

# CCSM PINE TREE

VOL. 72, #3 | ONLINE | EASTER SEASON 2023

## RISE UP, TAKE HEART

by Sheryl Johnson

*Christ is risen! Hallelujah!*

We made it through our Lenten journey and have arrived at our Easter celebration. If you aren't quite there in your mind, heart, or spirit, the good news is that we have not only Easter morning but a full fifty-day season to get there. I hope and pray that the joy of new life and the mystery of resurrection and renewal will find you very soon.

As you likely know, we've been on quite the Lenten journey. I can barely believe that it was only a few short weeks ago that Rev. Melissa, Rev. Jorge,

and I led the Ash Wednesday service which began our season of Lent. We've been through a lot. I am so grateful to Chris Wuthmann and others who are leading us in a process of healing and reconciliation to process this season of our church life and help us to move forward together. I am also grateful to our board (including our new moderator, Austin Mader-Clark), search teams, and so many others who are working hard to figure out the best next steps. And I am so grateful to so many members and church leaders who are stepping in to support, help with worship, serve on



Moderator Austin Mader-Clark and Rev. Sheryl Johnson on Easter

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### BREAKING NEWS!

Kibbie Ruth steps up as CCSM's new "Transitional Minister."  
Find out more on [page 13](#).



Congregational  
Church of san mateo

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



# CHILDREN, YOUTH & FAMILIES

Our children and youth programs continue to build momentum and have good energy. I am so grateful for the leadership of Kim Rey and Troy Grabow who have been very helpful in offering a great deal of assistance, including sending out a survey to families to get input on the timing and



types of programs families are looking for right now. I am also so grateful to the many volunteers who especially pitched in to help with our Easter kids' programming including Heather Nayak, Michele Cinq Mars and Nicole Tocchini. I am also so grateful to our wonderful CYF staff: Elaine Kauffman, Lily Gonzales, Shannon McEntee, and Elijah Barnard who have stepped up especially in this time when I have been more involved in worship leadership.

**Our Sunday kids' programs have continued to include our preschool free play program, K-5th grade Godly Play class, middle school youth discussion, and monthly "60 Minutes" discussion for highschool students.** In Godly Play, Shannon tells a Bible story and then leads the kids to reflect on a number of questions to connect the story to their lives and to examine what is important to them about the story and what they imagine it to mean. Elaine then connects the story to a theme and helps the kids to engage in that theme through



contemporary storybooks, art, service projects, and more.



**Our middle school program has been focused on parables and play.** As several of our middle schoolers enjoy board games, we thought it would be fun to bring in those games and talk about what the games can teach us about ourselves, working with others, and issues in our world. Those are "parables" in and of themselves, but

we've also been connecting the themes from the games to Biblical parables as well as parables from other sacred texts and faith traditions. It's been a very interesting time and the youth have shared a lot of deep insights both from the games themselves as well as what we can learn from how we play them - competition, collaboration, not giving up too soon, how to win/lose well, what really matters when we play games, etc.



**Our highschool youth have continued to discuss important issues in our world including top stories**



**from the news, events going on at our church, and youth mental health.** I am so grateful

to Mike Mullery for his continued leadership in this group for over 20 years!

**For families, we also continue to hold a monthly lunch and activity after church on the first Sunday**

—cont. on next page—





**of the month.** This has been a lovely time to get to know one another better. Our activities have included playing board games, decorating pillowcases for a LifeMoves family shelter, decorating lunch bags and writing notes of encouragement for those participating in free meal programs, singing and music, and much more. Please plan to join us in May if you can!

**For youth, we have also been preparing several highschoolers for Confirmation!** We went to Foothills UCC to meet their youth and learn about confirmation - it was a wonderful conversation and time of fellowship. And then I had a wonderful time with 3 CCSM youth at a weekend Confirmation retreat at Orinda UCC. We had sessions on the Bible, worship, Jesus, God, faith and justice, UCC history, and more. The youth created their own worship service and also helped to lead worship that Sunday at Orinda. It was a wonderful time of conversation, reflection and a lot of fun - including games, ice cream Sundays, a scavenger hunt, and more.

**On Wednesdays, it has been a blessing to have our children and youth**

**programming re-start after a few weeks off.** We continue to play games, do creative activities, talk about our lives, and explore themes like care for the Earth. We continue to have a good group of participants from ages 0-18.

I am also delighted to share that **the Peninsula Multi-faith Coalition has re-launched their youth program with youth from various communities coming together to plan and execute events to learn more about one another's faith traditions.** Our next event will be a park/beach clean up and BBQ in late April. This is a great chance for youth to practice their leadership skills and build diverse community to serve the common good. All are welcome to participate in the events and the leadership team!



## RISE UP, TAKE HEART cont. from p. 1

committees, help behind the scenes—truly I have experienced such an outpouring of support and love during this time and I want to express deep and sincere gratitude to everyone.

