

TRAINS OF THOUGHT by REV. SALLY TRAIN



Transition

September is a time of transition- a transition from summer to autumn. A transition from vacation to school year.

It is fitting that during this month we, as a church, will take some time to think seriously about the transition we are in. The time between settled pastors is referred to as the “Interim Period” or the “Transitional Period.” In years past, it was seen as an interlude -a period of waiting. The church would hire an Interim Minister who was sort of like a substitute teacher – someone who filled in and kept things going until a real minister could be called.

In recent years, the thinking has changed. It was recognized that the in-between time is a special time, a

golden opportunity for churches to consciously chart a new direction. It was also recognized that it is a time when churches are more open to change. This is profoundly important because the world around the Church has radically changed in the last few decades. In order for churches to thrive and do relevant ministry in such a world, they need to consciously determine what changes they need to make to relate to that world. The interim period is the perfect time to do that important work. So Interim ministry has become a specialized ministry and the interim period has become a time of self-assessment and discernment.

During the month of September, we will talk specifically about the work that is best accomplished during the interim period. Your Pastoral Search Committee has been hard at work gathering input from you and writing your Church Profile. The three essential questions they need to answer are: Who are we? Who is our neighbor? Who is God calling us to become? They have

almost completed this phase of their work and will share it with you soon.

In answering the final question, they will be articulating a vision for the church. A clear vision is vitally important, but it is not enough without concrete actions designed to make that vision a reality.

On September 16 and 23, during worship and fellowship hour, we will move through a process to select several projects on which to focus in the year ahead. These projects should be designed to

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live into the vision of what God is calling FCCSR to become. **Make it a priority to be in worship on those two Sundays, if at all possible.**

In the weeks ahead, please spend some time prayerfully imagining what you would like to see your church do. What do you think are important and urgent activities that your church should be engaged in? **Bring your musings and your dreams to these important discernment sessions on September 16 and 23.**

Once the specific projects have been identified, the Search Committee will share them with potential ministers. They will look for a minister who is excited about your vision for the church. They will look for a minister who has the skills to help implement the projects you have selected. They will look for a minister who will be a good fit for this jewel of a church.

September will be an important month. We need everyone's input. We need everyone's insights. We need everyone's prayers. We need everyone's voice. We hope everyone will be fully present as we shape and embrace the future of our beloved church.

Pastor Sally



ICE CREAM CELEBRATION IN OUR BEAUTIFUL COURTYARD SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 9

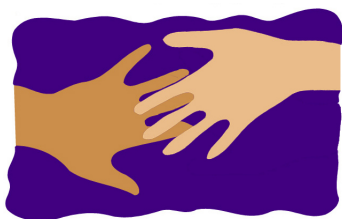


We will celebrate 10 years of our remodeled courtyard on Sunday, September 9, with an ice cream social. In addition to enjoying the quiet beauty and welcoming space, we have found the courtyard wonderful for activities such as the Blessing of the Animals, labyrinth walks, receptions, games, and conversation.

The original loan of \$140,000 from the Cornerstone Fund of the UCC is now down to only \$14,000. We hope this ice cream celebration will be a reminder to those who pledged to complete their pledge, and an opportunity for newer members to offer some support to help us finish off the project. Just write "Courtyard" in the memo line of your check to FCCSR.

PRAYER PARTNERS

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



August 26 - Sept. 1

Tessa and Colin Templeman

Sept. 2 - 8

Dorothy Trotter

Sept. 9 - 15

Colleen Trudeau

Sept. 16 - 22

James (Trip) True

Sept. 23 - 29

Jim Turner

Sept. 30 - October 6

Richard and Denise Walker



September 2 Communion Sunday

Scripture: Mark 8: 27 – 38 Jesus was not the Messiah that was expected. He had to overcome those expectations and teach a radically different way of being. One of the most difficult things he had to teach was the way of the cross, and the truth that one must lose one's life in order to gain it. Pastor Sally will reflect on this profound paradox.

September 9 Ice Cream Social Sunday

During worship, Interim Minister Sally Train will reflect on the Journey of the Interim Period and the critical work a congregation needs to do in the time between settled pastors. We will celebrate what we have accomplished and begin musing about what we would like to do in the time remaining. Following worship, we will gather in the courtyard for ice cream, conversation, and a chance to enjoy the lovely outdoor environment created there. We will have an opportunity to donate funds to pay off the loan that was needed to refurbish this beautiful space.

September 16 A Day to Dream

By now the Pastoral Search Committee should have shared with us a draft of the Church Profile which outlines a description of the church and a vision for its future. Together we will dream of the concrete ways we can make that vision a reality. We will search our hearts and minds for ways we can live into our highest aspirations. Come with your ideas for projects you are passionate about – activities you would like to see the church do. We will share our hopes and dreams and then work together to focus on the ones we truly feel are important and urgent. Through this process we will endeavor to discern God's call to us.

