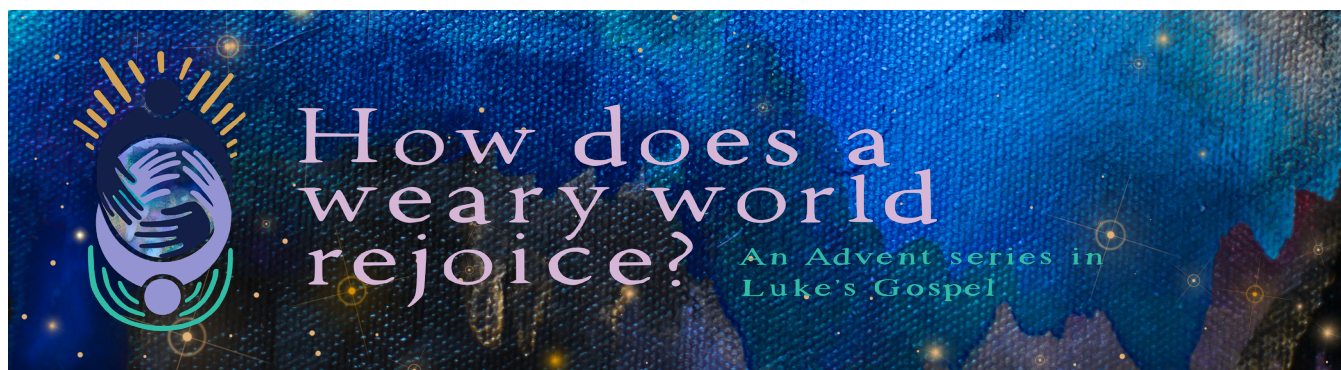


CCSM PINE TREE

VOL. 72, #6 | ONLINE | ADVENT 2023



a note from rev. jessica



I've been thinking about Advent for quite some time, and how to journey through this season together as a community of faith. How will we prepare to welcome God's love breaking into this world once again? Advent is my favorite season in the Christian calendar. It's the beginning of a spiritual new year—a time for dreaming and anticipation. What does God have in store?

And yet, collectively, we are tired. We are still figuring out how to do life in a post-COVID world. We've had to navigate a lot of change over the last three years. We've watched as communities have been destroyed by natural and human disasters, families separated by systems beyond their control, housing and food insecurity a growing reality for so many, and the continued persecution of our siblings because of the color of their skin, gender identity, religion, or country of origin. It's exhausting and overwhelming, and yet, we must still rejoice.

So, how does a weary world rejoice? This is the question we'll explore during this season of anticipation and hope. We can find joy amidst grief, anxiety, excitement, disappointment and exhaustion because our joy is rooted in the truth that we belong to God. The world needs our joy, even if we are weary.

This Advent we will hold space for our weariness and our joy as we seek a "thrill of hope" in our hurting world. We will REJOICE.

Throughout this edition of The Pine Tree you will find many ways for you and your family to connect with our wider family of faith as we acknowledge our weariness, find joy in connection, allow ourselves to be amazed, sing stories of hope, make room, root ourselves in ritual, and trust our belovedness. I'm looking forward to sharing this journey together.

Awaiting what the season holds,

Jessica

OUR JOY IS
ROOTED IN
THE TRUTH
THAT WE BE-
LONG TO GOD.

**GO TO PAGE 3 TO
FIND MORE ADVENT
RESOURCES,
INCLUDING AN
ADVENT DEVOTIONAL
AND CALENDARS**



- ADVENT CALENDAR**
Each day in December, either a new page on the calendar or a resource to help your family rejoice.
1. Help your grown-ups decorate your home for Christmas.
 2. Open your pantry and look for food items you can donate.
 3. Watch your favorite Christmas movie with your family.
 4. Draw a picture of something that brings you joy.
 5. Offer to do something nice for a neighbor.
 6. Enjoy your favorite game with your family.
 7. Set up a table or tent for your nativity scene.
 8. Add Mary and Joseph to your nativity scene.
 9. Write, draw, or act out a story about joy.
 10. Encourage a child in the hospital with a Christmas card.
 11. Add dialogues to your nativity scene.
 12. Record a video and send it to someone you love who lives far away.



Congregational
Church of san mateo

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

CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILIES

by Sheryl Johnson

The fall at CCSM has gotten off to a great start! Our numbers have been rising for both our Sunday and Wednesday programs and there is good energy as relationships deepen and new ideas emerge.

Our monthly family playdates have been a wonderful time to gather informally and deepen relationships. In October, a great group had a beautiful day in Pacifica which ended with a wonderful time at the beach, splashing in the waves and building a pool in the sand for the youngest kids to go in. It was a lovely collaborative effort amongst the older kids! In November, Ivan and Natalia's family hosted a playground gathering after church in Burlingame. Thank



you!

Thank you also to Troy Grabow and Kim Rey for chairing our CYF Ministry Team. We've had great conversations and planned many meaningful programs together. I am so grateful for their leadership and all who serve on the team and support in various ways.

On Saturday, September 30 CCSM had a booth at the San Mateo Fall Fest! We had some fun giveaways for kids and had a number of families (and adults without kids too!) stop by to learn more about the church. We offered some information about upcoming events and shared some basics about progressive Christianity—something that was new to many folks! On Halloween, Revs. Alvaro, Jessica, and I handed out candy (and flyers with upcoming church activities) to folks in the neighborhood at the church (thank you, Sue and Rosemarie, for all of the candy!). It was a great chance again to connect more with both English and Spanish speakers in the local com-

munity.

Another special event was our children's Día de los Muertos celebration. The kids learned about the holiday and made papel picado (colorful cut tissue paper flags) and other crafts to decorate the altar. We had two adults (Pablo and Reina) from our church with Mexican heritage share about the meaning of the holiday and their experiences of celebrating it, particularly from when they were children. The kids enjoyed a wonderful face painter, created paper marigold flowers (thank you, Lauren and Ashley!), decorated sugar skulls, read beautiful children's books (thank you Elaine!), watched the movie Coco, ate popcorn (thank you Jim!), and remembered loved ones who had died. A very special word of thanks to Alicia, Santi, and Reina who put so much love into this event and took the lead on the altar creation. We had so many kids we had to keep adding more chairs as the morning progressed. It was meaningful to see kids and families from Wednesday and Sunday building community together.

Our highschool youth continue to gather for 60 Minutes (thank you to Michele and Mike for all you do to support!). This is a wonderful program where our youth decide together what they would like to discuss each month. In many ways this is the basis for our new Peer Leadership Team, where youth not only plan their discussion topics but other events for themselves, kids at church, and the wider church community. I am so excited to be building this great team of 10-12th graders and to be helping them to develop their own leadership skills to plan, promote, and implement events that they discern would be a ministry to their peers and others.

This is a similar approach being used by the Peninsula Multifaith Coalition's Youth Program. We are blessed to have a very diverse group of youth from



our local faith communities who have come together to learn about one another's faith traditions and serve the community. CCSM recently hosted a planning meeting and organized a community fun afternoon for youth to play games, get to know one another, and share about youth experiences in different faith traditions.

A new program we are excited to be launching is called Disciples and Dragons. If you are familiar with Dungeons and Dragons or D&D (a role playing game) you will know the approach and overall style—but this curriculum explores Biblical stories. It was created by an Episcopal priest who wanted to help youth explore the Bible and learn about progressive Christianity through the format of a role playing game. One of our youth is a big fan of D&D and we hope to get this started soon; please let Sheryl know if you have experience with D&D!

