



# So what did you do on your summer vacation?

By Pastor Elizabeth Clement

How can anyone have a vacation when 1) we're living in bubbles, 2) the world is on fire, and 3) I miss you when we aren't connected even though I've only been here six months? Maybe that's a rhetorical question but there is it, anyway.



Pastor Liz Clement

Actually, I spent time working on my personal purpose statement (which you have seen before) and which I promised was an ongoing process as I live and learn with you and the world around us. You might think that, with

the air quality we have had lately, the smoke might get in my eyes, so to speak. On the contrary; the insights have been quite clear and illuminating, mostly thanks to the online course I took to refresh and replenish my work with you. (If you'd like to know more, contact me; I could go on and on.)

In addition to working on my personal purpose statement — and finding it has a new, local component — I continued working on the futuring process that we have begun together here at CCB which may have a new name, once it gets run by the Visioning/Futuring team.

Following is a glimpse of what has emerged from my vacation and what we will be working on together in the months to come:

1. What is my Highest or Deepest Intention for my time as Interim Pastor of CCB? Another question is: What have you given yourself in service to?

“That I may create a good space, hold a



Bob Donovan turned 99 on July 14 and CCBers joined Bob, Ella Mae, neighbors, family and friends in a drive-by birthday celebration in front of their Hiller Street home in Belmont. More photos appear on Pages 6 and 7.

good process, and walk as good company with CCB to clarify who you are and what your mission is, so you are ready to identify the leadership that will walk with you going forward into the future.”

This is also my prayer, in a sense, for the time we will share together. And a clarifying statement that I will revisit often because it will inspire, refresh and direct what I do and how I do whatever we are doing together. This statement will pull me aside from time to time to remind me what I aspire to and what I intend. I will wander, to be sure, and forget. But now that you see it, you can pull me over, too. I'm counting on that.

Now, just so you know — this clarifying work is a challenge for me. In this case, it was especially challenging because I thought I already knew what I was doing and thought myself quite clear about it. Until I was asked the question you see above — what is your deepest intention? Intention is not an objec-

tive; it's the thing that comes from way, deep inside, more like a prayer, something your whole self wants to embody.

The body part is what's hard for me. So much of what we do in our world only takes what's in our minds seriously, and we just ask our bodies to deliver our heads to where they need to go next which, it turns out, causes us to miss a lot.

So, I am struggling to feel what my body can teach me, how the whole ecosystem (including all of you and the smoke, too) can instruct me. That's a shift from living and learning in my ego-system to more fully engaging with the wholeness of life around me, the eco-system.

The course I took asked us to bridge the divides between me and you and them and the world and the pandemic and the wildfires and the presidential campaign and my mind, body and will...and hold them all with grace  
**See FutureCARE, Page 9**

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



On a chilly July evening, Michael Medwid brought his jazz trio to the CCB veranda and played a mini-concert for us and a number of neighbors who dropped by. We were all masked and socially distant but it was great to be together at church, bundled up and enjoying the company of our dear community and some great jazz from Michael. Are we ready to do it again?



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

# Council creates a new personnel committee

By Greg Thornhill

Early this year, Church Council created an ad hoc personnel committee to address the need to locate a replacement for Ron Evans. Micki Carter, Mike Venturino, Steve Chamberlin and I volunteered to help rework the job description and fold in the building rental role, and ultimately made a recommendation to council to hire Lea Mavroudis.

Through the processes of hiring Lea, the ongoing HR compliance efforts that Mike manages and some of the personnel decisions that has faced Council over the past couple of years, an idea took root that maybe the needs for a personnel committee were ongoing.

A proposal was recently made and approved by Council to establish a standing personnel committee to help manage some of the HR tasks that fall on the church as an employer, allowing Council to deal with its already full agenda.

The personnel committee will now be responsible for tactical management of a few key functions, making recommendations to Council for ultimate approval. This shift in approach should allow the church to better adhere to California Labor law, to be better employers and to handle HR issues that may arise.

Examples of the types of topics/tasks that the committee will help navigate are:

- Fold in the work that Mike has been doing on HR, keeping abreast of and adapting to changing laws and best practices that may impact our church
- Review compensation plans for positions that we intend to hire and make recommendations to Council and the hiring board.
- Review formal offer letters prior to being sent to candidates.
- Manage the formal hiring and termination process for employees (offer letters, employment background checks, IRS paper-

work, exit interviews, etc.)

