

Everything Under the Sun....



Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

Don't read this letter right now. No seriously, don't. Just set it aside and come back to it at the end of the month.

Are you back? Great. When I was in the store on the afternoon of February 14th, I saw new displays of plastic Easter eggs and peeps in every color of the rainbow edging out the picked-over chocolate hearts wrapped in bright red foil. I saw Cadbury cream eggs and chocolate bunnies even though it was still 36 days until Easter. It is so easy to skip to Easter. It is so easy to look ahead past Lent, past all the focus on fasting and suffering, wandering and wilderness, and jump right to the part about the resurrection amidst the new life of chicks and bunnies, first out-of-the earth daffodils and sweet jelly beans. And that would be unfortunate.

Because it is only when we take the time to acknowledge all of the sin and suffering in this world that we understand the importance and the true significance of the resurrection.

As I have been watching the election coverage on

the television, I see candidates arguing for the expulsion of Muslims and immigrants, American citizens cheering racist remarks, vigilantes taking up arms to eradicate those they perceive as a threat at best and evil at worst. I see people comparing this rhetoric to Hitler's, and they're not wrong, but they're not helpful. As a nation, this is not the first time we have seen rhetoric like this in our own country. The hard part is finding a way out, a way forward. I see people reacting to this with equally poisonous vitriol, prayer with no intention of action, or with denial. I see a nation polarized and paralyzed, though their fear may stem from different impetuses. It is hard for me to find hope in all of this, especially since it is all so familiar.



We have seen rhetoric and legal maneuverings like this in the book of Exodus, when Pharaoh deliberately enslaved and oppressed and then tried to eradicate the Israelite people who had done nothing, but by whom he felt threatened nonetheless.

We have seen false promises and politicians with ulterior motives in the book of 2 Kings when the Babylonians besieged the City of Jerusalem with promises of a better life if they surrendered, but then deported them from their own country and took their lands and businesses. The Jews weren't the first people they had done this to, and they weren't the last.

We have seen closed-minded laws from powerful lobbies passed to encourage a nation-wide eradication of a religious and ethnic minority in the book of Esther when a pampered and isolated King of Babylon passes an edict based on the self-serving, prejudiced, and revenge-seeking advice of Haman.



We have seen temptation like this when the devil tried to convince a depleted and isolated Jesus to serve only himself, to grab national power as quickly as possible and to garner as much attention as possible by leaping off the Temple in a dramatic but false self-serving act of piety.

We have seen this quashing of truth-tellers in the Books of Acts where apostles preaching the Good News and calling on leaders to change their corrupt and wicked ways were repeatedly arrested, beaten, and jailed with admonitions not to stop breaking the law, but to stop preaching for fear they would stir the people to action.

It is in times like this – in a world plagued by sin – that the resurrection of Christ is truly a message of hope. It is only by understanding the long-standing brokenness that we can embrace this season of healing. It is only when we see how much damage temptation and corruption does that the importance of humility and self-denial are clear. It is only by seeing the destructive effects of fear embraced by empires that we can truly seek love of God and neighbor. It is only when we open our eyes to the brokenness that has plagued our world since time immemorial that we can answer the call to live into Christ’s resurrection.

I invite you to pray with me that we use the season of Lenten reflection and self-denial so that we might truly embrace the triumph of Easter, which is exactly what we need at times like this: God restoring hope and peace to humanity, love conquering sin and death, and re-embracing our own call to follow a path that actively builds beloved community in a world that desperately needs it.

Blessings, *Pastor Tracy*

ORDER A LILY FOR EASTER

You are invited to order an Easter lily in honor or in memory of a loved one. The lilies will be placed in the altar area of the Sanctuary on Easter Sunday, April 5th, 2015. The lilies are \$10.00 each and order forms are in the church office.



PRAYER PARTNERS

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



February 28 - March 5

Caryl Hodges, Sean and Allison Kaufman

March 6 - 12

Alana and Brandon Intrader, Emma and Jack

March 13 - 19

Lorene Jackson, Aaron, Alex, and Jeffrey

March 20 - 26

David Knopf and Cathi Fuller, Rachael and Rebecca

March 27 - April 2

Jill Krippendorf



Come and
Worship
w i t h u s !



