



From My Story ... to Our Story ... to Our Calling

My vocation: I am a woman of color of a certain age, called to live fully in my gifts and in God's purposes by cultivating healing, wholeness and hope, one space at a time, fearlessly, wherever that can happen.

By Rev. Elizabeth Clement
Interim Pastor

It's not the first time you've read my vocation statement but what you may not know is how long it took to arrive at a statement that was crisp enough to commit to memory and clear enough to live faithfully into. This



Pastor Liz Clement

clarity of vocation began to be born 10 years or more after I was ordained to ministry. And it is tweaked regularly, to this day. It was conceived in a classroom... once upon a time...

We were asked to choose a person from the Bible that we wanted most to be like. This was in a class of pastors who were working on their continuing education requirements, and we each had to make a presentation on our choice to the class. Most of the others in the class, male and female, did not recognize my heroine right away, even as familiar as they were with the narratives of the Bible. Truth is, I hadn't seen her either for a very long time.

She is small and not easy to see. Or hear. But when she speaks, she begins a process of healing that changes everything. When she dares to speak, her voice becomes a helpful, hopeful intervention in the systems of power and the status quo.

My heroine is the "young girl" in 2 Kings



Two of these signs are posted in the front of the church along Alameda de las Pulgas to show where the Congregational Church of Belmont stands on the current discussion on racial inequality and injustice.

5:1-4. I want to be like her. She is my role model for making the difference in the world that I can make, small and invisible to some though I may be. My voice when lifted can change the course of events for God's good. And, like her, I must speak up.

When the dean of chapel at my seminary asked me to preach for Women's Week some years after I had graduated, she also asked me to bring my mother. She wanted us to do a dialogue sermon together. There was a silence on the phone for a minute in which I could hear her chuckling to herself. She knew me well and knew my mother. She had a wonderful sense of humor grown in relationship with her own daughter who was heading for ministry. She was pretty sure this was a wonderful opportunity for my mother

and for me, and she was right.

The theme for Women's Week was "Widening God's Vision." We went straight to the Lectionary to see what might suggest itself to the focus of worship on that day. Nothing I could see looked promising, but just as despair was about to set in, my mother said, "You know, there's only one female voice in all of these texts. And she doesn't say much."

Sure enough, there she was in 2 Kings 5, "the little maid," as she's called in the language of the King James Bible, the slave girl.

A search for this citation in your Bible will most likely name this story "The Healing of Naaman" which it surely is. And unless you are looking carefully, you will not

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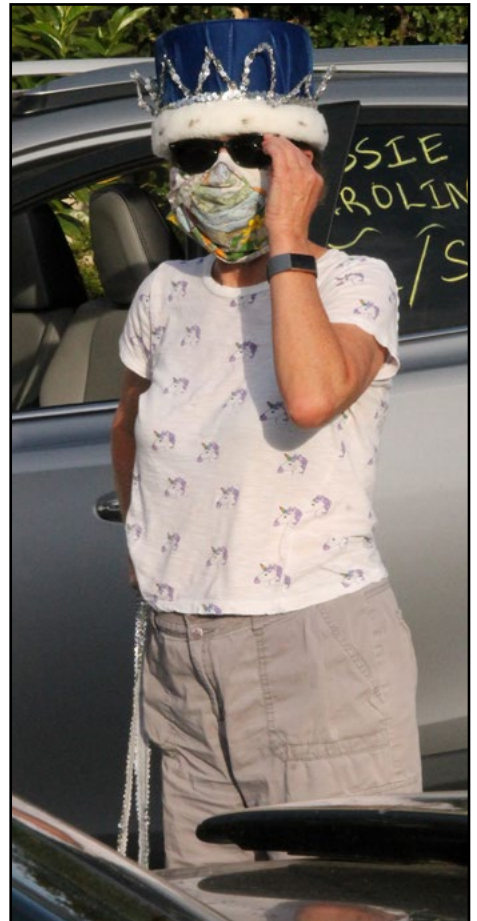
We are an Open and Affirming Congregation valuing everyone's race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, age, class, physical and mental abilities.



