

SALT & LIGHT

COMMUNITY CHURCH OF SEBASTOPOL
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

FEBRUARY 2022 NEWSLETTER

The Community Church of Sebastopol

United Church of Christ

707.823.2484

www.uccseb.org

office@uccseb.org

Lead Minister

Rev. Dr. Benjamin J. Broadbent
(on Sabbatical: Feb 1 - May 1)

Acting Lead Minister

Rev. Rachel Knuth

Handbell Ensemble Director

Karna Roa

Keyboardist

J. Althea

Choral Director

Andy DelMonte

Congregational Administrator

Chris Chang Weeks

Bookkeeper

Deanna Euritt

Custodian

Luis Guzman

Pastor Emeritus

Rev. Gene Nelson



"Ordinary" Growth with Purpose and Connection

By Acting Lead Minister, Rev. Rachel Knuth

I look out at my garden this time of year, and it isn't the big fall harvest, with tomatoes bumping and squash rambling and lemon cucumbers I can't keep up with. But there are things happening out there. I found a loveliness of ladybugs tucked into tobacco leaves (we accidentally grew tobacco instead of comfrey last year, but that's ok)-- and there are vegetables, including sweet little radishes. Their green tops are quietly collecting sunshine, cheering on the rosy fruit beneath the soil.



The Season of Epiphany is considered "Ordinary Time" in the church, and mirrors this quiet collection of warmth that supports underground growth. By that I mean, it's a season when we are invited to experience God in the ordinary stuff of life, which warms us on the inside and connects us to God. I'm a person on the go, so one practice that helps me feel connected to God is Notice + Savor + Respond. That usually looks like Noticing something beautiful (like the ladybugs in our tobacco leaves), Savoring it (enjoying the bright red color contrasted by the green waxy leaves), and Responding (saying a prayer: "Thank you, God"). Epiphany lends itself to noticing God in the ordinary. You might try this practice of Notice+Savor+Respond on your next morning walk, or sitting outside with a cup of tea. See what happens, I'd love to hear about it.

In many ways this will be an "ordinary" February in the "Ordinary Time" of Epiphany. I know what you're probably thinking, because at first I was thinking it too-- How could this possibly be an ordinary month? Pastor Benjamin is engaging a sabbatical, Pastor Lacey has transitioned to ministry with a new congregation, and our clergy staff is looking pretty different than how it's looked in the past couple of years. We'll also have two guest preachers filling our pulpit this month. But! Then I had the thought-- What could be more ordinary than change? Congregations experience change all the time, with the arrivals and departures of clergy and staff, parishioners who join or move away, music that is new to worship, leaders who rotate on and off boards, not to mention the change of internal growth from lived spirituality. Change is a part of life.

FEBRUARY 2022 WORSHIP

- ◇ We worship in the sanctuary every Sunday at 10:30am
- ◇ Services live streamed on our church's YouTube channel and FaceBook page.

February 6 – 5th Sunday after Epiphany / Communion

The Chancel Choir offers sacred music, and Rev. Rachel Knuth, Acting Lead Minister, preaches a sermon on Luke 5:1-11, and we share Communion.

February 13 – 6th Sunday after Epiphany

The Handbell Ensemble connects us to a spirit of worship, and Rev. Rachel Knuth, Acting Lead Minister, offers a sermon on Luke 6:17-26.

February 20 – 7th Sunday after Epiphany

The Chancel Choir raises their voices to God, and Rev. Blythe Osner is our guest preacher. Blythe is a member of Community Church, former Pastor of Petaluma UCC, and currently teaches at Live Oak Waldorf Charter School in Petaluma.

February 27 – 8th Sunday after Epiphany / Transfiguration

The Youth Ensemble lifts up our worship in song, and Rev. Rhina Ramos is our Guest Preacher. Rev. Ramos serves as Pastor of Ministerio Latino, an Open & Affirming Congregation in Oakland that welcomes and reaches out to Latinx immigrants of all faith traditions and all sexual orientations. She is a regular contributor to Witness for Justice, an outreach and publication of the United Church of Christ at the national setting.

