

## Everything Under the Sun....



Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

This month we celebrate Epiphany, the day that Jesus was revealed to the world outside of Israel when the Magi found him. While in the United States the festivity of Christmas ends on December 25, Christians have historically continued to celebrate the birth of Christ for an additional twelve days until Epiphany. This is a momentous holiday because it means that Jesus isn't just for one group of people. Jesus is for the entire world. As we have spent this Advent season focusing on the theme of Peace, it is important to remember that peace is a promise that God gives to all nations.

Over the past year, as we have watched how violence and war have affected Syria, Beirut, Paris, the Ukraine, the Middle East, and the United States, this promise becomes all the more important. The practices of sharing, forgiveness, making amends, helping, breaking bread together, and loving one's neighbor embody a new and crucial relevance.



Over the past year we have also had incredible opportunities to build relationships with new people: our neighbors at Pilgrim Park, the people who have recently started attending our church, and other churches and organizations in our community and within our denomination.

In the coming year we have more opportunities to build bridges with other organizations and within the community to build a more peaceful planet for everyone. By continuing to address issues such as poverty, hunger, homelessness, and education, we are investing in a future by building a world where everyone has enough and no one is forgotten.

Howard Thurman once said, "When the song of the angels is stilled, when the star in the sky is gone, when the kings and the princes are home, when the shepherds are back with their flock, the Work of Christmas begins: To find the lost, to heal the broken, to feed the hungry, to release the prisoner, to rebuild the nations, to bring peace among people, to make music in the heart."

I ask that you pray with me as we start the new year together. St. Francis of Assisi once prayed, "Lord, make me an instrument of thy peace." As we gather together to decide on our goals for the year on January 31, I pray for guidance on how we might be peacemakers. I pray for the vision to see how our gifts might meet the right opportunities so that we can bring Jesus' promise of hope, joy, love, and peace to the Magi of the world. Together, I pray that we might find solutions that will fulfill the promise made so long ago.

Blessings, *Pastor Tracy*



## ANNUAL MEETING SUNDAY, JANUARY 31

Sunday, January 31st, is one of the most important days of the year for the church. On this day, immediately after church, the congregation will review the accomplishments and future goals of our ministry together. The meeting will begin immediately after worship.

During the meeting, boards and committees will briefly present their goals for the coming year, the council will offer to the congregation a proposed budget to accomplish these goals, and the nominating committee will propose a slate of officers and committee members. (See page 4.) All are welcome, and members may vote.

And to make the day even better, there will be a potluck after church to celebrate the new year for our community!



### REPORTS NEEDED

Church Officers and Board/Committee Chairs need to get their reports for our Annual Report in to Eric by January 10.

### SCOTT CLARK WILL BE PREACHING JANUARY 3

Scott Clark is the Chaplain and Associate Dean for Student Life at San Francisco Theological Seminary (SFTS). Scott is a graduate of SFTS, and also has worked with the seminary's Program in Christian Spirituality. Before going to seminary, Scott practiced law for twelve years in Birmingham, Alabama, where he worked mainly on cases involving employment discrimination and constitutional law. In addition to his ministry at the seminary, Scott preaches frequently in Bay Area churches, and is an advocate for the full inclusion of LGBTQ people within the full life of the church and broader community.

### PRAYER PARTNERS

*Please remember the following members of our church family in prayer. Pray for their welfare and growth in faith and discipleship.*



**January 3 - 9**  
Mary and Oak Dowling

**January 10 - 16**  
Elaine and Andrea Farwell

**January 17 - 23**  
Louis ad Khamla Frost, Melanie Sakskul

**January 24 - 30**  
Megan Fuller, Elisabeth and Will Godby

**January 31 - February 6**  
Elizabeth Ganz



*Come and*  
**Worship**  
**w i t h u s !**



**January 3      Luke 2:16-20, 25-32 - The Heartbeat of God**

The Scripture text from which I will preach is Luke 2:16-20, 25-32, and the sermon title is “The Heartbeat of God.” The theme is listening for all the ways that the heartbeat of God shows up in humanity—in Christ, in us, in all creation, in ordinary life, in the ways we serve and help each other. Incarnation everywhere. Scott Clark will be our guest preacher (see p. 2).