We celebrated our grads with a car parade!



To go to the Congregational Church of Belmont website, click on [CCB](#).



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CCB is going to try a virtual choir! Join us?

By Elizabeth Mye
Music Director

The love of music lives on in our amazing CCB music library, built over the past 10+ years that Jeffrey and I have been leading the choirs and recorded by Gary Brandenburg! We have the honor of sharing CCB music treasures in our Sunday streaming services, but it is just not enough!

Steve Chamberlin has taken the lead in testing out Adobe Premiere Pro software that will enable our humble choir to make our own virtual productions.

While this may seem like an easy task, given the talents of our musicians, the process is not as easy as simply jumping onto a video conference and singing together!

Technology is not quite that "live" yet.

The building of a virtual song starts with a recording of the piano accompaniment, then recording each vocal part to be distributed to our singers who individually sing and record their parts.

Steve will then piece all of the individual voices and accompaniment together!

He has already tested and masterfully built a four-part Rutter piece singing all the parts himself! The Chamberlin family has also tested and made their own virtual



Four iterations of Steve Chamberlin singing all four parts of of John Rutter's *God Be in My Head* to see how a virtual choir will work.

birthday song together. Amazing!

So, our choir is going to give it a go and see what we can do. Stay tuned and thanks for being with us in spirit and online!

I am in awe of the dedication of our little church. Miss you lots and hope to see you soon! In the meantime, we send our love in music and song!

Service League, Samaritan House get assists

By Linda Howard
Chair, Social Action Board

Since March when the world changed, the Board of Social Action has been researching ways to give back to our community.

In addition to the Guardian Scholar Program mentioned in the last Messenger, the board has donated to two more organizations.

In the past, half of the proceeds of Chocolate Fest has gone to Samaritan House, Second Harvest and Home & Hope. This year the board has made an additional donation of \$100 to Samaritan House, to support children in our community with backpacks and school supplies.

This year, due to Covid-19, Samaritan House has requested cash donations. Samaritan House will assemble the backpacks and distribute them.

If you would like to donate to this good

cause, they are accepting donations [here](#).

The second donation of \$500 went to the Service League of San Mateo County. For the past 50 years, this organization has been supporting those who are incarcerated or newly released from incarceration.

The Service League is a non-profit agency whose goal is to provide services so that inmates and former inmates can successfully re-enter the community as contributing citizens and responsible family members.

The Service League provides services in the areas of rehabilitation, education, employment, spiritual and personal growth.

The under-represented population of African-American people are over-represented in our prison systems. The board felt that supporting this organization would serve several areas of need in our community.

They would welcome additional monetary support. If you would like to donate you can do so online [here](#) or by mail: Service

League of San Mateo County, Attn: Toni Martinez, 727 Middlefield Road, Redwood City, CA 94063

In addition to monetary support to organizations, the Board of Social Action is maintaining and restocking the Blessing Box as needed. This mini-food bank is located on the south end of the church driveway.

There is evidence that the community is using the box for its intended purpose. Food disappears and is replenished in equal measures. This is a simple way anyone can contribute food or find needed food. There are no forms to fill out and no lines.

The board continues discussing ways we can address inequalities in justice, education and health in our community. All ideas are welcome.

If you have suggestions of how CCB could better serve the community, please send an e-mail to the church office to let your ideas be known. Better yet, join us!

To go to the Congregational Church of Belmont website, click on [CCB](#).

PENINSULA MULTIFAITH COALITION

Socks & Underwear Drive



SAMARITAN HOUSE

Samaritan House is in desperate need of socks and undergarments for distribution through their Kids Closet. We are collecting these items now so they are ready to be delivered for back-to-school. You can purchase items and have them delivered by clicking the link below. Our teen coordinator will receive and deliver the items to Samaritan House. **Our goal is to collect at least 50 pairs of socks/undergarments for each age group and gender by July 31!**

To donate to the sock and underwear drive, click [here](#).

