

July August 2018

First Congregational Church of
San Rafael

The TIE

TRAINS OF THOUGHT by REV. SALLY TRAIN



I was privileged to attend the Annual Gathering of the Northern California Nevada Conference of the United Church of Christ, held at Sonoma State University June 14 – 17. I was thrilled that David Knopf was able to join me there on Friday and Louis Frost on Saturday. (The only thing that happens on Sunday morning is Worship. I decided I would rather worship with you, so I came to the Pride Service. I know some of you were surprised to see me there. I was so glad I came. It was wonderful!)

The purpose of the Annual Gathering is to meet, greet, make new friends, renew old friendships, nurture our souls through worship and workshops, learn new things, and conduct the business of the wider church through the democratic process of discussing and voting on resolutions. I am delighted to say that I did all of those things and thoroughly enjoyed every minute of it

The theme was Three Great Loves: Love of Neighbor, Love of Creation, Love of Children. There were three keynote speakers all of whom were passionate, inspiring, and challenging as they encouraged us to live into those three great loves.

I took two workshops:

A Deeper Path: The Call of Aging led by Rev. Lois Mueller, whom I met years ago when we were both in seminary. Aging has been a specialty and emphasis threading through her entire career. She is now a retired pastor who leads workshops and retreats with the goal of advancing the view of aging as a spiritual journey and encouraging mid-life seekers to begin preparing for a deeply vibrant elderhood. It occurred to me

that we may wish to invite her to lead a workshop or retreat for us.

Guided Meditation: Accessing Inner Wisdom led by Rev. Kathryn Schreiber. After a short introduction, she led us on a guided meditation filled with sacred symbols that was, for me, very powerful and transformative. I have always believed that our greatest

learning comes from the truths that arise from our own inner world. When we take the time to journey within, we find wisdom, guidance, and healing. The Divine speaks to us through our own souls using the images and symbols that will communicate most profoundly to us. It occurred to me that we might also wish to invite Rev. Schreiber to lead a workshop or retreat for us.

(continued on page 2)



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David Knopf, Chair of Trustees, dutifully took a workshop on Stewardship and said he learned a few things.

Louis and I attended the Golden Gate Association Gathering

Mark your calendars: there will be an Association Gathering November 17 in San Carlos. Rev. Jim Moos, and Rev. Jane Sullivan-Davis will speak about how we, as individuals, groups, or local churches can help with our missions and missionaries here in the US and around the world. We are also honored to have our own Rev. Diane Weible (our Conference Minister) share her experiences as a missionary for Common Global Ministries in Japan.

See pages 5 and 6 for the resolutions passed and a letter sent at the Annual Meeting.

All in all, Annual Gathering was a full and joyful event that allowed me to connect with others in our denomination and participate in the life of the wider church. I hope you will consider joining me there next year.

Pastor Sally



NEW MEMBERS CLASS JULY 1 AND 8

Starts July 1 after service.

Interested in learning more about First Congregational Church and finding ways to participate more fully? Interested in learning more about our denomination, the United Church of Christ - its history and beliefs? Interested in

exploring the possibility of becoming a full member of our beloved church?

If so, please join us! We have six wonderful people taking the class and would welcome more. If you plan to come, please let Pastor Sally know.

PRAYER PARTNERS

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



July 1 - 7

Melanie Sakskul and David

July 8 - 14

Marie Saldana

July 15 - 21

Val and Ralph Sherer

July 22 - 28

Cyndi Siroky, Chris, Brandon and Joshua

July 29 - August 4

Debra Smith

August 5 - 11

Annie Song-Hill

August 12 - 18

Hilary Spaulding and Bruce Weir

August 19 - 25

Sue and Bob Spofford

August 26 - Sept. 1

Tessa and Colin Templeman

Come and Worship with us!

