

# CCSM PINE TREE

VOL. 68, #11 | DECEMBER 2019



## Advent 2019

- Dec. 15** *Make the Blessings Known: Unabashed Joy.* Reflection: Special Guest: Phil Porter (back by popular demand) Special Music: Joyful Noise.
- Dec. 22** *The Lord is Come: Incarnate Joy In Three Acts. Act I:* Christmas Pageant with Joyful Noise. **Act II:** Baptism of twins Moises and Teresa Boigues. **Act III:** Reflection: Marge Boyd.



### CHRISTMAS EVE

**5:00PM Family Service:** A joyful service with some special treats this year.... **NEW:** You're going to love the family service as Storyteller Rev. Phil Porter has a special Christmas story for people of all ages!

**11:00PM Candlelight Communion service:** with choir and special musical guests

- Dec. 29** CCSM College Sunday. Reflections from first-year college students Gabby Obres-Padre and Melia Zimmerman.



CCSM's beloved George Parker celebrated his 101st birthday in October

photo by Chris Yeh

## A Season of Newness

The season of Advent marks the beginning of the new church year. In my home church growing up, we had banners depicting a rising sun that were added each week of Advent. As a child, I loved the juxtaposition of the image of the sun getting higher while, in the real world, the days got shorter and drearier. I think that says that our Advent hope is a different kind of hope, that it doesn't need external validation or confirmation, that there is truly something "new" that is happening amongst us.



Having been at CCSM for six months now, there is still much that is new for me. While many faces are becoming familiar and the rhythm of the week feels increasingly known, I was suddenly reminded on the first Sunday of Advent that I have not yet been here for this season. Coming into the sanctuary and seeing the gorgeous decorations and the warmth of the lights and the beautiful colors in the space on that rainy day, I was taken aback. Experiencing the Living Advent Wreath for the first time with the kids, I was deeply moved by the symbolism. I feel so grateful for the opportunity to experience Advent, always a season of newness, anew with you at CCSM.

As we journey into this sacred season of Advent, I pray that a spirit of newness, of unexpected hope, of daring joy, will find you in some way. That even as so much in our world is deeply painful and distressing—politically, communally, and individually—that this season will communicate God's movement for transformation; already taking place, though not yet completed. I am so grateful to be with each of you in this liminal time. To be starting to feel very much at home, but with still so much more to learn and to experience. May Advent bring the newness you most yearn for, and may it bring us closer together and closer to God.

Sheryl



Congregational  
Church of san mateo

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# CHILDREN, YOUTH & FAMILIES

## Advent and Christmas: Kids Programs!

Here are some of the special things that are taking place: kids are participating in our “Living Advent Wreath” on the four Sundays of Advent, our K-5 kids made Advent wreaths and learned about the season of Advent on December 1, kids left their shoes outside their classrooms for St. Nicholas to fill with treats on December 8, on Monday, December 16 at 7:00pm, families are invited to participate in our Las Posadas Advent event, and on Sunday, December 22 we will have a no-rehearsal Christmas pageant in worship!



## YOUTH UPDATE

In November, our Sunday mid-high class focused on learning about other Christian denominations and visited a Catholic and an African-American church. We had lots of time for conversation and discussion about the similarities and differences between churches. The kids seemed to really enjoy being off-site and experiencing other ways of worshipping and being church. Our mid-high class focus for December will be

on Advent: helping to write the script for our Christmas pageant, filling shoes on St. Nicholas Sunday, and more.

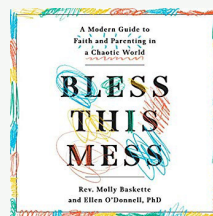
Our Sunday youth groups have had some great gatherings. Highlights have included lunch at a Mexican restaurant (after Catholic mass) and working on the Christmas Collection Drive for Open Cathedral. The youth have been very reflective about what people who are unhoused or under-housed might most appreciate as well as the many reasons why poverty exists. We have also been able to connect our focus on mental health with this, considering the ways that mental health and other forms of marginalization too often intersect and what society could do to support all people better.

