

THOUGHTS FROM THE PASTOR... REV. BARBARA PERONTEAU



Sometimes life gets broken. The break could be when your parents divorce, a death of a loved one, or the loss of a job. You don't know how to put it back together. The universe has a holistic rhythm to it. The universe just hums along, but for circumstances beyond your control, you were just disconnected from the Great Circle of Life. There's a hole, a gap, a missing part. Your Life Circle has been broken.

My greatest disconnection, my brokenness from the Great Circle of Life came in the summer of 1968 when I climbed into the back seat of my Dad's 1968 Dodge Monaco, as we drove down Riviera Dr. for the last time heading for Reno and then on to our new home in the southeast corner of Pennsylvania. I had just finished eighth grade at Davidson Jr. High School fully expecting to be a Bulldog at San Rafael High when my life circle was suddenly broken. Life goes on.

In the late Spring of 2022, by a unanimous vote of the congregation I was called to be your pastor. The call was for a "Designated Term." That term was for 18 months. A year and a half. For many and various reasons I was excited about becoming your pastor. On a very personal level, I was thrilled to be here, back in San Rafael. My life circle was reconnected. This was exciting on both a spiritual and a visceral level.

At the end of a "Designated Term" the congregation has a few options it wouldn't have were I hired as an intentional interim. With a designated term you can change the designation to settled, extend the term, change it to a hired position for another term, or choose not to continue our relationship at all. Council chose the latter.

While I was on my vacation in August a poll was conducted regarding my performance here. There are enough of you who are dissatisfied enough that when I met with Caran Cuneo, David Knopf, and Louis Frost to go over the results, it was Louis who said, "We feel you're not a good fit."

From the beginning I said I would respect your decision. I do. For the first several weeks following our meeting, however, I was sad, depressed, disconnected, and unfocused. I was grieving. It's part of the natural rhythm of the universe.

At that same meeting I was offered a hired interim position for an unspecified time. I turned it down. It just didn't feel right to me. It feels as if my spouse wanted a divorce so she could look for another partner but wanted to keep me

around to do the dishes and mow the lawn. It feels creepy. I don't know how to live in that space, nor should I. I am choosing the clean break option.

What's next for me? I don't know. Even though there is no "Plan B" at the moment, I am in a good and healthy place. My last Sunday is November 12, after which I will take the rest of the year off. I have a doctorate to work on. That should keep me out of trouble for a while.

As of this writing I have seven more weeks remaining with you. Two of which I won't be here. October 15 I will be back in Pennsylvania for my 50th High School Reunion and a pilgrimage to Mercersburg. I am also looking forward to catching up with my brother. October 22 is my "Fifth Sunday" off. I'm switching days because I want to be here on October 29th, Reformation Sunday. The Rev. Davena Jones, our acting Conference Minister, will be here, October 22nd, to supply and also help you process my leaving and answer any questions you might have about what's next for you and how to put your Circle of Life back together again. Please be intentional about being here on the 22nd and making that time sacred. It's important. There is loss for you too, and that time will help you grieve as well.

On November 12, there will be a "Service of Release" following the sermon. Davena Jones and a representative from the association are planning to be here.

As this may very well be my last "Thoughts from the Pastor," I want to remind you that God is good!
God is good all the time!

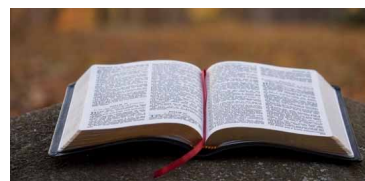
I am forever grateful for this season in time to have been with you.
You were a blessing to me.
Thank you.

Grace, Peace, and Wonder, ~ Pastor Barbara K. Peronteau

BIBLE STUDY ON TUESDAY NIGHTS

We are studying the Gospel of Matthew.

We meet on Tuesdays 7:00 pm. Please join us on Zoom



PRAYER PARTNERS

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



October 1 - 7

Catherine Hills and
Audrey and Josie

October 8 - 14

Caryl Hodges

October 15 - 21

Lorene Jackson

October 22 - 28

Ann Jolly

October 29 - November 4

Amy Kaufman, Sean and Cio
(Allison)

Come and Worship with us!

