

CCSM PINE TREE

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HOME IS ON THE HORIZON



Dear Beloved Community at CCSM,

In some ways, this is a strange moment to be celebrating Homecoming and the start of the new program year. There is a huge and incredibly exciting change on the horizon: the beginning of Rev. Jessica Vacketta's ministry at CCSM and her first worship service with us on Sunday, October 15. But we aren't quite there just yet.

For now, we are still in the in-between, in the season of waiting and wondering, planning and preparing, for what is sure to be a wonderful and blessed season for CCSM. Isn't that so often where we find ourselves—we are anticipating a change, looking forward in hope, but the time is not quite there yet.

Many of you have already met Rev. Jessica, either during her interview process or during her very celebratory candidating weekend August 12-13. Many of you commented how "at home" you felt with her and what a natural fit for CCSM she is. I also heard many people say how kind, insightful, relatable, and powerful she is in preaching and worship leadership. I personally could not be more delighted and am just so excited for this new chapter of our collective story at CCSM. Please get ready to welcome Rev. Jessica to her new church home at CCSM on Sunday, October 15!

And, in the meantime, we are also invited to find home in the now. Not to get too drawn into memories or expectations

coming from the past, or jump over the blessings of now by thinking too much about the future. We have had a meaningful summer of worship together, exploring different

perspectives, gathering for many fun events (thank you, Connect and Celebrate Ministry!), and engaging in meaningful classes and congregational discussions and presentations. We had a wonderful Homecoming celebration on September 10 filled with good energy and reconnection. Deep thanks to all who attended and assisted!

It has been a sincere pleasure and a deep blessing to serve as your Acting Senior Minister. I have been so gifted by your [click to continue to p. 3](#)



Rev. Jessica Vacketta



Kids line up for face (or arm) painting at the Homecoming Picnic

As Reverend Sheryl noted in her Homecoming sermon, this year's Homecoming was a celebration of coming together as we are, embracing the present. There was no official count of the members and friends who attended the Homecoming lunch, but chili projected to serve 150 people nearly ran out! And, just as important, there were more than 20 people who volunteered to help. The weather cooperated, and it was great to see kids playing games or just running around on the lawn. Thanks to Reverend Alvaro's encouragement, several members of the Wednesday congregation joined us to share the meal and conversation. New members Nancy and Jerry Nugent and Peter Pierson celebrated their membership by attending. In fact, the Nugents were responsible for running the whole show, a task they hadn't signed on for when they joined the Connect & Celebrate ministry, but one they stepped up for when the need arose. See more photos on page 4!



Congregational
Church of san mateo

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CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILIES

by Rev. Sheryl Johnson

Our Children, Youth, and Family (CYF) programs are ramping up toward another wonderful year. In August, our CYF ministry team leaders Kim and Troy facilitated a meaningful parents' breakfast and planning meeting where we discussed ideas and priorities for the coming year. It was a wonderful time to reflect and to vision together. Kim, Troy, and I have also met with leaders in the Latino Ministry to have similar conversations to make sure our programs are supporting both our Sunday and Wednesday attendees as part of our one CCSM family. We are also excited to be building our CYF planning team and are grateful for all who have already stepped up or are considering doing so (thank you, John, Ivan, Natalia, and Sean!).

In August we bid farewell to Shannon McEntee who was with us for 8 years as our Godly Play teacher. While we are sad to see them go, we are also very excited for them in achieving a life long dream of becoming a music therapist. We know their work will benefit many in our community. We also bid farewell to Elijah Barnard in June—lots of transitions at CCSM, but many new possibilities are on the horizon.

One very exciting one is that we are welcoming Ashley Lopez as a new leader for our Sunday kids' program. Ashley has been a long-time attendee on Wednesday evenings and is a great leader who loves kids. We are excited also for the possibilities her leadership will bring for bridging our Sunday and Wednesday kids as part of our one

beloved CCSM congregation. Thank you, Ashley!

Our 60 Minutes High School program continued to meet over the summer to discuss important issues in our world, focused on values in America: past, present, and future. It has been a very meaningful conversation with a lot of excellent input and reflections on how we have come to be where we are and what we need to do to build a more positive future together. We also had some highschoolers attend the UCC's Camp Tamarack this summer. They shared that it was a great time and encourage all youth to come next year.

On Wednesdays this summer we have had a great



crew of kids from 0-18 coming together to create, imagine, play, and build community. Some favorite activities this summer have included painting, using recycled materials to make inventions, origami, and card games. On Sundays, we have also had a fun time gathering in the Memorial Garden to read stories, discuss, and use our imaginations to create. We explored themes such as identity, friendship, neighborhood, and community. Many thanks to Lily and Elaine for their dedicated leadership and consistent presence on both Wednesday and Sunday each week. We are so grateful for you.

As we look towards fall, I am excited to share that our Youth Peer Ministry Team is shaping up. These 10th, 11th, and 12th graders from both Wednesday and Sunday will meet to plan events for other youth, service projects, and intergenerational events all based on their interests and what they think will serve the community (in church and beyond). If you or your youth are interested in joining



us, please let me (Sheryl) know! There is still time to join. Some benefits of Peer Ministry include valuable leadership experience that youth can use on college applications and on resumes, the chance to reflect on how to serve other youth and the wider community and what ministry and service mean, the opportunity to determine what they and other youth want to do, and much more. It's a great model that I have used at other churches and I am very excited to bring it to CCSM.

I am excited to be gathering our middle schoolers in the near future for a fun afternoon of building community, having fun together, and then also discussing and brainstorming what topics we will focus on and what activities they would like to do this year. We are currently working on finding the best date—if you didn't receive an e-mail from me and have a middle schooler, please let me know.

I am also excited to share that the Peninsula Multifaith Youth Council is re-starting and is looking for youth members as well. Our partners in a variety of faith traditions have been working together for many years to learn about one another's traditions, serve the community, and work for justice. If you are interested in getting involved, please let me know! This is another great leadership opportunity for all of our highschool youth.

Thanks so much to everyone for all of your support and dedication to our Children, Youth and Families community at CCSM!



HOME IS ON THE HORIZON cont. from p. 1

trust and your love, and have been delighted to serve in a more expanded role, exercising some of my "ministry muscles" that have been less used in recent years. I am so deeply grateful to the Board, staff, ministry teams, and each and every single member for all of the support, love, grace, and companionship you have offered to me in this time. And, especially with the start of the new school year, it also feels like a fine time to return back "home" to my previous role at CCSM and I am honored and delighted to be guided and led by Rev. Jessica into our common future.

