



The Bridge

January 2015 Community Congregational Church UCC

www.cccucc.org

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

- 1**
7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal
- 4**
10:00 AM Communion Sunday
Worship
12:00 PM Middle and High School
Youth Group
- 6**
10:00 AM Women's
Coffee
7:00 PM Rolling Tones
Rehearsal
- 8**
7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal
- 11**
10:00 AM Sunday Morning
Worship
12:00 PM Middle and High School
Youth Group
- 13**
10:00 AM Women's Coffee
7:00 PM Rolling Tones Rehearsal
- 14**
11:00 AM Benicia Forum
- 15**
7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal



- 18**
10:00 AM Sunday Morning
Worship
12:00 PM Middle and High School
Youth Group

- 20**
10:00 AM Women's Coffee
6:45 PM



- 7:00 PM Rolling Tones Rehearsal

- 22**
7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal

- 25**
10:00 AM Sunday Morning
Worship
12:00 PM Middle and High School
Youth Group

- 27**
10:00 AM Women's Coffee
7:00 PM Rolling Tones Rehearsal

- 29**
7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal

- 30**
7:00 PM



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CRAB FEED
February 27

Please join us for our 6th annual
Community Congregational Church, Benicia

CRAB FEED



Friday, February 27, 2015

at Vallejo Veterans Memorial

420 Admiral Callaghan Lane in Vallejo

No Host
Cocktails
6:00pm

RAFFLE

Dinner
7:00pm

\$45 per Person

table of 8 - \$335

Tickets: 707-745-0674

(www.cccucc.org)

no tickets at the door



Campus Enhancement

Jim Lessenger

The parking lot project is in a holding pattern for the holidays. We are still negotiating with the contractor for a price that we can afford. We know how much money we have and what we can afford. We also know what we want and need. So it is a matter of pouring through bids to check the fine print. We currently project to have the final bid secured by the end of the second week in January.



Welcome and Growth

Dale and Debi Stanley



“Bring Your Own Welcome” (BYOW)!

January 30, 7—9 PM

The Welcome and Growth is planning an activity to begin this month. Please join us!

Purpose: To extend our welcome activities beyond Sunday worship and fellowship times

When: The last Friday evening of every month to be “BYOW Night” (“Bring your own Welcome”) which will be a very informal game night (board games, etc.) for everyone and anyone.

Place: Fellowship Hall

BYOF: “Bring Your Own Friends” (please invite your church and non-church friends; assure them they will be warmly welcomed and not proselytized, etc.)

Time: 7-9pm last Friday of every month except when other church events supersede

Format:

- BYOG “Bring Your Own Games”
- BYOS “Bring Your Own Snacks” (Welcome and Growth Committee will supply cold drink refreshments)

Note: Please contact Welcome and Growth chairs, Debi or Dale Stanley with questions, suggestions, or if you need a ride.

Music Matters

Barbara Hamm

Our ears are still ringing with the glorious music of Christmas that we have heard here at CCC during the last month, even as we look ahead at the arrival of the new year and the further opportunities for ministry that await us.

The extent of the music produced by all our musicians during this Advent and Christmas is truly amazing! THANK YOU to all of them: The Rolling Tones Handbell Choir, the Sanctuary Choir, the Women and Girls' Chorus, and of course the youth and the children, who clearly stole the show at the Christmas Concert!

Thanks to all the instrumentalists as well, including our Christmas Ensemble and Jazz Gorilla. The Rolling Tones had a number of performances during the holidays, as did Jazz Gorilla. And I want to mention Deborah Shanks, who arranged two pieces that the Sanctuary Choir sang for the concert and on Christmas Eve. She composed parts for instrumentalists and bells on some of our choir numbers as well as the hymn of mine that we sang on the third Sunday of Advent.

Thank you to all of you. Your gifts of music are highly valued and appreciated.

