



May 2024
THE MESSENGER CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF THE PENINSULA

751 Alameda de las Pulgas, Belmont CA 94002 • 650-593-4547 • office@ccpeninsula.org • www.ccpeninsula.org



The HVAC workers setting up CCP's new heating and cooling system for the apartment and the upstairs office used a huge crane to hoist the new units to the top of the building. Read the story and see more photos on Page 9.

A Resurrection message from Pastor Jim

Christ is risen from the dead, trampling down death by death, and to those in the tombs, granting life. —Translation of the Greek Orthodox Easter hymn *Christos Anesti*
By Rev. Jim Mitulski

Dear friends,

We are still in Eastertide (and our Eastern Orthodox friends,



Rev. Jim Mitulski

who still follow the Julian calendar, are just getting started). Our world continues to need resurrection, and I will admit my life can use more and more as I age. We'll be overdoing the alleluias right up to Pentecost, May 19, when we celebrate the coming of the Holy Spirit.

The Sunday after Pentecost

is Trinity Sunday, not as prominent as the other religious holidays in our calendar. Come find out why the Trinity still matters and hear why the Unitarian Universalists left what is now the UCC over the issue. It's why we are still two separate denominations, though with a lot in common.

Churches divide over many reasons; let's keep the United Methodist Church in

See PASTOR'S COLUMN, Page 13

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



Leadership forum offers thought-provoking ideas

One of our forum leaders, Rev. Terri Echelbarger, read us the following poem called *Nothing Is Static* by Manish K. Mishra-Marzetti.

The ground shifts, sometimes slowly,
sometimes like an earthquake,
reminding us that the solidity
we often love and seek
is an illusion.

The crumbling dust of the desert plains,
the moist fertility of farmlands,
the eroding coastline of tidal shores,
all are changing.

Committees dissolve or are created,
Leaders retire or step away,
Ministers come and go,
by-laws are amended.

New experiences,
lead to new truths,
which foster
evolution;

the natural course of life
always pushing us
toward greater understandings
of what it means
to be human.

Everything about our existence
points toward change,
flexibility, and
dynamic re-creation.

And it's hard because change involves
loss.

Can we hold the losses well,
while not holding ourselves back?

The ground shifts, sometimes slowly,
sometimes like an earthquake;
nothing is static.

By Maura Whitmore

Greetings to my fellow resurrectionists.
Easter Sunday has passed, but our Easter



Rev. Terri Echelbarger

season lives on.

We here at the Congregational Church of the Peninsula are hopefully in a place that acknowledges the resurrection story in our own lives. We are always growing, changing and learning. This is not an easy process, but does come with its joys. I hope that you are all as excited as I am about new possibilities in our lives, and in our church.

Recently at our Church Leadership Retreat on a Saturday morning, a dozen of us listened to Rev. Terri Echelbarger and Rev. Sheryl Johnson speak on church polity, governance, "Right Relations," bylaws,



Rev. Sheryl Johnson

conflicts of interest, economic justice, finance and fundraising, values-focused church budgeting, time budgeting. Sounds like a real dynamic morning, right?

Well it actually was instructive, interesting, informative and thought-provoking. Terri hammered home that our bylaws are a legal document that binds our behavior and governance as a non-profit. She led us through a discussion to the conclusion that we can't let our bylaws run us, but we must make the bylaws fit our mission. So now we need to define/refine our mission to accurately reflect "Who We Are."

From her book, *Serving Money, Serving God*, Sheryl presented us with questions that we need to ask ourselves: Are we, as a church, concentrating our budget on big, important values-focused expenditures, or on small, less important items? Then, how do we account for our budgeting of precious volunteer time to avoid burnout among ourselves?

We don't have all the answers, but we do have food for thought.

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

Pastor Warren's Wonderings

By Rev. Warren Dale

I am always intrigued by how the post resurrection experience made an impact on those disciples. Somewhere soon, they went out from their locked rooms and started talking with others. They met in people's homes. They shared meals.



Rev. Warren Dale

We know what a real traveler Paul was. In Acts 20:20, the Apostle Paul declares to members of the church at Ephesus, "I kept back nothing that was helpful, but proclaimed it to you, and taught you publicly and from house to house."

Well, I have been wondering about all you disciples and thinking about where your feet are each week. I know that we are not just in church or Zoom people. We talk, relate, cry, laugh, hope, share, discuss with others. I look at my own schedule to remind me of how we all have different "communities" with which we witness.

On Mondays and sometimes Thursdays, I ride with my cycling friends. We ride between 14 and 20 miles each time. In the middle we have coffee and a bagel. Both on the trail and at coffee, we discuss the

happenings of the world. I know that I have laughter to share, but also questions, input and hope regarding community and world situations.

On Tuesday nights, I meet with a group of senior guys. There is one friend who claims he is agnostic/atheist. Yet, he keeps reading about what is in the universe. Last week he shared with me that is reading the book Abraham. And we started discussing the children of Abraham and its consequences. We frequently discuss things of the heart.

I play volleyball on Tuesday. We discuss what is happening in our lives. Who is ill and needs support, where people are that have been missing for a while.

This all reminds me of when I conducted my dad's funeral. I noticed three men there whom I did not recognize. When at the end of the formal part of the eulogy, I asked who would like to share, one spoke:

"We are Jeff's Starbuck buddies. We met with Jeff every week. He helped us with finances and with our personal issues. He was a really great friend."

