

Community Church of
Sebastopol
United Church of
Christ
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Keyboardist
J. Althea

Handbell Director
Karna Roa

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**Member-in-
Discernment**
Ross Pimentel

Pastor Emeritus
Rev. Gene Nelson



SALT & LIGHT

COMMUNITY CHURCH OF SEBASTOPOL

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

July 2022 NEWSLETTER

The “You” Turn Pastor Benjamin

Some people might assume that pastors have a robust prayer life. Or that we should at least be *trying* to have one. Or that, if we don’t have one, we should pretend like everything is going great. The truth is that pastors, just like everyone else, aren’t always on speaking terms with God. In fact, sometimes the dry spells are really dry, and they go on and on.

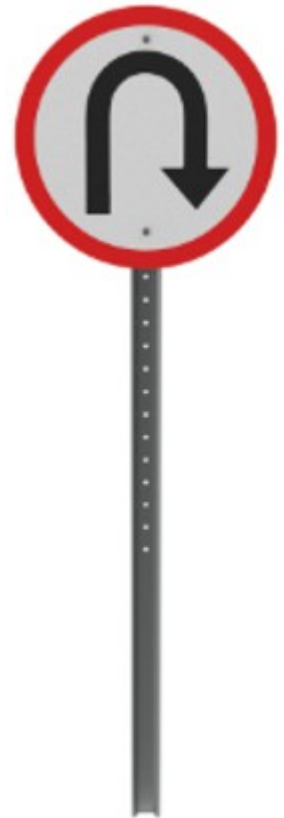
Whenever I experience a dry spell, I notice that I am doing a lot more *thinking about* God and a lot less *speaking with* God. When this happens, I try to make the “You” turn. I go on a long walk, I talk out loud, and I address my words to “You,” to God. It makes a difference. It is a totally different activity than talking to myself. This shift from first person to second person is a shift from impersonal to personal, and it’s huge.

For example, if I am walking and talking, I might say to myself, “The wars in Ukraine and Gaza and Iran and Lebanon are so horrible. I wonder what God would have me do about these intense feelings of sadness, grief and helplessness?”

Or, I might address God, saying, “God, this war is so horrible. I feel deeply sad, grieved, and helpless. What would *you* have me do with all these feelings?”

In the first approach, even though I am talking about feelings, I stay in my head. And it’s not entirely clear I even need to invoke God’s name. I could just say, “What should I do about these intense thought and feelings?”

But when I use the second approach, I am sharing my feelings with someone else, placing them in someone else’s hands. And not just anyone, but the one I trust to be the author of all that is, as well as the one who is revealed in Jesus as the



Continued on Page 2

incarnation of suffering love on behalf of others. When I address my question to “You, God,” I stay with the feelings, and I don’t rush toward an answer because I don’t have an answer. I’m speaking, but then I’m pausing to listen.

There are many ways to pray. I think we are often praying when we don’t even know it. Different forms of prayer work for different people at different times. There is no one-prayer-fits-all-for-all-time. But if you’ve been in a time of dryness, try making the “You” turn. Trust, imagine, act as if the God who made you and loves you, along with all people and all creation, delights in spending time with you and can be addressed familiarly as someone who never leaves your side whether you realize it or not.

* Based on a blog entry found at [Almost a Conversation](#).



NEW SUMMER PROGRAM

CHILDREN AGES 4—12.

Summer Circle will continue on July 12. Class will meet directly following the Children’s Message until 11:00 a.m. The program will conclude on July 19 by sharing some of what they have learned with the congregation during the worship service. Contact **Tirza Dawn**, Faith Formation Coordinator, with questions: faithformation@uccseb.org.

JULY 2026 WORSHIP
The Season after Pentecost

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

JULY 5 – 6th Sunday after Pentecost

On this day following Independence Day, we celebrate the Sacrament of Holy Communion. **Roger Wilson** shares special music and **Reena Burton**, Guest Preacher, shares a sermon on [Song of Songs 2:8–13](#) entitled, “Still, We Sing.

