

SALT & LIGHT

COMMUNITY CHURCH OF SEBASTOPOL

MAY 2019 NEWSLETTER

**The Community Church
of Sebastopol
United Church of Christ**

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Administrator**

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Custodian

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FROM THE PASTOR... WITNESSES OF THESE THINGS

By Rev. Benjamin Broadbent, Lead Minister

At the end of Luke's Gospel, just before he ascends out of sight, the Risen Jesus says to the disciples (those who follow), now apostles (those who are sent), "You are witnesses of these things." In the second half of Luke's writing, the Acts of the Apostles, the former disciples often remind each other, "We are witnesses of these things." It seems that a primary vocation of the church is to tell the story of what difference the resurrection has made in our life, personally and collectively.

This kind of storytelling has been happening at Community Church for nearly 40 years. Lenten Faith Journeys were begun by our first Associate Minister, Rev. Ginny Curinga, and later shepherded by Gail Thomas. Recently I was talking with a church member about what makes Faith Journeys so powerful. We agreed the soup supper was part of it. Breaking bread together creates an atmosphere of intimacy and trust. After eating, a person (in some cases, a partnered couple) is given the time and space to share the story of their faith. A feeling of reverence fills the room as the person shares their victories, struggles, and epiphanies; their depression, grief, and broken relationships; their beliefs, doubts, and desires.

As the person sharing bears witness to the abiding presence of God in their life, those who receive the story become "witnesses of these things." These kinds of stories shared openly and received graciously become "tokens of the resurrection," visible signs of new life that overcomes death. Rev. Curinga, who retired from ministry this year, is such a token. So is Gail Thomas, who faithfully coordinated the Faith Journeys program for many years. And so are you when you remember that no aspect of your life remains untouched by what happened on that first Easter morning. We are witnesses of these things.



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WORSHIP AND COMMUNION

MAY 2019 WORSHIP

Regular Sunday Worship happens 10:30 a.m. in the Sanctuary

Nursery Care available for newborns through Kindergarten

May 5 – 3rd Sunday of Easter



On this first Sunday of the month, we gather for multi-generational worship with Holy Communion. We will hear the story of Saul's conversion on the road to Damascus and how he was helped and healed by a former enemy.

May 12 – 4th Sunday of Easter / Mother's Day

In appreciation for all who have mothered us, we will hear the story of Tabitha, whose name means "Gazelle." Also known as Dorcas, she was known for her great acts of charity and love.



May 19 – 5th Sunday of Easter



On this last Sunday of our church program year, we hear the great vision of hope at the end of the Book of Revelation: the New Jerusalem made beautiful, like someone dressed for their own wedding.

May 26 – 6th Sunday of Easter / Memorial Day Weekend

While our Middle Schoolers explore Food Justice and worship at a church in Oakland, we hear the story of Paul and Silas in prison, the earthquake, and the jailer whose life was changed by the kindness of his prisoners.



*Christ is risen!
He is risen, indeed!*

Coming in June... Pentecost Sunday, Trinity Sunday, Musician Appreciation Sunday, New Member Joining, Youth Mission Trip Sunday, Strengthen the Church Special Offering

PRACTICING COMMUNION; BAKING BREAD

By Joanne Matson



"Communion. I chewed and swallowed it. It was at the absolute center of my faith: wheat and water and yeast and heat; grape and sun and time; bread and wine transformed into life. I ate it up. I kept coming back for more." (Sara Miles, [Take this Bread](#))

Gathering for communion each first Sunday, we participate in one of the great mysteries of our faith. We encounter Jesus, whose living and dying is so connected to our own; whose love of the poor and oppressed is our example of how we must live; who feeds our bodies and nourishes our spirits.

In something so simple as bread and grape; food and drink. . . We realize that communion is not limited to our monthly worship service. Every time we gather for a meal; every time we provide food for the hungry; during every shift at the food pantry, every potluck supper, we practice communion. Remembering Jesus, refusing to forget, we bring our hunger to the table where we are nourished with bread, bread that addresses a desire deeper than the need for food.