Still, as we move into the season of Easter, I know that questions remain. We continue to search for a new senior minister. We continue to explore questions of what a Latinx ministry might look like in this season. We continue to ask many questions about where we have been and where we are going. But we have the promise that new life is coming and we have the call to be part of making it so.

As we look into the coming weeks and months, we have a lot that is showing us signs of hope and new life. Our series over this season will be "Rise Up, Take Heart" which is loosely based on a message we find in the book of Ezra in the Hebrew Bible. This book of the Bible describes the period after Babylonian captivity, when the temple in Jerusalem is re-built. It is important to say that different Biblical understandings of "rising up" exist and those in the

Hebrew Bible are complete unto themselves for our siblings in the Jewish community (it is important not to read the Hebrew Bible as simply preparation for the Christian scriptures). Yet we know that "rising up" is also a message that shares deep resonance with our Easter theme of resurrection.

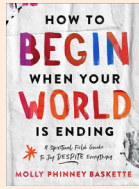
Today, we might find ourselves rising up from winter, from despair, from the pandemic, from the rains, and much more. And we might also rise up to what is coming next for us individually and collectively. And when we rise, we do it with heart. We bring our feelings, our pain, our care and our love. And we can take heart in the fact that we have a new day and this new season before us. Our story is not over. We have one another and we have a promise that God will be with us in this new season.



## UPCOMING SPECIAL SERVICES

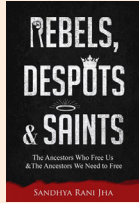
**Sunday, April 23:**

**Rev. Molly Baskette** preaches on her new book [How to Begin When Your World Is Ending](#). A book signing will follow the service during coffee hour!



**Sunday, May 14:**

**Rev. Sandhya Jha** preaches on their new book [Rebels, Despots, and Saints](#).



## CELEBRATIONS CORNER!

**O**ur next Pine Tree will have a special section where we will celebrate achievements in our CCSM community. Those could include graduations (from preschool, elementary school, high school, college, graduate school, or anything else!), professional achievements, sporting wins, drama performances, or really anything you'd like to celebrate in your own life (or celebrate about someone else you know - please just check with them first!). And while we love to hear about what is going on in the lives of our children and youth, adults, please don't be shy either! Please send about 150 words (maximum) to [sjohnson@ccsm-ucc.org](mailto:sjohnson@ccsm-ucc.org) by **May 10**. Thank you!

## FROM AUSTIN MADER-CLARK, YOUR NEW MODERATOR

I know some of you wonder what would possess me to step into a leadership role at this time in our church history. Here is my answer: When I'm getting ready to do the hard work and I roll up my sleeves, I see a tattoo on my forearm that is advice mother used to give me. It says, "Take a risk."

I've been your Moderator for three whole weeks, and what a ride it has been! It has been so fulfilling to reconnect with so many of you who I really haven't seen for the last three years. I've been reminded of how much love there is in our community. Love, spirituality, commitment, loyalty, and more love.

Of course, there have been challenging moments... we've got budget issues, an interim Minister search, a settled Senior Minister search, some kind of turmoil in almost every Ministry, and with changes to staff. No part of us was left untouched by the changes that have happened. Some of those challenges came from human missteps, some are fallout from a continuing global pandemic, some are just due to how hard change itself is; but none of these issues came out of malevolence.

My lowest moments happen when I am thinking, "I just don't know which way to go on this decision. What is best for our entire congregation?" When I am at my lowest, that is always when someone, or a group of someones, step in, ease my burden, and help me gain clarity. Every single time. I'm reminded repeatedly of the love, support, and thoughtfulness... and benevolence contained in our beloved community.

By the time you read this you will know that we have selected a fabulous Transitional Minister (whose role will be discussed in more detail soon). You've started to see the great strides the Senior Minister Search Committee is making, and how they are making the whole process more transparent. The Finance Committee is keeping you filled in on our budget and financial picture, and the Ministries are getting stronger and stronger. And engagement and volunteerism are on the rise!

This is a bit that I wrote in introducing myself in Connections:

*I am not building a bridge to get us over all the muck, we are all building paths through the muck to emerge on the other side, stronger, more resilient, and more bonded to each other. More bonded to our fellow problematic, beautiful human beings.*

I love CCSM, as I know you do, and I'm so deeply thankful to all of you. We will travel through all this change together and come out stronger. We can heal and build our future, and have fun and levity while we do it. Let's keep rolling up our sleeves... together. Take a risk!

—Austin





# MARCH 2023 FINANCIAL SUMMARY

April 11, 2023

Veril Phillips, Treasurer

In an effort to provide more financial information to all members of CCSM, we are providing a financial summary on a regular basis. We invite your comments about this report and whether more information or less information would be helpful.

This report is based on revenue and expenses for the first three months of 2023. We are reporting both for the month and for the year-to-date (YTD), which means January through March 2023 in this report.



