

## PASTORAL REFLECTIONS REV. JEFFREY COCHRAN-CARNEY



### A Celtic Retreat

As I am writing this, I am getting ready to leave for a retreat at Bishop's Ranch – an Episcopal retreat center in Healdsburg. Many people have said what a beautiful place it is. It feels like a good way to get ready for Lent. But the main reason I am excited about going is to hear John Philip Newell speak. John Philip has written many books, and is a leading scholar on Celtic Christian spirituality. Perhaps his most popular book and a good overview is *Listening For the Heartbeat of God* if anyone is interested in learning more.

I have followed John Philip and his writings for about eight years. Several years ago I was fortunate to hear him speak at Chautauqua Institute in upstate New York. A couple years ago while we were still living in New Jersey, I said to my wife,

“If we ever move to California, my hope and prayer would be to hear John Philip speak again. I see he comes to northern California.” If this could happen, two of my important worlds would come together – a longing to live in California, and a desire to be drawn closer to the Celtic spirit. This was long before we had any inkling about moving here, but it was a frequent prayer. I am saying this because for one thing, it is a testament to how God answers prayers, and often grants your heart's desire. And if not a particular prayer, then you can be sure it will be something even better.

When we visited Iona in 2012, it changed my life. It gave me a new perspective on my own spirituality and view of the world. Once in a while in the spiritual life, we might have an experience and immediately know, “This is it!”

Iona is the cradle of Celtic spirituality, thanks to Columba and the outpost he set up on the island. Today Iona still embodies the essence of Celtic spirituality. Thousands of pilgrims travel to the tiny island every year for healing and renewal. It is truly a “thin” place as the Celts like to say, a place where the veil between heaven and earth is very thin, and often the two intermingle. There was a certain spiritual energy instilled in me when we visited, and it is something I carry to this day.



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John Philip embodies this spirit, as he has spent much time on the island, first as the resident chaplain, and then as a leader for frequent pilgrimages and retreats. When I am in his presence, I feel once again the essence of Iona. When I can't be there, he brings the island to me. Such is his presence. Sometimes you're around a person, and you experience their spiritual luminosity.

As I write this, next Sunday is Transfiguration Sunday, when the radiance of God was revealed in Jesus on the mountaintop. His face shone like the sun, and his clothes became dazzling white. My mountaintop experience was on an island. As we worshiped in the abbey, I remember thinking, "Surely the presence of God is in this place." The spirit of worship and prayer over the centuries washes over every seeker who enters there. If I am fortunate over the next few days at the retreat, that Spirit will be there again.

*Lenten Blessings,*  
*Pastor Jeffrey*



To contact the pastor by email,  
please use this email for all church correspondence.

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

## **MARCH AGAPE TEAM**

Agape - Providing compassionate connection to our church community through words of encouragement, cards, calls, and visits. Our Agape leader for January is Hilary Spaulding (415-215-5769) with Cathi Fuller and Annie Song-Hill.



## **PRAYER PARTNERS**

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



### **March 1 - 7**

Bob and Sue Spofford

### **March 8 - 14**

Tessa and Colin Templeman

### **March 15 - 21**

Dorothy Trotter

### **March 22 - 28**

Colleen Trudeau

### **March 29 - April 4**

James (Trip) True

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



## **March 1      1st Sunday in Lent**

### **Temptation in the Wilderness      Psalm 32:6-11; Matthew 4:1-11**

Before Jesus began his ministry, he retreated to the wilderness for forty days where he was tested. He prevailed because he relied on God and not himself. Today there are times when we experience the wilderness in our lives. Quiet time alone can help us discern and become spiritually focused.

## **March 8      2nd Sunday in Lent**

### **From Darkness into Light**

**John 3:1-17**

Nicodemus was a Pharisee and a strict adherent to Jewish law. Normally Pharisees were opposed to Jesus' teachings, who went beyond the law, offering grace and forgiveness. However, in the darkness of night, something moved Nicodemus to come to Jesus with questions and curiosity. Many people still come in times of darkness and uncertainty seeking guidance from the divine.