JULY 12 – 7th Sunday after Pentecost

Today participants in the Summer Circle program, led by **Mimi Reid**, share special music, new members join our congregation, and **Rev. Benjamin J. Broadbent**, Lead Minister, preaches a sermon on [Matthew 26:47–56](#) entitled, “Trusting the Unarmed God.”

JULY 19 – 8th Sunday after Pentecost

Today **Bob Burnett** shares special music, and **Pastor Benjamin** preaches a sermon on [Matthew 13:24–30](#) entitled “The Cure for Division.”

JUNE 26 – 9th Sunday after Pentecost

Today a small vocal ensemble debuts an original composition by **Garth Watson** and **Pastor Benjamin** preaches a sermon on [Matthew 13:44–52](#) entitled, “What to Make of Hell.”

Coming in August... Apple Pie Sunday, Althea’s Last Sunday, All Church Camp



COMMUNITY

Tamar Knuth is a high school senior, ocean lover, surfer, and open water swimmer who finds joy in sunset beach walks, community, and being outdoors. Thoughtful and grounded, Tamar brings both curiosity and warmth to the Community Church of Sebastopol, where she has grown up surrounded by generations of people who helped shape her understanding of belonging, faith, and connection.



Like many young people raised in the church, Tamar's early relationship with Community Church began as part of family life. Church was simply what her family did together. She remembers loving the music as a child and participating in programs like Godly Play, but for many years, church still felt more inherited than personal. "It was kind of a rule in our house that if you're home, you go to church," Tamar shares honestly.

Over time, however, relationships transformed her experience. When her close friend Sophia joined the church in third grade, Sundays began to feel different. "From then on," Tamar recalls, "it was more like, 'Oh, I get to go to church, because then I get to go see Sophia.'" Through friendships, confirmation class, church camp at Westminster Woods, and traditions like the annual apple pie fundraiser, church became more than a place to attend. It became a community she actively wanted to be part of.

Tamar also found belonging through the consistency and care of the people around her. She speaks warmly about sitting with members of the Bell family during services. "They're always there," Tamar says. "And they're always happy to see me. They always just make room." It is a kind of welcome that she feels deeply embodies Community Church itself.

As Tamar has grown older, the church has continued shaping not only her faith, but also the way she moves through the wider world. "I definitely think I realize how important community is from going to church," Tamar reflects, "and I definitely seek it in other areas of my life." Community Church's open and thoughtful approach to faith has also expanded her understanding of people whose beliefs differ from her own. "Experiencing another person's religion," Tamar shares, "is something that is so powerful and beautiful. People believe differently than me, but they're still people, and that's a beautiful thing."

In recent years, Tamar has also found herself increasingly drawn to the sermons and teachings themselves. "After each sermon," Tamar says, "I try to take something from it and apply it to life." She especially appreciates messages that encourage courage, reflection, and stepping into discomfort when it aligns with one's values. Rather than experiencing faith as rigid or limiting, Tamar describes Community Church as a place that encourages openness, compassion, and thoughtful engagement with the world.

Tamar's story is a reminder that the church's impact is often built slowly and relationally, through friendships, traditions, shared experiences, and communities that consistently make room for people to belong. Through Community Church, Tamar has not only grown in faith, but also developed a deep appreciation for connection, curiosity, and the beauty of human difference. In investing in this church community, we invest in the shaping of young people who carry those values into the world around them.

Written by Reena Burton

Gathering The Waters of Summer

This summer, we are asking all members and friends of the Community Church of Sebastopol to bring back small samples of water from your travels. For example, if you go to Oahu, bring back a few ounces of Hawaiian ocean water. If you go tubing on the Russian River, bring back some water from your float. If you go to Europe, bring back water from one of those fancy fountains they have over there. If you go to a French restaurant in Santa Rosa, bring us back some water from your drinking glass.



