



June/July 2022

THE MESSENGER

CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF BELMONT

751 Alameda de las Pulgas, Belmont CA 94002 • 650-593-4547 • CCB@ccbelsmont.org • www.CCBelmont.org



Peanut butter and jelly sandwiches, fruit juice and tangerines went into the lunch bags that members of CCB packed before worship on May 29. The sandwiches went to Open Cathedral of the San Francisco Night Ministry which distributed them to the homeless in Golden Gate Park after their outdoor worship service. CCB packs about 125 sandwiches every fifth Sunday as part of its commitment to serving those in need.

Trains of Thought

In the good old summertime, refresh your soul

By Pastor Sally Train

As June approaches, I find myself humming “In the good old summertime, in the good old summertime...”

My mind wanders off to images of swaying hammocks and long warm evenings. Naps in the shade of a tree. Watermelon.

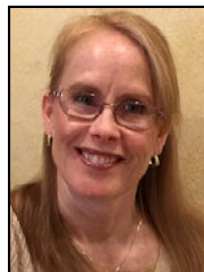
The word that comes to mind is “LAZY.”

But is it really laziness that my soul yearns for? Or a little self-care? Self-love?

We talk a lot in church about loving others, but I was reminded recently that the commandment is to “love your neighbor AS YOURSELF.”

If we do not take care of ourselves, we cannot take care of anyone else. If we do not

show love to ourselves, it is very difficult to show love to another. There are times when we need REST.



Rev. Sally Train

“Remember the sabbath day and keep it holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work. But the seventh day is a sabbath to the Lord your God; you shall not do any work.”

A balance of work and rest are built into the foundation of our religion. That balance is necessary to maintain harmony with the

Divine. That balance is necessary to maintain harmony with our souls.

As summer approaches, I invite you to savor the moments of relaxation you can find. Remember that sense of freedom you knew as a child when school finally let out and the summer stretched before you like an eternity.

Remember to enjoy the beauty of God’s earth and the company of your loved ones. Remember to get lost in a good book.

Remember to sit in silence and meditate on the miracle of life. Remember to soak in the warmth of the sun.

“Be still and know that I am God.”

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

Moderator's Report

Lots of excitement brewing at CCB this summer

By Danielle Chamberlin

Exciting things are happening at CCB!

I am thrilled to report that our little church has a lot of big plans to extend our arms in new and exciting ways out into our community. We have lots of plans for the summer!

On June 26 we will be celebrating Pride Month and Pastor Sally will be giving a special sermon on the topic of what the Bible does and doesn't say about homosexuality.

On Thursday July 14, our dear friend Bob Donovan is turning 101! Check out the story on Page 2.

Immediately following Bob's festivities, July 15-17 will be our annual **Family Camp** at Monte Toyon near Aptos in Santa Cruz County. Please join us for a weekend of fellowship and fun at Monte Toyon in the redwoods of Santa Cruz County. We are reserving the climbing wall, which was a big hit with many kids and adults last year, for Saturday morning

On Saturday afternoon we will have field games and then end the day with our annual talent/no-talent show in the evening. Garrett House will lead us in worship on Sunday morning in the outdoor amphitheater under the redwoods before we depart.

The Monte Toyon staff will keep us well fed throughout. We will have the entire Carey Lodge to ourselves, so families can have private dorm room accommodations.

If a scholarship would make it possible for you to attend, please contact Pastor Sally. For more information and to register, please see our family camp [website](#). (More details and photos on Page 7.)

On July 24, we will welcome **First Church of Redwood City** for a joint service and luncheon to explore how our churches can help each other.

During our visit with Rev. Molly Baskette from First Church of Berkeley, she made the suggestion that we reach out to First Church of Redwood City to explore ways we can partner together.

We have many common missions with this church and many friends there, including Rev. Warren Dale who is their current pastor. In the "before times," we also shared Bible study with them at Hillcrest Juvenile Hall.

LET US BREAK BREAD TOGETHER!

**A Shared Worship and Potluck Lunch
with First Church of Redwood City UCC at noon, Sunday, July 24**

**Our sister church in Redwood City sold their building years ago
and are now looking for a place to call "home."
We have a beautiful big historical building and a vision to
"Be a safe place for spiritual growth."**

A Match Made in Heaven?