Category	March 2023 actual	One month budget	One month difference		YTD actual	YTD budget	YTD difference
Donations to general fund	45,156	47,500	-2,344		156,180	142,500	13,680
Total revenue for general fund	58,563	68,043	-9,480		212,249	204,129	8,120
Expenses for general fund	142,629	85,472	57,157		293,987	247,183	46,804
Net revenue (revenue minus expenses)	-84,066	-17,429	-66,637		-81,737	-43,054	-38,683

## Comments:

1. Several unusual expenses in March account for the high expenses that month.
  - a. The annual payments for insurance, workers compensation, and property taxes totaled \$32,452.
  - b. Expenses associated with the resignation of our interim minister totaled \$30,097.
  - c. Our quarterly contribution to the UCC conference was \$5,000.
  - d. These three items totaled \$67,549 in expenses for the month of March 2023.
2. Bear in mind that even with the staff reductions that were so painful to implement, our budget for 2023 has a shortfall (expenses exceed revenue) of \$117,000.

## MUSIC & ART: SUSAN & STEPHEN BELL, APRIL 21



### MUSIC & ART, FRIDAY, APRIL 21 • NOON • BUCKHAM ROOM

Music and Art will convene at noon on April 21 in the Buckham Room. As always BYOL (bring your own lunch). Beverages and dessert are provided. A brief devotional and business meeting will be held and then

we'll have a wonderful music program presented by our own members, Susan and Stephen Bell. Their program will be called "Our Favorite Things" with Steve playing two or three trumpet selections accompanied on the piano by Susan. She will then play classical guitar pieces. We are so fortunate to have them share their talents with our group and CCSM at large.

Please RSVP to Susan Duty at [susanjd52@gmail.com](mailto:susanjd52@gmail.com) or by phone at 650-533-6830.

## LATINO/A MINISTRY UPDATE

by Julien Phillips

In the previous issue of the *Pine Tree* I reported that our Spanish-speaking congregants had decided to withdraw from CCSM, hurt by the events that culminated in the resignation of Rev. Jorge Bautista, their beloved pastor. In this issue I am reporting that they are back worshipping with us at CCSM.

After several weeks away they were feeling very sad about the loss of their Wednesday gatherings. Moreover, they were deeply moved by the outpouring of love and support for Rev. Jorge at his farewell fiesta, and they took note of all the ways that our CCSM community expressed how much we valued our relationships with them and their place in our community.

We offered to arrange for a Spanish-speaking pastor to lead a Wednesday gathering in which they could worship and celebrate communion together again, share a meal, and have a discussion with several of us 'Sunday folks.' They gratefully accepted. David Vásquez-Levy, President of Pacific School of Religion, agreed to lead worship and communion, and also to facilitate and translate for the discussion. Two of CCSM's board members participated along with the co-chairs of our senior-minister search committee and one of its members, and one Sunday person who wanted simply to demonstrate how much she valued the 'Wednesday folks' in our congregation.

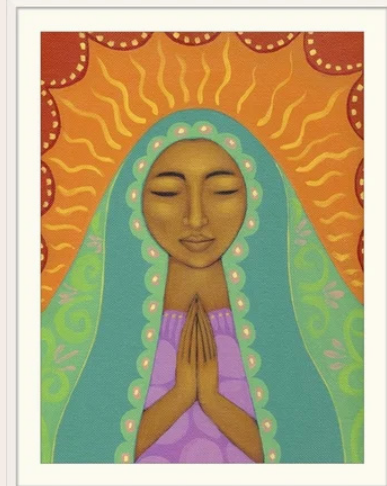
Several of us commented that it felt like one of the most meaningful services we had participated in for a long time. Although the service was primarily in Spanish, Rev. David summarized enough in English that everyone could engage fully. The sense of community among worshipping Christians seemed especially strong, the music led by Melanie Dresbach and her son Richie drew us into active participation, and Rev. David's spirit shined throughout the service.

In the discussion that followed the Spanish-speak-

ing folks expressed how good they felt to be back in their home in the Fireplace Room and at CCSM. Search-committee leaders invited them to play an active role in meeting with candidates and giving their feedback. A message from

Chris Wuthmann offered to hold a Spanish-language healing and reconciliation gathering. I offered to try to arrange weekly Wednesday gatherings at least through May with Spanish-speaking pastors. After discussion they indicated that they would like to return to CCSM at least during this period, participating in regular Wednesday gatherings and expressing their concerns and hopes as all of us work together to shape CCSM's future.

Since then we have been able to arrange for Spanish-speaking pastors to lead weekly worship services and communion through the end of May (except for one Wednesday devoted to the Spanish-language healing and reconciliation session, which David Vásquez-Levy has agreed to facilitate and translate). Our Spanish-speaking brothers and sisters encourage English-speaking congregants to participate with them in the Wednesday gatherings, and the pastors have agreed to translate enough into English to enable non-Spanish speakers to engage as well. Several of our Spanish-speaking families have also participated in CCSM's Sunday services, and it has been terrific to see English-speaking congregants chatting with them during coffee hour.