Use a simple, small container like a sample size shampoo bottle. Bring it to the church office and leave it with an attached note telling us who you are and where you collected the water. On September 13, we will bless all of the gathered waters of summer and use the collected water, after disinfecting it, in baptisms over the coming year. This will be a fun way to share our summer adventures with each other and a way to offer thanksgiving to God for the waters of the world that sustain us and bring us joy.

With questions, contact **Pastor Benjamin** at 719.238.5347 or pastorbenjamin@uccseb.org.



BIRTHDAYS IN JULY



JULY 1
Jalexandra Hole
Knowledge Brown

JULY 3
Stephen Reid

JULY 4
Harper Malone
Gary Leucht

JULY 5
Sandy Rosen

JULY 6
Maria Gordon
Eian Galletto

JULY 7
Kelli Clark

JULY 8
Nancy Lee
Ryan Hole

JULY 9
Norma Watson
Paul Feige

JULY 10
Ethan Dovey

JULY 11
Robert Best
Eva Norton
Henry Milcoff

JULY 12
Mark Pettis
Holly Locey

JULY 14
Dawson Bell
Chris Jenkins
Cheryl Witteman

JULY 15
Hosanna Bauer

JULY 16
Allyson Davis
Norma Taddeucci
Nathan LaForce

JULY 17
Daphne Cripps
Luanne Buchanan
Judy Stupfel

JULY 18
Joy Richards
Joan Gorin

JULY 19
Dorothy McKoin
Charles Williams Sr.

JULY 22
Tamar Knuth

JULY 23
Nancy Berger

JULY 24
Barbara Nichols
Bernie Hovden

JULY 25
Hal Roa
Marna McKenzie

JULY 27
Andrew DelMonte
Richard Olson
David Richards

JULY 30
Robert McKoin
Janice Eurgubian

JULY 31
Sean Wood

SCHOOL SUPPLY DONATION DRIVE



Starting May 12, 2026

The Mission & Outreach Team is collecting Backpack supplies. All donations will be taken To our Village Closet, a local Sonoma County Organization that supports children and youth impacted by foster care and kinship care situations.

Please donate only new, high-quality supplies to the basket
in the church entry by **July 12, 2026.**

- Lunch boxes
- Metal water bottles (adult size)
- New tennis shoes (youth - adult sizes)
- Pencil bags/boxes
- Crayons (36-count or less)
- Crayons (oversized for small hands)
- Binder divider tabs • Character folders (2 pocket)
- Spiral notebook (college & wide)
- Lined paper (college & wide)
- Composition books (college & wide)
- 3 ring binders (1-inch or smaller)
- Glue sticks
- Kids scissors (left & right-handed)
- Markers (24-count or smaller, thin & thick)
- Ice packs (for lunch boxes)
- Hand sanitizer (5-oz size)

For more information, please contact Kathy Matthies kathleenmatthies57@gmail.com .

THE JOY OF SHOWING UP:
How volunteering helps us create beauty, build community, and live our faith
By Tirza Dawn

"Volunteering is not about filling a need. It's about becoming part of the beautiful thing God is creating among us."

When many of us think about volunteering, we think about helping out. But in the life of a church, volunteering is something much deeper. It is one of the ways we live our faith, strengthen our community, and participate in God's work in the world.

The vibrant artwork pictured above, created by local street artist Velvet Bandit, recently appeared on a lamp post outside our church. It offers a beautiful reminder of this truth. Their murals and messages appear throughout our county, transforming ordinary spaces into places of reflection, hope, and connection. They remind us that beauty matters. Compassion matters. Community matters.



Church volunteers do something similar.

Every week, members of our congregation bring their unique gifts to create something meaningful together. Some welcome visitors at the door. Some prepare food, teach children, care for our grounds, organize events, serve on committees, or quietly handle the countless details that make our ministries possible. Each contribution may seem small on its own, but together they create something far greater than anyone could accomplish alone.