I didn't know that about my dad. I wonder how many different groups of which you are a part. I am thinking you are our missionary out into the world.

Blessings,
The Rev. Warren



What does Pride Month mean to you?

By Lea Mavroudis

Pride Month, which takes place every June, can mean a vast number of things to different people depending on their age group, gender identity, orientation, culture, and more. Do you have a Pride Month story you would like to share? Or maybe some thoughts on your hopes for the community in 2024?

We would like to hear your thoughts on what Pride Month means to you. We would especially love to hear from LGBTQ+ individuals, but we also welcome other allies of the community to chime in. Even if you are unsure about the meaning behind Pride Month and would like to learn more, we would love to hear from you.

Please limit your response to about 250 words so that we can have enough space to publish everyone's stories. If you feel you have more to say than will fit into 250 words, please contact me so we can discuss it further.

Our goal this year is to celebrate and uplift LGBTQ+ identities as well as educate and engage with people who might not have paid much attention to Pride in the past. As the atmosphere in this country continues to become more fraught for LGBTQ+ people in particular, we want to pay special attention to the concerns and needs of the community and continue to look for ways that we can offer our support.



On April 14, the CCP Worship Band performed for Jazz Sunday, coinciding with the 61st anniversary of Martin Luther King, Jr.'s Letter from Birmingham Jail. Songs included selections from Nina Simone and John Coltrane.

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

CCP Social Action board designates Lyman Covenant funds for several local organizations

By Linda Howard

The Social Action team at Congregational Church of the Peninsula focused on the environment, youth programs, food distribution, refugees and health care during the most recent round of donations.

Three organizations received financial support from the Lyman Covenant fund. These organizations align with the CCP mission “to do justice in the world.” They also meet the Lyman Covenant guideline of contributing to organizations in the local community.

The first recipient was CuriOdyssey. This San Mateo organization parallels with CCP’s values focusing on diversity, equity and inclusion and reaching out to underprivileged communities in San Mateo County. The monetary donation from Lyman Covenant contributes to STEM programs that offer scholarships to summer camps and participation in the Museums For All Program, which awards free memberships to low income families. In addition, CuriOdyssey focuses on conservation and education on the local natural environment.

The second recipient was Interfaith Movement for Human Integrity (IM4HI), an organization that actively works to find housing solutions for newly arrived, vul-

nerable migrants on the Peninsula through local congregations. Volunteers step in to provide food, clothing and basic necessities to facilitate families newly arrived. Legal aid is part of the package as migrants navigate through the process of applying for asylum.

The third recipient was RIP Medical Debt, a non-profit whose purpose is to eliminate or reduce medical debt, which is one of the leading contributing factors to poverty. Even people with insurance can experience crushing medical debt from accidents or illness leading to financial hardship. Access to medical care is a social justice issue. For this reason, the Social Action Board approved a donation of \$2,500 from the Lyman Covenant Fund to RIP Medical Debt.

RIP buys up medical debt from debt collecting agencies that in turn buy the uncollected medical debt of hospitals and other medical institutions. For every \$100 donated to RIP, \$1,000 in debt is relieved. For pennies on the dollar, medical debt is erased for qualified individuals. Through an arrangement with RIP, the money donated by CCP goes to residents of San Mateo County.

In addition to the donations from the Lyman Covenant, Social Action donated to Glide Memorial Church in San Francisco, Night Ministry and the LBGTQ Coastal

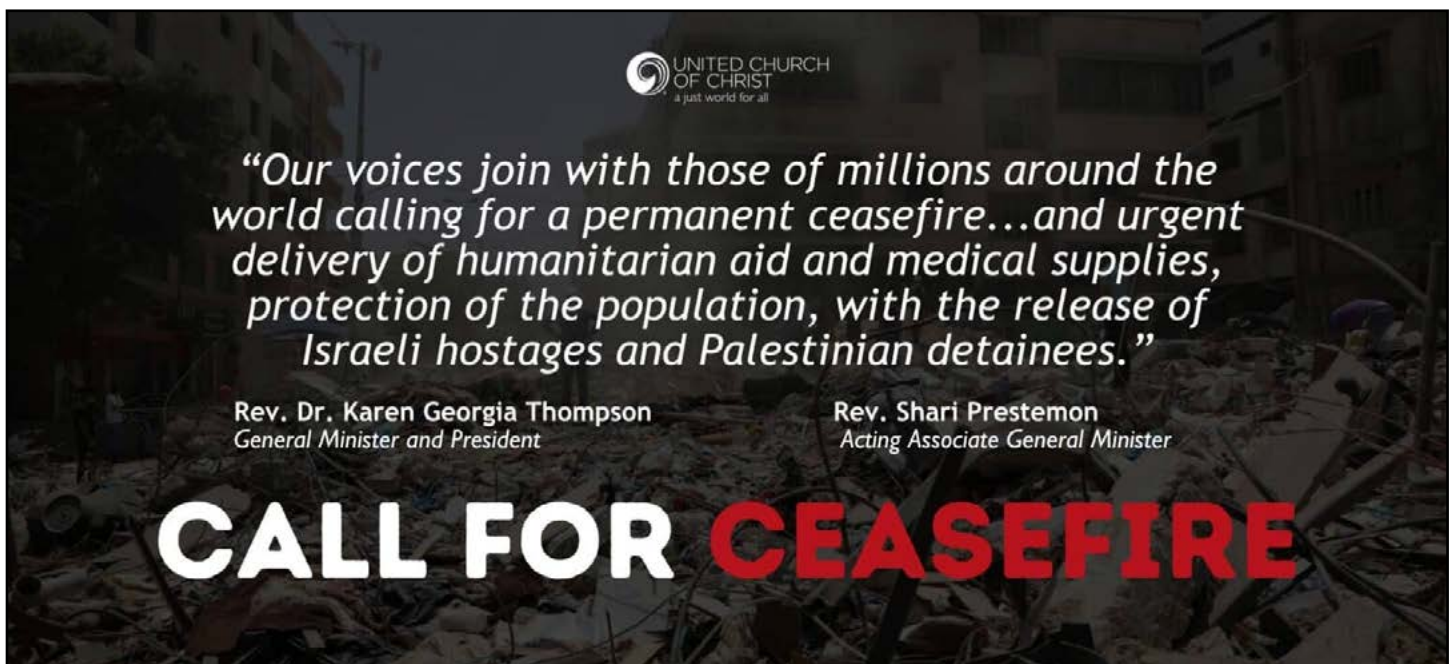
Community.