February 28 **Luke 2:15**

In honor of Black History Month

March 6 **Luke 17:11-19**

Jesus Heals the Lepers

March 13 **Luke 17:20-21**

The Face of God

Palm Sunday

March 20 **Matthew 21:1-13**

Jesus enters Jerusalem amidst palms and overturns the moneychangers in the Temple

Maundy Thursday

March 24 **6:30 PM Service**

Good Friday

March 24 **1 - 3 PM Meditation**

6:30 PM Service

Easter Sunday

March 27 **Luke 24:1-12**

The Resurrection of Jesus



Sunday, March 20 Palm Sunday

All are invited to come early to the worship service so that they can participate in the Procession of Palms.

Thursday, March 24 Maundy Thursday

6:30 PM Please join us for a multi-sensory Communion service with Hand Washing as you arrive in the Narthex.

7:30 PM A Soup Supper will follow the service in the Community Room



Friday, March 25 Good Friday

1 PM - 3 PM: A labyrinth will be set up in the courtyard to allow for a walking meditation that follows the Passion of Jesus.

6:30 - 7:30 PM: Please join us for a service in the sanctuary, followed by a moonlit walking meditation of the passion in the courtyard labyrinth.

Sunday, March 27 Easter Sunday

Easter Lilies will be used to decorate the altar on Easter Sunday. You may order your own Easter lily for \$10.00 and then take it home with you after the service. Please see your bulletin for an order form or contact Patty Trosclair for more information.

9:30 AM Flowering of the Cross: All are invited to bring flowers from their garden to decorate the cross. Please come half an hour early if possible to allow time for the decorating before worship begins at 10 AM.

10 AM Easter Processional: Children and adults are invited to come early and participate in this festive processional.

10 AM Easter Worship

Easter Egg Hunt: Children of all ages are encouraged to join in the Easter Egg Hunt





LENTEN STUDY SERIES CONTINUES WEDNESDAYS, MARCH 7, 9, 16 6:00 - 7:30 PM IN THE COMMUNITY ROOM

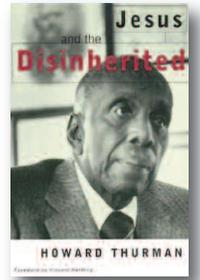
Please join us for this special series during Lent in which we are reading and reflecting on Howard Thurman's seminal work *Jesus and the Disinherited*. Each week we reflect on a different chapter of Thurman's work. We discuss the different theological understandings of God that are present and that continue in today's society. We end each session with a guided meditation. If you would like to participate, please let Pastor Tracy know there will be enough books for everyone. A \$15 donation per book is requested. No one will be turned away due to lack of funds. For more information, please contact Pastor Tracy at revtracybarnowe@gmail.com

We will look forward to seeing you there!

March 2: Chapter 3: Deception

March 9: Chapter 4: Hate

March 16: Chapter 5: Love and Epilogue



WHAT IS ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING AND WHY SHOULD I CARE?

One Great Hour of Sharing is the Lenten Offering of the United Church of Christ that supports disaster, refugee, and development actions.

We live in the midst of the largest refugee crisis since World War II. One in every 122 people in the world today is forcibly displaced from their home, seeking refuge either within their national borders or beyond (according to the UNHCR).

Violent political actions all over the world—Syria, Iraq, Burundi, and Guatemala—have created waves of refugees and displaced people, unable to return home, fearing for their lives. Natural disasters, like Typhoon Haiyan, have also disrupted communities, displacing people from their homes and livelihoods. In addition, chronic hunger, exaggerated by climate change, forces the migration of families for the sake of survival. Life in a refugee camp, without access to health care, defies the wholeness of individuals and communities. These realities may lie beyond our comprehension, but the people who live them are not beyond our collective hearts. Without OGHS donations this work would be impossible.

This year the ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING offering highlights the plight of refugees, but only about 14% of the offering is dedicated to refugee problems. If you want to designate an additional contribution to the Syrian Humanitarian Crisis, your special gifts will be used to support the immediate and ongoing needs of Syrian Refugees even before they arrive in the U.S.

