

SALT & LIGHT

COMMUNITY CHURCH OF SEBASTOPOL

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

JUNE 2024 NEWSLETTER

The Community Church
of Sebastopol
United Church of Christ
707.823.2484
www.uccseb.org
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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



Living The Questions

Rev. Dr. Benjamin J. Broadbent, Lead Minister

In 2008 a group of progressive Christian scholars created a program called "Living the Questions." The group included authors whose books adorn the shelves in my study: John Dominic Crossan, Amy-Jill Levine, John Shelby Spong, Marcus Borg, and Walter Brueggemann. They drew the title of the program from a passage in Rainer Maria Rilke's "Letters to a Young Poet" where the sage advises his mentee:

Have patience with everything unresolved in your heart and try to love the questions themselves as if they were locked rooms or books written in a very foreign language. Don't search for the answers, which could not be given to you now, because you would not be able to live them. And the point is, to live everything. Live the questions now. Perhaps then, someday far in the future, you will gradually, without even noticing it, live your way into the answer.

This summer in our worship and preaching, we will attempt to "live the questions" as Rilke suggested. This doesn't mean we won't suggest any answers, but there is a difference between rushing to quick answers and lingering over questions long enough to allow them to sink down into our lived experience so that they might elicit a more profound response. Rilke's suggestion that perhaps someday without noticing it you will live your way into an answer reminds me of Kathleen Norris's humbly prescient statement: "I often think that if I ever become a Christian, I'll be the last to know."

A colorful and glittery box in the Narthex has been receiving questions from the congregation that we will use as liturgical prompts this summer. In the coming weeks, feel free to add your own earnest questions to these:



- ? I have difficulty loving everyone when some people seem evil. Can you provide guidance on how to feel towards people like this?
- ? I was raised with so much legalism. I would like further understanding regarding the reason/purpose of hell/heaven and the idea of the "rapture," a word that does not appear in scripture.
- ? Who or what is the Holy Ghost?
- ? It seems like Jesus' birth was a big event and then we hear nothing until he is much older. What do we know of Jesus' early life?

June 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”

June 2 – Pride Sunday

On this day following the Sonoma County Pride Parade, we gather for a Pride Sunday worship service with Holy Communion. LGBTQ members of our congregation lead worship and music. Rev. Benjamin Broadbent, Lead Minister, preaches a sermon on [Mark 2:23–28](#) entitled, “Breaking Rules for the Sake of Love.”

June 9 – 3rd Sunday after Pentecost

Today Nancy Berger is our guest keyboardist and Pastor Benjamin preaches a sermon on [Mark 3:20–35](#) entitled, “Queering the Family.”

June 16 – 4th Sunday after Pentecost / Juneteenth Sunday

On this Sunday preceding the Juneteenth National Holiday, we will experience special music from a guest musician and Pastor Benjamin preaches a sermon on [Mark 4:26–34](#) entitled “Changing Our Imagination.”

June 23 – 5th Sunday after Pentecost / U.C.C. Anniversary

On this Sunday before the 67th anniversary of the founding of our church’s denomination, the United Church of Christ, we welcome new members and Pastor Benjamin preaches a sermon on [Mark 4:35–41](#) entitled “Crossing Over to the Other Side.”

June 30 – 6th Sunday after Pentecost / ONA Sunday

On this national Open & Affirming Sunday, Pastor Rachel preaches a sermon on [Mark 5:21–43](#) entitled “Your Faith Has Made You Well.”

FAY-FO* LINEUP FOR JUNE: PRIDE MONTH!

Sundays, 11:15–12:15

Chapel

Thanks to the Pride Team for putting together an awesome lineup:

June 2 **Carson Amiral** shares his story of gender transition. For more information, see below.

June 9 **Family Panel** of people sharing their own journey of “coming out” after their loved one came out, with Q&A at the end.

June 16 **Ice Cream Social** — We break from Fay-Fo, to participate in the Men’s Retreat Ice Cream Social!

June 23 **Pride Bingo** with Emily Bell & Members of the Youth Groups (in Fellowship Hall).

June 30 **LGBTQ+ “Coming Out” Panel** of people sharing their journey of coming out, with Q&A at the end.