• Work with the boards that manage employees on employee feedback/review processes and salary recommendations into the budgeting process

• Assist other boards in ensuring up-to-date job descriptions for new hires

The personnel committee is excited to implement these processes. We certainly would welcome anyone to this committee that would like to join us, especially if you have a penchant for HR, management or hiring.

This is not a committee that is meeting-heavy. We meet when needed, accomplish much over email and so far have been very agile in making recommendations and decisions. You can reach us at [Personnel@ccbmont.org](mailto:Personnel@ccbmont.org).

This standing personnel committee will need to be added to our Bylaws at our next Annual Meeting so stay tuned for more on that front.

**OFFICE OF MARK CHURCH  
CHIEF ELECTIONS OFFICER & ASSESSOR-COUNTY CLERK-RECORDER  
REGISTRATION & ELECTIONS DIVISION**

## November 3, 2020 Presidential General Election MORE DAYS, MORE WAYS TO VOTE!

Commencing October 5, 2020, ballots for the November 3, 2020 Presidential General Election will be mailed to all registered voters. As a leader in California Vote-by-Mail Elections, San Mateo County has established the highest standards of excellence for Vote-by-Mail Elections. Voting by mail is safe, secure and convenient in this COVID-19 environment. Voters may vote from the safety and convenience of their homes, vote in person at one of our 45 Vote Centers or use our new Remote Accessible Vote-by-Mail Ballot system. For more information on new voter services and our COVID-19 preparation please visit [www.smcvote.org](http://www.smcvote.org) or call 650.312.5222.

**Ways to vote:**

- Vote by Mail**
- Vote in Person**
- Remote Accessible Vote-by-Mail Ballot system**

October 5 to October 30*	Three Vote Centers in North, Central and South County will be open weekdays, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.
October 31 to November 2	Forty-five Vote Centers will be open daily, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.
November 3	All forty-five Vote Centers will be open, 7 a.m. to 8 p.m.

**Important:** Since many jurisdictions have moved to District Elections, your local representative's name may not be on your ballot. Please check with your City, School or Special District for details.

\*Vote Centers will be closed on Columbus Day, Monday, October 12, 2020.

Visit [www.smcvote.org](http://www.smcvote.org) or [@smcvote](https://twitter.com/smcvote)  
Call or Text: 650.312.5222

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

# Kids take lead in ‘beta testing’ CCB futuring

By Robin Linares

Times are a-changin here at CCB. It’s not a shock to anyone that things are a little different around here. Over the last few months, we have been enjoying our interim minister, Elizabeth Clement (Pastor Liz), while having to adjust to distanced church services and not being able to see each other for months.

After adjusting to our new online church ways, we now have some business to attend to and, don’t worry, it’s the fun kind: the future of CCB. I know that might sound a bit daunting, but don’t fret. There is a plan of action here, but we need your help.

For a few weeks now, the youth of CCB, (myself included), have been beta testing a plan to use storytelling to help create a future that we as a community want for the church. Our two Zoom sessions, led by Pastor Liz, Elizabeth Nordt and Danielle Chamberlin, had an overarching objective, but each meeting had different focuses, the first for creating space, and second for asking questions.

The first meeting started with introductions, so we could all meet and catch up with each other again. Then we went over some guidelines. We discussed nine Covenants of Presence, with some notable ones being

“no fixing” meaning don’t try and correct somebody else’s stories, but rather to “turn to wonder,” meaning analyzing what the story means and what we could take away from the story.

We also reviewed Holy Listening and Testimony, meaning either listening with your whole being, without any distractions, or speaking with your whole being.

Then we broke out into breakout rooms with two or three others to tell stories. The story that we told in this session was a “My Story,” which is telling a story about you to have the others get to know you a bit.

Three prompts helped us think of a story:

- What was a time that someone appreciated you and you knew it?
- What is something that you love and why you love it?
- What is something that you do that gives you more energy?

Everybody in our groups shared their stories, and then we went back to the main Zoom room for a quick review of what we did, some questions/ comments, then finally a closing.

The next week, we had our follow-up meeting. We went with our same groups as the previous week into breakout rooms.

