

PASTORAL REFLECTIONS REV. JEFFREY COCHRAN-CARNEY



What Makes Holy Week Holy?

What makes Holy Week holy? That question came up for me during a walk early one morning, which is when my best thoughts tend to occur. It is a question I first thought about during a Good Friday service in high school. What really happened that week, and what does it mean for us today?

At the end of Holy Week, Jesus was crucified, but it was more than that. Every year the questions have returned, and not only during Lent, but throughout the year. After all, the last days of Jesus are an important part of the Christian faith. Without Holy Week, there could be no Easter. But maybe it's not a question to be answered, but a question to live with and ponder. Holy Week provides us with such an opportunity to accompany Jesus, and participate in the sacramental acts of that last week. In doing so, we internalize his values and actions.

As far as answers to my questions about Holy Week go, the realization dawns that the answer can never come with words. They always fall short. It is more important to listen to your life, with its intuitions and holy hunches you would stake your life on, for that is exactly what you are doing.

Tomorrow I will go for a walk again, and my mind will ponder the same questions, knowing that the Holy Whisperer might say, "My grace is sufficient," and that may have to do. One of the virtues of growing older is the ability to live with more ambiguity. Meanwhile, someone continues to walk with me, just as closely as my dog walks at my heels. Call it the Holy Spirit, or a divine indwelling.

There is a temptation to view Holy Week from the perspective of Easter. Every generation of Christians since that first Easter know how the story ends. It would be easy to pull back the curtain on Good Friday and go directly to the empty tomb. Yet, our lives are more existential in nature. Holy Week did not occur just once in history, but is recapitulated every time we wrestle with questions that give our life meaning.



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Would you have allowed Jesus to wash your feet? Shared in the last supper in the Upper Room? Would you have followed Jesus to the Garden of Gethsemane? Would your heart have broken when Judas betrayed Jesus? Would you have been at the trial, or wept at the cross with the three Marys as Jesus was taking his last breath? If so, then you know what made the week holy.

Early on Easter morning, another voice will emerge, one that is soft and sweet. But let's not get ahead of ourselves. There are more than enough penultimate things between now and then to shape our lives and ascribe with meaning. Let's be grateful for these moments in between, and savor the company we keep without insisting on explanations.

The life of Jesus can have a sacramental effect in everything you do. His heartbeat can still be felt in your chest today. His presence at the Last Supper means he can be a guest at your next supper. Holy Week amplifies the impulses we feel all the time, but may not notice. What makes Holy Week holy for you – and not only *that* week -- but for *all* your weeks ahead? It is a question to ponder, and a faith we can continue to live out.

Faithfully,
Pastor Jeffrey



DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME BEGINS SUNDAY, MARCH 14

"COFFEE HOUR" CHANGES BACK TO 10 AM

Don't forget to change your clocks (set them ahead one hour) on Saturday night, March 13! **We will also be changing our Sunday "Coffee Hour" on Zoom back to 10 AM starting Sunday, March 14.** See you at 10 AM.

MARCH AGAPE TEAM

Agape - Providing compassionate connection to our church community through words of encouragement, cards, calls, and visits. Our Agape leader for March is Anice Flesh (415-306-7902) with David Knopf and Caran Cuneo.



PRAYER PARTNERS

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



February 28 - March 6
Cyndi Siroky

March 7 - 13
Debra Smith

March 14 - 20
Annie Song-Hill

March 21 - 27
Hilary Spaulding

March 28 - April 3
Bob and Sue Spofford



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



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.

March 7 3rd Sunday in Lent Turning the Tables

John 2:13-22

Today our lectionary passage brings us to the story of Jesus driving out the money changers in the temple. The story appears in all four gospels, and is one of the few times we see Jesus angry. There are multiple layers to this story, but it prompts us to ask ourselves what makes us angry. How we deal with our own anger is important, and has spiritual implications that call for our attention.

