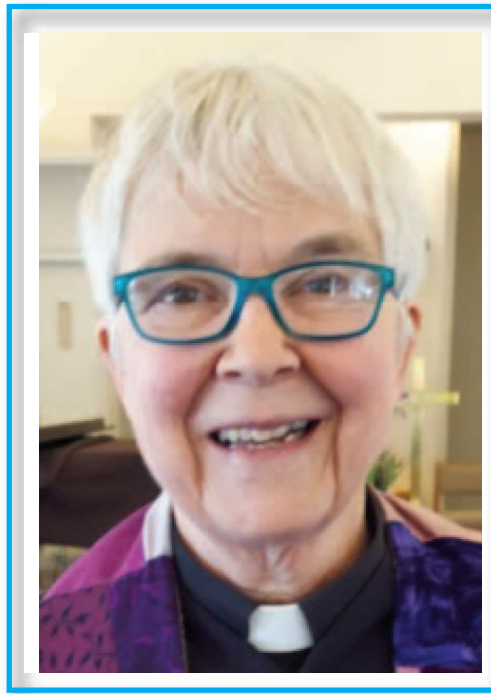


The TIE



**From our pastor,
Rev. Elisabeth Middelberg**

Easter Tide....

The resurrection of Jesus, said Dr. Stookey, “is the manifestation of a new kind and quality of life, which we have no words to describe. If we think we can understand it, we do not understand it at all. For resurrection is the sublime, mysterious gift of God, which we are to experience as both astounding and transforming.”

We do not know for sure if Eastertide lasted exactly 50 days, or if the Bible indicates that Jesus was with his disciples for an extended period of time after the resurrection. Our transformation times both individually and as church, tend to take much longer, and it is often that we experience God’s presence in these transformations only when we look back and exclaim: ‘Oh!

God was truly with us. I take great comfort in the words of the poet Rilke: “Even at the times we do not see it, God is still ripening.”

I pray that we experience this astounding and transformative power, individually and as a church, as we continue to come together and open ourselves to God’s Spirit.

It was March 10th, when David let me know that the Board of Trustees and the Church Council voted to offer me the position of Interim Pastor for First Congregational Church of San Rafael. The next question of course was: “when to start?” Initially I thought that it might be best to start after Easter, knowing that getting ready for Holy Week and Easter, while getting to know people and understanding the structures and rhythms of a church, might be a little much.

On the other hand, what better time to start then, moving together through this time of incredible transformation and new beginnings, which Easter represents. So, we settled on March 15th, and yes, we had some busy weeks, but it was also a wonderful way to get to know the community and get to see just how committed the church is and how willing everybody is to step in and step up. I am very grateful for the warm welcome I received and am very excited to continue with you on this next part of our journey.

Listening Sessions

To map out some of the initial steps we are thinking of putting in place this coming year, we want to invite you to some ‘Pastor Elisabeth Listening Sessions.’ These are 45–60-minute gatherings to get to know each other better and to explore what is alive and present for you in the life of the church.



Continued on the next page.

Continued from page one.

We will explore questions such as – how do you experience your connection to the church; how do you see the church do the work of being God's presence in the world; what type of sustenance do you receive; are there connections you would you like to deepen? We hope you will participate in one of these sessions.

These are the times and dates: Sunday May 5th after church.
 Thursday May 9th, at 10:30AM.
 Sunday May 12th, after church.



There are sign-up sheets in church, or you can email me at elismid@yahoo.com. The council is also in the process of scheduling a half-day retreat. Please stay tuned for more information to follow.

May God's grace be with all of us.

Pastor Elisabeth

BACK, BY POPULAR DEMAND! OLD FOLKS II



After the terrific first meeting of our Old Folks group in April, thanks to strong demand from the group to continue, our second meeting is coming up on Wednesday, May 15th.

Once again Joan Roane will be leading us over Zoom (link forthcoming). We'll start at 6:30 and end at 7:30 (we agreed the hour and a half last time was a little long).

During the first meeting we shared many thoughts, but also—a real benefit—got to know each other better as we learned about each others' lives and histories. Please join us on May 15 at 6:30 PM even if you missed the first episode. All Are Welcome!

PRAYER PARTNERS

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



April 28 - May 4
Anne Dannecker

May 5 - 11
Bob De Haan and Nancy
Sangster-De Hann

May 12 - 18
Jackie Dema

May 19 - 25
Kristi Denham

May 26 - June 1
Julie Dowling



Come Worship

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

**May 5 10 AM Sixth Sunday of Easter
Communion Sunday**

**May 12 10 AM Worship
Mother's Day**

Come join us as we honor mothers and listen to some of the stories of mother's from around the world, whose children are in harm's way.