Glide Memorial hosted Pastor Jim and the confirmation class recently. The youth, parents and Pastor Jim served meals and observed the ministry at Glide Memorial. The Night Ministry continues to need financial support as they prepare sack lunches for people attending church services every Sunday in the Tenderloin.

In February, the LBGTQ Coastal Community experienced vandalism of their building and grounds. Hateful messages were left. To show support and solidarity, Social Action sent a donation to this group whose purpose is to provide emotional support and a safe haven for the LBGTQ community in Half Moon Bay.

If you would like to recommend to the Social Action Board an organization or individual that makes a positive impact in our community, please click on this [link](#). Answer the questions as completely as possible and send to the Social Action Board. Every recommendation will be thoughtfully reviewed.

It is a privilege that our church has the resources to donate to organizations in our community that help people become more self-sustaining and set them on the path for a better life.



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

Spread a little joy with Mother's Day Magic!

By Micki Carter

It was a casual remark from the manager of the LifeMoves shelter in Menlo Park, the Haven, that set things in motion.

I had just delivered more than a dozen boxes, each containing six place settings of dinnerware. Most of it was our old brown dishes from the CCP kitchen that the discovery of the beautiful new china from the First Church storage units had made obsolete. We added additional boxes of mugs with the First Church imprint that we also uncovered.

The manager, Evelyn Reyes, was over the moon. She said the dishes would be put to immediate use since families usually arrive with no kitchenware at all.

So I asked, what else do they need?

"They need everything from toasters and coffeemakers to pots and pans. They want to set up housekeeping but they need everything."

That sparked a thought: Mother's Day is coming. Perhaps we could each bring a kitchen gift (new or gently used) for a Life Moves mother. And if you don't have anything from your kitchen to share, a trip to Goodwill or Savers in Redwood City would offer lots to choose from for a very small investment.

A box with the Mother's Day Magic flyer on it sits on the bench in the Narthex by the stairs. Please put your donations in the box or talk to me about picking it up. (Bob



Want to work some Mother's Day Magic?

The unhoused families that have found a home at one of the LifeMoves family shelters need small kitchen appliances (toasters, mixers, coffeemakers, etc.) and cookware to set up housekeeping.

If you have new or gently used items that would fit the bill, bring them to church any time between now and May 5, and we will pack them up and deliver them to the LifeMoves family shelters in San Mateo, Menlo Park, Redwood City and Daly City.

If you'd like to make a donation, contact Office@CCPeninsula.org.

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Donovan has already sent an abundance of riches!)

If your kitchen has no spares, consider a donation that I will spend on needed items.

Would you join me in providing some Mother's Day Magic for the families at one

of the five Life Moves shelters?

PS: LifeMoves can also use hotel toiletries (that you no doubt pick up when you travel) and new or very clean pillows and blankets. You can put them in the box as well.

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

Building vendor relationships for Chocolate Fest

By Jill Visor

I first attended Chocolate Fest in 2016 with my family as a member of the community and remembered it with such delight that, when I joined the church, I wanted it to continue. It was partly the sparkly lights, wine, and chocolate (and how much my daughter LOVED the cannoli), but I remembered the banners on the wall, with messages that were so different than the church I grew up in – and that aligned with my beliefs. Now, in my second year of organizing Chocolate Fest, I feel more confident, armed with my learnings from last year.

In this series of articles for the Messenger, I thought it would be fun to focus on a different topic in each issue. This month is vendor relationships, as recruitment began in April. We want to make sure chocolatiers have Chocolate Fest 2024, Oct. 19, penciled in their calendars.

To that end, on April 7, I attended the Chocolate Salon at the Hall of Flowers in San Francisco. I got to see old friends (and address some of their grievances) including

Coco Tutti, Michael's Chocolates, Coba, al Chocolat, 1.2.3 Chocolat, flying noir and R&J Toffees. In addition, there were many new potential friends, including three new chocolatiers located on the Peninsula in Los Gatos, Los Altos, and Menlo Park. Micki Carter designed a lovely trifold Vendor Guide (printed and folded by Lea Mavroudis) that I had the privilege to distribute.

