



# The Bridge

April 2014 | Community Congregational Church UCC

Church Office Hours Tue—Wed 10:00am to 2:00pm

Rev. Renie's  
Office Hours

Tues & Thurs. 10:00am to 2:00pm  
and by appointment

## Happenings

**Tue 4/01**

10:00 AM Women's Coffee

7:00 PM Rolling Tones Rehearsal

**Thur 4/03**

7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal

**Sun 4/066**

10:00 AM Communion Sunday

Worship

12:00 PM Middle/High School

Youth Group

**Tue 4/08**

10:00 AM Women's Coffee

7:00 PM Rolling Tones Rehearsal

**Thur 4/10**

7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal

**Sun 4/13**

**Palm Sunday**

10:00 AM Sunday Morning

Worship

12:00 PM Middle/High School

Youth Group

**Tue 4/15**

10:00 AM Women's Coffee

6:45 PM Church Council

7:00 PM Rolling Tones Rehearsal

**Thur 4/17**

6:00 PM Maundy Thursday

7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal

**Sun 4/20**

**EASTER SUNDAY**

6:30 AM Sunrise Service

10:00 AM Sunday Morning

Worship

11:30am **EASTEREGG HUNT**

**Tue 4/22**

10:00 AM Women's Coffee

7:00 PM Rolling Tones Rehearsal

**Thur 4/24**

7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal

**Sun 4/27**

10:00 AM Sunday Morning

Worship

12:00 PM Middle and High

School Youth Group

**Tue 4/29**

10:00 AM Women's Coffee

7:00 PM Rolling Tones Rehearsal



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The Community Congregational United Church  
of Christ in Benicia presents  
a Mother's Day Celebration:

### "Empowering Mothers, Empowering Daughters"

**What:** Come join us in the showing of Miss Representation – a documentary on the state of women and girls' political power in the United States. Followed by discussions led by educational professionals for 5<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> graders, 7<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> graders, 9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> graders, and adults

**Where:** The viewing will be held at 1305 West Second Street in Benicia (The Community Congregational Church)

**When:** **May 10, 7:00-9:00, Come at 6:30 for seating.**

Any questions?

Please contact: Sarah Thompson  
707 342 7825

For more information about

Miss Representation:

<http://film.missrepresentation.org/>

# Campus Enhancement

Jim Lessenger

At the January Congregational meeting the Church voted overwhelmingly to proceed with a reconstruction of the parking lot. The task force met on February 9 and changed its name to the Campus Enhancement Committee (CEC) to reflect the entire scope of the project. The committee will continue to be a subcommittee of the Buildings and Grounds Committee. At that meeting several critical decisions were made:

The chair is Jim Lessenger.

Greg Cox and Jim messenger will continue as the co-chairs of the B and G Committee.

Jim Lessenger is designated as the sole representative to authorized Change Orders. In his absence, Greg Cox will act in his place.

The committee authorized Dale Olm to proceed with the Cornerstone loan application.

The committee authorized Jim Goring to proceed with engineering studies at a cost \$27,000.

It was noted that the sewer system has disintegrated – literally – and that it will have to be rebuilt as part of the enhancement. The extra cost will be about \$6,000 to \$10,000.

The committee will try to keep the campus operational during construction.

Laura Pyles has created a comprehensive workflow chart.

At the February 23 meeting it was announced that the 93 page Cornerstone loan application was in the mail. Dale Olm gets credit for the work he did.

Other points are:

Laura Pyles updated the workflow plan.

Jim Goring was tasked with the landscaping plan contract.

A subcommittee of Jackie Lawrence and Debbie Conway was appointed to explore parking while the parking lot is closed for construction.



It was suggested that the accounts of “capital improvements” and “parking lot repairs” be combined. Planning was started on a financing guide for members.

At the March 9 meeting it was announced that the Cornerstone Fund loan had been approved and that the loan documents needed to be signed. The retention of an attorney was authorized to write the “consul letter” that is required as part of the loan process. The consul letter is a document that guarantees to the lender that the people who have signed the documents are authorized to do so, that the church is in compliance with all nonprofit corporation laws and that the church real estate is free of liens judgments and encumbrances. Mr. Scott Reep Esq. has been retained to do that task.

