

PASTORAL REFLECTIONS REV. JEFFREY COCHRAN-CARNEY



The Spirit of the Game The Value of Baseball for a Weary Nation

“Come to me all who are weary and heavy laden,
and I will give you rest.” Matthew 11:28

Could you use a diversion about now? Something fun and lighthearted for a few hours? The boys of summer are back! Well, sort of. What was to be a 162 game season before the coronavirus has been reduced to an abbreviated schedule of 60 games. It is significant because baseball has been almost a spiritual practice for me over the years. Since the age of seven, it has been a compelling force that altered my schedule in order to accommodate games. Homework was delayed and dinner was late, all in the name of the game. Things haven't changed much today.

Numerous writers have cited the importance of baseball for a weary country that desperately needs the national pastime as a diversion for a nation in crisis.

Many baseball fans are familiar with President Franklin Delano Roosevelt's “Green Light” letter, in which he encouraged baseball owners and executives to “keep baseball going” to boost Americans' morale during the country's entrance into World War II. This is arguably another such time.

As a young boy, most of my hopes and dreams were focused between the lines of a baseball diamond. What boy doesn't dream of growing up to be a major leaguer? But there was something more. It was about being with friends and feeling fully alive on a warm summer day. It meant hitting the ball out of the park and running around the bases, which was in my mind a way of using whatever God-given talents I had. It was also a sure way to be popular with friends. Looking up to heroes such as Mickey Mantle and Willie Mays always brought out the best in me.



Looking back, there was something memorable about baseball in a small West Virginia town. For a while I was able to forget that my father recently lost his job, or that Cousin Nanny died. At that moment the advice of a neighbor rang true: “As long as you're on the field playing ball, ain't nothing bad can happen.”

Jesus said, “For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.” There was no doubt where my treasure was. Most summers I could be found at the baseball field behind the high school. If my parents wanted to find me, they knew where to look. If there were chores to do, they had to wait.

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Today in the midst of a pandemic and rampant racism, some moments of longing for the naïveté of youth and a game on green grass would be understandable. T.S. Eliot, in his poems, “Four Quartets,” got it right when he said, “Humankind cannot bear too much reality.” He was not a baseball fan as far as I know, but he lived through the 1918 flu pandemic, the Great Depression, and World War II, so he knew something about hard times and the need for diversion. I rest my case.

I remember the special moments when I sat on the porch with my grandfather on warm summer evenings, listening to the Pittsburgh Pirates on the radio before we had T.V. There was the time when I broke my leg while sliding into home plate, and my grandfather was in such a hurry to rush to the scene that people say he forgot his cane.

I recently read a story about a man from the Bronx who died, and had a couple of seats from the old Yankee stadium planted next to his grave! It’s not a bad way to take the game with you. I admire his intent. No doubt we would have had a lot to talk about.

The writer Robert Mayer, in his book, *Baseball and Men’s Lives: The True Confessions of a Skinny Shortstop*, put into words what I always felt: “Baseball, for those who inhabit it fully, is no mere game. It is an alternate reality parallel to the ‘real’ world. It is the touch of the ball itself, usually at age 7, that opens through the palm of the hand an entry into an enclosed tunnel of time and history.”

When it became obvious I would not be playing baseball as a career, my thoughts turned to being a sportswriter for a period of time. Frederick Buechner defines vocation as the place “where your deep gladness meets the world’s deep hunger.” His words rang true. Today I no longer report on games, but I do report on where evidence of God might be found.

For many years on Father’s Day, I would talk in my sermon about the movie *Field of Dreams*. When it got to the end where Ray Kinsella (Kevin Costner) has a game of catch with his estranged father who died, but somehow came back in spirit form, most of the men in the congregation cried, but they did not know why. Perhaps they were remembering their own fathers, wishing either they could make amends, or have a game of catch again.

