

CCSM PINE TREE

VOL. 73, #5 | ONLINE | HOMECOMING ISSUE 2024

A NOTE FROM JESSICA



Greetings, Church!

It's hard to believe school is starting and **Homecoming at CCSM is right around the corner!** Homecoming is one of those beloved traditions in our faith community that I've heard

many stories about, even before I started serving as your pastor, and I'm excited to celebrate my first Homecoming with you on **September 8th** following worship! Álvaro and I had an interesting conversation recently, as I tried to explain the concept of Homecoming to him, starting with my own experience in high school with Homecoming games, parades, floats, and dances. He asked, but what about people who don't have a home, or those who are looking for one? How can we expand our understanding of Homecoming for it to include those looking for a home and a place to belong? Who can you invite to be part of this celebration, and our CCSM community?



Last year's Homecoming celebration

WORSHIP SERIES OUR GUIDING PRINCIPLES

We are Christian

We are a Spiritual Community

We are God's Hands, Feet, and Face

We are Inclusive

We are Open Minded

We are Evolving

SEPTEMBER 8-OCTOBER 13



On Homecoming we'll also kick off a **6-week worship series focused on our Guiding Principles**. Can you name all six? (Check out our website for a refresher.) My hope is that by the end of this series you'll be able to do just that—name the principles with the same ease of sharing a mailing address or phone number. Our guiding principles are the values that shape our community's culture, decision-making, and actions. They serve as a compass, guiding us towards our vision of who we are trying to be as a community of faith. If we don't know our Guiding Principles, how can we do this? It's also good to revisit these principles periodically to affirm that they reflect who we are striving to be as a church. One of our principles is "We are Evolving – we welcome change, seek transformation, and explore new ways of being faithful because we know that God is still speaking." Following this principle means we commit to consistently engaging, questioning, and adapting these values to ensure they remain a relevant and dynamic framework shaping our community.

—cont. on next page—



Congregational
Church of san mateo

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Before we dive into this issue, I want to share one more exciting ministry opportunity that I know many of you are aware of, and already participating in—**daily meal service in partnership with Samaritan House!** On August 12, we began serving meals to guests from 4-6pm, Monday-Friday, in Kloss Hall. You might have seen the big Samaritan House box truck serving pre-packaged meals in the parking lot across the street, but since the pandemic, the sit-down meal service offered by Samaritan House has been on pause. Samaritan House staff members approached us in the spring of 2023 with the hope of going back to sit-down meal service on our campus. They shared that this would be an opportunity for those who might need it the most to find connection, conversation, and support in a dignified way—around tables, breaking bread together. Our commitment to this

new partnership is a tangible expression of our progressive Christian values. By providing sustenance to those in need, we are not only addressing the food insecurity experienced by so many of our neighbors, but we are also fostering a sense of community and compassion.

If you would like to serve with this ministry, or learn more about what that looks like, please reach out to Jim Granucci at jimgranucci@yahoo.com. Join us in making a difference, one meal at a time.

I can't wait to see how God will continue to invite us to be co-creators of peace, love, and justice in the days ahead. May we embrace this journey with open minds and loving hearts.

With gratitude and hope,
Jessica

THREE YOUTH HAVE A UCC ADVENTURE

In June, three of our younger youth joined 175 others from as far away as Hawaii and Montana for the UCC Western Regional Youth Event at Long Beach State University. In the beginning, Josh, Kiela and Ismael said they were “very anxious”—so much was new for them. A strange college campus, different ideas, and incredible diversity of gender identity and cultures in the crowd of unfamiliar people. Fortunately, the event theme, “Love is greater than fear,” touched them deeply. The kids ate a lot (and often), attended fascinating workshops, sang lively music, worshipped, did service projects, slept in dorms without air conditioning, and spent over 12 energetic hours at Disneyland.



Worth it? Kiela says she has never had so much fun in her “whole life!” The three also said they

- ◆ learned to become less anxious about uncomfortable situations,
- ◆ learned more about themselves,
- ◆ learned that the more we understand another person, the easier it is to be friends,
- ◆ learned more about Christianity and praying to God, and
- ◆ learned that, even though the world seems a dismal mess right now, we can each make it a bit better.

For his service project, Josh volunteered at a senior home to help residents with technology.

The first person needing help wanted to turn up the volume on her phone. Upon being assigned to Josh, she immediately panicked. “I don’t like you,” she said with her German accent. “You look Jewish. I survived the war. I don’t want you to help me.” He graciously helped her anyway, before she fled upstairs to her room.

He said the second woman he helped was really sweet. As he told us his story, he added, “‘Love is greater than fear.’ She has lived most of her life in fear. I tried to remember to love instead.”

Thank you, CCSM, for helping these youth have such an amazing growing experience!



CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILIES

SUNDAY CHILDREN'S PROGRAM



WHO: Kinder - 4th Graders
WHERE: Memorial Garden
WHEN: 10:30 AM Sunday mornings

Following the Passing of the Peace, our Kinder-4th graders are welcome to join Miss Elaine in the Memorial Garden for our Children's Program. In August we are using a curriculum called "Seasons of Welcome." Each week we use stories, scriptures, prayers, and a fun activity to help us understand God and the world around us in new and different ways. We use practices of welcome that help us embrace Community. **We are looking for volunteers** to serve as a second adult and support Elaine, we just need one person each week, so if you can help in this way once, please email Rev. Jessica, jessica@ccsm-ucc.org Lily continues to meet with our youngest CCSMers each week.



Dálary, granddaughter of Imelda and Oscar Rosa, making friends with Sue Bullis' dog, Buddy, at our Familia Fiesta.

MEET THE GRAN' ITS: NEW MIDDLE SCHOOL PROGRAM



WHO: Middle Schoolers "Gran' Its"
WHERE: CE Building
WHEN: 10:30 AM Sunday mornings

This is a newly formed youth group for our incoming 5th - 8th graders! Led by Kibbie Ruth, **this group will meet each Sunday in the top row of the back balcony and then head to the Christian Education building after Passing of the Peace.** Over the next month they are covering God, Bible, Jesus, and church. Whew, that's a LOT to explore. Come with questions and bring friends! For more information (including upcoming plans beyond Sunday morning), please email Kibbie Ruth, kibbie@kyros.org

Why the odd name? Moses received the Ten Commandments carved in stone. Later, Jesus told Peter that upon "this rock" he would build his church (*Peter* means rock). Because youth are the rocks upon which the future of our church will be built, the rock or stone theme seems to fit as a name for the new group--but we can't call them stoners! So, granite—youth are truly GRAND and ITS (inclusive of she/ he/ they/etc.). Introducing the Gran' Its, a faith formation class and youth activity program envisioned to include all the middle schoolers, regardless of whether their parents worship on Sunday or Wednesday.

In their first class, the Gran' Its decided what question they each wanted to ask God, wrote down every religious word they could think of, created drawings of themselves as "images of God," and closed in prayer. Their depth of curiosity and openness seemed beyond their years. Truly, Jesus can build his church of these youth.

CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILIES

HIGH SCHOOL



WHO: High Schoolers
WHERE: Fireplace Room
WHEN: Sunday at 10:30AM monthly

This fall our 9-12th graders will continue to meet monthly for 60 minutes led by Michelle and Mike! We are also in the early stages of exploring what a youth group might look like—including partnering with other churches like our friends at the Congregational Church of the Peninsula in Belmont. If you aren't in the high school text group or receiving emails, please let Rev. Jessica know. (jessica@ccsm-ucc.org)

COLLEGE STUDENTS



Are you or a loved one embarking on a college adventure this fall? We want to stay connected with our students as they begin this exciting new chapter! Please fill out the "[Students Away](#)" form online to share your college information. We'll send you words of encouragement and keep you updated on church events and send a little love from home.

Let's stay in touch!



PARENT PIZZA PARTY!



WHO: All parents
WHERE: Kim and Javi Rey's home
WHEN: Sat. October 5, 6-8pm

Save the date for a Parent Pizza Party! Let's connect over delicious pizza and great conversation! We invite all parents to join us for an evening of fun and fellowship. It's a wonderful opportunity to meet other parents, share stories, and build community. Keep your eye out for more details in upcoming issues of Connections.

We are committed to building a strong community and providing opportunities for spiritual growth and connection for CCSM kids, youth, and parents! If you have any questions or feedback, or would like to help with our CYF ministries, please do not hesitate to reach out to our CYF Ministry Leads, Kim Rey (kim.bianco.rey@gmail.com) and Troy Grabow (grabrowt@gmail.com).



The Mid High Gran' Its

OPEN CALL FOR NOMINATIONS

To the Congregational Church of San Mateo Community,

As we prepare for the upcoming year, the Leadership and Governance Committee is pleased to announce an open call for nominations for various leadership positions within our beloved congregation. We are seeking individuals who are passionate about serving our community and have a heart for furthering our mission.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR SERVICE

We are actively seeking nominations for the following positions:

- MEMBERS OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS:** The Board of Directors provides overall leadership and guidance to the church, ensuring that we fulfill our spiritual and organizational goals. This year we have a vacancy for the Board Secretary and for a Board Member / Director at Large.
- MEMBERS OF THE BOARD APPOINTED COMMITTEES:** These committees play a vital role in supporting the work of the Board of Directors and implementing various initiatives. This includes the Finance Committee, Endowment Committee, Pastoral Relations Committee, Leadership & Governance Committee, and Personnel Committee. Although we have specific openings for the Chair of the Endowment Committee, members of the Endowment Committee, Chair of the Personnel Committee, and members of the Personnel Committee, we encourage interested volunteers to apply to any and all Committees that they may have interest in.
- LEADS FOR MINISTRIES:** Ministry leaders oversee the operations and programming of specific ministries, helping to foster spiritual growth and community connection. This year we are looking for a Lead for the Latino Ministry and a Lead for the Connect and Celebrate Ministry, but again, we encourage interested volunteers to apply to any and all positions to which they feel called.