**We will sing, pray, worship, eat, and talk. We will explore the possibility of working together to support one another in our visions, goals, and missions.
We will try to discover how we can best Be the Church in this part of God's world.**

Pastor Sally is arranging the service and our discussion questions over lunch. Let me or Pastor Sally know if you can bring a potluck dish to share!

Finally, in August will be a very exciting event – our very first **Yard Sale** to benefit CCB's Medical Debt Relief Project. There is more on that on Pages 4 and 5 so I will let Linda and Micki fill in the details.

I am so excited to see all the energy and enthusiasm we are putting into living our values.

On the **Pastoral Search** front, we have completed our Local Church Profile, and this month we have been collecting letters of reference from non-members that know us well. We have received two letters with promises of another by June 1. That will be the final step before sending our job posting to the Conference.

Looking forward past the summer, there are two major events that we might like to organize.

On Sept. 11, we will focus on diversity for our Back to Church celebration in the front yard after worship.

We'll put up the bouncy house for unlimited free jumping, blow giant bubbles, and play games from around the world. We hope that kids will enjoy learning to play Bato Lata from the Phillipines, El Avioncito from Mexico, or Diketo from South Africa.

We will have games from around the world (except I have drawn the line at Australian Cockroach Racing – while God loves everyone, we believe those are best left in

their natural environment).

Maybe we can even get a food truck or two to provide some lunch.

One of our "Love your Church" projects is to host a **Multicultural Music Festival**, and Lea Mavroudis and Garrett House have volunteered to lead this project. It could possibly happen in September but more likely in the spring.

Lea and Garrett will start meeting to plan this event soon. If you'd like to be involved with this and haven't signed up already, please let them know.

Finally, we have tentatively put **Chocolate Fest** on the calendar for Oct. 14-15. We have had to modify the event significantly for the past two years, and we think the community would be eager to see us back in close to our original form.

If you are excited to see Chocolate Fest happen this year and have some ideas how we could put this event on in a safe fashion in our "new normal" world, please let me know.

We know how to put on a Chocolate Fest pretty well by now (it's our 39th year!), so there's not much new to invent. That said, we will need a small group of people who are committed to seeing this event happen. We can tell you exactly what needs to be done and whom to talk to.

We should decide by mid-June if we want to go forward with Chocolate Fest this year. If you are interested in helping to make sure Chocolate Fest happens in 2022, please let me know.

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

Start cleaning closets for CCB's Yard Sale

By Linda Howard

Do you have piles of precious "stuff" you no longer use but can't quite part with?

Do you procrastinate hauling your cast-offs to Goodwill?

A solution awaits in the near future. Rummage Sale revisited is coming your way Aug. 27.

Rummage by any other name is still the same, but the new version of the rummage sale will be renamed the CCB Yard Sale. The entire operation will take place in front of the church on the driveway from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

The Yard Sale will be a scaled down version of past rummage sales. Individual families who wish to donate their goods to the sale will bring their items on the morning of the sale and set them out on tables provided by the church.

They will oversee their table(s), price the items, negotiate and take down their table and haul away anything that is left at the end of the day

What if you enjoy the excitement of a yard sale – the adrenaline rush of the crowds pouring in, seeing the pleasure on people's faces as they walk away satisfied with their bargains – but you don't want to manage a table? Volunteers are needed throughout the day as runners, crowd managers, parking attendants and cashiers.

In addition to the Yard Sale, there is the added bonus of making this a community event. Several nearby Congregational Churches, Catedral de Familia and CPNS will be invited to participate.

If shopping for bargains isn't a big enough draw, the Bouncy House, baked goods and music will be part of the fun.

The proceeds from the sales will go to CCB's Medical Debt Relief Project. (See the article on the project for more information.)

The date is Saturday, Aug. 27, from 9 a.m.-3 p.m. in front of the church.

If you would like to participate by setting up a table with your donated items, volunteer in other ways, or have further questions, please contact Linda Howard.

Our Belmont neighbors might take notice of The Little Church on the Hill and stop by.

The Congregational Church of Belmont is having a yard sale
to eliminate medical debt.
We'd like you and/or your members to join us!



**Saturday, Aug. 27,
from 9 a.m.-3 p.m.**

in front of the church at 751 Alameda de las Pulgas, Belmont.