*Fay-Fo is short for “Faith Formation” because that’s how we kick it for summertime



Welcome, Carson!
Alvin Hukins

Carson Amiral is a transgender man who is also a successful businessperson. He spends his time advocating for at-risk youth and other community services. He will be sharing his story of coming out during Fay-Fo on June 2. I feel his story to us is an important one to hear, as an Open & Affirming congregation. Carson is also an amazing individual whose life is dedicated to providing valuable services to the community. Like all Queer people, he should be known for more than being part of a marginalized faction put into a little box. Rather, we should all be looked upon as whole people who have many special attributes.

Here are a few words from Carson:

“Growing up in Sonoma County, soccer was my world from age 4 through my junior year in college (until an ankle injury sidelined me). I studied Kinesiology at SSU and graduated in 2009. After years of insisting I would never go into business, I ended up working in my family’s company for 16 years, contributing to its growth and success. I went on to earn an MBA in 2012. In 2014,

I met Grace at Oliver’s, and we began dating, and later that year I came out as transgender. Grace and my family stood by me. We tied the knot in 2017, and 3 years later our adventures continued when our son, Lincoln, was born. Now, he’s a 3.5-year-old whirlwind of mischief and giggles. Grace teaches at the preschool she attended as a kid and where Lincoln is currently attending. In 2016, I helped to navigate the sale of the majority share, followed by the strategic offloading of operations in 2020.

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BLESSINGS ABOUND

5th—7th Grade “Introduction to the Bible” Class receives blessings and new Bibles.





High School Graduates receive prayer shawls and blessings...



Spring Children's Choir



Handbell Choir



- ? Is Jesus God? I know we say he is the Son of God, but I believe there are writings where he says he is God or God the Son.
- ? Do Black churches use the same lectionary we do? I feel uncomfortable and upset when “masters and slaves” are referred to in the biblical readings.
- ? When we say, “Our Father, who art in heaven,” what are we actually speaking of? Where or what is heaven?
- ? I was raised with the idea of substitutionary atonement. I’m no longer sure that’s the purpose of Jesus’s death. What was his death about really? What does it mean “Jesus washed away our sins,” as was sung today.
- ? What is prayer? What is going on when we pray?
- ? In what sense is Jesus a savior?
- ? The Life of Brian Question – the shoe or the sandal?
- ? To what extent are our different religions “real” or just differences of perspective and cultural background?

Inter-Church Food Pantry: June is “Canned Tuna & Chicken” Month!



Place your canned items in the grocery cart near the church office. Each month our church focuses on collecting one particular item, but we’ll accept good-quality, non-expired pantry items of any kind, just put it in the cart and it will get whisked away to the food pantry by our kind volunteers.

For more info, or to volunteer at the pantry, contact Mark Albin: malbin@sonic.net.

Welcome, Carson! Cont. from Page 3

Building upon this, I obtained the Certified Management Accountant (CMA) designation 2020, solidifying my expertise in fiscal management.

Transitioning into the nonprofit sector, I assumed the role of VP of Finance at the Boys and Girls Clubs of Sonoma-Marin. Here, I applied my financial acumen to drive impactful initiatives that support the community’s youth. I loved working in the non-profit sector, but financial services were calling my name. In late 2021, I began my journey as a financial advisor. I love education and continue to expand my skill set, including Financial Advisor and Chartered Life Underwriter certificates, and currently plan to sit for the Certified Financial Planner (CFP) exam in 2024.

Disneyland holds a special place in our family’s hearts, even if our love for it might be borderline obsessive. We love to travel to places like Tahoe, the East Coast, Europe, and Hawaii. And sports are still a passion, especially during the World Cup. In my spare time, I enjoy my work with TLC, a non-profit for at-risk youth in Sonoma County and working to create “Professionals with Pride,” a new chamber group for the LGBTQ+ community.”

We look forward to hosting Carson during Fay-Fo on June 2 in the Chapel!