This week, in our breakout rooms, we would retell our My Story to get everybody back up-to-speed, but then we added an Our Story.

The Our Story would be a story about any good memory that we had about CCB. This time, we would collaboratively look at what the stories say about us and our values and the core values that we want to have for CCB. We then went back to our full group and shared our findings with the others.

For our session, Our Stories were very different from one another, but some overarching values that we all loved and wanted to keep was the strong community that we have at CCB and to keep it an open and inclusive environment.

The process was interesting since we were meeting via Zoom, but I thought that it was still just as much of a collaborative experience as it would be in-person. It was also nice to get to know a bit more about each other through our stories.

If you are interested in taking part in this process, you can contact Pastor Liz.

## What’s next for the Payroll Protection Program loan?

By Mike Venturino

The next and, hopefully, last step in the Paycheck Protection Program is to apply to have our \$19,600 loan, or at least most of it, forgiven. The church recently received an email advising us that the process to apply for forgiveness would be open soon.

As a Christian Church, it seems to me that we are always in the process of applying for forgiveness, but to apply to the Small Business Administration is another thing entirely.

We will be applying to have about \$16,000 forgiven; the rest we will simply pay back. While Bookkeeper Larry Keiffer and I have assembled the records required to support our application, we will probably wait to see if Congress passes any changes to the process that might simplify things before we apply.

This program allowed us to continue paying our staff for an extra eight weeks, while conserving our savings.

## Project captains needed for MLK Day

Martin Luther King Day of Service on Jan. 18 is already taking shape, and the greatest need right now is for captains to lead the various projects.

Last year, Greg Thornhill led a renovation project at Hillsdale High School. He’s signed on for this year already and is happy to be a resource for others who are thinking about a similar commitment.

Captains are needed for an improvement project at Roosevelt School in Redwood City, a clean-up at Ryder Park in San Mateo, painting at the Home & Hope Day Center and craft projects such as mask-making, knitting, sewing and preparation of hygiene and activity kits.

Essentially, captains are the link between the host organization and the volunteers. They make a list of supplies and do their best to keep their volunteers on project.

If you’re willing to help, email [dana@izenon.net](mailto:dana@izenon.net) or [sue@webfootc.com](mailto:sue@webfootc.com).



Greg at work last MLK Day.

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

## Teens, tweens meet via Zoom for deep thinking — and fun

By Danielle Chamberlin

Our youth have been busy in August!

First, we said goodbye to our dear friend Telma Rojas, who got the job she was dreaming of as a full-time preschool director. We appreciate her unwavering dedication to us through our time with virtual worship and wish her all the best in her new role.

Although Telma's departure is sad, CCB still has big plans for our kids. On two Saturdays in August, the middle and high school youth of CCB met with Pastor Liz via zoom to "beta test" the visioning process that the rest of the church will go through in the fall. (Robin Linares has a full report on Page 5.)

Saturday afternoons seem to be a good time for middle and high school youth to meet on Zoom, and we have kept this as an open time for our youth to meet. On Aug. 22 Linda Howard led a discussion of Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's Ted Talk, "The Danger of a Single Story." This is a very powerful telling of the need to see perspectives from all sides, and our youth related the examples in her story to their own experiences.

We plan to continue meeting on Saturday afternoons at 3:30 p.m. over Zoom, but also plan to weave in more "light" activities like gluten-free baking and online games, led by the youth. If you know of anyone who would like to join us, please let Lea know and we'll add them to our list.

We are also looking at how to better weave youth activities into our worship service since we can no longer break out into weekly Sunday School.

We have purchased the "Whole People of God" Sunday School curriculum for the school year of 2020-2021. Whole People of God Online from Woodlake Press is a simple, easy-to-use, online, Lectionary-based Sunday school curriculum for preschool through middle/high school. It includes weekly age-level lessons as well as worship resources for leaders.

We will start to weave it into an inter-generational worship this month.



