

SALT & LIGHT

COMMUNITY CHURCH OF SEBASTOPOL
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
AUGUST 2024 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

Associate Minister

Rev. Rachel Knuth

**Congregational
Administrator**

Joy Richards

Choral Director

Andy DelMonte

Keyboardist

J. Althea

Handbell Director

Karna Roa

Bookkeeper

Deanna Euritt

Custodian

Keith Brown

Pastor Emeritus

Rev. Gene Nelson



Summertime: The Living is Easy?
Dr. Rev. Benjamin J. Broadbent, Lead Minister

This summer at the Community Church of Sebastopol, we have been “Living the Questions.” Of the varieties of questions that people ask me, many have to do with money and the church. Below are some common questions and my best responses:

1. *Why does the report in the bulletin show us in the black (revenue exceeding expenses) in the Spring but in the red (expenses exceeding revenue) in the Fall?*

Some households pay their annual pledge in full early in the year. In 2024, by the end of June, 25 households had fulfilled their pledge for the whole year, totaling \$83,000. 6 months into the year, we have received 12 months of giving from these households.

2. *Does our congregation pass a balanced annual budget?*

Yes, though for the past couple of years we have balanced the budget by drawing upon “Undesignated Reserves,” funds we accumulated in prior years to help us in the case of a financially challenging year. Since 2020, the year COVID arrived, we have drawn upon our reserves to balance the budget. Since 2018, these funds have dropped from \$98,667 to \$13,627.

3. *Have the church’s expenses increased dramatically in recent years?*

In 2023, expenses were a little less than they were in 2018. Our highest expenses were in 2019, the year our staff had 2 full-time pastors and a half-time pastor. Our 2024 expenses are projected to be 4% higher than 2023.

4. *What is the profile of member pledges?*

Ours is a generous congregation. 131 households have pledged \$360,260 to Local Ministry (Operating Fund) and an additional \$30,796 to Wider Mis-

sion. Those amounts have increased by \$99,000 and \$18,000, respectively, since 2016. Our congregation is bucking the trends of many similar churches.

5. *What budget challenges will we be facing in the next few year?*

- Having used much of our reserves, congregation members will need to increase pledges to sustain current staffing levels, especially given our commitment to just compensation for all staff persons.



Cont. on Page 13

August 2024 Worship

Worship Details:

We worship in the sanctuary on Sundays at 10:00 a.m.
Services live streamed on our church's [YouTube channel](#) & [Facebook page](#)
Weekly bulletin and announcements available at www.uccseb.org

Summer Worship Theme: **“Living the Questions”**

August 4 – 11th Sunday after Pentecost

Today we celebrate Holy Communion, **Benji Margulis** shares special music, and **Rev. Benjamin Broadbent**, Lead Minister, preaches a sermon on [2 Samuel 11:26–12:13a](#) entitled, “Speaking Truth to Power.”

August 6 – Hiroshima & Nagasaki Remembrance Day

August 11 – 12th Sunday after Pentecost

Today **Judy Hawkins** and **Andy DelMonte** provide special music and **Pastor Benjamin** preaches a sermon on [2 Samuel 18:5–9, 15, 31–33](#) entitled “Futility of War.”

