

**Community Church of
Sebastopol
United Church of
Christ**
707.823.2484
www.uccseb.org
office@uccseb.org

Lead Minister
Rev. Dr. Benjamin J.
Broadbent

**Congregational
Administrator**
Joy Richards

**Faith Formation
Coordinator**
Tirza Dawn

Choral Director
Andy DelMonte

Keyboardist
J. Althea

Handbell Director
Karna Roa

Bookkeeper
Deanna Euritt

Custodian
Paul Louden

Seminarians
Tirza Dawn
Ross Pimentel

Pastor Emeritus
Rev. Gene Nelson



SALT & LIGHT

COMMUNITY CHURCH OF SEBASTOPOL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST MARCH 2026 NEWSLETTER

Un-seeded or Unceded?

Moving Beyond Our Land Acknowledgment

Rev. Dr. Benjamin J. Broadbent, Lead Minister

Since 2020, our church includes a land acknowledgment at the beginning of Sunday worship and other events: “As we begin our worship in this sacred place, we respectfully acknowledge that our church’s sanctuary is located on the traditional and unceded land of the Southern Pomo and Coast Miwok peoples who have been stewarding this land for generations.” In the first phrase, we affirm that the place we gather is sacred to us. In the second phrase, we confess that it is also sacred to others. The homonyms unseeded and unceded can confuse the ear. Unceded means that this land was once stolen from people who cared for this land for millennia. In my limited research, I discovered that the land where our church is located was in a region shared by the Southern Pomo and Coast Miwok peoples, a place of cultural intersection, of trade, and cooperation.



Last fall, a group of 8 Community Church members attended a “Beyond Land Acknowledgments” workshop offered by the Redbud Resource Group. We learned that while acknowledgment is a good start that moves beyond ignorance and erasure, a community that takes its acknowledgment seriously must expand into education, advocacy, and partnership. Slowly but surely, this expansion has been happening, and my hope is that more church members will get curious and become involved. Here are some ways we have been moving beyond our land acknowledgment since 2020:

- We have been using our church communications to encourage participation by members in local events hosted by indigenous people that are open to the public including the Ya-Ka-Ama Spring Festival in Forestville and appearances by the Sonoma County Pomo Dancers.
- We have made donations to the Shelterwood Collective, the black, indigenous, and LGBTQ-led organization that purchased what we once knew as “Camp Caz” and now stewards the land using regenerative forestry practices.

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- Our Youth Group, led by Emily and Dawson Bell, have planted native plant species on our church property.
- With the Religious Leaders Caucus of North Bay Organizing Project, we hosted a “Rights of Creation” event featuring local Pomo leader Rose Hammock.
- Liturgy and sermons take care to incorporate aspects of indigenous wisdom with respect. In “Tending the Wild,” Kat Anderson observes that Native Californians practiced control burns as a way of improving the ecology of the land. Plant and animal species not only depended upon human interaction but evolved from and thrived upon it.

A few folks have asked me, “How much longer are we going to keep saying the land acknowledgment?” I’m not sure how to answer that. Perhaps we can stop saying it when we have more fully embodied it in our practices as a congregation. Similarly, you don’t have to *tell people* you’re a Christian if your life already reflects the courage and compassion of Jesus. If you feel called to help this church move beyond its land acknowledgment, you are not alone. Please speak up, suggest a possibility, organize an action, and invite others to join you. When we interact with each other, with our neighbors, and with the land, we will evolve in our humanity and grow in our faith.

GLIMPSES OF GOD’S TIMING AND SHARING OUR GIFTS

Joy in Passing the Torch

Bobbie Johanson

Some folks say there are no coincidences. Some say that they experienced a God thing. I say I was happy to see a moment where I recognized God’s timing at work in a simple conversation. It occurred at a regular meeting of our Prayer Shawl Ministry on Monday morning, February 16.

Joanne Matson was sharing that she had let Pastor Ben know she was needing to quit writing the *We Hold In Prayer Concerns* that appear in the Kindred Connections email from church on Thursdays. She’s been doing it since Pastor Rachel left in September 2024. Joanne liked doing it but it had become harder to do since she had taken on some other responsibilities. I was sorry to hear it because I thought she did a lovely job.