So we go forward together in faith rather than certainty, with many questions but also rooted in the assurance that God is with us now just as the past, and that is the one thing that will not change into the ever-evolving future. In a way, home is always ahead of us; a future in which we have deep hope but that is never fully realized in this life. We can get much closer to it at times, maybe even have moments of grasping hold, but full completion and perfection is always still to come.

A vision of God's home, God's kin-dom of jus-

tice and peace, before us can help to shape our living, help to sort out what matters from what doesn't, give us the energy and momentum we need to keep moving when times are tough. It can spur us to keep going when we need it. To feel the in-breaking of comfort and communion that we are promised awaits us. We may have our own memories of loving homes, of home-making and home-building in many shapes and forms that have given us a taste of the promise that one day all will find.

CCSM has been and continues to be one of those homes for many of us. And it will be that for others who have yet to come through our doors. We live in the creative tension between what is simultaneously already and not yet realized. Let us give thanks for this good home that has been and is already here at the Congregational Church of San Mateo – and look forward in anticipatory hope to all the blessings that remain before us on the horizon ahead.

Peace and blessings,

Sheryl

HOMECOMING 2023



Homecoming 2023 was a celebration of coming back to CCSM and supporting one another as we move forward on our journey. Welcome back!

THE SAME DIRECTION ON MANY PATHS

FROM YOUR MODERATOR, AUSTIN MADER-CLARK

This article is partially taken from my testimony at church service on September 10.

I am right-handed, but for the last few months, every morning I brush my teeth with my left hand. A friend of mine who works at UCSF was telling me how when you brush your teeth the same way every day, or take the same route to work, or to the grocery store... you physically start making a track in your brain. Over the years as you do the same thing again and again that track get deeper, until it is an actual, physical rut in your brain. It gets deeper, your brain gets less flexible, and it gets harder and harder to get out of that rut. I will say that now brushing my teeth is a very slow process.

I feel as though this last year at CCSM has been a year of brushing our collective teeth with our non-dominant hand. We were in a very comfortable rut, that we have spent the last year pulling ourselves out of! But I think we're doing a great job! Don't you agree? There is so much energy and hard work going on around CCSM.

If we look at CCSM as a whole with many parts, and if we continue to push transparency and communication, as we have been doing, and understanding of being human – and that we all are just humans on the same roller coaster... feeling slightly out of control but deep down knowing that it is going to be okay. I believe we can get there... building that path I talked about when I first stepped into this role. Not a bridge OVER everything, but a path; really, many paths from many different perspectives, through the muck and the hard stuff, to come out the other end together. As a community, a beloved community that tries new things, in a different way than we did before. It can be hard, but it's so great and energizing too. Brushing with my left hand starts my day off with a burst of energy.

We are individuals, working together to build community and live our faith. Something that is really missing outside of CCSM. This is the place to be in community. I said it before, many years ago, that this is a unique place where you can connect and build these deep relationships that can't happen anywhere else. Expressing your spirituality with a

large group of people is a very vulnerable act.

Last Sunday, I talked a bit about how we cannot continue to blame the pandemic, or Penny leaving, for all our woes. I said that I agree with that statement, just as you can't blame your mother forever... at some point you must take responsibility for yourself. You can, however, acknowledge what brought you to where you are today. So, no we cannot blame our past forever, but we must acknowledge its effect on us. We are still reorganizing and getting our bearings. Society will never be as it was before 2020. All churches and Christianity itself will have to find new ways to build beloved community. That includes CCSM, as we each continue striving to be the hands, feet, and face of God.

As a society we went into hibernation, holding onto our resources and protecting ourselves. But I believe that we have come through that winter of hibernation, and we are even well past spring and heading toward harvest, where we can enjoy the fruits of our harvest. We are blooming!

There are so many signs of re-growth: The church picnic; the solar project; such a smart and engaged Associate Minister in Sheryl; an energetic leader for our Latino/Latina Ministry, Álvaro; staff clicking on all cylinders; more transparency than you probably want when it comes to board meetings and finance; the various Ministries are really cookin' again. Volunteerism is way, way up! Did you see how many volunteers there were at Homecoming? And I can't tell you how many hours have gone into collaborating to start building a strong budget for 2024, and the Stewardship Committee has a nice head of steam as we move into the last months of 2023.

I would love to name each and every volunteer, but as I said in one of my 150th Anniversary testimonials – in 50 years your name may not be remembered, but the mark you leave on this beautiful church will be.

Now we have an energetic, dynamic Senior Minister coming our way. **Jessica's found a place to live in San Mateo and starts work on October 9th, her first sermon will be October 15th.** Sheryl gets

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"I FEEL AS THOUGH THIS LAST YEAR AT CCSM HAS BEEN A YEAR OF BRUSHING OUR COLLECTIVE TEETH WITH OUR NON-DOMINANT HAND."

FROM YOUR MODERATOR (CONT.)

to go back to Associate Minister and focus on areas at CCSM that are in the most need. Kibbie gets to go back to being a regular voting member of CCSM on October 9, and has graciously offered to consult with Jessica for about 45 days. I don't think there are enough "thank you-s" in this world to show our appreciation to Kibbie for stepping in with so much energy and enthusiasm when we needed her so badly. What a terrific job she's done.

Along with input from many members of the congregation, and working with the Board and Personnel Committee, the Finance Committee is building a pragmatic budget while at the same time investing in our future with an inspirational and visionary budget. A budget designed to build on the

strides we're making toward a vibrant and healthy future. One that will support Jessica and help make her successful here at CCSM. Something we all want.

Our Stewardship campaign starts next week, and I'm so excited about everything happening here at CCSM, and I want to keep it going. I want to invest in our future – I'm bullish on CCSM, and the beloved community that I know we can continue to build. Please make your pledge as early as you can. The more we know and the earlier we know it, will help provide Jessica with momentum to plan for next year.

Let's keep moving in the same direction on many paths – Give to a bright future together.

FROM THE ARCHIVES... TWO STORIES OF EARLY CCSM MEMBERS

You all know that the address for our church is 225 Tilton Avenue. Have you ever wondered who Tilton was? As a matter of fact, Stephen S. Tilton was a founding member of the Congregational Church of San Mateo. One of the original 10. He served as a Deacon from July 1864 until 1887. But that is only part of the story.

It turns out that Stephen S. Tilton, born in New Hampshire in 1822, was one of the early 49ers who came to California to find gold. He did not, however, find gold—instead, he found real estate. According to the 1860 Federal Census, he was living in San Francisco with his wife, Mary and at least two children and several other family members. His net worth in real estate was given as \$26,000. That would have been a tidy sum in 1860.

Some of the land he owned was in San Mateo and as a prominent citizen and one of the founding members of the first Protestant Church in the Town

of San Mateo (CCSM) his name was applied to a street now called Tilton Ave.

