



# April 2024 THE MESSENGER

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What a glorious Holy Week at the Congregational Church of the Peninsula! It began with Palm Sunday when the altar was decorated with two huge fan palm fronds and folded palm crosses were distributed to the congregants. It culminated with two lovely Easter services: Sunrise at 6:15 a.m. at the home of Kris and Michael Stauffer in Emerald Hills where choruses of birdsong joined the congregational singing on the hillside. Then at 10:30, the CCP Worship Band and our incredibly talented youth singers joined the Sanctuary Choir for a music-filled morning. The altar featured its traditional flower cross and was surrounded by banks of Easter lilies dedicated to loved ones. The morning ended with children grabbing Easter baskets and heading out to find colored Easter eggs that our older youth had hidden on the lawn and in the crabapple trees. When they had found them all, a bagel breakfast provided by the Deacons awaited in the Dining Room. More photos appear on Pages 3 and 4.

## An Eastertide message from Pastor Jim

spring song  
by Lucille Clifton  
*the green of Jesus  
is breaking the ground  
and the sweet  
smell of delicious Jesus  
is opening the house and  
the dance of Jesus music  
has hold of the air and  
the world is turning*



Rev. Jim Mitulski

*in the body of Jesus and  
the future is possible*

**By Rev. Jim Mitulski**

Dear friends,

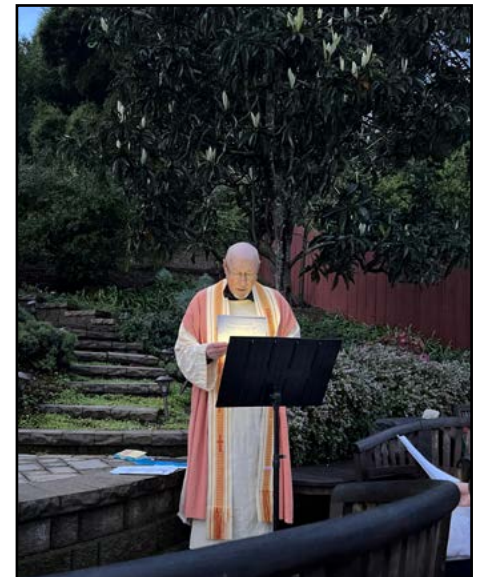
I am writing this in the afterglow of a glorious week. Let's especially thank our musicians: our accompanist, our director, the choir and solists and the band. We had engaged in collaborative

services with the three closest UCC Churches, the Woodside Road and Burlingame United Methodist Churches, and Saint James AME Zion Church.

For the first time in any of our churches, we offered the full complement of Holy Week services — called the Triduum — with each night at different location and each night a different experience. All of it culmi-  
**See PASTOR'S COLUMN, Page 8**

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





To go to the Congregational Church of the Peninsula website, click [here](#).



**CHAMBER**  
SAN MATEO COUNTY  
**GOOD MORNING**  
San Mateo County

Be Inspired, engaged, and participate!

**Thursday, April 4, 2024**  
**12 - 1 PM via Zoom**

Good Morning San Mateo County is our platform for sharing ideas, information, and inspiration.

Business and community leaders come together to engage, learn from each other, and go out and make a difference in their communities.

**BELMONT**  
**STATE OF THE CITY ADDRESS**  
*Planning and Building Our Future Together*



**Julia Mates**

Mayor, City of Belmont

## Upcoming Worship Schedule

### **April – Poetry Month and Eastertide**

- **April 7:** Resurrection Stories; Transgender Day of Visibility; Pastor Jim preaches
- **April 14:** Testimony from Karen Ferguson, CEO of CORA (Community Overcoming Relationship Abuse). CORA is one of the organizations that CCP has chose to support through the Lyman Covenant; Pastor Jim preaches
- **April 21:** Earth Day! UCC VA Chaplain Rev. Thomas Crosby preaches
- **April 28:** Rabbi Rebecca and students from Peninsula Temple Beth El; Passover

### **May – Asian American History Month**

- **May 5:** Pastor Warren preaches
- **May 12:** Mother's Day and Commemoration of Frances Perkins
- **May 19:** Pentecost and Confirmation
- **May 26:** Trinity Sunday

### **June – LGBTQ+ Pride Month**

- Check back soon for updated information.

## Pastor Warren's Wonderings

By Rev. Warren Dale

I have been noticing how many drive-by folks have been commenting on our flags and signs. I was thinking that so many of us just drive by churches and don't really register that



**Rev. Warren Dale**

which is happening inside. Oh, maybe we notice the number of cars on a given day in the parking lot. And maybe we squint, sometimes, to look at the title of a Sunday sermon. Though it usually does not prompt us to make sure we attend.