Reena Burton was able to join us that Monday; something she can’t always do. She also said she loved reading Joanne’s writing in the Thursday emails. Reena asked more about the task and decided it was something she could take on and enjoy doing. Joanne was thrilled to know that this important communication to our congregation would continue seamlessly and not become a burden for Pastor Ben or Joy, our busy congregational administrator, or be a task that went undone.

Joanne also stated that she enjoyed helping families in her role as Ceremony Coordinator for Memorial Services but she wished there was a team to do this job. Again, Reena asked for more information and stated she would like to help with this also. It was wonderful to see how happy they were to share this sensitive task.



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MARCH 2026 WORSHIP

The Season of Lent

What Is a Human? – Psalm 8:4

Worship Details...

We worship in the sanctuary on Sundays at [10:00 a.m.](#)

Services are live streamed on [YouTube](#) & [Facebook](#)

Weekly bulletin and announcements available at www.uccseb.org

MARCH 1 – 2nd Sunday in Lent

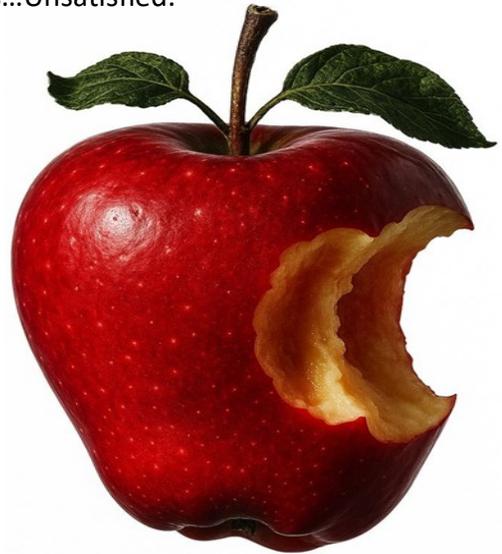
Today we continue in the season of Lent, 40 days, plus Sundays, between Ash Wednesday a Easter Sunday. The Chancel Choir, directed by Andy DelMonte, sings “The Prayer of St. Francis,” we celebrate Holy Communion, and Rev. Dr. Benjamin J. Broadbent, Lead Minister, preaches a sermon on Genesis 12:1–4 entitled, “A Human Is... Blessing and Curse.”

MARCH 8 – 3rd Sunday in Lent

Today the Handbell Ensemble, directed by Karna Roa, shares worship music and Pastor Benjamin preaches a sermon on Exodus 17:1–7 entitled, “A Human Is...Unsatisfied.”

MARCH 15 – 4th Sunday in Lent

Today the Chancel Choir, directed by Andy DelMonte, sings John Tavener’s “The Lamb,” and Pastor Benjamin preaches a sermon on I Samuel 16:1–13 entitled, “A Human is... Adoring.”



MARCH 22– 5th Sunday in Lent

Today our in-house band, All Things New shares worship music, and Tirza Dawn, our Student Intern, preaches a sermon on Ezekiel 37:1–14, the story of the valley of dry bones.

MARCH 29 – 6th Sunday in Lent / Palm Sunday / Passion Sunday

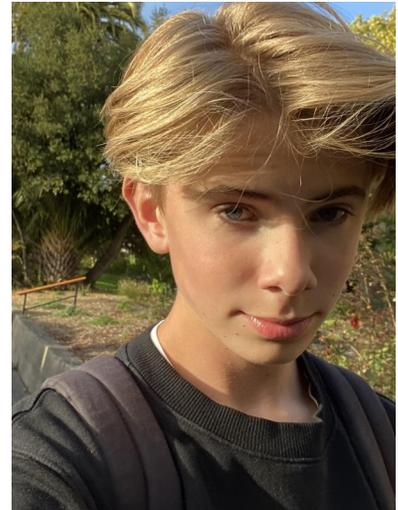
Today we begin Holy Week, beginning our worship with a palm frond processional and concluding with a darkening of the sanctuary and departure in silence. The Chancel Choir sings and Pastor Benjamin preaches a sermon on Matthew 26:36–46 entitled, “A Human Is... Complicated.”