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My story Continued

see My Girl. Unless you are looking for her, you almost certainly will not hear her or note the few words she speaks that put in motion an alternate, healthful future for others.

This is what Walter Brueggemann says of her:

“Readers, if they noticed (the girl) at all, might have recognized in her *a model for how to initiate a new narrative of well-being* in a circumstance palpably marked by suffering and despair.” (My italics).

When I finally saw her — when I took the time to stay in her story for long enough to see and hear her — not only did I see her, but I saw in her a model for my own life in ministry.

She was an interruption that made a path toward a different future available where it had not been seen before, “to initiate a new narrative of well-being.” When I finally saw here, I knew that was my work, too.

Act Two of My Story is the work we did on a model for use in congregations wanting to develop their capacity to cultivate Christian vocation, which led us to the use of narrative and story as a tool for discerning vocation.

Lectionary for July and August 2020

Proper 9 (14) Fifth Sunday after Pentecost July 5, 2020 <i>ART -- PRAYER</i>	Genesis 24:34-38, 42-49, 58-67 Psalm 45:10-17 <i>or</i> <i>Song of Solomon</i> 2:8-13	Zechariah 9:9-12 Psalm 145:8-14	Romans 7:15-25a	Matthew 11:16-19, 25-30
Proper 10 (15) Sixth Sunday after Pentecost July 12, 2020 <i>ART -- PRAYER</i>	Genesis 25:19-34 Psalm 119:105-112	Isaiah 55:10-13 Psalm 65:(1-8), 9-13	Romans 8:1-11	Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23
Proper 11 (16) Seventh Sunday after Pentecost July 19, 2020 <i>ART -- PRAYER</i>	Genesis 28:10-19a Psalm 139:1-12, 23-24	Wisdom of Solomon 12:13, 16-19 <i>or</i> <i>Isaiah 44:6-8</i> Psalm 86:11-17	Romans 8:12-25	Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43
Proper 12 (17) Eighth Sunday after Pentecost July 26, 2020 <i>ART -- PRAYER</i>	Genesis 29:15-28 Psalm 105:1-11, 45b <i>or</i> <i>Psalm 128</i>	1 Kings 3:5-12 Psalm 119:129-136	Romans 8:26-39	Matthew 13:31-33, 44-52
Proper 13 (18) Ninth Sunday after Pentecost August 2, 2020 <i>ART -- PRAYER</i>	Genesis 32:22-31 Psalm 17:1-7, 15	Isaiah 55:1-5 Psalm 145:8-9, 14-21	Romans 9:1-5	Matthew 14:13-21
Proper 14 (19) Tenth Sunday after Pentecost August 9, 2020 <i>ART -- PRAYER</i>	Genesis 37:1-4, 12-28 Psalm 105: 1-6, 16-22, 45b	1 Kings 19:9-18 Psalm 85:8-13	Romans 10:5-15	Matthew 14:22-33
Proper 15 (20) Eleventh Sunday after Pentecost August 16, 2020 <i>ART -- PRAYER</i>	Genesis 45:1-15 Psalm 133	Isaiah 56:1, 6-8 Psalm 67	Romans 11:1-2a, 29-32	Matthew 15: (10-20), 21-28
Proper 16 (21) Twelfth Sunday after Pentecost August 23, 2020 <i>ART -- PRAYER</i>	Exodus 1:8-2:10 Psalm 124	Isaiah 51:1-6 Psalm 138	Romans 12:1-8	Matthew 16:13-20
Proper 17 (22) Thirteenth Sunday after Pentecost August 30, 2020 <i>ART -- PRAYER</i>	Exodus 3:1-15 Psalm 105:1-6, 23-26, 45b	Jeremiah 15:15-21 Psalm 26:1-8	Romans 12:9-21	Matthew 16:21-28

that’s another story. That story explains how My Story has come to meet CCB’s Our Story.

What I have learned over these years is that, if we take enough time in these stories — My Stories and Our Stories — we begin to see possibilities that were not available before, hear voices that have good news, and a way to a future more fully alive in God’s narrative for good as a congregation of God’s people.

