

The TIE



From our pastor,
Rev. Elisabeth Middelberg

Ascension (Pastor Steve Holmes)

*He was lifted up,
and a cloud took him out of their sight.*

—Acts 1.9

**Heaven is not up, but in.
It's the heart of things.
That's where God is.**

**Jesus was pure love,
the love of God made flesh.
He was resurrected
not as an individual,
but as a community.
We're his risen body.**

**When he “ascended”
it doesn't mean he literally
floated up into the sky.
It means he dissolved into us,
like salt dissolving into the soup.**

**Christ, the love of God made flesh,
is now in us.
We are witnesses—we are the evidence—
of resurrection.
Go.**

Pentecost is celebrated this year on Sunday, June 8, and on that day our “Eastertide” will have ended. Ascension Day, sometimes called the Feast of Ascension, is observed 10 days earlier, on the 40th day after Easter. On this day we tell the story of how Jesus was taken up into the heavens. In the Eastern Orthodox Church, Pentecost is celebrated the day before Ascension Day. In this order the Spirit is poured out on the disciples before Jesus is taken up into the heavens.

Needless to say, the story lends itself to quite a bit of debate with people wondering and questioning what really happened on that day. It has stirred the imagination of quite a few artists, and we see the scene depicted in many of the churches around the world. Go to images in Google, look for



Ascension Day, and you will see a wealth of paintings and glass in lead windows.

Continued on the next page.

I particularly like the ones where the disciples are looking up to see the feet of Jesus disappear.

The poets and the artists always seem to be able to connect us to the beauty and the mystery inherent in so many of the Bible stories, the mystery of God with us and in us.

I appreciate the words of the poet Steve Holmes when he says: Jesus was pure love, and when He ascended, he did not somehow miraculously float up in the sky but he, this love, dissolved in each of us. The love of God made flesh in each of us, in this community. Pray we make time, for that mystery to take a hold of us.

Amen. *Pastor Elisabeth*



Right of Return Pilgrimage

Sunday, June 8, 7am-7pm

22 miles in 7 legs
Starting at: Islamic Center of Alameda
Ending at: West Berkeley Shellmound

To register for a leg:
bit.ly/RightofReturnPilgrimage

Join Interfaith4Ceasfire to walk in public witness for the Palestinian Right of Return to their homes and families.
We also walk in solidarity with immigrant, Indigenous, student, unhoused, transgender and BIPOC communities.

PILGRIMAGE WALK JUNE 8

Our Board of Mission is a sponsor of this interfaith Right of Return Pilgrimage on June 8 in the East Bay. We will be walking the 6th leg of the pilgrimage (about 2.9 miles). If you are interested in participating in this event, please join us! You can learn more details and register at:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfoqYACGrrgklotyVz1rjvJveaNKDxZLvDMHfV-9q_yzqNcXg/viewform

PRAYER PARTNERS

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



June 1 - 7
Charles Little

June 8 - 14
Helen MacLam

June 15 - 21
Ekhard Mahl

June 22 - 28
Clara Miller

June 29 - July 5
Jean and Ray O'Leary

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



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

**June 1 10 AM Seventh Sunday after Easter
Acts of Restoration
John 20:30, John 21: 1-19**

**June 8 10 AM Pentecost
Acts 2:1-17**

**June 15 10 AM First Sunday after Pentecost
Fathers Day**



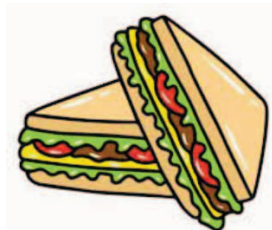
Guest Preacher: Rev. Wally Bryen
Rev. Bryen is one of the chaplains at Lucille Packard Children's Hospital. He is also a member of the Lakeshore Ave Baptist Church in Oakland.

**June 22 10 AM Second Sunday after Pentecost
Pillow Sunday**

**June 29 10 AM Third Sunday after Pentecost
Pride Sunday**

JOIN US FOR LUNCH AFTER WORSHIP JUNE 22

We will have a community lunch after worship on June 22. Sandwiches, fruit, dessert, and drinks will be provided. Donations are appreciated.





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

June 5: The Board of Trustees will meet on **Thursday**, June 5 at 7:00 PM.

June 17: The Board of Ministry will meet on **Tuesday**, June 17 at 11:45 AM.

July 16: The Church Council will meet on **Wednesday**, July 16 at 6 PM.

July 16: The Board of Mission will meet on **Wednesday**, July 16 at 1 PM.