Coming in April... Maundy Thursday Tenebrae Service, Good Friday Contemplative Vigil, Easter Sunrise Service, Easter Sanctuary Worship, beginning of the 50-day Season of Easter.

NURTURING SPACE

Henry is a thoughtful, kind, and quietly funny young member of our Community Church. A lover of music, positivity, and meaningful connection, Henry brings curiosity and warmth wherever he shows up, especially on Sunday mornings.

Henry first began attending church as a child, tagging along as his mom brought their family through the doors. At that age, he described church as something he experienced passively, pleasant, and familiar, but not yet deeply his own. Like many young people, he didn't yet know what role faith or community might play in his life. What he did know was that it felt like a welcoming and safe place to be.



Over time, relationships transformed Henry's experience of church. Joining the tech team gave him a way to contribute and belong, offering both responsibility and connection. "Being on the tech team is really fun, and it's nice getting to know other kids my age," Henry shared. "I probably wouldn't get to know them any other way." Working alongside others who were supportive and encouraging helped him feel valued, while programs like confirmation class invited him to explore faith in a thoughtful and engaging way.

Henry is especially grateful for the people who make up this community. "I'm just so thankful for all the people," he said. "It's really amazing." He also speaks warmly of Pastor Ben's teaching and the way sermons invite reflection rather than repetition. "A lot of the sermons I remember from months back, and that's just really cool to me," Henry shared. "They're really thought-provoking." One recent sermon, in particular, stayed with him, exploring what it means to reflect love outward into the world. "Pastor Ben had this sermon about being a mirror and a window, that we mirror Jesus's love and are a window into something greater than ourselves," Henry said. "I thought that was really powerful."

Today, church is something Henry truly looks forward to. "I love coming," he shared. "It's made Sundays my favorite day of the week now." Through meaningful relationships, engaging teaching, and opportunities to contribute, his faith has become something alive and personal. He describes the Community Church as unique, rooted in kindness, open curiosity, and learning that continues beyond the walls of the sanctuary. Being part of this community has helped Henry grow, reflect, and feel connected to something greater than himself.

Henry's story is a reminder that the church's greatest impact often unfolds quietly, through relationships that nurture belonging and spaces that invite young people to participate fully. When we invest in the life of this church, we invest in the growth of individuals like Henry and in a community that continues to shape lives with care, intention, and hope.

Written by Reena Burton

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

BIRTHDAYS IN MARCH

Birthdays are also listed in the Kindred Connection email sent every Thursday. If you would like to receive the weekly email, please contact the church office



1	Maya Malone
1	Lily Pelton
1	Ann Shradar
2	Linda Basso
3	Connie Blackstone
3	C.J. Hudlow
3	Nancy Degenkolb
4	Pamela Kruse
5	Denelle Tognozzi
5	Susan Olson
6	Ross Pimentel
9	Julie Davis
10	Leslie Wood
11	Joella Falkingham
11	Curt Nichols
12	Avy Card
12	Owen Thomas
12	Reece Thomas
13	Maria Culberson

15	Luis Quezada
16	Cecilia MacKillop
16	Sara Poisson
17	Lori Babcock
18	Karyl Clendenen Drennon
19	Mary Culberson
19	Bree Cassells
19	Katrina Harris
20	Joyce Cox
20	Christine Vincent
21	Eliana Curtis
22	Carter Bell
22	Taylor Davison
23	Nao Noguchi
23	Bridget Hole
24	Forest Cole
25	Mark Lifvendahl
26	Olivia Stoll
30	Margarette Murakami

Please join us for dinner at the

St. Patrick's Day FUNDRAISER



14 MARCH

5:00 - 8:00 PM

Community Church of Sebastopol
Memorial Hall
1000 Gravenstein Hwy North

**Dinner
Sing Along
Silent Auction**

**\$30.00 per person
\$10.00 for children under 13**

Purchase tickets online or
to pay at the door contact



All profit proceeds raised will
go to the church's Capital
Campaign to improve the
church's aging buildings

Kathleenmatthies57@gmail.com

LENTEN SOUP SUPPER & FAITH JOURNEY SHARING



Lenten Soup Supper and Faith Journey Sharing

Join us for Mondays during Lent to have soup together followed by a sharing of someone's faith journey testimony.