So, all of this has me contrasting the drive-bys and the "ignores" with those who have noted and then called us or wrote us with a comment. Now, I am thinking about the incredible phenomena that has just occurred.

Imagine, a person drives by. They notice one of our flags or signs. Now, here is where it gets interesting. They don't stop, but they don't stop thinking either. Perhaps they talk to themselves out loud, or to another person traveling with them.

But wait, it doesn't stop there. The engagement continues to the point that they call us, or they write a letter, or an email, which means they have visited our website or Googled us! Now they know more about us, about what where we stand, and that we are a Micah 6 Church:

"God has shown you, O mortal, what is good. And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God."

Wow, this is amazing! A church has just made a difference in the life of one person (or two or three in the car). Wait, it didn't stop there. Because every time they drive by, they think, they mumble, they engage with an idea of faith.

Oops, it didn't even stop there, because it prompted our staff, our council, and even those with whom we mentioned their comments, to discuss their message. It sure makes me want to keep those banners, flags, and signs flying.

To go to the Congregational Church of the Peninsula website, click [here](#).

# Ceasefire banner in front of CCP is vandalized

By Micki Carter

CCP's banner advocating a ceasefire in Gaza was spray-painted, sometime between Tuesday evening, March 19, and Wednesday morning, March 20. Henry Altorfer first noticed it and brought it to the attention of the CCP Admin Lea Mavroudis.

This is the second time in less than a year the church has had a banner vandalized. Last July, the rainbow pride banner on the porch was slashed. It was replaced very shortly after.

Pastor Jim ordered the 6-foot banner stating "Love and Life Demand a Permanent Ceasefire Now," and the Church Council decided to hang it after discussions with the congregation and a positive vote by Church Council. It was hung early in March, street-side, in front of the church.

Pastor Jim had been with a group of religious leaders from around the Bay Area. The group had encouraged churches to speak out in favor of peace, on both sides,

to simply stop fighting. He said it was meant to show a stand for peace, rather than taking a particular side in the conflict.

Sometime in the early afternoon on March 20, photos were added to the sign depicting three Israelis held hostage by Hamas. The photos were removed and displayed in the Narthex of CCP, but by Monday, a new set of hostage photos were attached to the banner.

Pastor Jim said the comments the church has received since displaying the banner have been mostly positive. He said it's a way to facilitate much needed conversation in the community.

"This banner has already brought largely positive feedback, especially, but not solely, from our Muslim neighbors, one of whom offered to help us replace it. I pray for the people who vandalized our church and invite



them to engage us personally in dialogue," Pastor Jim said. "I made the same invitation to the person who vandalized our rainbow flag some months ago. This is what I believe Jesus would do."

A report was filed with the Belmont Police, and an officer came out to investigate. No suspects have been identified, but the police urged CCP to consider adding security cameras.

## Ceasefire banner a beacon of hope on the Peninsula

By Lea Mavroudis

I'm very proud to have helped facilitate the hanging of the ceasefire banner in front of CCP earlier this year, and was disturbed to see the vandalism perpetrated against it. To me, it felt like a slap in the face to what should be a non-controversial call for peace.

However, something good came out of this. We learned that the banner was actually making a difference in the community. Even the vandalism itself shows people are paying attention to it, but other than this negative incident, the overall response to the banner has leaned in a very positive direction.

I received a phone call from a local Palestinian Christian woman who was nearly in tears with gratitude at seeing the banner. She said that she had told her family and members of an activist group she belongs to about the banner, and they were all extremely appreciative of it. Pastor Jim also spoke with her at length about her thoughts on the banner and the vandalism.

I also spoke with a Muslim neighbor who stopped by to say how much he appreciated seeing the banner, and how sad and frustrated he was to see the vandalism. He even offered to help pay for a replacement.

We received several other emails of support from community members as well as friends of the church. Pastor Jim spoke with another community member on the phone who called before the vandalism occurred to voice his support and appreciation for the banner. But the visible defacing of the banner seems to have triggered an outpouring of support from the community. A local rabbi even offered to help us clean the banner.

I think the greatest takeaway from all this is that our banner is making a tangible difference in the community.

Pastor Jim has also informed me that while many churches in the East Bay have joined the Interfaith Movement for Human Integrity in displaying ceasefire banners, we seem to be the only house of faith on the Peninsula that is doing so. This, in my opinion, makes it all the more important that we keep our banner up no matter how much pushback we might get. We can remain proud and confident that we are acting on the side of peace and human dignity, and that our banner is a small beacon of hope in a very dark time.



As someone who is paying close attention to what is happening in Gaza and who has extended family from Palestine, this issue is especially close to my heart and I take pride in working for a church that supports and stands up for peace.