March 14 4th Sunday in Lent Conversations in the Night

John 3:1-15

Nicodemus, a Pharisee and a Jew, came to Jesus by night. Maybe he was intrigued or curious about the teachings of Jesus. Perhaps he didn't want his colleagues to know. His observations were clear and compelling. He said: "No one can do these signs that you do apart from the presence of God." His life changed that night as a result of his conversation. We all come to Jesus by night with our own set of questions and experiences. What can we learn from their conversation?

March 21 5th Sunday in Lent A Grain of Wheat and Other Secrets on the Way to the Cross

John 12:20-33

"Unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains just a single grain; but if it dies, it bears much fruit" (John 12:24).

A crowd shouting Hosannas is already surrounding Jesus in Jerusalem, yet the disciples and the crowd do not fully understand who he is. The crowd has been following Jesus since he raised Lazarus from the dead among other miracles. The occasion is the Jewish festival of Passover. The Greeks came to Philip and said to him, 'Sir, we wish to see Jesus.'" (John 12:21). Jesus responded with an enigmatic answer, but beneath the surface of his comments lay secrets to interpret on the way to the cross and in your life and mine.

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



March 28 Palm/Passion Sunday Hope Amid the Hosannas

Psalm 118:19-29; Luke 19:28-40

In today's lesson, Jesus is about to enter the holy city of Jerusalem. Palm Sunday, also called Passion Sunday, is the first day of Holy Week, and commemorates Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem. The Jewish people were expecting a king and hero such as King David. Surely Jesus would take control from the Romans, and usher in a new era for the Jewish people. Soon, however, fortunes would change when the crowd became disappointed as Jesus entered the city on a donkey – a biblical symbol of service, suffering, peace and humility. Where would you be in the crowd? What are your hopes and expectations today for the Christ who comes into our hearts and the world?

ZOOM MEETINGS LET US GATHER TOGETHER SAFELY on Sunday, March 7 at 11 AM and CHANGING TO 10 AM ON MARCH 14

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



MEETINGS, MEETINGS, MEETINGS -- VIA ZOOM

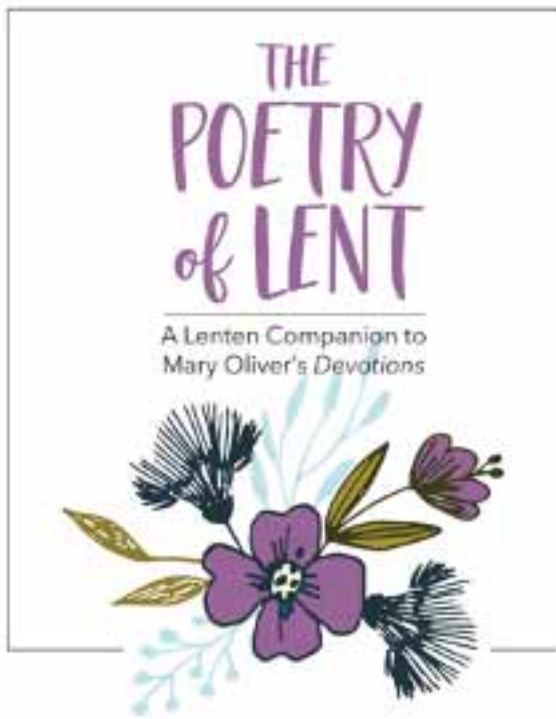
MARCH 9: The Board of Ministry meeting will be on Tuesday, March 12, at 12:00 noon.

MARCH 16: The Board of Trustees meeting will be on Tuesday, March 16, at 7 PM.

MARCH 3, 10, 17 and 24: The Lenten Reflection Series will meet on Wednesdays from 7 - 8 PM.

MARCH 24: The Church Council meeting will be on Wednesday, March 24, at 5:30 PM on Zoom.





LENTEN REFLECTION SERIES CONTINUES FEATURING THE POETRY OF MARY OLIVER

You are invited to join on Zoom on Wednesdays from 7:00 – 8:00 PM for a Lenten reflection series.

We are exploring Lent through scripture and the poetry of Mary Oliver. Her rich, inviting images provide a perfect companion alongside Lenten themes from the Bible.