Looking ahead to Advent, we have lots on the horizon. Our youth leaders are planning a caroling afternoon on Dec 3 where we will sing Christmas carols at the homes of some of our members who are not able to get out to church. On Dec 3 during the service, youth will help the kids practice carols and make holiday crafts for seniors. If you know of someone who might appreciate a caroling visit (or are such a person yourself!), please let Sheryl know - we might not be able to visit everyone but would love to spread joy to as many folks as we can. The Bay Area UCCs are preparing a youth retreat Dec 9-10 at the Orinda UCC to learn about Advent, have fun and worship together at this special time of year. All youth in grades 8+ are invited. On Sunday, Dec 10 we will have some fun activities for kids after church during the annual cookie exchange!

As we look toward the Advent season, I pray that amidst the tizzy of festivities you will find moments of reflection, prayer, and deep connection. Our world so badly needs peace, hope, joy, and love—and many of us personally do, too. May this season be a time of doing our small part to help mend our communities and hasten the coming of a more just world for all, led by the wisdom of the infant Christ—born anew in and through and for us each year.



RESOURCES FOR ADVENT

ADVENT WEEKLY DEVOTIONAL BOOKLET

We invite you to go a little deeper this season and join us in reading our Advent devotional **HOW DOES A WEARY WORLD REJOICE**. Beginning with the first Sunday in Advent, Dec. 3, this daily devotional follows the Christmas story in Luke 1–2. It includes weekly readings along with art, poetry, and reflective questions to follow at your own pace.



Printed Advent Devotionals will be available at the church beginning Sunday, November 29. You can also view an e-reader version at

tinyurl.com/Advent-Devo-23

REFLECTION GROUPS

This December, we are offering multiple opportunities for you to find space to reflect on the season in community. Using our Advent Devotional as a guide, we'll share in song, prayer and conversation as we practice joy together in this weary world. This is a great opportunity for you to invite a friend to check out our faith community in a relaxed setting.

All groups will meet in the Fireplace Room.

Sundays, December 3, 10, & 17

- ◆ 9:30-10:15am, bagels & coffee
- ◆ 5:00-6:00pm (bilingual), cider & snacks

Wednesdays, December 6, 13, & 20

- ◆ 12:00-1:00pm Bring your own lunch; dessert & coffee provided

Zoom Group

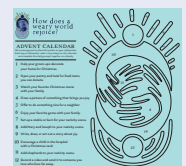
- ◆ Date and time TBD

ADVENT CALENDARS

CCSM will offer two different Advent Calendars this year: one for children and another for youth/adults.

Each calendar includes a daily prompt for you and/or your family to “practice joy in a weary world.”

Printed Advent Calendars will be available at the church for pick-up beginning Sunday, November 29, or you can download a digital copy here: tinyurl.com/Advent-Kids-Cal for the children's calendar and tinyurl.com/Advent-2023-Cal for adult/youth.



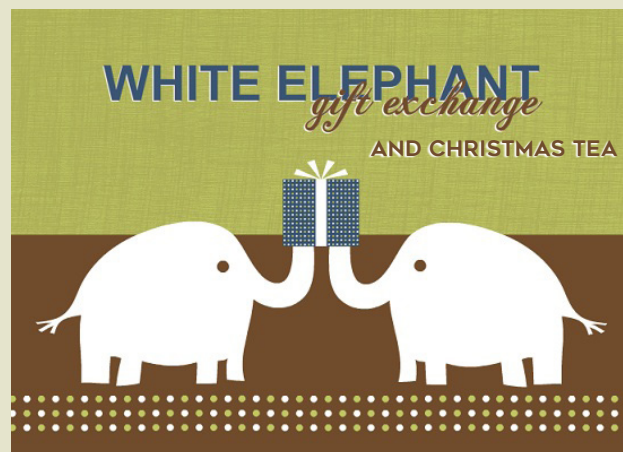
Advent Resources provided by SanctifiedArt.org

TAKE A BREAK: SENIORS CHRISTMAS TEA

Join friends in the Buckham Room for Christmas cookies, tea and hot chocolate on **Monday, December 4, 2:00-4:00PM.**

This return of tradition includes a **crazy white elephant swap**. Bring a “re-gift” from your distant relative, some treasure on your shelf that is ready for a new home, or anything to trade for a surprise that someone else brings. It’s the ultimate recycling party!

Please RSVP to kibbie@kyros.org.



FROM THE ARCHIVES... TWO HISTORIC STAINED-GLASS WINDOWS

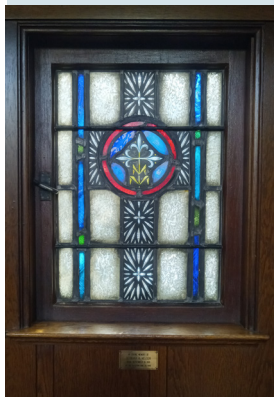
by Phil Lind

As you gaze around the sanctuary during a Sunday Service, you might notice the seven small cross-shaped stained glass windows along the pews on the lower level. (There is also one in the Narthex.) Each window is a memorial to a former member or relative of a member. They are dated variously during the 1940's and 1950's. Two in particular lend themselves to a Pine Tree Article as they are veterans from World War II and we remember them during this Veterans Day period.

On the Tilton Street side of the sanctuary is a window with a plate reading “In loving memory of Bernarr H Nelson, Born September 16, 1919, Missing in Action June 22, 1943.” Next to it is another window with a plate reading “In loving memory of Robert Henry Lupton, Born July 7, 1924, Missing in Action January 9, 1945.”

Both of these men were members of Bombardment groups during World War II.

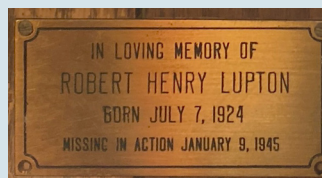
Bernarr Nelson was a First Lieutenant in the 547 Bombardment Squadron, part of the 384th Bombardment Group. The Squadron saw action in the European Theater of War.



His unit flew B-17 bombers and operated from an airbase in Greenock, Scotland. On its first combat mission, June 22, 1943, Lt Nelson’s plane was shot down over the English Channel. Three of the crew survived but he and six other mates did not. A lieutenant on a B-17 would be a pilot, co-pilot, navigator, or 1st bombardier.

Robert Henry Lupton enlisted in the Army Air Corps in 1943 at the age of 18. Sgt Lupton was a member of the 877th Bombardment Squadron and was attached to the 499th Bombardment Group. They saw action in the Pacific Theater of War and operated from Saipan. The 877th flew mainly B-29 bombers and participated the Battles of Iwo Jima, Truk, and the Mariana Islands. His plane went down January 9, 1945 when his squadron participated in raids on Kyushu in support of the advance on Okinawa. He is memorialized at the National Cemetery in Honolulu, Hawaii. A Sergeant on a B-29 would be a radio operator, a gunner or a maintenance engineer.

These men have been honored in memorial windows at CCSM for 80 years. We thank them for their service and their sacrifice.



LATINO MINISTRY UPDATE

This autumn, cross-congregational sharing has become a major theme of the Latino Ministry. Rev. Álvaro has conducted all of the Wednesday gatherings bilingually, and our Latino group has encouraged non-Latinos to join them. An increasing number of "Sunday folks" have responded, and they have enjoyed the spirited music, the very active passing of the peace, the interactive element of Rev. Álvaro's preaching, the weekly communion, the abundant cultural diversity of the shared meal, and the intimate communal feeling of the whole experience. Since her arrival, Rev. Jessica has participated regularly and her great spirit has enlivened the gatherings even more.



