Community Church of Sebastopol **United Church of** Christ

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Lead Minister

Rev. Dr. Benjamin J. Broadbent

Associate Minister Open

Faith Formation Coordinator Tirza Dawn

Congregational Administrator Joy Richards

Choral Director Andy DelMonte

> Keyboardist J. Althea

Handbell Director Karna Roa

> Bookkeeper Deanna Euritt

Custodian Paul Louden

Pastor Emeritus Rev. Gene Nelson



SALT & LIGHT

COMMUNITY CHURCH OF SEBASTOPOL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST **OCTOBER 2025 NEWSLETTER**

Beneath a Shadow of Wings

Rev. Dr. Benjamin J. Broadbent, Lead Minister

They shall again live beneath my shadow, they shall flourish as a garden, they shall blossom as a vine. - Hosea 14:7

Filled with pathos, the Book of Hosea alternates between agony and grace. It begins with a description of Hosea's family relationships which mirror Yahweh's relationship with Israel. God instructs the prophet to marry a prostitute because Israel acted like a prostitute by being unfaithful to God. Yes, even God can be jealous.

Hosea marries Gomer and they have three children, which God instructs them to name "Sows," as in sows seeds of conflict, "Not Pitied," and "Not My People." Lovely names for children. But in the next few verses, God can't help but relent, saying, "In the place where it was said 'Not my people," it shall be said to them, "Children of the living God."



WHERE COMMUNITY HAPPENS

Throughout the Book of Hosea, we encounter a God who appears all-toohuman. You might prefer an other-than-human God who lives safely in the confines of your own thoughts, or as a pleasant feeling you can call upon when the going gets rough. But this God is deeply involved with humanity. This God is faithful and asks for faithfulness in return. This God is wounded when forgotten or scorned. This God is ready to give up on, even to destroy, the people God had once loved and seems determined to do it. But then...

Imagine you are the parent of a teenager who has taken advantage of your trust. Perhaps they lied to you or stole from you, and not for the first time. You are so angry and exhausted, you are about to say something you can never take back, like, "I never want to see you again." But then you look at them and you remember them as a baby, as a toddler, on their first day of school, when they learned to ride a bike. That's what happens to Yahweh in Hosea chapter 11: "How can I give you up? My heart recoils within me; my compassion grows warm and tender."

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Beneath a Shadow of Wings cont. from Page 1

We are kicking off an ambitious Capital Campaign called "Flourishing Together: Tending the Place Where Community Happens." Since 1889 this congregation has gathered to worship a living and loving God that has met us where we are and refused to leave us there. We've faced many challenges along the way, many losses, and maybe a few regrets. But we've also found relationships that have meant the world to us, that have transformed our hearts, teaching us what true friendship, and true faithfulness, are all about.

We chose this year's campaign scripture from the last chapter of Hosea because God is not done with us.

- When you hear the words, "they shall again live beneath my shadow," you might think of our sloping sanctuary roof, like the shadowy wings of a brooding hen.
- "They shall flourish as a garden," might invoke for you our kinship time bounty table where people come and take produce that will nourish.
- And "they shall blossom as a vine" suggests the ways in which we are connected to one another and to the wider community we are sent to love in Christ's name.

I pray this campaign will be a time of flourishing together, of sharing resources so that this community may thrive. It won't be easy, but ours is a God who has promised not to give up, and who calls us back to tend the place where community happens so that we, too, may be called "children of the living God."



GRAINS OF SALT & SPECS OF LIGHT



WOMEN'S RETREAT 2026

Save the Date for the 44th Women's Retreat January 16-18, 2026, at Walker Creek Ranch, in the lovely hills between Petaluma and Marshall. Our leaders will be our own **Kathy Bell** and **Amy Furber Dobson**. The topic is yet to be announced but Kathy assures us it will be FUN. Mark your calendars (it's MLK Jr. holiday weekend) and stay tuned for more particulars.

WOMEN'S DISCUSSION GROUP

Women's Discussion Group will meet in the Fireside Room at 2 p.m. on Saturday, October 11. **Bobbie Johanson** will lead a time of fellowship and some games. Please join us for a casual time to gather, have fun, and get to know each other better. Bring a friend! With questions, contact **Bobbie Johanson**, 707.494.9599.

SAVE THE DATE

GIANT PUMPKIN/FUNNY VEGETABLE CONTEST during Kinship Time on October 26. Win a first-place ribbon! Contact **Jane Huneke** at <u>jane.huneke1@gmail.com</u> or 707.889.6852 to register.