Please email Pastor Jeffrey if you would like to participate (fccsrpastor@gmail.com) so he can forward the PDF to you that will be the basis of our reflection. Poems will be from her book *Devotions: The Selected Poems of Mary Oliver* (you can also find the poems online).

“Week by week, we’ll travel this Lenten journey together toward
Easter morning – and thereby do our part, in a world so full of shadows,
to help lengthen the light and welcome the joy of God’s spring.”
(from *The Poetry of Lent*)



We fondly remember Richard Walker, husband of Denise Walker, and Chris Siroky, the son of Cyndi Siroky, both of whom passed away during February.



BOARD OF MISSION MISSION MATTERS



WHAT IS ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING?

One Great Hour of Sharing is an offering of the United Church of Christ that supports disaster relief, refugee assistance and development actions. Last year we were ready to do our special offering the week the sanctuary closed and congregant worship ended.

Now as we see begin to see the light of 2021, your Board of Mission has designated March 22nd as One Great Hour of Sharing. March 22nd is also the United Nations International Observance of **World Water Day** where we reflect on the importance of water in our daily lives and remember those who lack access to adequate drinking water supplies.

With your support, 100 families will benefit from the Water Well project, sponsored by the **United Church of Christ** in Mozambique. When you give to **One Great Hour of Sharing**, you invest in the hopeful future of women and girls around the world and serve as co-workers with God to build a just world for all.

We would ask you to consider making this special offering during the month of March, by including a **check made payable to FCC San Rafael, with OGHS 2021 on the memo line.**

In many ways, our world was not prepared for the weight of the COVID-19 pandemic. But because of your past generosity through **One Great Hour of Sharing** many communities were better prepared to meet the challenges presented by COVID-19. Through your past support of projects, more people were equipped for the crisis with improved sanitation; access to clean, safe water for handwashing; and were empowered to prevent the spread of disease among their family and neighbors.

But you are not just sharing water – when you share what God has given you, you “let love flow.” Water is, after all, life. When you “let love flow,” lives are not just saved—they are transformed. Thank you for your generous gifts.



PILGRIM PARK NEWS

50th ANNIVERSARY PILGRIM PARK 1971-2021

Yes, Pilgrim Park is 50 years old this year. Probably later in the year we will have a birthday party.

Les Santos – Les Santos, the new manager of Pilgrim Park, and his wife have moved in to Nancy's former apartment. Soon, Les' grandmother will join him and his wife. Les seems to be settling into the manager's job quite nicely.



Board Meeting – The board will next meet on March 11 via Zoom. In addition to the regular management and financial reports, the board will hear about the paving project planned for later this year and will begin to discuss what we should do with the soon-to-be-vacated Head Start interior and exterior space..

Bob De Haan – Board member since about 1974



TRUSTEE'S REPORT

FCC Awarded Second Draw PPP loan

The church applied for a second draw of the Payroll Protection Program forgivable loan, and received the funds within a week! This will cover 2 months of the cost of our pastor and office manager. Since our rental income is still only one half of our pre Covid income, these funds allow us to maintain our excellent staff.

We are still hoping things will get more normal for our renters this summer.

This Could be Electrifying!

Do you know a reliable electrician we could hire at reasonable cost to change a parking lot light to LED and set up lighting for our outside crosses? We have talked with a couple of electricians, but have been waiting a long time for estimates.

Contact David at knopf.david@gmail.com, or any Trustee.

BOARD OF MINISTRY REPORT

Welcome to new members of the Board of Ministry

Tessa Templeman and Louis Frost have agreed to join our Ministry Team. Welcome to both of them!

Lenten Study Wednesdays at 7 pm.

The following are quotes from those who attended...

“Such exquisite poems!”

“It was really meaningful to hear folks’ thoughts and stories about unburdening from things that was inspired by the poem, “Storage.”

“Mary Oliver’s story is so inspiring; she is an example of a Resurrection story; to create such beauty from such a painful childhood.”