Appreciating the altar

The most special sharing was the series of Día de Los Muertos celebrations (Day of the Dead, or All Souls Day). On Sunday, October 29, a multi-generational group of youth and adults built a traditional



Mexican altar (also called Ofrenda) and then both "Sunday folks" and "Wednesday folks" placed photos or other remembrances of departed family members and friends whom they loved and continue to carry with them. During coffee hour, two of our

Connecting Mexican-American

members, Reina González and Pablo Quintanilla, shared how Día de los Muertos is celebrated in the parts of Mexico from which they emigrated. On Wednesday the Latino Ministry held a special All Souls service in the sanctuary. When the following Sunday service honored All Saints Day, the Día de los Muertos Community Altar was in the narthex to help inspire congregants' cherished memories of their departed loved ones.

We are grateful to Latinos and non-Latinos alike for joining in and actively building relationships across language and culture. The accompanying photos depict moments of connection.



Wednesday gathering worshipping in the Sanctuary

On **Wednesday, December 20, the Latino Ministry will host Las Posadas**, which has become an enduring annual tradition at CCSM. This will be Álvaro's first Las Posadas; he will incorporate some new elements, which will help us get to know and appreciate the diversity of Latin American customs and traditions of the season; there will be surprises, so don't miss it!

The Ministry invites everyone in the church, children and adults, to participate in this special Advent experience. It is also a great event to invite friends!



Follow the Latino/a Ministry on Facebook at facebook.com/MinisterioLatinoCCSM

LATINO MINISTRY THANKSGIVING!



The Latino Ministry invites you to a special Thanksgiving Service on Wednesday, November 22. Come and join us at 7:00 pm for a special dinner where, together in community, we will thank God for the blessings of this life. All are welcome; the service will be bilingual, with Rev. Jessica presiding. You can bring a side dish or dessert to share or just your heart full of gratitude. **Please RSVP to Alicia with your name and how many will come so we know how much turkey to prepare!** Text 650-868-4324 or email westcoastalicia@gmail.com

"PRAISE GOD AND TELL EVERYONE WHAT HE HAS DONE FOR YOU. PRAISE HIM AND SING HYMNS IN HIS HONOUR. DO NOT GROW WEARY OF GIVING THANKS TO GOD." TOBIT 12:6

music&art



Friday, November 17 we'll gather at noon in the Buckham Room to enjoy our BYOL (lunch). Beverages and dessert are provided. Following a

brief devotion and business meeting we'll move to Kloss Hall where Music and Art members **Linda Mallette and Mary Ann Notz will play a program of piano duets.** Be sure to RSVP to Don Harper at donaldgharper@yahoo.com or phone 650-553-1800. This is important so we have the correct number of chairs and tables as we are limiting guests to five persons per table. And we want to have enough dessert for all!

In December, Music and Art will take place on **Friday, December 15.** We'll gather as usual in the Buckham Room at noon for our fellowship lunch with a very brief business meeting and a program consisting of **Kibbie Ruth doing a seasonal reading for our group followed by carol singing** with the possibility of additional instrumentation.



JOIN US FOR

*United in Thanksgiving:
A Community Celebration of
Gratitude*

**NOVEMBER 23, 2023
10:00 A.M.**

**825 MONTE DIABLO AVENUE,
SAN MATEO, CA**

St. James AME Zion Church, San Mateo
Congregational Church of San Mateo
Trinity Baptist Church, San Mateo
Peninsula Temple Beth El, San Mateo
Island United Church, Foster City
Congregational Church of the Peninsula,
Belmont



The Morgan, Palmer-Sammons, Harris and Kerwood-Gribbens families on a trip to the Marine Mammal Center in June where they practiced their seal barking skills

NOTES FROM YOUR DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS



by Chase Montara

I am so thrilled to welcome Rev. Jessica to her new role as Senior Pastor here at CCSM. What a joy Jessica is to work with! She has been with us less than one month, and her vibrancy and enthusiasm were apparent from Day One. Her easy laughter can

be heard often. And speaking for myself, laughter and joy are just what I need. I am impressed by how quickly she is getting oriented to all the people, committees, events, processes and history of CCSM. I look forward to learning from Rev. Jessica and serving her as she leads the congregation into a new season.

Here's a bit of news! **The church is back up on the Peer Space platform.** Peer Space is like an Airbnb for venues. Brian Mathews, at the request of the Board, was very instrumental in initially helping launch Peer Space back in August 2022. From August through May 2023, we were very successful, renting out various rooms to about 18 renters, including corporate meetings and events, as well as private parties. But managing what was essentially a small business 24/7 required finding a volunteer to assist with the volume of inquiries, emails, bookings and tours. In August, **Sean Moran responded to the call** and we began to work together to get our listings back up and running again. We have been "live" again now for one week, and we already have two bookings for Kloss Hall. The hope is that by renting out space in the church, we can generate income to help balance the budget. Of course, we have always rented to outside renters, such as the San Francisco Boys Chorus, Masterworks, numerous 12-step groups and community partners. But with the exposure on Peer Space, we can reach a wider market and hopefully, increase the volume of rentals.

The goal is to increase rentals while ensuring that the facilities remain available to the church members themselves. One way you can help accomplish that goal is to look ahead and **submit your booking requests as early as possible.** I also ask that if you observe anything that is of concern, that you **report your concerns directly to me.** There is a form in the Main Office that should be completed, so all the details can be documented and I can follow up and resolve any concerns you may have. A big thank you to Sean Moran, and also to Oscar Rosa who provides custodial services, and is on site during off hour events. Together, all of us, including the members, can contribute to making

Peer Space a financial success.

The Board is looking for long-term renters for the second floor of the Woodward (CE) Building. As we move forward with this venture, we will take great care to find just the right renters, who will be respectful and flexible regarding the church's ongoing needs for the space. If you have any suggestions as to potential prospects, please let me know!

This past week, the **Tree of Life windows** were evaluated and one area was resealed where there was some slippage in the applied image. We were reassured that this area of repair will last another 30 years. The **gate in the Memorial Garden** was also recently repaired where the wood had weathered and split. Jim Schwandt and I are pursuing a replacement for the **elderly furnace** that serves the sanctuary. Multiple estimates will be obtained in the coming months for review by the Finance Committee.

As we enter the Advent season, there will be many wonderful opportunities to gather together and share in our community. Busy times highlight the need for us to offer each other grace. If something gets missed or is not 100% as you had planned, let's remember it was not intentional. **We are called to extend each other extravagant understanding and kindness always, but especially during this season.**

Please let me know how I can help you make your Advent event special. The staff is here to support the life of the church!



Painting by Sue Bullis



BECOMING A CREATION JUSTICE CHURCH



A key goal of the Environmental Justice Ministry is for CCSM to achieve official UCC recognition as a Creation Justice Church. **The intent of UCC's Creation Justice Church program is to ensure that the work of the ministry of environmental justice becomes an integral strand in the DNA of our faith community.** But, in order to achieve this honored status, we collectively have some work to do. According to UCC policy, a congregation can only be officially designated as a Creation Justice Church if it completes **five specific steps** and documents its achievement in an application.

THE FIRST STEP IS CREATING A "GREEN TEAM" that drives environmental justice issues and initiates climate actions within the church. With the creation of the Environmental Justice Ministry back in 2017 and the ongoing work of the ministry, CCSM can check this box.

THE SECOND REQUIRED STEP IS REFLECTING ON WHERE WE'VE BEEN AND DISCERNING WHERE WE CAN GO WITH OUR ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE EFFORTS. The EJ Ministry will need to identify

the strengths of our ministry that have led us to this point. With this as a foundation, we must then actively institute the **"Four Dimensions of a Creation Justice Church."** They are: a) bringing a theological understanding of creation care into worship services. b) integrating creation care into the life and work of the governing council and other ministries. c) researching issues of race and economic inequality and mapping learnings to congregational advocacy and action, and d) connecting with other local groups engaged in environmental justice to effect change in the local community.