Tomorrow I will go back to worrying about the coronavirus and racism in America. I will figure out what to preach on next Sunday, and how to help my son register for college. But for what is left of the summer, I will continue an unlikely spiritual discipline. The boys of summer are back—well, at least for a while. For a few hours they can help us forget that we are in the midst of the worst pandemic in a century, or sinking into a deep recession. I do not know what the answers will be for a nation that is burdened and divided, but I will take a brief respite from the weariness of it all when I hear the magical words, “Play ball!”

Blessings, Pastor Jeffrey

AUGUST AGAPE TEAM



Agape - Providing compassionate connection to our church community through words of encouragement, cards, calls, and visits.

Our Agape leader for August is Anice Flesh (415-306-7902) with the Agape team members David Knopf and Caran Cuneo.



Come and Worship with us! virtually, that is



Pastor Jeffrey is providing a complete worship service via email every Sunday. It's a video including music, prayers, scripture and sermon. Check your email on Sunday morning.

Aug. 2 Michael Meehan, preaching

Pastor Jeffrey will be on vacation on August 2.

Aug. 9 Wrestling with God

Genesis 32:22-31

Jacob wrestled with a stranger through the night, becoming injured in the process. As dawn began to break, the stranger implored Jacob to let him go. But Jacob said, "I will not let you go, unless you bless me." It was only later that Jacob understood that he was wrestling with God. Today we may also struggle with God, but like Jacob, we are encouraged to not give up until we are blessed.

Aug. 16 God's Hungry People

Isaiah 55:1-6; John 6:1-14

Today's New Testament reading is the only miracle recorded in all four Gospels. Jesus and the disciples encountered a large, hungry crowd. In a miraculous display, Jesus multiplied loaves and fishes and was able to feed over 5,000 people with some food left over. Today God's people are still a hungry people. We show our hunger in many ways. God provides food for the body as well as the soul.

Aug. 23 Learning to Listen

1 Kings 19:9-13; Matthew 13:10-17

God told Elijah to go out and stand on the mountain in the presence of the LORD, for the LORD is about to pass by. God was not in the wind. God was not in the earthquake or fire. Afterwards there came a gentle whisper, and Elijah knew he had heard the voice of God. Today we can learn to notice the quiet whispers within and without, whether it is thorough mindfulness, contemplative prayer, or the practice of paying attention.

All sermons are posted on the website in PDF format.

See the next page for our Sunday AM Zoom Coffee Hour Meetings.



Come and Worship with us! virtually, that is



Aug. 30 Standing on Sacred Ground

Exodus 3:1-6

Moses was tending the flock of his father-in-law Jethro in the wilderness when he noticed a bush was burning but it was not consumed. As Moses went closer to the bush to look, he heard God calling him from within the burning bush. “Do not come any closer,” God said. “Take off your sandals, for the place where you are standing is holy ground.” What constitutes the sacred today? How does God speak to us? Where do you find sacred ground? We can learn from Moses as we hear one of the favorite stories from the Torah.

All sermons are posted on the website in PDF format.

See below for our Sunday 10 AM Zoom Coffee Hour Meetings.

ZOOM MEETINGS LET US GATHER TOGETHER SAFELY on Sundays at 10 AM

We are holding weekly Zoom meetings on Sunday mornings, so members of the congregation can gather together for “Coffee Hour” via a video meeting tool called Zoom. We can see one another, talk to each other, and share our experiences of the past several weeks. It is like being in a room together, but safely. Most people find it easy to do. Give it a try! You can use either your computer, your cell phone, your tablet, or even just call in from your land line.

Link to join all church Zoom meetings:

<https://us04web.zoom.us/j/813993981>

Meeting ID: 813 993 981

Password: 594741

Call in number 1-669-900-6833



PRAYER PARTNERS

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



August 2 - 8

Mim and Scott Faraci,
Sam, Ben, and Emma

August 9 - 15

Anice Flesh

August 16 - 22

Louis and Khamla Frost
Melanie Sakskul

August 23 - 29

Cathi Fuller and David Knopf
Rachael and Rebecca

August 30 - September 5

Megan Fuller
Will and Elizabeth

MEETINGS, MEETINGS, MEETINGS -- VIA ZOOM



(See the Zoom instructions at bottom of page 4.)