## Happy 99th Birthday, Bob!



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**You Are Invited to**

# **The Big Send**

**A virtual “Get Out the Vote” letter writing party**

**Hosted by:**

**Associate Conference Minister Davena Jones**  
**Rev. Sally Train and Sana Sunia**

**When: Saturday, September 26, 2020 at 10AM until Noon**  
**(You do not need to wait until then to start writing letters)**  
**Where: Zoom (A link will be sent to registered guests)**  
**Why: The voice of the people must be heard!**

**Here is what you need to do:**

- Register for the party by clicking here:

<https://ncnc.dreamhosters.com/the-big-send-a-virtual-get-out-the-vote-letter-writing-party/>

- Set up an account at <https://votefwd.org/>

## **Calling all Musicians/Singers**

It would be wonderful to be serenaded while we write the letters. Who better to inspire us than our own church musicians? Please send a link to your U-Tube video so we can play it during the party. Send to: [Sana.Sunia@yahoo.com](mailto:Sana.Sunia@yahoo.com) by 5 pm on Monday September 21

Questions? [sallytrain@comcast.net](mailto:sallytrain@comcast.net)

We look forward to seeing you at *The Big Send!*

# FutureCARE

## Continued from Page One

and hope in service of this intention.

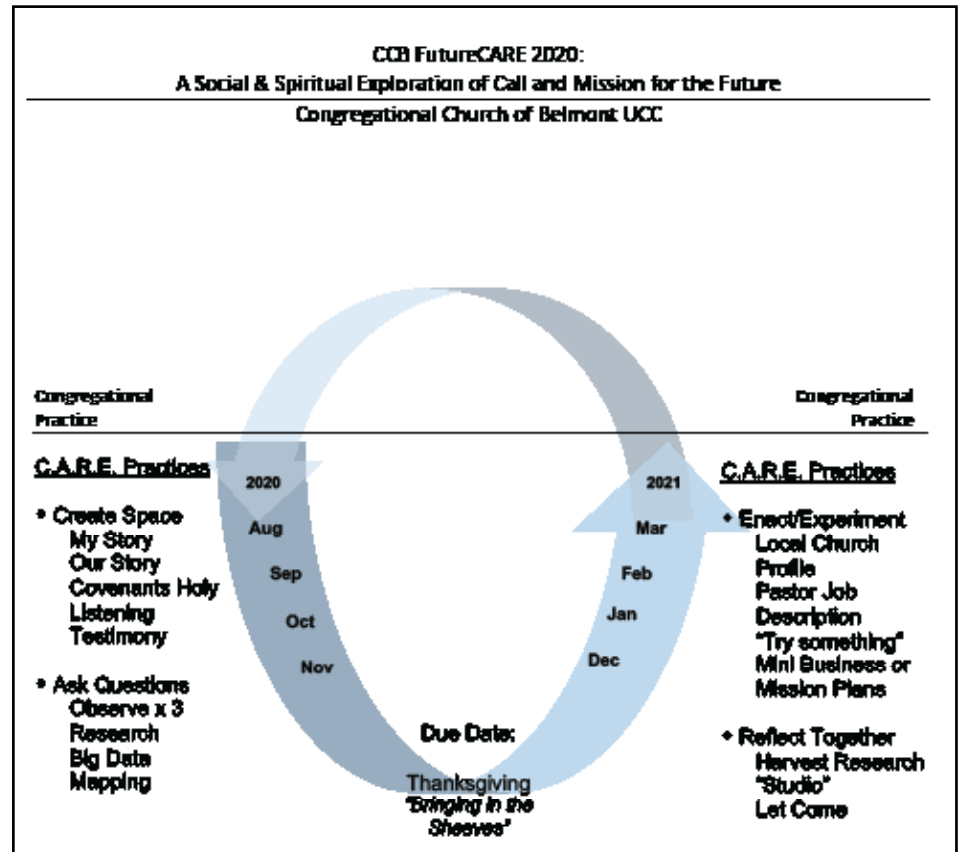
I didn't always like it, but it got me to my deepest intention, and I do like that.

2. What about CCB FutureCARE 2020: A Social and Spiritual Exploration of Mission for the Future? Well, that's the name I will propose to the Futuring team and we will agree on something like it, perhaps, and you will know about it as soon as we do.

Over the months, the group that has wanted to work on exploring CCB's future mission and leadership has been "negotiating" a framework or path and the practices we would use to gather information, include the whole congregation and, eventually, roll out our process in the wider membership.