The engineers and architect visited the city planning department and the church campus on Tuesday, March 11. Because we have made a proactive effort to comply with the zoning laws specifically pertaining to lighting, drainage, surfacing, retaining walls, and slope control, a conditional use permit will not be necessary and city staff can approve the designs. That will save us a tremendous amount of money and time. In addition, it looks like we will not be required to construct sidewalks along the streets.

The Committee has been in negotiations with Happy Hearts and others. It is our desire to keep the campus open during the construction process. However, we ask the indulgence of everyone who uses the campus to minimize traffic and understand the necessities of safety.

The Committee meets every other Sunday at 11:30 in the CE room.

## Stewardship

**Michelle A. Cavagnuolo**

March is a time of renewal and reflection with the promise of what Spring holds for us all. We desire a fresh perspective. We awaken our souls for meaning and purpose. We can find joy in new beginnings and fresh starts.

Our congregation has committed to renovation of our campus and parking lot. A commitment that will be financially a part of our narrative for a long while. We have also renewed our commitment to be the work of Christ in our communities with 10% of our offerings going towards our decided Mission and Outreach programs and our active participation in Common Ground. We have agreed to call an Assistant Pastor/Youth Minister so that our children will begin to develop a sense of what the journey of faith means for them as they grow.

While reflecting on our upcoming **Stewardship Pledge Drive** for the fiscal year 2014-2015, which, begins **Sunday, April 27, 2014, and continues each Sunday through Consecration Sunday, May 18, 2014**, I have thought about the number of times I have said,

**“I give what I can.”**

For many of us, the struggles of money and time are real. It seems we can never really have enough of either and the desire for both often leave us chasing one or the other so hard and fast, we do not allow ourselves the divine spiritual gift of being at ease with living a life less complicated. With this time for reflection, I ask that you reconsider the phrase, “I will give what I can,” and instead, look at the possibilities in another alternative:

**“I give so we can be.”**

### Helping Community Congregational Church by Investing in the UCC Cornerstone Fund

The investments of our members and friends In the UCC Cornerstone Fund can save us up to 1% on loan interest each year!

Investments in the Cornerstone Fund from individuals, churches and organizations across the UCC build the pool of money that funds Cornerstone Fund loans. When you or our church invests with the Cornerstone Fund, you not only make possible new loans to more churches like ours, you help our own church earn an annual interest rate rebate on its fixed rate loan for the upcoming campus renovation.

Here's how it works —

- You choose from a demand account or from a range of term investments. You can even establish a Roth IRA.
- Tell the Cornerstone Fund you want your investment to help our church earn an interest rate rebate. The Fund will calculate the total amount of investments received from members, friends and organizations of the church — and for every 25% of our loan balance that is invested, the Cornerstone Fund will rebate .25% of the interest paid — up to 1% each year!
- Your investment remains confidential — no one in our church will know how much you have invested — and you may add or withdraw funds as you desire according to the terms of your investment.

By participating in the Cornerstone Fund, investors enjoy a very competitive rate of return, while ensuring funds are always available to churches seeking to make capital improvements. By borrowing from the Cornerstone Fund, churches sustain a ministry that supports the mission of churches across the country.

See [www.CornerstoneFund.org](http://www.CornerstoneFund.org) or Dale Olm for more details.



## Congregational Care

Anna Atuatasi



Our next Congregational Care Committee meeting will be 4/27/2014 at 9:15 in the fellowship hall, you please come join us. Also if you would like to help make meals for a member who is having surgery April 1st please contact Anna Atuatasi.



### French Students Need Hosts

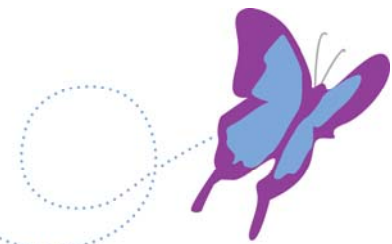
St. Patrick St Vincent High School is coordinating housing for a group of French youth this summer for three weeks that are part of the Vistas in Education program. They will be in the Bay Area from July 10-July 31. They are in need of homes to stay in for this time.