PS: Now you understand emc2k5@gmail.com.

5 Naaman, commander of the army of the king of Aram, was a great man and in high favor with his master, because by him the Lord had given victory to Aram. The man, though a mighty warrior, suffered from leprosy.[a] 2 Now the Arameans on one of their raids had taken a young girl captive from the land of Israel, and she served Naaman’s wife. 3 She said to her mistress, “If only my lord were with the prophet who is in Samaria! He would cure him of his leprosy.”[b] 4 So Naaman[c] went in and told his lord just what the girl from the land of Israel had said. 5 And the king of Aram said, “Go then, and I will send along a letter to the king of Israel.” NRSV

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Book group reads *The Choice* Mid-year CCB pledge statements will be emailed this week

By Steve Chamberlin

The church's book discussion group is now reading *The Choice* by Edith Eger, and will meet at 7 p.m. Tuesday July 21, via Zoom, to discuss.

We would love to have more of you join us.

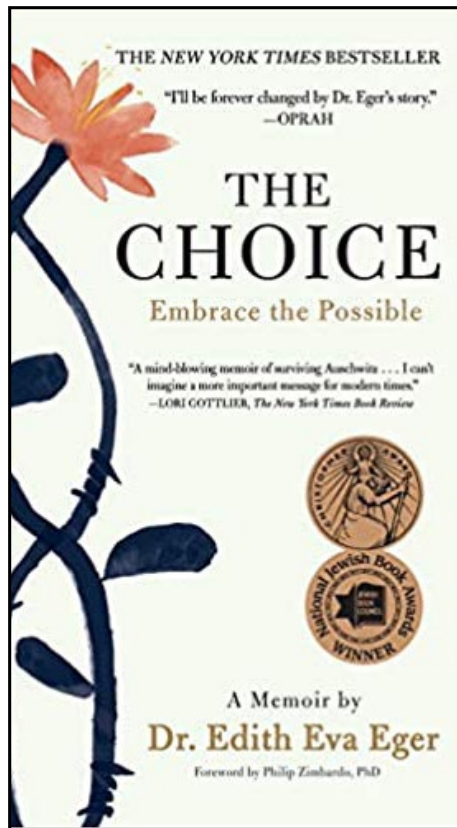
This moving and powerful memoir explores Eger's harrowing experiences in World War II concentration camps, her journey to rebuild her life afterwards, and the insights that her trauma provided when she later became a therapist.

Instead of allowing her painful past to destroy her, Eger treated it as a gift, enabling her to help others heal.

The book's subtitle is *Embrace the Possible*. Eger was sent to die, but she survived by sustaining hope for the future, embracing a sense of wonder, and savoring what little joys she could find.

It's a lesson in mental toughness, and in freedom and forgiveness. She writes of her hope that her story may inspire others to understand "if she can overcome, then so can I."

Please contact me at steve.chamberlin@gmail.com if you'd like to read *The Choice*.



**By Mike Venturino
Treasurer and Financial Secretary**

I will be sending out the mid-year pledge statements this week. In a year such as this, it's wonderful to see the continuing financial support from our little community.

The statements will be emailed as PDF attachments. They'll come from financial.secretary@ccbmont.org so make sure your spam filter won't bounce these emails.

As always, please check to see that our records agree with yours.

Please, also note if you are on track with your pledge as the year is progressing and if you need to make any adjustments to your pledge. Circumstances change, and a note to the financial secretary is all it takes.

If you did not pledge, you'll get a statement at the end of the year listing your contributions. All correspondence — electronic or otherwise — for the financial secretary is opened only by the financial secretary.

Blessings for everyone's continuing help in what can only be understatedly described as a challenging year.

September Messenger deadline will be Monday, Aug. 24



THE MESSENGER
CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF BELMONT
751 ALAMEDA DE LAS PULGAS
BELMONT CA 94002

June was Pride Month and CCB was proud to underscore that it is an Open and Affirming congregation of the United Church of Christ by posting a photo of the rainbow flag that flies over the front porch of the church every day of the year.

