

SALT & LIGHT

COMMUNITY CHURCH OF SEBASTOPOL
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

MARCH 2022 NEWSLETTER

Purpose and Connection

By Rev. Rachel Knuth, Acting Lead Minister

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, temp
Maria Mojica, on leave

Pastor Emeritus

Rev. Gene Nelson



I love this artwork that depicts hands in the ground, nurturing the roots and growth of a fig tree, in artist Rev. Lauren Wright Pittman's painting, *You Are Worthy*. With



"You Are Worthy"
by Rev. Lauren Wright Pittman

simple graphics, we see how, as the artist says, the "loving arms of the Gardener reach out to provide us everything we need." I appreciate the tattoo-looking arms and the simple use of color, just a bit of gold— but it's underground, shining from the roots. Rev. Pittman says she created the sleeves to show all the things a plant needs, not just to survive, but to thrive. In the sleeves I see sun, rain, earth, water. But I also see a bit of adversity in the rock— and I'm learning that actually a wee bit of challenge makes a plant stronger. At our house, when we planted fruit trees last year, they seemed so spindly and small. But the wind actually nudged them to strengthen up their trunks a bit. (I know some of my children will be in college or beyond, before these new trees bear fruit— but I'm banking on nectarines with grandchildren!). The small bit of adversity now will be strength for the fruit-bearing years of the future.

Lent is a season when we are invited by our scriptures and rhythm of the church year to sink our hands and hearts into deeper soil and experience what's underground. It's a time when we might examine our own roots and consider how to provide nurture for our faith to continue to grow— for our individual paths, and for our church community. It may be a time of confession, of releasing (or "giving up") what holds us back from our relationship with God. It may also be a time of rooting ourselves down and saying yes to that internal, underground growth that will support us in the seasons to come.

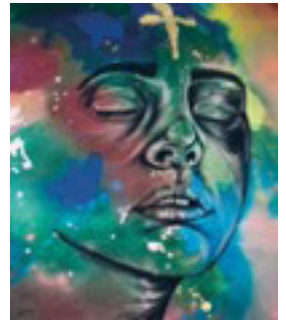


MARCH 2022 WORSHIP

- ◆ We worship in the sanctuary every Sunday at 10:30am
- ◆ Services live streamed on our church's YouTube channel and FaceBook page.
- ◆ Weekly bulletin and announcements available at www.uccseb.org

March 2 – Ash Wednesday worship at 6:30pm in the Sanctuary

Join worship leaders Andy DelMonte, and Pastor Rachel for a special service with imposition of ashes. Facing our mortality in a death-denying culture can be freeing. Together we will remember that from dust we have been made, and to dust we shall return.



“Stardust”

by Rev. Lisle Gwynn Garrity

March 6 – 1st Sunday in Lent / Communion

The Chancel Choir offers sacred music, Rev. Rachel Knuth preaches a sermon on Luke 4:1-13, and we share Communion.

March 13 – 2nd Sunday in Lent * (Vaccination Required for In-Person Worship)

The Handbell Ensemble connects us to a spirit of worship, and Rev. Daniel Ross-Jones is our guest preacher. Rev. Ross-Jones is an Associate Conference Minister in the Northern California-Nevada Conference of the UCC. He is a native Minnesotan, has served as a community chaplain to incarcerated people, has provided regional denominational leadership, and holds a specialty in Religious Fundraising.

*Current NCNC-UCC policy requires our Conference Staff to participate only in vaccinated settings. On March 13 our ushers will be checking vaccine cards at the door. Please bring proof of vaccination if you would like to worship in-person this day. We will be live-streaming as usual, as well.

March 20 – 3rd Sunday in Lent

The Chancel Choir raises their voices to God, and Rev. Rachel Knuth offers a sermon on Luke 13:1-9, the Parable of the Fig Tree.