## **March 15      3rd Sunday in Lent**

### **Living Water**

**Exodus 17:1-7; John 4:5-19, 28-29, 39-42**

The woman at the well in John's gospel has long represented those whose lives seem empty and who long for something more. As a Samaritan, the woman was marginalized and an outcast. Jesus offers her and us "living water" for a dry and thirsty soul.

## **March 22      4th Sunday in Lent**

### **Open Your Eyes**

**Psalm 130; John 9:1-17**

Jesus performed a miracle when he restored sight to a blind man. Today God challenges us "see" in new ways when we look beyond our limitations, whether it be in the world or in ourselves.

## **March 29      5th Sunday in Lent**

### **Raising Lazarus**

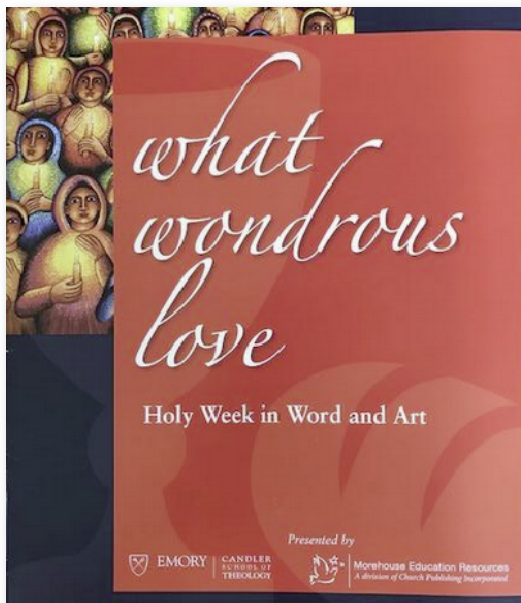
**Ezekiel 37:1-14; John 11:1-6, 17-45**

In a story that foreshadows his own resurrection, Jesus raises Lazarus from the dead. What are the parts of us that feel "dead?" God offers us new life and hope when we are open to the divine within as well as in the world.

**EVERY SUNDAY: 10-11:15 AM**

**Church School and Child Care**





## LENTEN DISCUSSION GROUP *WHAT WONDROUS LOVE*

**Thursdays, 12 noon  
March 5 - April 9**

*What Wondrous Love* is a DVD study series with reflections for Lent. This series features commentary by members of the Candler School of Theology at Emory University and the stunning artwork of John August Swanson. Study books will be available. We will meet in the Church community room.

## ORDER A LILY FOR EASTER

Memorial Easter Lilies: If you wish to honor and/or celebrate a loved one by gracing the sanctuary with a trumpeting Easter Lily, fill out an order form. Order forms will be enclosed in Sunday service bulletins leading up to Easter. The cost is \$10.00 per plant.



## MARK THESE DATES ON YOUR CALENDAR



**April 5**

Palm Sunday

**April 9**

Maundy Thursday

Soup Supper and worship - 6 PM

**April 10**

Good Friday music and meditation - 12-3 PM

**April 12**

Easter Sunday

Decorate the cross at 8 AM

Worship at 10 AM

Easter Egg hunt following worship

**THANK YOU**  
**from**  
**Jacob Cline-Meehan**



Dear FCC San Rafael,

In church we are constantly taught that Jesus said to “Love thy neighbor.” This past week I was able to put that mantra into practice when I joined the Nicaragua Service Project’s trip to Managua, Nicaragua. We left on February 14, 2020, and returned Sunday night. I have been looking forward to this trip for the last four years, and I could not be happier with the trip this year. I did bring home a stomach virus along with great memories from the trip.

I am writing to the church to thank you all for the donations that the members of FCC San Rafael donated to our neighbors at El Divino Niño school, the Soya Teen Center, and the El Hogar De Los Ninos Orphanage. The donations were so well received, and it made me appreciate how fortunate we are to live in America and to have the opportunity to help others.

I know that I will be graduating this year, but I am hopeful that I will be able to continue helping the people of the world have a better life.

Thank you for your support.

Love, Jacob.