Yes, you can help! It all starts with your decision to give. Our One Great Hour of Sharing Offering (OGHS) will be on March 6. Thank you for your support.



YOUTH LENTEN AND SPRING PROJECT FOR ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING

For many months the youth at First Congregational Church and at Pilgrim Park have been discussing the refugee crisis in Syria. We have set a goal for making 250 hygiene kits, which will be sent to the displaced people through One Great Hour of Sharing.

Each kit will need:

- One hand towel measuring approximately 16" x 28" (no fingertip or bath towels)
- One washcloth
- One wide-tooth comb
- One nail clipper
- One bar of soap (bath size in wrapper)
- One toothbrush (in original packaging)
- Six standard size Band-Aids®
- One-gallon plastic bag with zipper closure
- \$2 for shipping to get the kit to its destination

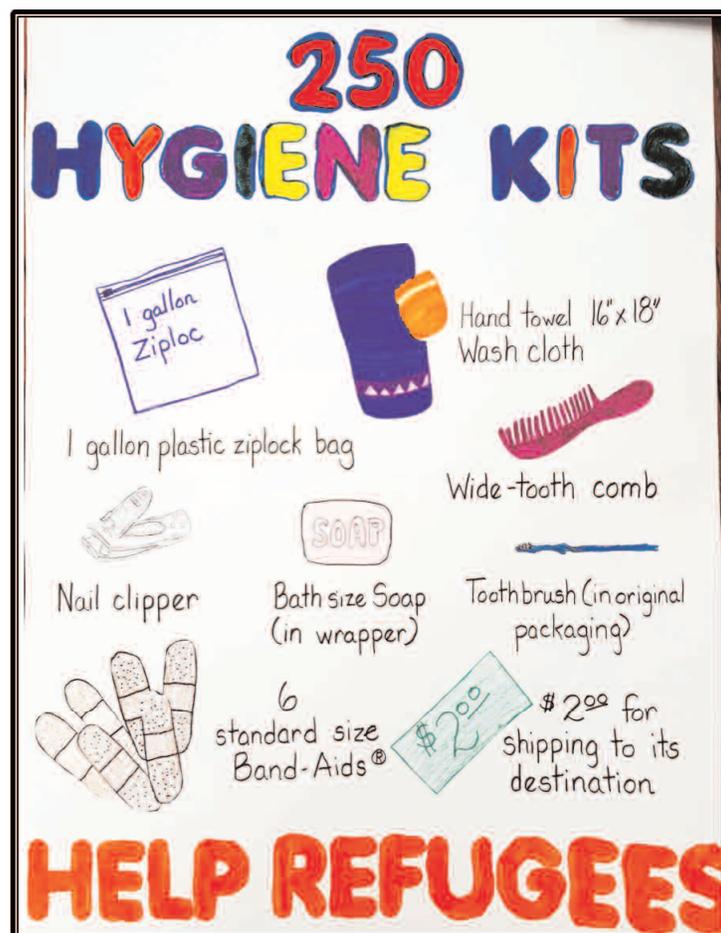


We will be collecting the items during March and April at church.

If you cannot donate an item, you can:

- make a check out to FCC San Rafael with "Hygiene kits" in the memo line
- Or go to <http://fccsanrafael.org/online-giving/> and click "GIVE NOW"

Questions? email Pastor Tracy at revtracybarnowe@gmail.com



MOVIE NIGHT MARCH 18 - CHINATOWN

“Forget it Jake. It’s Chinatown.”

A private detective in Los Angeles, deeply cynical about life and the people who seek his services. A beautiful woman, with complicated motives and an even more complicated past. Corrupt politicians, developers and cops. All the elements of classic 1940s film noir, set amid southern California’s legendary water wars.

Chinatown, written by Robert Towne, directed by Roman Polanski, and starring Jack Nicholson, Faye Dunaway and John Huston, is on every list of the greatest movies ever made. However, for almost 40 years after its 1974 debut, the only home version available was a dark, muddy recording. Finally, in 2013 a superb high-definition BluRay disc was released, and we’ll watch this on March 27.



Join us to re-discover this classic film. And, perhaps we can discuss why we are so attracted by a film that seems to justify our most cynical expectations.