March 27 – 4th Sunday in Lent

Andy DelMonte offers music, and Sarah Neidhoefer is our guest preacher. Ms. Neidhoefer is the Director of the Plumb Line Institute, focused on mission alignment, spirituality, and personal student growth programming. She holds a Master of Divinity Degree from Yale, served in the Jesuit Volunteer Corps, and is a mother of four teens.

Coming in April... Palm/Passion Sunday, Holy Week, Easter, and Additional Guest Preachers✠

Community Behavioral Covenant: Come on in, the water's fine!

+

Join us after worship: March 13 & April 3 in the Fireside Room



As presented at the Annual Meeting, our church is embarking on the process of creating a Community Behavioral Covenant. Our church Moderator, Bob Curtis, along with Kathy Bell, and I have been tasked by the Leadership Council to support and lead this process. We'll be offering Listening Circles on March 13 and April 3 to hear what your thoughts are about a Community Behavioral Covenant and what you think ought to be included in one for our church. During our time together, we'll briefly talk about what a Behavioral Covenant is, and give some examples. We'll also ask you what values you think are important for our church to stand on—and we'll brainstorm what the “worst church ever” and “best church ever” might look like. We'd really like to hear your thoughts, and look forward to being with you. For more information, contact Bob robertfcurtis@gmail.com, Kathy kbellnow@yahoo.com, or me pastorrachel@uccseb.org.

—Pastor Rachel



Purpose and Connection, Continued from page 1

And to do this, to grow in faith, we need stories. Human beings for all time have been hungry for stories. We long to hear what happened to those who have gone before us—how they encountered suffering, and how God came alongside them in it. We have a need to tell our stories to each other— and this requires brave storytellers and generous listeners, both. The late writer, William Kittredge, once wrote, “What we need most urgently is a fresh dream of who we are that will tell us how we should act... stories that tell us to stay humane amid our confusions... We need stories that will encourage us to understand that we are part of everything, that the world exists under our skins, and that destroying it is a way of killing ourselves. Our lilacs bloom, and buzz with honeybees and hummingbirds. We can still find ways to live in some approximation of heaven.” I think part of what he's saying here is that stories ground us and help us grow.

“
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faith, we
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”

As we embark on our Lenten journey together, it's a time of deep storytelling. Our scriptures will lead us to listen for God's story unfolding over the aeons— stories of God's faithfulness in desert places and parables of frustration. Through it all, God provides— filling God's people to the brim. Our Lenten practices will also support us. There will be a number of opportunities this Lent for each of us to sink deeper in our own lives— from a “Good Enough Lent Group” to establishing a prayer practice at our evening meals at home, to a “Faith Journey Cafe” evening of storytelling and community. This Lent, I invite you to choose at least one of our Lenten programs—choose one that will fill you to the brim, so you are ready when God calls you to be poured out in love in another season. Or maybe at least, choose the practices this Lent that will make you full “enough” to the brim. I look forward to the lengthening of days, the strengthening of capacity, the listening and telling of holy stories— and how through it all, we will continue to grow, together. ✨



Full to the Brim: Special Programs for Lent

by Pastor Rachel

This Lenten season we have several opportunities for our whole church to deepen connection with God and each other in community. Psalm 118:5 says, "I cried out to God in my narrowness, and God answered with great expanse." This Lent you are invited to live into God's great expanse, in whatever ways bring you closer to God. Here are some great options:

- ✿ **Create a home altar to guide your prayer life using symbols of life, death, and resurrection (from the all-church Nature Hike, or objects you find at home)**

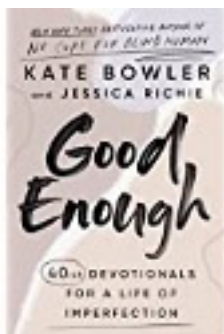
Whether you joined the all-church Nature Hike, or not, find three nature objects around your home, to be symbols of life, death, and resurrection. Once settled at home with your three objects, place them on your dining table, to pray with at meal time throughout Lent. Your evening mealtime prayers during 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.