The vendors were happy that we are addressing their concerns from 2023 (many of which were also concerns of our guests) including space and noise. This year, we will expand our event footprint to also have tasting booths in the back of the Sanctuary. The event will be a single day (1–9 p.m.), with staggered arrival times and limits on the number of tickets sold per time period. This one-day format has been suggested by members of the church before and it will also reduce vendors' travel expenses (e.g. gas and hotels)

The thing I've learned about chocolate makers is that they are passionate about their products and often have amazing stories to

share about their history of chocolate-making. Some are preserving a style of chocolate making and/or sourcing beans from their cultural roots. Many of our vendors are cottage industries, just getting started, whereas others may have a storefront and have been in business for years.

Regardless, they took quite a financial hit during the pandemic and many are struggling to make ends meet. One vendor from last year said that she really wanted to attend our event again in 2024 because she believes in our cause, but just couldn't afford to pay the county fees, rent a car and pay for a hotel. Many of the vendors are in San Francisco or Berkeley, where not everyone has a car and getting staff to come to an event on the Peninsula may be a struggle. We are hoping she will attend now that it is a single day!

Lea and Micki have the [website](#) set up beautifully for vendor registration, and we will soon be sending registration emails to our fabulous chocolatiers.

A weekend of fun and fellowship awaits at Monte Toyon Camp

By Henry Altorfer

Come join us for our annual Fellowship Camp in the majestic woods of the Santa Cruz mountains near Aptos. Enjoy two evenings and a full day in the serene environment that seems like it's miles and miles away from civilization even though it's just on the edge.

You may notice a name change from previous years. The church Council voted to change the name from Family Camp to Fellowship Camp to emphasize the fact that all ages and statuses are welcome.

We will be at Monte Toyon Camp July 19 to 21. We will arrive just after dinner on Friday evening and leave after breakfast on Sunday.

Last year we had members from College Heights join us, and this year we hope to see them again in addition to folks from some of our other sister parishes in the area.

There is always time for some nature appreciation in the woods, like walking the extensive trails in the hills or a more gentle one in camp while enjoying the redwood gi-

ants, which feel like they're embracing your very soul. We usually have some fun "picnic games" too, and roasting marshmallows and singing around a fire. And back by popular demand, we'll have access to a climbing wall on Saturday morning. Perhaps we'll have some new activities this year as well.

The cost for Fellowship Camp will be:

- Adults – \$230
- Children (6-11) – \$133
- Children under 6 – Free

If you would like to attend but need financial assistance, please contact pastor.jim@ccpeninsula.org. See our [website](#) for further details about costs and what to bring.



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

May is Mental Health Awareness Month

By Rev. Dr. Thomas Crosby, BCC-MH

Mental health includes emotional, psychological, and social well-being. It affects our thinking, feelings, and actions. Our mental health also helps us manage stress, establish relationships, and make healthy choices. Mental health is essential at all stages of life.

National Alliance on Mental Health (NAMI) studies tell us that one in five of us will suffer from some form of mental health challenge every year, and only half of those who suffer receive treatment. Other NAMI studies show that 50% of lifetime mental health illnesses begin by age 14 and 75% by age 24. Today, however, research and treatments for mental health lag behind those for physical health. There is a significant shortage of mental health professionals, which makes seeking treatment difficult.

Most of my work has been in mental health for the last 15 years as a chaplain. Working with those who have mental health struggles is challenging and rewarding. While working on my doctorate, I became qualified and received a mental health specialization for chaplains. That's the BCC-MH after my name. In my time at the VA, I have seen how mental health can affect the connection one has with themselves, others, and even God. Some feel that due to their past, God is punishing them with a mental health struggle. Unfortunately, this belief is common.

Mental health and physical health are also an essential component of general health. I was surprised to find out how much effect mental health has on our physical health and vice versa. Depression significantly increases the risk of long-term diseases such as diabetes, heart disease, and stroke. Additionally, chronic diseases heighten the probability of experiencing mental health challenges.



Our mental health, just like our physical health, is subject to change over time due to various factors. When we face stressors that surpass our ability to cope, our mental health may be negatively impacted. For instance, individuals who work long hours, take care of family members, or experience financial difficulties may experience poor mental health.

Loss of connection is a common stress I encounter in my work. Veterans often tell me that when they are in the military, they feel like they are a part of a family — a family on a mission. The mission's success depends on everyone working together towards it, which quickly forms close bonds among them. However, when these veterans complete their military service, they return home without any of those close bonds around them. Many of them feel out of place and feel like they don't know the world they have come back to, even in their own homes. This loneliness can affect their mental health, leading to a downward spiral.

Taking care of our physical health by following a healthy diet and exercising regularly is essential, as it can also help with mental health challenges. Prayer and mindfulness are other effective ways to deal

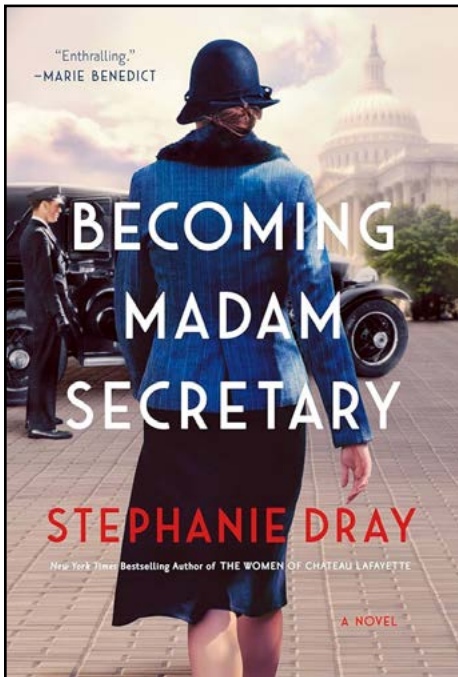
with mental health issues. For our veterans, I suggest finding a community where you feel you belong. Group support can be beneficial in dealing with mental health challenges. The VA offers various types of groups to assist veterans with their mental health. Still, unfortunately, there is a significant shortage of mental health professionals, which makes access to treatment difficult.

