

## The TIE



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

I am writing this reflection just before we observe Palm Sunday, the day that Jesus rides into Jerusalem on a donkey. The crowds, eager for somebody who will bring about peace, are lining the street shouting “Hosanna, blessed is He who comes in the name of our Lord” — risking the attention of the authorities, yet their collective longing overrides their fear.

It is interesting to note that our Palm Sunday coincides this coming weekend with the third “No Kings Day”. People all over the country will be lining the streets, shouting, equally eager for change that will bring about peace, that will bring about justice and an end to the wars.

Fr. Michael K. Marsh, an Episcopalian Priest writes:

*What if Palm Sunday was the original No Kings protest?*

*What if Jesus, the disciples, and the crowd that follow Jesus are protesting violence, injustice, and imperial power?*

*Instead of protest songs there were shouts of “Hosanna!”, a cry for deliverance and liberation, a plea for change.*

*Instead of protest signs there were cloaks and palm branches, symbols of joy, peace, submission, and the celebration of a new way.*



The faith communities have always participated in liberation and freedom movements. Many of the actions of the civil rights movement originated in the black churches. The Interfaith presence of the faith communities has been noted, and welcomed in the current struggles to protect immigrants, to confront ICE violence, to uphold democratic and religious values. It has been powerful and inspiring to see people of different faith stand together because our collective longing strengthens our voices and strengthens our shared message that the sacred worth of every person needs to be honored.

Like Jesus and those who followed him, we too cry out for deliverance, for people to be set free, for lives to be protected.

One of the hardest things for me to understand and remember about Good Friday is the deliberate harm being done to the body and spirit of human being, of Jesus. There seems to be so much deliberate harm that is being done right now, to individuals and to whole groups of people. It seems to be a dynamic inherent in all of the wars, or

Continued on the next page.

whenever power is out of control and is being used to wound rather than protect. The grief of anybody noticing or witnessing what is going on in the world around us, is palpable. You can feel it when we share prayers or talk about the harm we see being done.

Just like the people lining the streets when Jesus rode into Jerusalem, we too would like to see someone or something make a definitive change right now. Instead of turning away, of dispersing like the crowd did, when we do not see an immediate change, may we hold on to the events following Good Friday, hold on to what we witnessed at Easter.



We are an Easter people, and we know about God's resurrection power, a power that is still moving through the world. So maybe during Easter and the upcoming Easter Season, we can find ways to realign ourselves with the knowledge that there is something, someone, greater than the principalities of this world. I recently read this story, which strengthened me in a resolve to stay with it, to keep doing the work we are called to do.

There are bamboo forests in Asia. When bamboo is planted, almost nothing happens for years. The seed is watered. The soil is tended. Seasons pass. To the casual observer, the ground appears unchanged.

One year goes by. Nothing.

Two years. Still nothing.

Three. Four.

Then sometime around the fifth year, something remarkable happens. The bamboo suddenly shoots upward. Within a matter of weeks, it can grow nearly ninety feet tall.

To someone who has not been watching closely, the growth appears sudden and almost miraculous. But of course, the growth did not begin in the fifth year.

For years the bamboo has been doing its most important work underground. It has been growing an intricate network of roots, spreading wide and deep through the soil. Only once that foundation is strong enough does the visible growth begin.

Pray that collectively we keep tending to the work set before us, keep tending to our hearts so they grow stronger, knowing that ultimately the world is held in the hands of the One seeking to reconstitute and resurrect all of creation.

**Amen,**

*Pastor Elisabeth*

## FLOWERS FOR EASTER

If you wish to purchase an Easter lily or spring bulb in memory or celebration of a loved one, please fill out the order form that will be in the Sunday bulletins in March or leave a message in the office voice or email for Amy.



## PRAYER PARTNERS

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



**March 29 - April 4**

Ray and Jean O'Leary

**April 5 - 11**

David Santschi and Christina Schiffner Santschi

**April 12 - 18**

Val Sherer

**April 19 - 25**

Cecil Sherrod

**April 26 - May 2**

Debra Smith

# Come and Worship with us!



**We will be worshipping at 10 AM in the sanctuary.**

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

**March 29      10 AM      Palm Sunday**

Luke 19:29-40



**April 2      5:30 -7 PM      Maundy Thursday**

Last Supper

Soup/Bread, Handwashing and Taize Service

**April 3      12-3 PM      Good Friday**

Come and walk the Meditation Stations

**April 5      10 AM      Easter Sunday**

8:30-9 AM bring flowers  
for the Cross



**April 12      10 AM      Worship**

Post-Resurrection Story

“On the Road to Emmaus”