By receiving a student as a member of your family, not just as a guest, he or she will share in all aspects of your family life. They will participate in any trips you plan for your family; accompany your children in their activities; and basically be part of your family for this time.

The French students are between the ages of 13 and 18. They have studied English for varying lengths of time. All American families are welcome to apply for this program. IT IS NOT NECESSARY TO SPEAK FRENCH since the students who come usually have a fair level of English.

There is no compensation for families who host a student, so families have to be willing and able to support another mouth to feed for the three weeks, as well as pay for movies or other family activities.

If you are interested in this great international experience, please contact Bruce Smith at [dramaguy2@aol.com](mailto:dramaguy2@aol.com) or 707-654 8928.



## Music Matters

Barbara Hamm

The musicians have been hard at work preparing and providing music for worship at CCC and out in the community.



**The Rolling Tones** played for a concert at Hope Lutheran Church in El Sobrante on March 7. They will be playing for services at CCC the following Sundays:  
 April 13: "Andante" by A. Vivaldi, arr. by K. McChesney – handbells, handchimes, & flute  
 April 20-Easter: "Hail the Day That Sees Him Rise/Jesus Christ is Risen Today" (Llanfair), arr by Lloyd Larson and the "Hallelujah Chorus" by Handel, with Choir, congregation, and trumpet

**The Benicia Celtic Band** has played on Saturday morning at the park in Vallejo and also for gathering music on Sunday mornings.

**Jazz Gorilla** has played for gathering music on Sunday mornings and for an AAUW-sponsored Arts Festival in Feb.

Following is the list of music that will be sung by the **Sanctuary Choir** in worship.

March 23: "Come to the Water" by Foley

March 30: "I Have Longed for Thy Saving Health" by William Byrd

April 6: "You Are Mine" by Haas, arr. Hayes, with Sanctuary Choir and flute

April 13-Palm Sunday: "Hosanna, Loud Hosanna" by Threlfall, arr. Raney, with the Sanctuary Choir and the Women and Girls' Chorus, accompanied by handbells

April 20-Easter: "Joy in the Morning" by Sleeth, with the Choir and Stuart Blackie, trumpet

"The Hallelujah Chorus" with the Choir, congregation, handbells and Stuart Blackie, trumpet

April 27-Holy Humor Sunday: "A Place in the Choir" by Staines, arr. Deborah Shanks for Choir

See you all in church!



## Christian Education

Jennifer Green

The children have been studying stories of Jesus leading up to Easter.

There will be an Easter egg hunt after service on Easter. Please help by bringing wrapped candy to church. Give them to Jennifer or Anna.