July 1 Communion Sunday

Living History: A Brief Look at the Story of the United Church of Christ

The story of our church is intimately bound up with the story of our country. It is fitting that we should celebrate the history of our church near the 4th of July when we celebrate the birth of our nation. It was our spiritual ancestors who laid the foundation for this country and wove into its fabric many of the principles we most cherish to this day. It will be a day to lift up the best actions of our forebearers, remember with.

July 8 What Does It Mean to Be a Sanctuary Church?

Guest Speaker: Ashley Reid (see her bio on page 8)

Do you want to learn more about the Sanctuary movement in faith-based organizations? We have a guest preacher coming to our church! She is funded under a grant obtained by the Redwood Presbyterian Church through the Marin Interfaith Council. Here is a short bio.

July 15 Hymn Sing

Music is the language of the soul! We will raise our voices and lift our spirits as we sing our favorite hymns. We will welcome back our former Music Director, Tom Truchan, to lead us in this joyful worship (so Jeff can have a well-deserved vacation.) Several of our companions will read poems or selections that have meaning for them. It promises to be a time of great joy and meaningful sharing.

July 22 Celebrate Sunday School

Ever wonder what actually goes on in Sunday School when the little ones leave the sanctuary and travel to their classroom? This Sunday the journey will be reversed, and Sunday School will come to the sanctuary. Our extraordinary teachers will lead us in an experience of learning, demonstrating how they communicate the principles of our faith to the children in our midst.

July 29 May the Force Be with You

We know that the Force (Spirit) was with Luke Skywalker, but what about us? Do we believe that the force can be with ordinary people like you and me? Pastor Sally will reflect on how the Spirit works and through whom. Our Gospel reading will be Mark 6: 1-13 which describes Jesus's experience when he preaches in his hometown. Our second scripture lesson will be from Paul's Second Letter to the Corinthians 12: 2-10 in which he writes, "...power is made perfect in weakness."

EVERY SUNDAY: 10-11:15 AM

Church School and Child Care



SUNDAY, JULY 22 PICNIC AND PADDLING

You are invited to our summer First Congregational Church of San Rafael family picnic on the dock (or on the couch) at Lynn Grant's home.

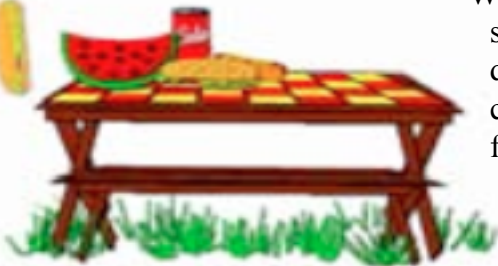
When: After church on Sunday, July 22, beginning at 1 pm

Where: Lynn Grant's patio in Bel Marin Keyes, Novato

What to bring: Potluck picnic foods such as salads, breads, desserts and cold cuts. Bring picnic plates, cups and utensils for your own family if you can. If you forget, come anyway; there will be extra dishes on hand as back-up.

AND Bring a friend!

What to wear: Comfortable clothes (a bathing suit and towel if you want to swim from the dock) so you can take a turn rowing in the canoe, kayak or paddle boat. Bring life jackets for your kids, please!



SUNDAY, AUGUST 12 PARTY - CALLING ALL NONAGENARIANS

What's a nonagenarian?

That's a person who is 90+ years old. First Congregational Church of San Rafael has several members (at least 8 of them) who are or will be 90 or older this year. We're going to celebrate this amazing part of our church family on August 12.

Come one, come all, for a special gathering after church on Sunday, August 12. Lunch will be provided. Families of the honored guests are encouraged to join us. Party hats encouraged!!



ICE CREAM SOCIAL IN OUR BEAUTIFUL COURTYARD SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 9



Join us in the courtyard after church to hear the story of the courtyard renovation, enjoy ice cream, and help raise the final \$15,000 to pay off the mortgage that allowed us to create this beautiful outdoor space. For those of us who pledged toward the courtyard renovation, we will be receiving an update on the status of our pledge in August. For those of you who are new to our church community, please consider making a pledge to help us finish paying off the mortgage that allowed us to create this wonderful space.