**April 19      10 AM      Worship**

Chaplain Chitoka Webb preaching

**April 26      10 AM      Worship “Earth Day”**

Rev. Lauren Van Ham preaching

Eco-Chaplain and Spiritual Director





## 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](mailto:Knopf.david@gmail.com)

## MEETINGS, MEETINGS, MEETINGS -- VIA ZOOM

**April 9:** The Board of Trustees will meet on **Thursday, April 9,** at 7:00 PM.

**April 15:** The Board of Mission will meet on **Wednesday, April 15,** at 12:15

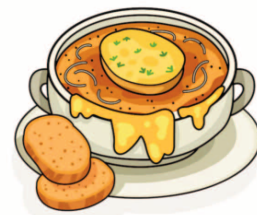
**April 15:** The Church Council will meet on **Wednesday, April 15,** at 6:00 PM.

**April 29:** The Board of Ministry will meet on **Wednesday, April 29,** at 11:45



## THURSDAY, APRIL 2, 5:30 PM MAUNDY THURSDAY SOUP SUPPER

We will enjoy a simple soup supper together on Maundy Thursday, April 2, at 5:30 PM, followed by handwashing and a Taize service of song and prayer.



## LUNCH AFTER WORSHIP - APRIL 19

Monthly luncheons will continue after Church on the third Sunday of every month. This month we'll meet at **La Hacienda Mexican Restaurant**, 3815 Redwood Hwy, San Rafael, on April 19.

## BOARD OF TRUSTEES REPORT



### Landscape Project Planting Soon

The North San Pedro Road re-landscaping project will plant native plants soon. During March a crew has been digging trenches for irrigation pipes to support a drip system. This has also involved switching the courtyard and cross garden drip systems to the new recycled water system (except the hose by the outside cross). They have also been preparing the soil to receive plantings. We still hope for some spring rain to help the new plantings thrive.

### And More Plantings...

The 4H group Caryl advises will be planting pollinators plants in the "ameba" raised planter in the Courtyard this Spring. We hope to see more bees and butterflies in the courtyard.

### Stuff, Stuff, Everywhere

We have been working at getting rid of unused stuff around the church. We recycled out-of-date printers and decades old paints, and found left over construction supplies from the last century. The choir robes the choir haven't used for years and were disliked by the choir are now be used as costumes for Marin Shakespeare's San Quintin Theater Program.

### AARP Tax Help Continues

Continuing every Wednesdays from 10 AM - 2 PM until tax day, volunteers with AARP will be helping people complete their taxes for free in the Community Room. Last year over 200 people were aided in completing their taxes. Most were single, with low income. The service provides advice and electronic filing with IRS approved security.

**Next Trustees Meeting will be Thursday, April 9th, at 7:00 PM on Zoom.**

To The First Congregational Church of San Rafael:

Thank you for providing us a space to hold our toastmaster meetings for the last four years. COVID interrupted everyone's life and we were incredibly fortunate to have a member like Ralph Sherer who had the ability to ask for your help and receive assistance. As you already know, membership ebbs and flows. The one aspect to any organization's survival is a place to meet, and the First Congregational Church provided this. Even after COVID, as we regained our footing, the church generously provided space. Over the last year, our group has regrown, and in order to adapt to our members' needs we found a new location. We are sad to leave the current location; it cultivated our club's growth.

Sincerely,  
Daniel Altman  
2025-2026 Marin Toastmasters Club President



## BOARD OF MISSION MISSION MATTERS



### BREAD FOR THE WORLD OFFERING OF LETTERS - APRIL 26

On Sunday, April 26, after worship, the Board of Mission invites you 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 will write 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. On the next page, you can see a sample letter.



By taking part in Bread for the World's 2026 Offering of Letters, you will help support domestic nutrition programs like SNAP and WIC, as well as funding for critical international food assistance programs. Tell your senators and representatives to support healthy, equitable, and sustainable food systems.

The impact of government funding is significant. It not only affects the agriculture and food sectors - it can play a huge role in ending food insecurity and hunger in the U.S. and save the lives of millions abroad.

