



Everything Under the Sun....



Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

I remember when I was pregnant with my first child. Pregnancy changes things. All of a sudden every little change in your body is noteworthy, exciting. Preparations are celebrated – the receipt of a tiny pair of booties can make an entire room of friends and family ooh and aah. Dreams became more significant, as do names. With pregnancy, priorities change in ways we could not imagine. We tend to avoid the negative and seek out the positive.

And we anticipate. We seek out moments of quiet just to wonder, just to feel, just to experience the growing life that is about to burst forth. Every day there is something new to report – a movement, a heartbeat, a craving, a dream. We as much need time to adjust to the change as we need time to enjoy it.

As we move through Advent, we anticipate in the same way. We await the birth of a very

special child. We move with Mary and Joseph through the season of their pregnancy and notice every detail. Notice how Mary and Joseph's priorities change, and then change again. Notice the dreams, the exclamations over movement, the reflections on names, Mary singing to her child in the womb.

Every year ministers do their best to remind their congregations the real reason for the season, and every year we feel drowned out the holiday advertising that is louder and flashier. This year, our theme for Advent is **Good News**. Years ago people lived in small villages isolated from one another and the only news people got was either from within their village or from rare, occasional travelers wandering through.

Nowadays we are bombarded by news constantly. All of the worst news from around the world is filtered and concentrated into thirty-minute news segments with accompanying footage. Dr. Christian Northrup said years ago that our brains are not wired to absorb news this way. We are designed to hear the news of our village and occasional updates from neighboring villages.

Otherwise we can become overwhelmed, anxious, depressed. I wonder what it must have been like to wait, to anticipate, to see a traveler approaching but still hours or even days away and hope for good news.

When we find Christ, our priorities change. This Advent season, I am making a point of seeking out Good News, of taking the time to notice the small details that are usually drowned out by the unending torrent of bad news, fake news, false



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advertising. I invite you to join me in waiting with great anticipation of the birth of Jesus. I invite you to pray with me to open our eyes to see the Good News all around us in both the tiniest of details and the biggest stories that may get missed. I invite you to reflect and share with each other every day where you notice Jesus, where you see God at work. And please share it with me. I wait in rapt anticipation of some Good News.

Blessings, *Pastor Tracy*

SAVE THE DATE: JANUARY 29

Our congregation's annual meeting will be the last Sunday of next month, January 29. The meeting will be immediately after church and be followed by our classic potluck.



POINSETTIAS

Fill the sanctuary during Christmas with brilliant color in honor or memory of a loved one. You may purchase a poinsettia by filling out the order form and a check for \$10.00 (made out to FCCSR). Order forms will be available in the December Sunday bulletins or 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.



November 27 - December 3

Paul and Marcy Burks

December 4 - 10

Cara and Eric Caindec, Conrad and Kai

December 11 - 17

Jamie Cline and Michael Meehan,
Taylor, Jacob, Michael, and Tristan

December 18 - 24

Anne Dannecker

December 24 - 31

Bob De Haan and Nancy
Sangster-De Haan

A Season of Good News



Worship

with us!

November 27 Isaiah 52:7-10, 61:1-4 Advent Begins

Isaiah lived in difficult times, and in his prophesying he saw the only solution to the troubles in society as a messiah – an anointed one. This individual would change people's hearts, lift up the most vulnerable, and would be the Good News people needed to hear. Join us as we explore Isaiah's hopeful prophecy, how later Gospel writers interpreted it, and how it still impacts our lives today.

December 4 Luke 1:5-20 Angel Gabriel and Zechariah

Hundreds of years after Isaiah's prophecy, Zechariah experienced an unexpected phenomenon. His elderly wife and he are suddenly expecting a child. He is so overwhelmed he doesn't believe it. The Angel that tells him about his future son, John the Baptist, and promises him that this is Good News. We invite you to join us as we examine Zechariah's unexpected reaction and unexpected joy and Good News and what we might learn from it in our own time.