INTER-CHURCH FOOD PANTRY

INTER-CHURCH FOOD PANTRY basket is located in the entry to the Sanctuary. The item for October is Peanut Butter. Please don't leave perishables or expired food. To donate to or volunteer at the pantry, contact **Mark Albin** at 707.829.1492 or malbin@sonic.net.

OCTOBER 2025 WORSHIP Worship in the season after Pentecost

Worship Details...

We worship in the sanctuary on Sundays at <u>10:00 a.m.</u>
Services are live streamed on <u>YouTube</u> & <u>Facebook</u>
Weekly bulletin and announcements available at <u>www.uccseb.org</u>

OCTOBER 5 – World Communion Sunday / Capital Campaign Inspiration Sunday

Today we celebrate Holy Communion in solidarity with Christian communities throughout

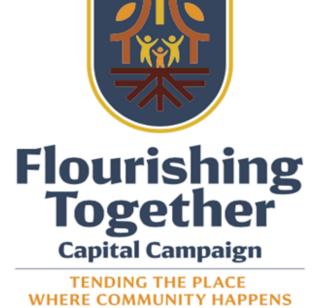
the world. Our Chancel Choir sings and we kick off our Flourishing Together Capital Campaign. **Rev. Dr. Benjamin J. Broadbent**, Lead Minister, preaches a sermon on <u>Lamentations 3:21</u> entitled, "Therefore I Have Hope."

OCTOBER 12 – 18th Sunday after Pentecost

Today we continue "Flourishing Together" as our Handbell Ensemble provides worship music and **Pastor Benjamin** preaches a sermon on <u>Jeremiah</u> 29:7 entitled, "Seek Welfare Where You Have Been Sent."

OCTOBER 19 – 19th Sunday after Pentecost

Today we continue "Tending the Place Where Community Happens" as the Chancel Choir sings and **Rev. Gene Nelson**, Pastor Emeritus preaches a sermon on <u>Revelation 21:1–6</u> entitled "Daring to Hope."



OCTOBER 26 – 20th Sunday after Pentecost

The "New Band," led by **Michael Ost**, shares worship music, new members join, and **Pastor Benjamin** preaches a sermon on <u>2 Timothy 4:6–8, 16–18</u> entitled, "Keeping the Faith."

Coming in November... All Saints/Souls Sunday, Campaign Response Sunday, Gratitude Sunday, Reign of Christ Sunday, and the First Sunday in Advent

AWESOME

Devon is a man of many talents and passions. You get a whiff of this seeing him at his family's homestead in the thick redwood forests above the hamlet of Occidental. In addition to being Molly's husband and engaged father of three young daughters, Devon, with a twinkle in his eyes, deprecatingly calls himself a "terrible amateur" farmer who tends an orchard, garden, goats, chickens, and ducks. He has written a full-length, sci-fi romance novel, has recorded an album with vocals and guitar on Spotify, and is the founder and CEO of an agricultural technology company.

Devon was raised in religious schools and church. "My whole life was in church. I was always inspired by Jesus and believed in him, and I always *loved* the sermon; I loved that part of church." But not much else about the church experience held him, and he abandoned the church as a young adult. Despite many positive things in Devon's life over the last decade, he acknowledges he felt an underlying emptiness. He recollects college as being a very secular experience focused on career. "And if you go into the tech world," he reflects, "Saying you're Christian is like a bad word. It left people like me starved of spiritual community."



When Devon and his family moved out to the country, they had more free time and lots of space. Living in a remote area left them hungry to meet new people on a deeper level. Devon felt a missing spiritual bond in their lives. "We asked ourselves, 'How can we lean in to developing intentional community?"

Joining Community Church this past spring became their answer. Devon says his wife, Molly, was the most active in getting the family to church. "She said she felt called to check out a church, and I was feeling it too...something missing," he recalls. They were going to try a number of congregations and visited Community Church first. "This church was so up our alley, it was awesome," he remembers. "Just the right people; the sermon was amazing; Molly was crying; everyone was so nice, and I said, 'Yeah, this is what's missing.'" That was last winter. After a period of questioning, they returned on Easter Sunday. The congregation felt so right, they didn't even want to try another church.

When the family first experienced the children's sermon, his daughters Poppy and Iris loved it. Devon chuckles, "They were the ones saying to us, 'Let's go back to church! We love church!'" He continues, "This church is investing in these kids, trying to adapt the sermon to fit them and then to have it work and make them excited, that's so awesome."