**Here are answers to questions you may have:**

**1. How do I participate?** After worship on April 26, take a few minutes to write a letter similar to the sample on the next page. **There will also be printed copies of the sample letter that you can simply sign if you prefer, as well as addresses of our congressman and senators, and envelopes. Bring your own return address labels!**

**2. Wouldn't it be better to donate to reputable charities instead of trying to influence US government aid?** Charitable aid is important, but what is more difficult is changing the systems that allow hunger and poverty to persist. This is why changing the policies and practices of how we deliver assistance is essential to reducing hunger and poverty.

**3. Why handwritten letters?** Because they work. Research from the Congressional Management Foundation confirms that handwritten, mailed letters are still the best way to communicate with your members of Congress. In fact, 96 percent of Capitol Hill staff reported in a survey that if their member of Congress had not reached a decision on an issue, personalized letters would influence his or her position. Handwritten letters from constituents of members of Congress are always read and logged. You can also write your letters at home and bring them to church with you on May 18.

**4. To send a personalized email go to: <https://www.bread.org/offering-letters/>**  
You can learn more about Bread for the World and the Offering of Letters at:  
**<https://www.bread.org/offering-letters/>**

## OFFERING OF LETTERS SAMPLE

Rep. \_\_\_\_\_  
US house of Representatives, Washington DC 20515  
Sen. \_\_\_\_\_  
U.S. Senate, Washington, DC20510

Dear Senator \_\_\_\_\_, or Dear Representative \_\_\_\_\_,

Hunger is rising and children are at risk. It's time to act.

As a person of faith, I believe every child is created in the image of God and deserving of dignity and opportunity. As your constituent, I urge you to make ending hunger a top priority.

Specifically, I ask you to:

- Restore, protect, and strengthen U.S. nutrition programs—including SNAP and WIC—that help families put food on the table;
- Fully fund and strengthen global food, health, and development programs that promote human flourishing and help keep America safe, strong, and prosperous;
- Pass a strong, bipartisan Farm Bill that supports farmers, strengthens communities, and helps end hunger at home and overseas.

Hunger is not inevitable. It's a reflection of our priorities and policy choices. Cuts to SNAP and international assistance have already put millions at risk. We can and must do better.

In Matthew 14:16, when the disciples asked Jesus to send the hungry crowd away, He replied, "You give them something to eat." Today, that same call comes to us. As hunger grows in our midst, we must act. I look forward to hearing how you will prioritize legislation and funding to help end hunger — for our children, our communities, and our world.

Sincerely,

Your name and your address

Senator Alex Padilla  
112 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Senator Adam Schiff  
331 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Representative Jared Huffman  
House Office Building  
Washington, DC. 20515

## 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. Of course during Lent the Board of Ministry will continue our pastoral care through home visits and card writing, thanks to Helen MacLam, Jackie Dema, and Cathi Krise. Thanks to the Agape Team and the pastor for their home or hospital visits, for offering rides to appointments and to church. If you have or are aware of someone in need of prayer, transportation, pastoral visits or nourishment, reach out to the prayer chain, Pastor Elisabeth, or the church office.

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

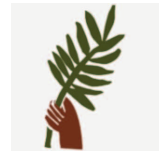
**Meditation Tuesdays at 5 PM** Meditation continues every Tuesdays at 5 PM. Tell Elisabeth if you wish to join by Zoom or need a ride if you cannot attend in person.

**Monthly luncheons** will continue after Church on the third Sunday of every month. This month we'll meet at La Hacienda Mexican Restaurant on April 19. See page 4 of this TIE.

### Holy Week and Beyond

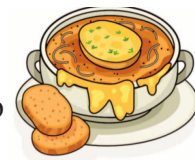
*After resisting temptation in the wilderness, Jesus rode slowly into Jerusalem where he was welcomed by crowds waving palm branches and shouting Hosanna!*

**Palm Sunday** On Sunday, March 29, we will celebrate with palms and “Hosannas!”



*On the following Thursday Jesus shared the feast of the Passover with his disciples. Before sharing the meal He humbly washed the disciples' feet.*

**Maundy Thursday** On April 2 from 5:30 to 7:00 we will gather for a simple soup and bread supper, followed by hand-washing, and a Taizé service.



*On Friday Christ was arrested and sentenced to death by crucifixion.*

**Good Friday** 12:00-3:00 The courtyard will be open and prepared for a self-led meditation walk. The Sanctuary will be open for individual prayer with meditative recorded music.