When we asked volunteers here at Community Church of Sebastopol why they serve, their answers were inspiring and uplifting. They spoke about joy. They spoke about purpose. They spoke about belonging.

For some, volunteering is a spiritual practice—a way of expressing gratitude and living out their faith through action. For others, it is an opportunity to build relationships and deepen their connection to the church community. Many simply enjoy creating something beautiful alongside others.

One volunteer shared that serving helps them feel like they truly belong. Another said it gives them purpose. Others described volunteering as a way to "be the Church" rather than simply attending it.

As our congregation continues to grow and evolve, volunteers are helping shape what comes next. New ideas emerge, leadership develops, friendships deepen, and collaboration creates momentum. Together, we are building a church that reflects our shared values and aspirations.

The good news is that all of us can do something.

You do not need special expertise or unlimited free time. You only need a willingness to share your gifts; however, they may show up. Every act of service contributes to the larger picture, helping create a community that is welcoming, compassionate, vibrant, and alive.

Like the messages woven into the artwork that brightens our streets, every act of service leaves its mark. Together, through our shared efforts, we create beauty, we create connection, and we create the church we hope to become.

Here is a poem that speaks to our call to “walk humbly” in service and joy:
In Memory of Bishop Oscar Romero (1917 – 1980)

It helps now and then to step back and take the long view.
The Kingdom is not only beyond our efforts; it is even beyond our vision.
We accomplish in our lifetime only a tiny fraction of the magnificent enterprise that is God's work.
Which is another way of saying that the Kingdom lies behind us.
No statement says all that could be said.
No prayer fully expresses our faith.
No program accomplishes the Church's mission.
No set of goals and objectives includes everything.
No strategic plan addresses every possibility.
That is what we are about.
We plant seeds that one day will grow.
We water seeds already planted knowing that they hold future promise.
We lay foundations that will need to further develop.
We provide yeast that produce effects far beyond our capabilities.
We cannot do everything, and there is a sense of liberation realizing this.
It enables us to do something and do it very well.
It may be incomplete, but it is a beginning, a step along the way, an opportunity for the Lord's
grace to enter and do the rest.
We may never see the end result, but that is the difference between the master builder and the worker.
We are the workers, not the master builders, ministers, not messiahs.
We are prophets of a future not our own. Amen.

-Composed by Bishop Ken Untener of Saginaw, Michigan, in 1979. It was drafted for a homily by Card. John Dearden for a celebration of departed priests. The words are often attributed to Bishop Oscar Romero but were never spoken by him, yet they speak to his spirit.



It's Apple Pie Time!!

August 6, 7, 8, 9



Our biggest fund-raiser of the year, the Apple Pies Event, is right around the corner. This is our 54 year 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 adults and to 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:

- | | |
|--|---|
| £ Thurs, 4-8pm set up, sorting apple slices, pie making | £ Saturday, 8am-4pm sorting apple slices & making pies* (BBQ Hot Dog lunch served at noon) |
| £ Friday, 8am-4pm sorting apple slices & making pies * (BBQ Hot Dog lunch served at noon) | £ Saturday, 8am-12:00pm sorting apple slices & making pies |
| £ Friday, 8am-12:00pm 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 clean up 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 online at: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0E4BA8A92DA0FBC43-64553054>

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

*“What does the Lord require of you but to do justice, **to love kindness**, and to walk humbly with your God?” — Micah 6:8*

August 28–30

Westminster Woods, 6510 Bohemian Highway, Occidental, CA 95465

All-Church Camp Weekend

You’re invited to join our church family for All-Church Camp, August 28–30, at beautiful Westminster Woods in Occidental. This year’s theme is **Camp Kindness**. Come for the full weekend—from Friday evening through Sunday morning worship—or join us for a fun-filled Saturday on August 29. Saturday-only participants should arrive between 8:00 and 9:00 a.m.; all three meals are included.