"The feeding of the five thousand, the miracle wasn't that Jesus multiplied the loaves. It's that the disciples took the bread and did what they were told, got up and started feeding, and something happened. . . You know it's a mystery. But sometimes you just have to trust and eat." (Sara Miles, [Take this Bread](#))

Communion bread baked by members of our community is a symbol of our love and care for each other. . . It is practicing communion!

If you would like to bake bread for our monthly communion celebration, please contact Joanne Matson or leave a message with Becca in the church office.



SUMMER PROGRAMS

SUMMER CAMP AT CAMP CAZ!

Summer camp registration at Caz is now open. Did you know that the impact of camp lasts a lifetime?! It's true! There are actually scientists out there who have studied it! And according to the American Camp Association, children's camp experiences improve their lives:



- Research suggests that the **skills campers learn at camp last far beyond their camp experience**, and specifically help them in school, when they attend college, and in their first jobs.
- **Relationship skills, independence and responsibility, appreciation for living in the moment, appreciation for diversity, perseverance, and willingness to try new things** appear to be the most essential and lasting outcomes of camp.
- When compared to home and school, **camp appeared to make special contributions to campers' overall learning in the areas of learning to live with peers** (for those who attend overnight camps), **independence, willingness to try new things, appreciation for living in the moment, identification recreational interests/hobbies through activities offered at camp, and affinity for nature.**
- As a context for developing relationship skills, preliminary findings suggest that **camp is an integral part of a young person's overall learning**, alongside school and other educational contexts.
- Camp is a **unique learning experience** that appears to promote skills **transferable to 21st century school and work contexts.**
- Preliminary findings suggest that camp is a safe place for young people to explore **who they are and how they want to be viewed by others.**

Camp gives campers the opportunity to practice being around and **appreciating people with attitudes, values, and abilities different from their own.**

Check out these articles about how outdoor time for children has an impact:

https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/parenting/wp/2018/05/30/kids-dont-spend-nearly-enough-time-outside-heres-how-and-why-to-change-that/?utm_term=.99d6671d969a

https://www.npr.org/sections/health-shots/2019/02/25/697788559/greener-childhood-associated-with-happier-adulthood?fbclid=IwAR3-tQQDvisQZwGrplnpXL1q5LZsxiR7Q5paDYXdfYqg1Y_g48zFgp1X5Sw

Sign up to go to camp!! Positive life experiences are waiting. Register now at <https://ncnccucc.org/yomc/>.



VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL



Vacation Bible School registration is open for church members and their families! Sign up today - registration forms are available on our website at <https://uccseb.org/docs/2019%20VBS%20Registration%20Form.pdf> or in the church office. Completed forms and checks can be mailed (1000 Gravenstein Hwy N, Sebastopol, CA 95472) or dropped off in the church office. This year's theme is *Who Is My Neighbor? Learning to love like Jesus*. Through a fun-filled time of learning and experiences, children will discover that neighbors are more than the people who live next door. This interactive VBS will lead children deeply into five Bible stories focused on God's care and compassion for neighbors close at hand and around the world. *Who is My Neighbor?* will take children on a journey as they discover more about God's great love and what it means to be a neighbor and to live out our faith. Want to bring your friends? Terrific! Open registration for the community begins May 19. VBS is for children ages 4 years old through (completing) 5th Grade.



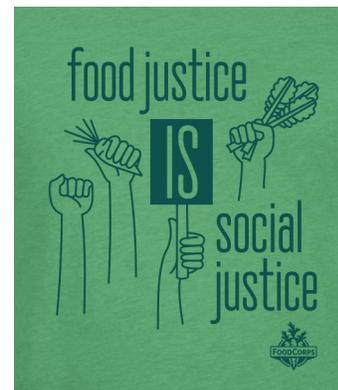
Are you too old for VBS, but want to get in on the fun? We are looking for a few more adults and youth to lend a hand during the week of VBS. Contact Julie Reimer, Children's Ministry Coordinator at childrensministry@uccseb.org for more information and to sign up.

