

PASTORAL REFLECTIONS REV. JEFFREY COCHRAN-CARNEY



He is going ahead of you

The words of the angel to Mary and Salome strike a chord in me as I read the Easter narratives -- "Go, tell his disciples and Peter that he is going ahead of you to Galilee; there you will see him, just as he told you." The company of women must have been surprised. They came to the empty tomb looking for Jesus – looking in all the old, familiar places.

Isn't it just like them, and like us – to look for Jesus in all the old places we're used to seeing him? But God had something new in store – something that neither the women, nor we were expecting. Easter is the supreme example of God making all things new. The old ways with limitations and familiar endings are replaced by the new reality of the resurrection.

It is an important lesson of Easter to learn: we are most alive and at one with the Risen Christ when we move ahead with him on the road to tomorrow. He is

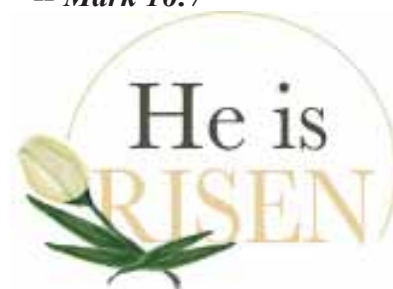
going on ahead of us as he always does. No looking back. We may be tempted to linger near the tomb, nursing our grief and sorrows, or we may want to stay home and celebrate our good fortune that Jesus was raised. In either case, he has already left the scene and gone on ahead of us, and beckons us to follow into the future. It is true for us, and I believe it is true for the church.

We serve a go-ahead God. Jesus is always going ahead of us. We're lucky if we catch a glimpse as he blazes a path before us. He has an urgent agenda to share grace and good news to any who will listen, and so he goes on ahead of us and urges us to follow. Is it any wonder the adjective used most often by Mark to describe Jesus' actions is "immediately?" No lingering allowed.

What are the implications for us? For the spiritual believer, it means the future holds possibilities for hope and new life. I'm reminded of Casey Stengel, whose legendary baseball career spanned over 50 years. He began as manager of the Mets when he was in his seventies. When asked what his greatest thrill had been as he

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"But go, tell his disciples and Peter that he is going ahead of you to Galilee; there you will see him, just as he told you." -- Mark 16:7



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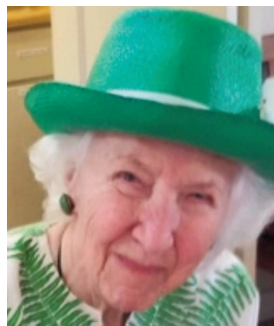
recalled his fifty plus years in baseball, he politely smiled at the reported and said, “Young man, I haven’t had it yet!” There is a case of optimism and hope for the future! That’s how it is for Christians – the best is yet to be – a future filled with hope, surprises and joy. And why not? We travel with a Risen Savior.

Where is the “Galilee” in your life? Where will your travels with the risen Christ take you? A pilgrimage? A new relationship? Let’s put on our walking shoes and be ready to follow him. We should not be surprised at the angels’ words . . . “He has been raised, and is going on ahead of you to Galilee; there you will see him, just as he told you.” Let’s not keep him waiting.

Easter Blessings, Pastor Jeffrey



Richard Walker



Marion Long



Chris Siroky

APRIL AGAPE TEAM

Agape - Providing compassionate connection to our church community through words of encouragement, cards, calls, and visits. Our Agape leader for April is Jackie Dema (415-259-8610) with Val Sherer, Denise Walker, and Tessa Templeman.



PRAYER PARTNERS

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



March 28 - April 3
Bob and Sue Spofford

April 4 - 10
Tessa and Colin Templeman

April 11 - 17
Dorothy Trotter

April 18 - 24
Colleen Trudeau

April 25 - May 1
James (Trip) True

Come and **Worship** **with us!** **outdoors and virtually**



There is a complete worship service available via email every week. It includes music, prayers, scripture, and sermon.