Coming in March... Ash Wednesday, Lent Begins, Additional Guest Preachers



Ordinary Growth, Continued from page 1

Personally, the two words I'm carrying forward through the month of February are "Purpose" and "Connection." As Acting Lead Minister, I think that a way to frame our time together is to focus on our Purpose: How can we continue to live into our church's mission statement? – and our Connection: How can we continue to be connected to one another and to God? My plan is to work with our Leadership Council and Staff, to offer connected leadership that is rooted in our collective purpose as a congregation, with a focus to deepen our relationships in community. I know I won't be able to personally fill all the shoes of our previous Pastoral staffing structure. And I will make mistakes. But I plan to "keep calm and carry on." Thankfully being a Minister is quite relational work, which means we can "keep calm and carry on" together! We have a strong community of committed people, a loveliness of care for one another, and excellent lay leadership. We can also lean on our scriptures this month, which remind us to sink deeper into relationship with God, to stand on a level place, to love our neighbors with mercy, and to experience awe.

With Purpose and Connection, I pray blessing on our Epiphany Season.

Warmly,
Pastor Rachel

The Mission of The Community Church shall be "To worship God and share the love of Jesus Christ, teaching the message of Jesus to all ages and putting our faith into action."

LIVE-STREAMED GRATITUDE

Rev. Benjamin Broadbent, Lead Minister
(on sabbatical, February 1 – May 1, 2022)

“The Spirit helps us...” – Romans 8:26

In their book on leadership, Ronald Heifetz and Donald Laurie make a distinction between “technical” and “adaptive” challenges. With technical challenges, “the necessary know-how and procedures are already available.” For example, a technical challenge in our church, like “We need to let the congregation know whether worship this week will be in-person, on Zoom, live-streamed, or some combination?” can be addressed with, “The Congregational Administrator will notify the congregation in the weekly all-church email.”

“ Adaptive challenges require experiments, new discoveries, and novel adjustments.

Ronald Heifetz and Donald Laurie

What about adaptive challenges? Adaptive challenges, according to Heifetz and Laurie, “require experiments, new discoveries, and novel adjustments.” A huge adaptive challenge we faced in the past 6 months was, “How do we create the ability to offer live-streamed video of worship services and other events from our sanctuary once we are able to return to indoor and in-person gatherings?” At the outset, we did not know who could lead the process of addressing this challenge; we did know how we could fund it; we did not know who could take on smaller pieces of the project; and we did not know who could run the system once it was installed. Nevertheless, the Spirit helped us by providing people with energy and gifts to address this challenge.

It began with a generous financial gift from Garth & Norma Watson. Garth had served for a time on our Safe Return Task Force, and he could see that once we started to return to in-person worship we would need to have a way to continue including people who preferred to worship from home and out of town/state/country. These funds created possibilities. Thank you, Norma and Garth!

Those of you who participated in Zoom worship anytime between September 2020 and June 2021 know that one blessing of the pandemic situation was that we, as a congregation, got to enjoy professional recordings of our Handbell Ensemble enabled by our Handbell Director and church member, Karna Roa. Separate from her music responsibilities, Karna agreed to manage the overall live-stream project. She had a friend who had set up live-streaming capabilities for his own church in Reno and been sharing his expertise with other churches. Karna put in many hours figuring out what equipment we would need to buy that would interface with our current sound system and what human supports would need to be in place to make the system run consistently. Thank you, Karna!

John Henel, in addition to serving as our church Treasurer in recent years, is also our webmaster and technical go-to person. John helped set up a new mesh Wi-Fi system throughout the campus, including the sanctuary. We would need this strong signal in order to livestream from the sanctuary. Thank you, John!

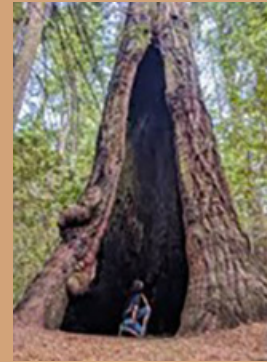
Kim Buckman was tapped to build a shelf that would hold the two cameras that we currently use, one with a fixed, wide-angle lens, and another with a rotating telescopic lens. It was a relatively small project, but one without which the live-stream project would have stalled. Thank you, Buck!

Based on the recommendation of Karna and her friend, we purchased a new laptop with high-definition media card, the two cameras mentioned above, and various other cords and adapters to make this new hardware compatible with our sanctuary sound system. But who would be able to competently run the system on a consistent basis? Teenagers.