QUALIFICATIONS AND COMMITMENT

We welcome nominations for individuals who possess:

- A strong commitment** to the mission and values of the Congregational Church of San Mateo.
- Time and willingness** to serve others and contribute to the well-being of our community.
- Demonstrated leadership skills** and experience in relevant areas.
- A collaborative spirit** and a desire to work as part of a team.

NOMINATING PROCESS

To nominate yourself or someone else, please submit the following information to the Leadership and Governance Committee by **AUGUST 31, 2024**. Forms can be found at the front desk and returned to the nomination bin, or scan the QR code or click [this link](#) to submit online. You'll need to include:



- Name** of nominee
- Position** of interest
- Brief statement** highlighting the nominee's qualifications and commitment to service

We encourage you to prayerfully consider nominating yourself or someone you know who would be a valuable asset to our leadership team. Your participation is crucial as we strive to build a strong and vibrant community of faith.

With gratitude and warmest regards,

Frank G. Garritano
Chairperson, Leadership and Governance
Committee Vice Moderator
Congregational Church of San Mateo



CONNECT AND CELEBRATE MINISTRY

The “party” ministry continues to look for new ways to connect members, while celebrating activities which have become CCSM traditions. Please let us know if you have an idea for a get-together.

Great end to last year’s Pick A Parties.



This quarter saw the ever-popular **CHAMPAGNE OPEN HOUSE**, hosted by Jim Berthelsen and Kurt Neubert (with help from their “puppy.”) Guests mingled both inside and outside, feasting on a tasteful spread of appetizers, capped by Sibby’s lemon cupcakes. As you can see from the photos, everyone enjoyed Jim’s and Kurt’s beautiful home and the company of old and new friends.

A new party was offered this year which proved a great success. Michele Merfeld, CCSM’s virtual member from Missouri, suggested a **BAKERY CRAWL**, and Sandy McNabb helped plan the bakeries and the route. Michele was present in person to help chauffeur guests to four bakeries in the City, where they sampled yummy pastries and ended with lunch at Tartine Manufactory. All agreed that a chocolate crawl should be next year’s party! (You can sign up to host that crawl when Pick A Parties open in the fall.)



Dave Goulden finally got a chance to tell the real story of attending **BURNING MAN** when he and Megan hosted a dinner and discussion at their home. The dinner in Megan’s extensive garden was lovely. Dave dispelled misconceptions about Burning Man—that it was all crazy disorganized chaos—and talked about careful organization which allows amazing art, music, and other talents to be presented in a supportive community. He was so compelling, several of the guests are considering attending (at least for one day).

SOUND HEALING was popular with a number of CCSMers who attended Chuck Rosenthal’s Sound Bath amid the redwoods in San Francisco’s AIDS Memorial Grove. This proved an ideal location to experience the calming effect of Chuck’s use of the LOGOS healing technique.



Pick A Party will re-open in the fall, and we’d like to have lots of new parties on offer.

The C&C Ministry will offer a list of ideas, but please start thinking now. In addition to the great dinners and hikes we’ve had in the past, (and which raise important revenue for CCSM), we’d like to encourage parties where hosts are the organizers of, for example, chocolate crawls or garden tours, but aren’t required to clean their house or provide a meal. We’re calling these parties “**fun raisers**” rather than “fund raisers,” with the goal of energizing Pick A Parties and making parties easy for everyone. If you’ve felt intimidated to offer a party because you don’t cook or have a large house, this approach is for you.

HOMECOMING – SEPTEMBER 8

Celebrate Together Again—or for the first time—as we come home to CCSM on September 8 following worship. Enjoy food, games, music, and connection. Bring a dish which means “home” to you and join us for a potluck meal on the lawn after worship. CCSM will provide the meat, veggies, and drinks.

Volunteers are needed! Can you spare just 30 minutes on Saturday or Sunday, September 6, 7 or 8, to help set up, take down, or help the lunch go smoothly?



Just scan the QR code or contact Sandy McNabb, sandra.j.mcnabb@gmail.com, Sue Bullis, bullisclan@comcast.net, or Nancy Nugent, jnugent@mac.com



RUMORS! RUMORS! RUMORS! OH NO!

I heard a terrible rumor the other day about CCSM’s Happy Coffee Hour! It’s going around that some folks believe that hosting happy coffee hour is very complicated and difficult to do. What a weird rumor to be circulating! Please allow me to correct this strange rumor and set the record straight.

If you can get dinner on the table at night and clean up afterwards, you can host a CCSM happy coffee hour. I’m not referring to a 10 course Chinese banquet dinner, but the vast majority of regular folks’ Hamburger Helper or tacos evening meals. Heck! It can even be a Carl’s Jr or Taco Bell affair with a little fruit. If you can buy a Burger King family dinner or cook Ragu spaghetti and make a salad, then you can host a happy coffee hour with cookies and fruit. In fact, if you are still a bit worried about this, just let me know and I can pair you with someone who can help boil the spaghetti and even bring the parmesan cheese.