**January 10      Luke 3:1-22 - The Baptism of Jesus**

The Baptism of Jesus is one of hundreds performed by John the Baptist. The emphasis is often made upon the act itself, but when we listen to what John is exhorting and how the crowds react, we learn a lot about its meaning and life-changing nature. Please join us as we wrestle with the ancient concepts of repentance and baptism in a modern world. This Sunday we will also bless all of the pledges of Time, Talent and Treasure. **Please be sure to get your completed Pledge Forms to Louis Frost by this Sunday!**

**January 17      1 Cor 12:1-31 - Paul’s Spiritual Gifts**

As we start off the New Year and approach our Annual Meeting on January 31, we have spent a lot of time taking stock of what we have to offer the church. Paul detailed many spiritual gifts that people bring to the church and to the world. Please join us as we discern the gifts that God has given us and how they might help build a more beloved community. Today we will be blessing and thanking individuals who are leaving their service and leadership positions. Please join us for a special celebration.

**January 24      Luke 4:14-30 - Jesus Preaches in Nazareth**

This story of Jesus being run out of Nazareth has vexed and perplexed Christians and scholars for centuries. But when we put the story back into its original context we see a society rich with cultural traditions and a people struggling to understand ancient scripture in their own context. Join us as we unpack this challenging but very human piece of scripture.

**January 31      Nehemiah 8:1-12 - The People Convened at the Temple after Exile**

This seldom-read passage is a momentous event in the history of the people of Israel. After many years of exile they return to rebuild Jerusalem. The ceremony they chose to celebrate the completion of the return is well-documented and a wonderful example of how people gather together to commit to each other and to their community. Please join us as we explore the history and social significance of this event as we look to our own community’s annual gathering and recommitment.

# STEWARDSHIP 2016

## ALL THE INFORMATION YOU HAVE BEEN WANTING

Your Church Council and Board of Trustees has been diligently been working on a budget that continues the good work done this year by Pastor Tracy and all the hardworking members of the church. To keep this momentum going, as we have presented at the church over the past month, we need all our wonderful members to bring their talents to bear.

You will be receiving (or have already received) a letter, along with a time and talent and pledge form, and a narrative budget to let you know our goals and plans for 2016. Please reflect on what contribution you are willing to make, and put it down on the forms to be returned to the church by January 9th. Additional forms and narratives are available in the church narthex. If you need any additional forms or information, contact Louis Frost at [cteclouis@comcast.net](mailto:cteclouis@comcast.net) or at 707 529-3343.



Below is the challenge we have set for ourselves for 2016, taken from the narrative budget you have received in the mail:

### The Challenge for 2016

As a growing and welcoming community rooted in social justice, steeped in scripture and committed to relationship with each other, we strive to live out the Gospel of Jesus Christ in all that we do with each other, in our community, and in the wider world. In 2015 we increased our worship attendance by 25% and our membership by two.

Our overall goals in 2016 are to increase worship attendance and membership, grow our current ministries in order to improve our community for the least fortunate and most vulnerable, continue to partner and collaborate with organizations to address real issues in our community and around the world, and to build our youth and adult programs by offering dynamic educational and discipleship and fellowship events for all ages.

In order to do this we are considering the following major changes:

- Increase Pastor Tracy's position from  $\frac{3}{4}$  time to full time, so that she can continue to reach out into the community, build partnerships with other organizations, bring newcomers into the church, expand the academic programs at Pilgrim Park, and host educational opportunities for adults.
- Hire an intern to administer the youth programs at FCC San Rafael and Pilgrim Park.
- Host a Field Education student from Pacific School of Religion and/or San Francisco Theological Seminary to help with preaching, leading worship, and pastoral care.

If we are to accomplish these goals, we will need a commitment of time, energy, and money from every single person in this congregation. Most importantly, it will require an openness to discerning God's will for us as individuals and as a church family as we use our gifts in faith to serve and participate.

I ask that you prayerfully consider how we can all meet this challenge together, so that we might grow and thrive, walking Jesus' path together in the year 2016 and beyond.

Many blessings, Pastor Tracy

## JANUARY 9 - TWELFTH NIGHT POTLUCK AND CRAZY GIFT-GIVING EXTRAVAGANZA



The month of January offers one of our whackiest traditions--combining a super potluck with funny gift giving. Mary and Oak Dowling will host this occasion in their home in San Rafael at 6 pm on Saturday night, January 9th . Meat and vegetarian main dishes will be provided; sign up in the Community Room for a side dish, appetizer, or dessert, and BYOB of your favorite drink.

The highlight of the evening will be our white elephant gift surprise -- your chance to exchange a WRAPPED gift (consider it a re-gifting or recycling opportunity). Bring a gift if you want to participate. We'll feast and laugh the night away.

