



August 2022
THE MESSENGER CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF BELMONT

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



Many of CCB's families gathered for Family Camp at Monte Toyon near Aptos July 15-17. They explored the many natural wonders along with wall-climbing, singing and more. A story and more photos appear on Pages 6-7.

Trains of Thought

Be the light that shines in darkness

By Pastor Sally Train

We are living through some dark times. You do not need me to tell you this. You read or watch the news. If you are like me, your heart breaks every day as you learn of unnecessary suffering, deliberate acts of cruelty, and malicious lies.

We know that, at this point in human evolution, with the weaponry we have developed, empire-building and war have become obsolete. They are useless relics from a past age. Yet here we are — ensnared in a war that is all about building empire. It simply makes no sense. Perhaps the larger purpose is to expose that antiquated way of thinking for what it is — and eradicate it from this

world. Perhaps that is Divinity's plan. Old thought patterns die hard.

In a world linked with instant communication, vast trading networks, and global corporations, there is no room for nationalistic thinking. We have become interdependent. That is a good thing because it forces us to learn the ways of peace. Who is our neighbor? The whole world.



Rev. Sally Train

I could go on and on about what is

wrong: pervasive racism, women being used as pawns in a contest for power, innocent children being killed for no reason. But what would be the point? You know all this. You are intelligent people.

When we find ourselves in darkness, we have only one choice — turn on a light. Now, more than ever, the church is needed to be a place of refuge, a safe haven, a place of renewal for those who are hurting. Now, more than ever, we need to be the light in the darkness. We need to be the place where wisdom is shared, and the truth is spoken with love. We need to be the place where kindness and compassion rule.

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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.

Moderator's Report

CCB keeps up its momentum in summer 2022

By Danielle Chamberlin

Summers tend to be a time to step back, relax, and restore ourselves. I hope you are all finding time this summer to rest in a hammock, sit on the beach, admire the trees, or hang out with friends – whatever restores you.

It amazes me that even in this season of relaxation and rest, CCB is humming with activity and energy. On June 26 we had a wonderful celebration of Pride Sunday with a very special sermon from Pastor Sally.

On July 14 we celebrated Bob Donovan's 101st birthday at Belmont's 101 Burgers and Shakes. Later that week, about 20 of us traveled to Monte Toyon in Aptos for a weekend amongst the redwoods and friends.

This past Sunday, we invited First Church of Redwood City to join us in shared worship and had a delightful potluck shared lunch exploring ways we could partner together to help each other's congregations, which produced several great ideas for resource sharing which are already moving forward. It was nice to see Rev. Warren Dale leading a service from our church again as we have missed him and Georgi while



they've been off serving the Redwood City church.

Looking forward into August, we are gearing up for our second annual river rafting trip to the South Fork of the American River on August 13 and our first annual Yard Sale for medical debt relief on August 27. Our little church is full of energy!

With all this energy in new directions, one thing we may say goodbye to is Chocolate Fest. We are proud of the long legacy of this tradition, but we are ready to pass on leadership. We have reached out to Peninsula Multifaith Coalition and are happy to offer our location if they would like to host a Chocolate Fest fundraiser this year, but in

all likelihood it is time to say goodbye to this long time tradition and refocus our energy into the new traditions we are forming.

On the visioning front, we have submitted our Local Church Profile and job description for a full-time pastor to the NCNC and it has been posted on the national UCC site. We have already received our first two pastoral profiles for consideration. The search committee will be meeting with Rev. Davena Jones on Friday July 30 to kick off our search process.

In addition to discussions with First Church Redwood City, I also had an initial conversation with Jim Garrison of College Heights UCC. They are also beginning their visioning process for a settled pastor and reached out to see if it would make sense to share pastoral resources with us, an intriguing offer. Jim Garrison and I agreed to get our search committees together to further explore this idea in coming months. Building on our shared Maundy Thursday service earlier this year, we're continuing to reach out to the other local UCCs in our area. We love finding ways we can be stronger together, and believe it will further grow the energy of all our congregations.

Afghan refugees welcomed at Notre Dame

By Micki Carter

Three Afghan families who were evacuated from Kabul in that chaotic scene a year ago are now living in student housing at Notre Dame de Namur University just down the hill from CCB.