SPRING RETREAT - SATURDAY, JUNE 21



There will be a half day retreat on the morning of **Saturday, June 21st** in the Knopf-Fuller garden, from 10 AM to noon.

The theme will be **Rekindling the Light. Finding renewal in a difficult time.** All are welcome.

KINDNESS — PASS IT ON!

Eat lunch with someone new

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 **The Search Committee is Caran Cuneo, David Santschi, Annie Song-Hill, Lucinda Ray, and Cathi Fuller.**
- ☒ We update our church's website and engage the congregation through surveys to better represent who we are.
- ☒ 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

SEARCH COMMITTEE UPDATE

We have completed our church profile! Now we enter the next phase of seeking a new pastor. This is a pivotal moment in the life of our congregation. I want to extend my sincere thanks to our Search Committee members: David Santschi, Annie Song Hill, Cathi Fuller, Pastor Elisabeth, and to our editor supreme, Lucinda Ray.



The next few months are a time of reflection, prayer, and hope—but most importantly, it is a time to nurture a healthy spiritual environment within our church family. Our transition has been eased by the love, caring and insightful inspiration we receive each week from Pastor Elisabeth. We are truly grateful.

Staying United in Purpose

Transitions can bring uncertainty, but they also offer opportunities to come together in faith and vision. Our unity in Christ is what binds us, not any one individual. As we seek God's guidance, may we remain committed to walking in grace, patience, and mutual respect.

Trusting God's Timing and Leadership

We believe that God is already preparing the heart of the one who will shepherd us next. Our responsibility now is to continue sowing seeds of love, service, and worship, trusting that God is at work in both our church and in the life of our future pastor.

Caran Cuneo, Search Committee Chair

BOARD OF TRUSTEES REPORT



IMPORTANT REMINDER: The church parking lot and the driveway to Pilgrim Park will be resealed and unavailable Wednesday, June 25, and Thursday, June 26. **Cars parked there will be towed!**

That same week the Acqua Montessori Preschool will be closed and the old fence torn down and a new one installed. Beautiful design panels will come later. The old, dilapidated shed has already been removed.

Ongoing repair needs continue. The toilet by the Plum Room has an internal tank leak and has been recalled by the manufacturer. The drip system timer has failed and we are awaiting replacement, but in the meantime some plants have suffered.

Next Meeting: Thursday, June 5, 7:00 PM on Zoom.

To the Board of Trustees, First Congregational Church

I am writing to thank you for your support of our Tax-Aide program this tax season. We greatly appreciate your willingness to help and your flexibility in providing us a work-space. We were especially grateful again this year to be able to use the Sanctuary for our waiting taxpayers as we have had so many very cold days and some very elderly taxpayers.

Our volunteers at the Church prepared 215 tax returns this year for local residents while open only day per week plus 1 Saturday. The average AGI of our taxpayers is \$46,600. Eighty-two percent of our clients file single most of which are divorced or widowed. This site provides an easily-accessible location for the many residents for the Terra Linda/Northgate area and provides an additional site in Marin County preparing returns. Without this site available, Marin AARP Tax-Aide would not be able to accommodate these taxpayers as all our sites book up and have to turn people away at the end of the season.

I want to thank David Knopf for his graciousness and willingness to help. He dropped in several times and came to the rescue of a clogged sink in the bathroom in spite of the fact that he was caring for a very ill wife. All our Counselors really appreciated the hot pot of coffee lovingly prepared for us each week by Jackie Dema and we would like to thank her for the time and effort she put into doing that.

I am very happy with what we were able to accomplish this tax season. We truly could not have done this without your support. I look forward to being able to offer this service again next year on Wednesdays. I hope this change will better accommodate the other groups wanting to use the space on Tuesdays.

With sincere gratitude,

Linda Bell
Northgate Shift Coordinator
Marin AARP Tax-Aide



BOARD OF MISSION MISSION MATTERS



BREAD FOR THE WORLD OFFERING OF LETTERS **Success!**

On Sunday, May 18, after worship, the Board of Mission invite members of the congregation to participate in writing and sending an Offering of Letters. Working together with many other denominations across the country and with Bread for the World, we wrote 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.



Thank you so much to everyone who participated. **We wrote and mailed 48 letters!**

PILLOW SUNDAY, JUNE 22



Time to go shopping for pillows!

This year Homeward Bound is in need of new, clean, comfy pillows. The Board of Mission will have the collection on Sunday, June 22. You may want to do your shopping soon due to vacation plans, family visits, etc. This is something that has been so much a part of our congregation's commit-

ment to outreach for many years. It brings joy, both to the givers and to receivers.