JUNE BIRTHDAYS

June 1	Brian Plaugher	June 16	Elisa Lovejoy
June 2	Keith Blackstone	June 17	Abigail McGinnis
June 2	Garik Goodell	June 18	Anabel Bagley
June 2	Chris Hudlow	June 18	Ainsley Curtis
June 2	Elin Lennox	June 21	Alicia Sanchez
June 4	Alicia Boal	June 22	Gary Bachelor
June 4	Paul Downing	June 22	Beth Larson
June 6	Jan Barrow	June 23	Tracy Amiral
June 5	Casey Card	June 24	Bernie Hovden
June 6	Richie Goodell	June 25	Sokpha Lim
June 6	Brian Purcell	June 26	Joe Plaugher
June 6	Reid Sanderson	June 26	Sam Dowdney
June 8	Susan Shaw	June 28	Juniper Gonzales
June 9	Ethan DelMonte	June 29	Marie Cotton
June 9	Kasey Babcock		
June 10	Alena Basso		
June 12	Rachel Allen		
June 14	Judy Kinsey		
June 14	Jimmy Hooper		
June 15	Bob Holland		
June 15	Jamie Malone		
June 15	Blythe Osner		



MICRO-DOSING: ACCEPTING HELP

Rev. Rachel Knuth, Associate Minister

"Practice being cared for in little doses... so it will be easier to accept help later on."



As I write this newsletter article, I am sitting in a camp chair on dry land with my feet in a cool creek listening to the water chuckle across smooth stones. I'm camping for the weekend and reflecting on some things in the sunshine. I recently received expert medical care from a team of herbalists. I'm not going to share personal health details, but suffice it to say, I needed some help. And that experience is what I'm thinking about right now with my feet in a cold stream.

As a working mother of four I am used to being responsible (possibly overly so) for a lot of details, which often brings me satisfaction and joy. But I am not used to receiving help from others so much. In fact, I felt rather uncomfortable describing my concerns to the team of practitioners who helped me. I felt shy and vulnerable to being unprepared to solve my own problem. Of course, they were so kind and generous with me. They asked clarifying questions and took me seriously. The acupuncturist gave me a treatment and the herbalist gave me a personalized tincture. And it was all just lovely and beautiful.

And it was not easy to take. It got me thinking— what if we could practice receiving help from time to time, to let it in and really accept care as a gift? What if we could practice being cared for in little doses, so it will be easier to accept help when we need it?

There is a common perception among Christians that to live out our faith means to give of everything we have and everything we are, until one day we fall down dead. This idea happens to go really well with the capitalist American work ethic. But didn't Jesus also receive? Did he not accept a nice meal of grilled fish on the shoreline? Did he not allow his feet to be perfumed with oil and dried with Mary's hair?

There is beauty whenever brokenness and wholeness can meet. That's the beauty of the Christ-Light shining. And we can participate in the Light by sharing our full selves in community— our broken selves, our whole selves, all of us.

What if those of us who are used to being "givers" could micro-dose receiving help? Because one day each of us will need more help than we can give, and it would be nice to learn how to become more graceful about it along the way, if we can. Allowing others to care for us can take some adjusting to, especially if we've spent many years on the other side of the equation. But vulnerability is what gives space for God's Holy Spirit to shine through both the giving and receiving.

And I think that's some of what it means to be the body of Christ.

JUNE 2024 EVENTS AT COMMUNITY CHURCH

- June 3 **Pride Sunday**, Worship Service, 10:00 am, Sanctuary
Kinship Time, 11:00 am, Bell Tower Courtyard
Summer Fay-Fo, 11:15 am, Chapel
Interfaith Pride Service, 7 pm, Unitarian Universalist Congregation
- June 3 Prayer Shawl Group, 10 am, Fireside Room
Intergenerational Gym, 4:30 pm, Memorial Hall
- June 4 Grounds Team, 9 am, Church Campus
Men’s Discussion Group, 6 pm, Fireside Room
- June 5 Staff Team, 10 am, Fireside Room
Women’s Bible Study, 10 am, Room 6
- June 6 Meditation Group, Noon, Classroom 6
- June 6-8 NCNC Annual Gathering, Fresno, CA
- June 8 Second Saturday Luncheon, Noon, Fellowship Hall
Women’s Discussion Group, 2 pm, Fireside Room
- June 9 **3rd Sunday After Pentecost**, Worship Service, 10:00 am, Sanctuary
Kinship Time, 11:00 am, Bell Tower Courtyard
Summer Fay-Fo, 11:15 am, Various Locations
Inquirer’s Class, 11:15 am, Media Room
- June 9-16 High School Salt Trip, Mexico
- June 10 Intergenerational Gym, 4:30 pm, Memorial Hall
- June 11 Grounds Team, 9 am, Church Campus
Facility Committee, 11 am, Fireside Room
Lead Minister’s PPRT 5 pm, Fireside Room
Outreach Committee, 7 pm, Fireside Room
- June 12 Staff Team, 10 am, Fireside Room
Women’s Bible Study, 10 am, Room 6
Leadership Council, 6:30 pm, Media Room
- June 13 Meditation Group, Noon, Room 6
- June 15 Salt & Light Newsletter Deadline for July
- June 16 **4th Sunday After Pentecost**, Worship Service, 10:00 am, Sanctuary
Men’s Retreat Ice Cream Sundae Fundraiser, 11 am, Fellowship Hall