*Author's note: I understand that opinions on this topic vary within the congregation. I am simply offering my perspective on the situation and highlighting the positive feedback we have received. Should anyone wish to express their own opinion on the matter, we welcome you to submit an article for next month's Messenger.*

To go to the Congregational Church of the Peninsula website, click [here](#).



# Rev. Kristi Denham is honored as Pastor Emerita

*Pastor Kristi sent this letter to the church after her Pastor Emerita service.*

**By Rev. Kristi Denham**

Dear family and friends at CCP,

In one of the darkest moments of my beginning chemotherapy treatment, I had a dream that turned the tables for me: I was back in our beautiful church giving a sermon on love — seems that all my sermons were about that! But suddenly I just stopped in the middle of what I was saying and stepped down from the pulpit and walked into the aisle.

Looking into all your eyes I said, “I’ve always known you loved me and through your love I learned to love myself and to really love all of you, my family, this church, the wider community of compassionate people of so many faiths and none. You have taught me the meaning of Paul’s words in I Corinthians 13. Please could you lay your healing hands on me now.” And I knelt down, and you began to move forward, and I woke up. There are no words to express my deep gratitude for Sunday’s amazing honor and joy filled service. I had wanted to tell you how much you had taught me. I wanted to give you the Jewish donation box with

the beautiful cut glass design of the Golden Gate Bridge that I received from the Jewish Community Relations Council as a small token of my incredible, overwhelming appreciation of all you have meant to me. I hope it finds a place in your midst for donations to whatever purpose you deem appropriate.

As I got up to finally leave the reception because I was completely exhausted after so much joyful dancing and weeping and listening and connecting with so many of you, Bob Donovan approached me to try to say one last word. He began by acknowledging Ella Mae in our presence. And then he struggled in silence to find words to speak of our friendship and years of love. He finally said, “I have no word.” And I said, “I totally understand! I have no words either, except, I love you!”

So, all I can say is thank

you, thank you, thank you.

With so much love,  
Rev. Kristi Denham



The Sanctuary was bursting on March 10 as church and Peninsula Multifaith friends and family gathered to honor the Rev. Kristi Denham as Pastor Emerita. Pastor Kristi retired as pastor of the Congregational Church of Belmont in 2019 after 20 years of service to the church. The worship service ended with a laying-on of hands for healing for Pastor Kristi and during the reception that followed, everyone had a chance to greet her and her sons, daughter-in-law and grandchildren.

To go to the Congregational Church of the Peninsula website, click [here](#).



# Our capital improvement fund dollars at work

By Greg Thornhill

After many months, perhaps years, of repeated challenges with the toilets in the lower-level bathroom, we have replaced all three toilets and the associated flush valve plumbing with them.

The project was prompted by recurring blockages causing major inconvenience and embarrassment to our tenants and their clients. Volunteers were often plunging toilets and snaking the lines or we had plumbers doing the same to resolve the issues, but the solutions rarely persisted.

After assessing the options with plumbers, we deemed our path forward was to simply replace the toilets. The old toilets had no identifying information on them (brand, gallons per flush, model, etc.) so the plumbers were playing a guessing game of trying to match up the correct flush valves to these toilets (these are tankless industrial style toilets).

We've had no issues with the blockages since the replacement and our downstairs tenants have expressed such appreciation for us making the upgrades.



One of the old toilets, which were likely originally installed in the 1950s.



One of the new, more efficient toilets installed last month.



CCP celebrated Doris Brown's 96th birthday during coffee hour on March 24.

## Pastor's Column

Continued from Page One

nated in our two Easter services, outdoors and indoors, sunrise and morning. Thank you to Kris and Michael Stauffer for hosting us as the sun greeted us on the hills of Redwood City.

Easter has 50 days, as opposed to Lent's 40 days, because the size of our joy in the resurrection is greater than the period of solemnity in preparation for it.

Bring your alleluias to church with you for the next six weeks!

Yours in resurrection power,  
Pastor Jim

Read Pastor Jim's Eastertide column for the *Bay Area Reporter* on Page 9.

To go to the Congregational Church of the Peninsula website, click [here](#).

# Ready for resurrection: Pastor Jim's Eastertide column printed in the *Bay Area Reporter*

*Editor's note: This column originally appeared in the Bay Area Reporter on March 27.*

**By Rev. Jim Mitulski**

I'm ready for resurrection: new life, meaningful life, new beginnings, and hope in place of despair, love that is stronger than death. And Easter is this week!

