



# April 2020 THE MESSENGER

CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF BELMONT

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## Pastor Liz arrives just in time to hunker down

*The Rev. Elizabeth Mitchell Clement arrived in our midst the second week in March, and she must have known something was in the air (literally) when the moving van driver had to remove a tree branch to get her worldly possessions settled in the apartment on the top floor of the Congregational Church of Belmont.*

*Pastor Liz, as she allows us to call her, had come as an intentional interim pastor to see us through the process of determining who we are as a church and to help us decide what virtues we need in a settled pastor.*

*She didn't come to us to huddle alone in that big apartment in a huge and empty church building, by herself, in the middle of an international crisis.*

*But she's here and we are thrilled.*

### By Rev. Elizabeth Clement

First of all, thank you CCB for being such a warm and welcoming congregation. Entering a new ministry setting is always risky and can stir up any number of fears and insecurities in an interim pastor.

I am blessed to say that has NOT been something I have had to work through.

You have been wonderful, kind and so very generous, beginning with the lovely apartment so beautifully and lovingly refurbished, on to another jar of nasturtiums that I found on the porch today, and food that I cannot seem to eat as fast as it comes.

An interim pastor friend asked the other day if I wanted to trade congregations. I declined.

Oh, and did I mention the global Covid-19 pandemic that landed here about the same time I did, and how kind and attentive you have been of me as we work our way through so much that has, literally, rewritten our reality? Holy moly!

Notice, I waited until the second para-



**Moderator Garrett House read the Litany of Welcome for Pastor Elizabeth Clement on March 15. Below is the basket of goodies that awaited her as she moved into the newly renovated church apartment.**

graph to mention it, but it is surely too soon to think learning to live like we must now is not taking a lot out of us — each of us — and taking a heavy toll. Like death and so many other losses, it's much easier to face together.

You have graciously offered me the support and encouragement I have badly needed from day to day. I am humbled and grateful. And my dearest hope is that I am able to do the same for you.

CCB is rising to this occasion beautifully as a congregation, loving God and each other, and our neighbors. Thank you for making this as soft a landing as could be imagined in such weird and wonderful times. When we are more settled in the work CCB called me to share, we will have the careful relationships to do God's good work. In the meantime,

Grace upon grace,  
Pastor Liz



**Check out CCB's new [website](#) and tell us what you think!**

**We are an Open and Affirming Congregation valuing everyone's race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, age, class, physical and mental abilities.**





Social distancing prevented us from laying our hands on Pastor Sally Train as we sent her on her way March 8.

# Pastor Sally sends a big Thank You to CCB

**By the Rev. Sally Train**

It is Sunday morning about 10:45 a.m., and I am snuggled in a warm robe drinking coffee – utterly relaxed. (Vacations are wonderful.) My thoughts drift to you, knowing that worship has started. Warmth fills my heart as I think of you all.

My morning began with prayer and meditation, as it always does. As I sat in the Divine Presence, my eyes would settle now and then on the beautiful orchid you gave me last week, and my soul would fill with gratitude. I still have the poinsettia from Christmas which is growing and thriving. Both bring beauty to my home and to my meditation practice.

I want to thank you for all the love, care and respect you showed me while I was with you, and for the Supercalifragilisticexpialidocious send off you gave me. So fun! So creative! So thoughtful! I am especially looking forward to indulging in a delicious Italian meal at Il Fornaio, courtesy of the gift certificate you gave me.

I leave there a better person and a better pastor not only because of what I learned from you, but also from the books you introduced me to via the Book Study Group.

All of them were wonderful. I did not attend the last Book Study meeting because I had not managed to read the book *Better Together*; but I am reading it now and learning so much!

That is how it is — We encounter each other, touch each other’s lives, and the effect

of that encounter goes on for years. Thank you for the effect you have had on me. I will continue to hold you in prayer and watch your progress as you grow into your future.

Blessings and love,  
Pastor Sally



Spoonfuls of sugar for Pastor Sally!



*Thank you, Pastor Sally, for dropping into our lives!*

*You rescued us when we were so very tired of trying to keep on keeping on.*

*Thank you for being our bridge to the future!*

*With love from all of us  
at the Congregational Church of Belmont*

To go to the Congregational Church of Belmont website, click on [CCB](http://www.ccb-belmont.org).