December 11 Children's Christmas Pageant

Please join us for our annual Pageant starring all of the children of the church. You won't want to miss this fun and festive jaunt through the story of Christmas. The mostly original production will be presented by the young people of our church (with a little help from the congregation) complete with favorite carols. See [page 9](#) of this issue of The TIE.

December 18 Luke 2:8-20 The Angels and Shepherds

The story of the birth of Jesus is a ancient and familiar one, but the promise of peace on earth and goodwill toward all people is still relevant today. Join us as we explore this passage during a time when the world needs to hear glad tidings.



December 24 Christmas Eve Services

7 PM — A family service of the Christmas story through scripture readings and carols.

11 PM — A contemplative service of anticipation with candle lighting, Communion and music.

December 25 Christmas Day Service at 10 AM

This year Christmas lands on a Sunday, and we will be worshipping at our regular time. Please join us for a joyful celebration of our favorite Christmas carols, Communion, and singing of the Good News. Come dressed in your Sunday best or your bedroom slippers to celebrate with us on this most holy of days.

HOLIDAY SEASON FUN

La Posada: December 11 - 25

You have the opportunity to participate in our annual tradition of inviting Mary, Joseph and Joshua (the donkey) to share your home, “to welcome them into the “inn”. The beautiful paper mache family were made by our beloved previous members, Millie and Julianne.



They will start their journey from church on the third Sunday of Advent, following the pageant and then whoever has the family will arrange the transfer and delivery to their next home. This gives us an extra opportunity to say hello to one another during the holiday season. There is a journal to share pictures or thoughts about your time with the trio that you would like to share. To schedule your visit, there will be a sign-up sheet during community time. See Judy Girard.

NEWS RELEASE FROM THE YEAR 33 A.D.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



The Jerusalem Evening News will explore the surprising beginning of Jesus of Nazareth on December 11 at 10 AM.

Many witnesses have reported seeing this dead man walking after his Roman execution, but until now little has been understood about his origin.

With prizing winning reporters, the Evening News will explore the most unusu-

al background of this man’s earliest days.

The analysis uses live interviews, archival surveillance camera footage, on-the-scene action reporting, and distinguished commentary to bring to life the amazing events at the start of the life of Jesus.

Critics have called this “the greatest story ever told” and an “antidote to dark times.”

Official sources have tried to suppress this as a challenge to Roman dominance and exclusivity in piety.

News For and About Kids



DECEMBER 4: At the church immediately after worship for kids of all ages

Please join us as we decorate the church for Christmas! We will gather on Sunday right after worship to set up lights, the Christmas tree, put out garlands, and so on. Revelers of all ages are warmly invited to join us. Hot chocolate and Christmas cookies will be served. Please feel free to bring finger foods of your choice to share it if you feel so moved. We will look forward to seeing you there!

DECEMBER 11: Christmas Pageant - 10 AM for kids of all ages

On Sunday, December 13, kids of all ages are invited to participate in the annual Christmas pageant. See [page 4](#) for more information about this fun event.



YOUTH SERVED AT FOOD PANTRY NOVEMBER 12

On Saturday, November 12 four of our youth came to the church in the wee hours to help with the Food Pantry up the hill at Anthem church at 7 AM. They spent two hours unloading and then distributing food to around two hundred people. They lifted 50 pound sacks of potatoes, boxes of yams, apples, and carrots, emptied boxes, and even stomped down empty cardboard boxes in the recycling bin!



They worked hard and had fun and did a lot of good work very early on a Saturday morning. Special thanks to David Knopf and Pastor Tracy for getting up to go with them, and to David Knopf who almost single-handedly unloaded the palette of watermelons.

CREATIVE WRITING LAB PUBLISHES FIRST STORIES

Since October, several of the youth attending our Homework Club have been hard at work in a Creative Writing Lab led by published author Connie Kronlokken, whom many of you may remember when she attended worship last year.