In anticipation of Holy Week services, the choir at the Congregational Church of the Peninsula, where I am the pastor, has been rehearsing pieces from the Andrew Lloyd Webber/Tim Rice musical *Jesus Christ Superstar* so it's embedded in my mind. As a child, I stereotypically and shamelessly acquired the habit of memorizing every word to every original cast recording I could lay my hands on. My musical tastes were promiscuous: from *Carousel* to *Fiddler on the Roof* to *Hair* to *Godspell* — to this one, my very favorite, with its memorable chorus: "Jesus Christ, Superstar, who are you, what have you sacrificed? Jesus Christ, Superstar, Do you think you're who they say you are?"

This musical always filled me with hope, even though the question of whether or not Jesus is resurrected from the dead is never actually addressed. It's been over 50 years since I first heard the musical Mary Magdalene scandalously sing, "I don't know how to love him." These words still capture both my ambivalence and my desire to find meaning in the Easter story. While I lost faith for some years in the church as a credible institution to proclaim liberation, the musical planted seeds in my spirit that nurtured my hope that somehow love would prevail even when human beings disappoint.

I learned about the power of Easter and resurrection when I was the pastor of the historically gay congregation at Metropolitan Community Church-San Francisco, located then on Eureka Street in the Castro. I worked there through the 1980s and 1990s during the most challenging years of the HIV/AIDS epidemic. Today MCC-SF continues its ministry in another location (in St. Mary's Chapel at Trinity-St. Peter's Episcopal Church, 1620 Gough Street, at Bush), focusing on celebrating queer identity and spirituality. In those days though, MCC-SF

was described in the press as the "pink and purple church where AIDS funerals take place," and "the church with AIDS." We proudly reclaimed that nickname and said, "We are the Church Alive."

In the height of those years, we sponsored a theater company, Metropolitan Community Theater. We presented musicals and dramas — and we had a lot of drama, on and off the stage. Though we never really said this at the time, probably half or more of the actors, musicians, and even the audiences had HIV. This was before medications we have today had become available. We were partly able to stage these elaborate productions because of the volunteer energy of a community where so many were on disability. We turned our suffering into art and music. And *Jesus Christ Superstar* was one of the musicals we presented to the community. We channeled all the intensity and passion of our lives into the production. There was no resurrection at the end of the story, but we achieved resurrection while working together as a community.

In Christian practice, we narrowly focus Easter and resurrection on the life and crucifixion of Jesus, a revolutionary lover of humanity who demonstrated that love is stronger than death. In those years I learned to enlarge the meaning to apply it to our own lives. Acts of love that evoke our best selves and community spirit that result in beauty, generosity, and inspiration are tangible signs of resurrection. When I hear the music of *Jesus Christ Superstar* today, I still remember several cast members who are no longer alive; and I can hear their voices. I remember Walter, who lived long enough to leave Leyland House, one of the local hospices, because new medications turned the trajectory of his disease around. People leaving hospices became a regular occurrence at one point, which had been unimaginable a few years earlier.

There are still signs of crucifixion all around us. The impulse to separate trans-



gender and nonbinary people from the gay, lesbian, bisexual, queer struggle is a betrayal as deep as the one depicted in the Bible accounts of Holy Week. When Anita Bryant emerged from Florida and stormed America with her gospel of hate in the 1980s, we rallied together to turn the tide of prejudice; we need to do the same today — especially for transgender people in Florida, Missouri, Texas, and other states. It's time to summon the same commitment to civil rights generally, and transgender rights and women's reproductive health care specifically, as we demonstrated in the past. Advocating for peace abroad and the release of hostages and political prisoners, and working for racial justice at home and for migrants exercising the human right of migration at our borders are the best way to say "No!" to crucifixions and "Yes!" to resurrections here and now. Preventable starvation is a crucifixion. Sending food to the starving people in Gaza and other places where famine threatens is resurrection. My favorite synonym for resurrection is solidarity.

I invite you to look for signs of resurrection and to make it real. Listen for voices that remind you that you aren't finished yet and that more unprecedented life awaits. The ancient story portrayed in *Jesus Christ Superstar* and the events of Easter still invite us to the possibility of new life in our own day, because resurrection is about life before death and our ability to live and love each other into abundant life.

**To go to the Congregational Church of the Peninsula website, click [here](#).**



# Yo ho ho, it's the spiritual life for me! An invitation to join the Board of Deacons

By Mike Venturino

When most of us joined the church, we were welcomed into membership by the pastor and at least one Deacon. This part of the Deacon's work for the church is, perhaps, one of the most joyous and satisfying. Others may remember being greeted at the door, provided a bulletin and shown into the Sanctuary before Sunday service. These are but two of the roles that Deacons play in our church.

