

The TIE



From our pastor,
Rev. Elisabeth Middelberg

“Sparking and equipping real people to be changemakers like Jesus in their everyday places and spaces”

We are embarking on a four-week sermon series called “The Changemakers,” developed by Rev. Marcia McFee in partnership with the Changemaker Initiative. This initiative, launched in 2018 by Rev. Kathi McShane, seeks to integrate faith with effective, innovative action in the world.

The initiative grew out of the very questions people in faith communities have been wrestling with: “How do I connect my faith with how I live in the world? What kind of difference can I—or can the church—make in our

world today?” To explore these questions, Rev. McShane’s Methodist Church partnered with Ashoka, a secular social entrepreneurship organization, spending a year learning about the skills and processes of making meaningful change.

Their vision is both inspiring and ambitious: We imagine a culturally diverse national movement of courageous Changemaker Churches that catalyze people to be compassion-driven changemakers in their neighborhoods, schools, workplaces, families, and communities.

I found myself intrigued by the possibility of discovering a more systematic way to talk about the church’s mission—seeing it as a place where people can be equipped to build direct connections between their faith and their day-to-day lives, between their beliefs and how they show up in the world around them.

Initially, looking at this changemakers initiative I found myself a little overwhelmed, thinking it would ask more time from people to implement. But then I realized that much of what they’re advocating for is already woven into what we’re doing. Many of our ministries come out of people’s passion and initiatives. Our mission moments are designed to share how people are living out their faith in their work or volunteer activities.

Our Holy Cow Survey spoke clearly about many people’s desire, to connect spirituality with daily life, and I believe it’s worthwhile to see how this initiative can help us find new language for talking about the

Continued on the next page.



impact we can make together.



During our four-week worship series, we'll explore some of the core attributes of changemaking: Compassion, Collaboration, Creativity, and Empowerment, drawing from scriptures in the gospels of Mark and Luke. If you'd like to learn more about the Changemaker Initiative, you can visit their website: <https://thechangemakerinitiative.org>

Even though most of us are not in school, September always feels to me like the beginning of a new year. So we want to welcome everybody back from possible travels and time away and hope that you will join and grow with us as we continue our journey together. We are very excited to have our Music Director, Gerry Grosz, back with us this month, and grateful for Jason Meyers, who filled in for Gerry during the summer months. Please note that there is a special "Welcome Back" Sunday on September the 14th, but please know that you are welcome at any time.

I am grateful to be on the journey together, *Pastor Elisabeth*

OUR NEIGHBORS NEED OUR HELP



When disaster strikes, families in our community can lose everything in an instant. Fires, floods, storms, evictions, deportations, and other unforeseen emergencies often leave people without homes, clothing, or even the basics of daily living. Canal Alliance is partnering with the City of San Rafael, the County of Marin and other agencies to support the approximately **55 individuals who face devastating losses after the apartment fire on August 21 at 516 Canal Street, San Rafael.**

Canal Alliance's Client Support Fund provides relief for tragedies like this. Through this fund, Canal Alliance is able to step in quickly with critical assistance—helping cover urgent needs such as temporary shelter, food, clothing, medical care, and other essentials. Together, we can provide comfort and support when it matters most.

Please do NOT bring physical donations, which add strain in an already chaotic situation. **Please do not bring physical donations** to Canal Alliance, County offices, or the families recovering from this fire.

Right now, the most effective way to help is through financial contributions. We ask you to consider giving via this link <https://donate.canalalliance.org/campaign/718853/donate> or bringing a gift card to Canal Alliance's neighborhood location at 91 Larkspur, San Rafael, to be delivered to these families.

PRAYER PARTNERS

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



August 31 - September 6
James "Trip" True

September 21 - 27
Bruce Weir

September 7 -13
Jim Turner

September 28 - October 4
Barbara Alexander

September 14 -20
Denise Walker

Come and Worship with us!

We will be worshipping at 10 AM.

The service will also be available streaming on YouTube (see next page).

- September 7 10 AM Changemakers Part 2 - Collaboration**
Luke 10:1-11
- September 14 10 AM Changemakers Part 3 - Creativity**
Luke 7:36-50
Welcoming Sunday
Mission Moment: Lisa Bennett (see below)
- September 21 10 AM Changemakers Part 4 -Empowerment**
Mark 10: 46-52
- September 28 10 AM Guest Speaker: Rev. Rhina Ramos**
Associate Conference Minister of Justice & Witness and
Anti-Racism for the Northern California Nevada
Conference of the United Church of Christ.