See Mary or Oak Dowling for directions, a ride, and/or other questions. Please sign up for this event in the community room. **Have kids? See below!**

Don't stay home because you'd rather not drive—just let Oak or Mary know, and a ride will be provided for you. The Dowling's home is at 273 Mt. View Ave., San Rafael.

## Events For Kids



**SATURDAY, JANUARY 9, 6 PM**

**A SIMULTANEOUS TWELFTH NIGHT PARTY FOR KIDS ON JANUARY 9**

David and Cathi Knopf are hosting a simultaneous party at their home for kids...call them at 415- 479-4346.

**FRIDAY, JANUARY 22, 7 PM**

**MOVIE NIGHT** on January 23 features the film Inside Out, perfect for families and youth. Pizza will be served! See **page 8** for more details.

**SUNDAY, JANUARY 24, 4-6 PM**

Please join us for a fun evening as we **prepare a meal for the REST Shelter Program**. All youth are welcome. For more information, please contact David Knopf at [knopf.david@gmail.com](mailto:knopf.david@gmail.com) or Pastor Tracy at [revtracybarnowe@gmail.com](mailto:revtracybarnowe@gmail.com)



## BOARD OF MISSION MISSION MATTERS



### MISSION BUDGET INCREASED IN 2015

We finally did it. We raised our mission budget this year. We made significant increases in cash contributions to all our mission-oriented local organizations like Canal Alliance, Habitat for Humanity, Homeward Bound, Ritter Canter, and St. Vincent de Paul.

In addition, our church actually gives much more each year in non-budgeted donations, including offerings of towels, backpacks, One Great Hour of Sharing offerings, and financial support to the MARIN CROP WALK and Neighbors-in-Need (NIN), plus monthly gifts of food to our Food Bank Barrel and meals for the R.E.S.T. program. Overall, our discretionary benevolence increased from 4.4% to 6.6% of our church's pledge income. That's closer to what we've been aiming for, so we all should feel good about that.

### R.E.S.T. DINNERS CONTINUE

The First Congregational Church of San Rafael - Mission Board is happy to provide dinners for homeless women during 2015-16 Winter REST Program. We will be feeding 15-20 homeless women, at the Wellness Center in San Rafael. The Mission Board Team prepares and brings everything needed for a hot, nutritional and tasty meal for these women. We also eat and chat together with our guests before we clean up. It all begins at 5:45 PM to set up tables, chairs, and place settings. The guests arrive at the center and are ready to be served by 6:00 PM. We eat with them, and then we clean up the dishes and are usually done by 7:30 PM.

**Our REST Dinner dates - All on Monday nights**

**Jan 25 - Feb 22 - Mar 28 - April 25**

**Our January 25 dinner will be provided by our church youth.** For other dates, we need your help with table set up, food preparation (we can also pick up any dish/item you make/donate prior to 5:30, if needed), food serving, and clean up. Whatever the donation, help or time you



can offer is appreciated. See the various sign up opportunities on line at Sign-up Genius:

<http://www.signupgenius.com/go/805044bada829a20-rest>

If you have any questions, ideas to help, suggestions for dinner themes, please call Sher Ripley on her cell at 415-577-6104 or email [sher\\_ripley@comcast.net](mailto:sher_ripley@comcast.net)



### HOMWORK CLUB MEETS on WEDNESDAYS AND THURSDAYS

Sponsored by the Board of Mission, the Homework Club serves children from Pilgrim Park and provides support and tutoring as they complete their school homework assignments.

About 10-12 children attend each Wednesday and

Thursday from 4-5 PM in the Oak Room. We are definitely in need of more tutors to help staff this vital program. If you are able to volunteer as a homework helper, please contact Mission Board chair Sue Spofford or Pastor Tracy.

## PILGRIM PARK NEWS

### THE HOLIDAYS AT PILGRIM PARK

**Thanksgiving** – The Food Bank presented boxes to each of the 25 or so seniors. These boxes contained all the trimmings for a complete traditional dinner. Each box also contained a gift certificate large enough for a turkey, thanks to Capital One.

**Christmas** – Highlights included a new sleigh and reindeer atop the community building, the staff and directors catered dinner, the residents pot luck dinner, and the children's gift selection and wrap. Colleen Trudeau and her family and Jean Nadell from the church and Pilgrim Park ladies staffed this annual and very popular event.

#### PILGRIM PARK AND BOARD OF MISSION COLLABORATE ON CHRISTMAS SHOPPING PARTY

Imagine eager, happy children shopping for gifts for their parents, paying for them, wrapping them, and then celebrating with hot chocolate and treats, all surrounded by Christmas decorations and music.