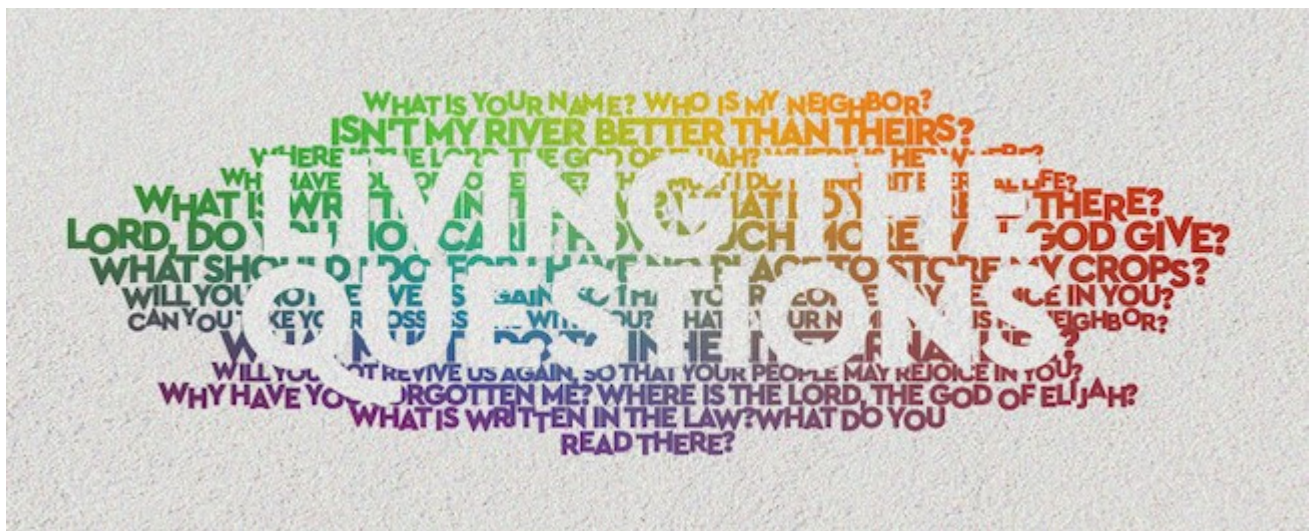
August 18 – 13th Sunday after Pentecost

Today **Garth Watson** provides special music and **Rev. Rachel Knuth**, Associate Minister, preaches a sermon on [1 Kings 2:1–12, 3: 3–14](#) entitled “Conventional and Unconventional Wisdom.”

August 25 – 14th Sunday after Pentecost

On this special day, **Sheina, Ainsley, and Quinn Curtis** provide special music as we host as our honored guest preacher, **Rev. Dr. Davena Jones**, Conference Minister of the Northern California Nevada Conference, United Church of Christ.

Coming in September... Gathering of the Waters, Launch Sunday, All-Church Camp Weekend, Mission Sunday, Neighbors in Need Special Offering



August 2024 Faith Formation Hour

“Fay-Fo” Lineup for August
Sundays, 11:15 - 12:15

August 4 — Adult Bible Basics. Pastor Rachel will be offering a 4-week Bible Basics class for adults. Last Spring, when our 5-7th graders participated in a class to learn how to read the Bible, if you thought to yourself: “Wow, I wish I could go to that class,” then, This Is Your Moment! Intended to be a four-week series, but drop ins are welcome. There will be hands on activities, small group work and discussion.

August 11— Week 2 of Adult Bible Basics Series.

August 18 — Karym Sanchez our liaison to the North Bay Organizing Project (NBOP), hosted by **Judy Davison & Pastor Benjamin**. Week 3 of Adult Bible Basics Series continues.

August 25 — We are delighted to host **Dr. Davena Jones**, Conference Minister of the Northern California-Nevada Conference of the UCC. Week 4 conclusion of the Adult bible Basics Series.

Faith Formation



Coming in September—Pastor Rachel & Terrie Harper will lead Godly Play for All, a chance for anyone who’s “Godly Play Curious” to come experience a full Godly Play session (parents and interest adults especially welcome)! Pastor Benjamin begins a series **Grace Saves All**, a podcast and discussion format. Starting on Launch Sunday, September 8, our Faith Formation Hour resumes with an exciting weekly lineup.

- ◆ Godly Play for Children K-5th
- ◆ God & Donuts for Youth Groups: 6-8th & 9th—12th
- ◆ Church Chat for Adults

There is something for everyone, every Sunday from 11:15—12:15 p.m.

Godly Play Training Retreat
With Bay Area Trainer, Jill Gidlund
August 25, 1 — 5 p.m.