RESOLUTIONS PASSED AT THE UCC ANNUAL MEETING

Five Resolutions were passed at the Business Meeting

To read the resolutions, please go to conference website – <https://nencucc.org> – and click on Events and then Annual Gathering.



The one that inspired the most discussion and debate was entitled “Follow Me.” It proposes that the constitution of the United Church of Christ be amended to define church members as those who believe in the triune God, accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, and those who are in discernment of belief. It proposes that people could join the church not only through the traditional routes of baptism and confirmation or reaffirmation of faith, but also through a Pledge of commitment to follow Jesus’ way.

Every local church has the authority to set its own criteria for membership, but many churches look to the U.C.C. Constitution for guidance. The By-Laws for our church state: “To become a member of the First Congregational Church of San Rafael one must be baptized....”

I attended the discernment session for this resolution. There was lively conversation about the place of baptism and whether it should be required for membership, and whether members should adhere to a common set of beliefs. There was discussion about the difference between belief and faith, Christian identity, and what it means to be a member of a church. In the end, the resolution was passed and will be sent to the national church to be considered at General Synod.

There were two resolutions opposing bills that are before our legislature that would, if passed, curtail our First Amendment Right of free speech and expression. Opposing the Israel Anti-Boycott and Opposing the Anti-Semitism Awareness Act of 2018 (which defines criticism of Israel as “anti-Semitism.”) A third resolution pertaining to Israel was entitled Supporting H.R. 4391, the Promoting Human Rights by Ending Israeli Military Detention of Palestinian Children Act. All three resolutions passed quickly with little or no debate. I urge you to read the resolutions and take whatever action you feel called to take.

There was a fifth resolution that had to do with changes to the constitution of the United Church of Christ.

UCC ANNUAL MEETING RESPONDS TO BORDER FAMILY CRISIS

Conference Minister, Diane Weible writes:

I was approached by a couple people during our Annual Gathering about the horrific conditions families at the border seeking asylum were facing and asking if there was something we could do—or, more accurately, asking for us, as the Church, to act.

So, we did. The letter [on the next page] was read to our gathered community at the end of our business session on Saturday. Attendees were invited to sign on to the letter. We posted it on our Conference Facebook pages and received quite a few more signatures, with even more signatures coming this week as the letter was read in some of our churches last Sunday. Our UCC office in Washington, DC, sent the letter and signatures to our California Senators and members of Congress on our behalf along with the letter written by our UCC leaders.



*We support, unite, nurture the
church of Jesus Christ in local
settings and ministries*

Rev. Diane Weible
Conference Minister

Rev. Davena Jones
Rev. Daniel Ross-Jones
Associate Conference Ministers

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June 16, 2018

Dear Mr. President and members of the United States Congress,

We, the delegates and visitors gathered for the Northern California Nevada Conference of the United Church of Christ Annual Meeting, June 14-17, 2018, demand that you follow international law and human decency and immediately end the mistreatment and abuse of those camped at our borders seeking asylum in the United States. In addition, we demand that you allow them to enter this country and follow the process that our ancestors and countless others have followed throughout the years, a process that has identified this country as a country that welcomes immigrants and values diversity.

In many cases these human beings are fleeing kidnapping, torture, and abuse in their own country in order to find protection in the United States, a country that has the Statue of Liberty as one of its greatest symbols, proclaiming: "Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free..."

The systematic violation of U.S. and international law that blocks these immigrants at international bridges goes against everything our country stands for. It goes against everything that human decency demands of us. It goes against everything that we stand for as Christians in the United Church of Christ, people of faith who follow a resurrected Christ who healed the broken, stood up for the weak, brought strength and courage to people discarded by society.