Here's how it works:

- Go through your house and gather up all those items that no longer "give you joy."
- Reserve a table at the sale by emailing Office@CCBelmont.org. (They're limited so hurry.)
- Set up your table so you're ready to go when we open and staff it throughout the day.
- You will set the prices, haggle if necessary and conclude the sale by writing the total amount on a receipt.
- The buyer takes the receipt to the cashier, pays using cash, check, credit card or Venmo and brings the stamped receipt back to you to pick up their bagged items.
- At the end of the sale, you pack up your things that didn't sell and take them home with you (or to Goodwill).

Every cent raised will go toward erasing medical debt for people who have accumulated it through accident, misfortune and lack of medical insurance. Every \$1 raised off-sets \$100 in medical debt as we work with the organization RIP Medical Debt. Through the national office of the United Church of Christ, millions of dollars in medical debt has already been retired. Ask us and we can show you a video on how it works!

Did we mention we'll have a **Bouncy House**,
Bake Sale, **Music**, **Food** and **lots of fun** throughout the day.
And you will go home knowing your leftovers
are doing a very good deed!
Can we sign you up?

**Wear Red to church
on Sunday, June 5!
It's Pentecost Sunday,
the birthday of the church!**

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

Turns out, solar panels won't work for CCB

By Steve Chamberlin

The solar project team has been busy investigating the options for rooftop solar power at CCB.

At February's Annual Meeting, solar power was chosen as one of the top five goals for the church, and a team was assembled with Mike Venturino, Micki Carter, Linda Howard, Keith Howard, Danielle Chamberlin, Elizabeth Nordt, Leslie Marx and me.

The team met with Bill Hilton of Unitarian Universalist Church of Palo Alto to discuss his church's experience installing solar panels, and we also spoke with many solar companies and consultants.

From the information we received, unfortunately, it appears that rooftop solar at CCB isn't feasible for now.

The church's status as a non-profit entity makes the economics of solar power more difficult. When homeowners install solar panels on their roofs, they receive a federal tax credit which effectively lowers the cost



by 26 percent. CCB can't benefit from this tax break for residential solar, and would be considered a commercial solar project, requiring a more complex financing arrangement.

The church would need to lease the solar panels from a finance company or sign a long-term power purchase agreement at a pre-negotiated rate per kilowatt-hour, rather

than buy the solar panels outright. There aren't many solar financing companies that can do this, and they don't like to deal with projects as small as ours would be.

A second difficulty is the church roof. Although it looks like traditional wood shingle, it's actually a metal architectural shingle with a 50-year lifetime. It was installed in 1998 and still has decades of life left in it. Standard methods of solar panel installation aren't possible on this type of roof.

Most of the solar companies declined to even consider it, while one said it might be possible if we replaced the roof sections under the panels with asphalt single. It wouldn't be sensible for the church to pay extra money to downgrade to a lesser-quality roof material.

The size and orientation of the roof are also problematic. It's not well-situated for collecting sunlight, and there's not enough roof area to fit all the solar panels that would be needed to offset the church's normal electric use.

We contacted ten different solar companies and also spoke with a solar consultant who is an old friend of Danielle and me.

In the end, due to the financial and site difficulties, we failed to get any specific bids.

Even though this wasn't the result we'd hoped for, the work was helpful for learning about solar possibilities and bringing closure to something we've talked about for a long time but had never taken further until now.

The team is considering other energy-saving and green options. The ideas include heat pumps, solar hot water, rain barrels, and a gray-water system to irrigate the lawn.

Help CCB erase \$100 in medical debt for every \$1 raised. Our goal is \$5,000!

By Micki Carter

CCB has launched its Medical Debt Relief Project with an initial gift of \$500 from friends and family of Barbara Todd at her memorial May 21.

Every dollar raised eliminates \$100 in medical debt through the auspices of debt consolidator RIP Medical Debt, which has eliminated millions of debt through projects funded by churches of the United Church of Christ.

Our goal is to raise \$5,000 and erase \$500,000 for those who are carrying a burden they cannot lift.

The Yard Sale described on Page 4 will be our first all-church fundraiser for the Medical Debt Relief Project of CCB.