But Tilton Ave. has more secrets to share. Two other early members of CCSM were Robert and Sarah Wisnom. In 1872, the newlyweds lived in the boarding House run by Stephen Tilton's wife, Mary. If you've lived in San Mateo for a few years, you might remember Wisnom's Hardware store on the corner of Delaware St. and First Avenue. (It's now called Hassett Hardware.)

Robert and Sarah Wisnom joined CCSM in the early 1870's, Robert in 1870 and Sarah in 1873. The family began to grow shortly after their 1872 marriage. According to CCSM Archival records, Babies John, Robert, Jane, William, Anna, Samuel, and David were all baptized shortly after their births between 1873 and 1894.

In 1905, brothers Robert and William teamed up with Partner Robert Bonner and founded the Wisnom-Bonner Store. In 1924 the partnership dissolved and the Wisnom family ran the business until Hassett bought them out.

So, a Street named Tilton and a store named Wisnom trace their origin to early members of CCSM

Phil Lind, Church Historian



<<Original Wisnom's Hardware, Second & Ellsworth, 1905
>>Wisnom's at First & Delaware



LATINO/A MINISTRY UPDATE

Thank you to our congregation for all of your encouragement and support of the Latino Ministry. Thank you too for your enthusiastic welcome to Rev. Álvaro Durán, whose leadership, experience, and extravagant love has blessed us in recent months.

Álvaro will be with us for a period of 9-12 months as Transitional Minister for Latino/a Ministry. His employment will begin as soon as he receives his work permit, probably in early October. All the funds for this position will come from one-time sources—three-quarters from CCSM's New Initiatives Fund and a generous gift from an anonymous donor. We are exploring three grant possibilities to provide the remaining funds, which would enable us to employ him for the full year.

The purpose of this position is to provide pastoral leadership to our Spanish-speaking congregants and to work with all of us to build a strong and sustainable Latino/a Ministry of three parts:

1. **Highly engaged and growing Spanish-speaking community within CCSM.**
2. **Alignment in CCSM on mission and goals of Latino/a Ministry, and broadening and deepening relationships between Spanish- and English-speaking congregants.**
3. **Renewed relationships between CCSM and North Central/San Mateo Latino/a community as we work together on issues of social justice.**

Álvaro is expected to devote about 50% of his time to pastoring our Spanish-speaking community and about 25% of his time to working on each of the other goals. We will work together to develop leadership capabilities of participants in the Ministry, reduce staffing needed, explore sources of external funding, and otherwise bring the ongoing cost of the Ministry to a sustainable level.

Rev. Álvaro is an Anglican priest from El Salvador, the only 'out' LGBTQ clergy person in El Salvador. For the past five years he has led the Church of the Magdalene in San Salvador, which serves LGBTQ people, people who live with disabilities, and other marginalized people. Prior to that position he served for a period of time as the Anglican bishop's consultant to churches in crisis or experiencing major change.

Our Spanish-speaking congregants are enthusiastic about Álvaro's pastoral leadership. They first met him last year when he led Wednesday services during an earlier visit to the United States. This



Hearing the scripture together

spring during his sabbatical he led several Wednesday services, the Spanish-speaking congregants' acquaintance deepened, and their respect and love for him grew.

In mid-June CCSM invited him to live in CCSM's small apartment and lead every Wednesday service through the end of July. Soon thereafter we began discussions about the possibility of his extending his leave from his Salvadoran church for a year while helping us to develop a strong and sustainable Latino Ministry. This led to the Board appointing a committee to develop a job definition, find funding, and work out a contract with Álvaro; then a period for congregational input on the proposed commitment; and finally Board approval.

As Álvaro has become acquainted with our English-speaking congregants, his energy, positive spirit, and pastoral orientation have proved infectious. These qualities, as well as his thoughtful perspective on how to approach the cross-cultural challenges we face, equip him well for the transitional role he will assume.

In order to respond to the Board's charge to lead CCSM in achieving alignment on what we want in our Latino Ministry, especially in relationships between our predominantly Spanish- and English-speaking congregants (Goal #2 above), Álvaro envisions a discernment process that will engage the whole congregation, both English- and Spanish-speaking. We anticipate that will begin in mid-October, with Rev. Jessica's collaboration and input.

We warmly welcome you to join us on any Wednesday at 7:15 pm in the Fireplace Room to experience the intimate and inspiring worship service

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LATINO/A MINISTRY UPDATE (CONT.)

with our Spanish-speaking brothers and sisters. You don't need to speak Spanish to feel God's presence in beloved community.

Feel free to reach out to me at any time with questions, suggestions, or ideas as we navigate the journey ahead.

Late-breaking news: Last Wednesday we held our bilingual Homecoming, Regresando a Casa. At least 50 people, including children and youth, participated! What an amazing experience of spiritual community we shared in singing, praying, celebrating communion, dining and conversing together!

Julien Phillips, Latino/a Ministry Lead

UPCOMING MEETINGS

UPCOMING BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETINGS:

October 8
November 12
December 10

These meetings are on Sundays at noon in the Buckham Room. Nov. 12 is a joint meeting with the Council of Ministries.

To access the Google folder containing CCSM Board Meeting minutes, go to tinyurl.com/CCSM-Minutes-BOD

UPCOMING COUNCIL OF MINISTRIES MEETINGS:

September 24
October 22
November 12
December - OFF

These meetings are on Sundays at noon in the Buckham Room. Nov. 12 is a joint meeting with the Board of Directors.

SANDWICH INVITATION!

Every fourth Sunday, someone is making sandwiches in the CCSM kitchen for Open Cathedral's ministry. The Latino Ministry has September covered. For **October 22** and **November 26**, anyone is invited! It's an easy way to get involved and meet other CCSM volunteers, and learn more about the SF Ministries Open Cathedral Lunch-making program.

Below is a photo of the volunteers from the choir who made sandwiches in August. Thanks to all who participate in this simple form of generosity.



The CCSM bike riders that participated in LifeMoves ride on August 26. We all wore our CCRider shirts and were accompanied by friends from our Saturday morning bike group.

Weather was perfect with overcast skies and mild temperatures for the climbs and miraculously turned to perfectly sunny and clear skies at the top of our last climb as we were rewarded with expansive views of the SF Bay and hills.

The after-ride party was great and we enjoyed the company of friends and great food, listening to music that was clearly targeting our generation! Fun.