The Rev. Randy Mayer, a UCC minister in Arizona who has witnessed what is happening at the border, said this: "In my 20 years here being engaged in frontline immigration work, this was probably my most difficult and hopeless day. There were probably 120 migrants looking for support. Most were coming from Guatemala and Honduras, wanting to seek asylum. There were a lot of women with children who were fleeing horrible domestic violence situations where their ex-husbands are trying to kill them. They had no idea that Attorney General Sessions has changed the laws and that they can't even apply, or if they do, they will be separated from their kids. It was so painful to see them process this news and they are so far from home."

When Attorney General Jeff Sessions insulted all of us by quoting Romans 13 regarding submission to governing authorities, he missed the first line, which states, "There is no authority except that which God has established." Our God is a God who, according to Isaiah 10, says:

Woe to those who make unjust laws,
to those who issue oppressive decrees,
to deprive the poor of their rights
and withhold justice from the oppressed of my people,
making widows their prey
and robbing the fatherless.
What will you do on the day of reckoning,
when disaster comes from afar?
To whom will you run for help?
Where will you leave your riches?
Nothing will remain but to cringe among the captives
or fall among the slain.

All human beings are entitled to being treated as human beings, the way any of us would want to and expect to be treated. The mistreatment and abuse of those individuals who have come to this country asking for help from our country is abhorrent and must end immediately. Signed below in faithful witness,

CC: Attorney General Jeff Sessions



BOARD OF MISSION MISSION MATTERS



BACKPACK SUNDAY, JULY 29

This is our annual gathering of school supplies for the Ritter Center kids. Please bring your donations to church on July 29, as they will be distributed to the kids at Ritter Center in early August, because the school start dates are early. Here's what is needed:

- New backpacks (boys and girls, high need for elementary school)
- Binders (small/large) and binder paper
- Tabbed dividers and zip pouches
- Pencils (#2/colored), pens, and erasers
- Glue sticks and index cards
- Rulers, staplers, and small scissors
- Markers, crayons, and highlighters
- Pocket folders and spiral one-subject notebooks
- Calculators (especially graphing calculators such as TI-83)
- Geometry drafting sets

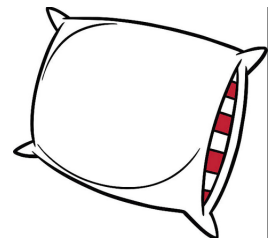


There is always a GREAT NEED for department store gift cards and cash donations

→**TIP:** You may want to cut out this list for your purse or pocket.

PILLOW SUNDAY NETS 24 PILLOWS

The mission board is grateful to all of you who contributed pillows in June! Thank you for your continued commitment to Homeward Bound's mission.



FOOD BANK CONTRIBUTIONS NEEDED

Please remember that people experience food insecurity all year long. Your contributions of rice, beans, peanut butter, pasta, canned vegetables, and other staples are needed during the summer months. The collection barrel for the food bank is now located in the community room.

THE INTERIM PROCESS -- HERE ARE THE NEXT STEPS:

- ☒ We appoint an Interim Search Committee to locate and recommend an interim pastor
- ☒ We hire an Interim Pastor - **Rev. Sally Train began November 8, 2017.**
- ☒ We appoint a Search Committee -
**Megan Fuller, David Knopf, Alana Intrater, Anice Flesh,
Michael Meehan, Helen MacLam, Annie Song-Hill, Oak Dowling**
- ☐ We create our Church Profile, a description of our church to be read by potential pastors
The Search Committee is working hard on this project.
- ☐ The Search Committee will consider all potential candidates
- ☐ The Search Committee will select possible candidates
- ☐ The Search Committee will interview these candidates
- ☐ One candidate will be recommended to the congregation
- ☐ The congregation will have an opportunity to meet the candidate
- ☐ We will vote on the recommended candidate
- ☐ We will join in worship to install our new pastor



TREASURER'S 6-MONTH REPORT

At the Annual Meeting in January, we adopted a budget that was a “stretch” for us. As of the end of June, the mid-point of the 2018 year, our income is just a \$1,000 short of covering our expenses to date. Thank you all for your pledges and special offerings. As we enter summer, please remember that our expenses continue and keep your pledges up to date.