Continued on page 6

ALL-AGES LENTEN WORKSHOP / NATURE WALK

February 27 at 3:00pm
Grove of Old Trees
17599 Fitzpatrick Ln, Occidental



Our Lenten Workshop this year will be a Nature Walk at the Grove of Old Trees, a forest preserved by LandPaths off Joy Road in Occidental. All people are welcome! We will meet up at the parking lot for a prayer and brief instructions, then meander through the forest of old-growth redwoods, each at our own pace. As we walk, we will each be on the lookout for three things to take home for our Lenten journey: 1 symbol of life, 1 symbol of death, 1 symbol of resurrection. These found nature objects will become for us symbols we pray with during Lent. The trails at the Grove of Old Trees are fairly flat (not hilly) and covered in soft redwood and pine needles. There's a small parking area in front of the Grove, carpooling is recommended.

For an at-home alternative, you can begin with prayer, asking God to be with you as you move around your home in search of three objects : 1 symbol of life, 1 symbol of death, 1 symbol of resurrection. You might cut out a photo of trees from this newsletter (life), find some dried flowers (death), and draw a picture of a butterfly (resurrection). Look around with intention and see what speaks to you.

Once settled at home with your three objects, place them on your dining table, to pray with at meal time throughout Lent. Your prayers during Lent might look something like this:

(Holding your symbol of life): God, today I noticed you when...

(Holding your symbol of death): God, today I confess that I turned away from you when...

(Holding your symbol of resurrection): God, today I thank you for showing me new life when...

Amen.

For more information about the Lenten Workshop/Nature Hike, contact Pastor Rachel pastorrachel@uccseb.org, or Kathy Bell kbellnow@yahoo.com. ☼

**TO PASTOR LACEY WITH MUCH LOVE AND GRATITUDE
FROM COMMUNITY CHURCH OF SEBASTOPOL YOUTH GROUPS**

Farewell Sunday, January 23, 2022, for Rev. Lacey Hunter, Associate Minister of Faith Formation

- ☼ Thank you for leading Youth Group, and for your amazing sermons. Thanks for many great memories.
- ☼ Thank you for providing so many children's lessons and activities (both distance and in-person) during this long, long pandemic.
- ☼ Pastor Lacey related to people and understood their problems and what they were going through. I learned new ways to pray like breathing and meditation. I am used to praying by verbalizing. One of the services I found to be most fun was building the mini houses for the homeless.
- ☼ Thank you so much for being such a welcoming and amazing person. You are so caring and you have been such a generous giver. I am sad to see you leaving but I know you will be just as incredible wherever your life takes you. Thank you again for everything you have done.
- ☼ Lacey, I appreciate how fun and interesting you have made youth group, even on zoom and I am sad that you will be leaving. I always left youth group with many new ideas to contemplate. We'll miss your presence at this church. Thank you for spreading so much fun and joy into our community!
- ☼ Lacey is a great listener and fun to hang out with.
- ☼ The thing I would like to say about Lacey is that even though COVID, Lacey found a way to keep youth group going for the most part and kept the meetings entertaining. It was always a space that I could go just to check with myself in the safety of my church youth group. She made it engaging and something to look forward to in a time of need for everyone but especially us youth with our lack of socialization.
- ☼ I appreciate that Lacey is always supportive when it comes to activism and helps me understand what it means to be a servant of the Lord.
- ☼ Lacey made Youth Group and Church special by being her self. One of my favorite part about Lacey is how kind she is. She always wants to help the community and is super generous to spend her time making a difference. My favorite thing I did with her was to do the mulching at Ragle Park. It was my first big project and I was really nervous but she made it fun. I will miss her so much and I hope she knows how important she is to me, the Youth Group, and the Church.
- ☼ Thank you for all you've done Pastor Lacey. You're really cool.
- ☼ Lacey has taught me that people have not been as fortunate as us here and that it takes a community as a whole to help everyone in these times.
- ☼ Hi Pastor Lacey, Thank you for always being such a wonderful pastor and friend to me through all of the Sundays together. Best of luck with your future endeavors!
- ☼ Lacey is so kind and understanding. I am so glad I got to meet them and enjoy church over the past two years, thanks to Lacey. When we would go to Garth's farm and work on it, even though we were all tired and hot, we had a really fun time. Lacey is a big part of that. I am so sad that we see Lacey go, but so excited for them to start a new chapter and make so many more happy memories. Lacey is so loved and will be so missed.☼

