoves annual Benefit Breakfast to increase awareness about homelessness in our community and raise critically-needed funds to support the high-impact housing programs and services provided by LifeMoves. Anne Lamott will be

the keynote speaker.

CCSM will have two tables at the event. Reservation cost depends upon whether you prefer sitting at the host table or our second table. Reservations may ONLY be made through the church office, not LifeMoves. If you are not able to attend the breakfast, there are other ways to participate in this fundraiser.

Pick up a registration packet on the large table in the Narthex. Please contact Marge Boyd (mboyd@ccsm-ucc.org) with questions about the breakfast, or Lynnelle Bilsey (lbilsey@livemoves.org) with questions about LifeMoves.

MUSIC & ART

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 21, BUCKHAM ROOM



We are honored to have for our program our own CCSM moderator, Tony Gallo, native of Cuba, to enlighten us with slides, talk and history. Tony came to the U.S. two years after Castro's overthrow of the Batista dictatorship. The Cuban missile crisis occurred around his 10th birthday and he was not allowed back. President Obama relaxed restrictions

and native-born Cubans were allowed to return to their homeland, enabling Tony and his wife, Kathy, to visit.

Men are also invited to attend Music and Art meetings as well as other guests. Bring your own sandwich/salad; beverages and dessert are provided. To be sure we have a space for you, please RSVP to Susan Duty at: susanj52@gmail.com or phone: 650-533-6828 or 650-533-6830.

SECOND HOUR SUNDAYS



>>> REBUILD SOUTH SUDAN

SEPTEMBER 16, 11:45 A.M. • BUCKHAM ROOM

Join Michael Mayen, a former Lost Boy of Sudan, as he shares about his work with Rebuild South Sudan. Michael prevailed against all odds walking not only to Ethiopia and Kenya as a child



but also across the university stage twice. Now armed with an education, he's a full time resident in his home country, a leader in grassroots education, health, women's issues, and economic initiatives. Even though

war is present in South Sudan, Michael won't leave, because some people have to stay to rebuild. Come and let Michael invite you into his resilience, his determination, his joy, and his culture. An authentic South Sudanese tasting menu will accompany his talk.

>>> STOP EXTRAJUDICIAL KILLINGS
IN THE PHILIPPINES

SEPTEMBER 30, 11:45 A.M. • KLOSS HALL

Since Rodrigo Duterte took power in the Philippines, there have been over 24,000 extra-judicial killings, as well as on-going political persecution of women, journalists, human rights defenders, and church leaders. There has been very little coverage of these massive human rights violations by the mainstream media in the U.S. CCSM attendees Violeta Reyes and Ago Pedalizo are leaders of FAHRA (Filipino-American Human Rights Alliance), and will be hosting a Community Forum on September 30th to address this pressing human rights crisis. Other speakers at the forum include human rights activist Art Garcia and immigration attorney Rodel Rodis. Please come join us to learn more about the current situation in the Philippines and how we can act collectively to stop the killings.

WISE & WONDERFUL

2ND & 4TH WEDNESDAYS, 10:30AM - NOON •
COOKIES AND COFFEE PROVIDED

September 12 and 26: Study of the Gospel of John

October 10: Book Discussion—*Labyrinths from the Outside In* by Rev. Dr. Carole Ann Camp and Rev. Dr. Donna Schaper.

October 24: Film—*The Wild Parrots of Telegraph Hill*, a PBS documentary about the relationship between an unemployed musician and a flock of feral parrots.

November 14: Book discussion—*On the Brink of Everything: Grace and Gravity and Getting Old* by Parker Palmer

Joys and Concerns

CCSM Pastoral Care Team

Please share your prayers with the pastoral care team: Rev. Dr. Penny Nixon, Rev. Jorge Bautista, Rev. Dakota Brown, and Rev. Amie Giordano. You are invited to share your prayers, your hopes, and your lives. You may connect with us in the following ways:

- in person,
- by filling out a blue prayer card at Sunday service,
- by filling out a ccsm-ucc.org/MyCCSM online prayer request,
- by contacting us via staff emails listed in your bulletin, the website, or the Pine Tree newsletter.

You may also contact the church office or email Dakota at dbrown@ccsm-ucc.org or call 415-244-3696 if you need support during the week, and Dakota will make sure one of the pastors contacts you as soon as possible.

SEPTEMBER BIRTHDAYS!

Shirley Robertson is 92 on September 11th (currently living at The Commons, 10711 Thornton Rd., Stockton, CA 95209). Jackie Payne is 90 on September 17th (381 Bramble Ct., Foster City, CA 94404). We wish them both happy birthdays and endless blessings.

PRAYERS OF GRATITUDE

To my dear CCSM family, Bless each of you for your heartfelt expressions of sympathy, as you reflected on the death of my wife Trudy Duncan. Your personal messages touched us deeply. So nice to be comforted by warmth of your many tributes.
—**Arnold, Jodie & Scott Duncan**

UPDATE ABOUT OUR UCC SISTER CHURCH IN REDDING

Our sister church in Redding is safe, though it was close to the fire. However, at least four families have lost their homes and there is great need in the area. The conference has already sent money and will continue to collect, but besides money there is something else our church can do: send a card or letter with greetings and encouragement. Please send cards and letters to Pilgrim Congregational UCC, PO Box 993183, Redding CA 96099-3183. The Redding folks feel very alone and far away. Let's help them feel surrounded by the love of the UCC family.