—Tony Gallo

NOTES FROM YOUR DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS



by Chase Montara

Lots going on in the life of the church! And lots going on with the church buildings, too! We are in a period of fiscal restraint, even more so than usual, so Oscar and I are prioritizing the integrity of the buildings over what might be considered “vanity”

projects. But there are several structural projects to which we are giving our focus. We are working with the Buildings and Ground Ministry (Jim Schwandt, lead) to be sure that the buildings are maintained at the level they deserve.

First, a shout out to Peter Held who shared his skills, expertise and time to bring new life to the **Narthex doors** by giving them a deep sanding, sealing and refinishing the surfaces. It was a joy to work with Peter, who cheerfully and quietly accomplished this feat, being diligent to keep us updated and was always mindful of the larger church schedule. Thank you for that fine example of collaboration, Peter!

Most pressing among the current projects are the **balcony doors** out to Tilton Avenue. These doors and window sashes are significantly weathered and in need of overall shoring up and new paint. Toward that end, the doors will be removed and taken to the contractor’s shop for repair. During this time, plywood will be installed to cover the doors for security and protection against weather. For safety reasons, the balcony will be closed during this time, as those doors are the means of external egress. The same contractor will be taking a look at the wooden gate in the Memorial Garden, which has developed a noticeable crack and will offer us repair options and an estimate for our review.

Pam Ridlehuber noticed that there was a potential issue with the **Tree of Life windows** at the Chancel. It appears that one (or more) of the windows has slipped in its frame, creating a sort of blurry double image. The original installers will be coming soon to assess the issue and offer their suggestions for correcting this issue. These windows are a valued legacy and we want to preserve their integrity. Thank you for noticing and reporting this, Pam! The Tree of Life contractors will also be assessing the status of our smaller stained-glass windows to see if they need to be sealed for lead safety.

Also in the sanctuary, we are keeping a close eye on the **large post and beams** throughout as we

have noticed some cracks. We have had them inspected by Aaron Avelar, who suggested we watch and measure the cracks to determine if these are old cracks, or if they are changing over time. We are in the preliminary investigation stage and Jim Schwandt has installed some measuring devices that we are monitoring. Nothing to be worried about at this time, but just evidence that in a building of this vintage, it is important to keep a high level of vigilance. Be reassured that we are keeping that high standard. Thank you, Jim, for keeping an eye on this.

Cheryle Matteo helps me to keep track of the **water usage** via our CAL Water monthly bills. Because we monitor these bills closely, we noticed an increase in usage that might not be explained by seasonal water use patterns. We had that investigated by Caccia Plumbing and a small leak was found. We are not convinced that this small leak is the cause of the increased usage versus expected seasonal increases (which we track through the California Water Service), so for now we are watching this, as the estimate for repairs was \$24,000. If concern continues beyond this watering season, we will obtain other bids for repair before presenting to the Finance Committee for consideration and approval.



*Narthex doors getting a face lift
courtesy of Peter Held and Oscar Rosa*

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DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS NOTES... CONT.

Another cost-saving project made possible by use of New Initiatives funding is the **replacement of the incandescent lightbulbs in Kloss Hall with cost-saving LED lightbulbs**. As part of this project, the bulbs in Buckham, the Fireplace Room, the Main Office and the Infant Room will also be replaced. Salvador Santos, electrician, was the low bid on this project and has done a thorough and expert job replacing the ballasts and dimmers, and suggesting lower cost bulbs. This project has been pursued by the Environmental and Energy Ministry and is part of our mission to be a Climate Church.

We are also mindful of the elderly furnace which heats the sanctuary. At the request of the Finance Committee, Jim is pursuing estimates for replacement with a **heat pump**, which will be more efficient. We have been aware that this furnace is on borrowed time for a while now, but part of the consideration has been the installation of the solar panels and how they affect which type of furnace is chosen. All of the church furnaces are scheduled for their annual maintenance service inspection in October, so that we can be prepared for the upcoming winter season in good shape.

We have recently had a **leak repaired in our Back Flow system**. And we have requested a **Fire Inspection** to ensure we are operating all aspects in

a safe manner. Our fire extinguishers throughout have just been inspected, re-charged or replaced. We are aware that the outside sanctuary windows are in need of some maintenance and have received estimates for that work, which is not yet scheduled. And we are **considering taking out the grass on the Ellsworth side** of the CE/Woodward Building as a cost-saving/water saving measure, and replacing it with drought tolerant landscaping. We are also investigating a **low-grade hum** reported by some users in the hearing enhancement/loop system in the sanctuary.

In other news, the **summer office hours have now ended**. Although there was some misconception that I was not working after 1:00 pm during the summer, I was here writing policies and procedures to come into compliance with the Department of Justice, as well as bringing our personnel files up to date, and other projects that required deeper focus. Having (a little) less traffic in the office gave me the space I needed to address these projects, along with my day-to-day workload, and the projects detailed above. **The office is again open from 9:00-4:00 pm Monday through Thursday.**

Happy Fall, everyone!

SEEKING VOLUNTEERS FOR LITERACY CENTERS

Homework Central has supported North Central students for 25 years, and the need has grown post-Covid. It takes a caring community, "a village," to serve youth. YOU, members of CCSM, have been that village, supporting our programs from the start; thank you!

We serve about 100 students in four 3rd-5th afterschool classrooms and one 2 & 3rd-grade Literacy Center. We are opening two additional afterschool classrooms this fall, including another Literacy Center, and we're hoping YOU will consider joining our volunteer tutoring team.

If you enjoy helping kids and have two hours a week to spare, you can make a difference for students who need help with schoolwork and reading comprehension. Also, share this with someone you know who may be interested.

To learn more about our homework centers, literacy programs, and volunteer requirements, you may speak to Lani Leydig, Tony Gallo or Betsy Woodward, longtime volunteers.

You may also check out the volunteer page on our website, smhwc.org. or email Ofelia at odelgadillo@smhwc.org for additional information.



PICK-A-PARTY SEASON BEGINS!



CCSM Fundraising Event
2023-2024

Yes, it's time to brainstorm parties you want to host for our next Pick-A-Party season. Information packets and submission forms are available in

the narthex and in Kloss Hall, as well as here: tinyurl.com/PAP-23-24-packet for the packet, and tinyurl.com/PAP-23-24-form for the submission form. Keep in mind that parties don't need to be elaborate dinner parties (although we all love those) — they can be line dancing or yoga lessons in Kloss Hall, coffee and donut discussion groups at a local coffee shop or park, scavenger hunts, sing-alongs, or trips to a local place of interest.

Need ideas or want to connect with a co-host? Contact Sandy McNabb (sandra.j.mcnebb@gmail.com, 650-678-5650), Mike Harris (mypirocks@me.com, 650-572-8378), or Nancy Nugent (jnugent@mac.com, 520-288-6539).

SUBMISSION FORMS ARE DUE OCTOBER 1.