Here are the dates to put on your calendars:

- Monday, February 23 - Soup Supper & Faith Journey Sharing #1 —Reena Burton
- Monday, March 2 - Soup Supper & Faith Journey Sharing #2—Tirza Dawn
- Monday, March 9 - Soup Supper & Faith Journey Sharing #3—Devon Wright
- Monday, March 16 - Soup Supper & Faith Journey Sharing #4—Scot Covington
- Monday, March 23 - Soup Supper & Faith Journey Sharing #5—Joel Brotherton

6-6:45 pm for Potluck soup supper in Fellowship Hall
7:00-7:45pm Faith Journey in the Church Chapel

Soups are needed. We are looking for volunteers to bring soups for these dates. If you can bring a soup, email Kathy Matthies at kathleenmatthies57@gmail.com .



Order Your Easter Lilies for Easter



Purchase Easter lilies that will grace the altar on Easter Sunday. Multiple dedications can be made per plant.

Dedications will be printed in the service bulletin on Easter Sunday, April 5th.

Please return this form, with a check made payable to "Community Church of Sebastopol," to the church office by Sunday, March 22nd.

In Honor of _____
(name of person(s) or event(s))

In Memory of _____
(name of person(s) or event(s))

Dedicated by _____
(your name/name of person making the dedication)

Please use a separate form for each Easter Lily. Cost: \$15. per plant

Check one:

- I will pick up my Easter Lily after the 10:00 am service on Easter
- I will not pick up my Easter Lily, please share it with someone who is home bound
- I would like to help deliver an Easter Lily to a homebound church member

WOMEN'S RETREAT 2026

Emily Dawson

The 2026 Community Church of Sebastopol Women's Retreat was a sanctuary of community, nature, and God. The presence of over 40 women brought a weekend filled with joy and laughter, but also heartfelt conversations and deep connection. Nestled in the rolling hills of Marin County at Walker Creek Ranch, the retreat center served as the perfect backdrop for games, hikes, spiritual practices, yoga, crafts, songs, and meals shared by this incredible community. Our fearless leaders, Kathy and Amy, did an amazing job facilitating a weekend full of hope, light, and reflection.



Throughout the weekend, we explored what it means to find *personal sanctuary*. Where do you find sanctuary in the world? In a beautiful and often humorous brainstorming activity, women filled large sheets of paper with sticky notes—naming everything from the beach to a cozy chair, from quiet morning coffee to, yes, even cheese. Beneath the laughter was a sacred reminder: God meets us in the ordinary places where we feel safe, restored, and fully ourselves.

We also reflected on *sanctuary in community*. Who in your life has been a sanctuary for you? Through journaling and small group sharing, stories emerged of friends who listened without judgment, family members who showed up in hard seasons, and church members who prayed faithfully. The vulnerability in those circles created space for deeper connection, reminding us that sanctuary can be found in the company we keep.

As the weekend unfolded, we asked a challenging and beautiful question: *How can we become sanctuary for others?* Together, we named simple, but powerful practices—listening well, showing up consistently, creating space for honesty, offering gratitude. In a creative (and slightly competitive!) marshmallow-and-spaghetti building challenge, we reflected on how our church community can continue to be a sanctuary—strong yet flexible, grounded in faith, and built together.