YOUTH MINISTRIES

MIDDLE SCHOOL YOUTH HEADING TO THE EAST BAY

By Emily Syal, Youth Ministry Coordinator

Our Middle Schoolers are heading out on their SALT (Serving And Learning Together) Trip at the end of this month over Memorial Day weekend! Marin Broadbent-Bell, Dimitri Boussaid-Bergman, Jonah Gonzalez, Jonah Knuth, Elan Sawyer, and Owen and Reece Thomas will be learning about food justice in Oakland and Richmond and partnering with community-based organizations as they *serve and learn together* (see what I did there?) alongside members of the community who are affected by food injustice.



One organization we will be partnering with is Happy Lot Farm and Garden in central Richmond. This community lot was established by Richmond local, Andromeda Brooks, in 2012. Happy Lot Farm and Garden is a testament to what a community with a vision and will can accomplish. Once the site of a Section 8 housing complex, Happy Lot sat empty—an eyesore full of weeds and trash—for many long years. Having grown tired of looking at the rather sad lot, neighbor Andromeda Brooks decided in 2012 to take action and turn it into a happy lot, a place where neighbors could feel a sense of community, and most importantly, have access to healthy, organic food that they could grow themselves. Happy Lot is all about building community,

beautifying the neighborhood, and growing great grub!

Andromeda told me that she was going to have her number one volunteer take the lead during the time our group is there (she will be around but letting her volunteer lead us in the work). Her main volunteer is a 12-year-old boy who has been volunteering at Happy Lot since 2016. His name is Juan and he will be working with our middle schoolers (he is in 7th grade himself) and telling us adults what to do as well! Our youth will get to hear Juan’s story as well and hear from a fellow middle schooler the impact that locally-grown and healthy food has had on him, his family, and his surrounding neighborhood!



If you are interested in finding out more about our Middle School SALT Trip or would like to contribute a donation for their trip, please feel free to talk with me!

One way you can contribute to making this trip a success is coming to the **Pie Auction on Sunday, May 5th after worship!** Our youth will be auctioning off pies made by *you* or members of our community and also providing you with some entertainment beforehand. Come out and join us!



Next month, I will feature more information on our High School SALT Trip to Cheyenne River Reservation in South Dakota. Until then...

CONGREGATIONAL CARE

GOOD FRIDAY CEMETERY WALK



About 30 people of all ages attended the Good Friday Cemetery Walk, remembering the death of Jesus and honoring beloved church members who have died. Pastor Rachel led the group in a meditative walk, stopping at the graves of Bob Thomas, Dick Huppertz, Tom Larsen, and the founders area of the cemetery. At each stop on the journey, the group



heard part of the Holy Week story and learned a movement in Julian of Norwich's Body Prayer: Await--Allow--Accept--Attend. The walk ended with a benediction of water poured on a resurrection fern, and the enjoyment of hot cross buns.



PRAYER CIRCLE

We lift prayers for...

People of all faiths who experience violence and acts of terror because of their religion... May God bring comfort to their grieving families, and bold acceptance to the communities that hold them.

All people journeying with illness, including Glenda Elvy, Helen & Charles Williams, and Virginia Hughes ...May the Christ-light surround them.

All people in a season of loss, including Debbie Stewart, Heather, Kathy & Jim Manchester, Brian Purcell, and the family of Ruth Halleck ...May the Spirit hold them in peace.