I have a question for you: do you take care of your mental health? If you notice any signs of mental health struggles in your life, do you take steps to address them? These questions might be difficult, but they remind us of the stigma surrounding mental health. This stigma can be as challenging as the actual mental health issues themselves.

If you have a few minutes, I encourage you to watch Dr. Guy Winch's TED talk [How to Practice Emotional First Aid](#). It is an excellent talk about the lack of emotional support compared to our significant focus on physical health. I often show this in my spirituality groups, and it generates substantial discussion about the importance of paying attention to our mental health.

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

Don't forget to bring your photos of mothers or mother figures to worship on Sunday, May 12!



Book group starts new novel about Frances Perkins

After concluding their discussion of *The Choice*, a memoir about the harrowing experiences of Edith Eva Eger during the Holocaust, the Chat 'n Chew online book group will start reading a new novel about the life of Frances Perkins in May.

In *Becoming Madam Secretary*, bestselling author Stephanie Dray tells the story of Perkins, who was FDR's Secretary of Labor and the first female Cabinet member. Sometimes referred to as the Mother of the New Deal, Perkins is credited with starting Social Security and many of the other benefits that we take for granted today.

In the course of the month, the group will welcome guest Tomlin Perkins Coggeshall, grandson of Frances Perkins who will talk about his grandmother.

The group meets every Tuesday at 1:30 p.m. on Zoom using this [link](#). New members are always welcome!

New HVAC systems are in place for the third floor

By Greg Thornhill

In a special meeting of the Congregation on March 3, we approved the replacement of our aged heating systems on the third floor (offices and apartment). The apartment furnace had stopped working, and parts were difficult to come by given the age of the unit. Trustees and Buildings & Grounds had researched a few options which included replacing the existing low-efficiency gas furnace, upgrading to a high-efficiency gas furnace, or upgrading to a heat pump system.

We decided upon the heat pump solution. These units are very efficient compared to gas units and generally much more eco-friendly. We get the added bonus that heat pumps are also air conditioning units.

In the apartment, the furnace that was up in the attic was removed and replaced with an air handler/blower unit. This allows us to use all the existing ductwork of the old furnace, and a condenser unit was placed on the flat roof on the northwest corner of the building.

The offices had a much different solution. It's a mini split setup where a head unit is mounted to the wall in each of the three offices and tied into another condenser on the same roof. This allows each room to be controlled completely independently, which is the ideal solution given how and when the offices are occupied.

Some electrical work was also involved as new circuits were needed for the new condensing units and had to come from the main panel in the warrens. The upper floor sub panels were incapable of handling the additional load.



This job was only estimated to take a few days but ended up taking a bit over two weeks. JC HVAC encountered several challenges in working with our old building but did a good job of adapting. They had a crew of two to four folks onsite for the entire project.

While there's still some cosmetic handyman work to be completed, the project is essentially wrapped up. We have taken a big step toward our goal of being a more eco-friendly church, will be able to eliminate dangerous space heaters and clumsy portable air conditioners, and have added to the comfort of everyone who utilizes the third floor.

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

Good Hope Luncheon will be on May 7

This month's Good Hope Luncheon will gather at 12:30 p.m. on May 7. Join the group at Harry's Hofbrau at 1909 El Camino Real in Redwood City.

This is a purely social event where everyone pays for their own lunch, and there is no real agenda except for sharing the fellowship of the CCP community.

Please RSVP to office@ccpeninsula.org if you plan on attending.

Upcoming worship themes for May and June

May – Asian American History Month

- **May 5:** Pastor Warren preaches on Rural Life Sunday in the UCC; Holy Communion
- **May 12:** Mother's Day and Commemoration of Frances Perkins (bring pictures of Mothers for the altar). Learn more about Frances Perkins [here](#).
- **May 19:** Pentecost Sunday and Rite of Confirmation
- **May 26:** Trinity Sunday

June – LGBTQ+ Pride Month

- **June 2:** TBA
- **June 9:** Intersectionality Sunday - Remembering Pulse Nightclub in Orlando, Fla., and Mother Emanuel AME Church in Charleston, S.C. Note that this is National Violence Day, and we are encouraged to wear orange. More details to come.
- **June 16:** Lesbian Presbyterian hero and pioneer Rev. Janie Spahr preaching; the most dangerous Presbyterian in the church, she was put on church trial more than any other person for performing same-sex marriages.
- **June 23:** Juneteenth observed
- **June 30:** Stonewall Day commemoration



Scouts workday helps with much-needed CCP projects

By Elizabeth Nordt

After church on April 14, a small but mighty group of our Troop 27 Scouts gathered for an afternoon of work to make our church a little more functional and a little more beautiful. They cleared low hanging branches along the back parking strip, trimmed the bushes blocking our handrails at the front steps, cleaned out filthy garbage and compost cans, cleaned cobwebs on the veranda, brushed off pollen and grime from the deck, pulled weeds in the front lawn, and polished up all the brass dedication plates on

our pews. Our Scouts like to show us how much they truly appreciate us extending the use of our facilities so that they have a home for doing their weekly activities and planning all of their adventures.