**May 19 10 AM Pentecost
 2 PM Celebration of Life for Lynn Grant**

**May 26 10 AM Worship
Guest preacher (Pastor Elisabeth in Holland)**

COME JOIN THE CHOIR!

Make a joyful noise! Sing with a great group of people! We rehearse from 9:30-9:50 on Sunday before worship and from 11:15-12:00 or 12:15 after worship.

Singing makes you feel better.
Singing enhances lung function.
Singing helps you beat stress and relax.
Singing helps improve memory.
Singing builds a sense of community.
Singing lets you express yourself.
And it's FREE!





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=c2V0RXEvdW94R0p1STN1STlxbWFFTENuZz09>

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/UCbqjXLjsBEmjdGuoOKnOykA>
- 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

May 7: The Board of Ministry will meet on **Tuesday**, May 7, at 11:45 AM.

May 15: The Board of Mission will meet on **Wednesday**, May 15, at 1 PM.

May 16: The Board of Trustees will meet on **Thursday**, May 16, at 7 PM.

May 22: The Church Council will meet on **Wednesday**, May 22, at 5 PM.



LUNCH TOGETHER AT LA HACIENDA AFTER WORSHIP ON APRIL 25

BOARD OF TRUSTEE'S REPORT



Pastor Elisabeth will be visiting family in the Netherlands so we will not be seeing her May 26 and June 2.

Guest preacher for May 26 is still to be determined, and Rev Janie Spahr will be joining us June 2 (after being rescheduled due to the Big Storm and Easter)

The Trustees agreed in their April meeting that the church should sponsor a table for up to 8 people at the Marin Interfaith Council Annual Prayer Breakfast on May 1.

This is a large event of several hundred from the religious community in Marin, gathered at Congregation Kol Shofar synagogue in Tiburon. The meeting includes Christians, Muslims, Jews, Buddhists, and others.

Have you noticed the little garden at the church entrance on the left? One of Lynn Grant's last gifts to the church were the short iron fences which now protect the plantings. Previous plantings have had hard lives because they got stepped on, but the fence has stopped that and the plants are thriving.

Next Trustees meeting Thursday, May 16, at 7:00 PM on Zoom.

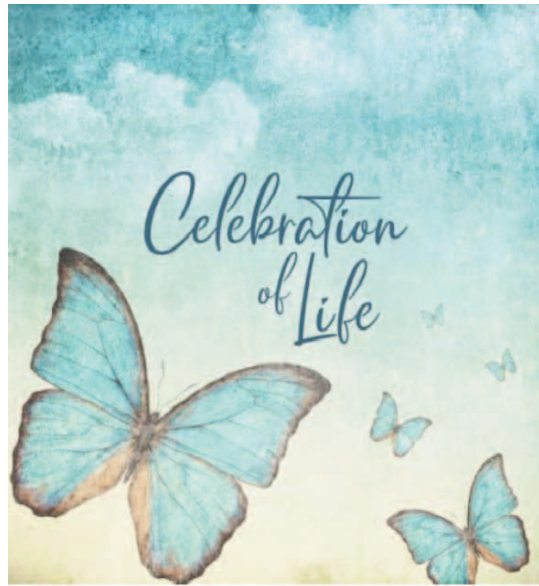
THE INTERIM PROCESS -- HERE ARE THE NEXT STEPS:

- We appoint an Interim Search Committee to locate and recommend an interim pastor
The Interim Search Committee is Louis Frost, Megan Fuller, and David Santschi.
- We hire an Interim Pastor **Rev. Elisabeth Middelberg began on March 17, 2024.**
- We appoint a Search Committee
- We create our Church Profile, a description of our church to be read by potential pastors
- The Search Committee will consider all potential candidates
- The Search Committee will select possible candidates
- The Search Committee will interview these candidates
- One candidate will be recommended to the congregation
- The congregation will have an opportunity to meet the candidate
- We will vote on the recommended candidate
- We will join in worship to install our new pastor

CELEBRATION OF LIFE FOR LYNN GRANT - MAY 19

Our beloved Lynn Grant passed away on Sunday April 7, a week after we celebrated Easter. She was a long time member of the church, assisting the church in so many ways, active until the very last weeks of her life. Her wisdom, clarity, and decisiveness had such a big impact on the life of the church.