WELCOME FOUR NEW INCOMING LEADERSHIP COUNCIL MEMBERS

Thanks to John Henel, Kathy Bell, Joyce Cox and Larell Fineren for their service on the Leadership Council. Their terms end in January. During the Annual Meeting on January 30, the congregation will be voting on the nominations below:

Bobbie Johanson will be joining Leadership Council as the member for Mission and Outreach ministry. She is a past moderator and has been active on our Gratitude and Generosity Team and Nominating Committee this last year. She has been a Youth Leader and participated on Youth and Adult Mission Trips. She currently sings in the choir, plays handbells, knits prayer shawls, and writes care cards for Women's Fellowship. Now a retired teacher, she enjoys being a grandma, golfing, quilting and playing games of all kinds.

Deidra Warner will be the new Treasurer. Her husband and she are both structural engineers. They have three sons, Lincoln, Parker and Callen. Deidra grew up in our church and is the daughter of Chris and Lisa Dawson. She has served on the Budget Committee when we used to have a Board of Trustees. She is a good thinker and clear communicator and will be an asset to our Leadership Council in this position.

Pat Furber will be our new Leadership Council member in the area of Faith Formation. She has been a member for 46 years. Pat is a retired school teacher and raised her two daughters, Amy and Andrea in our church. She has been a Youth Leader and been on the Personnel Committee. She has helped out with children's ministry and is blessed to have her granddaughter Avy involved. Pat sings soprano in our Chancel Choir and helps with the Care Card Ministry of Women's Fellowship. Pat and her family never missed Family Camp at Caz and were very sad to see it sold.

Debbie Stewart will be the new Leadership Council member as Officer for Personnel (Secretary). She was born in San Francisco, and moved to Sonoma County in 1970. She has one sister, niece and nephew, who live in the area of Roseville. She retired very early from State Farm Insurance. She spends much of her time walking, hiking, doing some photography, traveling around in Europe. She hopes to bring new ideas to the Leadership Council, and getting to know more members of the congregation. ❁

Live-Streamed Gratitude, Continued from page 3

Karna met with our Tech Team to train them on how the system worked and what would need to be done on a week-to-week basis to create a quality live-stream. Initially, Aaron Knuth and Marin Broadbent-Bell got up to speed so that we could begin live-streamed worship from the sanctuary on November 28, 2021, the First Sunday in Advent. Within a few weeks, Jonah Gonzales and Owen Thomas were also trained. If you've watched the live-stream, you know that there are different camera angles. These are set before the worship service by the Tech Team based on what will be happening in the service. You may also have noticed titles that come up at the beginning of each piece of the liturgy. These are also created ahead of time by the Tech Team. Each Sunday, they respond to technical challenges and work to improve the live-stream experience for all. Thank you, Aaron, Marin, Jonah, and Owen!

Enabling live-streamed worship is one adaptive challenge we have faced as a church and responded to with success. We are so grateful to Garth, Norma, Karna, John, Buck, Aaron, Marin, Jonah, and Owen for the parts they have played in expanding our ministry in this way. I hope you'll express a word of thanks to each of them as the opportunities arise.

Also, let this example be a parable for the kinds of things we can accomplish as a congregation especially when we don't know right away how we will respond to new challenges. Adaptive challenges will require experimentation, risk, some failure, and people willing to do their smaller part in service of the larger good. We do this with confidence because, as always, "the Spirit helps us." ❁

OPPORTUNITY AWAITS!

By Linda Roa, Council Member for Worship & Arts

The church is in need of ushers each Sunday. Serving as an usher is a wonderful opportunity to meet and greet people as they enter in the morning. It is neither difficult nor burdensome. All you need is a smile and a brief word of "welcome" or "Hello, nice to see you!" Being an usher does not mean a long commitment—only an occasional Sunday morning when you will already be in church. We will do any instruction or training necessary which means only 10-15 minutes of your time, one time only.