Here's how RIP describes their work:

"Every day, we receive messages from people who suffer under crushing debt far beyond their financial means to pay from the son of a stroke survivor in Kentucky whose family could not keep up with their mortgage payments, to the cancer patient in

Florida whose debts made it impossible for her to continue with necessary treatment. Rising health care costs and endless bills are leaving families with nowhere to turn.

"RIP uses donors' funds to wipe out medical debt from the neediest cases up.

"Once we've pinpointed the portfolios for those in or near the poverty level, we buy up their debt. Then we send notices to the benefiting families, and subsequently help the recipients repair their credit reports renewing their access to opportunities and resources that will allow them to rebuild and recover."

This [video](#) from NBC News tells the story.

We are looking for families and friends who will match the proceeds of the Yard Sale or half the proceeds or 10 percent of the proceeds. If we can do that, we'll make it to our goal of \$5,000 in no time.

You can make individual donations to CCB's Medical Debt Relief Project right [here](#). Just indicate MDR in the memo.

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

CCB Calendar for June/July 2022

| June 2022 | | | |
|------------------|-------------------|---|---|
| 5 Sun | 9AM - 10:30AM | <input type="checkbox"/> Church Events | Worship Preparation |
| | 10:30AM - 12:00PM | <input type="checkbox"/> Worship | Sunday worship on Pentecost/Gifts of the Spirit |
| | 11:30AM - 1:00PM | <input type="checkbox"/> Church Events | Coffee Hour |
| 12 Sun | 9AM - 10:30AM | <input type="checkbox"/> Church Events | Worship Preparation |
| | 10:30AM - 12:00PM | <input type="checkbox"/> Worship | Sunday worship with Rev. Thomas Crosby |
| | 11:30AM - 1:00PM | <input type="checkbox"/> Church Events | Coffee Hour |
| 19 Sun | 9AM - 10:30AM | <input type="checkbox"/> Church Events | Worship Preparation |
| | 10:30AM - 12:00PM | <input type="checkbox"/> Worship | Sunday worship |
| | 11:30AM - 1:00PM | <input type="checkbox"/> Church Events | Coffee Hour |
| 26 Sun | 9AM - 10:30AM | <input type="checkbox"/> Church Events | Worship Preparation |
| | 10:30AM - 12:00PM | <input type="checkbox"/> Worship | Sunday worship on Open & Affirming Sunday |
| | 11:30AM - 1:00PM | <input type="checkbox"/> Church Events | Coffee Hour |
| 27 Mon | 7PM - 9PM ✉ | <input type="checkbox"/> Off-site events | Council Meeting |
| July 2022 | | | |
| 3 Sun | 9AM - 10:30AM | <input type="checkbox"/> Church Events | Worship Preparation |
| | 10:30AM - 12:00PM | <input type="checkbox"/> Worship | Sunday worship |
| | 11:30AM - 1:00PM | <input type="checkbox"/> Church Events | Coffee Hour |
| 10 Sun | 9AM - 10:30AM | <input type="checkbox"/> Church Events | Worship Preparation |
| | 10:30AM - 12:00PM | <input type="checkbox"/> Worship | Sunday worship |
| | 11:30AM - 1:00PM | <input type="checkbox"/> Church Events | Coffee Hour |
| 15 Fri | 9:00AM - 10:00PM | <input type="checkbox"/> Off-site events | Family Camp at Monte Toyon |
| 16 Sat | 9:00AM - 10:00PM | <input type="checkbox"/> Off-site events | Family Camp at Monte Toyon |
| 17 Sun | 9AM - 10:30AM | <input type="checkbox"/> Church Events | Worship Preparation |
| | 9:00AM - 10:00PM | <input type="checkbox"/> Off-site events | Family Camp at Monte Toyon |
| | 10:30AM - 12:00PM | <input type="checkbox"/> Worship | Sunday worship |
| | 11:30AM - 1:00PM | <input type="checkbox"/> Church Events | Coffee Hour |
| 24 Sun | 9AM - 10:30AM | <input type="checkbox"/> Church Events | Worship Preparation |
| | 10:30AM - 12:00PM | <input type="checkbox"/> Worship | Sunday worship |
| | 11:30AM - 1:00PM | <input type="checkbox"/> Church Events | Coffee Hour |
| | 12PM - 12:30PM | <input type="checkbox"/> Church service/All rooms | Luncheon with First Church RWC |

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



Family Camp's coming July 15-17. Sign up!