If shopping for pillows presents a hardship, please let a Mission Board member know, and one of our board members will shop for you! Thank you for your continued commitment to Homeward Bound's mission. Let's see how many pillows we can provide for beds and for weary heads to rest!

THANKS TO EVERYONE WHO VOLUNTEERED FOR THE STREET CHAPLAINCY DINNER



Wow! Eleven members of the congregation volunteered on May 6 to prepare, serve, sort clothing, and eat with those who came to the Street Chaplaincy dinner. Thanks to Megan Fuller, Anice Flesh, Ed Briggs, Lorene Jackson, Caran Cuneo, Jim Turner, Charles Little, Lucinda Ray, Jackie Dema, Pastor Elisabeth, and Cathy Krise.

RIGHT OF RETURN PILGRIMAGE WALK - JUNE 8

Our Board of Mission is a sponsor of the interfaith Right of Return Pilgrimage on June 8 in the East Bay. We will be walking the 6th leg of the pilgrimage (about 2.9 miles). If you are interested in participating in this event, please join us! See more details on page 2. You can register at:

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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.



Agape Team

The Agape Team provides “compassionate connection to our church community through words of encouragement, cards, phone calls, home visits, and other support as needed. Leave a message in the church office or contact Jackie Dema or Cathi Fuller if you have a request. If you need a visit or other support, please leave a message in the office, or let Pastor Elisabeth know for more urgent matters.

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.

Tuesdays at 5 PM Meditation continues every Tuesdays at 5 PM. Tell Elisabeth if you wish to join by Zoom or need a ride if you cannot attend in person.

Pastoral Care

- Cecil will be assisting Jackie in the sending of cards to congregants. We noted that the job is best done by two people.

Community Fellowship and Spiritual Life

- **Elders** will meet on Thursday, June 26, 6:30-7:30. See page 9 for details.
- **Book Club** will meet on Thursday, July 10th at 7:30. See page 9 for details.
- **Sandwich Luncheon** in the Courtyard will be after worship on June 22. See page 3 for details.
- On Sunday mornings during worship, we encourage folks to move forward to sit in pews closer to the front, so that the church doesn't look empty for those viewing our service online.
- We will sing Happy Birthday the last Sunday of every month to members with birthdays that month, during the Announcements time.
- **RETREAT:** There will be a half day retreat on the morning of **Saturday, June 21st** in the Knopf-Fuller garden. The theme will be Rekindling the Light. Finding renewal in a difficult time. See page 4 for more details.
- We will have an AIDS remembrance on Pride Sunday, June 29, and Pastor Elisabeth will display an AIDS' quilt.



Next meeting for the Board of Ministry: Tuesday, June 17, at 11:45 on Zoom.

ELDERS MEET ON THURSDAY, JUNE 26, 6:30 - 7:30 PM

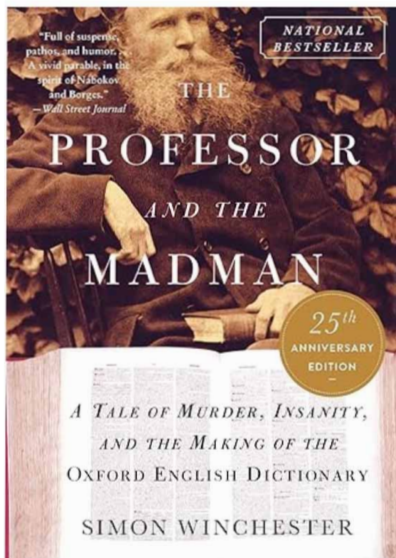
As we get older, and as Elders we are even a bit older than “getting older,” we lose various abilities to do things, we increasingly lose friends, our lives become more limited, and medical issues can consume our time and attention. How do we navigate this time in our lives? We can become frustrated, angry, depressed, or just very tired. Is there a way to make peace with this process and deal with it gently and gracefully?



Our June Elders meeting will discuss this issue. Starting with a meditation on the subject by Frank Ostaseski, we will talk about our own experiences and how we are attempting to accept the truths of our own aging, and the difficulties we are facing in doing that.

Our meeting will be Thursday, June 26, from 6:30-7:30 p.m. on the Church's Zoom link.

JULY BOOK CLUB - THURSDAY, JULY 10, 7:30 PM



We will be reading *The Professor and the Madman*, by Simon Winchester. It is available from both the Sonoma County and Marin County libraries.

If you imagine reading about the writing of a dictionary would be tedious, think again!