The stories and poems from the first class have been published and are up on our website. We encourage you to read them and support our young writers.

<http://fccsanrafael.org/category/students-blog/>



BOARD OF MISSION MISSION MATTERS



DINNERS FOR HOMELESS WOMEN (THE R.E.S.T. PROGRAM)

The First Congregational Church of San Rafael - Mission Board is happy to provide dinners for homeless women during 2016-17 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 5:30 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

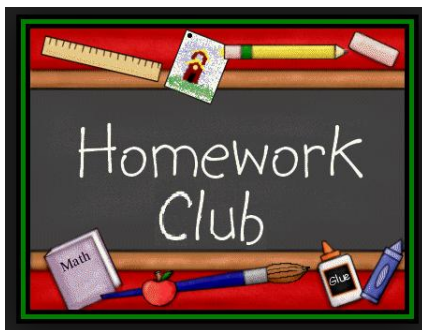
Dec 19 - Jan 9 - Feb 13 - Mar 6 - April 3

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 online 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



HOMEWORK 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.

DON'T FORGET THE FOOD BANK DURING THE HOLIDAY SEASON

You can leave your contributions for the Food Bank in the narthex. Peanut butter, tuna, canned soup, pasta, rice, and other staples are always needed.





STEWARDSHIP MATTERS

Before the Christmas Rush...

As you begin the holiday season, first remember what it is all about and turn in or mail in your pledge of time, talent and treasure so you can join in the church's effort to make a difference in this world.

Extra green forms are in the church office and are available in the narthex.

PRAYER CHAIN RETREAT DECEMBER 3

All members of the prayer chain, and all interested in the prayer chain are cordially invited to join us for a meditative and restorative morning of prayer and fellowship.

The retreat will be held at the home of Hilary Spaulding, 168 Esmeyer Drive, San Rafael.

Light refreshments will be provided. Please bring finger food to share.



MEETINGS, MEETINGS, MEETINGS

NOVEMBER 29 The **Pastor Parish Relations** meeting will be at 9:30 AM in the pastor's office.

NOVEMBER 29 The **Board of Trustees** meeting will be at 7 PM, Plum Room

DECEMBER 14 The **Church Council** meeting will be at 7 PM, Plum Room.

HOLIDAY CONCERTS CONCERTS CONCERTS

This advent season is filled with musical opportunities that include several of our church family as performers. And in addition, the music itself is excellent! See those involved in the concerts (below) for more information.



Candlelight Choral Concert

Marin Symphony Chamber Chorus

Saturday Dec. 5 at 7:30 PM

Sunday Dec. 4 at 4 PM

Mission San Rafael

\$30

Concert includes:

Lucinda Ray, Charles Little, and Jim Turner

College of Marin College Chorus and Chamber Singers

Tuesday, December 13 at 7:30 PM

James Dunn Theatre: College of Marin
Kentfield Campus

Donation

concert includes:

Jeff Paul and Charles Little



Felix Mendelssohn's *Elijah* - Marin Oratorio

Sat. Dec. 17 at 8 PM

Sun. Dec. 18 at 3 PM

James Dunn Theatre

College of Marin

Kentfield Campus

\$20

concert includes:

Jeff Paul, Charles Little, and Tom Truchan

Holiday Pops Concert Marin Symphony and Marin Symphony Chorus

Tuesday Dec. 13 at 7:30 PM

Marin Civic Center

\$20 - \$70

concert includes:

Bob De Haan and Lucinda Ray



CHRISTMAS AT PILGRIM PARK

Extra food deliveries – The Food Bank usually adds some seasonal specialties in the weekly delivery of food.

Christmas Dinner – On December 17 the residents will sit down to a catered dinner in the Community Center. This happens every other year.



Directors Dinner – On December 15, the Pilgrim Park directors combine a shared dinner with the staff and a little business. This year's dinner will include spouses.

Community Center decorations – Right after Thanksgiving, the staff will adorn the center with lights, Poinsettias, a Christmas tree, etc. We welcome church members to visit, share a cup of coffee and see the Community Center all dolled up.