Michele Moffitt has relocated permanently to Pennsylvania to be close to family. She has had multiple health problems in the last several months and her niece, Mary O'Neil, is quite supportive. Michele is staying with her niece until she finds an Assisted Living that is a good fit.

Cards can be sent to her **c/o Mary O'Neil**  
**19 Lakefront Lane**  
**Scott Township, PA 18433**

She would love to hear from her church family. We will update her address when she settles into an Assisted Living. We hope to see Michele online soon! She will be greatly missed for her intrepid spirit and her good humor.



Michele Moffitt (R) serving communion to Caroline Reinke, 2019



## NEW BOARD MEMBER DON RUTHROFF

Hello Church Family,

My name is Don Ruthroff, you may know me as the big tall guy that sits down front on Sunday mornings, and I am honored to be your newest Board of Directors member. I felt called to offer to fill a seat on the Board at this point in the church's history, because I believe with all my heart that as we are journeying through a valley at this moment, this is an opportunity for our congregation to chart a course for renewal and exit the valley stronger and prepared for what is next for us together.

You may wonder what I bring in the way of talent to the Board, well I often tell folks that I was destined to be Lutheran as I was born on Reformation Day (October 31) in the Lutheran Hospital and my first 38 years the Lutheran Church is where I was, including over 5 years planning and leading the contemporary worship service in the largest Lutheran Church west of the Mississippi, for over 30 years. More recently I came to CCSM in 2016, when my husband and I were looking for a church home and I already knew Penny. I am a singing member of the San Francisco Gay Men's Chorus, singing in my 21st season with them. I own my own architectural practice, that I just opened after being an owner

and working for a mid-size architectural firm here in the Bay Area for 23 years.

I believe I bring an inquiring mind and a deep faith in God to the Board. I am not afraid to ask questions and challenge "norms" in order to move things forward. I am also a listen-first person, who believes there is so much to gain from listening to all points of view in the conversation before making a determination. I look forward to the challenges ahead and to working together with you to build on the foundation of what has come before at CCSM to create something new and vital as we welcome a new Senior Minister and begin a faith journey together under their leadership.



## OUR OWN PABLO QUINTANILLA SPEAKS ON NPR



Hi all, my spouse (Silvana) and I joined the Church in 2015 after moving to San Mateo from San Francisco. The Church's commitment to social Justice drew us in initially. I wrote this piece ([tinyurl.com/CCSM-PabloQ](https://tinyurl.com/CCSM-PabloQ)) for KQED to highlight the importance of

fostering durable relationships between children of different means as a way to close the economic divide in our community. — Pablo Quintanilla

Also, last fall I wrote four other pieces for KQED on topics around **CLIMATE JUSTICE**, **WORDS MATTER** (following racist remarks LA city council), **GHOSTS OF HOMEOWNERSHIP** (racial covenants in San Mateo property deeds) and **COVID AND LATINX** (disproportionate impact on immigrant community). Find them at [tinyurl.com/CCSM-PQ-All](https://tinyurl.com/CCSM-PQ-All)

## LIFEMOVES BENEFIT BREAKFAST RETURNS! APRIL 27, 7:30AM



FEATURED SPEAKER

**Liz Murray**  
**From Homeless to Harvard**

ple off the streets and into stable homes. CCSM has been a strong supporter of this organization for many years. Seating is limited. Registration is free. There will be an optional opportunity to donate to LifeMoves at the breakfast.

Use this link to register: [tinyurl.com/2023-LifeMoves](https://tinyurl.com/2023-LifeMoves) or call the Life Moves office at 650-685-5880. For questions, email Kimberly Adinolfi at [kadinolfi@lifemoves.org](mailto:kadinolfi@lifemoves.org)

CCSM members are invited to attend the LifeMoves Benefit Breakfast at the Hyatt Regency in Burlingame on Thursday, April 27 from 7:30 - 9:00AM. This is the first time the annual event has been held in person since the start of COVID.

The featured speaker will be bestselling author and film producer Liz Murray, speaking on "From Homeless to Harvard." LifeMoves provides critically needed funds to support interim housing and services that move peo-

# NOTES FROM THE MUSIC TEAM

The music team and ensembles at CCSM have truly been on a Lenten journey this year. Melanie and her son Ritchie are continuing to provide music for the Wed. Gathering services and Melanie led several of the Lenten Taize services. CCSM's Lenten musical journey culminated in an inspirational Holy Week beginning with a joyous Palm Sunday, moving Maundy Thursday and Good Friday services and a celebratory Easter morning. On behalf of the music team, we appreciate all the musicians and friends of CCSM who contributed their time, talent and support on behalf of our blessed community.