We will celebrate an Eagle Court of Honor on May 11. Meanwhile, several Scouts will complete their Eagle projects and boards of review this month in May.

Memorial Day Weekend begins with flag planting to honor Veterans' graves. The Troop will then go camping at Brannon Island in Rio Vista.

Share the news about your graduate

By Micki Carter

Do you have a graduate in the family?

Anyone graduating from middle school, high school or college (or anywhere else!) this spring?

If you do, please send a note to office@ccpeninsula.org and tell us about the student, the relationship to you and what school the student will attend in the fall.

Feel free to tell us about graduation honors or anything else you'd like.



We want to honor your graduate and share the news with our church community.

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

LifeMoves luncheon offers perspectives on the issue of homelessness in the Bay Area

By Lea Mavroudis

A group from CCP attended the LifeMoves benefit luncheon at the Crowne Plaza hotel in Palo Alto on April 25. As you may know, LifeMoves is an organization that “provides emergency interim shelter, food, clothing, and intensive case management to rapidly return adult clients to stable housing and address the underlying factors contributing to homelessness.” It was the chosen recipient for the proceeds of last year’s Chocolate Fest.

The luncheon served as a thank you to donors as well as an opportunity for further fundraising and education. The contingent from CCP included Pastor Jim, Pastor Warren, Maura Whitmore, Jill Visor, Linda Howard, Georgi LaBerge and myself. Rev. Michael Cronin, Alexis Lewis and Peggy Williams from Island United Church also joined us, and we ran into Rev. Jessica and Rev. Álvaro from the Congregational Church of San Mateo at the event too.

The program, titled *A Home for Everyone*, began with a poetry reading from two teens whose families were assisted by LifeMoves and a speech from the CEO of the organization. Then, keynote speaker Stephanie Land took the stage. Land is a critically acclaimed author and public speaker whose memoirs *Maid: Hard Work, Low Pay, and a Mother’s Will to Survive* detail her experiences with poverty and her struggles to support herself and her daughter. *Maid* was also recently adapted into a Netflix miniseries.

Land’s speech examined the issue of poverty in the U.S. and highlighted the need for organizations like LifeMoves to support people and families who are struggling. Rev. Michael remarked, “Stephanie Land’s keynote reinforced my thoughts on the government’s shortcomings and misdirected attitudes that keep people in the cycle of poverty.”

The second speaker was Laura Green, a mother who received assistance from LifeMoves after her husband abandoned her and their four children. Green’s speech moved many of us to tears and showed the real-life ways that donations to the organization are applied.



It was a privilege to be part of this event and learn more both about the issues of poverty and homelessness in the Bay Area as well as how LifeMoves is making a real difference.

Pastor Warren said, “It was inspiring to join with people across the spectrum to celebrate and participate in possibilities for our unhoused neighbors.”



To go to the Congregational Church of the Pen-

CCP will share a booth at this event with some of the other UCC churches in the area. We would love to have you join us there!

San Mateo County Pride Celebration Event & Parade

Saturday, JUNE 8, 2024

Get ready to come together at the **PARADE**, meeting at 2nd Street and B Street in San Mateo at 10 am!

EVENT at San Mateo Central Park, where the fun never stops!
Location: 50 E 5th Ave, San Mateo, CA 94401
Time: 11 am to 5 pm

Love at our Core
LOVE
Pride in 2024!

JOIN THE CELEBRATION AT OUR EPIC 12TH-YEAR PRIDE ON THE PENINSULA CELEBRATION!

FREE and SOBER EVENT

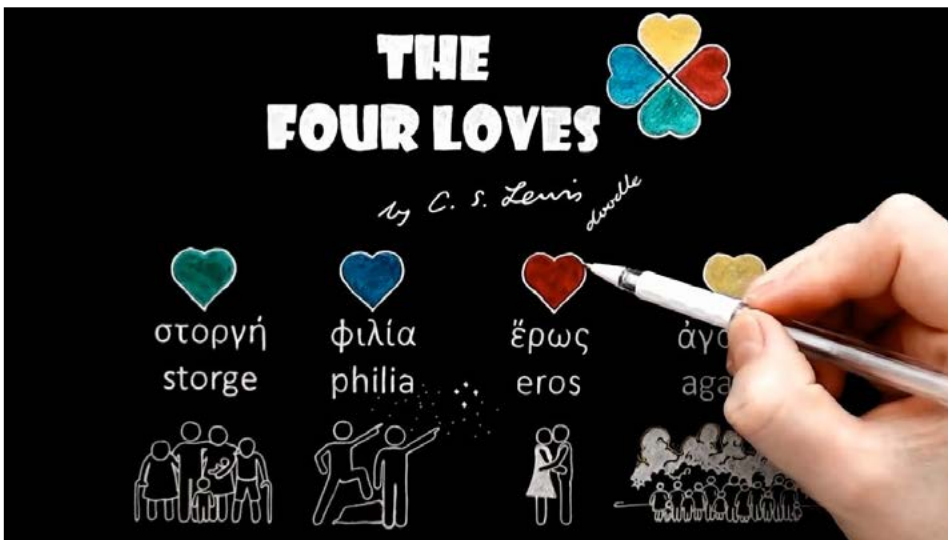
**Resource & Vendor Booths - Entertainment
Food Trucks - Live DJ - Family and Pet Friendly
Youth and Older Adult Areas and More...**



SAN MATEO COUNTY HEALTH
**BEHAVIORAL HEALTH
& RECOVERY SERVICES**



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



View from the Pew: *The Four Loves* by C.S. Lewis revisited in a modern context

By Gwen Jeong

The Four Loves is a 1960 book in which C. S. Lewis explores the nature of love from a Christian and philosophical perspective through thought experiments. The book was based on a set of radio talks from 1958 which had been criticized in the U.S. at the time for their frankness about sex.