***We will be worshipping at 10 AM inside the sanctuary.
The service will also be available streaming on YouTube (see next page).***

Below are the scripture readings from the Revised Common Lectionary for May. The first set of readings from the Old Testament and Psalms is called semi-continuous. These readings loosely follow each other for several weeks. The second set of Old Testament and Psalm readings is called complimentary (paired). In this set of readings, the connection to the Epistle and Gospel is a more obvious.

Oct 1 18th Sunday after Pentecost Theme: God's Sustaining Presence

World Communion Sunday Neighbors in Need Offering

Exodus 17:1-7 and Psalm 78:1-4, 12-16
or
Philippians 2:1-13 15:15-21 and Matthew 21:23-32

Oct. 8 19th Sunday after Pentecost Theme: Blessing of the Animals

Exodus 20:1-4, 7-9, 12-20 and Psalm 19
or
Philippians 3:4b-14 and Matthew 21:33-46

Oct. 15 20th Sunday after Pentecost Theme: Praiseworthy Living

Exodus 32:1-14 and Psalm 100:1-6, 19-23
or
Philippians 4:1-9 and Matthew 22:1-14

Oct. 22 21st Sunday after Pentecost Theme: Living Messages

Tension in the Wilderness

Exodus 33:12-23 and Psalm 99
or
1 Thessalonians 1:1-10 and Matthew 22:15-22

**Oct. 29 22nd Sunday after Pentecost Theme: The Compassionate Life
Reformation Sunday**

Leviticus 19:1-2; 15-18 and Psalm 1
or
1 Thessalonians 2:1-8 and Matthew 22:34-46



ZOOM MEETINGS LET US GATHER TOGETHER SAFELY

We are also providing our Sunday worship service streaming on YouTube at 10 a.m. You can use either your computer, your cell phone, or your tablet. See below.

Link to join all church Zoom meetings

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/2011092691?pwd=c2V0RXEvWXF4STNNSTlxbWFFTENuZz09>

Meeting ID: ID: 201 109 2691

Password: FCCSR!

Call in number **1-669-900-6833**

SUNDAY WORSHIP IS NOW LIVE ON YOU TUBE

We broadcast live Sunday mornings on YouTube. Our channel address is:

- <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCbqlXLjsBEmjdGuoOKnOykA>
- Then click on videos->live
- Subscribe and each week you will get a direct link.

We will also post a direct link each week in the What's Happening? email.

The whole service unedited will be available for a few days; then an edited version to include just the sermon will be posted.

If you are having trouble getting connected, email Knopf.david@gmail.com

MEETINGS, MEETINGS, MEETINGS -- VIA ZOOM

Oct. 3: The Board of Ministry will meet on **Tuesday**, Oct 3, at 11:45 AM.

Oct. 11: The Board of Mission will meet on **Wednesday**, Oct. 1, at 1:00 PM.

Oct. 19: The Board of Trustees meeting will be on **Thurs.**, Oct. 19, at 7 PM.

Oct. 25: The Church Council meeting will be on **Wednesday**, Oct. 25, at 5 PM.



CHURCH COUNCIL REMOVES THE MASK MANDATE

At their April meeting, the Church Council of the First Congregational Church of San Rafael discussed eliminating the mask mandate.

Going forward, masks are recommended but optional at this time. Please continue to be respectful of others.

A MESSAGE FROM OUR MODERATOR, CARAN CUNEO

Transitions

With the upcoming transition in leadership, it is my pledge as your lay leader to foster open and honest communication within our church community.

Under our operating procedures, your Council is responsible to:

- Determine overall policies, ministry, mission, and vitality of church.
- Call congregational meetings.
- Facilitate communication between boards and committees.
- Council may create temporary committees to accomplish specific tasks, designating the board to which they report.
- Bring Council recommendations to congregation.

Our Council meetings are held monthly, where updated reports are shared among all board and committees. These include reports from the Pastor; treasurer and pledge secretary; trustees; boards of ministry and mission.

Our recent focus, in addition to conducting regular church business through boards updates, has been on transition. Please mark your calendars for these important dates:

October 22nd. Rev. Dr. Davena Jones will lead worship and will join us in the community room to assist us both in grieving and in planning for next steps. Please plan to join in this important discussion.