The Wednesday evening youth programs are also going very well! The youth are really connecting well with one another and appreciating having their own space in Kloss Hall to gather for games and discussion... as well as to do homework!

On Wednesdays we have a new staff member, Colleen, working with our kids (unfortunately Mariska found the commute from Berkeley to be too much). She brings many skills to the role, including experience with directing a children’s drama and with physical education and health. If you are able to help on an occasional Wednesday, you would be most welcome (high school aged or adult!). Thank you!

## Faith and Parenting: What’s God Got to Do with It?

Feeling awash in the materialistic youth culture? Clueless about how to encourage spirituality amidst frenetic activities and responsibilities? Panicked about your kids’ God questions? Wondering how to promote Jesus’ call to non-violence, justice and living more simply in today’s climate? Maybe, questioning what you believe yourself and how to live it out?



Spiritually-based parenting is revolutionary. Rather than our molding children into what we want them to be, we are called to be conscious, awake and mindful—to connect, engage and learn from them. When it comes to spirituality, we parents are just our kids’ ambassadors. We can show them around, but we don’t need to know everything. Yet, it might help to have encouragement and support from the CCSM community.

Starting **January 26 and continuing on fourth Sundays after church**, join other parents for lunch and conversation. Kibbie will facilitate, while providing some simple strategies and resources. Meanwhile, Sheryl will make sure your children and youth are fed and happy while we meet.

On **February 23rd**, we will have a special guest speaker, Rev. Molly Baskette from First Church Berkeley. She will preach in worship and then afterwards she will share about her new book on progressive faith and parenting entitled “Bless this Mess.” Mark your calendar for this special event and invite your friends!



## Sanctuary family update

As previously announced, CCSM has the opportunity to provide sanctuary for a father and son from Guatemala, David and Bryon, who were separated at the border over a year ago. Their arrival has been delayed due to all the bureaucratic and legal hoops they have to jump through; it will most likely be January. In the meantime, here is a video telling their story: [tinyurl.com/CCSM-sanctuary](http://tinyurl.com/CCSM-sanctuary)



## AN IMPORTANT MESSAGE FROM YOUR BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Back in May, the board enthusiastically approved the terms of Rev. Sheryl Johnson's employment. As many of you know, Sheryl is ordained in the United Church of Canada and is coming to CCSM as an ordained minister. At that time, the board chose not to bring this to the congregation for a call because we felt it necessary to move quickly (we were not the only church interested in Sheryl) so that the position could be filled by a very qualified candidate. Six months later we feel very blessed to have found such an outstanding person to guide our CCSM children and youth. Sheryl has helped integrate our children and youth into every aspect of worship and the children have displayed their spiritual wisdom through their interpretation of scripture, their art and their dance.

Sheryl reached out to us and said: I would be truly honored to serve as a called pastor at CCSM, switching from the "appointment" status that I currently have, and I would humbly ask you to consider "calling" me to my role as Associate Minister for Children, Youth, and Families. First and foremost, it is because I truly feel that CCSM is an excellent fit for my ministry and a real spiritual home for me, and I would like to deepen that relationship and commitment. Additionally, as a called pastor, I would be eligible to accumulate years of service within the UCC and also be eligible for other programs, such as an exciting initiative called the Next Generation Leadership Initiative offered by the UCC Pension Fund.

At our November 17th meeting, the board voted unanimously and enthusiastically to ask the congregation to issue a formal call to Sheryl. This call will not only communicate our gratitude for and confidence in Sheryl's ministry, but it will also be an indication that this is a long-term relationship and commitment. Sheryl commits to us, and we commit to her. If you haven't had a chance to get to know Sheryl yet, take some time in the next few weeks for a conversation or a cup of coffee. At our congregational (or do we call it annual now?) meeting on January 12th, the board will present a motion to call the Rev Sheryl Johnson as our Associate Minister for Children, Youth and Families.