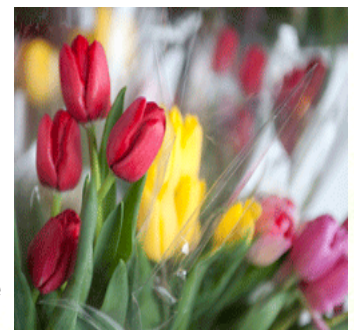


Easter Egg Hunt



## Easter Offerings

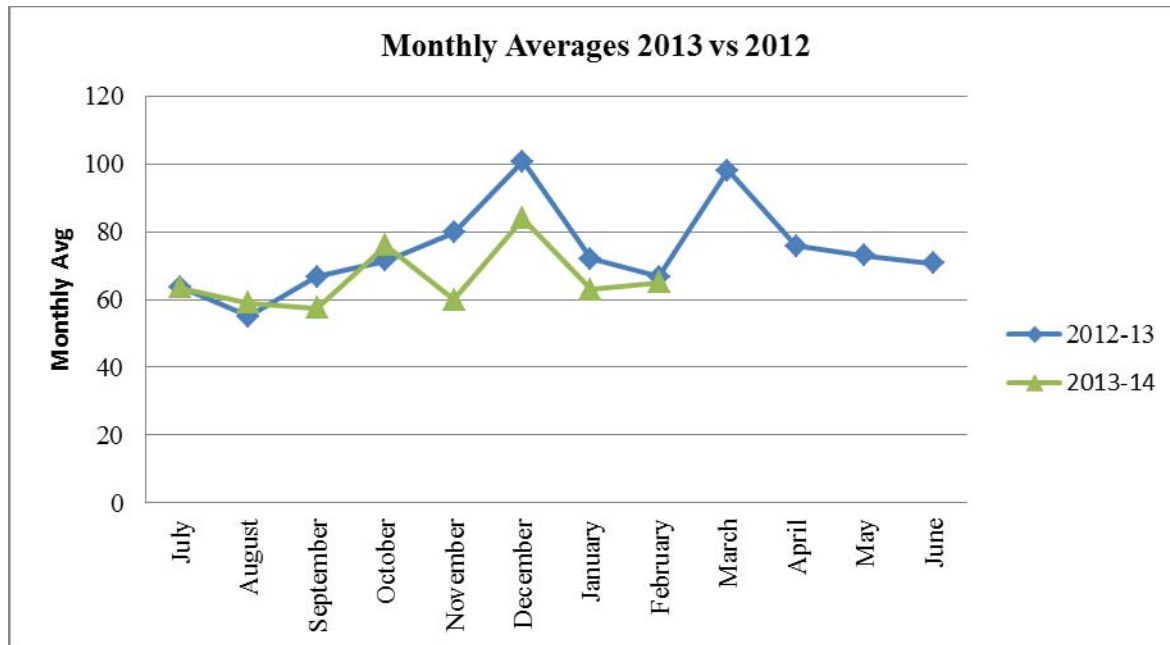
During the Easter season, it is encouraging to see both new and familiar faces at our worship services. Throughout the year, many of you already support the congregation with your time, talent and financial contributions but greater participation is always welcome. We encourage you to look into our electronic giving program. It takes just a few minutes to setup a recurring giving plan. Visit the church website and locate the donation link or complete a paper authorization form.



# Welcome and Growth

Debi and Dale Stanley, Co-Chairs

## Sunday Worship Attendance Numbers for February, 2013



In February, Sunday morning worship attendance averaged 65 and ranged from 58 on week 4 to 70 on week 3. Year-to-date average attendance is 66 vs 72 for same period in 2013. In our first full month of tracking children in worship, we averaged 15 per Sunday.

**New Guests** We welcomed 4 first-time visitors in Sunday worship in February. Reminder to all: when you notice a visitor, please ensure they have signed the guest book and provided their email address.

We have implemented a system for identifying 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> – time visitors:

A first-time visitor will have a hand-lettered nametag

A second-time visitor will have a printed nametag with a small, colored dot on it

A third-time visitor will have two small, colored dots on it

After a third visit, the dots will be removed



New Member Sunday March 23



The Story of the Lorax

## Pastor's Ponderings

Rev. Renie Stamm-Kirk



I'd like to start this off with an expression of gratitude to Leslie Lessenger for volunteering to take on the Bridge. Our last publication was

April 2013, so I am glad to see it come back by April 2014! THANK YOU Leslie!

As I write this the first day of Spring has come and gone, hard to imagine since we really had no Winter to speak of, very few rain storms, virtually no major cold, so spring seems like it's early this year. I'm not ready to let go of winter. How about you? You see for me Winter is about going inward, fireplaces, comfort food, shoes, pants, short days and long nights. Growing up in the North East, Winter was cold with lots and lots of snow. I spent my days building snow forts and having snowball fights, sleighing down local hills and basically awaiting for days off because of the snow. Now that I'm a grown up I'm thinking I could use a snow day every now and then, how about you? You know a day where all your responsibilities are gone and your only requirement is to go outside in the snow or stay in and watch a movie or cartoons, and drink hot cocoa. A day of play, no extra homework, no additional tasks, just a day off. Doesn't that sound

awesome? Well I believe that "snow days" are good for our soul, a day with nothing to do.... Many people live right on the verge of exhaustion—physical, mental, emotional and spiritual exhaustion! What's the answer? For me, it was as simple as: "Take the day off!" It was a simple principle that I had been violating for years, and it finally caught up to me. Many people have a day off, but they don't take a day off! They don't take the day off mentally or emotionally; therefore, they never rest. Let's look at a few things God says about rest.