# Lectionary readings for this Holy Week

Holy Week Year A	First reading	Psalm	Second reading	Gospel
<b>Monday of Holy Week</b> April 6, 2020 <i>ART -- PRAYER</i>	Isaiah 42:1-9	Psalm 36:5-11	Hebrews 9:11-15	John 12:1-11
<b>Tuesday of Holy Week</b> April 7, 2020 <i>ART -- PRAYER</i>	Isaiah 49:1-7	Psalm 71:1-14	1 Corinthians 1:18-31	John 12:20-36
<b>Wednesday of Holy Week</b> April 8, 2020 <i>ART -- PRAYER</i>	Isaiah 50:4-9a	Psalm 70	Hebrews 12:1-3	John 13:21-32
<b>Maundy Thursday</b> April 9, 2020 <i>Holy Thursday</i> <i>ART -- PRAYER</i>	Exodus 12:1-4, (5-10), 11-14	Psalm 116:1-2, 12-19	1 Corinthians 11:23-26	John 13:1-17, 31b-35
<b>Good Friday</b> April 10, 2020 <i>ART -- PRAYER</i>	Isaiah 52:13-53:12	Psalm 22	Hebrews 10:16-25 or Hebrews 4:14-16; 5:7-9	John 18:1-19:42
<b>Holy Saturday</b> April 11, 2020 <i>ART -- PRAYER</i>	Job 14:1-14 or Lamentations 3:1-9, 19-24	Psalm 31:1-4, 15-16	1 Peter 4:1-8	Matthew 27:57-66 or John 19:38-42
<i>Italicized readings, complementary to the standard reading, may be used with, or in place of it.</i>				

## We'll depend on technology to carry us through a locked-down Holy Week

By Micki Carter

So how will CCB observe Holy Week as we shelter in place?

We hear that the Southern Baptists have decided to postpone Easter this year and just go on with Lent, not 40 days but maybe 80 or 120 — until the chance to dye eggs and hunt for them on the church lawn actually comes again.

We're probably not going to do that. Maybe we'll see the entire lockdown in the midst of the Covid-19 pandemic as a metaphor for the darkest hours of the last week of Jesus' life, through Maundy Thursday and Good Friday to the promise of the resurrection on Easter.

Our return to life after weeks of isolation from friends, family and church will come in its own safe time, and we will emerge into the new day.

We will make our way through Holy

Week much as we have been doing church for the past three weeks, with live streaming that combines some of the beautiful music we have been able to cull from CDs of our past worship services, the wise words of Pastor Liz, prayers for our wounded world and the comfort of Scripture.

We won't be dyeing eggs on Palm Sunday although I understand we will have a lesson on palm-folding from Andrew Altorfer.

We will observe Maundy Thursday with music and the passion passages of the traditional tenebrae service, also by video.

And on Easter, the flower-bedecked cross will be on the altar next to Pastor Liz. There'll be no mass release of butterflies, bagel brunch or gathering of dyed eggs on the lawn. But I have heard whispers about a virtual Easter egg hunt.

Stand by!



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# Learning to live-stream worship on the fly!

By Micki Carter

Even before we heard the words “shelter in place,” the Church Council was aware that we would need to dust off our long-stalled plans to live-stream our worship services and get to work.

How else could we continue to serve the CCB community?

We knew we had a resource in Pastor Darley Machado of Catedral de Familia, the Brazilian church that uses our building for their Sunday evening services. They’ve been streaming their services as long as they’ve been at CCB.

We called Pastor Darley the week before our March 15 service, our first with the new social distancing requirements in place. He met with Danielle Chamberlin and me in the church office and introduced us to Switcher Studio, the app that he uses for streaming.

Soon we had our free two-week trial of Switcher, and Danielle plunged in to learn how to use it with the equipment we had. It was a pretty steep learning curve, but Pastor Darley came to our service on March 15 and helped us set everything up.