The book is available online at Amazon and other booksellers.

A local Presbyterian Minister cited it recently as required reading when he was in high school, recalling that it enabled him to make a choice about a political act that he was asked to undertake. It comes down to personal values when faced with dilemmas. For this reason, this book is presented here as more than a book for book club chat, and hopefully helpful for stirring up reflections on our own internal conflicts.

Example dilemmas:

Why does a member(s) of a Christian congregation, sensing that another member is quietly bisexual, ignore this fact until the LGBTQ+ person comes out of the closet? Why did Bill Clinton legislate, “Don’t ask, don’t tell?”

Why do some religious organizations/churches bravely post banners or posters demanding “Peace” when it comes to the outrageous killing in Gaza but see sending arms and killing devices to Ukraine as dif-

ferent?

Why do local, state and federal politicians and community leaders “support” another whose values seem to be so opposite? It is here that the minister I referred to above relied on God’s mandate to “Love thy God with all your mind and heart. Love thy neighbor as thyself.”

Below are The Four Loves with only one or two sentences to introduce the author’s categorization:

Storge (empathy bond) – Liking someone through the fondness of familiarity, family members or people who relate in familiar ways that have otherwise found themselves bonded by chance.

Philia (friend bond) – The love between friends as close as siblings in strength and duration. The friendship is the strong bond existing between people who share common values, interests or activities.

Eros (romantic love) – Love in the sense of “being in love” or “loving” someone, as opposed to the raw sexuality of what he called Venus. The illustration Lewis used was the distinction between “wanting a woman” and “wanting one particular woman....”

Agape (unconditional “God” love) – Charity (agape) is the love that exists regardless of changing circumstances.

Pastor’s column

Continued from Page One

our prayers as they have just voted to fully welcome LGBTQ+ into membership, marriage and ministry. Already a fourth of their congregations have left just over the fact of the discussion.

We know something about the importance of LGBTQ+ inclusion in the UCC. Let’s pray for all of our co-religionists that “They all may be one,” as Jesus famously prayed, perhaps foreseeing our capacity to splinter even when a divided world benefits from our unity.

Join us this month for worship, learning, prayer and relationship-building, on-site or online. Hope to see you.

With love,
Pastor Jim

P.S. California Humanities just announced the award of a prestigious [grant](#) to historian Lynne Gerber and [Eureka Street Productions](#) for their audio documentary that features Pastor Jim’s preaching from the ‘80s and ‘90s. Here’s a very brief [audio clip](#) from January 1988.



Planning team for Pride Month 2024 to be created

Are you interested in helping CCP gear up for Pride Month? We are putting together an ad hoc team to help brainstorm ideas and plan speakers, activities and more. We are also scheduled to participate in San Mateo County’s Pride Day on June 8 together with some of the other local UCC churches. We aim to make this our most fun-filled, educational and affirming Pride Month yet!

Send a message to office@ccpeninsula.org if you’re interested in being on the planning team.

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



More communities are joining the peace banner movement in the Bay Area and around the country

By Rev. Jim Mitulski

We are part of a growing network of churches and faith communities throughout the Bay Area and the country that are calling for peace in the Middle East.

The following religious organizations in Northern California have already signed up to raise “Love Demands Permanent Ceasefire” Banners like ours, and the list continues to grow:

- Berkeley Methodist United Church (Dec 24)
- Buddhist Church of Oakland (Jan 21)
- Buena Vista United Methodist Church (Jan 28)
- Congregational Church of the Peninsula, Belmont
- First Congregational Church of Oakland (Dec 24)
- First Congregational Church of Alameda
- First Unitarian Church of Oakland (Dec 31)
- First Unitarian Universalist Society of San Francisco (Jan 10)
- First United Methodist Church,

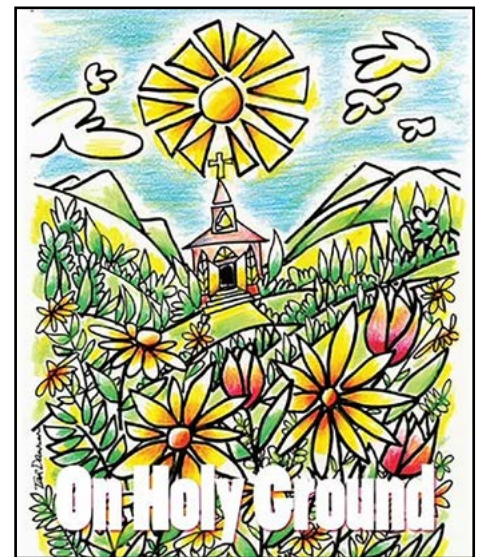
Sacramento

- Lakeshore Ave Baptist Church, Oakland (Dec 24)
- Pine United Methodist Church, San Francisco (Jan 7)
- Plymouth United Church of Christ, Oakland (Jan 14)
- Shomeret Shalom Network (coming soon!)
- St. Basil Greek Orthodox
- St Columba Catholic Church, Oakland (Dec 31)
- Skyline Community Church UCC, Oakland
- Twin Towers United Methodist Church, Alameda

Other faith communities that have put up other versions of a Ceasefire banner include:

- Berkeley Buddhist Temple
- Kehilla Community Synagogue, Oakland

Here is a [link](#) to an article by Pastor Allison Tanner from Lakeshore Avenue Baptist Church describing their experience with the peace banner.