The third required step is drafting a creation justice covenant. A covenant marks a sacred promise to God and entails a promise among congregants to each other to walk together in addressing environmental justice in the church and the larger community. **Fourth, the creation justice covenant then needs ratifying by the church governing body and the congregation.** And finally, **the fifth step is to complete and submit an application to UCC** documenting the steps taken and requesting official status as a Creation Justice Church.

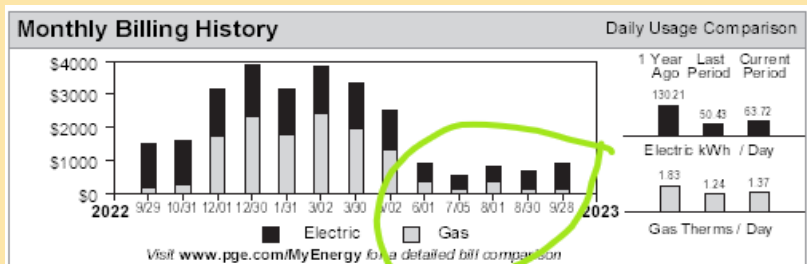
We look forward to everyone's participation in CCSM's journey to achieve UCC recognition as a Creation Justice church in the near future.

Gary H. White

Lead, CCSM Environmental Justice Ministry

WE ARE A SOLAR CHURCH!

We've been saving big money every month since we went solar and on October 21 we got approval to start selling power back to the grid!





HOT OFF THE PRESS FROM CALIFORNIANS AGAINST WASTE:

Governor Newsom signed [SB 244 - California's Right to Repair Act](#) into law! Guaranteeing a "right to repair" will ensure that consumers have the ability to fix the electronics and appliances that they own or have them fixed by a technician, preventing e-waste and saving consumers money.

In July 2024 companies then will be required to provide parts and tools to repair a product, and they must share how to repair the products. Way better than recycling!

TREASURER'S REPORT

by Veril Phillips, Treasurer

This is the latest installment of our continuing series providing the congregation a financial summary on a regular basis. Many of you will recall that the budget for 2023 approved by the congregation last January included a shortfall of nearly \$117,000. Expenses were then projected at \$933,329 and revenue at \$816,514. Yes, that's a large shortfall, but fortunately we have ended most prior years in the past decade with revenue exceeding expenses and have \$132,000 in the bank that will more than cover that shortfall. Furthermore, we continue to project a smaller shortfall of \$80,000 by year's end. This arises from a few generous gifts to the General Fund that were not planned as well as some designated funds that were released for the General Fund.

The Finance Committee has held several open meetings to discuss the 2024 budget and **the Board will hold a discussion of the 2024 budget following**

worship on November 19 in Kloss Hall. A light meal will be served for all who participate. Come join us!

Finally, we provide below a brief overview of revenue and expenses through October. We report both for the month and for year-to-date (YTD), which means the total for January through October. Detailed reports have been provided to the Board and are available to members upon request.

The Board is planning to review the budget with the congregation on **Thursday, December 14, at 7:00 pm in Kloss Hall.** All are encouraged to attend. Another date for your calendar!

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



Category	October 2023 actual	One month budget	One month difference	YTD actual	YTD budget	YTD difference
Donations to general fund	55,761	47,500	8,261	477,657	475,000	2,657
Total revenue for general fund	84,338	68,043	16,295	766,718	680,430	86,288
Expenses for general fund	72,331	78,086	-5,755	798,252	780,856	17,396
Net revenue (revenue minus expenses)	12,007	-10,043	22,050	-31,534	-100,426	68,892

OSCAR'S HOMEGOING

by Oscar Rosa

In July, my son Moises and I made a wonderful trip to my home in El Salvador. Moises had never been to El Salvador and I had not returned home for twenty-eight years. We were able to see family and spend time together sharing meals and stories. I want to thank the members of CCSM who were so generous to me. Moises and I have memories to share and we hope to return again for another visit soon.



Oscar's family in El Salvador: (left to right): Aunt Berta Tejada, Oscar, Sister Gloribelle Tejada, Son Moises, Mother Fidelina Tejada, Brother Rafael Tejada
Below: Moises in a hammock

En julio, mi hijo Moisés y yo hicimos un viaje maravilloso a mi casa en El Salvador. Moisés nunca había estado en El Salvador y yo no había regresado a casa en veinte y ocho años. Pudimos ver a la familia y pasar tiempo juntos compartiendo comidas e historias. Quiero agradecer a los miembros del CCSM que fueron tan generosos conmigo. Moisés y yo tenemos recuerdos que compartir y esperamos volver pronto para otra visita.

LET THE PARTIES BEGIN (AND CONTINUE)!



By the time you read this, CCSM's annual Pick-A-Party sign-ups (round one) will have already occurred. But if you missed it, or are thinking you should have signed up for one more

party, you have a **Second Chance!** Come to coffee hour on **November 19** and sign up for those parties or put your name on the wait list. Guests frequently drop out due to schedule changes, and you'll want to be on the wait list to get the call as a replacement.

Also, a new Silent Auction item is available-- **4 tickets to the Christmas Day 49ers v. Ravens game!** These are Sue Bullis' amazing seats, which come with special access and food court privileges.

Pick-A-Party started 25 years ago, in 1998, and has been going strong ever since. The original idea was borrowed from CCSM Interim Minister Dave Sandberg, who apparently started the tradition at Orinda's UCC church. Parties offered at CCSM in 1998 included Alison and Jim Schwandts' ever-popular

Cribbage Party, a Winery Tour offered by Bob and Caroline Reinke, "Real Steaks Poker" hosted by Warren Long and Mike Harris, an Italian Festa Dinner by Louisa and Jim Shaul, Champagne & Cheesecake by Barb Karlin, a French Dinner by Krista & Eric Hanson, and Tennis & Lunch hosted by Mary Ann Notz and George & Cari Parker, among many more.

Over the years, CCSM members could take Native American flute lessons and Haiku Writing Workshops, car enthusiasts could talk over cars (including the launch of the Tesla!), guests enjoyed Crab Feasts and Cuban Dinners, and who can forget Penny and Annlee's Paella parties?

This year's offerings continue the tradition, from the classic Schwandt Cribbage Party to a new offering by Chris Wuthmann and Allison Rock discussing housing in the Bay Area.

Pick-A-Party is a unique combination of fellowship and stewardship, as CCSM'ers move outside their "assigned pews" to socialize with new friends, while also financially supporting the church in a relatively painless way.

Let the parties begin (and continue)!

VOLUNTEER!



by Diane Kalliam

Several years back (not sure how many) I was asked to become the lead for the Congregational Care ministry. All of the ministries under this umbrella are involved in providing a service for our congregation. They are rewarding to those being served and those providing the help. The pandemic created some challenges and I think we are still in the process of coming back from it and the changes of the last 18 months. I also think we are energized by the arrival of Jessica and excited to see what is in store for us in the coming months. So this is a perfect time for new leadership in this ministry.

I am “over the moon” that Melodie Lew has offered to serve as lead for Congregational Care. We all know how much service she already provides to the church so it doesn’t surprise me that she has agreed to take on one more! I have every confidence that the congregation will approve her nomination.

There is no way I could thank all the people who have provided service these past years... you know who you are... you always said “yes” when asked and “volunteered” before being asked. But I would be remiss in not mentioning just a few. Chase Montara and Oscar Rosa have always gone beyond their jobs to assist us. Deb Flaherty, Genel Morgan and Sharon Tobin have had Month of Sundays running like a well-oiled machine. Carol Henton is dedicated

to our Companion Ministry and is always ahead of the curve. And Lin Fenn, Melodie Lew and Robert Leung are tireless in their commitment to Coffee Hour.