November 11th. First Congregational Church of San Rafael will host the Golden Gate Association Fall Gathering on Saturday from 9 am – 1 pm. All members are welcome as “We are the Conference”. The topic is so relevant -- Church Growth. Speakers include Rev. Molly Baskette, Pastor of First Church, UCC, Berkeley and author of “Real Good Church”.

November 12th. Farewell Reception for Pastor Barbara Peronteau following worship. Volunteers are needed to assist in planning the reception. Please see Louis Frost if you can help.

Please remember your active involvement is crucial in this challenging time. As we say weekly, No matter where you are on life’s journey, You Are Welcome Here. I welcome your ideas, concerns, insights and guidance as move forward together in the months ahead.

Caran Cuneo

SAVE THE DATE: SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 11

**OUR CHURCH WILL BE HOSTING THIS MEETING IN
OUR SANCTUARY,
WITH LUNCH IN OUR COMMUNITY ROOM**

Please come and represent our church!

BOARD OF MINISTRY REPORT

With the news of Pastor Barbara's ministry at FCC coming to a close on Nov. 12th, the Board of Ministry anticipates a huge impact on our planning of worship and community nurture as we head into the Advent Season and New Year. The Board of Ministry is deeply grateful for Pr. Barbara's thoughtful participation in our meetings and her enthusiastic leadership in worship this past year and a half.

Agape

The Agape Team provides "compassionate connection to our church community through words of encouragement, cards, phone calls, home visits and other support as needed."

Please contact the church office by phone or email for the prayer chain if you have concerns, joys or needs that need support from your church family.

HELP WANTED for Community Time

Thank you to those who have been making coffee and bringing treats for sharing at our Community Time! PLEASE Sign up on the clipboard next to the bulletins in the Church entry on Sundays if you can volunteer to bring a simple treat to share and/ or make coffee for our Community Time after worship.

Community and Spiritual Nurture

- UCC Classes on History and Polity were held in September.
- A Bible Study class focused on the book of Matthew started on September 19 and will continue every Tuesday at 7pm through early November.
- **Coming Soon:** more information about a half-day Spiritual Retreat.

Upcoming Worship Services:

October 1: World Communion Sunday and Neighbors in Need collection

October 8: The Blessing of the Animals: A Celebration of the Feast of St Francis
Bring your canine, feline, avian or other animal family members to worship and celebrate in the courtyard. If you prefer, a photo of a current or past animal kin can also be blessed in proxy and in memory. Music, stories and blessings will abound as we express our gratitude for "All Creatures Great and Small."

October 15: Rev. Blythe Osner

October 22: Rev. Dr. Davina Jones

A time for sharing thoughts and feelings regarding Pastor Barbara's ministry coming to a close will be facilitated by Rev. Jones following worship.

November 12: Release of Service for Pr. Barbara with a reception following

Volunteers will be welcome to help with the reception. Let Louis know if you can help.

November 26: Rev. Julianne Stokstad will lead worship and a Thanksgiving Celebration of Life in memory of Hilary Spaulding.

Job 12: 7-10. English Standard Version

But ask the beasts, and they will teach you;
the birds of the heavens, and they will tell you;
or the bushes of the earth, and they will teach you;
and the fish of the sea will declare to you.
Who among all these does not know
that the hand of the Lord has done this?



BOARD OF TRUSTEE'S REPORT

Keeping-Up withthis old building....

Like any home, something always needs fixing. particularly in a building more than 60 years old. This month we replaced the fluorescent lights in the downstairs kitchen with new LED lights, and repaired a broken window in a restroom on the basement level.

This next month we get ready for winter. We'll have the gutters cleaned and one leaky one repaired. Last Spring we had the flat roof over the Community Room repaired, so we hope to finally have a leak-free room.

Looking Ahead to November...

What is your vision for the future of FCCSR? What are the characteristics that you dream to see our church become? These questions lie at the heart of our contemplations regarding our pledges in November. What specifically can you do to make these happen?. It takes dreams, it takes actions, and it takes money; they all reveal our priorities. More on this later.

Next Trustees meeting October 19th at 7:00 PM on Zoom.

WANT TO READ A GOOD SHORT BOOK AND TALK ABOUT IT WITH FRIENDS?