On Page 5 of this Messenger, Robin Linares reports on the "test drive" we did of one aspect of our design, a way of storytelling and listening to one another. The teens of CCB were willing to give their time and attention over two, 90-minute Zoom calls on consecutive Saturday afternoons, and they were wonderful! Elizabeth Nordt, Danielle Chamberlin and I were the team that worked on this — they are wonderful, too! — and we asked our youngest members to help us learn what we needed to know before going any further.

Specifically, we wanted to know if what we had in mind would accomplish what we wanted it to. They asked the kinds of ques-



tions we needed to refine our thinking and our "deepest intentions." What a gift; what a blessing.

3. So, what's next? When it gets out of my head, through my body and lands on paper, I want to share a sketch of what I see as the way forward with the Futuring team,

the Council and the congregation of CCB. This has been a struggle, frankly, but I feel more hopeful today than I did a week ago. It may actually come out now...but I will need to step away from the laptop and summon my artistic abilities to draw something I hope will be helpful. Let's see what happens...

# Liturgy for the Sundays in the month of September 2020

<b>Proper 18 (23)</b> Fourteenth Sunday after Pentecost September 6, 2020 <i>ART -- PRAYER</i>	Exodus 12:1-14 Psalm 149	Ezekiel 33:7-11 Psalm 119:33-40	Romans 13:8-14	Matthew 18:15-20
<b>Proper 19 (24)</b> Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost September 13, 2020 <i>ART -- PRAYER</i>	Exodus 14:19-31 Psalm 114 <i>or</i> Exodus 15:1b-11, 20-21	Genesis 50:15-21 Psalm 103:(1-7), 8-13	Romans 14:1-12	Matthew 18:21-35
<b>Holy Cross</b> September 14, 2020 <i>ART -- PRAYER</i>	Numbers 21:4b-9 Psalm 98:1-5 <i>or</i> Psalm 78:1-2, 34-38		1 Corinthians 1:18-24	John 3:13-17
<b>Proper 20 (25)</b> Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost September 20, 2020 <i>ART -- PRAYER</i>	Exodus 16:2-15 Psalm 105:1-6, 37-45	Jonah 3:10-4:11 Psalm 145:1-8	Philippians 1:21-30	Matthew 20:1-16
<b>Proper 21 (26)</b> Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost September 27, 2020 <i>ART -- PRAYER</i>	Exodus 17:1-7 Psalm 78:1-4, 12-16	Ezekiel 18:1-4, 25-32 Psalm 25:1-9	Philippians 2:1-13	Matthew 21:23-32

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



# 75 years after Hiroshima: An encounter on a train

By Linda Howard

In 1976 I lived in Japan while my former husband was stationed at Yokota AFB.

I would travel many places while in Asia, but one of my most vivid memories happened as I traveled on a train south of Hiroshima. The destination for this trip was to be Miyajima Island.

But before we journeyed to this storied place, there was homage to be paid at another well-known site in Japan – Hiroshima.

The Bullet Train or Shinkansen would pass through this city, and we felt a need to see the place where the first atomic bomb strategically unloaded its deadly payload over a heavily populated area where approximately 100,000 people were mortally injured or vaporized in a matter of seconds on Aug. 6, 1945. I wanted to think and be made aware of this horrific, historical event that was the birth of the Atomic Age.

As my husband and I walked through the streets, I felt a chill which was not entirely from the October evening.

We found the Memorial Cenotaph, a horse-shoe shaped structure which contains the names of all people, regardless of nationality, who perished that day and those who died later as a result of the bomb. I felt the weight of collective guilt about the loss of life that occurred in this city 31 years before.

When we reached Peace Park we saw the ruins of a building which had been one of the few left standing after the bomb dropped.

The next morning, we hopped on the Shinkansen and were happy to be hurtling down the track on our way to Miyajima Island.. However, Hiroshima and its memory were not to be easily left behind.

We spent the day touring, hiking and viewing. It was late afternoon and time to board the train once again and return to Kyoto. As we stood on the train platform looking bewildered and lost, (none of the signs were in English), a Japanese woman approached us and asked if she could help. Her English was perfect with no hint of an accent. When we told her we were going back to Kyoto, she said she would be taking the same train and to follow her. We naturally sat next to her in the train and started talking.

Even though her manner was pleasant and friendly I began to have an uncomfortable feeling as I spoke with her. This woman appeared to be in her late 30s, but it was hard



to tell because of scar tissue on her jaws and neck. It seemed as if her head had been removed and then set back on and held by skin which had been glued. Her hands were gnarled and twisted with webbing between her thumbs and fingers. The overall appearance was of one who had been melted and then put back together.