I used my connections at NDNU (where I used to teach) to find out if we could help these families — and the others who are expected to join them — in settling into life on the Peninsula. I spoke with Elgiva Wood of the International Rescue Committee and learned that she is seeking “resettlement teams” of six to eight people who would sign a contract for a six-month commitment to help one family navigate life here.

The teams would assist in the following ways:

- Finding housing on the Peninsula (not necessarily in Belmont)
- Working through the logistics of getting Social Security cards and



- registering for benefits
- Looking for work
- Socializing and helping them adjust to life in the US
- Practicing English language skills
- Enrolling children in school
- Acclimatizing in general

Some members of the family have some basic English skills although they speak Pashto, but Wood said language is not usually a barrier that can't be overcome.

The IRC is also asking for a monetary pledge of \$2,500-\$5,000 for each family to supplement the resettlement grant they receive from the federal government.

Council discussed the possibility of

becoming a resettlement team, but we are running out of bandwidth to take on the responsibility ourselves. We need someone who would be eager to manage this project; if someone could provide leadership, we're pretty sure helpers would surface. Please talk to Danielle Chamberlin or me for further details.

We've also reached out to Peninsula Multifaith Coalition to see if they might be willing to form a resettlement team, especially considering that PMC has a large Islamic membership within it. Our former pastor, Rev. Kristi Denham, and our PMC liaison, Elizabeth Nordt, will follow up with that possibility.

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



Yard Sale proceeds to help offset medical debt

By Micki Carter

Hope you're scouring your closets and garages for the very best items you're ready to part with. CCB's Yard Sale is coming from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Saturday, Aug. 27, and it's a fundraiser for CCB's Medical Debt Relief Fund.

The front lawn of the church will be transformed with tables along both sides of the driveway to showcase the classy castoffs of CCB and some of our friends. We will organize all the offerings from CCBers so that we have all the appliances, kitchenware, electronics, toys, small furniture items and clothing (only the very gently used) can be displayed together. Everything will be priced, and CCB members will take turns staffing the tables.

What else? The bouncy house will be in one corner of the lawn, and a bake sale will offer goodies to eat or take home. We'll have Square set up so we can take cash, checks or credit cards for purchases and donations.

Every cent raised will go toward alleviating medical debt through CCB's Medical Debt Relief Fund. Every dollar will offset \$100 in medical debt through the auspices of RIP Medical Debt, a debt consolidator. Our goal is to raise \$5,000 to erase \$500,000 in medical debt, and we're looking for donors who will match (all or a portion of) what we raise at the Yard Sale.

Linda Howard is chairing the event, and she needs to hear from you with the hours you can work the sale or manage the bouncy house or be a cashier. Plan to bring your items early enough to get everything set up and priced and be ready for

our first customers at 9 a.m. Chances are good that we can get PARCA to pick up our leftovers on Monday, but they won't take furniture. So if you bring large items and they don't sell, plan to take them back home with you. If you need to bring some things ahead of time, we do have a limited amount of space to store items at the church.

Please help spread the word about the Yard Sale. Flyers are available to distribute, and we have a PDF you can email to 100 of your closest friends.

To sign up to volunteer, click [here](#).

Plan to do the work of the church for

Pastoral Search Committee to call next settled pastor

By Garrett House

The pastoral search committee is very pleased to announce that we have posted our profile and our job description for a settled pastor. In other exciting news, we have already received two applicants!

Our first meeting is scheduled for Friday July 29th from 6:00 PM to 7:30 PM on Zoom. We will meet with Conference Minister Rev. Davena Jones who will be giving us an overview of the process, and answering any questions that we may have going forward.

If you would like to Join the committee and be involved in the search process, please contact Garrett House at garrett_house@yahoo.com.

God Bless us as we do the work of the church.

Trains of Thought

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Now, more than ever, we each need to ask ourselves what we can do to bring the light.

Can we find the time and energy to help a refugee family get settled and build a new life in this wonderful country of ours? Could we be the welcoming presence? The helping hand? The compassionate friend?

Can we spare a few dollars to release someone from the burden of medical debt?

As we go about our day, can we practice cheerfulness as a spiritual discipline? We know that a warm smile can lift the spirits of those around us. We know that laughter is good medicine.