7 PM Friday March 18 in the De Haan Center at Pilgrim Park

Links to video and critical commentary on *Chinatown* are on the FCCSR website:
<http://fccsanrafael.org/event/movie-night-march-25-chinatown/>

OWL PROGRAM OVERNIGHT MARCH 4-5

The Our Whole Lives program is having an overnight at FCC San Rafael on Friday, March 4 overnight until the morning of March 5, 2016. Do you have an air mattress, sleeping mat, or cot you can spare for the evening? We are also serving dinner and breakfast. If you are interested in helping or contributing, please contact revtracy-barnowe@gmail.com



BOARD OF MINISTRY MEETING

Sunday, March 13, immediately after worship, in the Plum Room.

BOARD OF MISSION MEETING

Sunday, March 20, immediately after worship, in the Oak Room.





MARCH BIRTHDAYS

- 4 — Patty Trosclair
- 8 — Sue Spofford
- 10 — Colleen Trudeau
- 11 — Jackie Dema
- 19 — Jim Girard
- 19 — Charles Little
- 24 — Blair Ripley
- 25 — Milagro Ramirez
- 26 — Sue MacKenzie

GOLDEN GALS — March 8

The Golden Gals will meet on Tuesday, March 8, at 10 AM, at the home of Jean Nadell. Bring a bag lunch.



MEN'S GROUP — March date to be announced



Do you want to discuss a wide range of important topics, including current events? Plan to attend the next men's group meeting on a Saturday in March to be announced. We will meet at 8:30 a.m. in the community room at Pilgrim Park. Bring your favorite sweet roll. Coffee is provided. We normally meet for about two hours.

TIE DEADLINE for the April Issue - Mon., March 28

The deadline for articles and news for the April 2016 issue of The TIE is Monday, March 28. Please have all articles for the April issue at the church office by Sunday, March 27th. Or, email your articles to 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

Office Manager

Tuesday 12:00 – 4:00 PM
 Friday 2:00 PM – 6:00 PM
 Office Phone: 415-479-2747

FCC Calendar March 2016

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
28  10 am Worship, Church School & Child Care	29	March 1	2 4 pm - 5 pm Homework Club - Oak Room 6 pm - 7:30 pm Lenten Study Group	3 4 pm - 5 pm Homework Club - Oak Room 7:40 pm Choir Rehearsal	4  OWL Overnight at church	5
6 10 am  Worship, Church School & Child Care 10 am Our Great Hour of Sharing Offering	7	8 10 am  Golden Gals' monthly meeting	9 4 pm - 5 pm Homework Club - Oak Room 6 pm - 7:30 pm Lenten Study Group	10 11 am - 12:30 pm Pastor Parish Relations 4 pm - 5 pm Homework Club - Oak Room 7:40 pm  Choir Rehearsal	11	12
13 Jayright Savings (Bart) 10 am  Worship, Church School & Child Care 11:30 pm - 12:30 am Board of Ministry	14	15	16 4 pm - 5 pm Homework Club - Oak Room 6 pm - 7:30 pm Lenten Study Group	17  St. Patrick's Day 4 pm - 5 pm Homework Club - Oak Room 7:40 pm Choir Rehearsal	18 7 am  Movie Night 'Chinatown' DeHaan Center Pilgrim Park	19
20 10 am  PALM SUNDAY, Church School & Child Care 11:30 pm - 12:30 am Board of Mission	21	22	23 4 pm - 5 pm Homework Club - Oak Room	24 4 pm - 5 pm Homework Club - Oak Room 6:30 pm - 7:30 pm Maundy Thursday Service 7:40 pm Choir Rehearsal	25 1 pm - 3 pm Good Friday meditation 6:30 pm - 7:30 pm Good Friday Service	26
27 Pastor 10 am  EASTER SUNDAY, Church School & Child Care	28 5 pm WTE Deadline for April issue 5:30 pm - 6:30 pm  REST dinner for Homeless Shelter	29	30 4 pm - 5 pm Homework Club - Oak Room 7 pm Church Council Meeting - Plum Room	31 4 pm - 5 pm Homework Club - Oak Room 7:40 pm  Choir Rehearsal	1 April Fool's Day	2

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.