GUEST PREACHER, ASHLEY REID, JULY 8

We have a guest preacher, Ashley Reid, coming to our church on Sunday, July 8th! She is funded under a grant obtained by the Redwood Presbyterian Church through the Marin Interfaith Council.

Ashley is a Master of Divinity student at San Francisco Theological Seminary. She is anticipating graduation in 2019 and is interested in providing pastoral counseling and focusing on social justice issues. She is a Trenton, NJ, native with her Bachelor of Science in Print Journalism from North Carolina A&T State University, and her Master of Arts in Management from the Wake Forest School of Business. She has experience working with youth and in nonprofit environments.

Currently, Ashley is working with the Marin Interfaith Council to support faith-based organizations understand what it means to be a sanctuary congregation.

SUMMER MOVIE NIGHTS

JULY 27 *A MAN CALLED OVE*
AUGUST 17 *JOY*

July 27 – *A Man Called Ove*

A grumpy curmudgeon with a heart of gold is one of the oldest formulas in literature, but every so often a writer or director gets it just right, and we understand again why it is so popular. Fredrik Backman's novel *A Man Called Ove* was a worldwide best-seller, and it has been faithfully translated to the screen by Director Hannes Holm.

When we first meet Ove, he is a lonely widower, the self-appointed watchman over every detail of life in his little neighborhood. Then a new neighbor moves in who needs help, and bit by bit, the history of Ove's life and the reasons behind his gruff personality start to be revealed. As he comes out of his shell, the process feels just as authentic – and rewarding – as when we slowly come to truly know another person in real life. Because the new neighbor is Iranian, the film is also a microcosm of the challenges Sweden faces in accommodating to an influx of refugees from other cultures.



August 17 – *Joy*

Joy Mangano was a housewife on Long Island who invented a new kind of mop and went on to become one of the biggest successes on TV shopping channels. “Joy” is loosely adapted from her life, but in the of writer/Director David O. Russell (“Silver Linings Playbook”, “American Hustle”) and a cast headed by Jennifer Lawrence and Robert DeNiro it is anything but a simple bio-pic.



“Joy” is a sharp-edged – often very funny – look at the pathology of a traditional working class family . . . a culture that believes in keeping dreams small to avoid pain and, especially, in “protecting” their women from unrealistic expectations. Joy’s struggle to escape this smothering trap is the heart of the movie, and it earned Jennifer Lawrence her fourth Oscar nomination in as many years.

7 PM Friday July 27 and August 17 in the De Haan Center at Pilgrim Park

Trailers and links to reviews of both films are on the FCCSR website.

FROM THE TRUSTEES

Save the Date

Coming on September 9, an ICE CREAM SOCIAL to celebrate the last year of our loan to rebuild the courtyard. We started in 2009 with a loan of \$140,000 from the UCC Cornerstone fund, and now have only \$18,000 left to pay off. If you didn't get a chance then to pledge to "buy a brick or purchase a plant," now is your chance to say you helped build it! Make checks out to FCCSR and specify Courtyard Fund in the memo line.



Rentals for our community

Our church facility continues being an important resource for the community. We provide reasonable cost rental space to 2 other churches, and 11 groups. Abby Montessori preschool has agreed to renew their contact for 10 years, and expects to restart its program here in September.

Thursdays with David

On-going freshening-up projects continue most Thursday mornings. This last month we began curb painting, pruned bushes, replaced wood borders downstairs, and had made a new Pride Sunday banner. The Trustees are considering ways to simplify the entrance sign in ways that also communicate something about our church. If you see a particularly good example, please take a picture and let David or Louis know.



Take some time to volunteer on Sunday mornings to be...