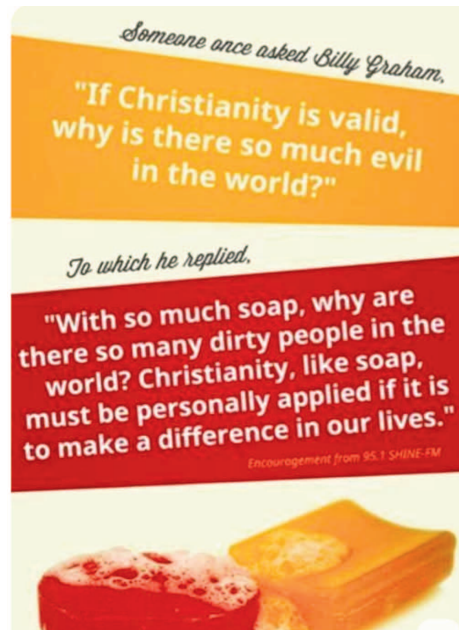
This unusual and exciting account centers on two men involved in the creation of the Oxford English Dictionary—Professor James Murray, its editor, and Dr. William Chester Minor, a true Connecticut Yankee who was one of the resource's most prolific contributors. The most surprising aspect of this long and productive partnership was that Dr. Minor, probably a schizophrenic, was incarcerated in England's most notorious insane asylum during the whole of their working relationship.

He was a scholar and medical doctor whose fragile mental condition was probably exacerbated by duty as a surgeon during the American Civil War. His imprisonment was not harsh, and his devotion to the cause of the dictionary and his precise and prolific contributions probably helped him hold on to some sense of reality. Winchester's descriptions of Civil War battlefields and the search for definitions of words such as aardvark or elephant are intriguing and compelling. This is a fine tale for both word lovers and history buffs. The momentum of the beginning scenes of warfare and murder are followed, not disappointingly, by descriptions of the trials and tribulations of dictionary crafting. Readers will meet some extraordinary men and an unusual woman, and find themselves well and truly ensconced in the late 19th century.

JUNE BIRTHDAYS



- 4 — Nancy Sangster De Haan
- 7 — Sean Kaufman
- 20 — Christina Santschi
- 27 — Amy Hodges Kaufman
- 28 — Randall MacKenzie
- 30 — Bob De Haan
- 30 — Christine Bandettini



TIE DEADLINE for JULY-AUGUST 2025 - MON., JUNE 23

The deadline for articles and news for the July-August 2025 issue of The TIE is Monday, June 23. Please email your articles to lucindaray@aol.com by Monday, June 23.



Rev. Elisabeth Middelberg

Thursday mornings
or by appointment

Phone: 707 280-0382

Email: Elismid@yahoo.com

Amy Powers – Office Manager



















Monday and Thursday 10:30 AM - 2 PM

You can contact Amy by phone
or email any time.

Office Phone : 415 479-2747

Email: office@fccsanrafael.org

FCC Calendar JUNE 2025

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1  10 am Worship, Church School & Child Care Our service is on YOUTUBE at 10 AM	2	3 5 am - 6 am  Meditation in the Sanctuary	4	5 7 am - 8 am  BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING via ZOOM	6	7
8  10 am - 11 am Our service is on YOUTUBE at 10 AM	9	10 5 am - 6 am  Meditation in the Sanctuary	11	12	13	14 Flag Day
15 Father's Day 10 am  Worship, Church School & Child Care Our service is on YOUTUBE at 10 AM	16	17 5 am - 6 am  Meditation in the Sanctuary	18	19 Juneteenth	20	21 10 am - 12 pm  SPRING GARDEN RETREAT
22 10 am  Worship, Church School & Child Care Our service is on YOUTUBE at 10 AM YELLOW SUNDAY 10 am - 11 am 11:15 am - 12:15 pm  LUNCH AFTER CHURCH	23 5 am  THE DEADLINE 5 PM	24 5 am - 6 pm  Meditation in the Sanctuary	25  DON'T PARK IN THE CHURCH PARKING LOT	26  DON'T PARK IN THE CHURCH PARKING LOT 6:30 pm - 7:30 pm  ELDERS MEETING ON ZOOM	27	28
29 10 am  Worship, Church School & Child Care Our service is on YOUTUBE at 10 AM	30	1 5 am - 6 pm  Meditation in the Sanctuary	2	3	4  Independence Day	5

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.

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
United Church of Christ

THE TIE
JUNE 2025



We're on the Web!

See us at:

www.fccSanRafael.org

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San Rafael, CA 94903
(415) 479-2747

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF SAN RAFAEL

8 North San Pedro
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[Address Correction Requested](#)