The Bylaws describe the Deacons as being responsible for the "spiritual well-being of the church." They are expected to be primarily responsible – along with the pastor, of course – for programs to meet this end. The Deacons ensure that the pastor has partners in presenting the worship services of the church; enlisting the folks we recognize as liturgists, readers, communion services and ushers is another major ongoing task. While

those people are often members of the board, they don't have to be.

Would you be willing to take on one of those tasks? We would love to include as many people as possible in these roles. No meetings are required and on-the-job training is provided.

Visiting prospective members in coordination with the minister is another role. While not explicitly called out in the Bylaws, clearly the "spiritual well-being of the church" would also include being available to visit current members. Due to the current small size of the board and the multiple responsibilities falling on most of its members, that piece of the board's work has languished recently. We hope to pick this up as our time and energy permit. We would welcome the help of anyone who is interested in participating in this part of our ministry.

The Altar Guild and music also fall under the Deacons' purview. In practice, they operate independently to maintain the altar and do the music ministry of the church. Flowers on the altar, other decorations and paraments – think Altar Guild.

Per the Bylaws, music is included as a committee of the Deacons. Historically its job was to "assist the choir director (now Minister of Music) in securing choir members, choosing music, and selecting soloists for special services." In practice all that seems to fall on the Minister of Music now. I'm sure Elizabeth Mye would be happy to have help with the more mundane tasks of sorting and cataloguing music. And we would love to have additional choir members!

Join us!

## LifeMoves luncheon will be on April 25

The LifeMoves benefit luncheon will take place on April 25 at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in Palo Alto.

From the organization: "LifeMoves 2024 benefit luncheon spotlights the stories of unhoused families who face unique challenges on their journey to permanent housing.

"Thanks to a matching challenge from the Valhalla Foundation, donations to this event will be matched dollar for dollar up to \$1,000,000

"We hope you will join us for this inspiring and informative event. You will learn about solutions and progress on ending homelessness in our community, while helping us to raise needed funds to support our clients on their journey to self-sufficiency and permanent housing."

Several people from CCP as well as other local UCC churches will be attending the luncheon. If you are interested in attending, please contact [office@ccpeninsula.org](mailto:office@ccpeninsula.org).

## Pi(e) Sunday sale aids medical debt and Gaza food relief

By Micki Carter

A dozen pies — including two St. Paddy's Day pistachio mint ones from Maura Whitmore — were offered on Pi(e) Sunday March 17, and \$575 was raised for CCP's Medical Debt Relief Fund!

As an added benefit, an anonymous donor will match the \$525 as a donation to World Central Kitchen to provide food relief in Gaza.

Pies sold included pecan, key lime, cherry, blueberry, apple, peach and berry tart.

Besides selling pies (made by Cassie and Christopher Gray-Spight, Danielle Chamberlin, Carol Patterson, Maura and me), we also took orders for Pie Futures that can be delivered whenever you'd like. You can still place your orders [here](#).

If you have a request for a particular kind of pie, talk to me. Several of us have peach, pear, apricot and apple trees that will be bearing fruit in just a few months. How does pear marzipan tart sound?



Micki and Mary Beth set out pies and take pie orders on Pi(e) Sunday.

To go to the Congregational Church of the Peninsula website, click [here](#).



# CCP seeks to protect the privacy of each of us

By Micki Carter

Gwen Jeong raised some concerns at Church Council about how the Congregational Church of the Peninsula protects the private information of its members and friends.

Good question — since identity theft is the regular subject of discussion in the media today, and scammers are always looking for new victims. So I thought I would share my answer to her question with the wider church.

First, know that we are aware that your private information is PRIVATE. Here's how we work to protect that privacy:

Every conversation with Pastor Jim or Pastor Warren is privileged, and they would never share anything you say to them without your permission.

We don't use personal email addresses or

phone numbers of individuals in the bulletin or The Messenger or any other communication unless we are requested to.

Lea, our Office Admin, is the perfect hub if information needs to be passed to you or from you to someone who's contact information you don't have. Send your message to [Office@CCPeninsula.org](mailto:Office@CCPeninsula.org), and she will forward it.

The CCP directory is for the use of members and friends of CCP only. It is not posted on our website. You will receive a PDF of the directory for your own use. A printed copy will be provided to a member only when requested.

The second page of The Messenger, which includes the Parish Personals and upcoming birthdays, is removed before The Messenger is posted online.

All the information in Parish Personals

has received prior approval from the individuals mentioned.

Children in photos in all our communications (the Friday Missive, social media or The Messenger) are not identified by name. Some adults have also asked that they not be identified by name or full name; others have asked that they not be photographed at all. We honor those requests. Send me a note if you want to be excluded from photos.

