

THE SEER



June 2021

Let everything that breathes
praise the Beloved with their lives.

May it be so now
and forever,
Amen.

These words are from a translation of Psalm 150 by Nan Merrill. We will read them in worship on Music Sunday, June 6th. I really appreciate the wording of Merrill's paraphrase. Praising God, one might argue, is the central tenet of our lives – or it is supposed to be – or it could be. How we praise God, what shape our praise takes, and how it looks or sounds is different for the diverse creatures that breathe. For us, as churchy folks, we might say that praising God is what we do on Sunday mornings. I hope that we consider this a portion of our praise or the beginning, not the sum total.

What do we mean when we suggest that we praise the Beloved with our lives? The concept of praising God with our entire life suggests to me that we live our lives in response to the blessings of creation and life itself. In the book of Genesis one of the creation stories suggests that we become stewards of the earth. I read this as a primal responsibility as the human family to be a good steward (to take care of) not only the planet, but also to be a good steward of our lives: how we treat our self/bodies, our relationships, and our time. These are central gifts God provided us and if we are doing our best (do not hear me say "get it right"), but if we are doing are best to live fully and to love abundantly, then I figure we are getting pretty close to holding up our responsibility (s) and thus being good stewards.

(Continued on next page)

INSIDE THE ISSUE:

Notes from the Pastor

Website Updates

Northern California/Nevada
Conference

Sonoma County Pride Parade
Outreach Opportunity!

Birthdays

Bible Study

Relations Committee

Jonny Heads back to the
Woods

Volunteer Opportunity

United Nations Refugee Day

Bible Study

I am Only One

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Now you might say what does that have to do with praise? Well, taking care of the gifts that have been given to us might be the best way to say thank you... and that is a generous form of praise!

As we get closer to regathering – and we are getting closer (look to hear an announcement in next months' Seer if not before) – I encourage you to consider the ways you are a steward of your time and talents. How does your stewardship look different during the pandemic? What have you learned about yourself and about God? I wonder what you've made space for that you would like to keep? I wonder what you can't wait to do once again? What feels like praise and celebration now that we as a larger society are starting to reemerge? And, I wonder what, specifically, might praise and stewardship look and feel like when we gather together as a church once more?

We are breathing, so let us continue praising and giving thanks.

Pastor Diana

Website Updates

Guess what? We've created a new way for you to get information! You can now go to our church website fcsr.org for:

- 1) Our newsletters - under the menu heading Newsletters.
- 2) Pastor Diana's most recent sermons - under the Media section. You'll also see Bill O'Neill's curated music there.
- 3) And our most current Church Directory - at the very bottom righthand side of each page. You'll need a password to get access to the Directory. The password is "church" and then click OKAY.

Newsletters

May 2021 Seer

April 2021 Seer

February/March 2021 Seer



Recent Sermons

If you cannot make church, not to worry! You can catch Pastor Diana's sermon by clicking image below or by visiting this link:

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCVy6rmnyLZh_thnXgs8uWjA

Northern California/Nevada Conference

Of the United Church of Christ

Report on the Budget Meeting

Part 2: Camp Caz

Once again, as your delegates, John Derby and I, along with Pastor Diana, attended an NCNC budget meeting on May 22. It was a one-item agenda: an offer for the sale of Camp Caz to a relatively new nonprofit. I am copying parts of the information because I know how much interest our congregation has in Camp Caz.

From the Finance and Business Committee, FABC:

FABC considered two offers based on five criteria:

1. A purchase price that meets or exceeds the \$3.5M listing price. (Offer \$4M)
2. A purchase that does not require NCNC financing.
3. A buyer/organization that has a commitment to preserving the Camp Caz property and lands and will consider engaging with the Sonoma Land Trust for a long-term deed commitment to the preservation of the property outside the building envelope.
4. A buyer that will be open to offer NCNC camp opportunities at prevailing rates.
5. A buyer that has a positive reputation in the greater community.

Based on these criteria, FABC is recommending to Council the Shelterwood Collective offer which meets all of them.

From Shelterwood Collective: Our Mission: shelterwoodcollective.org Shelterwood is an African American and Native American led environmental nonprofit committed to creating outdoor opportunities and creative spaces for marginalized communities while protecting California's iconic redwood forests. Formed in response to the tremendous lack of diversity in the outdoors, we are looking to secure our first educational and artistic center.