The Strengthen the Church offering supports the expansion of ministry and growth of local UCC congregations. Your support of this offering will help the UCC fulfill its commitment to creating a just world for all by investing in new ministries and practices that meet the emerging needs of local communities. As God calls our congregations to be the church in new ways, your generosity will plant new churches, awaken new ideas in existing churches and develop the spiritual life in our youth and young adults. CCP will receive the STC offering on Pentecost Sunday, May 19.

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



What Can I Personally Do to Fight Climate Change?

Peninsula Temple Sholom (PTS) Multifaith Climate Action Series

Join us on May 5 in the PTS Social Hall

1655 Sebastian Drive, Burlingame CA 94010

12:30 PM - 1:30 PM

Join us for an interactive discussion around
10 Things You Can Do About Climate Change

Following the discussion, we will explore how our community is a leader in climate action and clean energy. A representative from Peninsula Clean Energy will highlight the benefits and financial incentives for using clean energy in your home and transportation.

This is the third in a series of multifaith climate action events at Peninsula Temple Sholom in partnership with Peninsula Interfaith Climate Action and The Peninsula Multifaith Coalition.

A buffet lunch will be served starting at 11:30 prior to the program .

This is a free event, but registration (lunch and program) is required.

Register at this [link](#) or contact mlfmrktng@gmail.com with any questions.

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

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

Calendar for May 2024

1 Wed	11AM - 12PM	Off-site events	Bible Study (Zoom)
2 Thu	6PM - 7PM	Off-site events	Thursday Night Prayer & Check-in
	7:30PM - 9:00PM ✉	Church Events	Choir Rehearsal
5 Sun	10:30AM - 12:00PM	Worship	Sunday worship
	11:30AM - 12:00PM	Church Events	Coffee Hour
	5PM - 6PM	Off-site events	Zoom worship with Pastor Warren
7 Tue	12:30PM - 2PM	Off-site events	Good Hope Luncheon
	1:30PM - 2:30PM	Off-site events	Online Book Group
8 Wed	11AM - 12PM	Off-site events	Bible Study (Zoom)
9 Thu	6PM - 7PM	Off-site events	Thursday Night Prayer & Check-in
	7:30PM - 9:00PM ✉	Church Events	Choir Rehearsal
12 Sun	10:30AM - 12:00PM	Worship	Sunday worship
	11:30AM - 12:00PM	Church Events	Coffee Hour
	5PM - 6PM	Off-site events	Zoom worship with Pastor Warren
14 Tue	1:30PM - 2:30PM	Off-site events	Online Book Group
15 Wed	11AM - 12PM	Off-site events	Bible Study (Zoom)
	6:30PM - 8PM	Off-site events	Trustees Meeting (Zoom)
16 Thu	6PM - 7PM	Off-site events	Thursday Night Prayer & Check-in
	7:30PM - 9:00PM ✉	Church Events	Choir Rehearsal
19 Sun	10:30AM - 12:00PM	Worship	Sunday worship
	11:30AM - 12:00PM	Church Events	Coffee Hour
	5PM - 6PM	Off-site events	Zoom worship with Pastor Warren
20 Mon	6:00PM - 7:00PM ✉	Church Events	Deacons' meeting
21 Tue	1:30PM - 2:30PM	Off-site events	Online Book Group
22 Wed	11AM - 12PM	Off-site events	Bible Study (Zoom)
	7:00PM - 9:00PM ✉	Church Events	CCB Council Meeting
23 Thu	6PM - 7PM	Off-site events	Thursday Night Prayer & Check-in
	7:30PM - 9:00PM ✉	Church Events	Choir Rehearsal
26 Sun	10:30AM - 12:00PM	Worship	Sunday worship
	11:30AM - 12:00PM	Church Events	Coffee Hour
	5PM - 6PM	Off-site events	Zoom worship with Pastor Warren
28 Tue	1:30PM - 2:30PM	Off-site events	Online Book Group
29 Wed	11AM - 12PM	Off-site events	Bible Study (Zoom)
30 Thu	6PM - 7PM	Off-site events	Thursday Night Prayer & Check-in
	7:30PM - 9:00PM ✉	Church Events	Choir Rehearsal

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



From the Northern California and Nevada Conference: Save the date, [register](#) today, and organize yourselves to participate with us in San Francisco Pride, one of the largest LGBTQ+ parades and celebrations in the world. For nearly three decades, LGBTQ-inclusive congregations and affirming clergy from Northern California have proudly marched together, UNITED IN SPIRIT, as a collective testament to God's extravagant, inclusive love. Read more [here](#).

June Messenger deadline will be May 27.



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