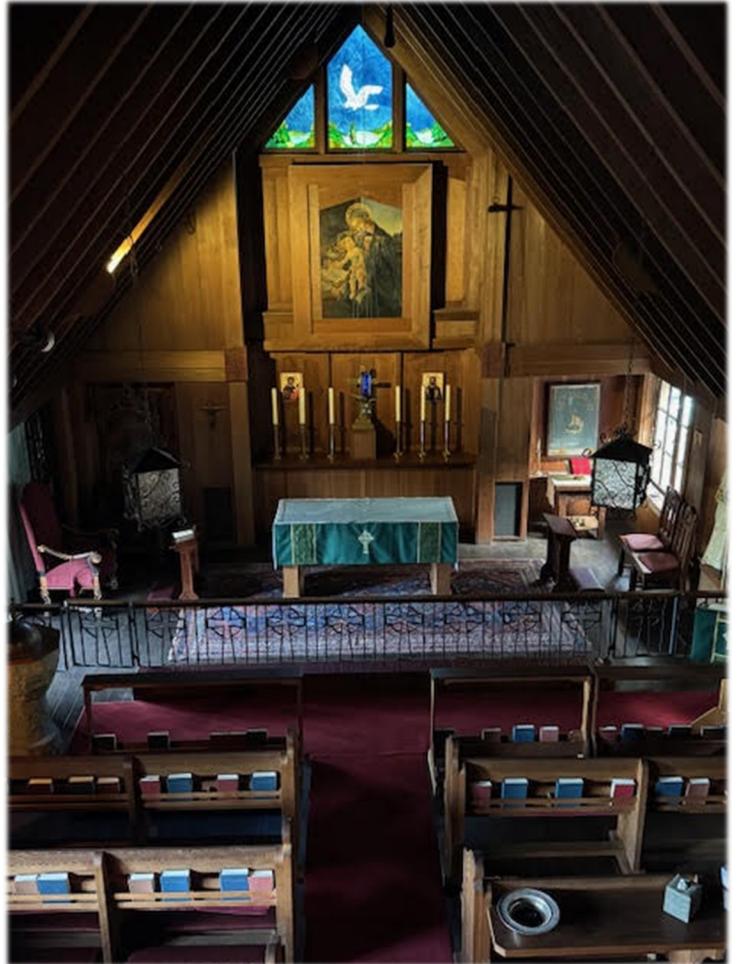
Woven through the weekend was our theme song: “Lord, prepare me to be a sanctuary, pure and holy, tried and true...” Sung in our gathering spaces, those words became both a prayer and a commitment. Surrounded by creeks, towering oak and bay trees, delicate lichen, and mushrooms pushing up from the forest floor, we were reminded that creation itself reflects God's sanctuary. We left refreshed, grateful, and inspired—not only to seek sanctuary, but to live as one.

MEN'S RETREAT 2026

Stuart Mitchell

Within the beautiful and unique grounds of St. Columba's Retreat House, 18 men gathered to learn about "stability", in a fast-paced world. Facilitated by the author of the book: "Stability—How an Ancient Monastic Practice Can Restore our Relationships Churches, and Communities," Rev. Nathan Oates guided us through thought provoking discussions. He emphasized that there is a social motivation to move from thing to thing, from person to person, place to place... instead of anchoring in and building connections and tapping deep roots... physically, relationally, and spiritually. Nathan was quickly and easily able to integrate into our group and everybody enjoyed his company and his teachings.

The weather was gorgeous, the home cooked food was delicious (especially Co's spaghetti!), the hikes were rewarding, and new and old



MEN'S RETREAT 2026 Cont...



I felt an urge to draft this article and Joanne said, "Well let me give you another example!" After church on February 15, she was standing with Kathy Matthies who was signing folks up to be soup makers for our Lenten Faith Journeys. Devon Wright was there saying he loved to bake bread and could bring some. Joanne piped up and asked if he wanted to make bread for communion during Lent. He happily agreed to do it.

I called Devon to let him know I wanted to write about his response in this article. He said, "Fine, but let me tell you more." He's only been making bread for 3 months but really enjoys it. He joked with his wife, Molly, that maybe someday he would be good enough to make communion bread. During the sermon on the 15th, Ben asked what gifts we could share? Devon thought of making bread. Fifteen minutes later he was asked by Joanne! God was really quick on this one.