This was the busy, serious and happy scene in the afternoon of December 11th in the De Haan Community Center as the Board of Mission sponsored Children's Christmas Shopping Party again took place. Colleen Trudeau from our church led a group of volunteers.

The children were given two quarters each to "purchase" donated gifts to take home for their holiday celebrations. After their choices have been made, the adult volunteers wrapped and tagged the purchased items. Thanks to all for continuing this magical and important Christmas tradition.



#### BOARD OF MINISTRY MEETING

Sunday, January 24, 11:30 AM in the Plum Room

#### CONGREGATION ANNUAL MEETING

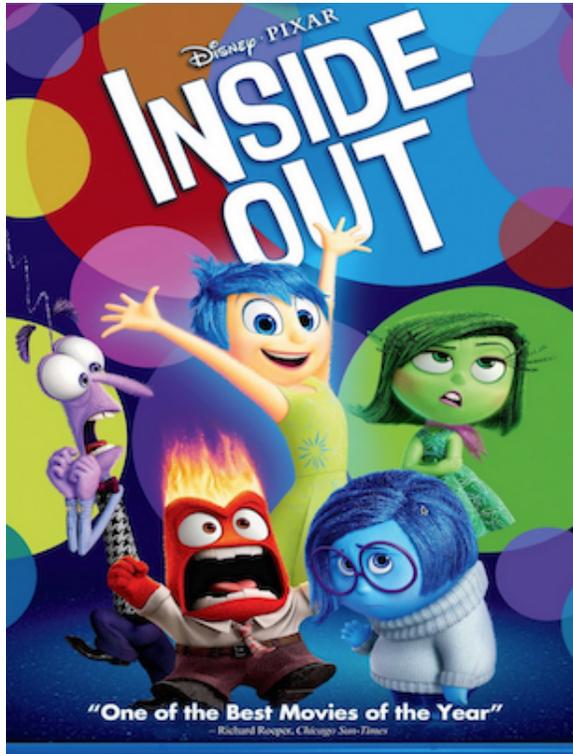
Just in case you missed it on page 2, the annual meeting of our church will be held on Sunday, January 31, immediately after worship. AND there's a yummy potluck lunch as well. We need everyone to attend and help make decisions!

## SPECIAL FAMILY MOVIE NIGHT JANUARY 22 - *INSIDE OUT*

Pixar's *Inside Out* has been hailed by critics as "A thrilling return to form for Pixar" and "a flat-out masterpiece." It's an animated adventure that deals brilliantly with how we grow up and learn resilience; It's also full of uproariously funny moments and fun cultural references.

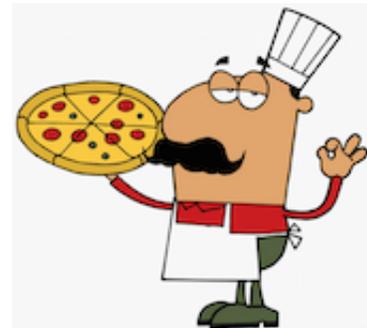
*Inside Out* takes place inside the head of an 11 year-old girl named Riley. There we meet the crew of emotions—Joy, Fear, Anger, who negotiate how she will respond to life's challenges. Their job threatens to overwhelm them when Riley's family moves from Minnesota to San Francisco, and she has a rough time adjusting.

Very young children may find *Inside Out* baffling or boring, but it is a perfect movie for pre-teen and older kids to share with parents and anyone else who's survived growing up.



**This movie night will be a joint production with the FCCSR Youth Group.**

Join us at 7 PM on Friday January 22 at the De Haan Center in Pilgrim Park. Pizza will be served!



**7 PM Friday January 23 in the De Haan Center at Pilgrim Park**

*Inside Out* is an absolute delight—funny and charming, fast-moving and full of surprises. It is also a defense of sorrow, an argument for the necessity of melancholy dressed in the bright colors of entertainment. Younger viewers will have a blast, while those older than Riley are likely to find themselves in tears. Not of grief, but of gratitude and recognition.

A.O. Scott, *New York Times*.

You can view the trailer for *Inside Out* on the FCCSR website.



## JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

- 1 — Chris Siroky
- 6 — Oak Dowling
- 10 — Lisa Roberts-Raade
- 20 — James True
- 30 — Jeffrey Russell

## GOLDEN GALS — January 12

The Golden Gals will meet on Tuesday, January 12, at 10 AM, at the home of Jean Nadell. Bring a bag lunch.