In the morass of bad news, can we seek out the stories that shine with hope, courage, and integrity? They are there. There are countless heroes quietly pursuing the truth, working for justice, and extending kindness. The light still shines in the darkness- brighter than ever.

Live in the Light. Walk in the Light. Carry the Light wherever you go. Never doubt the power of that Light.

The Light shines in the darkness and the darkness will not overcome it.

A friendly reminder from CCB Deacons

Just a reminder from the Deacons that CCB doesn't have a cleaning service for tablecloths and kitchen linens.

After every event, someone has to take the tablecloths and linens home, launder them, put them on hangers and return them to the closet in the hall between the Dining Room and Parlor. The tea towels and aprons go in the labeled drawers in the kitchen. Could we make sure that the "someone" who takes them home to launder isn't always the same "someone"?

Oh, and please don't use the tea towels to mop floors or clean tables. The Deacons are hanging a Rag Bag in the kitchen closet where the ladder is. Use the rags there for scrub work. And, just for the record, don't put dirty or wet rags back in the Rag Bag. They need laundering, too.

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

The Congregational Church of Belmont is having a yard sale
to eliminate medical debt.



Saturday, Aug. 27,
9 a.m.-3 p.m.
in front of the church at
751 Alameda de las Pulgas, Belmont.

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'll go home knowing your money
went to a great cause!

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

CCB families return for another year of fun and fellowship

By Garrett House

On Friday evening, July 17, a bunch of us packed up our gear, and headed out to the beautiful Santa Cruz mountains. After a very reasonable drive, (barely over an hour) we arrived at Monte Toyon Camp for our annual Family Camp.

We call it “Family Camp” but it’s much more than that. It’s friendship camp, new and old. It’s nature camp, a chance to commune with the beauty of the Santa Cruz mountains and the majestic redwoods.



It is so wonderful to be face-to-face with our fellow human beings. The young, the old and the “in between”. We commenced the weekend with our traditional opening campfire in the outdoor amphitheater. We sang songs and we roasted marshmallows and made s’mores.

On Saturday, after an excellent breakfast in the mess hall, we all met at the climbing wall and cheered each other on as our energetic climbers pushed upward to conquer their quest. We spent the rest of the day hiking and playing games such as badminton, three-legged race, water balloon toss, and much more. It was wonderful to engage with others and take a break from technology.

When the evening came, we were ready for our annual Talent/No Talent Show. The energy was amazing, and everyone who

participated received an enthusiastic round of applause and cheers from the audience. It was so much fun to watch the skits, the dancing, the singing, and the freestyle karaoke at the end was

hilarious! The night ended with a late-night movie for those who still had the energy.

After breakfast the next morning it was time to say goodbye, so we gathered around the fire one last time. We wanted to acknowledge that we were on occupied Ohlone land, so we

held our Sunday service in recognition of our indigenous brothers and sisters.

The following is an excerpt from our service:

A land acknowledgment is the formal statement that recognizes and respects indigenous peoples as traditional stewards of this land and the enduring relationship that exists between indigenous peoples and their

traditional territories. To recognize the land is an expression of gratitude and appreciation to those whose territory you are on. It is a way of honoring the indigenous people who’ve been living and working on the land from time immemorial.

Please pray with me this sacred Ohlone prayer...

The Prayer in the Four Directions



The East is the direction from which the new day comes into the world. It is the direction of renewal. It is the place of innocence, guilelessness, spontaneity, joy and the capacity to believe in the unseen. In the East is the rising sun, the dawn of a new day. As we walk the sacred path of life today, help us, Creator God, to grow in wisdom and strength.

The South is the direction of the sun at its highest point. It is the place of summer, of fullness, of youth, of physical strength and vigor. It is also the time that people work to prepare for the fall and winter months. Hence, symbolically, it is a time of preparing for the future, of getting ready for the days ahead. To



the South, where new and fresh rains come, we ask your help, gracious Creator, to walk in the ways of goodness and gentleness in heart and speech.