**HAPPY REDDITSGIVING!** Sara Scott-Hitchings didn't want anyone to celebrate Thanksgiving alone. The hall she rented for her online guests was canceled a few days before Thanksgiving. CCSM didn't hesitate to offer Kloss Hall as a substitute venue and numerous congregants gave of their time on Thanksgiving Day to assist Sara. Sara was [featured in the New York Times](#) for her idea of putting out a general invitation on the internet to anyone who wanted to share a Thanksgiving meal.



### 2020 Stewardship Update

As of Monday, December 9, we are at 75% of next year's budget goal—so make your stewardship pledge today as an investment in our future and as an act of social justice. We need to turn 130 pledging units into our goal of 200.

#### WAYS TO GIVE - CHOOSE ONE!

(go to [ccsm-ucc.org/stewardship-2020](https://ccsm-ucc.org/stewardship-2020) for more info)

- Become a Sustaining Pledger
- Renew Your Pledge
- Make a New Pledge

These may be done on your myCCSM account, or contact Cheryle Matteo at [cmatteo@ccsm-ucc.org](mailto:cmatteo@ccsm-ucc.org), 650-343-3694. Or you may complete a pledge card by printing one from the website or getting one at church and returning it to the church office. Thank you for your support!



Tracy Fallon with CCSM's Thanksgiving boxes

A note of gratitude from CALL Primrose: *Hi Tracy. Thank you again to you and your generous CCSM community for the amazing holiday boxes. We have received more than 1000 and are ready to distribute tomorrow. I simply could not do this without your support. Have a wonderful Thanksgiving. Gratefully, Terri Boesch, Executive Director, CALL Primrose*

## Home and Hope Volunteers Needed in January

CCSM will be hosting the families from Home and Hope **January 12-19**.

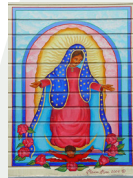
We of course need volunteers to provide dinner, be hosts and spend the night. Please contact Donna Lindsay at [releduc@sbcglobal.net](mailto:releduc@sbcglobal.net) to reserve your time and task.



On **Sunday, January 12** before the 3:00PM set-up, **Donna invites all current, past, and prospective Home and Hope volunteers to come to Kloss Hall for an update on Home and Hope.** The handbook has been revised and the program is undergoing changes and challenges. Please come and learn about what is happening with this important ministry which has been a part of CCSM for many years.

## SECOND HOUR

Second Hour Sundays bring important topics for learning and discussion at noon following the Sunday service.



### December 15: Mural

**Project.** The Mural Project Team will share slides and impressions of its inspiring visit to the murals in San Francisco's Mission District. This is an early step in the Team's process of generating ideas for a mural on the south wall of Kloss Hall that would represent CCSM's inclusiveness and openness to all. The Team looks forward to hearing the questions, ideas, and suggestions of those interested.

**January 12: Annual CCSM Meeting.**

**January 19: Energy & Environmental Justice Ministry**

**January 26: Reception, Violins of Hope**

**UPCOMING: February 2 and March 1: Spiritual**

**Resources for Polarizing Times:** The first goal is to understand the polarization of our times better: what it does to us, implications for our future, and reasons for its rise. A second goal of inquiry will be to consider the applicability of spiritual perspectives and practices in response to the corrosive force of polarization.



## Annual CCSM Meeting

**JANUARY 12, 2020**  
following the service

## Looking for Samaritan House Volunteers!

I'm recruiting a few volunteers who would be willing to help out with Samaritan House the second Wednesday of the month from 4:00-5:30. It's easy work, and you will get a chance to meet some wonderful people. Remember Christ has no hands but your hands, so please help.

—Jim Granucci

[jimgranucci@yahoo.com](mailto:jimgranucci@yahoo.com) • 650 302-9911



# Violins of Hope

JANUARY 26, 2020 • 10:30AM SPECIAL WORSHIP SERVICE

CCSM is privileged to host one of several events which are part of the Violins of Hope San Francisco Bay Area program, presented in association with Music at Kohl Mansion, Burlingame, CA.