Thursday, November 2, at 7:30 PM on Zoom

Early in September, at Lynn Grant's fabulous deck picnic, several of those attending began talking about the possibility of starting a book club. So here's an invitation to try it and see how you like it.

Lucinda suggested a short book that she read recently. It's called Foster, and it's written by Claire Keegan. Published in 2022, It was named the Best Book of the Year from NPR, New York Public Library, Electric Lit and PBS Newshour.

It is beautifully written, short (128 pages), and easily available from both Sonoma and Marin County Libraries. The paperback version is about \$15 and you can purchase it at local bookstores or online from a variety of places.

EVERYONE is welcome, and free to invite a friend. Use the church Zoom link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/2011092691?pwd=c2V0RXEwWTF4STNNSTlxbWFFTENuZz09>



BOARD OF MISSION MISSION MATTERS



NEIGHBORS IN NEED OFFERING OCTOBER 1

We will be holding the Neighbors in Need Offering on Sunday, October 1. Neighbors in Need (NIN) is a special mission offering of the United Church of Christ that supports ministries of justice and compassion throughout the United States. Please give generously.

BOARD OF MISSION SUPPORTS TWO LOCAL SCHOOLS

The Board of Mission administers the Pilgrim Hill Fund, which was founded at the time we renovated our sanctuary, over two decades ago. This year we reached out to local elementary schools, inviting them to submit grant applications for a \$1000 grant. We awarded grants to two schools who applied this fall. Here are descriptions of how they will use the money.



San Pedro Elementary School

San Pedro 4th graders will attend a spectacular outdoor education program! This past school year we received a donation from a local community member which helped fund our 4th grade students to attend MOSAIC, an outdoor education program near Santa Cruz focusing on the development of social-emotional skills. This was the first time our school has participated in this program and we found that the experience was extremely valuable for our students! In addition to developing social emotional skills in our 4th graders, the program helped students develop self-confidence and be exposed to students from different backgrounds. We would love to continue this program with next year's 4th graders (and continue this as an annual tradition for San Pedro 4th graders). The \$1,000 grant would be used to directly serve our 4th grade students by supplementing the cost of the program for 90 San Pedro 4th graders (in addition to other funds received from family contributions, our school PTA, other possible donors, and our school budget).

Venetia Valley

Our focus for this project will be our middle grade (6th - 8th) students who vary in age from 11 to 14 years of age. Our goal is to engage all of our 250 middle grade students in a Social Emotional Learning (SEL) project that teaches students how to be productive, responsible and critical thinking citizens in our communities with a major emphasis on social justice. Our students will engage in activities that will benefit the school community as a whole as they model our Falcon Expectations to their fellow students, but also as role models for our elementary students, many of whom are their younger siblings. Our Falcon Expectations are to "Be Respectful, Be Responsible, Be Safe and Be an Ally." Each of those expectations have characteristics of what their behaviors should look like in various settings. These include the classroom, the playgrounds, on the school bus, while out in the community and at home. By incorporating a Falcon Store at Venetia Valley to incentivize our students to earn Falcon Cards to exchange for prizes when they model the positive behaviors listed in our Falcon Expectations, our students will experience how their hard work contributes to our global society, how the economy works and a glimpse at personal financial responsibility.





OCTOBER BIRTHDAYS

13 — Benjamin Dempsey
 17 — Ann Dannecker
 19 — Jean O'Leary
 23 — Sher Ripley
 25 — Tessa Templeman
 25 — Deb Smith
 31 — Bruce Weir



TIE DEADLINE for NOVEMBER 2023 issue - Mon., Oct. 23

The deadline for articles and news for the November 2023 issue of The TIE is Monday, October 23. Please email your articles to lucindaray@aol.com by Monday, October 23.



Rev. Barbara Peronteau – Pastor

Tues., Wed., Thurs., 10 AM - 2 PM

Office Phone: 415-479-2747

Cell Phone: 510-646-2372

Email: barbareau433@yahoo.com

Amy Powers – Office Manager

Monday 11 AM- 2 PM

Wednesday and Thursday 10 AM - 2 PM

You can contact Amy by phone or email any time.

Office Phone: 415-479-2747

Email: office@fccsanrafael.org

FCC Calendar OCTOBER 2023

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.