*Jesus' body lay in its tomb on Saturday until evening when his body was treated for burial. The next morning several women discovered that the large stone covering the entrance had been rolled away and his body was gone. During the day He appeared to several of his followers and disciples, providing to Christians evidence of His Resurrection.*



**Easter Sunday** In joyous community we celebrate Christ's Resurrection with Alleluias and a welcome musical guest! We will fill the Sanctuary with memorial lilies and flowering bulbs, and fill the cross with flowers from our spring gardens.

**April 12** Pastor Elisabeth will talk about Jesus' appearances to the Disciples.

**April 19** Chaplain Chitoka Webb will preach about the meeting of two men with Jesus on the road to Emmaus.

**April 26 Earth Day** Rev. Lauren Van Ham, and Eco-Chaplain and Spiritual Director will preach.

**The next meeting of the Board of Ministry** will be Wednesday, April 29, 11:45-12:45 via Zoom.

## April Elders Share Lessons from Our Long Lives: What Have We Learned?

**WEDNESDAY, APRIL 8 6:30 - 7:30 PM**

Ancient Friends, We're meeting on, Wednesday April 8, at 6:30 over the Church's Zoom link (below). Here's the plan:

I know the FCCSR Elders have gained some life lessons from our years on this planet. We'd share them with young folks, if they would listen, but at least we can share them with each other. We'll understand!



At some point in your life did you suddenly, or slowly, decide there was a better way for you do, or be, or perhaps, interact with other people? What occasioned this insight? An event, something you read, a mistake, or something else?

Did you follow-through on this new knowledge? Do you sometimes and not others? What affect has this information had in your life?. No judgments. Just sharing.

Link to join all church Zoom meetings:

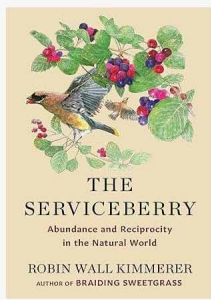
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/2011092691?pwd=c2V0RXEwWjF4STNNSTlxbWFFTENuZz09>

Meeting ID: ID: 201 109 2691

Password: FCCSR!

Call in number: 1-669-900-6833

## BOOK CLUB - THURSDAY, APRIL 16, 7:30 PM



The next meeting of the Book Club will be on Thursday, April 16, from 7:30 to 8:30 on Zoom. We will be reading *The Serviceberry*, by Robin Wall Kimmerer. This is a short book (128 pages) and is very available from both the Marin and Sonoma County libraries. It looks like a great book to read in the spring and in light of the current world events! From the #1 New York Times bestselling author of *Braiding Sweetgrass*, *The Serviceberry* is a bold and inspiring vision for how to orient our lives around gratitude, reciprocity, and community, based on the lessons of the natural world.

As Indigenous scientist and author of *Braiding Sweetgrass*, Robin Wall Kimmerer harvests serviceberries alongside the birds, she considers the ethic of reciprocity that lies at the heart of the gift economy. How, she asks, can we learn from Indigenous wisdom and the plant world to reimagine what we value most? Our economy is rooted in scarcity, competition, and the hoarding of resources, and we have surrendered our values to a system that actively harms what we love. Meanwhile, the serviceberry's relationship with the natural world is an embodiment of reciprocity, interconnectedness, and gratitude. The tree distributes its wealth—its abundance of sweet, juicy berries—to meet the needs of its natural community. And this distribution ensures its own survival. As Kimmerer explains, “Serviceberries show us another model, one based upon reciprocity, where wealth comes from the quality of your relationships, not from the illusion of self-sufficiency.”

As Elizabeth Gilbert writes, Robin Wall Kimmerer is “a great teacher, and her words are a hymn of love to the world.” It is an antidote to the broken relationships and misguided goals of our times, and a reminder that “hoarding won't save us, all flourishing is mutual.”

## APRIL BIRTHDAYS



- 3 — Bob Spofford
- 9 — Bob Bandettini
- 10 — Scott Faraci
- 11 — Jill Krippendorf
- 22 — David Santschi
- 23 — Ed Briggs
- 24 — Lucinda Ray



### MIC Interfaith Prayer Breakfast 2026: A Fundraiser to benefit the Marin Interfaith Council

#### Annual Interfaith Celebration of the National Day of Prayer

##### When

Wednesday, May 6, 2026 at  
8:00 - 10:00 AM PDT  
[Add to Calendar](#)

##### Where

Congregation Kol Shofar  
215 Blackfield Dr.  
Tiburon, CA 94920

##### Contact

Nicole Cuzzi  
Marin Interfaith Council  
[programs@marinifc.org](mailto:programs@marinifc.org)

Please join the Marin Interfaith Council on **Wed. May 6th from 8-10 am** at Congregation Kol Shofar (215 Blackfield Dr., Tiburon) for the 27th annual interfaith celebration of the National Day of Prayer. At this time in our nation, where each new day brings more distressing news as our government wages war against people living within our nation's borders, and on countries far beyond, let us gather to bear witness to the light and love that our faith traditions share.