September 23 A Day to Decide

The previous Sunday we will have identified a handful of projects and activities we feel drawn to. We will explore each of those in more depth, fleshing out the details a bit. Folks will get a chance to share about the one they are most passionate about and explain how it will further the overall mission of the church. We will talk, listen, pray, sing, worship, and finally vote. The hope is to choose four or five projects to implement in the coming year. This will not only help the church live into its future, it will also help the new minister know what you care about and what direction you want to go.

September 30 Living a Double Life

We are told the Kingdom of God is among us. The Kingdom of God is here and it is coming. We live in the spiritual realm and the earthly realm at the same time. We live a double life. Pastor Sally will reflect on the stories found in 2 Kings 2: 1-12 and Mark 8: 27-33 & 9: 2-9.



EVERY SUNDAY: 10-11:15 AM
Church School and Child Care

Sunday School Shines

This fall the Sunday School will be considering God's Care with readings from the Psalms and stories of the Good Shepherd and care for the sparrow, as well as God Bringing Freedom with stories of the Exodus.

Our teachers us as a starting point curriculum called *Shine: Living in God's Light*. This was developed by the Mennonite church and adopted by the UCC.

We have 2 classes—the younger, mostly preschool group, is lead by Cathi Fuller and Milagro Ramirez, and the older group is lead by Caryl Hodges and David Knopf.

WHAT'S THE NEXT BIG THING FOR FCC SAN RAFAEL?

Be sure to be at church on the 16th and 23rd of September to give your input into what the next big thing for our church is. For more details about what is happening in September see Pastor Sally's 'Trains of Thought' on pages 1 and 2 of this issue of The TIE.

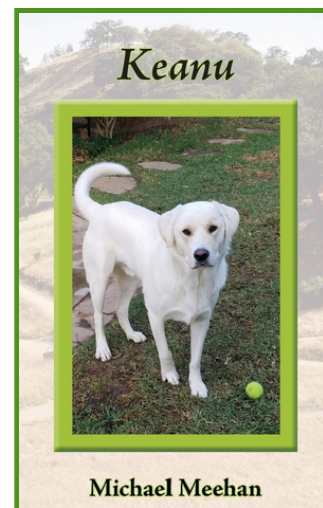
We are looking for the entire membership's input into what projects, programs, events answer the question "Who Is God Calling Us to Become?" Here's your chance to let the entire church know what is important and urgent to put our efforts into.



AUTHOR! AUTHOR! AUTHOR!

Our very own Trustee and Search Committee member has just had his book published! It's available on Amazon.com and barnesandnoble.com.

When Andrew "Drew" Duncan decided to take his best friend, Keanu, to the Mark Twain National Forest in Northern California for a hike, he had no idea it would change his life and possibly end it.



SEPTEMBER CARE TEAM

The care team for September is headed by Charles Little (415 342-2720) with Jim Turner and Amy Kaufman.

WHAT IS 'SANCTUARY'?

There is a lot of confusion over the term, “sanctuary” In the 1980s it was widely understood to mean providing physical shelter and protection from immigration authorities. Our former pastor, Tracy, shared a story about how one of the children from the afterschool tutoring program was afraid of having her parents taken away. Pastor Tracy told the child that FCCSR would provide a safe haven in our church. I later had a conversation with

David Knopf who is on our church council and asked about Pastor Tracy’s promise. He informed me that there is a process that the congregation has to go through in order to officially declare ourselves a “sanctuary congregation”, and that FCCSR had not yet done that.



I wanted to find out more about what it means to be a sanctuary congregation, so I attended the statewide conference in Oakland sponsored by the Interfaith Movement for Human Integrity. I learned that each congregation and faith community decides for themselves how they define “sanctuary” and it ranges from providing emotional support for neighbors who are in fear of, or in the process of being deported by giving rides to appointments, helping them find legal assistance, or accompanying them to court appearances to providing actual physical shelter in a place of worship or someone’s home.

One of the reasons I joined our church is because of the emphasis on faith in action. We have in our midst neighbors, many of whom are undocumented and are trying to build a life in this country. There are those from Central America and elsewhere seeking asylum, which is a legal process. What I learned is that there are people in our midst, many of them children, who live with fear and anxiety. Some families are afraid to send their children to school. A majority live at or below the poverty line. They do not have the resources to make their legal case. In situations where the main bread winner is deported, the family is left with no resources.