Pastor Rachel Knuth

I'm thrilled to announce, we'll be hosting renown Bay Area Godly Play instructor, **Jill Gidlund**, for a **Godly Play Training Retreat**. At this retreat, you'll learn more about Godly Play, and have a chance to practice a lesson in a friendly environment. If you attended the session with Jill last spring, this will be a continuation of that retreat. And-- you don't need to have come to the spring session in order to come to this.

Even if you're curious but unsure you can join the team quite yet, I encourage you to attend, you won't want to miss this retreat-style environment, excellent Bay Area trainer, and I know you'll be glad you came.

[SIGN UP HERE](#)

About our program...

Godly Play at Community Church is for K-5th graders, and will be offered every Sunday during Faith Formation Hour, 11:15 - 12:15. Godly Play is an international Montessori-style storytelling method where children are not told what to believe, but are invited to wonder about the story with their own spiritual imaginations. I believe it is the gold-standard way to offer "Sunday School" and I'm excited we have this program at our church! It is deeply respectful of child development and what I notice is that children who have a strong foundation in Godly Play are equipped for further study in our church's Bible Class and Youth Groups, when they get older.

Come join our church's Godly Play leadership team!
It's really quite satisfying and you will love it!

Our team is supportive and a great way to make friends with other adults at church. You'll grow your own knowledge of Bible stories. Plus, you'll be providing deep spiritual nourishment for our children. You don't have to be perfect; you do have to be willing to be a nurturing presence with our church's children. If you're a parent of a child in K-5th, this is a chance to be part of your child's religious life, you will be glad you joined the Godly Play team!

For more information about Godly Play at Community Church, contact **Pastor Rachel**: pastorrachel@uccseb.org.



Godly Play...
...is BEAUTIFUL
...develops children's spirituality through WONDER
...is the GOLD STANDARD for "Sunday School"

Sundays, 11:15 - 12:15
Room 5
Community Church of Sebastopol

The graphic features a light green background with decorative leaf patterns. It includes two circular inset images: one showing a child playing with a wooden block and another showing a child sitting at a table with a chair. The text is arranged in a central column, with the title 'Godly Play...' in a cursive font at the top.



Are you “Fully Vetted” Pastor Rachel Knuth

We begin a new program year on “Launch Sunday,” September 8th. This is when our Faith Formation programs resume, Youth Groups meet again, the Chancel Choir and Handbell Ensemble are back in action, Nine-to-Dine groups form, and there’s a buzzy buzz around the whole church!

To prepare for this flurry of activity, all our volunteers working with children and youth must be “fully vetted.” This means 3 things have to be completed:

1. Livescan Background Check
2. Attend a Safe Church Policy Training
3. Complete an online module on Child Abuse Prevention.

Why do this?

Many of our volunteers are parents, teachers, and nurses, who are used to being fingerprinted at work and to volunteer in their child’s classrooms. But I do think it’s important to articulate why we are vetting our volunteers so thoroughly.



Safety First

Well, the most important thing in my mind, is making sure that our children and youth are safe. No church on the planet can say, “it can’t happen here.” But every church can implement policies that will create the safest environment possible. We do this by making sure children are never unattended at church programs, and that the adults supervising them are fully vetted. I feel like, when parents entrust their children to our care, the church has a social contract with them to keep their children safe, to the best of our ability. And the “best of our ability” is to create a safety net of vetted adults.

Industry Standard

It’s also true that the “gold standard” out in global churchlandia has become to make sure volunteers are “fully vetted.” Churches of all stripes and sizes all across America are requiring two background-checked adults (over 18) to be present for all programs for children and youth. It’s just become the norm. Honestly, churches that are not complying with this, raise a red flag. Most churches are also requiring child abuse prevention training of some kind.