We use distribution lists from CCPeninsula.org as often as possible to keep church communication within the church family.

This is policy for us at CCP. However, we are human and we know that mistakes are sometimes made. Please call them to our attention so they aren't repeated, and we will be extra vigilant.

If anyone would like to talk about this further, we all are ready to listen.



California Interfaith Power & Light

## EXPLORING SOLUTIONS TO THE CLIMATE CRISIS

April 3rd @ 12:00pm

Join us for a webinar on how San Mateo County is leading the way for the just transition to renewable energy!

[tinyurl.com/5n97t2uv](https://tinyurl.com/5n97t2uv)

## Weekly Chat 'n Chew book group continues on Zoom

This week we finish *Demon Copperhead* by Barbara Kingsolver. The next selection is *The Choice: Embrace the Possible* by Edith Eva Eger. Goodreads summarizes: "It's 1944, and 16-year-old ballerina and gymnast Edith Eger is sent to Auschwitz. Separated from her parents on arrival, she endures unimaginable experiences, including being made to dance for the infamous Josef Mengele. When the camp is finally liberated, she is pulled from a pile of bodies, barely alive.

The horrors of the Holocaust didn't break Edith. In fact, they helped her learn to live again with a life-affirming strength and a truly remarkable resilience. *The Choice* is her unforgettable story."

Here is the schedule.

- April 9: Foreword though Part 1 Prison, pages 1-65
- April 16: Part 2 Escape, through page 125
- April 23: Part 3 Freedom, through page 233
- April 30: Part 4 to the end

To go to the Congregational Church of the Peninsula website, click [here](#).

# CCP has committed itself to caring for the planet in Earth month of April — and always

By Micki Carter

For more than 20 years, I used to plan for Earth Sunday with the kids of the church. I would put on overalls and haul the three recycle bins into the Sanctuary to lead Time With the Children.

We'd talk about Earth Day (April 22, this year) and how we could help the planet by recycling properly. But the kids would get antsy for what they knew was coming next: Dumpster Diving!

We'd outfit the kids with adult size T-shirts to cover their clothes and rubber gloves to protect their fingers and head out to the dumpsters in the parking lot to see if people really were recycling.

Well, we don't go Dumpster Diving any more but maybe we should. I wrote a story for the AAUW magazine about Rethink Waste, the broad-spectrum recycling program Recology supports here in San Mateo County, last month, and I was startled by the changes in recycling. And saddened to find out how recycling practices compound our concerns around climate change.

At Annual Meeting in January, we added attention to our planet and climate change to CCP's specific goals for 2024. We declared ourselves a Green Church more than 15 years ago, and we've been fairly diligent about keeping single-use plastics and styrofoam out of the building. Two years ago, Steve Chamberlin led an effort to see if our building was a candidate for solar panels on our roof. Turns out it wasn't, but we learned a lot in the process. Just last month we took a big step in choosing to install a new HVAC system that uses a heat pump in the upstairs floor spaces.

But we need to be aware that a lot has changed in recycling practices and how we can adapt to the new realities.

In the Dumpster Diving days, we taught the kids the Three R's: Reduce, Re-use and Recycle. Now there's a fourth: Rot (admittedly not as alliterative as the other three). But the point is that composting is a primary

## What are the 4Rs?

The 4 R's should be practiced from the top down.

1. **Reduce**- consume less to generate less waste
2. **Reuse**- use an item again or repurpose items to create something new
3. **Recycle**- place accepted items into the recycling cart/bin
4. **Rot**- place accepted compost item into the green cart/ bin

Sending items to the landfill is the last option.



Hierarchical model of the 4 Rs in the waste stream

## Takeaways

- Share what you learned with your friends and family!
- Practice 3 bin sorting rules
- Properly dispose of your household batteries at the PRC
- Items take hundreds of years to breakdown in a landfill
- Practice the 4 R's: Reduce, Reuse, Recycle, Rot
- Invite your family and friends to join us on a tour
- Divert materials from the landfill to increase its lifespan!
- Diverting food scraps reduces harmful greenhouse gasses such as methane

way of keeping food waste (or paper that has touched food) out of landfill and reduces the production of harmful greenhouse gases. We're pretty good about separating our compost into green bins here at church, but we have to make a commitment to using BPI-certified bags in the bins instead of ordinary plastic. When they end up in the green dumpster, everything in them is fouled and can't be composted. BPI-certified bags are more expensive but we can easily do that if we train our cleaning crew and distribute them to our renters.