The redwoods, hiking trails and climbing wall of Monte Toyon in Santa Cruz County beckon CCBers to Family Camp in July. Let Lea or Henry Altorfer know if you are planning to be there to share in the fun.



CCB is invited to join First Church Redwood City for prayer and Bible study via Zoom

First Church of Redwood City has invited us to attend their 11 a.m. prayer time on Wednesdays and 5 p.m. worship and Bible study time Sunday via Zoom.

Both are led by our dear friend Rev. Warren Dale.

Since we haven't had a Bible study in

several years and we don't have a prayer meeting, we thought our congregation might be interested.

Since it is over Zoom, it could also be accessible for some of our congregation who have moved away from the area.

The link for both meetings is [here](#).

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



Victoria and Kira both released the butterflies they took home from church on Easter as caterpillars after they emerged from their cocoons in their butterfly cages. Both girls were meticulous butterfly “moms.”

CCB's going rafting again on Aug. 13 **Signing off for now!**

CCB will take to the whitewater rapids of the American River again this summer on Saturday, Aug. 13.

This exciting excursion will take us down the South Fork of the American River through the beautiful Sierra foothills.

We'll leave CCB around 7:30 a.m. to arrive at Lotus (a bit east of Folsom) mid-morning. After a short orientation where we will meet our guides, we will raft nine miles of the American River over Class III rapids.

We will be treated to a riverside picnic lunch in the Marshall Gold Discovery State Park. We'll finish the trip over easier Class II rapids and take a short van ride back to our starting point.

We're welcoming all members and

friends to join us on this trip. Please RSVP (to office@ccbmont.org) with the number of youth and adults who would like to go by Wednesday, June 8, so we can reserve our spots before they are sold out.

The minimum age for this trip is 8 years old. Please also let us know if you have any dietary requirements.

The church will purchase the tickets. We estimate that the cost will be about \$150 per person. If finances are a barrier, please contact Pastor Sally at pastor@ccbmont.org to inquire about a scholarship.

We are also seeking chaperones and drivers, so parents please let us know if you can help!

By Micki Carter

After more than 25 years, I'm hanging up my visor and blue pencil as the editor of The Messenger for CCB.

This edition is my last.

We're not quite sure the form The Messenger will take in August when it returns from its summer siesta. But we will still be sending you the news of the Congregational Church of Belmont on the first of the month 11 months a year.

I have loved the opportunity to keep my news-hen skills sharp and I thank you for letting me know that you are reading it.

No crisis precipitates this change. It's just that Mike and I are planning on traveling more and the deadlines are getting in the way.

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

PRIDE SUNDAY

JUNE 26

A Celebration of Diversity

We will celebrate our commitment to being an *Open and Affirming* church. We will fly our rainbow flags, invite **all** to join us, and enjoy treats after worship.

For decades, Christian churches preached, “The Bible says same sex love is a sin.” Pastor Sally will examine the relevant Bible passages, in light of modern biblical scholarship, and share a more nuanced understanding of our spiritual literature.

Wear bright colors. Invite your friends. Come celebrate diversity.



LOVE WINS

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



Two members of the CCB family are college grads

Two members of the CCB family are graduating from college this spring.

Ezra Lux, the grandson of **Micki Carter and Mike Venturino**, will graduate in June from the University of California at Santa Cruz with a degree in film. The son of **Robyn Carter and Aesop Hantman**, Ezra will be heading for Los Angeles where he hopes to make connections as a screenwriter in the film or television industry.

Julia Bautista, the daughter of **Jill Visor**, graduated in May from Humboldt State University in Arcata with a degree in zoology. Julia is now a kennel assistant at the local shelter and is doing an internship in wildlife rescue.

The accomplishments of Ezra and Julia will be recognized during the June 12 worship service.

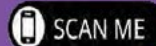
We send our congratulations!



The fun science day camp for curious kids!

Fun Summer Job!

Apply today:
<https://destinationscience.org/jobs>
Staffing@destinationscience.org



August Messenger deadline will be Monday, July 25.



United Church of Christ

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