In the near future, you will be receiving a survey based on the one from the Marin Interfaith Council. The Marin Interfaith Council is maintaining a data base of congregations and faith communities across Marin who are willing to volunteer categorized by volunteer activity. The contact person for FCCSR is Annie Song-Hill. When the Marin Interfaith Council gets a call for assistance, they will look at their database and see how many individuals from faith communities represented have volunteered for a specific task. They will then contact Annie and she will contact volunteers from our congregation. Your personal information will not be shared. For an hypothetical example, MIC will only know that FCCSR has four individuals who have volunteered to provide rides. In this survey you will also have a space for comments where you can express your opinion about this issue. If you have any further questions please feel free to contact me. Email is the most reliable way to contact me:

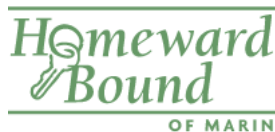
Annie Song-Hill
asonghill@gmail.com



BOARD OF MISSION MISSION MATTERS



VOLUNTEERS NEEDED



There is a new volunteer opportunity at Homeward Bound in Novato and see you may be interested/available to help. This activity requires 1 to 4 people max. working at the same time for 3 hrs. 10am to 1 or 1 to 4 pm.

Homeward Bound manufactures Wagster dog treats, and their market growing faster. They need help with production. Specifically packaging the treats. Their baker needs to cook a lot and they don't have another full time person yet to help with the rest of the production.

The activity needs to be done once a week by the same group for a minimum commitment of 2 months, to develop speed and to minimize training time. It is a seated activity that consists of 5 main steps: stamping the bags with the expiration date, weighing 6oz of the product, put the treats inside the bags, seal the bags, and put them inside boxes.

If this is something you are interested in volunteering for, please contact Lucinda Ray about which day of the week you are available and whether you are available in the morning or in the afternoon that day you are available.

BACKPACK SUNDAY EVEN BETTER THAN LAST YEAR

Thanks to everyone who contributed to our annual gathering of school supplies for the Ritter Center kids. We donated 32 backpacks and lots and lots of school supplies. The Board of Mission estimates we gathered over \$1000 worth of backpacks and supplies to support many needy students in Marin County. THANK YOU ALL!



NEIGHBORS IN NEED OFFERING OCT. 7

On Sunday, October 7, we will receive your offering for Neighbors in Need. Neighbors in Need (NIN) is a special mission offering that supports UCC ministries of justice and compassion throughout the United States. Most of the offering is used by the UCC's Justice and Witness Ministries to support, through grants, a variety of justice initiatives, advocacy efforts, and direct service projects.

One-third of NIN funds support the Council for American Indian Ministry (CAIM), which represents the voice for American Indian people in the UCC. Today there are 20 UCC congregations on reservations and one urban, multi-tribal UCC congregation in Minneapolis. CAIM supports these local churches and their pastors, and strives to be a resource for more than 1,000 individuals from dozens of tribes who are members of various UCC congregations. Please give generously.

FROM THE TRUSTEES

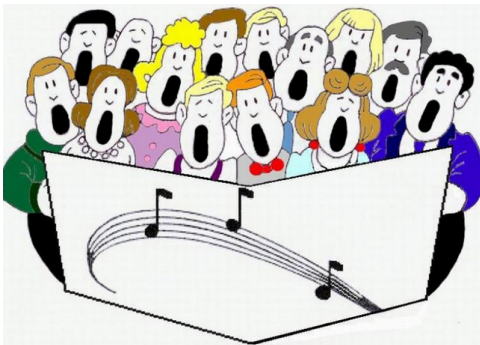
Update on our Renters

Our two biggest renters have updated and extended their leases.

Abbey Montessori has signed a lease for 10 years for the pre-school space below the sanctuary and expects to start using the space again this fall.

Ingelsia Ministerios De Dios Latino (MDDL) which uses our Sanctuary usually 5 nights a week, has agreed to a 4 year lease.

We continue to provide space for five 12-step type groups, the Threshold Choir, Marin Garden Club, Church of God (7th Day), a monthly Head Start meeting, and last tax season to AARP's income tax assistance program (see page 9 of this issue of The TIE).



CHOIR REHEARSAL RESUMES SEPTEMBER 6

Calling all voices! We need yours in the church choir. Rehearsals are held on Thursday evenings from 7:40-9:00 PM and from 9:20-9:50 on Sunday morning before worship. We welcome new members!

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

SEPTEMBER 28 MOVIE NIGHT - PAN'S LABYRINTH

If you loved *The Shape of Water*, you'll enjoy this month's movie. In *Pan's Labyrinth*, made ten years earlier, Writer/Director Guillermo del Toro first used fantasy and magic realism to explore how powerless "little" people find joy when surrounded by inescapable evil.