Agape teams

The Agape teams are continuing to rotate usually offering phone calls and/ or notes to most isolated members plus those identified with health or other needs.

Sunday, March 14: Remember TWO time changes

1. Our Sunday Zoom “Coffee Hour” social meetings return to 10 AM on March 14.
2. Daylight Savings starts on Sunday, March 14.



On Good Friday, April 2nd

On Good Friday, from 12-3 PM, there will be scripture stations set up at the church, related to the Easter Week events leading up to, and during, Christ’s Crucifixion. It will be a self-led time to meditate to a background of recorded sacred music. There will be one Ministry Team church member present during each hour. We ask that just one or two members (wearing your masks) move through the stations at a time, and allow others to take the time they need.

Easter Lilies?

We will not be purchasing memorial Easter Lilies this year. Instead, the Agape team members will deliver pots of spring flowers to members who have lost family members this year.

Next Meeting

Tuesday, March 9. at 12 noon.



MOVIE NIGHT MARCH *LITTLE FIRES EVERYWHERE* and *THE GOOD PLACE*

During the past year, Movie Night has featured relatively obscure gems from the streaming world. This month however, we're featuring a couple of well-known network hits of surprising depth that you just might have missed.

Little Fires Everywhere (streaming on Hulu)

This eight-episode domestic drama, based on the novel by Celeste Ng, was one of the first big hits of the Covid streaming era. Reese Witherspoon stars as Elena, the tightly-wound mom of a picture-perfect family in wealthy, picture-perfect Shaker Heights, Ohio.

When a single mother and her teenage daughter living out of their car appear in town, Elena welcomes them and rents them a house she owns, despite knowing nothing of their background. Complications . . . BIG complications . . . ensue as the secrets buried in everyone's past painfully emerge and we realize that nobody's story is as simple as we thought.



The Good Place (streaming on Netflix)

The Good Place is a half-hour sitcom that was a modest hit on NBC for four seasons and won a number of major awards for writing. It focuses on four young people, dead before their time, who arrive in a particular sub-division of “The Good Place” overseen by Ted Danson.

Everything seems perfect . . . except for all the little things that keep going wrong . . . and the characters' growing feeling that maybe they don't belong here. The dialog and acting are first-rate, laughs abound and the final episodes raise some surprisingly serious ideas about what “afterlife” might really mean.

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 — 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 APRIL 2021 Issue - Mon., March 29

The deadline for articles and news for the April 2021 issue of The TIE is Monday, March 29th. Please email your articles to lucindaray@aol.com by Monday, the 29th.



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 MARCH 2021

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
28  10 am Worship, Church School & Child Care	March 1	2	3 7 am - 8 am  Lenten Study Discussion	4	5	6  Movie Night at home. See suggestions on page 8
7  10 am Worship, Church School & Child Care 11 am - 12 pm ZOOM Meeting, Virtual coffee hour	8	9 12 pm  Board of Ministry Meeting 12 noon via ZOOM	10 7 am - 8 am  Lenten Study Discussion	11	12	13  Movie Night at home. See suggestions on page 8
14 Daylight Saving (Start)  10 am Worship, Church School & Child Care 10 am - 11 am ZOOM Meeting, Virtual coffee hour	15	16 7 am - 8 am  BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING via ZOOM	17 St. Patrick's Day 7 am - 8 am  Lenten Study Discussion	18	19	20  Movie Night at home. See suggestions on page 8
21  10 am Worship, Church School & Child Care 10 am - 11 am ZOOM Meeting, Virtual coffee hour	22	23	24 5:30 am - 6:30 am  Church Council Meeting via ZOOM 7 am - 8 am  Lenten Study Discussion	25	26	27  Movie Night at home. See suggestions on page 8
28  10 am Worship, Church School & Child Care 10 am - 11 am ZOOM Meeting, Virtual coffee hour	29 5 am  TIE Deadline for March 2021 Issue	30	31 7 am - 8 am  Lenten Study Discussion	1 April Fool's Day	2	3  Movie Night at home. See suggestions on page 8

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.