Looking forward, here are a few upcoming special music offerings:



## JOYFUL NOISE THIS SPRING

Following up their Palm Sunday entrance, the ensemble will join us in service again on **Sunday, April 23** in celebration of April's Earth Day singing one of my favorite works by Tom Chapin, "This Pretty Planet." Some of the youth will also join the Chancel Choir in celebrating our pretty planet sharing "O, Colored Earth" by Steve Heitzig. Julie and the choir will also be preparing a special musical offering for the Family Sunday on **May 14th** as well. All children (and parents) are welcome to participate. The group meets on Sunday mornings at 9:45 am in the C.E. building. For more information please contact Julie Berk at: [teacherjulie7@gmail.com](mailto:teacherjulie7@gmail.com).

## Z-QUARTET WITH JAMES KOEPPEN

During the **Sunday, April 30** service, we will be treated with the musical talents of oboist James Koeppen, violinist Chris Yeh and the members of the Z-Quartet. They will share several pieces during the service including a work by Mozart for Oboe and String Trio.

## 30TH ANNIVERSARY SPRING ORGAN RECITAL WITH ANGELA KRAFT CROSS • Sunday, May 7, 3:00PM

CCSM is blessed to enjoy Angela's talent on Sunday mornings, and this special concert is an opportunity for us to celebrate her musical gifts on our beautiful 1955 Casavant organ. The program will feature enjoyable and memorable works of Bach, Guilain, Mendelssohn, Schumann, Franck, Duruflé and Vierne as well as Angela's original compositions, including *Tree of Life*, celebrating its tenth anniversary! Please mark your calendar and come share your appreciation for this amazing accomplishment at CCSM.

Light refreshments will follow the concert. A free-will offering will be accepted at the door to benefit the music ministry committee at CCSM. Please contact Lynnelle Bilsey at [ltbmusings@gmail.com](mailto:ltbmusings@gmail.com) if you are interested in volunteering to assist with this recital.



**MUSICAL CONVERSATIONS** Following up on the announcement shared at the March 12th Meeting, Lynnelle Bilsey will host several conversations about music at CCSM in the coming weeks. All members and friends of CCSM are invited to join in these conversations to discuss the music program and offer input and insights into the type of music that is desired and the overall direction the congregation would like to see the program take. Please watch the bulletins and Connections for dates and times. If you have any questions or thoughts you'd like to share, you are welcome to reach out to Lynnelle directly at [ltbmusings@gmail.com](mailto:ltbmusings@gmail.com). —Lynnelle Bilsey, Director of Music



## BURLINGAME MUSIC CLUB MONDAY CONCERTS AT CCSM

The Burlingame Music Club has offered CCSM members to join their Second Monday concerts this past year, celebrating young musicians from the Peninsula. Here are some photos from some of the wonderful music that has been shared recently.



## THE CCSM GOING SOLAR PROJECT IS UNDERWAY!

Please note: PG&E has changed the dates for the electrical shut down at the church to **Monday, May 1 - Wednesday, May 3** (instead of 4/17-19). The church will be without power for those three days—no fire alarm system, lights or phones. All rehearsals and events will need to be canceled for those days out of caution for everyone's safety. It is possible that PG&E will change these dates again, so you may want to wait to reschedule your events until closer to those dates. Sincere apologies for the inconvenience.

There continue to be on-going fenced off areas in the parking lot, reducing our number of spaces. This changes frequently, as the workers move the fences around to try to provide us as many parking places as possible at any given time, depending on what they are doing. Please remember that there is additional Sunday parking available in the lot kitty-corner from the church, at Tilton and San Mateo Drive.



*Jim S, Jim G and Oscar watch the holes being drilled for the solar carport, 3-27-23.*





## A FUN TIME HAS BEEN HAD BY ALL! PICK-A-PARTIES

CCSM members have jumped back into Pick-A-Parties, doing everything from learning about the Civil War to besting one another at bocce ball.

...Doug and Carol Henton sponsored a **Chicken Marbella Dinner** in January, featuring the Silver Palate cookbook's favorite chicken recipe, fine wine and Carol's famous carrot cake.

...Angela Kraft Cross delighted everyone with her organ prowess at a **Valentine-themed concert** followed by treats and talk.

...**Civil War enthusiasts** swapped information over a great meal at Phil Lind's and Betsy Woodward's house.

...Joy and Merle Mason treated guests to a **New Orleans meal**, educating their guests about the best way to prepare okra, and sharing SF Giants memories (not strictly New Orleans, but a timely topic!).

...**Cribbage fans** new and old learned the rules or new tricks, and enjoyed the Schwandts' hospitality and Alison's great desserts.

...Laura Peterhans and Mary Ann Notz brought back their traditional **German breakfast and morning of music** at Laura's house, with guests showcasing their talents on Laura's 1898 Steinway Parlor Grand. This year, guests also competed for chocolate prizes based on their knowledge of Mendelssohn and his life.

...On a beautiful day in March, sixteen people split into teams for several hard-fought **bocce ball games at Beresford Park**. Fortunately, the Golden Rule was observed, and everyone had a great time. The Schwandts and the Gallos supplied snacks (including chocolate chip cookies) and tried to make sure everyone was following the rules.