Now to translate the above dinner meals to a happy coffee hour, just substitute cookies, pastries, etc. (sweets), fruit and a bit of cheese and crackers (savory) and bring to the church kitchen about 10:00 for happy coffee hour. Put the goodies onto plates (we can show you where they are) and put them out the tables all set up by Oscar in Kloss Hall and waiting for your goodies. About noon, start to clear, wash, and dry the plates you have used. Voila! You have just hosted a happy coffee hour, and CCSM thanks you immensely!

Sign up sheets for the remainder of 2024 open dates (needing happy coffee hour helpers) will be on the table during happy coffee hour. We would like to have two families or people for each Sunday.

Thank you all for helping to put this terrible rumor to rest.

Cheers!

Melodie Lew



Painting by Wei Lew

THE PRECIOUS PLASTICS PROJECT (P3)



PLASTICS RECYCLING GUIDE



Find the number inside the chasing arrows triangle on your plastic and follow the guide below. **CCSM** and *Precious Plastics Peninsula (P3)*, have launched a plastics recycling program at our church to help church members find a home for their hard-to-recycle number 2, 4, & 5 plastics. Your plastic brought to CCSM will be delivered P3 and then melted down and used to create new recycled products such as chairs, clipboards, phone cases, and many others.

→ RECYCLE #1 PLASTICS IN YOUR BLUE BIN



PET

- WATER, SODA & OTHER BEVERAGE BOTTLES
- MOUTHWASH AND OTHER MEDICINAL BOTTLES
- FOOD JARS INCLUDING PEANUT BUTTER JARS
- DISPOSABLE FOOD CONTAINERS
- SALAD DRESSING & OIL BOTTLES
- CLOTHING MADE FROM OR INCLUDE POLYESTER FIBER
- ALL ITEMS MADE FROM PET PLASTICS

→ CLEAN & BRING #2, 4, & 5 PLASTICS TO CCSM



HDPE

- WATER, JUICE, & MILK JUGS
- CLEANING PRODUCTS
- COSMETIC BOTTLES
- TOYS & PLAYGROUND EQUIPMENT
- PLASTIC ENVELOPES (AMAZON)
- PLASTIC ROPE
- SOME PLASTIC BAGS
- BUCKETS



LDPE

- SHOPPING BAGS
- BREAD BAGS
- SNACK BAGS
- SQUEEZABLE BOTTLES, TUBES
- TRAYS & CONTAINERS
- FROZEN FOOD BAGS
- GARBAGE CAN LINERS
- GROCERY & NEWSPAPER BAGS



PP

- YOGURT & SOUR CREAM CUPS
- BUTTER/MARGARINE TUBS
- CLOUDY PLASTIC CONTAINERS
- PLASTIC BOTTLE CAPS
- CEREAL BOX LINERS
- KITCHENWARE & UTENSILS
- OUTDOOR CARPETING
- BROOMS, BRUSHES, & RAKES

→ PUT #3, 6, & 7 PLASTICS INTO THE TRASH



PVC

- SHOWER CURTAINS
- WINDOW CLEANER BOTTLES
- COOKING OIL BOTTLES
- FLOORING & WINDOW FRAMES
- PLASTIC FURNITURE
- DECKING & GUTTERS
- GARDEN HOSES & FOOD TRAYS
- CLEAR FOOD WRAP



PS

- DISPOSABLE DRINKING CUPS
- CD & DVD CASES
- EGG CARTONS
- TO-GO FOOD CONTAINERS
- STYROFOAM PACKING PEANUTS
- LICENSE PLATE FRAMES
- CAMERAS & VIDEO CASSETTES
- COOLERS



OTHER

- SPORT BOTTLES/EQUIPMENT
- CAR PARTS
- BABY BOTTLES, SIPPY CUPS
- MEDICAL/DENTAL EQUIPMENT
- STORAGE CONTAINERS
- ELECTRICAL WIRING
- PLASTIC LIDS
- ELECTRONICS

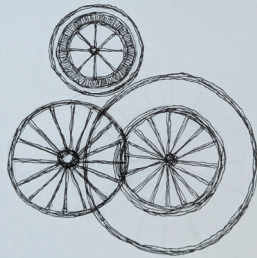
*** ALL PLASTICS WITHOUT A NUMBER SHOULD GO TO CCSM**

CHURCH WHEELIES

What? CCSM doing wheelies?

No—CCSM is not yet doing wheelies or even doughnuts, but we are considering **connecting those who may need wheels to those who are able to provide the rides**. Scope, details, and logistics are being worked out, so please stay tuned for more information to come in either the Sunday Bulletin, Connections, or Pine Tree.