From January 16 through March 14, 2020, Burlingame's Music at Kohl Mansion will host **Violins of Hope San Francisco Bay Area**, an immersive eight-week celebration of the remarkable resilience of the human spirit. Through a series of concerts, exhibitions, films, lectures, community conversations, and educational programs collaboratively presented by more than forty diverse Bay Area organizations in eight counties, Violins of Hope SFBA will showcase a collection of more than 50 string instruments once played by Jews in concentration camps during the Holocaust. Lovingly restored by Israeli violin-makers Amnon and Avshalom Weinstein, the Violins are now touring worldwide. This first West Coast appearance of the Violins of Hope commemorates the 75th Anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz.

As part of this larger event, Violins of Hope will bring their healing music to our own sanctuary during the Sunday morning service. You will not want to miss this service which promises to be inspiring and moving.

## Thanks to our LAM Advent Team

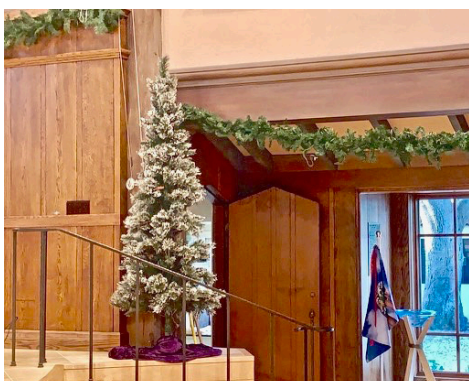
On Nov. 24, we transitioned from Fall into Advent. This year, the Liturgical Arts Team's (LAM) goal was to extend the warmth and beauty of the season to even more areas of the church than last year. We made and added bows to all the wreaths, placed Christmas trees in the Chancel, Fireplace and Buckingham rooms, and installed wreaths in the windows of Kloss Hall.

It takes a tremendous team of talented elves to make this transformation a reality. The Liturgical Arts Team wants to thank everyone who attended our first "Repair and Bow Making" Workshop and those who worked so hard to install everything in place.

**LAM ADVENT TEAM 2019:** John Fyfe • Alexandra Gillen • Len Flaherty • Mike Harris • Kay Harris • Valerie Keech • Hartmut Koeppen • James Koeppen • Donna Lindsay • Shannon McEntee • John McKenzie • Laura McKenzie • Alice Morison • Candy Nagare • Pam Ridlehuber • Jim Schwandt • Louisa Shaul • Jim Shaul • Christina Summerville • Gene Summerville

Also, a special thanks to Steve Davis and Eleanor Lewis for their donation of family Christmas decorations, table runners, and collection of ceramic pots for the Chancel and Memorial Garden.

Blessings of the season to all!



*Some of LAM's Christmas handiwork in the sanctuary*

## Proposed Ministry on Energy and Environmental Justice

The CCSM Board of Directors has authorized the establishment of a CCSM ministry focused on energy and environmental justice. As proposed, this ministry will research, educate and implement sustainable practices and energy savings operations for the church to achieve energy efficiency. It will also seek ways to address global warming through proactive actions by the congregation outside of the church.



The new ministry will initially conduct an energy audit at the church to determine the steps that can be taken to improve energy efficiency for CCSM. It will research a solar+ battery storage solution for the church. Once installed it can serve our local community as a resilient hub in the event of power outages and disasters. Thirdly, the ministry will seek to educate the CCSM community about the need to take action to reduce our carbon footprint in order to address our climate crisis.

Initial ministry members include Warren Long, Doug Henton, Eva Jakes, Jim Schwandt, Gene Summerville and Gary White. If you are interested in joining this ministry, contact one of us.

## Remove and Store CHRISTMAS DECORATIONS!



**SAT., JANUARY 11  
1:00-5:00 P.M.**

The Liturgical Arts Ministry needs help taking down and packing away all decorations which were lovingly installed for the Christmas season. Come help! Please email Kay Harris at [communi\\_ks@me.com](mailto:communi_ks@me.com) for more details.