...On the first of April, another beautiful day, Allison Rock and Chris Wuthman, together with their

docent friend Kate, led a **wildflower walk through Edgewood Park**. Although it wasn't yet the peak of the season, Kate helped everyone appreciate what was already blooming and explained what would be coming as the season warmed up. The hike was followed by a tasty picnic lunch – featuring chocolate chip cookies!

...The following Saturday, Carol Henton led a small but intrepid group of hikers up the somewhat muddy slopes of **Wunderlich Park**. Although the sun never came out, the views were amazing, and the size of the group allowed everyone to get to know each other much better. This hike was also followed by a great picnic, again featuring chocolate chip cookies! Clearly, CCSMers love a good time, enjoy connecting with their fellow members, and never turn down a chocolate chip cookie!

**There is still space in the High Tea (4/22), the Rock Hound Party (5/6), and the Book Lovers' Luncheon (5/20.) Sign up to enjoy the fun!**

### JOIN THE COOKS AND BAKERS ZOOM PARTY ON MAY 4 from 6:30 p.m. to 9 p.m.

(only \$20)! There's still time to sign up for this Zoom Pick A Party, hosted by Michele Merfeld Hale, in which all those interested in food (that's everyone) can share recipes and cooking ideas. Michele is a true virtual member, having found CCSM online and joining virtually. She's never been physically present at CCSM, but she's been active in our congregation for some time -- she came up with the ideas for our successful Pie Social and our Christmas Cookie Exchange. And she has more than 550 cookbooks! This Zoom Pick A Party is sure to be great fun, so contact Michele or Sandy McNabb to sign up now. [sandra.j.mcnabb@gmail.com](mailto:sandra.j.mcnabb@gmail.com) 650 678 5650; [kaymerf@yahoo.com](mailto:kaymerf@yahoo.com)



Wunderlich hike



Bocce ball at Beresford



Edgewood Park hike



## WHO'S IN THE BUILDING?

CCSM is committed to ensuring that all feel welcome and safe while here at 225 Tilton Ave, whether they are members, guests or renters. If you are using the facility after regular office hours, **there is now a white board located in the Main Office that will let you know who else is in the building with you.** This should ease everyone's minds and create a feeling of security.

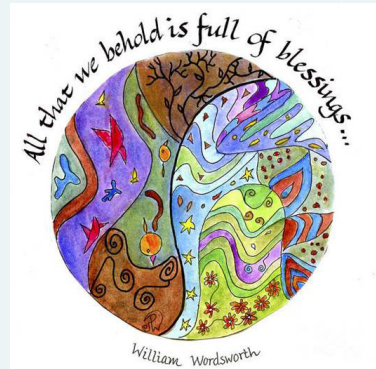
Please know that every effort is made to only rent to outside parties who will take care of and respect the facility. Should you have any concerns, please complete the "CCSM Reportable Event Form" located in the Main Office and place in Chase Montara's mailbox. Thanks for doing your part so that all feel welcome and safe!



## IN THE SPIRIT OF SHARING

by Chase Montara

The "In the Spirit of Sharing" group began in August 2020 as a way for folks to stay connected spiritually to God, to themselves and to others during the isolation and fear of the



pandemic. We intended to gather for six weeks initially, but due to group enthusiasm, we have met now for 32 months! It has been a pleasure to offer the group meaningful content and to facilitate spiritual exploration of that content. We welcomed all viewpoints and because we did, we learned from each other. We formed friendships, have tried to be of service to each other during and outside of group, and will carry very fond memories with us as we journey on.

**The last meeting of "In the Spirit of Sharing" will be Thursday, April 20th.** If you have not joined us in a bit, please feel free to join us as we wrap up this wonderful group. And a huge thank you to all who faithfully participated and thoughtfully shared your spiritual walk. May the blessings of God be upon you, may God's peace abide in you. May God's presence illuminate your heart, now and forever more. Amen.

## HEALING & RECONCILIATION

### SAVE THE DATE

The next Healing & Reconciliation conversation is scheduled for **MAY 7**, right after worship. We will dive into comments that were expressed at our March 19th session and start to define issues that we need to work on together. Please come with your ideas, questions, and passion for a healthy and vital future for our church.



## MSJ UPDATE

by Genel Morgan

We truly have a giving congregation! Thank you for your generosity in contributing to the plate offering each Sunday which we designate to many deserving charities in our local community, in our nation and globally. From providing diapers for low-income mothers locally to support for the people of Ukraine who have suffered so much, YOU truly are the hands, feet and face of God.



Jojo and the Blessing Box

Our **Blessing Box** is becoming a neighborhood ministry. In addition to all of those who access the box for food on a daily basis, we have those who have been donating food as well. Thank you, too, for bringing in your donations every Sunday and during the week. It is heartwarming to see the congregation caring for those who are food insecure in our neighborhood. Howie was a chef at the Hyatt Hotel in Burlingame and lost his job during Covid. He now lives in his car. A young couple from Guatemala with a toddler accessed the box and are so grateful. We don't know all of the other people we are helping, but we know they appreciate our help.