AUGUST 11: The Board of Ministry meeting will be on Tuesday, July 7, at 11:30 AM.

AUGUST 21: The Board of Trustees meeting will be on Tuesday, August 18, at 7 PM.

PLEASE CONTINUE TO SUPPORT THE WORK OF OUR CHURCH THROUGH YOUR PLEDGES AND OFFERINGS

Thanks to all our members and friends who have continued to keep up with their pledges. We especially want to thank the members who have sent their complete 2020 pledge. Our expenses do continue so this helps us keep on track.

You have 2 options:

Option 1

Use PayPal. Go to fccsanrafael.org. On the home page, you will see the words GIVING ONLINE. Click on this and you will end up on a screen with a PayPal logo. Click on it and you'll see a place to enter your pledge or offering amount. You can use a credit card or your PayPal account. You have the option to do a monthly donation this way as well. For your first time donating this way, Val Sherer will be happy to email you confirmation that she received your donation.



Option 2

You can mail a check to the church. Deposits will be made less frequently until we resume Sunday services, so don't panic if your check is not cashed as quickly as usual.



Feel free to email Val with any questions.

Val Sherer, Financial Secretary

valpub@yahoo.com



BOARD OF MISSION MISSION MATTERS



RITTER CENTER DONATIONS AUGUST 1- 9

While it is unclear what “going back to school” will mean this fall, we do know that students will need supplies and equipment to participate in their education. BUT this year, Ritter Center has asked us to contribute gift cards INSTEAD of backpacks and school supplies.

SO.....This year, call or email Megan Fuller, who will come to your house to pick up your donations of gift cards or cash between August 1 and 9. gemful@hotmail.com or 415 259-8527

She has volunteered to take them all to Ritter Center, as they will be distributed to the kids by Ritter Center in early August. Thanks so much for your generosity.

REQUEST FOR VISA CARDS AND BABY WIPES

FCCSR is a member of the Marin Interfaith Council Accompaniment Network. We received an urgent request to help the immigrant families purchase food and diaper wipes. According to staff member, Jessica Marker, the two greatest items needed right now are Visa cards and baby wipes.

Canal Alliance requested VISA gift cards (with activation fees pre-paid), which will allow Canal Alliance to get individuals who are in urgent need of food. Food is a growing need in the community right now - especially for community members who are in isolation or quarantine as described in the news video below) Given most of the clients are families of 4, they have found \$100 to be the most helpful amount in terms of providing enough food, although any amount is appreciated! Canal Alliance is the recipient of a grant for diapers and baby formula - but they don't have any wipes to distribute with the diapers. The MIC Accompaniment Network decided that the best way to get the items to Canal Alliance is for there to be a few collection sites. Volunteers will drive them over at a designated day and time since Canal Alliance has limited hours and staff, so individuals drop-offs aren't workable. Annie Song-Hill has volunteered to designate her house as a collection site,

If you are interested in donating VISA cards or diaper wipes please drop them off at the home of Annie Song-Hill in the next two weeks. Her address is:

31 Elda Drive, San Rafael, CA 94903a.

You can put VISA cards through the mail slot to the right of the garage door and leave the baby-wipes on the front porch.

To donate to the Canal Alliance Emergency Fund:

<https://donate.canalalliance.org/campaign/client-suport-fund/c276777>





The Big Send

A virtual “Get Out the Vote” letter writing party

oHosted by:

Associate Conference Minister Davena Jones

Rev. Sally Train and Sana Sunia

When: Saturday, September 26, 2020 at 10AM until Noon

Where: Zoom (A link will be sent to registered guests)

Why: The voice of the people must be heard!