Read this comment by an enthusiastic usher: "Ushering is very satisfying because I get to offer help to others. One example is anticipating their need for a hearing device, offering it, then hearing about their absolute delight after being able to finally hear everything that was said during the service!"

There is a sign-up tablet on the table in the narthex as you enter the back of the church. We need a minimum of 2 people (preferably 3-4) each week. All you need to do is look at your calendar and sign up for any dates you can be available to help in this area of ministry. Community Church prides itself in being abundantly welcoming and without greeters and ushers, this is difficult. You will have my support as Council Member for Worship and Arts. Please join the Usher Team by saying "YES!" Thank you! With any questions, please call me at 707-331-2723. ✨



HONOR A LOVED ONE OR SPECIAL EVENT

By Kathy Matthies

Our Flower Team can provide an arrangement which you can dedicate to a person or an event.

Here's how it works:

- * Using the chart in the church narthex, sign your name on an available date.
- * Give to the church office, or put in the offering plate, a check for \$50-\$75 payable to "Community Church" with "Chancel Flowers" in the memo line.
- * 1-2 weeks prior to the date you selected, the church office will contact you for dedication information and a member of the Flower Team will contact you about the arrangement itself.
- * Following the Sunday service, you may either take the arrangement home or request that it be delivered to a homebound member.



For more information, contact Kathy Matthies at kathleenmatthies57@gmail.com or 707.758.3970

More from the Flower Team

The Flower Team has lost a few of our volunteers to retirement or moving out of the community. If you love to arrange flowers, (expertise is not a requirement), just the love of flowers and how they make worship beautiful. The commitment would be about 4-5 Sundays throughout the year. If you can help and share your love of flowers please contact Kathy Matthies at kathleenmatthies57@gmail.com or 707.758.3970. The Flower Team needs you. ✨

February Birthdays

4 Terry Beck
4 Elaine Carlson
4 Nathan Knuth
5 Laura Pearsall
5 Larell Fineren
6 Ellen Sullivan
9 Chris Warner
9 Amy Scribner

11 Kathie Mayhew
14 Jennifer Halleck
14 Sandy Hendrickson
14 Kiley Clark
15 Brian Wetzel
15 Martha Kautz
15 Joan Carter
16 Parker Warner
16 Ruth Grant

18 Sonja Larssen
19 John Henel
20 Nico Bagley
22 Bethany Nelson
22 Gary Weeks
22 Theresa Weigel
23 Jean Boal
23 Judy Davison
28 Erika DelMonte

CELEBRATING BLACK HISTORY MONTH

By Kathy Matthies

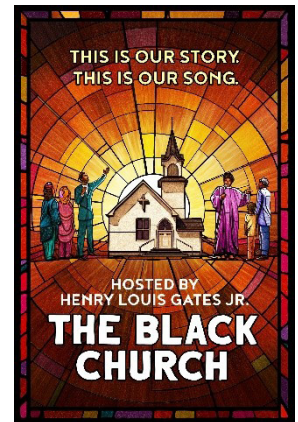
The month of February is Black History Month in the United States and Faith Formation Teams would like to present a couple of events to honor Black History.

Event #1: Creation of Collage Art Pieces of "Black Jesus"

Collage artist Muriel Weaver and banner/craft artist Kathy Matthies will be offering their talents with our youth on Sunday, February 6th after church (lunch provided) to create collage art pieces of "Black Jesus" using a collection of artwork of beautiful images of Black Jesus. It will also be an opportunity to learn the history of how Jesus has been portrayed in art images. If you are a youth interested in creating these art installations that will be on display in the church narthex throughout the month of February, contact Kathy Matthies. kathleenmatthies57@gmail.com or call her at 707.758.3970

Event #2: "The Black Church: This Is Our Story, This is Our Song" Media Viewing Series