**POT LUCK LUNCH -- SUNDAY, APRIL 19**



Be sure to save the date of Sunday, April 19, for a spectacular church pot luck lunch. There will also be fun entertainment for all. More details will be in next month’s TIE.



## TRUSTEE'S REPORT

### HELP! Taxes!

Preparing taxes is anxiety provoking and overwhelming for many. Again this year the AARP Tax-Aide program will be using our facility several days a week from February until April to help people with tax preparation and filing. They serve all comers. A high percentage of their clients are seniors and low income people. Exact days and hours are posted in the Community Room.



### BOARD of TRUSTEES MEETING

The Trustees will meet on Tuesday, March 17th, in the Plum Room, beginning at 7 PM.



### SPIFF UP THE CHURCH SATURDAY APRIL 4



SATURDAY APRIL 4, 9 AM until noon: Come help polish the church and join with other from our church and one of our renting churches. What's your pleasure? Nature? Gardening? Window cleaning? Humble service? Deep clean bathrooms. Prevent chaos? Do fixing. Love children—Scrub away their smudges. Concerned about global warming—Defrost the fridge. Just like to sit? Polish the pews.

Bring cleaning supplies and rags for your favorite job.

Next Board of Trustees-- March 17

## OWN IT!

FCC San Rafael is a Congregational Church. That means that we own the church and we are responsible for the church and the church grounds. If there is something about the church you want to change or keep up, then it is not your job to complain about it, but you should OWN the solution.

For example, one member of our congregation really values having a shiny cross on the altar, so every month she makes a point of taking it home and polishing it. She owns that job. She owns it for the betterment of the church and all of us. If there is something in the church that you want improved (cleaning the trash out of the planters, or cleaning the crayon marking off the back of the pews, etc.), then maybe you decide to own that job, and take the time once a week or a month to tackle that job. It will make you happy, and improve the church for all of us. Let's all OWN it.



## BOARD OF MISSION MISSION **MATTERS**



### **WHAT IS ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING?**



Sponsored by our Board of Mission, One Great Hour of Sharing is a Special Mission Offering (SMO) of the United Church of Christ that supports disaster relief, refugee assistance and in places lacking health and educational resources. The offering this year will be on **Sunday, March 22nd**.

The theme of One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS) in 2020 is Invest in Futures. The scriptures reference Corinthians 3:5-9 tells us we are servants in the service of God, one planting, one watering, and God being the one who grows and nurtures us all. Whether the need is for clean water, healthy food, education, medical care or housing, your gift to One Great Hour of Sharing is combined with other offerings throughout the UCC for care and resources beyond our imagination.

Yes you can help! In 2019 our congregation generously donated over \$1,000 to OGHS. Let's top that donation in 2020! It starts with your decision to give. Your gifts make hope possible. The need is even greater with earthquakes and tsunamis devastating many throughout the world and in our own country.

**Remember March 22nd is our One Great Hour of Sharing.** Thank you for your generous support!

### **DON'T FORGET THE FOOD BANK IN THE NEW YEAR**

You can leave your contributions for the Food Bank in the Community Room. Peanut butter, tuna, canned soup, pasta, rice, and other staples are **always needed**. Please donate generously!



## MOVIE NIGHT MARCH 27 - THE WIFE

It's 1992. We're in the air over the Atlantic. Writer and Professor Joe Castleman (Jonathan Pryce) and his wife Joan (Glenn Close) are on their way to Stockholm to collect a richly-deserved Nobel Prize in Literature. Also on the plane is a writer hoping to write a book about them and the whole business of winning Nobel.

As the swirl of events in Stockholm unfolds we start picking up little bits of personal history and relationship issue that aren't quite as ideal as the press releases . . . and then some that aren't quite so "little" either.

To tell any more would spoil the fun. Suffice it to say that by the end, nothing is what we thought it was at the beginning, and we are left pondering what price people may be willing to pay to reach the top of their — or their spouse's — profession.

Glenn Close's performance was nominated for best actress in a leading role at the Oscars and at least 25 other awards festivals. She won in many, including "Best Actress" in the AARP "Movies for Grownups" awards (one of our favorites.)