We get inspired during sermons and we think about how we can make a difference in our community. Having conversations at church meetings, 9 to Dine, or Kindred Time are opportunities to connect and know each other better. Do you like to cook or bake? You can help with Second Saturday lunches, bag lunches, Kindred Time or Soup Suppers. Are you a gardener? Every Tuesday morning a crew helps around our campus, or you could help plan a weekend where folks who work can join in. Do you love flowers? Try taking a turn at making an arrangement for Sunday Worship. Do you want to take part in the Godly Play program for our children? Take a turn being an adult helper. Do you knit or crochet? We have a new hat project coming in March.

I hope this story will spur you on to contemplate what new activity you can take on, even if only on a limited basis. It will help you think of something you might need to release so you can say yes to something you feel called to do. We all have gifts to share. Don't hide your light under a bushel, No! Have you had a glimpse of God's timing lately? Please share it in a conversation.



MARCH 2026 Events at Community Church

- MARCH 1** **2nd SUNDAY IN LENT**
 Worship Service, 10 am, Sanctuary
 Kinship Time, 11:15 am, Bell Tower Courtyard
 Church Chat, 11:15 am, Chapel
- MARCH 2**
 Prayer Shawls, 10 am, Fireside Room
 Lenten Soup Supper, 6 pm, Fellowship Hall
 Lenten Faith Journey Sharing, 7 pm, Chapel
- MARCH 3**
 Shower Program, 9 am, Memorial Hall
 Grounds Team, 9 am, Church Campus
 Handbell Ensemble, 4 pm, Sanctuary
 Men's Discussion Group, 6:30 pm, Fireside Room
- MARCH 4**
 Women's Bible Study, 10 am, Room 6
 Online Bible Study, 5 pm, Zoo
- MARCH 5**
 Meditation Group, Noon, Room 6
 Women's Fellowship Card Writing, WF Room
 Drop-In Dreamwork Group, 5:30 pm Room 6
 Chancel Choir, 6:30 pm, Choir Room
- MARCH 7**
 Emily Davis Memorial Service & Reception, 4 pm, Sanctuary
- MARCH 8** **3rd SUNDAY IN LENT/OGHS**
 Worship Service, 10 am, Sanctuary
 Godly Play (K-Grade 5), 10:15 am, Room 5
 Kinship Time, 11:15 am, Bell Tower Courtyard
 Church Chat, 11:15 am, Chapel
 Intergenerational Gym, 11:15 am, Memorial Hall
- MARCH 9**
 Lenten Soup Supper, 6 pm, Fellowship Hall
 Lenten Faith Journey Sharing, 7 pm, Chapel
- MARCH 10**
 Grounds Team, 9 am, Church Campus
 Shower Program, 9 am, Memorial Hall
 Handbell Ensemble, 4 pm, Sanctuary
 Pastor-Parish Relations Team, 5 pm, Fireside Room
 FIAT Card Writing, 5:30 pm, Media Room
 Outreach Committee, 7 pm, Fireside Room
- MARCH 11**
 Women's Bible Study, 10 am, Room 6
 Online Bible Study, 5 pm, Zoom
 Facilities Committee, 6:30 pm, Fireside Room
- MARCH 12**
 Meditation Group, 12 pm, Room 6
 Drop-in Dreamwork Group, 5:30 pm, Room 6
 Chancel Choir, 6:30 pm, Choir Room
- MARCH 14**
 Second Saturday Lunch, Noon, Fellowship Hall
 St. Patrick's Day Fundraiser, 5 pm, Memorial Hall
- MARCH 15** **4th SUNDAY IN LENT**
SALT & LIGHT NEWSLETTER DEADLINE FOR APRIL ISSUE
 Worship Service, 10 am, Sanctuary
 Kinship Time, 11:15 am, Bell Tower Courtyard
 Church Chat, 11:15 am, Chapel

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MARCH 2026 Events at Community Church cont...