PRAYERS OF JOY

We celebrate the the marriage of **Shannon McEntee to Jacob Detkin** in a beautiful seaside celebration on August 18th. Shannon is the daughter of **Valerie McEntee** and **Connie McEntee**. She has grown up in this church and serves our children teaching Sunday school and

through Peace Village.

PRAYERS OF LOVE AND REMEMBERING

Faithful and longtime member **Vera Pitts** died peacefully in her sleep on August 30. Lately she had suffered health challenges but is at peace now. Vera will be remembered for her feisty spirit, progressive opinions and her interesting career. A date for a memorial service will be set shortly. Cards may be sent to Vera's dear friend **Sophie Cole** at 135 Rizal Dr., Hillsborough 94010.

Beloved church member **Phyllis Mead** passed away on August 10. May God's love surround her family at this time. A memorial will be held at CCSM on September 8th at 10:00am. All are welcome. Cards may be sent to her daughter, Kathy Lavezzo, at 156 Briar Lane, SM 94403.

Joe Libertucci, friend of Jim and Louisa Shaul, passed away August 22 from cancer. Prayers of peace and strength for all who love him.

Patrick Kennedy, cousin of **Gordon and Margaret Smith**, died suddenly of a heart attack at the age of 74. Patrick will be missed by all who know and love him.

PRAYERS OF LOVE AND STRENGTH

Continued prayers of love and return to health for **Judy Hemmer**, at Peninsula Post-Acute nursing center getting the care she needs. Cards and visits are welcome (1609 Trousdale Dr., Burlingame 94010. 650-652-3969).

Continued prayers for **Linda Salter**, friend of **Carolyn Shaw**, who is recovering from a flood in her house, and has recently been told of impending health challenges. God we pray she will feel your love and

peace on this journey.

Please pray for **Susan Harrigan**, friend of **Linda Stoick**, who is battling cancer. We pray for her healing and for her family who love her.

Prayers for the protection and health of **Ashley** and her newly born daughter, niece and grandniece to **Don Ruthroff and Jonathan Kronn**. Ashley was experiencing complications and the baby was born early. Both are doing well. God, hear our prayers and give health and protection to this mother and child.

Healing prayers for **Rebecca Ruedy-Whelan**, who recently suffered a back injury. Rebecca is in a lot of pain, please pray for her immediate healing.

Prayers of gratitude for **Dale** and her husband, and nephew **Todd** and his family who are safe from the fires in California. They are friends and family of **Genel Morgan**. We continue to pray for all who continue to be affected by fire.

Continued prayers of strength and healing for our beloved brothers and sisters: **Rita Mancerea, Jean Barbagelata, Travis Woodmansee's mother Cathy, Dave Karlin, George Kromhout, Julie Lenden's cousin, Pico Soriano's friend Alexandria Christakos, Dawn Graves' mother Donna Stanger, Bill Daniels, Sandee Schlickman's friend Mike, Jim Groundwater, Ruth Black, Marjorie Griffin, Cathy Latta, Martha Grannis, Adrienne Mitchell, Genevieve and John Parsons, Fred Petri, Gordon Smith's sister Janet Smith Roberts**, and others as they walk their unique journeys with cancer and other health challenges.

LOTS HAPPENING AT CCSM!

Here is an overview of a few of the many events described in last month's gigantic Pine Tree. Check back there (and look for more events in this issue). Mark your calendars!

- SEPTEMBER 8: **5th Annual Ride to End Homelessness**
- SEPTEMBER 9: **Homecoming Celebration Lunch**, 11:45am, Kloss Hall
- SEPTEMBER 9: **Peninsula Soup**, 5:30-8:00pm at Qube Restaurant, 4000 S. El Camino Real, SM
- SEPTEMBER 10: **Spiritual Conversations** on Mondays for 9 weeks to discuss *Grounded*, 7:00-8:30pm, CCSM Library
- SEPTEMBER 12: **Wise & Wonderful**: second and fourth Wednesdays. 10:30a.m., Buckham Room
- SEPTEMBER 23: **Organ Recital with Dominic Pang**, 3:00pm, Sanctuary
- OCTOBER 2: **First Tuesday Book Group** discusses *Bobby Kennedy: A Raging Spirit* by Chris Matthews
- OCTOBER 7: **2018 San Francisco & Peninsula's Annual CROP Hunger Walk**, 1:00pm at Nealon Park in Menlo Park
- OCTOBER 14: **Pick-A-Party 2018**
- OCTOBER 14: **Home & Hope Concert**, 5:00pm, First Presbyterian Church, Burlingame
- OCTOBER 20: **Eighth Annual William J. Bullis Scholarship Fundraiser and Silent Auction**, 4:00-7:00PM, Kloss Hall
- OCTOBER 26: **Annual Halloween Organ Recital**, 7:30pm, Sanctuary
- NOVEMBER 3: **Dia De Los Muertos**
- NOVEMBER 4: **Angela Kraft Cross' 25th Anniversary Celebration in Service**



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A newsletter for the families and friends
of the Congregational Church of San Mateo, UCC

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