*"Everything you need to know about Joan comes through in Close's subtle and simmering portrayal, her eyes a window to a wounded soul. Just don't call Joan a victim — the star makes it clear that Joe's wife is nobody's patsy. The Wife [is] a funny and fierce showcase for her prodigious talents. You can't take your eyes off her."*

Peter Travers, *Rolling Stone*

**7 PM Friday March 27th in the De Haan Center at Pilgrim Park**

You can view the trailer for *The Wife* on the FCCSR website.



## UPDATE ON IMMIGRANT ACCOMPANIMENT WORK



### **Training to be a Accompaniment Driver for the Canal Alliance FRIDAY, MARCH 27, 4:00-5:30 PM.**

If interested:

1. Submit a volunteer application (here is the link: [https://canal-alliance.secure.force.com/volunteerapplication/rc\\_volunteers\\_\\_ApplicationForm\\_Designer?id=a3fo000000008Os#!mode=view&form=00Po00000002u7XcEAI&dev=true](https://canal-alliance.secure.force.com/volunteerapplication/rc_volunteers__ApplicationForm_Designer?id=a3fo000000008Os#!mode=view&form=00Po00000002u7XcEAI&dev=true))
2. RSVP to the orientation on 3/27 by emailing Ana at [AnaT@canalalliance.org](mailto:AnaT@canalalliance.org)
3. Show up to the orientation 3/27.
  - a. Complete the background authorization form at the orientation meeting.
  - b. Ana will also send people more materials to review after they RSVP.
4. Shadow an experienced volunteer.

### **Cuban Family of Five**

A family from Cuba is seeking accompaniment support. This is challenging because of the relatively large number. It is a couple, a grandfather and two children. An accompaniment team would need to find a housing host to receive the family initially, and they would stay with that host long enough (approx. 2-4 weeks) to then find more permanent housing. There is a sponsor who would like to make a donation to a congregation, who then uses this money to pay for their basic needs the family's first three months here including a housing deposit, rent up to \$3000/month, food and cell phone.

Permanent housing would ideally be an affordable rental so that once the sponsorship ends, the family can continue renting it on their salaries. The three adults were professionals in Cuba, employed as a mechanical drawing technician, theater teacher, and civil engineer/physical education teacher. They left Cuba for religious and political reasons. They landed in Venezuela, walked through Venezuela and Colombia to Ecuador, where they were denied asylum, and then walked through the Panamanian jungle and Central America, through Mexico to Tijuana to ask for asylum in the US.

After this harrowing journey, they have been waiting in Mexico due to the Migrant Protection Program for their number to be called to present themselves for asylum, and are currently 50 numbers away (very close) to being called. If you are interested in working with this family as a committee of FCCSR, please contact Annie Song-Hill.

## UPDATE ON IMMIGRANT ACCOMPANIMENT WORK continued



### Census 2020

The 2020 Census is a count of every man, woman and child living in the US and is required by the Constitution to be conducted every ten years. It is used to calculate how much money is distributed based on population in a geographic area. It determines fair political representation in Congress, funding for roads, hospitals, schools and fire departments. It takes a count of individuals regardless of their immigration or citizenship status. Because of the current political climate, the fear is that many individuals living in our area will not participate in the census out of fear that doing so would put them at risk of getting the attention of the government. There is a lot of fear and misinformation about the census. You can help make sure every person

is counted by volunteering to be “census messenger.” There is a training for clergy and lay members on Sunday, March 15, 2020 at Our Lady of Loretto church from 2PM to 4PM at 1806 Novato Boulevard in Novato. Learn answers to common census questions, census logistics and how faith communities can encourage participation among those communities reluctant to do so. To register for the training, please contact Mario Castillo at [faithcensus2020@gmail.com](mailto:faithcensus2020@gmail.com).

### The Truth Act Forum

In January 2017, California passed a law (Assembly Bill 2752) protecting basic rights of immigrant in local jails called The TRUTH Act (Transparent Reviews of Unjust Transfers and Holds). There is a meeting scheduled for March 31, 2020 at 5:30PM in the Marin County Board of Supervisors chambers Rm 330 located at 3501 Civic Center Drive, San Rafael. Becoming a sanctuary county is the topic of the forum.