CCSM IN THE NEWS! INCLUSIVE AND PROGRESSIVE

"This church is meant to be known by its love."

—Rev. Álvaro Durán

"How do you stay true to your roots and yet be nimble in a very different world? How do you honor your history ... yet, not be bound by it?"

—Rev. Penny Nixon

Both quotes come from the San Mateo Journal article "**CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF SAN MATEO SHARES MESSAGE OF INCLUSION.**" This is a wonderful article that touches on CCSM's history, ministry, and vision for service, and gives a great intro to CCSM. It was published on August 16, 2023. You can read the whole article at

tinyurl.com/SMJ-CCSM-2023



Photo by Nick Rose/Daily Journal

GOING SOLAR!

We're now up and running at CCSM with our solar panels generating electricity!

This fact helps align CCSM with our values of Environmental Justice, respect for the Earth and helping to mitigate Climate Change at the local level. Jim Granucci, the project manager for the Going Solar project at CCSM made this announcement at church on Sunday, August 27.

This has been a long journey! We are especially grateful for the initiation and dedication efforts of the project by the team of the Energy, Environmental Justice (EEJ) ministry – Warren Long, Anne Galli, Gary White, Gene Summerville, Rebecca Ruedy-Whelan, Jim Schwandt, Jim Lindsay, Jim Granucci, Doug Henton and Sheryl Johnson. We are most grateful for the generosity of so many CCSM donors to fund the project, for the Board of Directors and their foresight, to the CCSM clergy for



their support, to Chase Montara, Oscar Rosa and Cheryle Matteo for their administrative, facility and bookkeeping support, to Jim Granucci for serving as project manager and to our contractor, Sandbar Electric, for their expertise and for the installation.

During the church service on Sunday, May 28, we dedicated the panels. Gary White presented a historical summary, Rev. Dr. Sheryl Johnson and Warren Long offered prayers and Anne Galli unveiled the Going Solar plaque to commemorate this historic moment. The plaque is on display in the loggia to recognize and punctuate the evolution of CCSM's energy use from fossil fuels (coal to oil to gas) and now to Solar. Here Comes the Sun! Many thanks to all!



CCSM'S BUDGET <> CCSM'S VISION

by Ivan Raikov

Are the budget decisions of our church helping or hurting our ministry and spiritual goals?

The church budget is of critical importance for every congregation and church leadership. I believe the budget should be a vehicle to enable fulfillment of the spiritual vision of our church, and it seems to me that it is not prudent to focus on having a balanced budget without consideration for the overall vision, goals, and growth of the church.

It is particularly important to proactively share and develop an inspiring spiritual vision with the congregation, and I see the current stewardship efforts as a very positive step in that direction. Keeping the congregation informed about budget decisions at all levels is also important, but this communication should be

"WHEN WE HAVE A SHARED VISION, EVERYBODY CAN FEEL INVOLVED, EXCITED, AND WILLING TO CONTRIBUTE BOTH FINANCIALLY AND BY VOLUNTEERING."

primarily about building a vision and strategic goals together, and less about short-term financial measures. How can CCSM make good on its promise to serve the San Mateo community? By having programs and activities that have positive impact on the community, such as the Wednesday congregation. This is why we need to be working on making more community connections, partnering with other congregations that share our ideals, applying for federal and state grants for faith-based programs. If we do not ensure that CCSM is valuable to the community, there is no amount of budget balancing that will save us.

The long-term vision of the congregation is a critical factor in fundraising. Without a clear idea of what we want to accomplish, and what we have accomplished so far, fundraising is a boring chore. But when we have a shared vision, then everybody can feel involved, excited, and willing to contribute both financially and by volunteering. In that regard, Rev. Penny's sermons that personally inspired me the most were her series on the Beloved Community, and its vision of the love of God reflected in human society by the struggle to create an equitable and just community. I have long thought that the Beloved Community makes the most sense as a modern progressive theology, as it seeks justice and accountability of everyone in order to ensure equity in access, participation, and opportunity for everyone in the community, and certainly has broader appeal in a multicultural, multiethnic society. So as a congregation we really need to start thinking hard about where we want to be spiritually and not get too distracted by budget issues that could be solved by growth.

NOT NEW FACES... BUT NEW MEMBERS

Homecoming Sunday, five church regulars became official voting members of the CCSM community. They include a history whiz, a City Council member, a Lutheran minister, a professional organizer, and a rescuer of the Homecoming picnic. See if you can match these names to those mini-descriptions: **Don Harper, Nancy Nugent, Emily Beach, Jerry Nugent, and Peter Pierson, PhD.** Which two have played in worship services? Which two are incredibly active on the Connect and Celebrate team? Which two were officers in the military? If you don't know the answers or want to know more about membership yourself, please send an email to kibbie@kyros.org or text 650-580-1797. Welcome, Don, Nancy, Jerry, Emily and Peter!



Top (L to R): Don Harper, Emily Beach
Bottom: Peter Pierson, Jerry and Nancy Nugent



2023 FINANCIAL SUMMARY

by 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. Sometimes our finances seem complicated—we have operating funds, reserves, endowment funds, funds that are earmarked for certain purposes, funds that are more formally restricted, budgets, projections, excesses, and shortfalls. The congregation is not expected to keep up with all this. That's why you elect a Board, and the Board appoints committees to help keep everything straight. However, we try our best to keep you informed with the right level of detail, but we know it can be daunting.

To begin with, what is a budget? Do we all have the same interpretation? I suspect not. Some folks may view a budget as a static accountability tool—you can only spend what is authorized in the budget. Some folks may view a budget as a flexible financial plan that evolves as conditions change. I try to use both concepts—the approved budget is indeed static, but when conditions change frequently, we need to be able to adapt. The Finance Committee does this by preparing projections regularly and discussing them with the Board. These are departures from the approved budget with currently known and projected modifications. CCSM has certainly experienced a number of changes in 2023 affecting finances. Can we expect that to continue in future years? You bet we can. Modern life is fast moving. Programs and methods of the past don't necessarily work well today. Experiments are needed. Flexibility is needed. But the budgeting, projections, and other financial decisions of your leaders are always rooted in our Guiding Principles, our three priorities, and the values of this beloved community.

Okay. Let's get to the nitty gritty. Where are we? Many of you will recall that the budget for 2023 that

was approved last January included a shortfall of about \$117,000.

The details are that the total expected revenue at the beginning of the year was \$816,514 and total expected expenses were \$933,329, which left an expected shortfall of \$116,815. Whew!! Although that's a big number, the church has several years in which revenue exceeded expenses, which means that in January we had \$132,000 of cash in the bank from the net excess from operations in past years. This amount is still available, and it is not part of any endowment fund—this is cash on hand (and yes—earning interest) in an operating fund bank account. The accounting term for this is Retained Earnings, which is one of our reserve accounts.