- ✿ **Join and attend the "Good Enough Lent Group" on Sunday mornings**



I'm so delighted we'll be offering a "Good Enough" Faith Group on Sunday mornings in Lent, using Kate Bowler's brand new book of devotionals— called "Good Enough: 40-ish Devotionals for a Life of Imperfection." Kate Bowler is a history professor at Duke, known in particular for her research into the rise of the Prosperity Gospel. She's also a young mother who was diagnosed with Stage IV cancer when she was 35. Her writing is insightful,

Lenten Season Children's Ministry Events

✿ March 6

1st Sunday of Lent

We will talk about what lent is, and see how it is the same and how it is different from Advent.

✿ March 13

2nd Sunday of Lent

Faces of Easter 1

✿ March 20

3rd Sunday of Lent

Faces of Easter 2

✿ March 27

4th Sunday of Lent

Faces of Easter 3

Youth Group Events

✿ March 13

12:00 to 2:00 p.m.

Lunch ☞ Games

Discussion ☞ Worksip

Let's talk about a Mission Trip!

✿ March 27

6:30 -9:00 p.m.

Movie Night

Bring a friend

Full to the Brim, Continued from page 4

accessible, and excellent. The book comes with a companion journal, which we'll also be providing to the group. I'm grateful for Gina Scribner, who will be facilitating this program: kagscrib@gmail.com.

✿ Pick up a copy of "Full to the Brim" a self-guided devotional

These weekly devotionals from A Sanctified Art offer poetry, commentary, and art to sustain you throughout Lent. You'll recognize some of the artwork from our bulletin covers this Lent. It's appropriate for youth and adults of all ages, and you can go at your own pace. Stop by the church office for your free color copy to take home.



✿ Participate in our church's one-night-only Faith Journey Cafe: March 29th at 6:30pm (RSVP Required!)

For one evening only, we'll gather in the Fountain Courtyard under cafe lights for a program we're calling "Faith Journey Cafe." The first half of the evening we'll hear the Faith Journey of Community Church of Sebastopol, featuring Chris Jenkins and Kathy Bell, telling our church's story. What makes for a compelling faith journey story— is when someone's faith helps them through a difficult time. We'll reflect back on our own church's past challenges and how those who came before us navigated those times. The second half of the evening will be spent seated at round tables, sharing our own journeys of faith in small groups. Due to covid, we will not be sharing a meal, but our Women's Fellowship will provide cookies after the program ends for anyone who would like to linger and nosh. Please RSVP for this event in the church office by Sunday, March 20, so we can set up for the right size crowd. For more information, contact Pastor Rachel: pastorrachel@uccseb.org.

Coming in April: Holy Week events, including a viewing of the film "Jesus: His Life," Maundy Thursday foot washing and tenebrae, Easter! ✿

Pastor Lacey's Farewell with the Youth

By Kathy Bell



On the last Saturday evening in January, 20 youth and 7 adults gathered in the fountain courtyard for one last youth group meeting with Pastor Lacey. The evening started off with some rock painting. We wrote messages and made art for Lacey to bring to her new church home in Alameda. After some fun and games... and PIZZA, we gathered around two campfires (to keep us socially distanced) .. and had S'mores.

Around the campfire, Lacey had time to say good bye and thank the kids for welcoming her into their lives. Likewise, the youth had time to share appreciations for all that Lacey has done and been for them during these last 2 ½ years. It was a bitter-sweet event that ending with the 500 miles dance

around the fountain, an old camp tradition for many of the youth. We wish Pastor Lacey all the best as she finds her new Church Home. She will be missed! ✿



One Great Hour of Sharing®

This Lenten Offering is one of four special mission offerings of the United Church of Christ. It supports the disaster, refugee, and development ministries of the United Church of Christ within Wider Church Ministries.