Another hard lesson involves paper. All these years, we've believed that paper was the easiest to recycle and feel good about. Put it in the blue bin, and we've done our part for the environment. However, I learned that San Mateo County — and the entire western half of the United States — no

longer recycles paper! We gather it up and put it in shipping containers. Then they are loaded onto cargo ships and sent to Taiwan or Indonesia to be recycled. So our "good deed" of recycling paper ends up pouring abundant fossil fuels from those ships into the environment, boosting our climate crisis.

So, instead of picking up a multi-page paper bulletin each Sunday, use the QR code Lea posts each week to view your bulletin online. The usher will help you to do that if you like, and bring your iPad or tablet so you can make it as big as you need. Pretty soon we will be reducing our use of paper altogether.

We may not be doing any Dumpster Diving these days, but an occasional glance into what we're putting into those dumpsters in the parking lot will tell us a lot about how we achieve our environmental goal for 2024.

To go to the Congregational Church of the Peninsula website, click [here](#).



PENINSULA MULTIFAITH COALITION

MARTIN LUTHER KING JR  
**MULTIFAITH  
DAYS OF SERVICE**

EDUCATIONAL SERIES PRESENTS

**COMMUNITY  
READING  
OF MLK'S  
"LETTER FROM  
BIRMINGHAM  
JAIL"**

**SUNDAY, APRIL 14TH 2-4 PM**  
**TRINITY BAPTIST CHURCH OF SAN MATEO**  
**39 E 39TH AVENUE, SAN MATEO, CA 94403**

Join us on the 61st anniversary of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s classic spiritual letter about nonviolence, dissent, and faith—which he wrote while in prison on Good Friday in Birmingham, Alabama.

We're also looking for 40 individuals from our community to volunteer to read a part of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s historic "Letter from Birmingham Jail". All ages are welcome and families are encouraged to participate.

SIGN UP for more information below:  
<https://forms.gle/Dgk7CL2VVqCNfAzh6>



MADE POSSIBLE IN PART BY GENEROUS DONATIONS FROM:



To go to the Congregational Church of the Peninsula website, click [here](#).

The winner of the Dining Room rental voucher from October's Chocolate Fest Silent Auction is holding a hafla belly-dancing event at the church on April 27. She has invited anyone from the church or community who would like to attend. Tickets are free, but please be sure to register for the event using the information below so they can be sure to have enough seating and refreshments.

MISSING YOUR GHOSTS AND GOBLINS?  
HALLOWEEN SEEM JUST TOO FAR AWAY? THEN...

JOIN US FOR AN EVENING OF SPOOKY-YET-SWEET  
BELLY DANCE AND TREATS!

STELINA PRESENTS :

# Halfway to Halloween Hafla



Tickets are FREE  
(donations gratefully accepted at the door)  
Seats are limited  
contact [monica@monicahedman.com](mailto:monica@monicahedman.com)  
or  
grab your ticket using the QR code:

Saturday the 27th of April, 2024  
Doors 5:30 PM - Performance 6 -8 PM  
Congregational Church of the Peninsula  
751 AlamedaDeLasPulgas.,  
BELMONT, CA 94002



Please feel free to bring a dish or beverages to share!  
All ages welcome

To go to the Congregational Church of the Peninsula website, click [here](#).



# PAAM CONVOCATION 2024

Pacific Islander and Asian American Ministries



## OLA I KA WAI

### “Water is Life”

June 18 - 22, 2024

Honolulu, Hawaii - Kingdom of Hawaii

From PAAM: Aloha and warmest welcome to our esteemed guests, speakers, and participants from across the world. Today, invite you under the auspices of the Pacific Islander and Asian American Ministries (PAAM) - United Church of Christ USA, an organization dedicated to nurturing connections, understanding, and advocacy within and beyond our communities. This year is particularly momentous for us as we celebrate the 50th Anniversary of PAAM, marking half a century of commitment, growth, and unity. Our conference theme, deeply ingrained in Hawaiian wisdom, “Ola I Ka Wai,” translates to “Water is Life.” As we discuss fresh water and its critical importance to sustaining life across all forms, from the mountains to the sea, this powerful theme guides our discussions as well as illuminates our future. Find more information and register for the event at this [link](#).

To go to the Congregational Church of the Peninsula website, click [here](#).

# UCC WESTERN REGIONAL YOUTH EVENT



Long Beach, California

*Save the Date!*

**JUNE 23 - 27, 2024**

Join hundreds of UCC Middle and High Schoolers from the 8 UCC Conferences of the western half of the United States. We're gathering at California State University - Long Beach for a few days of workshops, service projects, music, worship, an adventure day at Disney and more!

- Sunday - Arrive & Evening Worship
- Monday, Tuesday & Wednesday- 3 days of Workshops, Service Project and an adventure day at Disney.
- Thursday - Morning Worship & Depart

Registration costs are still being finalized (somewhere around \$600) and will include housing, meals, and admission for one day at Disneyland. More info coming soon.