April 1 Maundy Thursday

Join us on Zoom on Thursday, April 1, at 7 pm for a brief time of scripture, prayer and communion. Please provide your own elements.

April 2 Good Friday

The church and courtyard will be available on Good Friday April 2 from 12—3 pm for silence and reflection.



Outdoor worship will be held every Sunday, weather permitting, starting April 4, with masking and social distancing.

April 4 Easter Sunday: He Is Risen

Colossians 3:1-4; John 20:1-18

On Easter morning, we will celebrate by gathering outdoors for worship once again! Easter is best understood in community. The disciples and friends gathered in excitement as they shared stories and accounts of the resurrection. Today we can do the same. Finally, there are new signs of life and hope emerging after covid. Where will you find new life? What will be risen in you?



April 11 A God of Second Chances John 12:20-33

It was Easter evening and Jesus, newly raised from the dead, appears to the disciples who are hiding out with fear and trembling. "Peace be with you," he told them. Jesus invited the disciples to look at his scarred hands and side. It would be enough. Only problem was, Thomas was not there when Jesus appeared. Upon learning of the appearance of the risen Lord, Thomas protested, and said he would not believe unless he saw Jesus for himself and the nail marks in his hands. Thomas got a second chance to encounter Jesus, and he believed. God gives us a second chance and more. We can experience God's abundant grace that allows us to live full and meaningful lives without regret or fear. Everybody deserves a second chance.



Come and Worship with us!



April 18 He Opened Their Minds

John 12:20-33

On According to Luke, the best way to comprehend the resurrection is through the telling of stories. Today's gospel follows the story of Clophas and the other disciple after they encountered Jesus on the road to Emmaus, though they did not recognize him. In today's lesson, Jesus appears to the disciples. "They were startled and frightened, thinking they saw a ghost." Through conversation and personal stories, Jesus "opened their minds," and some came to know him and why he came. What are the stories and encounters that open our minds to that spiritual presence today?

April 25 Hearing the Shepherd's Voice Psalm 23; John 10:11-18

Today is known across the church as Good Shepherd Sunday. It occurs on the Fourth Sunday of Easter. We are reminded of the beloved 23rd Psalm. People had met and talked with Jesus for a time after the resurrection, and many were comforted and assured. Who is this man? Is he the same one we knew before the resurrection? Who is he for us today? Jesus has been called, guide, friend, mentor, but always the good shepherd. Let us discover and go deeper into this beloved image of the risen Lord.

ZOOM MEETINGS LET US GATHER TOGETHER SAFELY Sunday Mornings 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



MEETINGS, MEETINGS, MEETINGS -- VIA ZOOM

APRIL 13: The Board of Ministry meeting will be on Tuesday, April 13, at 12:00 noon.

APRIL 20: The Board of Trustees meeting will be on Tuesday, April 20, at 7 PM.

MAY 26: The Church Council meeting will be on Wednesday, March 24, at 5:30 PM on Zoom.





BOARD OF MISSION MISSION MATTERS



ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING UPDATE

This year, One Great Hour of Sharing, came on 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.



Thanks to our generous donors in March to OGHS. Your donations, which totalled \$455, will be combined with other UCC gifts from across the country and will benefit 100 families in the Water Well project, sponsored by the United Church of Christ in Mozambique. Your gifts to One Great Hour of Sharing 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.

You can still contribute to this special offering by including a **check made payable to FCC San Rafael, with OGHS 2021 on the memo line.**

SONOMA COUNTY HABITAT FOR HUMANITY THANKS FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF SAN RAFAEL



As you may recall, last December the Mission Board donated funds to organizations working in our community. One of those was Habitat for Humanity of Sonoma County. In their recent thank you letter acknowledging the gift, Habitat said:

“It is so heartening when we receive a gift from a generous donor that allows us to say

“yes” to one more deserving, low-income senior in need of critical home repair. You make our work possible.