In fact, for the nine years 2014 through 2022, only one year had a budgeted excess (revenue exceeding expenses) and that was in 2015, when the excess was the grand sum of \$59. Yet, in that same period the church ended the year with an excess every year with one exception and that was in 2021. Part of the reason for a frequent excess is that we do not budget tightly, meaning that some line items are budgeted for more than is likely needed, especially for the various ministry teams, in order to provide creativity and flexibility. So, the bottom line is that as of the end of August, the Finance Committee's best estimate is that we will end the year with a shortfall of about \$80,000, which is \$37,000 less than the budgeted shortfall. And Retained Earnings will cover that.

Finally, let me provide some specific history for the especially curious. This report is based on revenue and expenses through August – the first eight months of 2023. We are reporting both for the month and for the year-to-date (YTD), which means January through August 2023 in the chart below.

Category	August 2023 actual	One month budget	One month difference	YTD actual	YTD budget	YTD difference
Donations to general fund	22,228	47,500	-25,272	403,857	380,000	23,857
Total revenue for general fund	30,862	68,043	-37,181	645,273	544,344	100,929
Expenses for general fund	63,975	85,472	-21,497	656,826	628,378	28,448
Net revenue (revenue minus expenses)	-33,113	-17,429	-15,684	-11,552	-84,034	72,482

If you have questions about any of this, please contact me at veril.phillips@gmail.com or contact any member of the Finance Committee.

MUSIC NOTES

CCSM MUSIC MINISTRY CONCERT SERIES:

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 24, 3:00 PM

MUSICAL CURIOSITIES WITH OBOIST CLAIRE TREMBLAY AND GUITARIST LYLE SHEFFLER. Take a musical walk through historical milestones; from Bach to Piazzolla, the duet will play in the beautiful wooden acoustics of CCSM's sanctuary. Suggested donation is \$20 (however, all are welcomed!). Claire Tremblay, oboe player, and Lyle Sheffler, classical guitarist, will share with you their "Musical Curiosities." If you need more information, please write to Claire at clairetre@gmail.com.

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 8, 5:00 PM

**14TH ANNUAL INTERFAITH CHORAL CONCERT:
THE BLESSED COMMUNITY**

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 27, 8:00 PM

CCSM'S ANNUAL SPOOKTACULAR ORGAN CONCERT! Young organ students and CCSM's own Phantom of the Cassavant AKC will perform a cavalcade of musical treats.

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 19, 3:00 PM



PIANO RECITAL WITH LOUISE COSTIGEN-KERNS. Louise is well-known on the Peninsula as well as the national concert stage; she will share a journey of the music for piano from Handel to Gershwin.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 16, 4:00 PM



CAROLS, COOKIES & CHRISTMAS - MASTERWORKS CHORALE AT CCSM. Music from *The Polar Express* and other family-favorite works will be included.

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 17, 4:00 PM



A CEREMONY OF CAROLS and other holiday classics will be performed by Masterworks Chorale.

CCSM's Music Ministry Committee welcomes you to attend any (or all) of the Fall concerts listed above. For CCSM sponsored concerts there is a suggested donation of \$20 for adults/\$10 for children, students & older adults. For ticket information for Masterworks Chorale Events, please use this link: masterworksbayarea.org/season

JOYFUL NOISE

The Joyful Noise Youth Choir and music program resumed singing together on Sunday Sept. 17. Joyful Noise Director Julie Berk leads children in songs, movement, and a variety of percussion instruments before church. If you are interested in participating with the choir or would like more information please contact Julie at teacherjulie7@gmail.com.

CHANCEL CHOIR & CARILLON RINGERS

CCSM's Chancel Choir and Carillon Ringers Bell Choir welcome musicians of all ages to participate. The ensembles rehearse weekly to provide music for the services at the church. If you are interested in joining or would like to learn more about either ensemble, please contact Lynnelle Bilsey, Director of Music at ltbmusings@gmail.com.

14TH ANNUAL NORTH PENINSULA INTERFAITH CHORAL CONCERT

The Blessed Community

IN BENEFIT OF LIFEMOVES

OCTOBER 8, 2023
5:00 PM

CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF
SAN MATEO
225 TILTON AVE, SAN MATEO

PARTICIPATING CHOIRS FROM:
 Congregational Church of San Mateo, UCC
 The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints
 Burlpres church
 St Paul's Episcopal Church, Burlingame
 St Catherine of Siena Catholic Church, Burlingame

NO ADMISSION FEE / SUGGESTED DONATION AT THE DOOR
 RECEPTION TO FOLLOW WITH REFRESHMENTS

ANGELA KRAFT CROSS'S 30TH ANNIVERSARY AT CCSM IS... SEPTEMBER 2023!

We will have a proper celebration soon... but wanted our new Senior Minister, Jessica, to be able to participate, so we will wait till after her arrival in October. Watch for it!

music&art

The Fall season of Music and Art began this month with a presentation on quilts from our own Susan Bell. Ours is the oldest surviving affinity group at CCSM. We currently have about 25 - 30 members which is small enough to become well acquainted with others and make new friends.

The gathering begins with a fellowship lunch followed by a short business meeting with a program of approximately one half hour. These programs feature a variety of musical presentations as well as various facets of art. We meet the third Friday of every month at noon in the Buckham Room. Members bring their own lunches and beverages and dessert are provided. You need not be a musician or an artist, only to have an interest in these topics.

The **Friday, October 20th** meeting program will feature (CCSM's own) **Julie Berk** directing a Women's Choral Group. New members and guests are always welcome.

EMPOWERING INCLUSIVE INTERPRETATIONS: REIMAGINATIONS OF BIBLICAL TEXTS

Presented by Dr. Sharon Jacob

Congregational Church of San Mateo
225 Tilton Ave. San Mateo, CA
4 Sundays, Oct 1, 8, 29, & Nov 5, 12-1:30pm
BYO Lunch, Spanish translation offered
In-person or via Zoom:
<https://clu.zoom.us/j/8682452297>

Session 1: Embracing Diversity: Exploring Gender & Sexuality

Session 2: Healing Our Planet: Navigating Climate Change

Session 3: Unveiling Perspectives: Understanding Race

Session 4: Transforming Perspectives: Embracing Disability Hermeneutics

Questions? Rev. Dr. Sheryl Johnson
sjohnson@ccsm-ucc.org



SJ GIANTS GAME A HUGE SUCCESS!