Mission Moment September 14: Lisa Bennett, the Executive Director of the Marin Multicultural Center will talk about the Rapid Response Network. This network is a program to provide support and witness in the event of a local ICE arrest. She will give an overview of other programs such as the Presente Program, which works with at-risk youth ages 15 to 19; Community Resilience, and Arts, Culture and Media.

Welcoming Sunday-September 14



Welcome back all our members! This is a time when the choir comes back together and inspires us with its beautiful music. At this point, we start looking forward to the fall and all the colorful times that brings us. Following worship, we have an Ice Cream Social in the Courtyard.



We look forward to seeing you on **Sunday, September 14.**



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=c2V0RXEwWjF4STNNSTlxbWFFTENuZz09>

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



Sept. 2: The Board of Ministry will meet on **Tuesday, Sept. 2** at 11:45 AM.

Sept. 3: The Search Committee will meet on **Wednesday, Sept. 3**, at 5:30 PM

Sept. 4: The Board of Trustees will meet on **Thursday, Sept. 4** at 7:00 PM.

Sept. 17: The Church Council will meet on **Wednesday, Sept. 17** at 6 PM.

Sept. 24: The Board of Mission will meet on **Wednesday, Sept. 24** at 1 PM.

JOIN US AS WE GO OUT FOR LUNCH AFTER WORSHIP Sunday, September 7



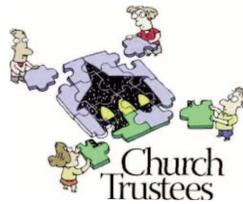
We will go out for lunch at World of Sourdough at 496 Las Gallinas Ave. after worship on September 7. Please join us!

KINDNESS — PASS IT ON!

Make a new friend

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



BOARD OF TRUSTEES REPORT

Preschool Fence Finished

The new fence around the Acqua Montessori preschool is complete and beautiful. The fence is made of long lasting redwood and includes metal panels with attractive leaf designs. Special thanks to Pilgrim Park and Audel Barajas and his crew.



What Happened to the pretty little entrance garden?

MOLES! The addition of the short border fence from Lynn Grant seemed to have stopped most of the traffic, and for awhile the garden thrived. This summer several times we planted new plants that promptly disappeared and small mounds appeared. We will seek mole-avoided plants, if such exist.

Rental changes

The Real Life Church has discontinued their use of the church Mondays and Tuesdays. This has resulted in an income loss for the church of about \$1000 per month. In the early Spring they added use Thursday evenings and Saturday days, so FCCSR is still ahead of rental income budget expectations, but less so.

A new 12-step support group will be renting the Plum Room on Tuesday evenings.

Street-side Landscaping Update

MMWD has approved the recycled water plans, so we expect to start installing the irrigation system this fall, and planting in late fall.

Next Meeting: Thursday, September 4, 7:00 PM on Zoom.

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.

Community Fellowship and Spiritual Life in September and October

We will be coordinating Pastoral Care for members who cannot attend in person. We are also sending cards to many church members! At our August meeting we also confirmed that we will sing Happy Birthday to all who were born each month on its last Sunday.

August 31: We bid goodbye to Jason Myers who filled in so superbly during Music Director Grosz' absence, and we'll be pleased to see Gerry back on the piano bench starting September 7th.

September 7: We are planning an informal luncheon after worship on September 7, at World of Sourdough at 496 Las Gallinas Ave. Everyone is welcome to attend.



September 14: The Board of Ministry will be hosting an Ice Cream Social after worship on “Welcoming Sunday,” September 14. Bring your appetites!

September 25: The Elders will meet on September 25 to continue reminiscing about impactful events and people from our younger years.

September 28: Rev. Reena Ramos, a representative of the Northern California Nevada Conference of the United Church of Christ, will be speaking during worship.

October 5: On World Animal Day, Oct. 5, we will have our annual **Blessing of the Animals** service, in our courtyard. Bring your pets, and invite your friends and neighbors to come and bring their pets too.