What Will We Do?

We’ll spend the weekend singing, dancing, playing games, worshiping, swimming, hiking, making crafts, sharing talents, and enjoying time together. There will be opportunities to meet new friends, reconnect with old friends, join intergenerational activities, relax, and simply enjoy camp.

Weekend Schedule

FRIDAY

Arrive and check in between 4:00 and 5:30 p.m. Bring your own picnic dinner and gather at the picnic tables at 5:30 p.m. Line dancing, Campfire and s’mores, closing circle, and game time.

SATURDAY

Between breakfast, lunch, and dinner, enjoy intergenerational games, workshops, swimming, and plenty of free time.

Have a workshop idea you’d like to lead? Workshops are about one hour long. Contact Kathy Matthies for more information. In the evening, enjoy a lively talent show. Bring your talent—and any props you need!

SUNDAY

Breakfast, worship, and departure for homewho do not live together. When registering, choose the Household option and select each family member who will attend. Each person must have a REALM profile before registration. If a higher subtotal appears at first, use the pull-down menu beside each family member’s name and select “This Person Is Included in a Household Registration” until only one Household Rate remains in the subtotal.

CAMP KINDNESS

Accommodations – Westminster Woods offers shared houses, shared rustic cabins, and meadow tent camping for those who prefer to bring their own tent.

Shared House – Up to two houses are available, each accommodating 8–10 people. Each house includes a kitchen, two bathrooms, and a living room. Please let Kathy Bell know whom you would feel comfortable sharing a house with (kbellnow@yahoo.com).

Shared Cabin – Many rustic cabins are available, each accommodating 6–10 people with bunk beds and a heater. Shared restrooms are nearby. Please let Kathy Bell know whom you would feel comfortable sharing a cabin with (kbellnow@yahoo.com).

Tent Camping – Bring your own tent, sleeping bag, and sleeping pad, and set up in the meadow. This is a great option for those who want their own space or enjoy sleeping under the stars. Prices are the same as the shared cabin rates.

Saturday-Only Option – Saturday-only registration includes three meals and a full day of fun. Please plan to arrive between 8:00 and 9:00 a.m. Breakfast is at 8:30 a.m., and programming begins at 9:30 a.m. If you will arrive after 9:00 a.m., please email Kathy Bell with your estimated arrival time by Thursday, August 27 (kbellnow@yahoo.com).

How Much Does It Cost?

Thanks to our Apple Pie Fund, the retreat cost is subsidized by 30%. Each year, volunteers help make and sell Gravenstein apple pies so camp can remain affordable. This year marks our church's 54th year of baking pies. The Apple Pie Event is August 6–9, so please save the date. We'll need many volunteers, and it's a wonderful chance to invite friends to get to know our church as we make pies together.

See the table below for cost details. Additional camperships may be available for those who need financial assistance to attend. To inquire, please contact Pastor Ben at pastorbengmin@uccseb.org and include "Campership" in the subject line. Rates below show both the actual cost and the subsidized amount participants pay.

Whole Weekend Cost	Actual Cost	Your Cost
Individual House – Adults only	\$260	\$182
Individual Cabin/Tent	\$180	\$126
Child 4 and under		Free
Child ages 5–10	\$80	\$60
Family Rates – Household of 4	\$460	\$322
Household of 5	\$545	\$382
Household of 6	\$630	\$441
Saturday Only Cost		
One adult, Saturday only	\$120	\$94
One child ages 5–10, Saturday only	\$60	\$42
Family Rates – Household of 4	\$300	\$210
Household of 5	\$350	\$245
Household of 6	\$400	\$280

CAMP KINDNESS

Register Online [HERE](#)

Early Bird Discount: Register on or before Sunday, August 9, to receive \$10 off per person.