It’s the Law

And, in January 2022, the California State Law “AB 506” went into effect. [Read More about the California Mandated Reporter Law HERE](#) State law now requires volunteers to be background checked, with the “two adult rule” in place, and to receive Child Abuse Prevention Training. Our church’s insurance broker, Church HR Networks, provides an online training for our volunteers that fulfills the requirement of the law. So if you’re a volunteer in our programs, a Staff Member will give you the paperwork for a background check, and send you a link to the online training, and you can complete it on your own time.

We Attend to Boundaries

When you come to a Safe Church Policy Training, we not only review the policy, we also think through the “gray area” of boundaries. We do this by examining make-believe scenarios, for example: what can happen when you don’t have enough adult supervision at a youth sleepover (hint: there might be making out!). We also spend a little time writing down our core values, and consider strategies for staying clear about adult roles when working with children and youth.

In Practice

It’s great to have a team of fully vetted volunteers who are revved up and ready to lead. The process of becoming “fully vetted” actually has a way of building camaraderie, because people feel like we’re all on the same team.

Our church safety net only grows stronger with the more people we have in our congregation who are “fully vetted.” It’s a requirement for Staff, Leadership Council Members, and Volunteers working with children and youth, but everyone’s welcome to participate in the 3 steps to become a “fully vetted” volunteer at the church.

You can read our whole Safe Church Policy [HERE](#)

Our next **Safe Church Policy Training** will be **Sunday, August 18, 1:00 - 3:00pm**. I hope to see you there!

2024 Women's Retreat is rapidly approaching!!

October 4-6 at Westminster Woods

Calling all Women!!!

Joyce Cox

We hope you can join us for our Women's Retreat. The theme is "Drawing from the Wisdom of Trees". Westminster Woods is the perfect setting for this theme. Our facilitator will be **Rev. Dr. Melinda McLain**, pastor of The Good Table UCC in El Cerrito. The committee who interviewed her was very excited to invite her to lead our retreat. Please join us for a wonderful weekend in the woods with new and old friends! Apply now and encourage your friends to come! Below, you can read about how retreats started and what they have meant to a few of the former participants.

Nancy Shimetz – The Beginning

One day in 1981, when I was the church secretary, Emily Davis came into the office and stated very strongly: "We need to have a women's retreat." Someone she knew had been to a church women's retreat and it sounded like a really good thing. I said, "Okay, let's do it!" Little did we know what a success retreats would be! Spending the weekend with a group of women is a lot of fun, along with the seriousness. It is a chance to learn more about ourselves as well as develop close relationships. It would take a very serious reason for me to miss a weekend with my long-time friends and to-be-friends.

Gail Thomas

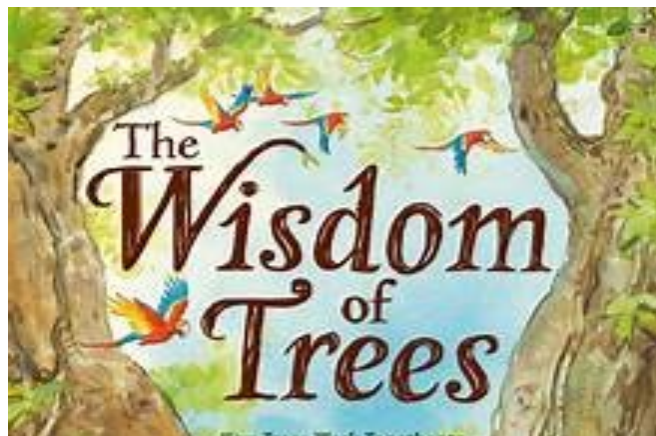
I went to retreat 50 years including the twice/year years and not only enjoyed the wisdom and spiritual growth which was important, but also developing deep friendships which have sustained me through the years. Life is often beautiful but there are times when you need a friend who knows the inner you. God Bless the women who keep this tradition alive.