Make a secure online gift today, giving generously to the One Great Hour of Sharing offering. The offering dates are March 27 and April 3. ✨

Thresholds

* We welcome with love, Baby Leona Rain Fox, born to Nicole Porter & Patrick Fox, February 5, 2022

* We release with blessing, Jack Curtis, who died at age 102 on November 18, 2021



March Birthdays

1	Jamie Lerum	12	Avy Card	23	Bridget Hole
1	Maya Malone	12	Owen Thomas	25	Kathy Smith
3	Connie Blackstone	12	Reece Thomas	26	Josephine Nirmala
3	C.J. Hudlow	13	Ruth Ann Midi	26	Olivia Stoll
3	Nancy Degenkolb	14	Michelle Brueggemann	26	Elliot Butterfield
4	Pam Kruse	15	Luis Quezada	26	Erin Butterfield
5	Denelle Tognozzi	16	Cecelia MacKillop	29	Rich McChesney
5	Hope Madden	17	Lori Babcock	30	Margarette Murakami
5	Susan Olson	18	Karyl Clendenen Drennon	30	Lois Michelsen
6	Ross Galleto	18	Jerry Coleman	31	Zoë Dillard
9	Julie Davis	19	Bree Cassells		
10	Leslie Wood	20	Joyce Cox		
10	Amy Olson Rocha	20	Christine Vincent		
11	Kendall Dawson	21	Eliana Curtis		
11	Joella Falkingham	22	Taylor Davison		
11	Curt Nichols	23	Nao Noguchi		
11	Elena Larssen	23	Esme Arendt		

Events in March at Community Church

Sunday worship is held in-person with the option to livestream. 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>.

Mar 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

Mar 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
Ash Wednesday Worship, 6:30 p.m., Sanctuary

Mar 3 Women's Fellowship Card Writing Ministry, 3:00 p.m.
Chancel Choir Rehearsal, 7:00 p.m., Choir Room

Mar 4 Board Games Group, 1:00 p.m., Media Room

Mar 6 1st Sunday in Lent, 10:30 a.m., Sanctuary
Kinship Time, 11:30 a.m., Bell Tower Courtyard

Mar 8 Grounds Team, 9:00 a.m., church campus
Handbell Ensemble, 4:30 p.m., Zoom
Outreach Committee, 7:00 p.m., Fireside Room

Mar 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

Mar 10 Chancel Choir Rehearsal, 7:00 p.m., Choir Room

Mar 12 Second Saturday Lunch, 11:30 a.m., Bell Tower Courtyard

Mar 13 2nd Sunday in Lent, 10:30 a.m., Sanctuary
Kinship Time, 11:30 a.m., Bell Tower Courtyard

Mar 15 Salt & Light Newsletter deadline
Grounds Team, 9:00 a.m., church campus
Handbell Ensemble, 4:30 p.m., Zoom

Mar 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
Leadership Council, 6:30 p.m., Media Room

Mar 17 Personnel Committee, 3:00 p.m., Zoom
Chancel Choir Rehearsal, 7:00 p.m., Choir Room

Mar 20 3rd Sunday in Lent, 10:30 a.m., Sanctuary
Kinship Time, 11:30 a.m., Bell Tower Courtyard

Mar 22 Grounds Team, 9:00 a.m., church campus
Handbell Ensemble, 4:30 p.m., Zoom

Mar 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

Mar 24 Chancel Choir Rehearsal, 7:00 p.m., Choir Room

Mar 27 4th Sunday in Lent, 10:30 a.m., Sanctuary
Kinship Time, 11:30 a.m., Bell Tower Courtyard

Mar 29 Grounds Team, 9:00 a.m., church campus
Handbell Ensemble, 4:30 p.m., Zoom
Faith Journey Cafe, 6:30 p.m., Fountain Courtyard

Mar 30 Women's Bible Study, 10:00 a.m., Offsite
Staff Team, 10:00 a.m., Fireside Room
Handbell Ensemble, 2:00 p.m., Sanctuary

Suspended until further notice:

- » Showers
- » UkeStars

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Sebastopol, CA 95472



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