In the meantime, if you have wheels or need wheels, or have ideas/want to participate in helping to set this up, please contact Melodie Lew at boygie.m2000@yahoo.com or call 650.573.9765.



SERVE AS A CCSM CHURCH FRIEND



Hopefully by now you are aware of Church Friends, which is part of our Congregational Care Ministry. This initiative, which was launched in the spring and with the full support of Rev. Jessica, serves

people who are seeking additional emotional support. Whatever the reason, CCSM's church friends attempt to be there for folks who are navigating through a current challenge. These unique CCSM friendships are confidential and will always strive to be based on mutual respect.

If you WANT TO BECOME a Church Friend volunteer, please contact Carol Henton, who is managing this initiative (carolhenton@aol.com). If, on the other hand, you are interested in HAVING a Church Friend, please contact the CCSM clergy (Rev. Jessica or Rev. Álvaro).

KITTY CORNER

We had a visitor! We had reason to suspect that a critter had been in the sanctuary. A few days later, Oscar received a notification that a neighborhood cat had gone missing. We put two and two together and found the cat hiding under the risers, quiet as a ...well... church mouse. He was likely there for a couple of days. His much relieved Mom came right away and coaxed him out and "Blueberry" is safely back home!





Nuevos Caminos

A church-wide discernment, re-envisioning Latino and Multicultural Ministry
Discernimiento congregacional para replantear el ministerio latino y multicultural

6 months of research, content and methodology creation and validation

1 Congregation-wide Survey

2 Facilitators training sessions (19 persons)

4 Congregation Sessions April 7, 14, 28 and May 5 (Average attendance 55)



"I pray that your love continues to grow in knowledge and deep understanding, so that you may discern what truly matters. Live a thoughtful and exemplary life, one that makes Jesus proud, overflowing with the fruits of the Spirit. Let your life reflect the beauty of Christ, drawing others to share in the glory and praise of God."
Philippians 1:9-11 PAR

Session 1 God's Call



This session focused on CCSM's ongoing journey to become a multicultural church committed to sharing the transformative Gospel of Jesus with everyone in San Mateo County. It emphasized the importance of revisiting and analyzing the diverse experiences shaping this journey. Participants learned about CCSM's long history of multicultural involvement, shared their experiences and views on the Latino Ministry—acknowledging both support and opposition—and identified lessons learned and successes to be celebrated, including addressing the challenges of separateness and the "us" versus "them" mentality.



Session 2 Crossing the Divide

This session explored the complexities of our inner lives and relationships, focusing on the barriers and walls we build—often unconsciously—that divide us. Participants reflected on how these barriers, such as socio-economic distrust, communication anxiety, and racial fears, hinder the church's mission. The session emphasized the importance of recognizing and dismantling these prejudices to build an inclusive and equitable community within the congregation.



Session 4 Embracing Hope

This session highlighted the transformative and counter-cultural nature of becoming the Kingdom of God, emphasizing that it brings hope while challenging established power systems. As the congregation enters a new season, participants were encouraged to embrace Christ's invitation to hope by discerning a shared vision and mission with humility and unity. The session allowed participants to share dreams and ideas about the future of the Latino and Multicultural Ministry at CCSM, aiming to move from mere inclusion to true belonging. They also brainstormed the next steps for building relationships and enhancing congregational engagement to support CCSM's multicultural ministry.

Next leg of the journey...

As we embark on our Nuevo Camino, the next leg of the journey – in the new path toward growth and unity—we are guided by the Holy Spirit and our love for one another and future generations. This journey will be undertaken stage by stage, informed by our own experiences and those of others, with imagination, courage, and a commitment to learning from each other and society. While we expect challenges, setbacks, and discomfort, we also anticipate the satisfaction and joy of making progress and deepening our relationships as a congregation. The journey to becoming a truly multicultural church will take years, but with participants' input from discernment discussions, we have outlined next steps to move forward.



Session 3 Practising Forgiveness

This session focused on the importance of forgiveness, as taught by Jesus in the Gospels, highlighting its role in achieving a full and meaningful life despite its challenges. Participants heard powerful testimonies from Latino members of the congregation about experiences of disrespect and exclusion, which evoked a range of emotions, including surprise, sadness, empathy, and guilt. The session also explored the connection between truth, justice, and reparation, and emphasized the vital role of forgiveness in fostering an inclusive and equitable faith community.



Dear beloved community,

I have now completed a little over a year of being here in beautiful San Mateo with you in this stage of my adventure that God has called me to. Without hesitation, life with Christ and life in the Ministry are fantastic adventures full of growth, learning, and beautiful stories and people I treasure.

Isaiah 30:21 says, "Whether you turn to the right or the left, your ears will hear a voice behind you saying, 'This is the way; walk in it.' These words deeply resonate in my heart as we, as a faith community, move forward, listening to God's guidance and walking this shared path before us.