Annie Song-Hill [asonghill@gmail.com](mailto:asonghill@gmail.com)

## BROADWAY SHOW INVITATION

See Broadway Show *Come From Away*

Saturday, June 20, 2:00 pm

San Jose Performing Arts Center

You are cordially invited to join folks from First Presbyterian Church so see the hit musical “Come from Away.” It is based on the true story of the amazing ways that the people in Gander, Newfoundland, Canada helped stranded airline passengers on 9/11. It is a powerful story of loving the stranger and how people embodied this important human quality of compassion at a time of fear and confusion.



Cost of Bus Trip and Show Ticket \$110

12:00 pm Leave San Rafael on chartered Marin Airporter bus

2:00 pm Matinee Performance

6:00 pm Arrive back in San Rafael

To make reservations, email Dinah McClure from First Presbyterian -- [EventFPCSR@gmail.com](mailto:EventFPCSR@gmail.com)

**Payment is due by April 1.** Checks made out to FPCSR.

Note “ticket” on the check - and give checks to Pastor Jeffrey.



## MARCH BIRTHDAYS

8 — Sue Spofford  
10 — Colleen Trudeau  
11 — Jackie Dema  
19 — Charles Little  
24 — Blair Ripley  
25 — Milagro Ramirez  
26 — Sue MacKenzie

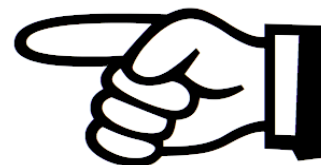
## GOLDEN GALS — MARCH 10

The Golden Gals will meet on Tuesday, March 10, at 10 AM. The exact location will be determined by the group.



## TIE DEADLINE for APRIL 2020 Issue - Mon., March 23

The deadline for articles and news for the April 2020 issue of The TIE is Monday, March 23rd. Please have all articles for the January issue at the church office by Sunday, March 22nd. Or, email your articles to [lucindaray@aol.com](mailto:lucindaray@aol.com) by Monday, the 23rd.



## CHURCH OFFICE HOURS

















### **Rev. Jeffrey Cochran-Carney** – *Pastor*

Mondays and Thursdays 8 AM - 4 PM  
Please call first for an appointment  
Phone (908) 487-8855 or  
(415) 479-2747  
[fccsrpastor@gmail.com](mailto:fccsrpastor@gmail.com)

### **Amy Powers** – *Office Manager*

Tuesday 11 AM- 2 PM  
Wednesday 10 AM - 2 PM  
Thursday 10 AM - 2 PM  
Office Phone: 415-479-2747  
[office@fccsanrafael.org](mailto:office@fccsanrafael.org)

# FCC Calendar MARCH 2020

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<b>1</b>  10 am Worship, Church School & Child Care	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b> 12 pm Lenten Discussion Group 7:40 pm  Choir Rehearsal	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>8</b> Daylight Saving (Start) 10 am  Worship, Church School & Child Care	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b> 10 am  Golden Gail monthly meeting	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b> 12 pm Lenten Discussion Group 7:40 pm  Choir Rehearsal	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>15</b> 10 am  Worship, Church School & Child Care	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b> St. Patrick's Day 7 pm  BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b> 12 pm Lenten Discussion Group 7:40 pm  Choir Rehearsal	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>22</b> 10 am  Worship, Church School & Child Care 10 am One Great Hour of Sharing Offering	<b>23</b> 5 pm  TLE Deadline for March 2020 issue	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b> 12 pm Lenten Discussion Group 7:40 pm  Choir Rehearsal	<b>27</b> 7 pm  Movie Night: The Wig De Haan Center Bilingual Book	<b>28</b>
<b>29</b> 10 am  Worship, Church School & Child Care	<b>30</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>1</b> April Fool's Day 12 pm  Deadline to buy tickets for Come From Away	<b>2</b> 12 pm Lenten Discussion Group 7:40 pm  Choir Rehearsal	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b> 9 am - 12 pm  Spiff up the Church

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).