What can you do in the days, weeks and months ahead? **VOLUNTEER!** Here’s a few ways.

ADVENT POINSETTIAS will be happening soon. Volunteer to take a plant (or several) to those on the list.

MONTH OF SUNDAYS is looking for some substitutes and maybe a couple of replacements.

MEMORIAL RECEPTIONS always needs a list of people to draw from to assist at these events.

COMPANION MINISTRY will be looking for folks to contact and/or visit our members.

COFFEE HOUR If you enjoy the treats after service, sign up to bring them some Sunday.

Many of us are good “doers”... most of us are not good “askers” and we tend to go back to the same people who have said “yes” before. My challenge to all of us is... don’t wait to be asked to help... offer to help those ministries that contribute so much to our church. If you have questions about any of these ministries I’d love to talk with you or put you in touch with those in the know.

Thanks to all who have helped. The recipients of our ministry have so often expressed a heartfelt appreciation for all we do. You’ll still be seeing me being a doer and helping Melodie where I can. JOIN US!

With much gratitude,

Diane Kalliam

MONTH OF SUNDAYS

by Genel Morgan

One of the gifts of belonging to a faith community is the caring we receive from each other in times of joy and times of life’s challenges. The Month of Sundays group, which is part of the Congregational Care Ministry, sends cards to members and friends of CCSM. I’m sure many of you have been recipients of these cards. Thank you to the ladies (past and present) who minister to the congregation in this way; Susan Duty, Lani Leydig, Anne Galli, Betsy Woodward, Susan Campo, Sharon Tobin, Mary Ann Notz, Annette Daniels, Rosemarie Pero, Genel Morgan, Chella Montes, Sue Bullis, Siew Kang, Pat Pepper, Cathy Levy.

We welcome donations of cards. There is a box on top of the white cupboard in the church office where you can leave donations. Thank you.

Anyone who would like to join our group is welcome. If interested call Genel Morgan or Sharon Tobin.



READY TO LEND A HAND? JOIN A TEAM! MAKE A DIFFERENCE!

Here is the contact info for the leads of all of CCSM's ministries.
Please don't hesitate to reach out with a question or to find out how to participate!

Ministry	Lead	eMail	Meetings (email lead for info)
Council of Ministries	Kay Harris	COM@ccsm-ucc.org	2024 mtg. schedule—TBD in Jan.
Buildings & Grounds	Jim Schwandt	jimschwandt@gmail.com	Meetings as needed.
Children, Youth and Families	Troy Grabow Kim Held Rey	grabowt@gmail.com kim.bianco.rey@gmail.com	Meetings as needed.
Congregational Care	Diane Kalliam	dkalliam@gmail.com	Meetings as needed.
Connect & Celebrate	Sandy McNabb	sandra.j.mcnabb@gmail.com	Meetings as needed.
Environmental Justice	Gary White	gwhite2711@gmail.com	4:30-5:30PM on Mon, Nov 20; Tue., Dec 19; Tue., Jan 16.
Engagement	Alison Schwandt	alisonschwandt@gmail.com	Meetings as needed.
Latino	Julien Phillips	41julien@gmail.com	Meetings as needed.
Liturgical Arts	Linda Stoick	lindastoick@gmail.com	Meetings as needed.
Music	Sue Bell	sbell2003@gmail.com	Meetings as needed.
Service & Justice	Genel Morgan	glmrn12@gmail.com	2nd Tuesdays, 7:15PM
Spiritual Life	Chris Wuthmann	cwuthmann@gmail.com	Meetings as needed.
Stewardship	Martha Bronitsky	Fitbosslady@gmail.com	Meetings as needed.

BLESSING BOX

by MSJ

In 2022, Oscar, our devoted custodian, constructed our Blessing Box (BB). For the past year, CCSM has been providing food for our neighbors who are food insecure. We have heard from several individuals who access the box how grateful they are for the help.

As it is said, it takes a village! MSJ wants to acknowledge and thank the following people who help keep the Blessing Box stocked on a daily basis: June Brown, Valerie Leung, Sue Bullis, Diane Kalliam, Eric Chaney, Carol Henton, members of Liturgical Arts ministry who fill the box when they decorate the sanctuary for Sunday worship (Pam Ridlehuber, Alice Morison, Marilyn Cintel, Laura Pierce-McKenzie, Alexandra Gillen, Kay Harris, Annette Daniels, Megan Goulden and Linda Stoick). I apologize if I forgot to mention someone.

Thank you to the congregation for stepping up in a big way by bringing food to church each Sunday and contributing generously when we have a plate offering designated for the Blessing Box. People in our neighborhood have been contributing food as well. Samaritan House provides us with some food on a weekly basis.

We are presently well stocked with rice, pasta, beans and tuna. Donations of pasta sauce, soup, chili, canned fruit, applesauce (in individual cups), boxed drinks etc are very welcome. Cans/containers easy to open are helpful.

No matter how much we put in the Blessing Box or what time of day we fill it, it is empty at the end of the day. The need is so great.

CCSM is truly putting into action our message that we want to be the hands, feet and face of God to our greater community.



TONY GALLO: RED RIDER



Over forty years ago, I developed type 2 diabetes, and I thought I had it under control. But a few months ago my doctor told me I had chronic kidney disease. My mom died of this diabetes complication when she was my age, and that really got me thinking. I guess my way of making lemonade with the lemons that I got from this news was to get involved with this fundraising ride.

I started raising money for it in July and was amazed at how many people supported my efforts. Over 85 people donated; many I had not talked to or seen in over forty years. They saw my donation requests on LinkedIn, Facebook, and Instagram. It was amazing. Personally I raised around \$7500 for the ADA (American Diabetes Association) and I was awarded a special plaque as the number one fundraiser on Team Red. So many from CCSM donated, which was really uplifting.

People with diabetes who rode the tour were commemorated by riding with a "Red Rider" jersey. The community was so supportive. As we rode past city streets, people honked their horns and onlookers on the corners were ringing cow bells. Volunteers all over the place were yelling out support for us as we rode by. I was deeply touched by this and it made my ride so very special and memorable. The rest stops were well equipped and the lunch and celebration—well, let us just say that we gained weight on this ride!



I had a picture of my mom, dad, and myself in younger times on the bike, and this ride was dedicated for them. You see, I did not know it, but all of us in the picture had diabetes at the time, and were unaware of it! That is the kicker for this dreadful disease. It is estimated that more than 93 million Americans have diabetes or pre-diabetes, and most of them don't know it either.

I want to acknowledge how many CCRiders went along on this ride with me—Linda Skromme, Mark Meyers, Jim and Alison Schwandt. Their support and love was just amazing and I was deeply touched. My wife Kathy joined the ride even though she is really afraid of riding on the street. Several others that ride with us every Saturday morning also joined me, Jym Clendenin, Charlie Kennedy, and Peter Held's relatives from the Rey family—his daughter's husband and family—Javier, Diego and father Juan.

Together, we raised more than \$10,000 for the ADA. That was just spectacular. This ride is the number one fundraiser for the ADA in the country, and we raised over \$1.1 million. Truly amazing what you can do when we work together for the common good!

Feeling blessed,

Tony Gallo
Red Rider

HAVE YOU HEARD? HOPE IN GOD'S BACKYARD

by Penny Nixon

This article was posted on November 8, 2023 on [Upwellings: News & Information from NCNC-UCC](#) and gives us a glimpse of the good work Penny has been doing since she left CCSM.