Music Ministry for January:

Jan. 4 – Christ Be Our Light (Sanctuary Choir)

Jan. 11 – Down to the Water to Pray (Sanctuary Choir)

Jan. 18 – Let Justice Roll Like a River (Sanctuary Choir)

Jan. 25 – Come to Me (Women and Girls' Chorus)

Women and Girls' Chorus rehearsal on Jan. 11 and Jan. 18 after fellowship hour to prepare for singing on Jan. 25.

Sanctuary Choir rehearsals are on Thursday evenings from 7-8:15 pm. Rehearsals resume Jan. 8. We could use more people on all parts. We have some exciting repertoire for Easter.

Now would be a good time to start participating in choir if you've thought about doing so.

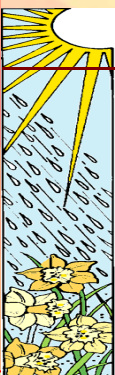
The Hippie Chicks are scheduled to play at CCC's Second Saturday in Vallejo. Thank you, Liz and Marilyn, for bringing music to our friends on the street.



Prayer Concerns

Dale Olm
Alice Burgess
Barbara Hamm
Peg Stone
Edward Olm (Dale's father)
Jennifer Otero, 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



Stewardship

Carla Goad and Nancy Aldritt

Greetings to you!!! It has been a couple of months since we have had an article in the Bridge and much has happened since our last installment. First of all, thank you all so much for your prayers and well wishes. We continue to heal our hearts and your love and support is so helpful. Stewardship was quite busy in October with the Fall Auction held on October 19, 2014. Thank you all for your participation!!! We had 14 live auction items and over 20 silent auction items. With all of these donations paired with the "love gift" donations, we raised \$2,550 with this year's event! Your generosity and participation are what makes these events successful and allows us to fund important parts of the budget for Community Congregational Church (CCC). Thank you again for all that you have done and are doing to support CCC.

If you found yourself wanting more after October 19, you are in luck! We will be hosting our annual Crab Feed and Auction on February 27th at 6pm. For this event we are seeking big ticket auction items as well as making sure we sell as many tickets to the event as possible. We will be soliciting donations from local business owners, so any connections you have to offer we appreciate. This is a fun time at the Vallejo Veterans Hall and one you will not want to miss. Tickets will be \$45 per person. Let's all invite at least 3 friends to join us! Stay tuned for additional information and ways to participate.

Thank you again for your generosity through your pledges and free will offerings. All of the contributions allow our church to do what it does in the community and to have a full-time pastor and other programs. As some of you know it has been one of the most difficult months for us. I do not know what I would have done without our pastor, sanctuary, and of course the music of Barbara Hamm. In our darkest hour, this is where we came to grieve and to heal. We understand on a whole new level the importance of a full-time pastor and the ability to come to our place of worship during times of great loss. As we move into the end of the year and look towards the New Year, we will be examining our giving to see if there is room for a bit more for CCC as we truly know the importance of maintaining our programs and staff. Do you have more room to give too?

Blessings for a joyous Christmas and a happy New Year!

Financial Secretary



Nancy Gilman

Year end and second quarter statements will be mailed the first and second week of January. They will be two separate statements with the year statement for use for income taxes. Please look over carefully to make sure they are correct. Contact Nancy Gilman at 707-208-6377 or by email at negilman@yahoo.com.

Pastor's Ponderings

Rev. Renie Stamm-Kirk



Greetings and Happy New Year

Embracing Mystery in the New Year: Ten Essential Practices

Imagine if your New Year's wasn't about fixing or improving, but about deepening and

transforming, about embracing the holy mystery at the heart of the world. *By Christine Valters*

Paintner, January 02, 2013

Who doesn't love the promise of new beginning the New Year offers? St. Benedict described his Rule as a rule for beginners, reminding us to always begin again. In Buddhism, an essential practice is beginner's mind. When we think we have become an expert at things, especially the spiritual life, we are in trouble.