## MEN'S GROUP — January 9

In lieu of a men's group meeting, on January 9 in the morning, Bob De Haan will lead a tour for anyone of the Matthew Turner, a 100' brigantine schooner being built in Sausalito. See the church bulletin and "What's Happening" for the time to assemble at the church.

The ship follows the lines of one of Matthew Turner's 150 major ships, which he built in San Francisco in the mid 1800's. The ship will be used for training teenagers and others in ocean sailing aboard a tall ship, navigation, living aboard and the ecology of the sea. Voyages to Mexico and the Pacific are expected. This is a unique opportunity to view and go on the deck of an 1850's ship under construction. The original design and California Douglas Fir are being constructed to Coast Guard standards using modern machines, fasteners and adhesives.

## TIE DEADLINE for the February Issue - Mon., JAN. 25

The deadline for articles and news for the February 2016 issue of The TIE is Monday, January 25. Please have all articles for the February issue at the church office by Sunday, January 24th. Or, email your articles to [lucindaray@aol.com](mailto:lucindaray@aol.com).



## CHURCH OFFICE HOURS

**Rev. Tracy Barnowe** – *Pastor*

Monday 9 AM - 1 PM

Wednesday 9 AM - 1 PM

Cell Phone (510) 703-0108

[revtracybarnowe@gmail.com](mailto:revtracybarnowe@gmail.com)

**Eric Rowe** – *Office Manager*

Tuesday 12:00 – 4:00 PM

Friday 2:00 PM – 6:00 PM

Office Phone: 415-479-2747

# FCC Calendar January 2016

| Sun   | Mon   | Tue   | Wed  | Thu  | Fri  | Sat  |
|---|---|---|--|--|--|--|
| <b>3</b><br>10 am<br><br>Worship, Church School & Child Care   | <b>4</b>  | <b>5</b>  | <b>6</b><br>4 pm - 5 pm<br>Homework Club - Oak Room  | <b>7</b><br>4 pm - 5 pm<br>Homework Club - Oak Room<br>7:40 pm<br><br>Choir Rehearsal   | <b>8</b>   | <b>9</b><br>9 am<br>Men's Group Beat Tour<br>6 pm<br><br>12th Night Party for Adults - Dowling Home<br>6 pm<br>12th Night Party for Kids - Knopf Home |
| <b>10</b><br>10 am<br><br>Worship, Church School & Child Care  | <b>11</b>   | <b>12</b><br>10 am<br><br>Golden Gals' monthly meeting | <b>13</b><br>4 pm - 5 pm<br>Homework Club - Oak Room | <b>14</b><br>4 pm - 5 pm<br>Homework Club - Oak Room<br>7:40 pm<br><br>Choir Rehearsal  | <b>15</b>  | <b>16</b>  |
| <b>17</b><br>10 am<br><br>Worship, Church School & Child Care  | <b>18</b><br>Martin Luther King, Jr. Day  | <b>19</b>   | <b>20</b><br>4 pm - 5 pm<br>Homework Club - Oak Room | <b>21</b><br>4 pm - 5 pm<br>Homework Club - Oak Room<br>7:40 pm<br><br>Choir Rehearsal  | <b>22</b><br>7 pm<br><br>Kids and Family Movie Night 'Inside Out' DeHaven Center Pilgrim Park | <b>23</b>  |
| <b>24</b><br>10 am<br><br>Worship, Church School & Child Care<br>4 pm - 6 pm<br><br>Youth Event Prepare R.E.S.T. Meal at Church | <b>25</b><br>5 pm<br><br>TIE Deadline for February Issue<br>5:30 pm - 6:30 pm<br><br>BEST dinner for Homeless Shelter | <b>26</b>   | <b>27</b><br>4 pm - 5 pm<br>Homework Club - Oak Room | <b>28</b><br>4 pm - 5 pm<br>Homework Club - Oak Room<br>7:40 pm<br><br>Choir Rehearsal  | <b>29</b>  | <b>30</b>  |
| <b>31</b><br>10 am<br>Worship, Church School & Child Care<br>11:30 am - 1 pm<br><br>ANNUAL MEETING and POTLUCK   | <b>1</b>  | <b>2</b><br>Groundhog Day   | <b>3</b><br>4 pm - 5 pm<br>Homework Club - Oak Room  | <b>4</b><br>4 pm - 5 pm<br>Homework Club - Oak Room<br>7:40 pm<br><br>Choir Rehearsal | <b>5</b>   | <b>6</b>   |

This calendar is also available on the church's website in interactive form. There you can click on any event to see more details. Check it out at [www.FccSanRafael.org](http://www.FccSanRafael.org).