Following much discussion, the offer was accepted with a 79% vote. An additional motion was passed to have the Conference Council work with Shelterwood on an MOU (Memorandum Of Understanding) spelling out the terms of NCNC use for summer camps more specifically.

The Conference acknowledged the grief felt by so many on this loss; it is particularly hard for the many people who worked on an alternate solution that didn't come about.

Winnie Hogoboom, Delegate



BEYOND THE RAINBOW DRIVE-THRU PARADE

Come Out! Come Out!
Wherever you are...

JUNE 5

11 am - 2 pm

Graton Resort & Casino Parking Lot - Rohnert Park

Sponsored by:



KAISER
PERMANENTE®



SONOMA
COUNTY
PRIDE®

Presented by Sonoma County Pride
& Graton Resort & Casino



GRATON
RESORT & CASINO®

Sonoma County Pride Parade

COME ONE, COME ALL to this year's Sonoma County Pride Parade!

Actually, it is an Un-Parade--the floats and displays stay in place, and the observers do a drive-by! Isn't that clever!

You can participate by helping Judy Cramer prepare our display, come to the display on Saturday, June 5 (sign up in advance) to wave at passers-by, or be in the drive by! Contact Judy Cramer at judithcramer@rocketmail.com for more info or to sign up.

Website Changes

We've created a new way for you to get information! You can now go to our church website fcsr.org for:

- 1) Our newsletter—under the menu heading Newsletters.
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Outreach opportunity!

The Redwood Empire Food Bank has done – and is still doing – a wonderful job of easing food insecurity during the pandemic. They are always eager for volunteers, and some of us have been part of this effort.

We are suggesting a group activity of volunteering together at the food bank – it should be a fun way to reconnect with one another and provide a service to the community. Thanks to Judy C., we can wear our comma t-shirts and show the community that God is Still Speaking.

The location is at the food bank near the airport: 3990 Brickway Boulevard, Santa Rosa 95403. All the work is outside in tents with masks and social distancing.

Here are the available shifts:

Monday-Friday

7am-9am | Early bird shift, best way to start the day!

10am-12pm | Perfect time to work up an appetite before lunch!

1pm-4pm | Spend the afternoon helping our community!

5pm-7pm | Finish your day strong!

If you're interested in being part of a group, please contact Ruth (rtbogart@gmail.com) or Kathy (fkathj@sonic.net) and let them know what days and times are possible for you. Then we'll try to schedule a time slot that works best for most people.

June Birthdays

6/2. Andreas Petersen
6/3. Lyn Derby
Winnie Hogoboom
6/6. Alan Balfour
Linda Noel

6/8. Dana Alexander
6/12. Bob Cramer
John Derby
6/15. Drew Fagent
6:24. Christine Williams
Marilee Kreml



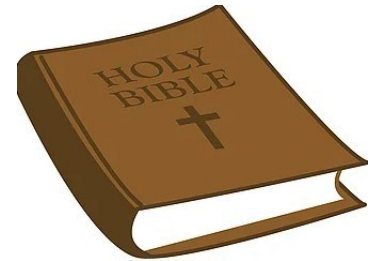
Bible Study on the book of Genesis

Explore some of the foundational texts of our faith (and that of our Jewish siblings) and do a deep dive with Biblical thinker and in-house scholar, the Rev. Rebecca Schroeder

Wednesdays @ 10:30am

On Zoom

Beginning Wednesday, June 16 (???)



RSVP to the office and a link will be sent to you.

PASTOR-PARISH RELATIONS COMMITTEE

This committee (PPRC) is set out in our church by-laws to “Act as liaison between the Pastoral staff and members of the congregation on any matter of personal concern which may arise.” The guidelines for the PPRC also provide that it will meet regularly with the pastor and “Provide opportunity for the pastor to reflect in confidence about personal concerns, hopes, ambitions and frustrations.” While not a personnel committee, the PPRC is available to meet with congregants who have concerns about the pastor. The committee is also charged with being alert to any concerns which the pastor may have. The meetings and discussions of the PPRC are held as confidential, except as provided in the UCC Manual on Ministry.