Last month I was on my way to a Non-Profit Housing Conference. I emerged out of the BART station at Powell Street in San Francisco and at the top of the stairs was a man sleeping/passed out/unconscious draped across an open suitcase as his pallet. Momentarily overwhelmed with powerlessness and hopelessness, I continued on to the conference a block away. I walked into a beautiful hotel and found myself in a crowd of almost a thousand people, all there because they care about homelessness and affordable housing. My first reaction was a feeling of despair because of the inequities and ironies of being in a beautiful, safe, expensive, clean, and inviting hotel working on solutions so that no one in the richest nation in the world would have to sleep in an open suitcase on the street. But I quickly moved from despair to hope. What gave me hope was that this conference represent-

ed just a small percentage of people in California who are engaged in the important justice work of solving homelessness and working to produce more affordable homes, particularly for low-income neighbors and residents.

My favorite definition of hope is engagement. And what really gives me hope, against what can feel like an insurmountable problem, is that faith communities all over the state are engaging at new and exciting levels, opening tremendous possibilities.

Many of you are aware that SB4, affectionately referred to as YIGBY (Yes in God's backyard) passed through the senate and assembly with resounding success and then, just a few weeks ago, was signed by Governor Newsom. SB 4, authored by Wiener, rezones land owned by religious organizations and nonprofit colleges to allow for affordable housing on their property. Broad coalitions, including many faith communities, supported this bill and made its success possible.

**"MY FAVORITE
DEFINITION
OF HOPE IS
ENGAGEMENT."**

All the latest research reveals that the number one proven solution to homelessness is to build more affordable housing, especially permanent supportive housing with wraparound services. This bill paves the way for that to happen. Now all we need is for faith communities, often cash poor but land rich, to explore the opportunities that their land might offer. As people of faith, we have done well providing food, blankets, water, medicine... but now, how about homes?

When I retired from parish ministry after almost three decades, I wanted to continue the justice work I had been doing—and I wanted to be able to do that full time. When I looked at all the justice issues I cared so deeply about, I kept finding housing justice at the center. So it was a natural segue for me to work in affordable housing. The Housing Leadership of San Mateo County contracts with me to do faith organizing for advocacy work, and the County of San Mateo as their Faith Communities Housing Liaison.

This didn't happen in a vacuum though. Eight years ago, a few colleagues and I founded the Peninsula Solidarity Cohort (pscohort.org). We are a coalition of about 30 diverse faith leaders, and we unite for formation, reflection, and collective action. We ground ourselves in the common good and aspire to be a compassionate moral compass for San Mateo County. This work has transformed each of us. We address the most pressing social justice issues in the county and are led by those most impacted. Being the co-director of the cohort is one of the most rewarding things I have ever done. And the work has enabled me to build deep relationships with faith communities all over the county as well as relationships with people from all different sectors.

Back to hope—as faith communities across the NCNC, we have an opportunity to be part of the solution to homelessness and to the crisis of housing affordability. California has one of the highest functional poverty rates in the nation, and that is due in large part to our high housing costs. Using our land to provide homes may be one of the best legacies we can leave. I am so proud to be part of a denomination that “gets it”. There are already a number of churches engaged in exploring using their land, and I feel confident that more will join in the momentum and that the NCNC can make an even greater impact going forward. No matter who you are, or where you are on life's journey, we all deserve a safe and secure place to live.

CHRISTMAS WISH LIST 2023

This holiday season, CCSM will again be working with LifeMoves' First Step for Families. Instead of "Adopt-A-Family" as it has been called in the past, it is now **A CHRISTMAS WISH LIST**. First Step for Families provides temporary shelter and services for families experiencing homelessness in San Mateo County.

Sadly, LifeMoves is finding that family members need very basic items, so we will be asking CCSM members/attendees/friends to purchase gifts selected by LifeMoves staff for each individual. Admittedly, donating necessities is not as personal and enjoyable as selecting fun gift items for each person as we have done in past years, however, the need is still as great as ever.

In addition, the 17 residents of the Vendome (another LifeMoves program) in downtown San Mateo are chronically homeless adults who will not have much this Christmas. On our CHRISTMAS WISH LIST Christmas tree, CCSM would like to have a few extra ornaments listing items to give the Vendome residents so they may also experience some joy during this time.

Please look for the WISH LIST Christmas tree on the loggia on two Sundays, December 3rd and 10th, after the service. Stop by and pick up an ornament or two with suggested gift items to purchase and return to CCSM by Friday, December 15th at the latest (earlier is better).

We will also incorporate the Sunday virtual and Wednesday evening service attendees into our effort this year. Please look for more information in the Sunday bulletins and/or Connections.

We are also looking for a few friendly and helpful people to volunteer and assist with the Program this year. Volunteers should be available for about an hour after the service on either one or both dates—December 3rd or 10th. Tasks involved are listed below:

- ★ Helping CCSM members pick out gift(s) to purchase and register their selection;
- ★ Monitoring the return of gifts;
- ★ Helping to pack up gifts by families for delivery (no gift wrapping necessary) to First Step for Families in San Mateo.

Please contact Melodie Lew at boygie.m2000@yahoo.com or call 650.573.9765. Thanking you in advance.



One of her very first stops during her first week here in October—CCSM's new Senior Minister Rev. Jessica Vacketta visits the Men's Breakfast Group, which meets Tuesdays at 10am at the San Mateo Library.

MUSIC NOTES

CCSM CONCERT SERIES NOV & DEC 2023

A PIANO RECITAL WITH LOUISE COSTIGAN-KERNS • SUNDAY, NOV. 19 AT 3 PM AT CCSM.



Music Ministry Chair Susan Bell shared: “Louise Costigan-Kerns is a gracious and talented pianist of the highest degree.” Louise recently played an outstanding program for the Upper Peninsula League of SF Symphony League where all enjoyed her excellent musicianship and technique. Louise earned her Bachelor's and Master's degree from the New England Conservatory of Music in Boston and currently is a member of the piano faculty at Stanford University and recitalist with the San Francisco Conservatory of Music. Locally she has performed with the New Millennium Chamber Orchestra, Redwood Symphony and Palo Alto Philharmonic. The concert at CCSM will feature the music of Handel, Brahms, Chopin and more. Suggested donation is \$20 for adults, \$10 for Students & Seniors, children 10 and under are free.

MASTERWORKS CHORALE

In December, CCSM is happy to share two wonderful concerts featuring the Masterworks Chorale in their 60th anniversary season under the direction of Dr. Bryan Baker. Several CCSM members have performed with this wonderful ensemble for many years and are excited to be sharing these wonderful concerts at CCSM:

COOKIES & CAROLS AND CHRISTMAS • SATURDAY, DECEMBER 16, 4:00PM AT CCSM



This is a family-friendly ‘pay-as-you-will’ concert to delight concertgoers of all ages, filled with holiday favorites, holiday pantomime, music from *The Polar Express* and the chorale’s famous holiday cookie treats. Reservations are recommended.

A CEREMONY OF CAROLS • SUNDAY, DECEMBER 17, 4:00PM AT CCSM



This concert features Brittan’s beautiful “Ceremony of Carols” Biebl’s “Ave Maria” and a new composition by local composer Nick Carlozzi, and will conclude with a Holiday Sing-a-long.

For more information or to purchase tickets, please call the Masterworks Chorale office at 650.918.6225 or email info@masterworksbayarea.org.

JOYFUL NOISE THIS ADVENT

The Joyful Noise choir returned this fall with a fantastic performance shared with the congregation on Oct. 29th. **They will sing again December 10th in our 10:30 service.** Rehearsals are on Sunday mornings at 9:30AM in the Community Room in the CE Building – all ages are welcome to join them for this fun and engaging music-making opportunity. For more information, please contact Director Julie Berk at teacherjulie7@gmail.com.