2020 will be a profoundly important election – not only for the Presidency – but also for state legislatures. The states draw the maps for Congressional Districts (and gerrymander or not). The states determine the process for voting (which can encourage or suppress voter participation.) President Obama, in a recent speech, pointed out that 19,000 municipalities need policing reforms, and elected officials – mayors, county executives, district attorneys – make the decisions in those communities.

There is no way to overstate the importance of this election.

There is no way to overstate the importance of getting out the vote for this election.

State legislature seats are often won with a margin of only 200 or 300 votes.

Every vote matters!

Mayor and City Council seats are often won with even smaller margins.

Every Vote matters!

With that in mind, we are inviting you to participate in **The Big Send**, a project of the non-partisan organization **Vote Forward**. The goal is to send 10,000,000 letters to communities all over the country that tend to have low voter turn-out and are therefore under-represented at all levels of government.

These letters do not ask the recipients to vote for a specific candidate or party. They simply encourage them to make their voices heard through voting. Research has shown that this is the most effective way to raise the voter turn-out.

These letters are being prepared, addressed, and stamped now. They will be placed in the mail on October 27 – one week before the election.

Our hope is that the Northern California Nevada Conference can contribute at least 2000 letters at our party – all written in the comfort of your homes or churches while sheltering in place.



Are you in? (See the next page)

Are you in?

Here is what you need to do:

1. Register for the party by clicking: [Big Send Party](https://ncnc.dreamhosters.com/the-big-send-a-virtual-get-out-the-vote-letter-writing-party/) (<https://ncnc.dreamhosters.com/the-big-send-a-virtual-get-out-the-vote-letter-writing-party/>)
2. Set up an account by clicking: [Vote Forward](https://votefwd.org) (<https://votefwd.org>)
(This is easy to do. However, they are screening for those who would try to misuse their platform. Therefore, it takes a couple of days to get approval to write letters. Please start the process in plenty of time.)
3. Download and print 20 letter shells from **Vote Forward** prior to the party. You will personalize the letters at the party.
4. This party is BYOS – Bring Your Own Stamps; Bring Your Own Stuff.

You will need:

- o 20 envelopes
- o 20 letter shells printed from **Vote Forward**
- o 20 attractive postage stamps – the more personalized the envelope looks, the more likely it is to be opened.
- o 20 cheerful stickers to decorate the envelopes
- o 1 blue ink pen – blue ink makes it clear that the letter and envelope are hand-written.



DISCUSSION GROUP'S NEW FOCUS: THURSDAYS 1 - 2 PM

A Book Club was started as planned in early June, using a book on Celtic spirituality and was well received with thoughtful discussion. The following week, discussion moved to the urgent concerns in the current context of the death of Floyd George and protests around racial injustice and the systemic health, economic, and social inequities for people of color. We decided to defer our study of Celtic spirituality and continue self-examination and study with engaging discussion around racial injustice and biases as inspired by recommended thought-provoking articles, books and movies. If you wish to join the Book Club discussion, please contact Amy, our Office Manager (at office@fcc.org) so she can add you to the weekly ZOOM meeting invitation. **(See the Zoom instructions at the bottom of page 4 of this issue of the TIE.)**

UPDATE FROM THE TRUSTEES

Thanks to all of those who are maintaining and even adding to their pledges. Our pledge income is keeping up, but our rental income is down substantially. Our rental income is half our yearly income. Forsightedly, the church had maintained some reserves which we will need to use later this year, since we expect more delay in the return of our renters.

The preschool has started up on a limited basis, and the Ministerios de Dios Latinos is now worshipping once a week in the courtyard and having a small 5AM Wednesday prayer meeting. They previously used our facility 5 evenings a week, so they are only able to make a partial payment. The three 12-step groups, the Threshold choir, and the Church of God (7th Day), Garden Club, and 4H are not meeting.

If there is another federal rebate, perhaps, you will be able to offer a portion to the church and the church missions.