Norma Watson

I always enjoy attending the women's retreat. I am certain that I wouldn't have made the loving and long lasting connections to UCC Sebastopol without the time spent together with the ladies, learning, worshipping, discussing theological issues and of course the game playing after the evening session.

Women's Retreat Committee; Jane Huneke, Joyce Cox, Barbara Deedler, Joanne Feige, Marge Holland, Kathy Manchester, Nancy Shimetz, Norma Watson.

Signups available soon.



AUGUST BIRTHDAYS

August 1 Marin Broadbent-Bell
August 1 Caroline Cassells
August 2 Dan Porter
August 3 Bobbie Johanson
August 3 Elizabeth Schultz
August 4 Dan Porter
August 4 Al DeBella
August 7 Tobin Arnold-Peterson
August 7 Austin Presley
August 8 Kyle Pelton
August 8 Kathy Manchester
August 9 Chris Dawson
August 9 Victoria Mayster
August 12 Gina Scribner
August 13 David Lennox
August 13 Monica Canfield-Lenfest
August 15 Sohni Yaylian
August 15 Rachel Knuth
August 15 Juliet Hole
August 16 Elias Galleto
August 17 Suzanne Gordon
August 17 Andy Berndt

August 20 Alicia Pelton
August 22 Doris Rowe
August 24 Elia DelMonte
August 24 Monica Goodell
August 25 Joanne Feige
August 27 Pam Oakes
August 28 Lisa Atwater
August 30 Judy Bowman
August 30 Aaron Knuth
August 31 Scott Carlson



PRAYER SHAWLS

Joanne Matson

Community Church's Prayer Shawl Ministry gathers twice each month to knit and crochet shawls for those in need of a tangible sign of God's grace. If you know of someone who would find encouragement in receiving a prayer shawl, you may contact Pastor Rachel or Pastor Benjamin who will guide you through the process of prayerfully choosing and presenting a shawl to a person in need.





It's Apple Pie Time!!

Kathy Matthies

Our biggest fund-raiser of the year, the Apple Pies Event, is right around the corner. This is our 52nd Anniversary of The Community Church of Sebastopol baking pies to raise money to be used to fund camp scholarships, S.A.L.T. trips of service for our youth and help offset costs for our All-Church Camp weekend at Westminster Woods in September.

Everyone can lend a hand, no matter what your age or abilities, from the youngest to the oldest. All children under 12 years of age must be accompanied by an adult. Join us for this wonderful multi-generational event as we prepare and bake hundreds of apple pies.

Volunteer Dates and Times (August 8, 9, 10, 11):

Thurs, 4-8pm sorting apple slices Dinner provided	Saturday, 8am-4pm sorting apple slices & making pies* Lunch provided
Friday, 8am-4pm sorting apple slices & making pies * Lunch provided	Saturday, 8am-12:30pm sorting apple slices & making pies
Friday, 8am-12:30pm sorting apple slices & making pies	Saturday, 1pm-5pm sorting apple slices & making pies – cleaning up
Friday, 1pm-5pm sorting apple slices & making pies	Sunday Cleanup 11am-2pm
Friday, 4-8pm cleanup, sorting apple slices	

*Please note we are asking, if possible, that you volunteer for the entire day, but we welcome anytime you can volunteer with us. And we encourage you to bring a friend.

Sign up on online at:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0E4BA8A92DA0FBC43-50190453-apple#>

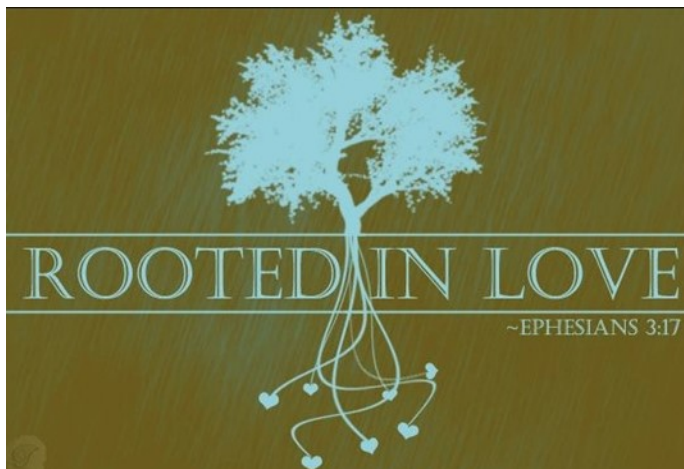
Baking volunteers and selling volunteers will be called from previous lists & scheduled by the Head Baker and Memorial Hall Team Leaders.