ADVENT SINGING AT CCSM



One of my great joys each year is singing in December through the holiday season, and I know many at CCSM who feel the same way. The Chancel Choir is preparing for a festive month of singing both for the Sunday morning services and for the Candlelight Christmas Eve Service. All singers are welcome to join us for Sunday mornings and/or the Candlelight Christmas Eve Service. **Rehearsals happen on Wednesday nights at 7:00PM**, usually in the sanctuary, but please check the weekly bulletin for any room changes. If you are only available/interested in singing with the choir for the Christmas Eve service, you still are most welcome. Rehearsal for Christmas Eve music will be toward the later half of the Wed. evening rehearsal. You are welcome to come at 7:00 for the full rehearsal, or at 7:45 for the Christmas Eve rehearsal portion. If you have any questions, or would like to be added to the choir update email I send weekly, please contact me (Lynnelle Bilsey) at ltbmusings@gmail.com.

MUSIC NOTES (CONT.)

RING IN THE HOLIDAYS WITH THE CARILLON RINGERS AT CCSM

Another wonderful holiday tradition at CCSM is the Bell Choirs' annual ringing at the Christmas Eve Family Service. If you have some ringing skills or are able to read music and would love to try your hand at ringing bells we would love for you to join us. **Rehearsals are on Thursday evenings from 7-8:30PM** in the choir room; we will be learning repertoire for the 5:00PM Christmas Eve Service. If you are interested, or have any questions, please email me at ltbmusings@gmail.com.



14TH ANNUAL MULTI-FAITH BENEFIT CONCERT AT CCSM



Our Chancel Choir and music program hosted four other churches for the Peninsula Multi-Faith Benefit concert, "The Blessed Community," this past Oct. 8 in the CCSM Sanctuary to support the work of LifeMoves. CCSM's Chancel Choir was joined by with choir singers from St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Burlingame, the Church of Jesus Christ LDS congregations from Half Moon Bay, San Bruno and San Mateo, BurlPres and St. Catherine's of Siena; in all 95 musicians lifted their voices together in song. Each choir performed individual choral pieces scattered between three 'mass choir' songs. Angela Kraft Cross was the organist/pianist and I (Lynnelle Bilsey) was the Conductor for the mass choir pieces.

I know many were unable to attend the event, but good news! Robert Cross was able to make a recording of the concert, which you can enjoy at this link: tinyurl.com/2023-Benefit-Concert

Music Directors Dr. Susan Matthews, Benjamin Sabey, Peter Bassford, Aki Akami and myself, assisted by Jennifer Jacobson, worked to bring this amazing concert together for the 14th season and I'm so happy to share the recording with CCSM's congregation. One note about the recording: **please do not post any portion of this recording on social media**; this is just for the CCSM community who missed the live performance.

CCSM PLAYS HOST FOR NEW CD RECORDING: ONE MORE DANCE

Back in November 2021 and unbeknownst to many of the congregation, an amazing event was happening. Karen Hutchinson (an amazing pianist and our accordionist for the several of CCSM's Las Posadas events) and Zachariah Spellman (Principal Tubist for SF Opera Orchestra), both well-loved friends of CCSM, recorded several works for piano and tuba which have culminated in a new album, *One More Dance*. The music was composed by Roger Kellaway in 2019 specifically for tuba and piano and the duet made the recordings in our sanctuary. A note that is included on the new CD released on 11/1/23 says "It is a great look into the tuba music of Roger Kellaway. Why, you may ask, did this jazz piano player composer and arranger write so much music for tuba? Roger himself was very good friends with another Roger, Roger Bobo, the virtuoso L.A. Philharmonic tubist and inspiration for many of Mr. Kellaway's tuba and piano duets." I know you will enjoy listening to this new CD, which is also streaming on the Bandcamp app. You can find it at this link: zachspsellman.bandcamp.com/album/one-more-dance-2



In addition, Zach and Karen recorded a special duet by Kellaway that was shared with CCSM's congregation in honor of MLK and aired online for CCSM's MLK Day Service 2022. Both Zach and Karen are phenomenal musicians and masters of their instruments.

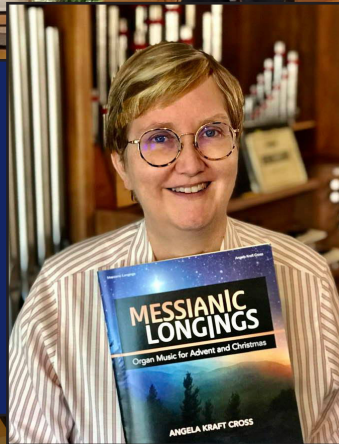
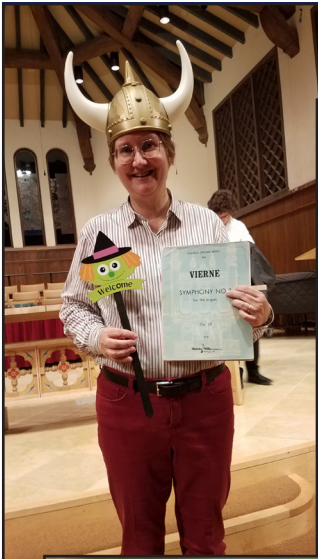
Please be sure to enjoy the abundance of musical offerings here at CCSM, and don't hesitate to contact me with any questions or to find out how to participate.

Thank you,

Lynnelle Bilsey, Director of Music

ltbmusings@gmail.com

EVERYTHING ANGELA



CELEBRATING ANGELA KRAFT CROSS' 30 YEARS AT
THE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF SAN MATEO

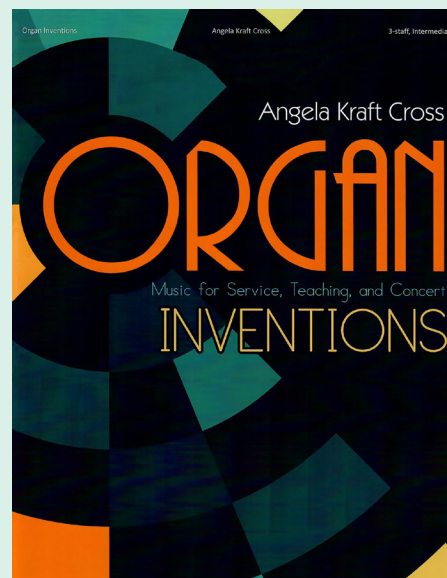
ANGELA KRAFT CROSS: CELEBRATING 30 YEARS OF EXCELLENCE AND INNOVATION AT CCSM

CCSM has been blessed to have an organist extraordinaire sharing her musical gifts with us over the past 30 years. She is recognized as an international organ soloist, published composer and master teacher of her beloved instrument the pipe organ. **CCSM will celebrate *EVERYTHING ANGELA* on Sunday, December 3rd both at the 10:30 am service and at a reception following.** Please mark your calendars and join us in showering Angela with the church's deep appreciation and love we all share for this remarkable woman who has dedicated her musical and spiritual journey with our blessed community at CCSM.

NEW ORGAN COMPOSITION PUBLICATION, FALL 2023

CCSM has had the pleasure of hearing several new compositions by our own Angela Kraft Cross for organists of intermediate skill levels this summer and during the Halloween Organ Recital. These pieces have been compiled into a new publication: *Organ Inventions: Music for Service, Teaching and Concerts*. Several of these pieces were composed for some of her students and CCSM was treated to hear these young organists debut their works at various Sunday services.

Congratulations, Angela, on your new publication and for inspiring new generations of musicians to learn the art of playing the organ over your thirty-year teaching career at CCSM.