WINCHESTER
CATHEDRAL

1079  1979

WE·WELCOME·YOU
TO·A·PLACE·WHERE
GOD·OFFERS·THE
WATER·OF·LIFE
FROM
A·WELL+SPRING
900·YEARS
DEEP

WINCHESTER
CATHEDRAL

1079  1979

WINCHESTER
CATHEDRAL

1079  1979

PLEASE FIND A SEAT AND READ THIS

In the centre of the fifteenth century Screen behind the High Altar is the figure of Christ crucified. In the Holy Sepulchre Chapel are twelfth century wall paintings of Christ being placed in the grave and of Christ risen and ascended.

Jesus Christ was born in Bethlehem over 1900 years ago. During his first thirty years he shared the daily life and work of an ordinary home. For the next three years he went about healing sick and troubled people and teaching small groups in villages, in the fields and by the lakeside. He gathered twelve ordinary men to be his helpers. He had no money. He had no university degrees. He wrote no books. He commanded no army. He wielded no political power. During his ministry he never travelled more than two hundred miles in any direction. He was executed by crucifixion at the age of 33.

He is now revered as Divine by over 900 million people throughout the world. This Cathedral stands to His glory. The service of Holy Communion which he instituted is celebrated in the Cathedral every day. The record of his life and teaching is contained in the Bible which stands open on the Lectern in the Quire and the Nave.

Jesus Christ taught by what he said, by what he was, and by what he did. He taught us to trust in God as a loving and merciful Father and to pray, in faith, to Him for all our needs and in all our difficulties. He taught that we are infinitely precious, that we are children of God, share in His Spirit, and so should be patient with one another in love, understanding, respect and forgiveness.

He taught us to live in a spirit of thankfulness to God for all His gifts to us and always to be sensitive to the needs of others, especially those who are sick in mind or body and all who are lonely or distressed. He taught that our life in this world is a testing time and part of a greater and fuller life in God's eternal kingdom. He taught us to follow him in faith, simplicity and love and to try to live by his teaching.

Towards the end of his earthly life Jesus endured cruelty, suffering and death. God raised him from the dead to demonstrate to all men for all time that Goodness will triumph over Evil, Justice over Injustice, Love over Hate, Life over Death. Without the Resurrection of Christ there would have been no Christian Church and this Cathedral would never have been built.

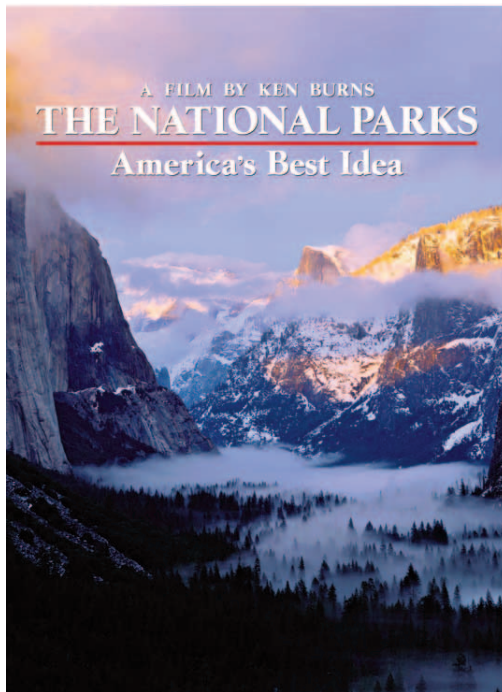
May your visit to this Cathedral be to you a Blessing by bringing you closer to Jesus Christ, deepening your trust in the love and mercy of God and in the power of His divine and indwelling Spirit.

Submitted by
Denise Walker

MOVIE NIGHT - AUGUST

Viewing Escape from the Political Seasons

With our FCCSR Movie Night on hiatus through election day (and probably far beyond) here are two recommendations for streaming viewing that both remind us the political world is capable of much more than we've seen of late.