- The Greeter welcoming people to our service and providing bulletins.
- Liturgist working with the pastor to be the lay leader during the service.
- Helping with communion of the first Sunday of the month by preparing the Communion Table, elements, and assist the pastor in passing the elements to the gathered community.
- Helping with Sunday School during the summer - to provide the Sunday School teachers with a break. Lead an art project! Play a board game! Take a nature walk around the neighborhood!
- Provide refreshments one Sunday, either individually or organize a team. Contact Lucinda Ray for details and to volunteer.

You can also volunteer during the week - weeding, doing small jobs around the facility. Contact David Knopf to volunteer.

JULY BIRTHDAYS

1 — Dorothy Trotter
5 — Saba Dempsey
6 — Cyndi Siroky
26 — Tristan Cline-Meehan
Michael Cline-Meehan
Jacob Cline-Meehan
Taylor Cline-Meehan
27 — Louis Frost
29 — Catherine Hills



AUGUST BIRTHDAYS

6 — Jamie Cline
6 — Audrey Barton
11 — Elizabeth Ganz
11 — Gaia Girard
12 — Rebecca Knopf
13 — Allison Kaufman
17 — Helen MacLam
19 — Melanie Sakskul
22 — Amy Smith
24 — Jakob Dempsey
27 — David Knopf
28 — Judy Girard

GOLDEN GALS — Tuesdays, JULY 10 and AUGUST 14

The Golden Gals will meet on Tuesdays, July 10 and August 14, at 10 AM, at the home of Jean Nadell. Bring a bag lunch.



TIE DEADLINE for the September Issue - Mon., AUGUST 27

The deadline for articles and news for the September 2018 issue of The TIE is Monday, August 27. Please have all articles for the July-August issue at the church office by Sunday, August 26. Or, email your articles to lucindaray@aol.com.



CHURCH OFFICE HOURS











Rev. Sally Train – *Interim Pastor*

Wednesday 10:30 AM - 2:30 PM
Phone (925) 216-9706
sallytrain@comcast.net

Amy Powell – *Office Manager*











Tuesday 11 AM- 2 PM
Wednesday 9:30 AM - 2 PM
Thursday 9:30 AM - 2 PM
Office Phone: 415-479-2747
office@fccsanrafael.org

FCC Calendar July 2018

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 10 am  Worship, Church School & Child Care 11:30 am Membership Class	2	3	4  Independence Day	5 9:30 am - 12 am Adopt a Project with David	6	7
8 10 am  Worship, Church School & Child Care 11:30 am Membership Class	9	10 10 am  Golden Gate monthly meeting	11	12 9:30 am - 12 am Adopt a Project with David	13	14
15 10 am  Worship, Church School & Child Care	16	17	18	19 9:30 am - 12 am Adopt a Project with David	20	21
22 Parents' Day 10 am  Worship, Church School & Child Care 1 am  Deck Party at Lynn Grants	23	24	25	26 9:30 am - 12 am Adopt a Project with David	27 7 pm  Movie Night: A Man Called Ove De Haan Center Pilgrim Hall	28
29 10 am  Worship, Church School & Child Care 10 am  Back-to-school Sunday	30	31	1	2 9:30 am - 12 am Adopt a Project with David	3	4

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.

FCC Calendar August 2018

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
29  10 am Worship, Church School & Child Care  10 am Backpack Sunday	30	31	August 1	2 9:30 am - 12 am Adopt a Project with David	3	4
5  10 am Worship, Church School & Child Care	6	7	8	9 9:30 am - 12 am Adopt a Project with David	10	11
12  10 am Worship, Church School & Child Care  1:15 am Nondenominational Party and Lunch	13	14 10 am  Golden Gals monthly meeting	15	16 9:30 am - 12 am Adopt a Project with David	17 7 pm  Movie Night: Jay De Haan Center Pilgrim Park	18
19  10 am Worship, Church School & Child Care	20	21	22	23 9:30 am - 12 am Adopt a Project with David	24	25
26  10 am Worship, Church School & Child Care	27  5 pm TIE Deadlines for September Issue	28	29	30 9:30 am - 12 am Adopt a Project with David	31	1

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