# Las Posadas



Join us on the front lawn at CCSM

**Monday, December 16**  
**7:00pm - 9:30pm**

After the musical procession, we'll celebrate with a piñata to break, tamales, buñuelos, champurrado, and punch. Join us in community for this wonderful time of year.



**Join  
us!**

For more information:  
(510) 684-8529 -- [jbautista@ccsm-ucc.org](mailto:jbautista@ccsm-ucc.org)



# Introducing Chase Montara, New Director of Operations

by Marge Boyd

It is a pleasure to introduce my colleague and personal friend Chase Montara. Chase has accepted the Director of Operations position, beginning her affiliation with CCSM in the office on December 9th!

I know how fortunate I am to have Chase in my personal life and want to tell you a little about why that is, so you may get a glimpse of the gifts she is bringing to this faith community.

Chase and I met at Mercy Center during “Sacred Journey,” the first year of our Spiritual Direction program. Chase was kind enough to provide me with rides to and from Mercy Center and we enjoyed wonderful conversations both in the context of our program and in her pickup truck! Over time, we have stayed in touch and cultivated our friendship.

Professionally, Chase has an amazing skill set with a background in nursing, senior programming, and business organization. But beyond that, she is a skilled Spiritual Director, having sat with me numerous times listening and being present as I wrestled with the challenge of the day. She is a poet, artist, musician, chef (last year she invited me to Thanksgiving and treated me to “heaven in a crockpot”), and comic! She walks on the beach with Mavis, her wonderful dog, takes photos, creates mandalas, teaches, runs workshops, and loves to read.

We are fortunate to have Chase on staff and she is fortunate to have all of you as a faith family. Please introduce yourselves to Chase by email or a visit to the office so that names may become faces and faces, treasured personalities!



## Gratitude and Farewell for Marge SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 9

Please mark your calendars for Sunday, February 9th for a celebration of Marge Boyd immediately following the service. We will honor her time with us and communicate our gratitude. Details about her purse will be forthcoming in the new year.



If you are willing to help plan and set up, please let Penny know.

## REV. PHIL PORTER CCSM's First Liturgical Artist-in-Residence

We are excited that Rev Phil Porter has agreed to come and be our Liturgical Artist-in-Residence at CCSM. Phil will be in worship once a month, telling stories and bringing his creative spirituality into the service. In partnership with the Liturgical Arts Ministry, he will develop workshops for the congregation and expand our understanding of all the ways the arts can bring new depth and renewed life to our faith and to our worship.

More details to come...





—CONT. FROM BACK PAGE—

### JANUARY 5

**Epiphany Sunday: HUMILITY.** The humility in the spirituality of the scientist and the mystic—to be planted in what you know, while living expectantly for discoveries yet to come. The wisest people we know carry a humility that manifests as tenderness in a creative interplay with power.

### JANUARY 12

**PATIENCE.** Congregational Meeting. Patience can be the fruit of a full-on reckoning with reality—a commitment to move through the world as it is, not as we wish it to be. A spiritual view of time is a long view of time—seasonal and cyclical, resistant to the illusion of time as a bully.

### JANUARY 19

**ADVENTUROUS CIVILITY. MLK Sunday.** The adventure of civility for our time can't be a mere matter of politeness or niceness. Adventurous civility honors the difficulty of what we face and the complexity of what it means to be human. It doesn't celebrate diversity by putting it up on a pedestal and ignoring its messiness and its depths.

### JANUARY 26

**VIOLINS OF HOPE** Special Service.

### FEBRUARY 2

**HOSPITALITY.** You don't have to love or forgive or feel compassion to extend hospitality. But it's more than an invitation. New social realities are brought into being over time by a quality of relationship between unlikely combinations of people. When in doubt, practice hospitality.