- MARCH 16** Prayer Shawls, 10 am, Fireside Room
Lenten Soup Supper, 6 pm, Fellowship Hall
Lenten Faith Journey Sharing, 7 pm, Chapel
- MARCH 17** Grounds Team, 9 am, Church Campus
Shower Program, 9 am, Memorial Hall
Finance Committee, 3:30 pm, Fireside Room
Health & Safety Team, 3:30 pm, Room 6
Handbell Ensemble, 4 pm, Sanctuary
FIAT Team, 5:30 pm, Fireside Room
- MARCH 18** Women's Bible Study, 10 am, Room 6
Online Bible Study, 5 pm, Zoom
- MARCH 19** Meditation Group, 12 pm, Room 6
Drop-in Dreamwork Group, 5:30 pm, Room 6
Chancel Choir, 6:30 pm, Choir Room
- MARCH 22** *5th SUNDAY IN LENT*
Worship Service, 10 am, Sanctuary
Godly Play (K-Grade 5), 10:15 am, Room 5
Special Meeting of the Congregation, 11 am, Sanctuary
Kinship Time, 11:15 am, Bell Tower Courtyard
God & Donuts (Youth), 11:15 am, Youth Lounge
- MARCH 23** Lenten Soup Supper, 6 pm, Fellowship Hall
Lenten Faith Journey, 7 pm
- MARCH 24** Grounds Team, 9 am, Church Campus
Shower Program, 9 am, Memorial Hall
Handbell Ensemble, 4 pm, Sanctuary
Leadership Council, 6 pm, Media Room
- MARCH 25** Women's Bible Study, 10 am, Room 6
Online Bible Study, 5 pm, Zoom
- MARCH 26** Meditation Group, 12 pm, Room 6
Drop-in Dreamwork Group, 5:30 pm, Room 6
Chancel Choir, 6:30 pm, Choir Room
- MARCH 29** *6th PALM /PASSION SUNDAY*
Worship Service, 10 am, Sanctuary
Godly Play (K-Grade 5), 10:15 am, Room 5
Kinship Time, 11:15 am, Bell Tower Courtyard
Church Chat, 11:15 am, Chapel
God & Donuts (Youth), 11:15 am, Youth Lounge
- MARCH 31** Grounds Team, 9 am, Church Campus
Shower Program, 9 am, Memorial Hall
Handbell Ensemble, 4 pm, Sanctuary





GRAINS OF SALT

MEN'S DISCUSSION GROUP Tuesday, MARCH 3, 6:00 p.m. in the Fireside Room. Topic: "Reflecting on Stability." Contact **Stuart Mitchell** at stuartmit@gmail.com / 707.328.0228.

INTER-CHURCH FOOD PANTRY

During Lent, we will be collecting non-perishable food every week on Sunday. Bring an item each week and deposit it in the basket under the Communion Table. To volunteer at the pantry, contact **Mark Albin** at 707.829.1492 / malbin@sonic.net.

CONGREGATIONAL MEETING NOTICE

There will be an all Congregational meeting on March 22, in the Sanctuary directly following worship to formally elect the approved committee members that will serve as the Endowment Committee. The Endowment Committee is responsible for managing the church's endowment funds. Flyers with nominee names and a copy of the Endowment By-laws is available in the Narthex.

SPECS OF LIGHT



SANCTUARY FLOWERS beautify our worship space every Sunday. To sponsor flowers in honor of a person or event, sign up on the poster in the Narthex.



WOMEN'S BIBLE STUDY meets on Wednesdays, 10 a.m. in Room 6. Contact **Norma Watson** at nor-mawatson1949@gmail.com.

ONLINE BIBLE STUDY meets Wednesdays, 5:00–6:30 p.m. via Zoom. Contact **Gail Thomas** for the link at 707.758.0295.

MEDITATION GROUP meets Thursdays, 12:00 – 1:00 p.m. in Room 6. Contact **Mary Culberson** at 707.525.1730.

DREAMWORK GROUP meets on Thursdays, 5:30–6:30 p.m. in Room 6. Contact **Raymond Dougherty** at 707.338.2500.

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Sebastopol, Ca 95472



SALT & LIGHT
COMMUNITY CHURCH OF SEBASTOPOL
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
MARCH 2026 NEWSLETTER

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