If you have any other questions, please call **Kathy Matthies** at 707.758.3970

All Church Camp “Rooted in Love”

Kathy Matthies

“We had so much fun at family camp! Having meals done and everything planned made it easy to drop in and really get to know a few folks. Westminster Woods is refreshing and beautiful. It was a sweet, connective time for us and our kids.” **The Basso Family**



The 2024 All Church Camp weekend promises to be a memorable time of being together and rooted in love. Mark your calendars and plan on attending. Also, the Saturday only date is an option for those who want to attend but can't commit to the entire weekend. Save with early registration and/or heling with the Apple Pie event.

2024 All Church Camp Weekend

September 13, 14, 15, 2024

Everyone in the whole church is invited to spend the weekend together at beautiful Westminster Woods in Occidental. Join us for the whole weekend or just for a full day on Saturday, September 14th. Activities Galore! Crafting and art — Hiking and outdoors activities — TNT (Talent No Talent) night — Friday night dance — Campfire and games — Coffee chat — Pool time — Nature workshop — High Ropes Course led by Westminster Woods staff

This year the campsite's ropes course will be available for an added cost. See the link below for signing up. Here is the camp's website for you to view the camp and the other activities you could be a part of with Westminster Woods <https://www.westminsterwoods.org/> .

Don't Delay! Early bird pricing ends on Sunday, August 4th and the deadline for all sign ups is Sunday August 25th. There will be no registrations after August 25th, so please plan ahead.

First sign up to help with Apple Pie days and receive your campership discount code in the sign up confirmation. <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0E4BA8A92DA0FBC43-50190453-apple#>. Then register for camp on [REALM](#). Payment through Realm is preferred, or you can drop a check off at the church or mail it in by the deadlines above. No refunds will be given after September 3rd.

All questions can be directed to the camp Registrar, **Sheina Curtis**, at hisheina@gmail.com or 650-248-3186.

August 2024 Events At Community Church

August 1	Meditation Group, Noon, Classroom 6
August 2	Health & Safety Team, 4 pm, Fireside Room
August 4	11th Sunday after Pentecost , Worship Service, 10:00 am, Sanctuary Kinship Time, 11:00 am, Bell Tower Courtyard Summer Fay-Fo, 11:15 am, Chapel
August 5	Prayer Shawl Group, 10 am, Fireside Room
August 6	Hiroshima & Nagasaki Remembrance Day Grounds Team, 9 am, Church Campus Shower Program, 9 am, Memorial Hall Men's Discussion Group, 6 pm, Fireside Room
August 7	Staff Team, 10 am, Fireside Room Women's Bible Study, 10 am, Offsite
August 8—August 11	Apple Pies Fundraiser
August 8	Meditation Group, Noon, Classroom 6 Faithfully Engaged, 5 pm, Media Room
August 10	Second Saturday Luncheon, Noon, Fountain Courtyard
August 11	12th Sunday after Pentecost , Worship Service, 10:00 am, Sanctuary Kinship Time, 11:00 am, Bell Tower Courtyard Summer Fay-Fo, 11:15 am, Chapel
August 13	Grounds Team, 9 am, Church Campus Shower Program, 9 am, Memorial Hall Facilities Committee, 10 am, Fireside Room Associate Minister PPRT, 3 pm, Fireside Room Personnel Committee, 4 pm, Fireside Room Lead Minister PPRT, 5 pm, Fireside Room Fall Worship Planning, 6 pm, Fireside Room Outreach Committee, 7 pm, Fireside Room
August 14	Staff Team, 10 am, Fireside Room Women's Bible Study, 10 am, Room 6 All-Church Camp Planning Team, 7 pm, Zoom
August 15	September SALT & LIGHT Newsletter Deadline Meditation Group, Noon, Classroom 6

August 2024 Events at Community Church cont.