Household Discount: Households of four or more people who live together under one roof may register at the discounted household rate. College students who depend on parental income may be included. This discount does not apply to extended family members who do not live together. When registering, choose the Household option and select each family member who will attend. Each person must have a REALM profile before registration. If a higher subtotal appears at first, use the pull-down menu beside each family member's name and select "This Person Is Included in a Household Registration" until only one Household Rate remains in the subtotal.

Registration and Payment – Please register early. Early Bird pricing ends Sunday, August 9, and the final registration deadline is Sunday, August 23. No registrations will be accepted after August 23. Payment through REALM is preferred. Please choose All-Church Camp Weekend from the payment menu. Checks may be dropped off at the church office or mailed to the church by the applicable Early Bird or regular registration deadline. No refunds will be given after August 27.

Questions?

Registration questions: Contact Joy Richards in the office at 707-823-2484 or office@uccseb.org.

Workshop questions: Contact Kathy Matthies at kathleenmatthies57@gmail.com.

Housing or roommate requests: Contact Kathy Bell at kbellnow@yahoo.com.

We hope to see you at Westminster Woods as we build a kindness community together under the redwoods.



JULY 2026 Events at Community Church

JULY 1	Coffee & Care, 10 am, Offsite
JULY 2	Meditation Group, 12 pm, Room 6
JULY 3 & 4	Office Closed, Happy Birthday, America!
JULY 5	<i>6TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST</i> Worship Service, 10 am, Sanctuary Kinship Time, 11:15 am, Bell Tower Courtyard Church Chat, 11:15 am, Chapel
JULY 6	Prayer Shawls, 10 am, Fireside Room
JULY 7	Grounds Team, 9 am, Church Campus Shower Program, 9 am, Memorial Hall Spiritual Exploration Group, 5 pm, Zoom Men's Discussion Group, 6 pm, Fireside Room
JULY 8	Coffee & Care, 10 am, Offsite Facilities Committee, 6:30 pm, Fireside Room
JULY 9	Meditation Group, 12 pm, Room 6
JULY 11	<i>Second Saturday Lunch, 12 pm, Fellowship Hall</i>
JULY 12	<i>2^{7H} SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST</i> Worship Service, 10 am, Sanctuary Summer Circle, 10:15 am, Room 5 Kinship Time, 11:15 am, Bell Tower Courtyard Personnel Committee, 12:15 pm, Fireside Room
JULY 13	<i>Health & Safety Team, 3:30 pm, Room 6</i>
JULY 14	Grounds Team, 9 am, Church Campus Shower Program, 9 am, Memorial Hall Pastor Parish Relations, 5 pm, Fireside Room Spiritual Exploration Group, 5 pm, Zoom Outreach Committee, 7 pm, Fireside Room
JULY 15	SALT & LIGHT NEWSLETTER DEADLINE Coffee & Care, 10 am, Offsite

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JULY 2026 Events at Community Church cont...

JULY 16	<i>Meditation Group, 12 pm, Room 6</i>
JULY 19	<i>8TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST</i> Worship Service, 10 am, Sanctuary Summer Circle, 10:15 am, Room 5 Kinship Time, 11:15 am, Bell Tower Courtyard
JULY 20	Prayer Shawls, 10 am, Fireside Room
JULY 21	Grounds Team, 9 am, Church Campus Shower Program, 9 am, Memorial Hall Finance Committee, 3:30 pm, Fireside Room Spiritual Exploration Group, 5 pm, Zoom
JULY 22	Coffee & Care, 10 am, Offsite
JULY 23	Meditation Group, 12 pm, Room 6
JULY 26	<i>9TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST/OPEN & AFFIRMING SUNDAY</i> Worship Service, 10 am, Sanctuary Kinship Time, 11:15 am, Bell Tower Courtyard
JULY 28	Grounds Team, 9 am, Church Campus Leadership Council, 6 pm, Media Room
JULY 29	Coffee & Care, 10 am, Offsite
JULY 23	Meditation Group, 12 pm, Room 6



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SALT & LIGHT
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