Your gifts allow Community Church to reach out to those seeking something deeper in life. Thank you for your generous support of our mission and ministries.

Written by Victoria Mayster

Watch this space every month as we feature stories about how the individual members feel connected with the church.

BIRTHDAYS OF THE MONTH

OCTOBER 1 MIMI REID OCTOBER 4 LYNN DEEDLER OCTOBER 4 WILL PLAUGHER LAURIE MITCHELL OCTOBER 6 LIBBY PLAUGHER OCTOBER 7 OCTOBER 8 LINDA ROA OCTOBER 8 JAN SWEENEY OCTOBER 8 LORI LAPHAM OCTOBER 8 CO DUNGCA OCTOBER 10 NADINE SANDERS OCTOBER 11 LINDA INMAN OCTOBER 12 VIDA SANCHEZ-STRAWBRIDGE **OCTOBER 13 SUZANNE WHITE** OCTOBER 13 GERRI DOODY OCTOBER 14 BIRGIT QUEZADA

OCTOBER 14 LARRY STALLINGS.

OCTOBER 17 ELLEN JORDAN

OCTOBER 18 MICHAEL OST OCTOBER 18 ELENA DILLON OCTOBER 20 STEVE BECK OCTOBER 20 KAYDIN BERNDT OCTOBER 20 BEN RASMUS OCTOBER 20 ELIANA GREEN OCTOBER 23 ANN BUTTERFIELD OCTOBER 23 GRETCHEN VINCENT-BRISBIN **OCTOBER 24** MARYELLEN TAYLOR **OCTOBER 24 EMMA DELMONTE** OCTOBER 25 RACHEL DOVEY OCTOBER 26 JONAH GONZALES **OCTOBER 27 ASHLEY ARNOLD** OCTOBER 28 BETTY NELSON OCTOBER 29 KATE MACKILLOP OCTOBER 31 JULIETTE BABCOCK

OCTOBER 31 IGOR PIMENTEL

OCTOBER 2025 Events at Community Church





Pastor-Parish Relations Team, 5 pm, Fireside Room

Outreach Committee, 7 pm, Fireside Room

OCTOBER 2025 Events at Community Church cont...

OCTOBER 15

SALT & LIGHT NEWSLETTER DEADLINE
Women's Bible Study, 10 am, Room 6
Online Bible Study, 5 pm, Zoom
Leadership Council, 6:30 pm, Media Room

OCTOBER 16 Meditation Group, Noon, Room 6

Drop-in Dreamwork Group, 5:30 pm, Room 6

Chancel Choir, 6:30 pm, Choir Room

OCTOBER 19 19th Sunday after Pentecost

Worship Service, 10 am, Sanctuary

Kinship Time, 11:15 am, Bell Tower Courtyard God & Donuts (Youth), 11:15 am, Youth Lounge

Faith Formation Hour, 11:15 am, Various
Prayer Shawl Group, 10 am, Fireside Room

OCTOBER 20 Prayer Shawl Group, 10 am, Fireside Room Faith In Action Team, 6 pm, Fireside Room

OCTOBER 21 Grounds Team, 9 am, Church Campus

Shower Program, 9 am, Memorial Hall Finance Committee, 3 pm, Fireside Room Health & Safety Team, 3:30 pm, Room 6 Handbell Ensemble, 4 pm, Sanctuary

Faith In Action Team, 5:30 pm, Fireside Room Advent/Epiphany Worship Planning, 6 pm, Chapel

OCTOBER 22 Women's Bible Study, 10 am, Room 6

Online Bible Study, 5 pm, Zoom

OCTOBER 23 Meditation Group, Noon, Room 6

Drop-in Dreamwork Group, 5:30 pm, Room 6

Chancel Choir, 6:30 pm, Choir Room

OCTOBER 26 20TH Sunday after Pentecost

OCTOBER 28

OCTOBER 29

Worship Service, 10 am, Sanctuary Godly Play (K-Grade 5), 10:15, Room 5

Kinship Time, 11:15 am, Bell Tower Courtyard God & Donuts (Youth), 11:15 am, Youth Lounge

Faith Formation Hour, 11:15 am, Various Grounds Team, 9 am, Church Campus

Shower Program, 9 am, Memorial Hall

Handbell Ensemble, 4 pm, Sanctuary Women's Bible Study, 10 am, Room 6

Online Bible Study, 5 pm, Zoom

OCTOBER 30 Meditation Group, Noon, Room 6

Drop-in Dreamwork Group, 5:30 pm, Room 6

Chancel Choir, 6:30 pm, Choir Room

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