June 2024 Events at Community Church cont.

June 17	Prayer Shawl Ministry, 10 am, Fireside Room
June 18	Grounds Team, 9 am, Church Campus
June 19	Juneteenth Holiday—Office Closed Women’s Bible Study, 10 am, Room 6
June 20	Meditation Group, Noon, Room 6
June 23	5th Sunday After Pentecost , Worship Service, 10:00 am, Sanctuary Kinship Time, 11:00 am, Bell Tower Courtyard Summer Fay-Fo, 11:15 am, Various Locations
June 25	Grounds Team, 9 am, Church Campus
June 26	Staff Team, 10 am, Fireside Room Women’s Bible Study, 10 am, Room 6
June 27	Meditation Group, Noon, Room 6
June 30	6th Sunday After Pentecost , Worship Service, 10:00 am, Sanctuary Kinship Time, 11:00 am, Bell Tower Courtyard Summer Fay-Fo, 11:15 am, Various Locations

GRAINS OF SALT



SPECS OF LIGHT



NORTH BAY ORGANIZING PROJECT annual event, Cultura y Cambio, happens Saturday, June 8, 4:00–9:00 p.m., at Penngrove Park. We will be providing a “movie themed” basket for the raffle. Please contact **Judy Davison** with items or cash donation at 707.486.7755 or jdavison95472@yahoo.com.

OUTWATCH LGBTQ FILM FESTIVAL on Saturday, June 8th. Film showings at 2, 4, and 7 p.m. Join **Susan Olson** and **Abacus Wealth Partners** at a reception with food and wine from 5:45 to 6:45 p.m., on the second floor. The reception is free but a movie ticket is required to get into the Rialto. Tickets for the films can be obtained at rialtocinemas.com or at the theater on June 8th. Questions? Contact **Susan Olson** at (707) 322-1312.

FALL MEN’S RETREAT , November 8-10, 2024, in Inverness at the St. Columba Retreat Center. Facilitator, **Rev. Vincent Pizzuto**, will speak on “Mysteries of Faith.” He is the Professor of New Testament and Christian Mysticism in the Department of Theology at the University of San Francisco.

PRIDE PARADE themed ‘Heroes, Sheroes and Queeroes’ is Saturday, June 1. Meet at 10 a.m. , at Fremont Park, 844 5th Street, Santa Rosa. Dress for the theme. Fun costume ideas can be found on Amazon see link [here](#). If you would like to help or participate, please email **Judy Hawkins** at jody-ha@gmail.com .

WOMEN’S DISCUSSION GROUP meets Saturday, June 8th, 2 p.m., in the Fireside Room. **Sandy Rosen** will lead the discussion, “In Praise of Aging” written by her daughter and our former minister, **Lizann Besham**. Contact **Bobbie Johanson** at bjohanseo@sonic.net.

SCHOOL SUPPLY DONATION DRIVE—The Mission & Outreach Team is collecting back-to-school items. Donations will be taken to Our Village Closet, a local organization that supports children and youth impacted by foster care and kinship care . A list of supplies can be found on the rainbow lectern, in the church office, or by clicking [HERE](#). Please donate only new, high-quality supplies in the collection box located in the entry of the Sanctuary by July 28th.

INQUIRERS’ CLASS for those interested in Community Church and considering membership will be held Sunday, June 9, 11:15 – 12:45 p.m., in the Media Room. Contact **Pastor Benjamin** at pastorbenjamin@uccseb.org.

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