QUESTIONS? WANT TO VOLUNTEER?  
Rev. Wally Hoeger | [whoeger@firstchurchlb.org](mailto:whoeger@firstchurchlb.org)

To go to the Congregational Church of the Peninsula website, click [here](#).



# Calendar for April 2024

2 Tue	12:30PM - 2PM	Off-site events	<a href="#">Good Hope Luncheon</a>
	1:30PM - 2:30PM	Off-site events	<a href="#">Online Book Group</a>
3 Wed	11AM - 12PM	Off-site events	<a href="#">Bible Study (Zoom)</a>
4 Thu	6PM - 7PM	Off-site events	<a href="#">Thursday Night Prayer &amp; Check-in</a>
	7:30PM - 9:00PM ✉	Church Events	<a href="#">Choir Rehearsal</a>
7 Sun	10:30AM - 12:00PM	Worship	<a href="#">Sunday worship</a>
	11:30AM - 12:00PM	Church Events	<a href="#">Coffee Hour</a>
9 Tue	1:30PM - 2:30PM	Off-site events	<a href="#">Online Book Group</a>
10 Wed	11AM - 12PM	Off-site events	<a href="#">Bible Study (Zoom)</a>
11 Thu	6PM - 7PM	Off-site events	<a href="#">Thursday Night Prayer &amp; Check-in</a>
	7:30PM - 9:00PM ✉	Church Events	<a href="#">Choir Rehearsal</a>
14 Sun	10:30AM - 12:00PM	Worship	<a href="#">Sunday worship</a>
	11:30AM - 12:00PM	Church Events	<a href="#">Coffee Hour</a>
16 Tue	1:30PM - 2:30PM	Off-site events	<a href="#">Online Book Group</a>
17 Wed	11AM - 12PM	Off-site events	<a href="#">Bible Study (Zoom)</a>
	6:30PM - 8PM	Off-site events	<a href="#">Trustees Meeting (Zoom)</a>
18 Thu	6PM - 7PM	Off-site events	<a href="#">Thursday Night Prayer &amp; Check-in</a>
	7:30PM - 9:00PM ✉	Church Events	<a href="#">Choir Rehearsal</a>
20 Sat	9:00AM - 12:00PM	Church Events	<a href="#">Leadership Retreat</a>
21 Sun	10:30AM - 12:00PM	Worship	<a href="#">Sunday worship</a>
	11:30AM - 12:00PM	Church Events	<a href="#">Coffee Hour</a>
22 Mon	6:00PM - 7:00PM ✉	Off-site events	<a href="#">Deacons' meeting</a>
23 Tue	1:30PM - 2:30PM	Off-site events	<a href="#">Online Book Group</a>
24 Wed	11AM - 12PM	Off-site events	<a href="#">Bible Study (Zoom)</a>
	7:00PM - 9:00PM ✉	Off-site events	<a href="#">CCB Council Meeting</a>
25 Thu	6PM - 7PM	Off-site events	<a href="#">Thursday Night Prayer &amp; Check-in</a>
	7:30PM - 9:00PM ✉	Church Events	<a href="#">Choir Rehearsal</a>
28 Sun	10:30AM - 12:00PM	Worship	<a href="#">Sunday worship</a>
	11:30AM - 12:00PM	Church Events	<a href="#">Coffee Hour</a>
30 Tue	1:30PM - 2:30PM	Off-site events	<a href="#">Online Book Group</a>

To go to the Congregational Church of the Peninsula website, click [here](#).

APRIL 20

# UCC ANNUAL EARTH SUMMIT



The UCC's second annual Earth Summit will feature celebrated author and activist Bill McKibben delivering the Jim Antal Keynote Lecture with the title, "Energy from Heaven or Energy from Hell?" Additionally, a panel of award-winning activists will speak about the multi-national struggle against the pollution of Formosa Plastics, one of the world's largest plastics producers. Both Sharon Lavigne and Diane Wilson have won the Goldman Prize which is often referred to as the "green" Nobel Prize. They will be joined on the panel by Nancy Bui from the International Monitor Formosa Alliance and Justice for Formosa Victims. The two-and-a-half-hour summit will also feature the announcement of the Dollie Burwell Prophetic Action Award winner, a celebration of the UCC's newest Creation Justice Churches, and a video showcasing the environmental ministries of our host congregation, the Church of Christ at Dartmouth College. Even if you cannot make the event on April 20 at 10 a.m. PDT, still sign-up, and a recording will be sent to you. [Register now!](#)

**May Messenger deadline will be April 26**



To go to the Congregational Church of the Peninsula website, click [here](#).