We will honor her, together with her family, on Sunday May 19, at 2:00 PM. Please share this information with people who you know might want to be part of this service. All are welcome.



BIRTHDAY PARTY FOR KRISTI DENHAM - MAY 26



Kristi says, "I'm turning 75 on May 28. I've decided to throw myself a birthday party. It will be on May 26 from 1 to 4 PM. The party will be held at Jesse (my son) and Susanna's house, 36 Edward Ave., San Rafael.

There will be cake at two. I'm hoping that my son, Gabe, and his new family will be there too.

Let me know if you think you can make it. The address is just down the street from our church."



BOARD OF MISSION MISSION MATTERS



BREAD FOR THE WORLD OFFERING OF LETTERS A BIG SUCCESS

On Sunday, April 28, after worship, members of the congregation participated in writing 59 letters to our U.S. Representative and our U.S. Senators, urging them to act to help end hunger at home and around the world, by reauthorizing the Farm Bill. The Farm Bill includes domestic nutrition programs like SNAP, as well as funding for critical international food assistance programs. Many thanks to all who participated!



VOLUNTEERS NEEDED MAY 21 FOR THE STREET CHAPLAINCY DINNER



On Tuesday, May 21, a group of us will again be volunteering at the Street Chaplaincy dinner at the First Presbyterian Church in San Rafael, for people who are homeless or in need. We will be shopping for groceries, helping Chef Michael and his staff prepare the meal, helping to serve it, and sitting and eating with those who come. You would need to be available from 4:00 to 7:00 PM. If you are interested and able to help, please let Lucinda Ray know. Look for more information in What's Happening. We need a group of about 6 or 7 volunteers.

BOARD OF MINISTRY REPORT

The Board of Ministry Team's key role in the church is to coordinate with the Pastor and Music Director in providing meaningful worship services throughout the liturgical year. We address the spiritual life of the church through the following areas: welcome and outreach, worship and prayer, fellowship, and education.



Pastoral Care/ Agape

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.

Pastor Elisabeth has begun having visits with individual members who are having transportation, health or other challenges. If you would like a visit (for any reason) please reach out to her to let her know.

The Agape team members have been bringing greeting cards for those who are unable to attend church in person to be signed by church family members. They will be located either on the table in front of the name tags or in the Community Room in front of “the library.” Please sign cards to stay connected and send well wishes and caring support.

Community/ Fellowship Time and Spiritual Nurture

NAME TAGS are a form of WELCOME: Please let Amy know if you need a name tag (leave a note on the main office desk or in Amy's box).

To signal to all that we are an Open and Affirming community, pronoun (she/her, they/them, etc...) stickers are available to add to our name tags. You can find the stickers in one of the slots in the front of the name tags, please add the one that best fits for you.”

Old Folks discussion group

Joan Roane led the first session of this group, it seemed particularly meaningful in the context of Lynn's passing and a number of members with major health concerns. The next meeting is May 15, at 6:30 PM. See page 2 of this issue of the TIE for details



Meals and Informal time together

On April 21st at La Hacienda Restaurant, we renewed our monthly informal lunch time together and had a lovely relaxed time for chat. See the picture on page 4 of this TIE. We will continue with a time of informal sharing together following church every 3rd Sunday of the month (May will be spent in fellowship during Lynn's Memorial celebration).

Listening Sessions Small group get-togethers meeting at the church with Pastor Elisabeth will discuss what/how we envision our FCC community for the next year(s). See pages one and two of the TIE for more details. Meetings will take place Sunday, May 5 and 12 after worship, and Thursday May 9 at 10:30am.



Saturday, June 8 There will be a Half-day Spring Retreat in the Knopf's garden. We will share a time for silent meditation, prayers of “joys and concerns,” and some celebration followed by “brunch” breaking bread together. Please RSVP to Cathi or David.

Cards from the church family are being signed after church and being sent to members who are unable to attend church. Please sign the cards that will be on the table in the Narthex or by “ the Library” in the Community Room.



• **Prayer Chain** E-mail either Julie Dowling isabella1472@comcast.net or Annie Song-Hill asonghill@gmail.com if you have a prayer request you would like included in the prayer chain.

Upcoming Worship in May

- May 5: Communion Sunday, Listening Session after worship for those who signed up. See page one and two of the TIE.
- May 12: Meeting following worship for Listening Session for those who sign up.
- May 19: Pentecost Sunday, Come celebrate the Birthday of the Christian Church with Spirit! Wear white or red, sing joyously and listen wholeheartedly as “God is Still Speaking.”
- May 19, 2:00 PM: Come celebrate again and grieve our loss, sharing together during the Memorial Celebration for the life of Lynn Grant offered by Lynn’s family and led by Pastor Elisabeth Middelberg. See page 6 for details.
- May 26, 1-4 PM Celebrate again...Kristi Denham is inviting all of her church family to celebrate her 75th birthday with friends and family. See page 6 for details.