As we move together into this new ministry season, autumn is just around the corner! I want to personally thank all the people who have extended a radical welcome to me, who have helped me to better understand this context, to the powerful and wonderful people who are part of the Latino Ministry and to all the people who were part of the discernment process, from those who helped me to review the first methodological proposals to the people who with open hearts participated in each of the sessions, above all because in discerning our "Nuevos Caminos, New Paths" you have opened your minds and hearts to the work that lies ahead, a work that involves healing, reparations, education, sensitivity, love and a renewed commitment to our Latino members. Most importantly, we have been recognising the challenges and needs in community as we strive to become an intentional multicultural church and yet move forward in faith, knowing that God's love guides us every step of the way.

As followers of Jesus, we are called to "walk in the way of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us" (Ephesians 5:2). This call to love is the foundation of our shared journey. As we embark on "the next leg of our journey," I pray that we, a congregation with deep roots and a rich history, can keep committed to opening our hearts and minds to the beauty of diversity and the richness of all cultures in our community. This commitment to celebrated diversity is not just a part of our journey; it is our journey!

The road ahead may not always be easy, but filled with hope, promise, and the transforming power of God's love, I guarantee it will be a great adventure! By embracing this call, we are not only becoming more relevant to our neighbourhood but embodying the very heart of Christ's message of unity, love, and justice.

Let us continue to walk these "Nuevos Caminos, New Paths" together, guided by the Holy Spirit, committed to the vision of a church where all people, without exception, are welcome, where all are valued and celebrated, and where all can see the reflection of God's love in our shared journey. This vision is not just a dream, it's our reality in the making, and each one of you is a vital part of it.

With love and encouragement for the journey,

Rev. Álvaro

We are currently serving and planning to serve our latino members and our neighbourhood in many creative ways. If you want to join the effort, let us know! latino@ccsm-ucc.org



MUSIC AT CCSM

JOYFUL NOISE CHILDREN'S CHOIR

Joyful Noise will resume following a summer break on Sunday, Aug. 25 and are excited to kick off singing in church on Homecoming Sunday 9/8. The choir provides a great opportunity for early music exploration for young children as well as opportunities to play percussion instruments and part singing for older youth. Children are given the opportunity to prepare and sing anthems for the worship service in addition to expanding their musical knowledge. They learn how to find the beat and the rhythm of a song in their bodies, and later on a variety of percussion instruments. Continued repetition of these musical concepts establishes an important musical connection in a child's brain at an early age. Joyful Noise participants are also taught how to recognize and match pitch, while developing a higher level of self esteem in the process.

Director and music teacher Julie Berk welcomes parents to participate with the younger kids which helps create a wonderful intergenerational atmosphere in the choir.

Joyful Noise meets at 9:45 am in the CE Building at CCSM. For more information, please contact Julie at teacherjulie7@gmail.com.



CARILLON RINGERS HANDBELL CHOIR

Cool Ringings: A handbell exploration workshop continues in August on **8/15 & 8/22 at 6:30 pm**. Geared to take the mystery out of ringing bells; you don't have to know how to read music to participate, it's helpful but not required.

The Carillon Ringers rehearse from 7:15 – 8:30 pm following these sessions and everyone at CCSM is welcome to come enjoy a rehearsal; come join us and take a peek into the world of bells.

The Bell choir will be ringing in church on **Sunday, August 25.**

Rehearsals resume for Fall on **Thursday, Sept. 12, 7 – 8:30 pm.**

CHANCEL CHOIR

Singing is good for the soul and CCSM's chancel is a great place to lift your spirits in song. There have been many studies over the past several decades looking into the healing properties of sound and music. You can however look back all the way to the ancient Greeks—Plato, Socrates and others all wrote about the healing qualities of music and the emotional connectedness sound creates. The choir ensemble creates a musical community where we explore the positive, healing and powerfully engaging aspects of making music together. **Everyone is welcome to join us for a rehearsal or Sunday morning service.** Your lungs will get their exercise for the day, your heart will be touched, endorphins will fill you with positivity and your soul will be uplifted.

Join us on **Wednesday evenings from 7:00 - 8:30PM** or **Sunday mornings at 9:15AM** for rehearsal.

The fall rehearsal schedule will begin **Wednesday, September 4.**

If you would like more information, please contact Lynnelle Bilsey at lbtbmusings@lifemoves.org.



[cont. →]

SAVE THE DATE! MUSIC OPPORTUNITIES

15TH ANNUAL PENINSULA MULTI-FAITH CONCERT

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 13 AT 5 PM

BurlPres will host choirs from CCSM, St. Paul's Episcopal, St. Catherine of Sienna, BurlPres & San Bruno LDS churches for this annual concert, which is a benefit for the CCSM-supported charity LifeMoves. If you are interested in participating in this year's joint choir concert, please reach out to Lynnelle Bilsey as CCSM's Chancel Choir will be participating in the concert. Rehearsals on the joint pieces will begin in September. All are welcome to participate and/or come enjoy this amazing event.