PPRC consists of five or more members who shall serve for two year terms with approximately one-half of the members appointed each year. Current members appointed by the Moderator at the start of this calendar year are:

Marcia Brumbaugh, Alicia Said, Kathy Johnson, Mark Adams and Chuck Cadman (chair). Since being appointed, the PPRC has met monthly with Pastor Diana.



Administrative Assistant Heads Back to the Woods

Hi everyone! My time as your administrative secretary has already come to an end. When I first accepted this job there was a general understanding that I would stay if I could. In February while still witnessing the spiking numbers of Covid-19 infections, it felt like my other job would not start anytime soon, and that I might be staying around here for quite a while waiting for students to come back to Westminster Woods, my home and primary job. And now its June and things have changed! More than half the county is vaccinated, and schools are planning to return to Westminster Woods and booking large parts of our calendar. The leadership team that I am on has already begun accepting applications for the fall season and we are looking to hire more teachers. On top of that, I have been recruited to be the summer's registrar and getting families registered for our Summer Camp Program. Things are busy!

In many ways this office job has prepared me to take on wider and different roles at Westminster Woods. I am grateful for the skills I have learned here, grateful for the hospitality I've been shown, and for the interactions I've had with some of you. It is on to the next thing for me! Thank you to your community, and I pray and hope that God keeps you, that you would "live and move and have y[our] being" in Christ. *Acts17:28*

Blessings,

Jonathan Angulo

Group Volunteer at Redwood Empire Food Bank

We have scheduled a first group volunteer shift at the food bank on Thursday, June 3, from 10 a.m. until noon. We will wear comma shirts to show that we are together and God Is Still Speaking.

Please join us! You can sign up at <https://refb.org/ways-to-give/volunteer.html>. Contact Kathy (fkathj@sonic.net) or Ruth (rtbogart@gmail.com) to let us know what size t-shirt you need.

Can't make it on June 3? REFB will need volunteers throughout the summer, so pick a date, let Ruth or Kathy know, and we will help to organize a group.

United Nations –World Refugee Day 2021

Sunday, June 20th is World Refugee Day—a time when we acknowledge the overwhelming adversity faced by the nearly 80 million displaced people worldwide. These vulnerable individuals should be protected, embraced and empowered in a world of just and welcoming communities.

Let us join with other people of good will on this day in celebrating the incredible resilience and contributions of refugees in America- and remembering those overseas who look to us for protection.

Let us recommit to serving our neighbors both around the corner and across the globe.

Here are practical ways we can help:

Pray,

Help vulnerable families fleeing violence by donating to refugee organizations like Church World Service <https://cwsglobal.org/learn/refugees-and-immigrants/>

Advocate for immigration policies that honor God’s love for all people and the dignity of each person.

Everyone can make a difference. Every action counts!

Outreach Team

Bible Study on the book of Genesis

Explore some of the foundational texts of our faith (and that of our Jewish siblings) and do a deep dive with Biblical thinker and in-house scholar, the Rev. Rebecca Schroeder

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I am Only One: A Green Minute

Helen Keller famously said “I am only one, but still I am one. I cannot do everything, but still I can do something; and because I cannot do everything I will not refuse to do the something that I can do.”

Many of the challenges we face daily seem out of our control. Still, we know that stewardship of the Earth and all that dwells in it is part of our calling as people of faith.

What are some ways, large or small, that you care for the earth? Do you have water-conserving habits to share? Or reduction/elimination of plastics? Reducing your use of fossil fuels?

Let’s share our “something we can do” ideas; we can’t all do everything but each of us can do something. And we can learn from each other! Please share your tricks with Kathy Johnson fkathj@sonic.net and watch for “Green Minute” in future weekly emails for others’ ideas. Maybe we’ll find some we can use at church and that you might be able to incorporate into your daily routine at home.

Virginia Greenwald offers that she’s trying hard to eliminate plastic:

- I've begun buying laundry detergent sheets.
- Don't buy plastic wrap any more.
- Have bought a set of silicone bowl tops.

And Kathy Johnson, a lifelong water watcher (Mom was a depression-era Kansas farm girl, after all):

- That bucket in the shower for watering plants, washing car windows, and more.
- A pitcher near the kitchen sink to catch warm-up water and run it through the Brita filters for drinking.
- Never leave it running while rinsing dishes or brushing teeth.

What do you have to share?

1 Peter 4:10 —Like good stewards of the manifold grace of God, serve one another with whatever gift each of you has received. (NRSV)