Fifty CCSM members and families attended and had a great time eating large quantities of meat at Turkey Mike's BBQ, watching a relatively good baseball game (but mostly chatting), and enjoying amazing fireworks. Remember this when next year's game rolls around!



SCHEDULING EVENTS AT CCSM (A REFRESHER)

by Chase Montara, Director of Operations

With a new season arriving, I thought it would be a good time for a **little refresher on how to schedule events.**

1. We have a **Facilities Rental Request form** available in the Main Office above the key cabinet. This document is also available in digital form now at tinyurl.com/CCSM-Facilities-Use.
2. Remember to **book your meeting ahead of time** whenever possible. This will avoid an awkward situation where your group has to move mid-meeting because another group was pre-booked for that space. Oscar and I like to present as organized and seamless as much as possible, and preparation is key to accomplish that. I recommend **booking as early as you are able.** We do have somewhat limited space (though we are very blessed with all we do have). So, thinking weeks or even months ahead is a great way not to be disappointed if the space you want is already booked.
3. Please **let us know beforehand (when you request space) how you would like the room set-up.** We all know that things run more smoothly if we have time to prepare. Oscar and I understand that last minute add-ons sometimes can't be avoided. But for the most part, if you are thinking ahead, you will be able to give us plenty of time to set your room up just as you want it. (Details to consider: microphones, podiums, WIFI passwords, extra cords to connect to the monitor, how to hook up



Kloss Hall during Coffee Hour on August 13

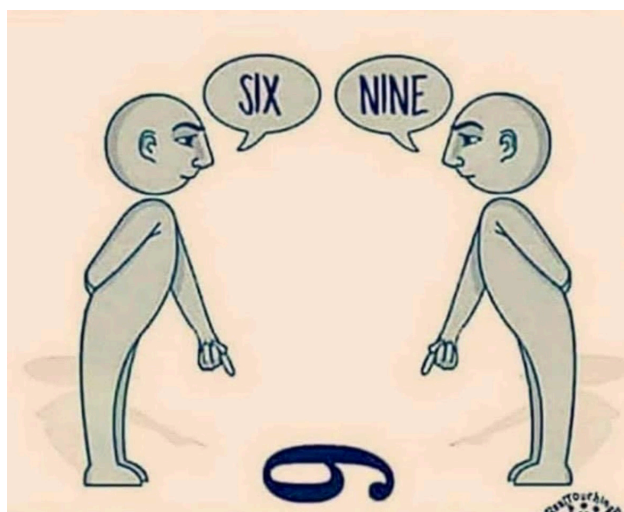
your computer to the monitor, special bowls/cutlery, coffee/tea set up, ice water, extra chairs, access to the church if you don't have a key, etc.)

4. I do suggest doing a **dry run of digital presentations** before your event, even the day before is great. Then if you can't get sound or don't have the cord you need, or your computer doesn't "talk to" the monitor without some adjustments, none of us will be scrambling at the last minute. You will have had plenty of time to work out the bugs beforehand.

5. If your event is likely to be large, making parking a potential issue, if you let us know we can put out the **"event only" parking sign** that gives an extra notification to those not attending the event not to park in the lot. I do try and be mindful of this when large events are coming up. I am mindful not to book two large events at one time. But we do only have 44 spaces (which is pretty amazing for this area), but some of those are used by staff and residents, so you will want to prepare your guests to arrive early as they might need to find street parking. Pre-notification reduces the "frustration factor" and just has things running more smoothly for all.

6. Remember that **Oscar is off on Saturdays, and most afternoons after about 1:30.** But if he is able to fully prepare beforehand, your event will run smoothly in his absence.

Here's to a wonderful season filled with connection, light and joy!



Just because you are right doesn't mean I am wrong. You just haven't seen life from my side.

Austin Mader-Clark contributed this great graphic!



Unlimited tasting of chocolate confections
from more than 20 different vendors •
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Order tickets now for the 40th edition of

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October 20 & 21, 2023

Three sessions —Friday: 7-9:30 pm; and Saturday: 1:30-4 & 7-9:30 pm

Entry fee (\$16-\$30) includes everything!

Order tickets online at ChocolateFestofBelmont.org.

Congregational Church of the Peninsula

751 Alameda de las Pulgas, Belmont 94002 • 650-593-4547

Want to volunteer: signupgenius.com/go/805084bafad2aabfd0-chocolate1#/

WHAT DOES THIS IMAGE MEAN TO YOU?



Where have you seen it before?

Hint: it might come to your mailbox next month.



VOLUNTEERS TO THE RESCUE!

After much of the choir was down for the count with a bout of COVID, a terrifying realization hit. Sandy McNabb was among those sick—and she is the lead for the Connect and Celebrate Ministry, which had big plans for Homecoming Sunday just a week away. Up stepped the ministry team, led by Jerry and Nancy Nugent, brand new members of CCSM. Volunteers cooked for the multitudes, set up tables and chairs for the event, and kept smiling during the messy clean up. Thanks to all those volunteers, Homecoming turned out to be delicious fun for the community. As appreciation for the Nugents' willingness to step in, the Posy Posse (a Liturgical Arts mini-team) delivered freshly arranged flowers, as it does for those who need a bit of sunshine or a huge thanks. We all echo that appreciation!



Nancy Nugent with a Posy Posse bouquet

HOW WILL SHE KNOW OUR NAMES?

Please practice wearing your name tags at church! Then Jessica can get to know us faster. If your name tag is dated or you don't even have one, let Alison Schwandt know, alisonschwandt@gmail.com, and within a week you'll have a shiny new one on the name tag board in the narthex (the entrance room to the sanctuary).

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. You may also contact the church office at 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

Mike and Sue Hill share that their prayers have been answered and their granddaughter, **Maggie**, is now completely well!

Rev. Dr. Eldon Irving and his wife **Gloria** pray God's blessing on **Rev. Jessica Vacketta** as she will begin her ministry with CCSM. They will miss her as she leaves University Christian Church in Fort Worth but know she will be a wonderful pastor for us.

Joyful prayers and congratulations to **Katie Bylander and Michael Rudzki** — may you both be blessed with a long and happy marriage.

PRAYERS OF LOVE AND STRENGTH

There will be a memorial service for **Gary Steele** at The Episcopal Church of St. Matthew (1 S. El Camino Real, SM) at **4:30 pm on September 20** to which all are invited. Gary passed on September 2 after a long battle with cancer. He was an active member at CCSM for many years and was a strong supporter of the church. We hold his wife Nancy, daughters Kierianne and Delaney, Julie and Laura, and grandchildren particularly close in our prayers as they remember, gather, and grieve together in this time.