- August 17 Women's Discussion Group, 2 pm, Fireside Room
- August 18 **13th Sunday after Pentecost**, Worship Service, 10:00 am, Sanctuary
Kinship Time, 11:00 am, Bell Tower Courtyard
Summer Fay-Fo , 11:15 am, Chapel
Safe Church Policy Training, 1 pm, Chapel
Confirmation Youth & Parents, 5 pm, Youth Lounge & Chapel
- August 19 Prayer Shawl Group, 10 am, Fireside Room
- August 20 Grounds Team, 9 am, Campus
Shower Program, 9 am, Memorial Hall
- August 21 Staff Team, 10 am, Fireside Room
Women's Bible Study, 10 am, Offsite
Leadership Council, 6:30 pm, Media Room
- August 22 Meditation Group, Noon, Room 6
Faithfully Engaged, 5 pm, Media Room
Chancel Choir Rehearsal, 6:30 pm, Choir Room
- August 25 **14th Sunday after Pentecost**, Worship Service, 10:00 am, Sanctuary
Kinship Time, 11:00 am, Bell Tower Courtyard
Summer Fay-Fo, 11:15 am, Chapel
Godly Play Training Retreat, 1 pm, Room 5
- August 27 Grounds Team, 9 am, Church Campus
Shower Program, 9 am, Memorial Hall
- August 38 Staff Meeting, 10 am, Fireside Room
Women's Bible Study, 10 am, Offsite
- August 29 Meditation Group, 12 pm, Classroom 6
Women's Fellowship Ministry, 2 pm, Women's Fellowship Room
Chancel Choir Rehearsal, 6:30 pm, Choir Room

www.uccseb.org

Summertime: The Living is Easy? Cont. from Page 1

- We will need to fund major deferred maintenance projects, including replacing the sanctuary roof and repaving the parking lots. This may require the congregation to support a capital campaign or other funding effort.
- Creative thinking will be required as we mobilize our people and facility as resources to generate revenue to support our overall ministry. Install solar in the Danmar parking lot? Build revenue-generating low-income housing? Transform our facility into a top-tier event venue? The possibilities are many.

GRAINS OF SALT



FAITH FORMATION HOUR SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE! Starting on Launch Sunday, September 8, our Faith Formation Hour resumes with an exciting weekly lineup:

- Godly Play for Children K-5th
- God & Donuts for Youth Groups: 6-8th & 9-12th
- Church Chat for Adults

There will be something for everyone, every Sunday from 11:15 - 12:15!

INTER-CHURCH FOOD PANTRY: August is “JAM” Month! Place your items in the grocery cart near the church office. Each month we focus on collecting one particular item, but we’ll accept good-quality, non-expired pantry items of any kind, just put it in the cart for pick up by our kind volunteers. For more info, or to volunteer at the pantry, contact **Mark Albin**: malbin@sonic.net.

SPECS OF LIGHT



Community Church of Sebastopol
1000 Gravenstein Highway N
Sebastopol, CA 95472



SALT & LIGHT
COMMUNITY CHURCH OF SEBASTOPOL
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
AUGUST 2024 NEWSLETTER

Rev. Dr. Benjamin J. Broadbent
Lead Minister
pastorbenjamin@uccseb.org

Rev. Rachel Knuth
Associate Minister
pastorrachel@uccseb.org

www.uccseb.org
office@uccseb.org
707.823/2484