The National Parks: America's Best Idea – When this series first came out in 2009, we may have been a little jaded by repeated doses of Ken Burns' distinctive video style. However, on second viewing it is clearly one of his best series. Part of the impact, of course, is the fabulous eye-candy of our parks, but equally powerful is the story of preserving these natural treasures for the people's use. It was a unique, revolutionary idea when Teddy Roosevelt first voiced it. And, it was still unique a generation later, when his cousin FDR expanded the park system toward its present scope. Watching the whole series is the best kind of feel-good TV. *Six 2-hour episodes streaming on PBS.*

The West Wing – This ground-breaking series ran for seven seasons, through the Clinton and George W. Bush administrations. It won countless awards and broke new ground in the richness of its characters and incorporating the real issues of the times into its scripts. Yes, President Jed Bartlett was a little too good to be real, as was the witty banter of his staff, but all great drama is larger than life. All 154 episodes are available to stream, so if you start right now watching one a night, you'll finish right around inauguration day. *Streaming on Netflix and Amazon Prime*



AUGUST BIRTHDAYS



6 — Jamie Cline
6 — Audrey Borden
12 — Rebecca Knopf
13 — Allison Kaufman
17 — Helen MacLam
19 — Emma Intrater
19 — Melanie Sakskul
22 — Amy Smith
24 — Jakob Dempsey
27 — David Knopf
28 — Judy Girard

GOLDEN GALS — Meeting postponed

The Golden Gals will not be meeting this month due to the Shelter in Place order but hope to do so some time in the future.



TIE DEADLINE for SEPTEMBER 2020 Issue - Mon. Aug. 24

The deadline for articles and news for the September 2020 issue of The TIE is Monday, Aug. 24th. Please email your articles to lucindaray@aol.com by Monday, the 24th.



CHURCH OFFICE HOURS

Both Amy and Jeffrey are working from home.

You can contact them via email

NOTE: Pastor Jeffrey's new email: fccsrpastor@gmail.com

Rev. Jeffrey Cochran-Carney – Pastor

Mondays and Thursdays 8 AM - 4 PM

Please call first for an appointment

Phone (908) 487-8855

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

FCC Calendar AUGUST 2020

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
26 Parents' Day 10 am  Worship, Church School & Child Care 10 am - 11 am ZOOM Meeting, Virtual coffee hour	27	28	29	30 10 am - 2 pm  Discussion on ZOOM: Racism and Social Justice	31 August 1 7 pm  Movie Night at home. See suggestions on page 11	August 1 7 pm  Movie Night at home. See suggestions on page 11
2 10 am  Worship, Church School & Child Care 10 am - 11 am ZOOM Meeting, Virtual coffee hour	3	4	5	6 10 am - 2 pm  Discussion on ZOOM: Racism and Social Justice	7	8 7 pm  Movie Night at home. See suggestions on page 11
9 10 am  Worship, Church School & Child Care 10 am - 11 am ZOOM Meeting, Virtual coffee hour	10	11 11:30 am  Board of Ministry Meeting 11:30 AM via ZOOM	12	13 10 am - 2 pm  Discussion on ZOOM: Racism and Social Justice	14	15 7 pm  Movie Night at home. See suggestions on page 11
16 10 am  Worship, Church School & Child Care 10 am - 11 am ZOOM Meeting, Virtual coffee hour	17	18 7 pm - 8 pm  BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING via ZOOM	19	20 10 am - 2 pm  Discussion on ZOOM: Racism and Social Justice	21	22 7 pm  Movie Night at home. See suggestions on page 11
23 10 am  Worship, Church School & Child Care 10 am - 11 am ZOOM Meeting, Virtual coffee hour	24 5 pm  TIE Deadline for August 2020 Issue	25	26	27 10 am - 2 pm  Discussion on ZOOM: Racism and Social Justice	28	29 7 pm  Movie Night at home. See suggestions on page 11
30 10 am  Worship, Church School & Child Care 10 am - 11 am ZOOM Meeting, Virtual coffee hour	31	1	2	3	4	5 7 pm  Movie Night at home. See suggestions on page 11

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.