We are currently actively running our Aging in Place (AIP) program. Your contribution will enable us to further our mission of giving Sonoma County seniors the opportunity to age safely in their homes. It will help transform lives by bringing comfort and hope to an all too often forgotten generation.”

As one recent AIP homeowner expressed, “You don’t know how worried I got every time it rained. I was afraid the rotting on my window trims would spread to the siding on my home. It was so stressful.” Mrs. T (the homeowner expressed tremendous relief when Habitat of Sonoma replaced the rotting trim around her windows. This would not have been possible without your act of kindness.

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.

Board Meeting – The board met recently to hear management reports and to review operating results to date. Pilgrim Park's operating results remain close to budget; the project is in excellent financial condition. The board also approved the auditors for the 20/21 audit. The final action was to approve Caran Cuneo as a new board member.

Bob De Haan – Board member since about 1974



TRUSTEE'S REPORT

LANDSCAPING AROUND THE OUTSIDE CROSS

Pilgrim Park Apartments has offered to landscape the area around our parking lot cross as part of a continuing program of enhancing the entrance to the apartments, and thus the church as well. The Board of Trustees has accepted this offer and will reimburse Pilgrim Park for the necessary materials.



The site has several challenges. It is sloped, has very thin, rocky soil with buried roots, and gets quite hot in the summer. The initial plans are to remove nearly all of current plants, dig out the roots, and reduce the slope by adding soil and perhaps some terracing. Heat and drought tolerant plants will be chosen as well as colorful plants that bloom near Easter. A drip irrigation system will also be installed.

GROUPS MEETING IN OUR CHURCH

Although our number of renters is way down, there is some activity starting up at our facility.

- *The Montessori preschool is in session now Monday-Friday.
- *4H meets Sunday and Monday afternoons.
- *A Yoga group has started up again on Wednesdays.
- *Ministerios de Dios Latinos has outside worship Sunday evenings, prayer meetings very early Saturday mornings, and band practice Friday evenings.
- *AARP has started up again, now providing "contactless tax filing and assistance" twice a week.

MUSICAL DIRECTOR JEFF PAUL RESIGNS

The church Musical Director Jeff Paul has resigned. He has been our musical directive for about 13 years. He continues to be the accompanist to the College of Marin Chorus and Oratorio, as well practicing real estate. We thank him for his years of service to the church. The Board of Trustees anticipates forming a search committee of choir and congregation members this Spring and hopes to be able hire several substitute temporary musicians before selecting a new musical director.

BOARD OF MINISTRY REPORT

Easter: The Long-Awaited Return

The Resurrection is coming! **We will be worshipping together, outdoors, on Easter, April 4 at 10 am!** In their March meeting, the Board of Ministry concentrated on planning for that Service. It will of course be a celebration of the resurrection of Christ, but also the return to worshipping in person. In response to many in the congregation's strong desire, the service will be at the church, outside if weather permits, and indoors, with all windows open, in the unlikely event of rain. In either case, masks and social distance will be required. As usual, the 10am gathering can also be joined on our usual church Zoom link on Easter Sunday.



Enhanced music and lay readings (the latter already begun in services), will be highlights of the Easter Celebration. A brass quartet (performed and recorded just for our service by Adrian Quince) will accompany the traditional Easter hymns, and congregants may happily hum along, **but not sing**. This celebration of The Resurrection will truly celebrate the hoped for return of a more “normal” world.

During Holy Week, on **Maundy Thursday** Pastor Jeffrey will host a 7 p.m. Zoom communion service. Also during Holy Week, the Church's cross will be draped for Good Friday and flowers will decorate the courtyard (or Sanctuary in event of rain) on Easter.

Easter flowers There will be pots of colorful bulbs in honor of those who have been ill or homebound decorating the church on Easter. Anyone wishing to help deliver these following Easter service, please contact Cathi Fuller. There will be Easter Lilies in memorial of our church members who have died.