The setting is Spain in 1944. Franco's fascists have won the civil war, but small bands of Republicans are still hiding out and fighting in the hills. At the center of the film is Ofelia, a delicate 12 year old girl. Her father was killed in the fighting, and her mother has sought safety by marrying an army Captain whose job is to find and wipe out these remaining loyalists.

Ofelia soon discovers that her new stepfather is a sadistic monster, and she seeks safety for herself and her newborn brother in a parallel universe that she discovers (and/or imagines) right under her nose. There, she is given the challenge and opportunity to right the balance . . . to accomplish something courageous and good.



By the time [Ofelia] faces her last challenge in the shattering conclusion of "Pan's Labyrinth," audiences will care deeply about a girl who's come to represent not just political dissent but life itself. Del Toro never flinches, and the final sequence, while both healing and tragic, is finally a triumph of uncompromising vision.

Ann Hornaday, *The Washington Post*

7 PM Friday September 28 in the De Haan Center at Pilgrim Park

Trailers and links to reviews of *Pan's Labyrinth* are on the FCCSR website.

OUT IN THE GARDEN by Gillian Rose Peace



Everything is changing with the days.
Life has ceased to move along its old accustomed ways.
So many things are topsy-turvy—nothing seems secure
Yet here in the peaceful garden all things seem to endure...

Trees stand as once they did maybe a hundred years ago;
And still the beautiful flowers—how they grow!
The birds sing above it all, and how blessed are we to know
That nothing changes here...
For out in the garden some things remain year after year.

submitted by Denise Walker

**EVER WONDER
WHAT YOUR
SUPPORT
FOR OUR CHURCH
ACCOMPLISHES?**

**HERE'S SOME GOOD
NEWS!**



This is an excerpt from a letter from Robert D. Robertson, the local coordinator of AARP Tax-Aide at Northgate. This group used the Community Room in our church during February, March and April.

All of us from the Northgate team of AARP TAX-AIDE are grateful to the First Congregational Church of San Rafael for permitting us the use of your space during the 2018 tax-preparation season.

Our team particularly enjoyed the setting you provided; a spacious area for clients and return preparers to work together, and a separate area with plenty of seating for those filling out forms and waiting their turns.

Between February 1 and April 17, we helped prepare over 400 tax returns, and our clients were truly a microcosm of California. They ranged from high-school students in their first jobs to folks in their 90s accompanied by caregivers. They came from San Francisco, Marin, Sonoma, Solano and Contra Costa counties.

We served individuals, single parents, blended families, and the stereotypical mom, dad, and two child families; Native Americans, immigrants, African Americans, Latino/as, Asian Americans, and Whites; our housed and unhoused neighbors. Some were in stable employment, some living on Social Security alone or disability income, some retired, some unemployed, and many who patched together three, four, and more part-time jobs. Folks came by car, on foot, on bicycle, and by bus.

Again, thank you for helping our fourteen volunteers make life a little easier for our neighbors.

Our church building gets used throughout the week and year by many different organizations. Your support of our church helps make all this possible!

SEPTEMBER BIRTHDAYS



2 — Julie Dowling	10 — Megan Fuller
4 — Greg Ripley	16 — Will Godbey
6 — Ray O’Leary	21 — Josie Borden Hills
9 — Emma Faraci	23 — Paul Burks
10 — Joan Roane	25 — Tim Dempsey
	25 — Caryl Hodges

GOLDEN GALS — Tuesday, SEPTEMBER 11

The Golden Gals will meet on Tuesday, September 11, at 10 AM, at the home of Jean Nadell. Bring a bag lunch.



TIE DEADLINE for the October Issue - Mon., SEPT. 24

The deadline for articles and news for the October 2018 issue of The TIE is Monday, September 24. Please have all articles for the July-August issue at the church office by Sunday, September 23. 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 Powers – *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 September 2018

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat
2  10 am Worship, Church School & Child Care	3 Labor Day	4	5	6 7:40 pm  Choir Rehearsal	7	8
9 Grandparents' Day 10 am  Worship, Church School & Child Care	10	11 Patriot Day 10 am  Golden Girls monthly meeting	12	13 7:40 pm  Choir Rehearsal	14	15
16 10 am  Worship, Church School & Child Care	17	18	19	20 7:40 pm  Choir Rehearsal	21	22
23 10 am  Worship, Church School & Child Care	24 5 pm  It's Deadline for October issue	25	26	27 7:40 pm  Choir Rehearsal	28 7 pm  Movie Night: Bands Labyrinth De Haan Center Pilgrim Park	29
30 10 am  Worship, Church School & Child Care	1	2	3	4 7:40 pm  Choir Rehearsal	5	6

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.