We’re now three weeks into our learning curve, and Danielle now is able to weave videotaped segments (Mike Venturino and Keith Howard providing prelude and postlude on guitar and fiddle, announcements, liturgist readings and joys and concerns, recorded at each one’s home.)

Inkang Kim offered an MP4 of him and son Gunwoo playing *What a Wonderful World* on saxophone and piano as special music. After still more research, Danielle was able to integrate it into the March 29 service.

The Sanctuary Choir had a lot of laughs trying to record *Happy Birthday* via Zoom, which is not easy when you have to deal with time delays of several seconds.

Through it all, Pastor Liz has soldiered on. She didn’t even have her boxes unpacked in the church apartment before she was sheltering in place all by herself in our very big, very empty building.

She decorated the altar and chose to deliver her sermon from the beautiful carved rostrum that former custodian Art Armstrong made for CCB in the late 1980s.

But each week we’re getting a little better at this.



Pastor Darley Machado from Catedral de Familia helped us set up.

Please plan on joining us every Sunday while we shelter in place [here](#). More than 300 people have viewed our March 22 video and many took the time to respond on Facebook.

Here are some of their comments:

**Kristin Tewksbury:** Good morning! We are SO happy you are doing this, and hope you all are well! Great to be here! Kristin, Elliott, and Sierra

**Tracey Lobanoff Brown:** I had the pastor read the whole 23rd Psalm at my mom’s funeral. It makes me think of and miss her.

**Lynne Benson-Colbert:** Going through “the valley of the shadow.” It can be anything from having to see one’s shadow self (and not being happy about that) or going through frightening times. I love that part. We go forward, awkwardly, to the table that is set for us in spite of our shadows. . .

This was great. First time I’ve been able to attend in years

**Inkang Kim:** The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. . . . Shalom à tous!

**Amanda Austin Calvo:** Thank you, Danielle!

**Margaret Cross:** Thank you to everyone who made this possible and who joined in online.

**Thomas Crosby:** What a blessing! Thanks so much. It’s nice to be in touch with you during this difficult time. Please remember our veterans here at Menlo Park as we go through this time together. We cannot see most of them, which is difficult for us chaplains.

Please be sure to leave your message in the comments section when you watch. We want to know who has joined us.

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# Meet Lea Mavroudis, our new office administrator

By Micki Carter

Lea Mavroudis, CCB's new Office Administrator, got exactly one day on the job before the shelter-in-place order was issued and she shifted to working from home.

It doesn't seem to have made much of a difference for Lea, who lives in Millbrae. Nor did it matter a whole lot that the office was jumping into several technology shifts that would affect her operations.

Working from home, she's tackled how to pick up telephone messages remotely, shift our office emails to a new platform (Office@CCBelmont.org) and learn the ropes of our building rental system. (No matter that most of the activity there lately has been receiving cancellations.)

In her spare moments, Lea has helped us connect with congregants during this crisis to make sure that everyone is safe and has all that they need.

Lea's a San Mateo County native.



**Lea Mavroudis**  
CCB's Office Administrator

She left home for a few years to obtain a bachelor's degree in anthropology from the University of Wyoming in Laramie. During her time there, she did field work with a local folk dancing group and performed statistical analysis of catalogued artifacts from the ancient Harappa Civilization, among other accomplishments.

Now she is happy to be back among friends and family in the Bay Area. She is currently working on a Master's Degree in Social Work. Her passion is learning about and helping people of all sorts.

She also enjoys music and singing, plays a variety of percussion instruments, and is an accomplished writer who has contributed to several publications.

Some of you have already spoken with Lea when she made some check-in calls. Once we're no longer social distancing, make it a point to drop in and say, Hello.

# Keep in mind those who aren't sitting at home

By Linda Howard

By the time this article appears in The Messenger, it will be over two weeks since we were asked to "shelter at home." There is a quote going around that goes something like this:

"Your grandparents were called to fight a war. You are being called to sit on your couch. You can do this."

I have observed first-hand among my family and friends that many of them are not just sitting on their couches. During this challenging time, I have seen examples of generosity, kindness and innovative ways to continue our normal lives and stay in touch.