Living into the mystery of things helps us to release our hold on needing to know the answers.

New Year's resolutions often come from a place of lack, or of thinking we know how to "fix" ourselves. Unfortunately, they are often fueled by a consumer culture that is eager to have us buy more and more things to improve ourselves. Embracing mystery, on the other hand, honors our profound giftedness and depth and acknowledges that coming to know ourselves and God is a lifetime exploration.

My invitation to you, is to shift your thinking this year. Welcome ambiguity. Learn to love the holy darkness of mystery. Dance on the fertile edges of life. Let what you love ripen forth.

Here are ten essential practices to help support you in this journey:

Breathe deeply. Our breath is our most immediate and vital connection to the life force that sustains us moment by moment. Let yourself be filled with awe and wonder at the marvels of this intimate gift. Sit for three minutes savoring that you are breathed into.

Embrace night wisdom. One of the great gifts of dreams is that they upend our desire for logic and immerse us in a narrative that reveals the shadows we must wrestle with and the joys that call to us, whether or not they make sense to the waking world.

Dance freely. We live so disconnected from our bodies. Dance has been part of human culture for thousands of years as a way to experience union with ourselves, one another, and the divine. Each day put on one piece of music that you love, close the door, and dance. Pay attention to what rises up

in the process. If you resist, even better—dance with your resistance!

Follow the thread. Each of us has a unique unfolding story and call in this world. We don't "figure this out" but rather we allow the story to emerge in its own time, tending the symbols and synchronicities that guide us along.

Trust in what you love. Following the thread is essentially about cultivating a deep trust in what you love. What are the things that make your heart beat loudly, no matter how at odds they feel with your current life (and perhaps especially so)? Make some room this year to honor what brings you alive.

Let the rhythms of nature guide you. We live our lives in a constant state of stimulation and productivity. We are often exhausted and overwhelmed. When we turn to the natural world we find with each day, each moon cycle, and each season a rhythm of rise and fall, fullness and emptiness.

Release what is no longer necessary. We accumulate so many things in our days, perhaps you have discovered at Christmas that you have a new pile of stuff that now requires energy to maintain or worry about.

Remember that you will die. St. Benedict writes in his Rule to "keep death daily before your eyes." This is never an act of morbid obsession, but a reminder of life's incredible gift. Any of us who have brushed near death, or had loved ones pass away, know this wisdom in profound ways.

Ask for the wisdom of your ancestors. Each of us is the inheritor of generations of stories that beat through our blood. Each of us has mothers and fathers, grandmothers and grandfathers, who wrestled mightily with living a meaningful life. We can call upon this great "cloud of witnesses" to support us in our own wrestling. We can listen across the veil between worlds.

Open yourself to receiving a word for the year ahead. In quiet moments what are the desires you hear being whispered from your heart? Is there a word or phrase that shimmers forth, inviting you to dwell with it in the months ahead? Something you can grow into and don't fully understand?

Imagine if your New Year's wasn't about fixing or improving, but about deepening and transforming, about embracing the holy mystery at the heart of the world.

With Many Blessing for your New Year!

Pastor Renie

**Community Congregational
Church**

United Church of Christ

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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 (Jennifer Otero) know. We don't always hear about a need right away. Thanks!



Jan 1 Thompson, Sarah*
Jan 8 Frawley, Candace*
Jan 14 Olm, Sam*
Jan 21 Lane, Walter
Jan 21 Bouty, Andree*
Jan 21 Mautz, Tim*
Jan 22 McDonald, Reiko
Jan 22 Mortensen, Eleanor*
Jan 22 Osborn, Kim
Jan 25 Lessenger, Jim*
Jan 27 Qually, David
Jan 28 Taylor, Penny*
Jan 30 Stone, Peg*

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 and save a tree!

Lost a past issue? Look it up on the web at www.cccucc.org.

Written contributions for future editions can be sent to 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.

2015



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UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
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