Two of my grandchildren have come with me several times to fill the Blessing Box. It is a good way for them to learn what they live.

*I went to church the other day to fill the Blessing Box. I brought my grandkids with me since they were off school.*

*While Jojo was helping me fill the box, Johnny was "making lunch for Jesus." LOL*

*I thought this was a heartwarming story in the midst of all our issues at church.*



Johnny "making lunch for Jesus"

## BOARD MINUTES AVAILABLE

In the interest of full transparency and to improve communications with CCSM, the **Board of Directors** now posts their monthly meeting minutes at this link: [tinyurl.com/CCSM-BoardMinutes](https://tinyurl.com/CCSM-BoardMinutes). As future meetings occur, minutes will be posted in this same folder at this same link.

## ELECTRIFY YOUR HOME

WORKSHOP MAY 9, 6:00PM



**ELECTRIFY  
YOUR HOME &  
SAVE MONEY**

Are you interested in electrifying your home and don't know where to start? Are you "electric-curious" and want to learn about the benefits of electrification? Switching to electric heating and cooking technologies creates safer homes and communities for generations to come. The City of San Mateo and 350 Silicon Valley are partnering to host a workshop that will share information on how and why to go electric and how to take advantage of newly increased rebates, incentives and financing. You'll also hear from a homeowner who will share their own home electrification process. Attend this workshop and learn how to start your electric home journey.

**Link to register:**

[sanmateopublic.libcal.com/event/10569620](https://sanmateopublic.libcal.com/event/10569620)



On Palm Sunday, our Girl Scout troop #61818 sold cookies in Kloss Hall.



## KIBBIE RUTH STEPS UP AS "TRANSITIONAL MINISTER"



Normally, an objective outsider leads a congregation through an interim period between permanent ministers. After a long-term pastor, the interim period is usually at least 18 months. Yet, our interim barely stayed six months before resigning. The interim search team immediately tried to find a replacement. Meanwhile, the permanent search team charged ahead with such success that new permanent minister could arrive just a few months from now. No professional interim wanted to pretend to do "interim work" within such a limited time-frame. What a stalemate!

In this in-between time, our task is to be the most vibrant, organized, and spirit-filled church possible by the time the new minister arrives. Rev. Dr. Sheryl Johnson jumped in to lead our worship services, provide pastoral care, and manage all the logistics of keeping church communication rolling—all while continuing to lead the children and youth program. Rev. Dr. Kibbie Ruth, a regular at CCSM, has agreed to partner with her as somewhat of a pseudo-interim minister. **As Transitional Minister, Kibbie will engage with the lay leadership to help the congregation heal from past wounds, increase the sense of community and participation, and prepare for a settled senior minister.** That includes working with the Council of Ministries, Board and Finance Committee in matters like process, protocol, and resources, refining the church mission and governance structure, and working toward financial stability.

**Kibbie and Sheryl cannot prep for the coming pastor alone. They need YOU! Please join the energized leaders and volunteers in helping CCSM shine before our new minister comes.** Together, with God's help, we can live into our Guiding Principles so authentically that the new pastor can start ministry here moving forward, rather than inheriting any of our stale baggage. Let's get to work!

To see a breakdown of clergy duties as divided up by Kibbie and Sheryl (and Chase), click on this link: [tinyurl.com/ClergyDuties-KR](https://tinyurl.com/ClergyDuties-KR)



*Another Pick-A-Party hike... a beautiful day in La Honda*

## ENDING HOMELESSNESS: STRATEGIES WITHIN OUR FAITH COMMUNITIES

**THURSDAY, MAY 11, 10AM - 1PM**

**at CCSM in Kloss Hall (lunch provided)**

**You're invited to a discussion** on how faith leaders and congregational leaders can partner with our local jurisdictions to be an integral part of ending homelessness on the Peninsula.

Mike Callagy, CEO San Mateo County, will be one of the presenters. The County of San Mateo has taken on a bold initiative and declared 2022-2023 as *The Year of Working Together to End Homelessness*.

This is the time, and this is our Call to Action to end homelessness in San Mateo County. There will be speakers, round tables, a panel and opportunities for participation—and lunch!

All faith leaders and congregational members are invited.

**PLEASE REGISTER BY APRIL 26**

**[SMC\\_Faith\\_Summit.eventbrite.com](https://SMC_Faith_Summit.eventbrite.com)**

(Rev. Penny Nixon, with Home for All and Peninsula Solidarity Cohort, is working to organize this event)

# Joys and Concerns

## CCSM Pastoral Care Team

Please share your prayers with the pastoral care team, **Rev. Sheryl Johnson, Chase Montara, and Rev. Kibbie Ruth.** You are invited to share your prayers, your hopes, and your lives. You may connect in the following ways: by **filling out an [online prayer request](#)**, by **contacting us via staff emails** listed in your bulletin, or through the website's Contact Us link, [ccsm-ucc.org/contact](http://ccsm-ucc.org/contact). 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 JOY AND GRATITUDE

News has reached us from western Maryland that longtime CCSM member **Tom Banks** recently remarried. Tom is 90 years old and still active. He and his bride **Nancy** tied the knot in February. Tom wants all of his friends at CCSM to know that he sends greetings and best wishes.