Rest is a command. It's number four on God's "Top Ten" list (Exodus 20:8–11) Not keeping the Sabbath is one of the commandments that carried the death penalty (Numbers 15:32–36; Exodus 31:14–15). And while today we don't get put to death for not observing the Sabbath, a constant stream of busyness unbroken by periods of rest does slowly kill us over time—physically, mentally, emotionally and spiritually. Rest is a blessing. Have you ever felt like you couldn't make a decision or think clearly because you were so tired? When we don't rest, we don't have the energy we need. I wonder how many creative ideas we're missing out on—for our families, for our work—because we're just too exhausted!

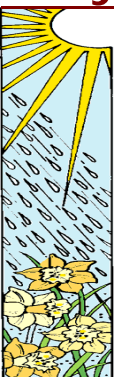
Exodus 31:17 says, "on the seventh day He [God] rested and was refreshed." Those words are amazing. Literally it means "to take breath." After creating the world, God stopped and "took breath." Likewise, Sabbath allows us to stop and breathe—to restart our mind, body, emotions and spirit. It's a blessing, not a burden.

Is it possible you owe yourself some rest days? Is it possible if you do it, you'll reap benefits, and if you don't, you're going to reap consequences? Rest is part of God's plan for you. God doesn't want you tired. God really does want you to be able to rest. Take the day off!

Many of us would have a hard time with that, but I challenge you to take one of those days soon, just breathe in the spring, and relax in your jammies for a whole day, let the dishes wait, don't catch up on your laundry just take a break. For some this will be impossible because we have family responsibilities, but we should try even if it's just for an hour or two, as long as it's not on a Sunday morning!

*With Blessings & Gratitude,  
Pastor Renie*

## Prayer Requests



Peg Stone  
Helen Nelson  
Alice Burgess  
Edward Olm (Dale's father)  
Jennifer Green, her daughters  
Elizabeth, Victoria and Isabella  
Prayers for our leaders



*Prayers for all families struggling with pain and separation*  
*Prayers for all our military personnel*  
*Prayers for our planet*  
*We pray for all those affected by war, and we pray for peace*  
*Prayer for all those struggling with addiction*

**Community Congregational  
Church**

**United Church of Christ**

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Phone: 707-745-0674  
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[www.cccucc.org](http://www.cccucc.org)

Phones with Caller ID blocking -  
Please dial \* 8 2 ENTER before dialing.



**Remember  
Our Homebound Members**

If you know of someone in our church family who needs a visit, please let Pastor Renie or the Pastoral Care Team (Anna Atuatasi) know. We don't always hear about a need right away. Thanks!

## Birthdays

Apr 1	Hanna, Karen*
Apr 1	Hull, Marge
Apr 2	Read, Keith*
Apr 5	Mitchell, Karyna*
Apr 5	Murrell, Janet*
Apr 7	Smith, Linda*
Apr 21	Benton, Audrey*
Apt 21	Thomas, Autumn
Apr 22	Cooper, Keiran*
Apr 22	Thomas, Holly
Apr 24	Eubank, James
Apr 25	Qually, Elizabeth
Apr 26	Martin, Jerry
Apr 27	Cox, Betty*
Apr 29	Lane, Priscilla*

### ENJOY THE BRIDGE *ONLINE!*

We hope you enjoy the Bridge Newsletter! Would you like to read the newsletter by **e-mail**? If so, send your e-mail address to us at [bridge@cccucc.org](mailto:bridge@cccucc.org) and save a tree!

Lost a past issue? Look it up on the web at [www.cccucc.org](http://www.cccucc.org).

Written contributions for future editions can be sent to [revrenie@cccucc.org](mailto:revrenie@cccucc.org) (deadline is the 20th of each month) or placed in the church secretary's in-box and marked "Bridge". All material submitted is subject to editing for space and content.

2014



COMMUNITY CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH  
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST  
Located at: 1305 West Second Street  
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