### FEBRUARY 9

**WORDS THAT MATTER.** The words we use shape how we understand ourselves, how we interpret the world, how we treat others. As technology reframes the meaning of basic human acts like making and leading and belonging, the world needs the most vivid and transformative universe of words we can muster.

### FEBRUARY 16

**GENEROUS LISTENING.** Real listening is powered by curiosity. It involves vulnerability — a willingness to be surprised, to let go of assumptions and take in ambiguity.

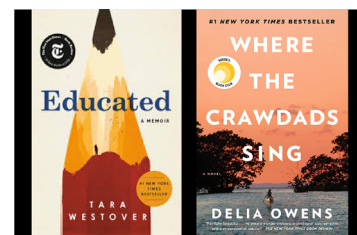
### FEBRUARY 23

**BLESS THIS MESS!** Guest preacher Rev. Molly Baskette.

## First Tuesday Book Group

JANUARY 7 & FEBRUARY 4 • 7:30PM  
FIREPLACE ROOM

We are on holiday leave until **January 7**, when we will discuss *Educated*, a memoir by Tara Westover. Westover is the youngest of seven children who grew up in the mountains of Idaho in a radical Mormon family. In her family, children did not go to school, visit doctors' offices or hospitals, or receive birth certificates. When Brigham Young University accepted her at 16 years old, her education started her down a path to an understanding of home, herself, and the world. **A note: Elrae was going to lead this discussion... we will gather and do our best in her memory.**



On **February 4**, we'll discuss Delia Owens' novel *Where the Crawdads Sing*, about a young woman who's left to raise herself in the marshes of North Carolina when her family abandons her at a young age. There is so much to her story: romance, mystery, and a murder... and it takes place in the breathtaking backdrop of the South. Please join us.

Questions? Contact Susan Stoehr at [s\\_stoehr@hotmail.com](mailto:s_stoehr@hotmail.com)

## Pick-a-Party Openings in January and February

It's not too late to get in on some wonderful fellowship with church friends at several Pick-A-Parties occurring this winter.



**Saturday, January 4: Ring in the New Year with dinner and**

**The King and I movie.** Time: 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. Come sing-a-long with the beloved songs, then enjoy trivia fun and a wonderful dinner provided by the Carillon Ringers. Price \$25.

**Friday, January 10: Movie Afternoon: Amadeus with CCSM Music Staff.** Time: 2 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. Celebrate Mozart's birthday with a screening of the film *Amadeus* while enjoying munchies and beverages. Price \$25.

**Sunday, January 19: Organ Camp for Adults.** Time: 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. Join Angela as she describes the range and depth of our beloved Casavant organ. Price \$15.

**Saturday, February 15: Casavant Love -- Organ Concert & Chocolate.** 4 p.m. Price \$35.

To sign up, contact Carol Henton at [carolhenton@aol.com](mailto:carolhenton@aol.com).



# Joys and Concerns

## CCSM Pastoral Care Team

**Please share your prayers with the pastoral care team:** Rev. Dr. Penny Nixon, Rev. Jorge Bautista, and Rev. Sheryl Johnson. You are invited to share your prayers, your hopes, and your lives. You may connect in the following ways: **in person**, by **filling out a blue prayer card** at Sunday service, by **filling out a [ccsm-ucc.org/prayer](http://ccsm-ucc.org/prayer) online prayer request**, by **contacting us via staff emails** listed in your bulletin or on the website, [ccsm-ucc.org](http://ccsm-ucc.org). You may also contact the church office at [cmontara@ccsm-ucc.org](mailto:cmontara@ccsm-ucc.org) or call 650-343-3694, and Chase will make sure one of the pastors contacts you as soon as possible.