### PRAYERS OF LOVE AND STRENGTH

Prayers for the friends of **Candace Nagare, Jan and Ron Barr**, whose son **Ryan** was killed in an avalanche in March.

**Bonnie Kitts** let us know that **Heidi Blumer Swinehart, Julie Meyers'** sister, passed away on April 10. Her family had been with her the previous week. They are still all in shock as they try to understand the suddenness of this for all who love her. Heidi had been diagnosed with cancer in her spine in March. Prayers for her husband **Roger**, daughter **Stephanie** and son **Zach** in this time of sadness.

### PRAYERS OF HEALING AND SUPPORT

**Michele Moffitt** has permanently relocated to Pennsylvania to recuperate after multiple recent health challenges and to be near family. Once recovered, she will be looking for an assisted living placement there. Cards can be sent c/o Mary O'Neil, 19 Lakefront Lane, Scott Township, PA 18433.

**Sandee Schlickman** requests prayers for her best friend's daughter, Kelly, who will be having brain surgery on May 18 in Kentucky. She will be spending 3 days in ICU and will then have a very long recovery. She is only 43 years old.

Please pray for **Dawn Grave's** sister **Sheri** who has been journeying toward receiving a new heart and lungs for five years; they are now looking for a donor match.

**Chase Montara** requests prayers for her close friend **Chrissy Burns**, who had extensive open heart surgery at Stanford on April 3. She remains in the ICU and has lost use of her legs as a result of the surgery; please pray that this is a temporary condition.

**Tony Gallo** asks for prayers for his brother, **Enzo**, who had surgery for colon cancer recently. Please pray for Enzo, his family and his doctors.

Please hold **Loomis Basin UCC** and their pastor, **Casey Tinnin** in your prayers. Pastor Casey has re-

ceived death threats and the church has received hateful messages for hosting a LGBTQIA+ youth support program at the church.

Prayers for **Greg Graves'** 90 year old aunt, **Roberta**, diagnosed with advanced colon cancer. She lives by herself in a log house at the end of a dirt road in Oklahoma. She will be starting radiation soon.

Kate Ames let us know that her sister and CCSM member, **Alice Morison**, is continuing to improve after fracturing her femur and is at Brookside in San Mateo. Cards and calls welcome.

**Carole Melis** requests prayers for her sister **Connie Mueke** who lives in Prescott, AZ as she continues to navigate challenging health concerns, including chemo for Non-Hodgkin's lymphoma.

Please continue to pray for the **Board** and the **Search Committee** as they work together, and with us, to bring a settled pastor to CCSM.

Prayers for **CCSM**, as we work toward reconciliation and healing. May the peace and light of Christ be with us as we move through this time.

### CONTINUING PRAYERS

*Continuing prayers of strength, encouragement, and healing for our beloved brothers and sisters:* **Bill Melis**, victims of the **earthquake in Turkey**, **Tatyana's family** in the Ukraine, **Mike and Lee Mullery**, **George Vail**, **Krystal Burndon's** sister **Janelle**, **Lorna and Jim Groundwater's** granddaughter **Yalda**, **Frank Garritano's** friend **Alex Carr**, **Martha Pierce**, **Angela Kraft-Cross'** friend **Judy Holcomb**, **Mike and Sue Hill's** granddaughter **Maggie**, **Ann Ritter**, **Mel Thrash**, **Ben Schroeter's** family, **Dana Scadden**, **Mary Ann Notz**, **Cari Parker**, **Judy Hermann**, **Mo Weimer**, **Andrew Lind**, the **Neil/Cinq-Mars** family, **Jo Buckham**, **Ruth Black**, **Gene Chelberg** and **David Meissner**, **Dorothy Gorman**, **Dr. Jim Groundwater**, **Clare Naegle**, **Dot-tie Scott**, **Gary Steele**, **Don and Jonathan's** brother **Chuck Ruthroff**, **Kay & Mike Harris'** friend **Mary-Helen McMahon**, **Joyce Clark's** mother **Vera**.

**APRIL 30 is Clare Naegle's 105<sup>th</sup> birthday! Send her a card at 201 Chadbourne Ave. #102, Millbrae 94030.**





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Sue Bullis' grandson Hank celebrates Easter!

## FAMILY PLAY DATE AT CENTRAL PARK, MAY 7



Join us May 7 for our monthly family play date with a picnic lunch! Please meet at San Mateo Central Park by the playground. Please bring your own lunch—optional to bring snacks/desserts to share. If you'd like to bring any balls, frisbees, scooters, etc., you are most welcome to do so. Contact Rev. Sheryl with any questions: [sjohnson@ccsm-ucc.org](mailto:sjohnson@ccsm-ucc.org)