Even though my description sounds like I would be repulsed, I was not. Her appearance did not bother me because of the warmth she exuded as she talked. Like eyes growing accustomed to the dark, my eyes grew accustomed to her appearance as we spoke. This discomforting feeling came from the fact that I knew she must have been a victim of the bombing. What must she be thinking of these Americans?

Fifteen minutes of the train ride passed and we were talking like old friends. I asked how she came to speak English so well. My new friend told me her story.

Yes, originally she was from Hiroshima. She had been 7 years old the day the bomb exploded above her city. She lived with her mother, father, sisters and a brother. All she remembered was a momentary, blinding light, like a lightning bolt. I couldn't bear to ask about her family, but she added that her mother had survived. Did that mean everyone else died?

Mostly I just listened, letting the incredible story flow. Soon after the bomb, teams of American doctors moved into the city. It was the perfect petri dish to study the effects of radiation on a human population. She, along with about 20 other children, were chosen to travel to the United States for medical treatment which would include reconstructive surgery for the burns.

When the bomb detonated, her mother experienced unbelievable losses in a mo-

ment's notice. In the days that followed, she would have to make a searing decision about her child and what would be in her best interest. In order for her daughter to receive continued medical treatment, her child would need to stay in the U.S. Many surgeries would follow. The mother would have to be willing to allow her child to be adopted by an American family.

This would ensure her daughter's continued participation in the medical treatment which would last for years. Her mother chose life for her child and sent her to live among strangers – the same people from the country that had changed their lives in an irrevocably catastrophic way.

My traveling companion told me this story with no bitterness, rancor or ethical opinion. I sat mesmerized for an hour listening to her account of an event in history that was the first of its kind.

Before this conversation, I only knew facts and statistics about Hiroshima. With this chance meeting, I was able to see the results of the bomb beyond the numbers and statistics.

The train pulled into the Hiroshima station. My friend was getting off. She said the U.S. was now her home, and she only returned yearly to see her remaining family.

I thought about getting her name, and address but decided not to. We shared an intimate, intense communication for one hour which happens sometimes with total strangers. I wanted to lock this memory into my heart and mind with the impressions and feelings I had at the moment she shared her story with me.

I gazed out the train window as this diminutive woman made her way toward the exit. She turned around and waved before disappearing into the crowd.

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



# Prayers for Healing

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**A Zoom Event to Focus on Healing  
from Pandemic and Division and Fear**

**Monday, September 7 at 10 a.m.**

**<https://pmc-prayers-for-healing.eventbrite.com>**

Speakers from the Hindu, Buddhist, Jewish, Christian, Muslim, Sikh and Baha'i Community will share their prayers with us as we pray together and deepen our multifaith understanding in this time of crisis.

Moderated by Rev. Kristi Denham  
PMC Board Member



## Deacons move the signups for worship participation online

Your current Board of Deacons include Steve Chamberlin, Jane Fernald and Barbara White.

Following the changes to the church's worship service format, the Deacons have moved Sunday sign-ups online for the liturgist, acolyte and ushers. You'll find a link to the sign-up list at the bottom of the church web page: [cobelmont.org](http://cobelmont.org).

The liturgist and acolyte can perform their parts of the Sunday service in person or send a pre-recorded video. For the first Sunday of each month, we also need someone to provide the communion bread for Pastor Liz to use in the dedication.

You can also dedicate altar flowers for the worship service. The Altar Guild provides the flowers, and you can purchase the dedication for \$15. Sign up in the binder in the Narthex or email the church office.



**A Black Lives Matter flag has joined our Pride flag over the front entrance to CCB. Racial justice has always been an overriding principle of the Congregational Church of Belmont and now we have the opportunity to express that along with our commitment to the LGBTQ community in our extravagant welcome!**

**October Messenger deadline will be Monday, Sept. 28**



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

**CCB Admin Lea is now in the church office on a regular basis.**

**New church office hours are 1-5 p.m. Mondays and 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Tuesdays through Fridays.**

**If you need to come in, call the church office at 650-593-4547.**

**Lea will let you in.**

**Be sure to wear your mask and observe social distancing.**