ANNUAL HALLOWEEN ORGAN CONCERT

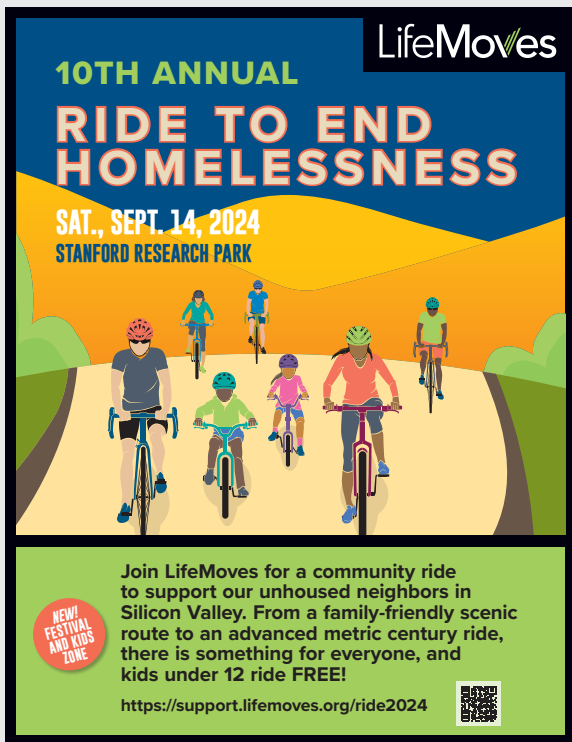
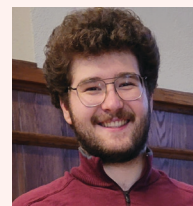
FRIDAY, OCTOBER 25

Be sure to write this date on your calendar, as the Annual Halloween concert is definitely not to be missed. Angela Kraft Cross' young organ students perform an organ recital in costume in the decorated Sanctuary—this is a family favorite event and attendees are encouraged to come in costume too.

We look forward to seeing you at this spooktacular event!

THANK YOU TO CHASE OLSON, CCSM'S ORGAN SCHOLAR

Let's all shout out a huge thank you to Chase Olson for sharing his talents on the organ and piano this summer during Angela's travels. Chase, we have been touched and amazed to hear how your artistry has continued to develop during your university studies. It's been a true blessing to have you with us this summer. We wish you all the best as we send you back to begin your senior year at Oberlin Conservatory this Fall.

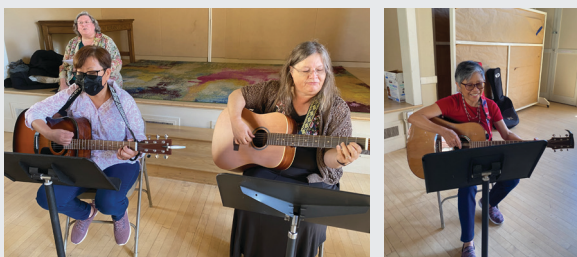


LIFEMOVES' 10TH ANNUAL RIDE TO END HOMELESSNESS

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 14

The 10th annual Ride to End Homelessness is happening on September 14th. CCSM has made participation in this event a tradition. Riders are welcome to participate in one of the four routes that range from "family friendly" to a 68-mile ride to the coast & back.

LifeMoves also has opportunities to volunteer for the event—if you are interested in learning more or signing up to volunteer, please contact Lynnelle Bilsey at lbilsey@lifemoves.org.



a couple of photos from the Singalong on July 21!

REFLECTIONS ON A FRIEND

by Chase Montara

Ann Lambertson is heading home. Peacefully heading home, surrounded by her children, surrounded by family and friends. I have known Anne for almost five years as a member of this church. I have never seen her outside of church, never socialized with her. And still, I will remember Ann with a great fondness, a fondness usually reserved for people with whom I am much closer. How does someone make such an impression upon us? What qualities do people have that allow them to get right into our hearts?

If I think about Jesus, he does not seem to me to be a particularly complicated person, at least not on this earthly plane. Jesus likes to cook fish on the beach for his friends. He dresses simply in robes and sandals. He asks for help drawing water from wells. He encourages us to love one another. He likes to pray in gardens. He speaks truthfully. He addresses people directly. He uses kind words. He likes to gather with friends. He doesn't leave anyone out. He welcomes all.

Ann, too, truly embodies such hospitality. I don't think she ever met a stranger. She is quick to make contact with someone she doesn't know. There is an almost childlike quality about Ann that Jesus would particularly love, I think. An unreserved, enthusiastic eagerness to embrace life and people. Each time we meet, Ann struggles to remember my name. But when I remind her, she nearly explodes with recognition. I know I am not the only recipient of this endearing reaction. Compliments and encouragement flow out of Ann like life giving water toward everyone she engages with. Her love for her fellows is an exemplar of unconditional love. Unconditional love is Ann's default position. It is where Ann starts every interaction.