On **Good Friday** stones outlining a simple labyrinth will be placed in the Church courtyard, and Stations of the Cross will be symbolized. Members are invited to come for a meditative experience from 12 noon until 3:00 p.m. Cathi Fuller, Pastor Jeffrey, and Louis Frost will take turns providing guidance for those participating.

Youth Lent activity: Our youth will be receiving some “teatime” activities to share with their family during Holy Week that connect an activity with scripture.

Moving forward, the Board of Ministry is working to add more musical variety to all services. Recent examples were Charles and Lucinda's “quartet,” and several pieces by Cathi's cousin, Sylvia Lester, in March. Choir members are encouraged to prepare other pieces.

Also looking ahead, the Committee is hoping to video the Sunday morning services for those who are unable to attend in person. David Knopf is working on the technology to do this.

Nurture and outreach:

Heartfelt thanks go out to our “small but very active” community who have offered love in so many ways through this challenging year but especially difficult recent months when we have had many members or close friends and family of members pass on as well as many who have had serious health concerns. You have sent hundreds of cards, made hundreds of phone calls,

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prepared and delivered dozens of meals, provided transport, food, gifts and flowers, served on committees becoming Zoom efficient, kept our church and grounds cared for, renters updated, finances finessed, services and studies planned and produced and so much more Special thanks to Pastor Jeffrey who has spent the majority of his time with us during the Pandemic and has not allowed the social distancing orders from keep him from being completely present with us in worship and pastoring.



Finally, the Board of Ministry welcomes feedback and suggestions for future worship. Members are Cathi Fuller, Pastor Jeffrey, and Charles Little.....and at our March meeting we were delighted to welcome our new member Tessa Templeman!



WELCOME SUBSTITUTE KEYBOARD PLAYER KENJI HIGASHIHAMA

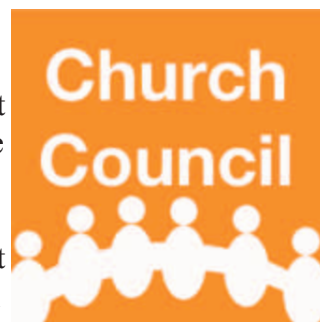
Meet our substitute keyboard player for April, Kenji Higashihama. Kenji has over 30 years of experience on the piano. While he is classically trained, he grew up singing and playing gospel music in church. He is an experienced music director having worked on a number of shows, including a national tour. Here in California he has been seen working with

organizations such as Berkeley Repertory Theatre, La Jolla Playhouse, Broadway By The Bay, Transcendence Theatre Company, and Piedmont Children's Choirs.

CHURCH COUNCIL REPORT

The FCC Council met on Zoom on March 24. The next meeting is scheduled for May 26, also on Zoom. At the May meeting, if we continue to open up our community, the Council will decide how they want to continue meeting through this year, in person or Zoom? Much of the meeting concerned the outdoor Easter worship service plans.

The Pastor announced he had found a keyboard player; for Easter as well as through April. He also told us Marion Long had died as a result of a fall. Jackie Dema has graciously agreed to cover the Clerk position for Council meeting until Annie recovers from recent surgery.



LAY READERS AND HYMN LEAD SINGERS NEEDED



Please contact Amy Powers in the church office if you wish to read scripture during a service. We also would like to include to special music and accompaniment for hymns. While we will NOT be singing hymns as a group, we look forward to special music and soloists with face masks. Please contact the church office if you can volunteer with music.

CHURCH DIRECTORY UPDATE COMING!

Please confirm that your information listed in the directory is correct (address, phone, cell phone, birth-day). The office will be updating the directory soon. Email the office with any change..



MOVIE NIGHT APRIL: NORWAY BECKONS *SUNLIGHT NIGHT* and *TWO LIVES*

For your streaming pleasure in April, we offer two very different films, both set in Norway.

The Sunlight Night

(streaming on Hulu, Vudu, and others)

The Sunlight Night is a quiet comedy based on the author's real-life experience. Frances is a young artist in New York struggling to get her career off the ground. In desperation, she takes a job assisting a famous conceptual artist in Norway complete his latest project: transforming an abandoned barn into an art object.