Join a limited capacity of viewers (* due to COVID) to watch this critically acclaimed documentary series on the history of the Black Church in the United States. This two-part series (each part is 1 hr 45 min) from executive producer, host and writer Henry Louis Gates, Jr., the Alphonse Fletcher University Professor at Harvard University and director of the Hutchins Center for African and African American Research, that traces the 400-year-old story of the Black church in America, all the way down to its bedrock role as the site of African American survival and grace, organizing and resilience, thriving and testifying, autonomy and freedom, solidarity and speaking truth to power. The documentary reveals how Black people have worshipped and, through their spiritual journeys, improvised ways to bring their faith traditions from Africa to the New World, while translating them into a form of Christianity that was not only truly their own, but a redemptive force for a nation whose original sin was found in their ancestors' enslavement across the Middle Passage. Link to view the trailer: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Wu7_HisWgBU



The series will be two Sundays after church in February in the media room. (Brunch Bites provided in the courtyard Kindred hour for these Sundays)

- ➔ Sunday, February 13
- ➔ Sunday, February 20

*Due to COVID restrictions that may or may not be in place at the time of this series, a limited capacity will be required, and everyone will need to be masked. Preferably with KN95 masks. ❄️

Events in February at Community Church

With the Omicron surge, the church is livestreaming worship services thru February 11. Some meetings are held in-person so long as they meet the County Health guidelines. Check for updates on our online calendar at <https://uccseb.org/Calendar.php>.

- Feb 1 Rev. Benjamin Broadbent, Lead Minister, starts sabbatical until May 1
Grounds Team, 9:00 a.m., church campus
Men's Discussion Group, 11:30 a.m., Bell Tower Courtyard
Handbell Ensemble, 4:30 p.m., Zoom
- Feb 2 Women's Bible Study, 10:00 a.m., Classroom 6
Staff Team, 10:00 a.m., Fireside Room
Handbell Ensemble, 2:00 p.m., Sanctuary
- Feb 3 Women's Fellowship Card Writing Ministry, 3:00 p.m.
Chancel Choir Rehearsal, 7:00 p.m., Choir Room
- Feb 6 5th Sunday after Epiphany, 10:30 a.m., Livestream
Black History Youth Collage Art Project, 11:30 a.m.
- Feb 8 Grounds Team, 9:00 a.m., church campus
Men's Discussion Group, 11:30 a.m., Bell Tower Courtyard
Handbell Ensemble, 4:30 p.m., Zoom
Outreach Committee, 7:00 p.m., Fireside Room
- Feb 9 Women's Bible Study, 10:00 a.m., Classroom 6
Staff Team, 10:00 a.m., Fireside Room
Handbell Ensemble, 2:00 p.m., Sanctuary
- Feb 10 Chancel Choir Rehearsal, 7:00 p.m., Choir Room
- Feb 12 Youth Group Service Project, 10:00 a.m., Fellowship Hall/Bell Tower Courtyard
Second Saturday Lunch, 11:30 a.m., Bell Tower Courtyard
- Feb 13 6th Sunday after Epiphany, 10:30 a.m., Sanctuary or livestream
Kinship Time, 11:30 a.m., Bell Tower Courtyard
Black Church Media Viewing, 11:30 a.m., Media Room
- Feb 15 Salt & Light Newsletter deadline
Grounds Team, 9:00 a.m., church campus
Handbell Ensemble, 4:30 p.m., Zoom
- Feb 16 Women's Bible Study, 10:00 a.m., Classroom 6
Staff Team, 10:00 a.m., Fireside Room
Handbell Ensemble, 2:00 p.m., Sanctuary
- Feb 17 Chancel Choir Rehearsal, 7:00 p.m., Choir Room
- Feb 20 7th Sunday after Epiphany, 10:30 a.m., Sanctuary or livestream
Kinship Time, 11:30 a.m., Bell Tower Courtyard
Black Church Media Viewing, 11:30 a.m., Media Room
- Feb 22 Grounds Team, 9:00 a.m., church campus
Handbell Ensemble, 4:30 p.m., Zoom
- Feb 23 Women's Bible Study, 10:00 a.m., Offsite
Staff Team, 10:00 a.m., Fireside Room
Handbell Ensemble, 2:00 p.m., Sanctuary
- Feb 24 Chancel Choir Rehearsal, 7:00 p.m., Choir Room
- Feb 27 8th Sunday after Epiphany/Transfiguration, 10:30 a.m., Sanctuary or livestream
Kinship Time, 11:30 a.m., Bell Tower Courtyard

Suspended until further notice:

- ◆ Showers
- ◆ UkeStars

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