As Ram Das said, 'When it's all said and done, we're all really just walking each other home.' Thank you, Ann, for walking toward home with us. Thank you for your encouragement over the years, for your glowing praise, for your quick wit and humor. Thank you for modeling for us how effortless it can be to show love and hospitality to everyone we meet.



Ann passed away peacefully on Wednesday, July 31 surrounded by her family.



Robert and John Leung enjoying the number 1 Ramen chain in Japan



Sunday morning conversations before church

Joys and Concerns

CCSM Pastoral Care Team

Please share your prayers with the pastoral care team, **Rev. Jessica Vacketta**, **Rev. Álvaro Durán**, and **Chase Montara** (**Rev. Dr. Sheryl Johnson** is on parental leave until September 1). Share your prayers, your hopes, and your lives. You may connect in the following ways: by **filling out an [online prayer request](#)** or by **contacting us via email**. 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

Jim and Alison Schwandt's daughter **Elizabeth** and her husband **John** welcomed a new baby boy to their family on Friday, July 19th. His name is **Thomas Faramarz Siami II** and he joins his big brothers **Perry** and **Calvin**!

Dorothy and Richard Kogl celebrated 60 years of marriage on July 11. Happy anniversary to this loving couple!

Nancy Jalonen sends her best wishes to everyone! She is doing very well, but watches now online as she is no longer driving.

Betsy Woodward and Phil Lind have moved to a new home! Still in Foster City, smaller and on one floor with the added benefit of being on the Foster City lagoon. "Still room for the grandkids to have sleepovers but we traded the rose garden for a deck on the water. It's wonderful and we're starting a new chapter in our life!" —Betsy and Phil

PRAYERS OF LOVE AND STRENGTH

Join us in praying for the family of CCSM member **Dorothy Skanderup**, who passed away on July 20 at the age of 95. Dorothy lived a rich and beautiful life; her obituary may be read [here](#). A Celebration of Life will be held at the Stratford in San Mateo, where she lived, on **August 16** at 2pm.

Prayers and tender thoughts for **Ann Lambertson's** family and friends, as dear Ann passed away peacefully on July 31, after being placed on hospice care. A memorial service is planned for the fall.

We surround in prayer **Otilia Rodriguez Lopez** following the death of her sister, **Maria Carmen Rodriguez** on Tuesday, July 30, quickly following the death of Otilia's brother-in-law **Ángel Salazar** in Guatemala.

Prayers for the family of **David Rogers** following his death on June 27. David is the brother of **Michael Grant**, brother-in-law of **Holly Allen**, and uncle of **Camille Grant**.

Prayers for the family of **Jo Buckham**, age 100, who passed away June 21. Jo joined CCSM on May 13, 1956, 68 years ago. A memorial service was held July 19 at CCSM.

Lynnelle Bilsey asks for prayers for her family mourning the loss of cousin **Michael Walkowiayk** who passed away on June 13th.

PRAYERS OF HEALING AND SUPPORT

Prayers for **Chris Yeh's** mother **Betty Yeh** who is in hospice care at Chris and Jennifer's home.

Mary Ann Notz is home from rehab and continuing to recover from hip surgery at her daughter's house. She welcomes visitors! Contact Genel Morgan for her address.

John McCann asks for prayers for his cousin **Jenny** and aunt **Vickie** who had to evacuate their home due to the Park Fire near Chico.

Martha Bronitsky requests prayers of strength and healing for her international daughter **Gaby Topete Eng Goon**, as she undergoes treatment for Hodgkin's lymphoma.

Linda Stoick requests prayers for her friend **Susan**, who is recovering from surgery and cancer.

Jim Granucci requests prayers as his daughter **Cheryl Granucci** undergoes cancer treatment.

Prayers for **Lani Leydig** as she continues to recover from surgery.

ONGOING PRAYERS

We join faith communities around the world in praying for a ceasefire in Gaza. May the Peace that surpasses all understanding prevail.

CCSM's prayer ritual for Ukraine, originally held March 6, 2022, continues to be available at tinyurl.com/CCSM-Ukraine-Prayer.

Continuing prayers of strength, encouragement, and healing for our beloved siblings: Aiden Hsiu; Genel Morgan's friend Susan; Trini Romero; Genel Morgan's family member, Jason; Allison Rock and Chris Wuthmann's friend, Karen; Mel Thrash; Bev Knowlton; Alice Morison's close friend, Cheryl R; Lee White, friend of Michele Merfeld Hale; Cari Parker; Martha Clements; Bill Melis; Mike and Lee Mullery; George Vail; Martha Pierce; Ruth Black; Dorothy Gorman; Dr. Jim Groundwater; Dottie Scott; Don and Jonathan's brother, Chuck Ruthroff; Caroline Reinke.

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Donna Lindsay and Peter Held enthusiastically serving up sundaes at the Special Sunday Happy Coffee Hour



Suzanne, a CCSM volunteer, serves our first meal in our new partnership with Samaritan House with Luis, a Samaritan House staff member

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