This year we will hear from Dr. Melba Patillo Beals, who put her life on the line along with eight other young people, to gain equal access to the education that she desired and was rightfully hers. Dr. Beals will share with us her story, her faith, and how she continues to be a promoter of justice and peace in our world.

New to this year's event will be the addition of music, provided by Marv Zauderer through his engaging way of teaching songs that all can sing. Come lift your voices together in love as our world desperately needs to hear them.

MIC will provide a delicious traditional breakfast with vegetarian and gluten free options, coffee & tea.



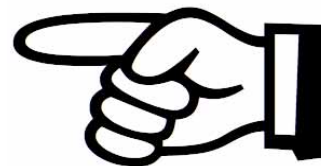
#### Dr. Melba Patillo-Beals

Dr. Melba Patillo Beals is a retired Professor Emeritus from Dominican University of California. Congress bestowed The Congressional Medal of Honor on Melba as one of the Little Rock Nine for risking their lives to integrate Central High School, Little Rock, Arkansas in 1957. She began her career as a PBS and later NBC television news reporter. Dr. Beals has written several award-winning books including, "Warriors Don't Cry", "MARCH Forward Girl", and "I Will Not Fear."

She has six adult children, one birth child and five adopted. She continues to give Webinars around the world on Equality and Self Love. She is an avowed worshiper who claims that a Higher Power has guided her since age three when her grandmother sat her on her lap and taught her to read the bible.

## TIE DEADLINE for MAY 2026 TIE - MON., APRIL 27

The deadline for articles and news for the MAY 2026 issue of The TIE April 27. Please email your articles to [lucindaray@aol.com](mailto:lucindaray@aol.com) by April 27.



### Rev. Elisabeth Middelberg

Thursday mornings  
or by appointment

Phone: 707 280-0382

Email: [Elismid@yahoo.com](mailto: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](mailto:office@fccsanrafael.org)

# FCC Calendar **APRIL** 2026

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<b>29</b>  10 am Worship, Church School & Child Care 11 am Our service is on <b>YOUTUBE</b> at 10 AM	<b>30</b>	<b>31</b> 5 am - 6 am  Meditation in the Sanctuary	<b>April 1</b> April Fool's Day 10 am - 2 pm AARP TAX HELP in the Community Room	<b>2</b> 5:30 am - 7 pm  Maundy Thursday, Service and Soup Supper	<b>3</b> 12 pm - 3 pm  Meditation in the Courtyard	
<b>5</b> Easter 10 am  Worship, Church School & Child Care 11 am Our service is on <b>YOUTUBE</b> at 10 AM	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b> 5 am - 6 am  Meditation in the Sanctuary	<b>8</b> 10 am - 2 pm AARP TAX HELP in the Community Room 6:30 am - 7:30 am  ELDERS MEETING ON ZOOM	<b>9</b> 7 am - 8 am  BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING via ZOOM	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>12</b> 10 am  Worship, Church School & Child Care 11 am Our service is on <b>YOUTUBE</b> at 10 AM	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b> 5 am - 6 am  Meditation in the Sanctuary	<b>15</b> 10 am - 2 pm AARP TAX HELP in the Community Room 12:30 pm - 1:30 pm  BOARD OF MISSION MEETING ON ZOOM 6 pm - 7 pm  Church Council Meeting via ZOOM	<b>16</b> 7:30 am - 8:30 am  BOOK CLUB reading THE SPINICEBERRY	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>19</b> 10 am  Worship, Church School & Child Care 11 am Our service is on <b>YOUTUBE</b> at 10 AM 11:30 am Lunch After Worship	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b> 5 am - 6 am  Meditation in the Sanctuary	<b>22</b> Earth Day	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>26</b> 10 am  Worship, Church School & Child Care 11 am Our service is on <b>YOUTUBE</b> at 10 AM	<b>27</b> 5 pm  THE DEADLINE 5 PM	<b>28</b> 5 am - 6 am  Meditation in the Sanctuary	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>

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](http://www.FccSanRafael.org).