### PRAYERS OF COMFORT

It is with great sadness that we share the news of the passing of **Elrae Bilsey** on November 24, beloved longtime faithful member of CCSM and mother of our Minister of Music, **Lynnelle Bilsey**. Elrae is well known to many through her active participation in the life of the congregation, including over the years the Bell Choir, Chancel Choir, Wise & Wonderful Seniors, and many other groups. Her faithfulness was matched by her wit, wisdom and high spirit, all of which she shared generously. She had many friends here at CCSM and she'll be missed deeply. A memorial service will be held on December 14 at 3pm at CCSM. Please keep Lynnelle and family in your prayers as they navigate this difficult time. 422 Quadrant Ln, Foster City, CA 94404.

Prayers for **Alice Morison** and family as Alice's 17-year-old grandson, **Max**, died on December 2.

CCSM member **Cheryl Pierpont**

passed away unexpectedly on November 11. Cheryl joined CCSM in 1999, and her parents **Dorothy and Mel Henson** were long-time members. Until her medications made it too difficult for her to walk any distance, Cheryl walked often with a group at the Hillsdale Shopping Center. She was a loving, kind, caring, cheerful friend and she will be missed.

### PRAYERS OF SUPPORT AND HEALING

**Linda Hodges** had hip replacement at the new Stanford Hospital on November 19 and was moved to Pacifica Rehab and Nursing on November 22. Phone calls and visits welcome.

Prayers for **Jim Berthelesen**, healing from ankle surgery. He's had a tough setback. Cards and calls welcomed.

Prayers of healing for **Melanie Dresbach's** brother **Rev. Michael Dresbach**, undergoing a second round of chemo treatment be-

cause the cancer has spread to his lungs.

**Sheila Jambekar** and **Sean Moran's** sister-in-law recently learned she has cancer. She would appreciate prayers as she goes through this journey.

Continuing prayers of strength and healing for our beloved brothers and sisters: **Dave McClure, Martha Grannis, Bill Melis, Dr. Jim Groundwater** and family, **Bill Daniels, Annette Daniels, Ruth Black, Marjorie Griffin, Adrienne Mitchell, Genevieve and John Parsons, Fred Petri, Rev. Travis Woodmansee's** mother **Cathy, Mike and Kay Harris' friend Mary Helen McMahan, Cathy Latta, Genel Morgan's** friends **Marty and Steve, Dottie Scott, Veril Phillips'** granddaughter **Eva, Deanna Riding's** friend and neighbor, and others as they walk their unique journeys with cancer and other health challenges.

## Trudy's Teas

The women's lunch group, Trudy's Teas, will begin again in late January. A chance to get together and share a meal and conversation. We meet once a month for four months. All you need to participate is a desire to get together. We meet in someone's home or at the church and take turns providing the food and drinks. Need a ride? No problem. Lack culinary skills? No problem. All are welcome! Invite a friend!

If you have questions or to sign up, contact Diane Kalliam at 415-469-7750 or [dkalliam@gmail.com](mailto:dkalliam@gmail.com).

## musicart

FRIDAY, DEC. 20 • NOON

PAT PEPPER'S HOME, 325 W. BELLEVUE, SAN MATEO

Masterworks Chorale Holiday Popup Choir will lead the merrymaking at our Christmas luncheon gathering. This ensemble is directed by CCSM's own Robin Hansen and includes a few CCSM members. Group carol singing will follow. Remember to bring your own sandwich/salad; desserts and beverages are provided. Please reserve your space by emailing Susan Duty: [susanjd52@gmail.com](mailto:susanjd52@gmail.com) or by phone @ 650-533-6828.



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Conversations Project.” She says: *It seems we are more divided than ever but we have the language, the tools, the virtues—and the calling, as human beings—to create hospitable spaces for taking up the hard questions of our time.*

In January and February, during the season of Epiphany where we welcome the light, we will welcome more light into our lives and into our conversations. The light will shine through the prism of the grounding virtues (the spiritual tools) we will explore. In January, we will provide a resource list for you to delve more deeply into each of these topics.

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

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## EPIPHANY 2020: SPIRITUAL TOOLS FOR POLARIZING TIMES

Krista Tippet is the host of the podcast *On Being* and she has put together a guide called [BETTER CONVERSATIONS](#) as part of her “Civil