October 12: World Communion Day will be on October 12. We will also take the Neighbors in Need offering on October 12.

October 26: will be Volunteer Recognition Sunday.

Next meeting for the Board of Ministry: Tuesday, September 2, at 11:45 on Zoom.

PILGRIM PARK NEWS



On Sunday, August 17, our Mission Moment featured an update on activities at Pilgrim Park. Pilgrim Park Apartments was established in 1971 from the happy confluence of:

- The First Congregational Church of San Rafael had excess land
- The congregation wanted to do something helpful for the community with the land
- The Federal Government was then sponsoring low-interest loans for affordable housing

Our church, under the leadership of John Starkweather, planned and managed the creation of Pilgrim Park Apartments, Inc., a 501 ©(3) not-for-profit corporation. Seven directors from the congregation have management and policy responsibilities for Pilgrim Park. The directors have delegated management of Pilgrim Park to The John Stewart Company of San Francisco.

Last Sunday the property manager, Les Santos, told the congregation about the capital improvements currently going on at the property with 61 apartments. As you may have noticed, some of the improvements included:

- The parking lot resurfacing and restriping (looks fantastic)
- The landscaping project along North San Pedro (including reclaimed water irrigation planned)
- The installation of new fencing and panels around the Montessori school

In addition to the capital improvements, Pilgrim Park has many services for residents, including

- A weekly food pantry (from the SF Marin Food bank)
- Deliveries from Extra Food
- A large and bountiful community garden (check out the tomatoes)
- Weekly programs offered by the Activities Director

Hoping many of us were able to join the Pilgrim Park community annual summer BBQ on Saturday, August 23rd! Fun for all!!

EVERY DOLLAR FEEDS KIDS



About 30 years ago, 15 members of our church traveled to Cuernavaca, Mexico, to a retreat center run by Benedictine Sisters. We met Patty and Bill Coleman, founders of Vamos!, an organization based in Vermont, focusing on improving the lives of the extremely poor children in Cuernavaca and the surrounding villages. The Colemans had seen the poverty in the city, watching young children selling cheap trinkets to get enough money for some very basic food for their families. Vamos! established learning centers to begin to educate the children, along with two daily meals. A volunteer said “without food, they cannot learn.” We must hold on to that meaningful statement.

After our visit to Cuernavaca, where we saw the minimal living conditions and the poverty, our own Alan and Barbara Miller began a project of providing food for these children. Every Dollar Feeds Kids, Inc., was established as a non-profit organization in 2004. In the first several years, we provided funds for over a million meals. Donations go directly to the food program, which employs local woman to shop and prepare the meals. Vamos! Centers serve close to 3,000 meals a week.

The head of Vamos!, Sean Dougherty, in a recent letter, said “We are deeply grateful for our partnership with EDFK as we serve the poor women and children of Cuernavaca, Mexico.”

After many years of expanding the programs, Vamos! kitchens are in need of upgrades. They’re in need of about \$15,000 for commercial-grade equipment to maintain their programs well into the future. We hope to continue our support of “our” wonderful children, many of whom have grown up and got out the poverty cycle. We’d like to take a bit of credit for making that happen.

Donations are always welcome. Checks should be made out to EDFK or Every Dollar Feeds Kids. Send donations to the church or place them in the offering plate any Sunday. If you’d like more information on the food service needs, email me at valpub@yahoo.com.

Val Sherer, EDFK Treasurer

EDFK Board members:

Louis Frost, President; Lucinda Ray, Financial Secretary; Megan Fuller, Secretary;
Caryl Hodges

ELDERS MEET ON THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 25, 6:30 - 7:30

Elders Continue Reminiscing in September Thursday, September, from 6:30 - 7:30.

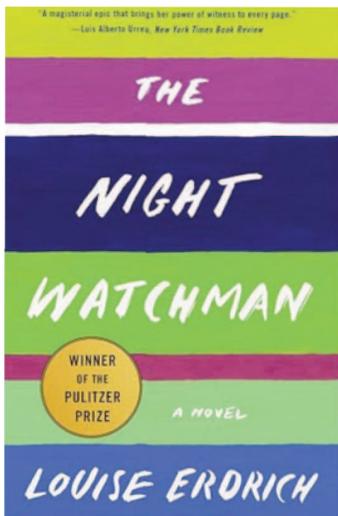
Have you ever gone on a camping trip and had to push your car up a hill after offloading your food and water? Were you a great water skier in your youth? Did your mother have no idea where you were or what you were doing when you were outside growing up?