These are some people I know who are NOT sitting on the couch:

Our niece in New Mexico works in an urgent care center. She sent me this photo



of her new "uniform" that she must wear every day. She worries every time she walks through the door at home that she will

expose her husband to the virus. He is health-compromised. Still, she carries on to take care of others.

Our son-in-law is a peace officer in a nearby city. He rarely talks about what happens at work, but when asked, he reveals a little of the challenges he faces on a daily basis. His job was never without danger, but now there is the added exposure to the virus. Still, he carries on to keep the public safe.

Our son works in a grocery store. In the past, this type of job would not be described as essential or dangerous. After our needs of health and safety are met, we all need food. The people who work delivering or checking out groceries are essential to our

well-being. Every day he carries on greeting his customers behind a plexi-glass barrier as they shop.

Let's be mindful and grateful to teachers who are NOT sitting at home on the couch. If they are sitting, they are preparing lessons and learning new ways to reach their students through on-line learning.

Pharmacists are essential workers as they fill prescriptions. Without truck drivers, our grocery stores would be empty creating panic and food shortages. The postal workers who deliver mail and the people who bring products to our doors continue to fulfill their responsibilities to the public.

Every week sanitation workers pick up our trash. If this service was discontinued our communities would dissolve into unhealthy conditions very soon.

First responders, medical, police, fire fighters and many others are the heroes for today. I am confident they would do their duty as their grandparents and parents did, but for now they are the ordinary people who are doing extraordinary work to keep us safe and fed and to provide some sense of order during this challenging time.

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Andrew Altorfer launched his butterfly last Easter. Our current batch of caterpillars (above) are entering their chrysalis stage.

## Telma Rojas to take reins of children’s program

Just in time to shelter in place, Telma Rojas accepted CCB’s offer to be our Children’s Program Coordinator.

Telma’s first appearance in church was March 15, Pastor Liz’s first day in the pulpit. So lots of new faces around CCB — if only they could be around the church. Instead Telma is working with our children remotely and hoping to get to know them individually a little bit later.

Telma has been working with children and advocating for children for the past 33 years. She began her career in the classroom as a preschool teacher and, after 18 years, was promoted to a director. She has directed programs and communities for 15 years and plans to continue to lead the Mountain View Building Kidz Center.

She attended college in Rancho Cucamonga, has been trained and certified as an Outdoor Specialist, and achieved NAEYC accreditation three times.

She believes all children have the right to be happy and to navigate through their childhood at their own pace and will. She sees it as her job to secure environments that are conducive to free exploration.

In her free time, Telma likes to stay active in the outdoors, do yoga and be mindful of the stillness of nature. She also loves to



**Telma Rojas**  
Children’s Program Coordinator

be with her pack of dogs. She says, “I look forward to meeting all of the families and to learning more about your children. I hope to cultivate meaningful relationships with both parents and teachers”

**By Telma Rojas**

**Children’s Program Coordinator**

I am glad to give you a view to what is on the horizon for our wonderful children’s program.

As the new coordinator, I am so excited to form great relationships with the children and their families. I will continue to introduce open-ended activities with the main purpose to promote a Christian perspective.

That said, we will continue to watch the caterpillars grow into beautiful butterflies, make plans to do some type of kind gesture to our elders in our community during these times as we hunker down at home.

And, in great hopes that we will be back at church soon, I would love to work on a community garden and give the children’s room a facelift to give the kids a sense of ownership and a sense of a community as well.

Another change to our children’s program is the addition of Zoom time with the children while we are still staying at home due to the shelter-in-place order. This will allow the children to connect with each other and to connect with me too. This will be fun!

Thank you for permitting me to make a difference and take great good care.

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Before we knew we would be sheltering in place for most of the spring, the CCB Sanctuary and Youth Choirs took part in the Peninsula Multifaith Coalition's Songfest March 1 at Peninsula Temple Shalom in Burlingame.

**May Messenger deadline will be Monday, April 27**



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**Wondering how to get your pledges and donations in to the church now that we aren't able to pass the collection plate but still really need your support?**

**Two ways: Click [here](#) to use your credit card to make your tax-deductible donation or — tada! — just mail us a check!**

**Either way, the only person who will handle your transaction is the Financial Secretary, Mike Venturino.**