The expectable moments of culture clash pass quickly, and we join Frances in her journey of growth. Then another American arrives in her little outpost, a young man who wants to give his late father a proper Viking burial. Romance starts to break out, cautiously and quietly, as the barn project nears completion. This is the kind of "little" movie that leaves you with a smile, a sigh and a desire to watch it all again.



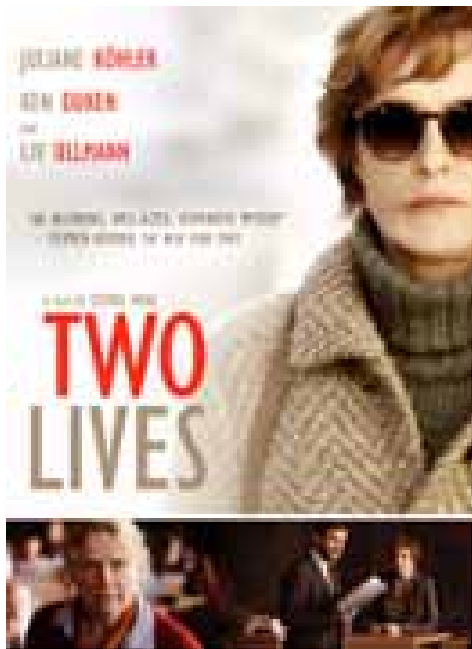
Two Lives

(streaming on Amazon Prime)

Two Lives, is a film from 2012 that centers on a piece of little-known WWII history:

"Lebensborn" was a Nazi breeding program intended to increase the population of "racially pure" children. German SS soldiers fathered babies with Norwegian mothers, and several thousand of these babies were given up to be raised by the state in special schools.

The movie is set in 1990, just after the re-unification of Germany. Liv Ullman plays a woman who was one of these Lebensborn mothers. She has long since re-united with her daughter and is leading a comfortable life in Norway. However, when she and her daughter are asked to help in an investigation of that era, things get complicated, very complicated. *Two Lives* is, in part, a spy thriller, but it goes beyond that to ask serious questions about family and loyalty.



APRIL BIRTHDAYS



- 2 — Barbara Miller
- 3 — Bob Spofford
- 4 — Colleen Beery
- 9 — Bob Bandettini
- 10 — Scott Faraci
- 11 — Jill Krippendorf
- 14 — Hilary Spaulding
- 24 — Lucinda Ray
- 26 — Michael Meehan

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 MAY 2021 Issue - Mon., April 26

The deadline for articles and news for the May 2021 issue of The TIE is Monday, April 26th. Please email your articles to lucindaray@aol.com by Monday, the 26th.



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 APRIL 2021

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
23  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	April 1 April Fool's Day 7 am-8 am  MAUNDY THURSDAY ZOOM SERVICE	2  12 am-3 am GOOD FRIDAY MEDITATION IN COURTYARD	3  Movie Night at home. See suggestions on page 8
4 Easter 10 am-11 am ZOOM Meeting, virtual coffee hour 10 am  OUTDOOR WORSHIP IN COURTYARD 10 AM	5	6	7	8	9	10  Movie Night at home. See suggestions on page 8
11 10 am-11 am ZOOM Meeting, virtual coffee hour 10 am  OUTDOOR Worship, Church School & Child Care	12	13  12 am Board of Ministry Meeting 12 noon via ZOOM	14	15	16	17  Movie Night at home. See suggestions on page 8
18 10 am-11 am ZOOM Meeting, virtual coffee hour 10 am  OUTDOOR Worship, Church School & Child Care	19	20  7 am-8 am BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING via ZOOM	21	22 Earth Day	23	24  Movie Night at home. See suggestions on page 8
25 10 am-11 am ZOOM Meeting, virtual coffee hour 10 am  OUTDOOR Worship, Church School & Child Care	26  5 am TIE Deadline for March 2021 issue	27	28	29	30	1  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.