FCCSR Elders shared these and numerous other stories from our youths during our August meeting, and we barely dented the surface. So, in September we'll continue our reminiscing with topics like: Did your family have a favorite tradition? What was your nickname? What do you think is missing from modern life that existed when you were young? And more.

Join us! We have a jolly good time and get to know our church friends much better.

BOOK CLUB - OCTOBER 9, 7:30 PM



We will be reading *The Night Watchman*, by Louise Erdrich. It is the winner of the 2021 Pulitzer Prize for fiction. It is available from both the Sonoma County and Marin County libraries.

Based on the extraordinary life of National Book Award-winning author Louise Erdrich's grandfather who worked as a night watchman and carried the fight against Native dispossession from rural North Dakota all the way to Washington, D.C., this powerful novel explores themes of love and death with lightness and gravity and unfolds with the elegant prose, sly humor, and depth of feeling of a master craftsman.

In *The Night Watchman*, Louise Erdrich creates a fictional world populated with memorable characters who are forced to grapple with the worst and best impulses of human nature. Thomas Wazhashk is the night watchman at the jewel bearing plant, the first factory located near the Turtle Mountain Reservation in rural North Dakota. He is also a Chippewa Council member who is trying to understand the consequences of a new "emancipation" bill on its way to the floor of the United States Congress.

It is 1953 and he and the other council members know the bill isn't about freedom; Congress is fed up with Indians. The bill is a "termination" that threatens the rights of Native Americans to their land and their very identity. How can the government abandon treaties made in good faith with Native Americans "for as long as the grasses shall grow, and the rivers run"?

SEPTEMBER BIRTHDAYS



- 2 — Julie Dowling
- 4 — Greg Ripley
- 6 — Ray O'Leary
- 10 — Joan Roane
- 10 — Megan Fuller
- 16 — Will Godbey
- 21 — Josie Borden Hills
- 25 — TJ Dempsey
- 25 — Caryl Hodges



TIE DEADLINE for OCTOBER 2025 - MON., SEPT. 22

The deadline for articles and news for the October 2025 issue of The TIE is Monday, September 22. Please email your articles to lucindaray@aol.com by Monday, September 22.



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 **SEPTEMBER** 2025

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
31  10 am Worship, Church School & Child Care Our services is on YOUTUBE at 10 AM	September 1 Labor Day	2 11:45 am  Board of Ministry Meeting via ZOOM 5 am - 6 pm  Meditation in the Sanctuary	3 5:30 pm - 6:30 pm  SEARCH COMMITTEE	4 7 am - 8 am  BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING via ZOOM		
7 Genuflectus' Day 10 am  Worship, Church School & Child Care 10 am - 11 am Our services is on YOUTUBE at 10 AM 11:55 am - 12:15 pm  GO OUT TO LUNCH AT ELDER'S CHURCH	8	9 4 pm - 7 pm  STREET CHURCH LUNCHEON DINNER 5 pm - 6 pm  Meditation in the Sanctuary	10	11 Parish Day	12	13
14 10 am  Worship, Church School & Child Care 10 am - 11 am Our services is on YOUTUBE at 10 AM 10 am WELCOMING SUNDAY 11 am ICE CREAM SOCIAL	15	16 5 pm - 6 pm  Meditation in the Sanctuary	17 6 am - 7 am  Church Council Meeting via ZOOM	18	19	20
21 10 am  Worship, Church School & Child Care 10 am - 11 am Our services is on YOUTUBE at 10 AM	22 5 am  THE DEADLINE: \$24	23 5 pm - 6 pm  Meditation in the Sanctuary	24 1:30 pm - 2:30 pm  BOARD of MISSION Meeting on ZOOM	25 6:30 pm - 7:30 pm  ELDER'S MEETING ON ZOOM	26	27
28 10 am  Worship, Church School & Child Care 10 am - 11 am Our services is on YOUTUBE at 10 AM	29	30 5 pm - 6 pm  Meditation in the Sanctuary	1	2	3	4

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.

Trach