SECTION 8 – In the military, a Section 8 discharge was a bad thing. In affordable housing, Section 8 is a good thing. At Pilgrim Park, 36 of the apartments are eligible for Section 8, in which the resident pays about a third of their reportable income as rent. The Federal government pays the difference between the resident payment and the market value to Pilgrim Park. About four other residents have Section 8 vouchers from the county.

Bob De Haan

YOUR HELP NEEDED YOUTH PRAYER PROJECT

During December, the youth will be studying prayer. As part of their project, we invite you to answer the following questions and give the answers to one of the youth at church to study during Sunday School. You can also email them to knopf.david@gmail.com

1. What prayers do you remember learning as a child? When did you say them?
2. What prayer was said before meals? Who said the prayer?
3. Was there a prayer that you said every day, or every Sunday at church?
4. What prayer did you use when you were feeling troubled? Who taught it to you? What were the results?
5. Tell us about a time when you had a prayer answered.
6. What is your favorite prayer? Why?

Thank you, we will look forward to hearing from you!



DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

3 — Denise Walker
 3 — Jon Girard
 13 — Nancy Mahl
 22 — Andrea Farwell
 24 — Ann Spatola
 24 — Tracy Barnowe
 28 — Faune Towrey
 30 — Elizabeth Godbey
 30 — Gloria Wilcox

GOLDEN GALS — December 13

The Golden Gals will meet on Tuesday, December 13, at 10 AM, at the home of Jean Nadell. Bring a bag lunch.



MEN'S GROUP — December meeting TBA

The Men's Group Meeting date for December is still to be decided. Check with Bob De Haan for details

TIE DEADLINE for the January Issue - Mon., Dec. 26

The deadline for articles and news for the January 2017 issue of The TIE is Monday, December 26. Please have all articles for the December issue at the church office by Sunday, December 25th. Or, email your articles to lucindaray@aol.com by Monday, the 26th.



CHURCH OFFICE HOURS

Rev. Tracy Barnowe – Pastor

Tuesday 9:00 AM - 1:00 PM

Available by appointment on other days

Cell Phone (510) 703-0108

revtracybarnowe@gmail.com

Gwendolyn Morgan – Office Manager

Tuesday 9:00 AM – 1:00 PM


















Wednesday 9:00 PM – 1:00 PM

Thursday 9:00 AM – 1:00 PM

Office Phone: 415-479-2747

office@fccsanrafael.org

FCC Calendar DECEMBER 2016

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
27 10 am  Worship, Church School & Child Care 10 am First Sunday in Advent	28	29 9:30 am Parish Parish Relations Committee Meeting 7 pm Board of Trustees Meeting	30 4 pm - 5 pm  Homework Club	December 1 4 pm - 5 pm Homework Club 7:40 pm  Choir Rehearsal	2	3 10 am - 12 pm  Prayer Chain Retreat at home of Hilary Spaulding
4 10 am  Worship, Church School & Child Care 11:30 am Decorate the Church for the Holiday	5	6	7 Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day 4 pm - 5 pm  Homework Club	8 4 pm - 5 pm  Homework Club 7:40 pm  Choir Rehearsal	9	10
11 10 am  Worship, Church School & Child Care 10 am Children's Christmas Pageant	12	13	14 4 pm - 5 pm  Homework Club 7 pm Church Council Meeting	15 4 pm - 5 pm Homework Club 7:40 pm  Choir Rehearsal	16	17
18 10 am  Worship, Church School & Child Care	19 5:45 pm  A & S.T. Dinner	20	21	22 7:40 pm  Choir Rehearsal	23	24 7 pm Christmas Eve Service 11 pm Christmas Eve Service
25 Christmas 10 am  Worship, Church School & Child Care	26 5 pm  TIE Deadline for DECEMBER issue	27	28	29 7:40 pm  Choir Rehearsal	30	31

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.