Next Board of Ministry meeting All are Welcome! Tuesday, May 7th at 11:45 on Zoom.

I Slept

by Rabindraneth Tagore

I slept and dreamt that life was joy.
I awoke and saw that life was service.
I acted, and behold, service was joy.

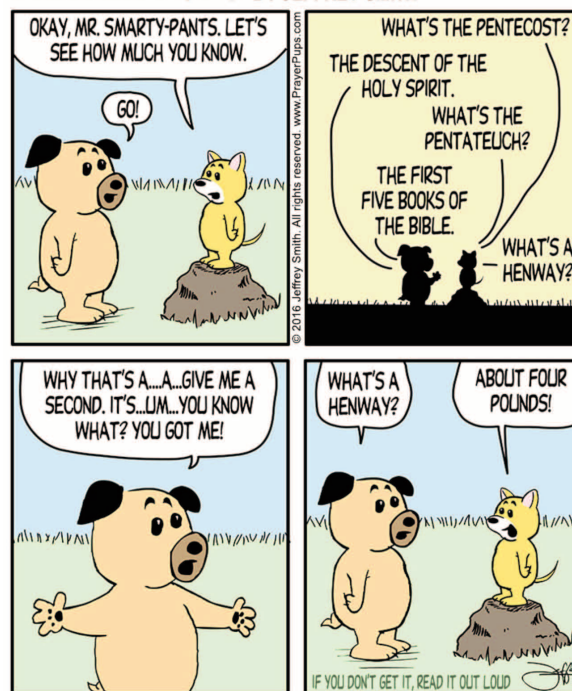


MAY BIRTHDAYS



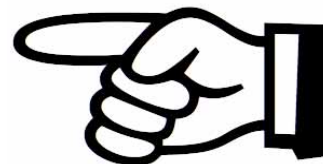
- 2 — Joshua Siroky
- 2 — Cecil Sherrod
- 10 — Val Sherer
- 10 — Brandon Siroky
- 23 — Cathi Fuller
- 23 — Loreen Jackson
- 25 — Colin Templeman
- 28 — Kristi Denham

PRAYER PUPS BY JEFFREY SMITH



TIE DEADLINE for JUNE 2024 issue - Mon., MAY 27

The deadline for articles and news for the June 2024 issue of The TIE is Monday, May 27. Please email your articles to lucindaray@aol.com by Monday, May 27.



Rev. Elisabeth Middelberg

Thursday mornings
or by appointment

Phone: 707 280-0382

Email: Elismid@yahoo.com

Amy Powers – Office Manager














Tuesday 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 **MAY** 2024

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
28 10 am  Worship, Church School & Child Care 10 am - 11 am Our service is on YOUTUBE at 10 AM	29	30	May 1	2	3	4
5 10 am  Worship, Church School & Child Care 10 am - 11 am Our service is on YOUTUBE at 10 AM 11:15 am - 12:15 am Listening Session with Pastor Middellberg	6	7 11:45 am  Board of Ministry Meeting 12 noon via ZOOM	8	9 10:30 am - 11:30 am Listening Session with Pastor Middellberg	10	11
12 10 am  Worship, Church School & Child Care 10 am - 11 am Our service is on YOUTUBE at 10 AM 11:15 am - 12:15 am Listening Session with Pastor Middellberg	13 Mother's Day	14	15 1 am - 2 am  BOARD of MISSION Meeting on ZOOM 6:30 pm - 7:30 pm  QUISTERS MEETING ON ZOOM	16 7 am - 8 pm  BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING via ZOOM	17	18 Armed Forces Day
19 10 am  Worship, Church School & Child Care 10 am - 11 am Our service is on YOUTUBE at 10 AM 2 pm  LYNN GRANT CELEBRATION OF LIFE	20	21 4 pm - 7 pm  STREET CHAPLAINCY DINNER	22 5 pm - 6 pm  Church Council Meeting via ZOOM!	23	24	25
26 10 am  Worship, Church School & Child Care 10 am - 11 am Our service is on YOUTUBE at 10 AM 1 pm - 4 pm  KRISTI DENHAM BIRTHDAY PARTY	27 Memorial Day	28	29	30	31	1

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.