A Dear Friend Lost: Longtime member **Dana Scadden** passed on August 29. Her friends at the Regent and at CCSM will miss her humor, generosity, and dedication to serving others. She created many birthday and other celebrations for Vendome, the city's shelter for chronically unhoused citizens. For many years, Dana was also an avid quilter with Blanketeers. She was a huge fan of the SF Giants and would bring her radio to Saturday meetings to listen to her "boys" play. You might also remember Dana for the many years she enjoyed hosting Pick-A-Party luncheons featuring Rummikub. Cards may be sent to: John and Cinda Scadden, 1655 E. Abajo Peak Circle, Heber City, UT 84032.

Prayers requested for **Sue Bullis** for strength as the anniversary of the September 9th tragedy in her family is a very difficult time.

Prayers for **Martha Bronitsky** as she faces the loss of her mother, **Bobbie Gorenberg**, who passed on August 23 as a result of a stroke.

Prayers for **Jeff and Chris Tan** and family as they grieve the loss of Jeff's mother **Nancy**.

Dawn Graves' sister **Sheri** passed away on August

12. Please pray for her family, friends, and all who are also grieving this loss.

Prayers for the family of **Gene Potts** (beloved childhood "second Dad" of **Michele Merfeld Hale**), who passed away in July.

Malcolm Jones passed away unexpectedly on July 17 while on a trip to Lake Tahoe with two of his sisters. Condolences may be sent to **Katie Blodgett Burkland** and **Sarah Blodgett**. A memorial service will occur later this year in Marin County.

Lynn Neiberding requests the prayers of the congregation for comfort for her daughters, **Amber, Janette, and Tiffany**, and for herself, as they grieve the death of their sister and daughter, **Elizabeth McKeel**, who grew up in CCSM.

Valerie McEntee's best friend passed away recently. Please hold Valerie and all concerned in your prayers.

PRAYERS OF HEALING AND SUPPORT

We pray for **Stephen Held** as he has been diagnosed recently with melanoma. We give thanks that his prognosis is very positive and it has been determined that no further treatment is needed at this time.

Prayers requested by **Veril Phillips** for **Bev Knowlton** as her doctors determine a plan of treatment for a compression fracture of one of her vertebrae.

Genel Morgan requests prayers for **Jason**, the husband of her "Taiwanese daughter," **Jennifer**, who is starting chemo for cancer which has spread. Jennifer was a foreign exchange student who lived with Genel's family for two years while Genel's kids were in high school; she always called Genel and her husband "Mom and Dad."

Prayers requested for **Alice Morison's** close friend, who has recently been diagnosed with pancreatic cancer. Prayers also for **Alice Morison's** niece and nephews surviving in Lahaina, Maui. May they and all people be safe and comforted through this tragedy.

Prayers are requested for dear friends of **Angela and Robert: Judy** is battling metastatic cancer; and **Minsook** is suffering from a malignant brain tumor.

Joys and Concerns - cont.

Don Harper requests prayers for successful treatment for his sister **Helen** and his son-in-law's sister **Renee**, who have both been diagnosed with very aggressive cancer. Helen has been a pianist for her country church in Illinois for 71 years and is still playing.

Prayers for good friends of **Michele Merfeld Hale, Lee and Marilyn White**, as they face severe health challenges, and for her friends **Ron and Camilla**, as Ron is facing a difficult health issue and his wife is very concerned.

Prayers of recovery for **Linda Hodges** as she heals from a bone fracture.

Continued strength for **Susan Campo** after her recent knee replacement surgery.

Prayers of continued healing for **Mary Ann McKay**, who had open heart surgery this summer.

Carole Melis' sister **Connie** is now on hospice as she continues her journey with cancer.

Prayers for **Cari Parker, Julie Berk's** mother, who recently entered into hospice care.

CONTINUING PRAYERS

Continuing prayers of strength, encouragement, and healing for our beloved brothers and sisters:

Linda Stoick's friend, **Susan**; residents of **Lahaina Maui**; **Martha Clements**; **Bill Melis**; **Mike and Lee Mullery**; **George Vail**; **Martha Pierce**; **Angela Kraft-Cross'** friend, **Judy Holcomb**; **Ann Ritter**; **Mel Thrash**; **Mary Ann Notz**; **Andrew Lind**; **Jo Buckham**; **Ruth Black**; **Gene Chelberg** and **David Meissner**; **Dorothy Gorman**; **Dr. Jim Groundwater**; **Clare Naegle**; **Dottie Scott**; **Don and Jonathan's** brother, **Chuck Ruthroff**; **Kay and Mike Harris'** friend, **Mary-Helen McMahon**.



Melodie Lew delivered a Posy Posse bouquet to Jo Buckham. She celebrated her 100th birthday on August 8! Melodie reported Jo to be in excellent spirits and said the following: "Had a hoot of a time chatting with her! What a wonderful lady. She's a Cal bear alum, was so gung ho Bears, and just about ready to get up and dance. When I told her that my husband Wei and son were Stanford folks, she almost had a fit, but ended up commenting that the Bay Area had so many great schools that graduating from any of them was very good, including my alma mater, SFSU. Very tactful!"



Laura Held received a Posy Posse bouquet delivered by Warren Long.



Baby Emma takes charge of her own baptism on July 9, 2023

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SPIRITUAL CONVERSATIONS

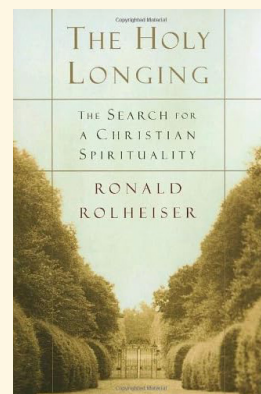
**SPIRITUAL CONVERSATIONS RESUMES
MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 18. The next meeting will
be Monday, October 9.**

**All Spiritual Conversations are held on Zoom
from 7:15 to 8:45 p.m. every two weeks.**

On September 18, Spiritual Conversations will discuss the question **“How well have we followed the Guiding Principles of CCSM in the last fifteen months?”**

On October 9, the group will begin to discuss *The Holy Longing: the Search for a Christian Spirituality* by Ronald Rolheiser. Fr. Ronald says, “This is a book on the essentials of Christian discipleship and the foundations of spiritual life.” Rolheiser gives seekers direction on their spiritual path and shows how spirituality is part of many aspects of our lives, including our sexuality. In his writing Rolheiser uses real life stories to flesh out his ideas, making them relevant to our lives.

For further information and the Zoom link, please contact Chris Wuthmann at cewuthmann@gmail.com.



This photo from Coffee Hour on August 13, 2023, captured the ways CCSM members harmonize commonalities and differences... check out the variety of stripes, checks, and plaid!