HALLOWEEN SPOOKTACULAR ORGAN RECITAL 2023

An enthusiastic crowd gathered in our sanctuary for the 10th annual Halloween Organ Concert on October 28! The program featured a record nine young organists, aged 10-17, all students of Angela, performing alongside Angela in costume and with Halloween stage names. The program featured works by Johann Sebastian Bach, Antonio Vivaldi, Eugene Gigout, Louis Vierne, Marcel Dupré, Angela Kraft Cross and young composers Aria Folkerts and RF Lee. The

program was co-sponsored by both the San Francisco and Peninsula chapters of the American Guild of Organists. Many thanks to Lynnelle Bilsey, Alan Roby and Noël Olson for seasonally decorating our sanctuary for the concert!

ANGELA KRAFT CROSS: YOUR HEALING TOUCH

YOUR HEALING TOUCH

This past year, Angela Kraft Cross had a unique opportunity, as Memorial Church of Harvard University commissioned her to write an anthem in celebration of the completion of their Fisk organ and in memory of Harvard medical school professor, Dr. Lynne M. Reid (1923-2021). Angela wrote both the words and music to the anthem, *Your Healing Touch*, which was premiered at Harvard Memorial Church in their Sunday service on October 22.

The anthem was recorded and is accessible on YouTube at tinyurl.com/Your-Healing-Touch. It is a prayer for healing at the level of each individual, family and friends, community and globally. The refrain proclaims: *"Bringing love and compassion, renewing and restoring us, making us whole."*

CCSM's Chancel Choir looks forward to learning and sharing this new work with the congregation in Spring 2024.



Your Healing Touch

by Angela Kraft Cross

Almighty God, Heavenly Creator, blessed is your name in all the earth.
Tender and reaching is your love in all the world.
May your guiding spirit be with us in all we are and do.
May your caring touch heal the broken parts of our lives.
Bringing love and compassion, renewing and restoring us, making us whole.

We are ill; we are tired and feel we can't go on: physical and mental exhaustion.
Lonely and frightened, what is this fatigue we feel?
Please bless us with your peace and your understanding,
Make us whole with your healing love.
Bringing love and compassion, renewing and restoring us, making us whole.

Please bless those in our inner circles; family and friends whom we hold so dear.
Bring health to all those who suffer, painful and perplexing, what is this fear we feel?
Help the struggling find their way in this life.
Bless us with your empathy, filled to overflowing with your inner peace.
Bringing love and compassion, renewing and restoring us, making us whole.

Please bless those in our community, those with daily hardship and hunger.
Combatting hidden forces, what is this anger we feel?
Help us to create a just and caring world, affirming a path for all.
Bringing love and compassion, renewing and restoring us, making us whole.

Please watch over our embattled world, many people building lives around the globe.
Sharing the planet with all the living creatures.
Alarmed and bewildered, what is this peril we feel?
Bring us mindfulness and healing.
Teach us to be your healing stewards, sharing freely your unconditional love.
Bringing love and compassion, renewing and restoring us, making us whole.

Joys and Concerns

CCSM Pastoral Care Team

Please share your prayers with the pastoral care team, **Rev. Jessie Vacketta**, **Rev. Sheryl Johnson**, and **Chase Montara**. 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

Bev Knowlton appreciates all the expressions of concern for her back and leg pain resulting from a compression fracture of a vertebra.

PRAYERS OF LOVE AND STRENGTH

Diane Morton passed away on November 8. Prayers for her daughters, **Lorraine and Maureen**, her daughter-in-law **Lori Morton-Fezell** and grandson **Tyler**. She was a lovely woman and my friend. —**Diane Kalliam**

We hold **Carole Melis** and family close in prayer as they mourn the death of Carole's sister **Connie**. Connie died on September 27 from lymphoma.

PRAYERS OF HEALING AND SUPPORT

Please hold both **Anne and Steve Galli** in the light as they both deal with health challenges.

Please pray for **Lorna Groundwater's** dear friend, **Denise McKevitt Rasmussen**, who has Stage IV metastatic cancer now affecting her brain.

Please pray for **Cindy Shaughnessy's** brother **Jim**, who is in the ICU being treated for a brain bleed.

Sarah Iya requests prayers for her mother, **Jane Don**, in England. She recently started her 4th round of chemo treatments for Stage 4 ovarian cancer. She is also recovering from surgery on a broken hip, caused by cancer in her bones, at the start of October.

Deb Chang requests prayers for her friend **Theresa** who returned home after 3 months in and out of the hospital from fainting and seizures. Hopefully her condition can finally be diagnosed and treated so she can remain and recover at home with her

family.

Prayers requested for **Cheryle Matteo's** brother **Lou**, who had a cancer recurrence and has now moved to a skilled nursing facility for ongoing care and treatment.

May we who enjoy the privilege of peace not forget **our brothers and sisters under siege in the Middle East**.

Prayers for the daughter of a friend of **Linda Stoick, Jennifer Garcia**, who suffered a stroke.

Prayer request from **Martha Clements**: Pray for me that I will be able to get out of bed and be able to help and take care of myself. I would so much like to relieve some burdens off my daughter, Rhonda. 88 is old, but not the end! Thanks to you dear God for all you have given.

CONTINUING PRAYERS

Continuing prayers of strength, encouragement, and healing for our beloved brothers and sisters: **Judy and Minsook**, dear friends of **Angela and Robert**; **Lisa Nelson**, friend of **Lynnelle**; **Alice Morison's** close friend, **Cheryl R**; **Jason**, friend of **Genel Morgan**; **Dawn Graves**; **Ron and Camilla**, friends of **Michele Merfeld Hale**; **Lee and Marilyn White**, friends of **Michele Merfeld Hale**; **Linda Stoick's** friend, **Susan**; **Cari Parker**; **Martha Clements**; **Bill Melis**; **Mike and Lee Mullery**; **George Vail**; **Martha Pierce**; **Ann Ritter**; **Mel Thrash**; **Mary Ann Notz**; **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**.



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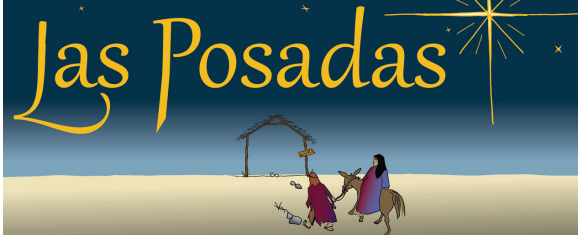
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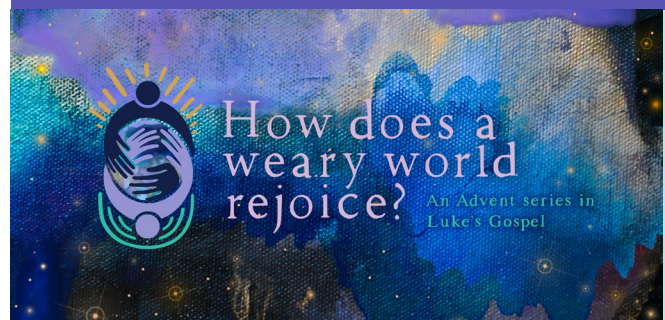
LAS POSADAS DECEMBER 20

MIÉRCOLES 20 DE DICIEMBRE
WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 20
7:00 - 9:00PM



On **Wednesday, December 20, the Latino Ministry will host Las Posadas**, which has become an enduring annual tradition at CCSM. This will be Álvaro's first Las Posadas; he will incorporate some new elements, which will help us get to know and appreciate the diversity of Latin American customs and traditions of the season. The Ministry invites everyone in the church, children and adults, to participate in this special Advent experience. It is also a great event to invite friends!

CHRISTMAS EVE



Join us **Christmas Eve, Sunday, Dec. 24, for our two wonderful Christmas Eve services!**

(And because Christmas Eve is on a Sunday, of course we'll have our regular 10:30am service.)

5:00 PM Family Service
(Bilingual Spanish/English)

11:00 PM Candlelight Service