The West is the direction from which darkness comes. It is the direction of the unknown, of going within, of dreams, of prayer and of meditation. The West is the place of testing, where the will is stretched to its outer limits so that the gift of perseverance may be won. To the West, the place of the setting

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sun, we thank you, good and generous God, for our day, we ask forgiveness for the times we caused disharmony today.

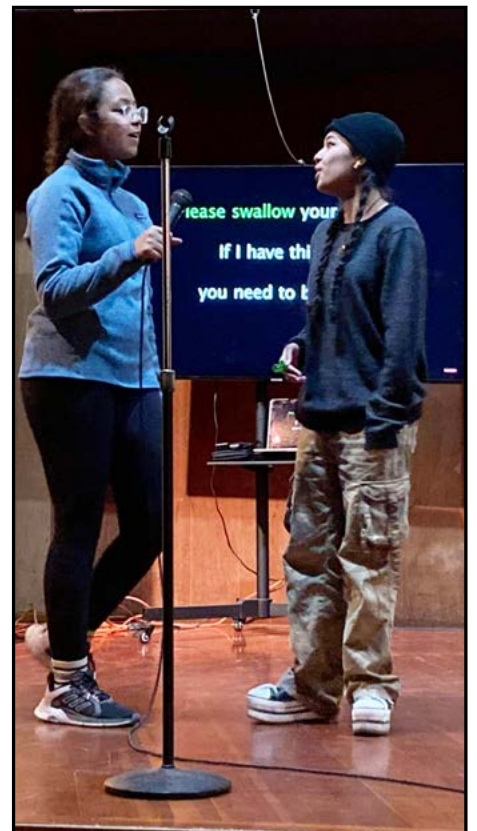
The North is the place of winter, of white snows that remind us of the white hair of our elders. It is the dawning place of true wisdom. Here dwell the teachers of intellectual gifts symbolized by the great mountain and the sacred lake. Some of the special gifts that await the traveler in the North include the following capacities: to think, to synthesize, to speculate, to predict, to discriminate, to solve problems, to imagine, to analyze, to understand, to calculate, to organize, to criticize, to remember, and to interpret hidden meanings. To the North we find courage to walk each day and ask your help to overcome fears and anxieties.

And now we bend down and touch our

mother the earth...

And now we stand up and reach out and up towards our Creator, who watches over us...

Amen



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CCB gathers to celebrate our beloved Bob Donovan at Classic 101 Burgers & Shakes

About 25 CCB friends attended Bob's 101st birthday party at the local burger and shake restaurant. We were overjoyed to celebrate Bob's 101 years and wish him many more wonderful birthdays to come.



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CCB Calendar for August 2022

7 Sun	9AM - 10:30AM	<input type="checkbox"/> Church Events	Worship Preparation
	10:30AM - 12:00PM	<input type="checkbox"/> Worship	Communion worship with Pastor Sally Train/Coming Home
	11:30AM - 1:00PM	<input type="checkbox"/> Church Events	Coffee Hour
14 Sun	9AM - 10:30AM	<input type="checkbox"/> Church Events	Worship Preparation
	10:30AM - 12:00PM	<input type="checkbox"/> Worship	Sunday worship with Second Sunday Sermon Response/Forest Fires
	11:30AM - 1:00PM	<input type="checkbox"/> Church Events	Coffee Hour
21 Sun	9AM - 10:30AM	<input type="checkbox"/> Church Events	Worship Preparation
	10:30AM - 12:00PM	<input type="checkbox"/> Worship	Sunday worship/Theological Reflection with Pastor Sally Train
	11:30AM - 1:00PM	<input type="checkbox"/> Church Events	Coffee Hour
22 Mon	7PM - 9PM 📺	<input type="checkbox"/> Off-site events	Council Meeting
26 Fri	5:00PM - 8:00PM	<input type="checkbox"/> Church Events	Set-up for Yard Sale
27 Sat	9:00AM - 5:00PM	<input type="checkbox"/> Church Events	Yard Sale
28 Sun	9AM - 10:30AM	<input type="checkbox"/> Church Events	Worship Preparation
	10:30AM - 12:00PM	<input type="checkbox"/> Worship	Sunday worship with Pastor Sally Train/Beyond Fear
	11:30AM - 1:00PM	<input type="checkbox"/> Church Events	Coffee Hour

September Messenger deadline will be Aug. 22



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