PRAYER CONCERNS BOX

If you have a prayer concern that is fragile, that you would prefer not read aloud in worship, you may place your yellow prayer card in the new Prayer Concerns box. God hears the unspoken prayers of our hearts, and the Pastors will pray alongside

these prayers every week. Look for the special wooden box on the Usher's table in the narthex, labeled "Prayer Concerns." The cards will be collected after worship every Sunday.



BALCONY VIEW & FAITH JOURNEYS

THE BALCONY VIEW... LEADERSHIP RETREAT AND GOVERNANCE AND MINISTRY



By Michael Ott, Moderator

The Leadership Council is excited about this month's leadership retreat which will include not only Council members but other members of the congregation who take a leadership role in our ministry. The retreat will focus on the following 3 R's:

- Roles - how do we understand and navigate various yet overlapping roles - staff, council, chairpersons, volunteers?
- REALM - how do church leaders use our new online database and communication hub to conduct church business?
- Recruiting - how do we help members say "yes" to the ministry programs they care about and are uniquely called to fulfill?

Our governance model features three interlocking entities – the Leadership Council, The Staff Team and the Facilities, Finance and Personnel Resource Areas. Governance is provided by the Council and Ministry is provided by the Staff Team. To understand the difference, I have listed some features:

Governance means:

- Minding the big picture of a congregation's mission.
- Planning and oversight.
- Responsibility for top-level tasks of articulating mission, selecting strategies for getting there, and making sure the strategy is followed.
- "Owning" the congregation, holding and controlling its human and material resources, and making sure that they are used to serve its mission.
- Delegating authority to those who lead the daily work, and holding them accountable for their performance.

Ministry means:

- The daily work of building a community, managing resources and transforming lives - the congregation's daily, practical work.
- Making the mission of the church happen.
- Finding ways to accomplish board-adopted goals while managing the feelings, preferences and energy of the available workforce of volunteers.

The Leadership Retreat will be a valuable point of connection between governance and ministry, to develop a greater understanding of each other and our roles, and to ensure that our church benefits from our leaders' shared goals and desires for our church.



A SEASON OF FAITH JOURNEYS

By Pete Emerson

I was initially drawn to the faith journey gatherings thanks to Larry Stallings letting the cat out of the bag and telling me that my wife was going to be the first presenter. I wanted to support her and hear her story.



For almost 40 years Gail Thomas has organized and hosted a gathering for people to share a simple soup supper and hear a member of the congregation's faith journey. On each Tuesday in Lent we broke bread together in Fellowship Hall and enjoyed each other's company with a variety of homemade soups. My personal favorites included pumpkin soup, corn chowder, and two Viking stews. After our simple meal we migrated over to Faith Chapel, where Gail introduced each speaker. This year, Rebecca Emerson, Rachel Melone, Beth Larsen, Julie and Russ Reimer, and Gail Thomas shared their faith journeys.

What drew me to return every Lenten Tuesday to hear each faith journey? Each faith journey gave me a view into a person that I wouldn't normally get through casual conversation. Each person shared a piece of themselves in an intimate and safe environment. Listening to each story helps me internalize that while we have many common bonds as human beings in close proximity on this planet attending the same place of worship, we are all still very unique individuals. Each of us has walked a different path

in life that has brought us to where we are today, and hearing about each of those journeys was enlightening and inspiring. I look forward to hearing your faith journey, someday, too, and I hope you will join this Lenten tradition next year.

LEADERSHIP COUNCIL NEWS

By Michael Ott, Moderator



At our April meeting, the Leadership Council held a wide-ranging discussion on the way our church currently rents our facility. Community Church is a non-profit organization which seeks to share its facility in ways that serve its members, enhance the ministry of the church, and support wider community events. Renting the facility is a significant source of revenue, and contributes greatly to our ability to pursue our mission.

Our Congregational Administrator Becca Emerson is tasked with making decisions about scheduling events in the facility and which fees may or may not apply. The Leadership Council has approved a policy to guide Becca in determining when and how fees should be applied.

The policy addresses how facility use should be well-coordinated with consideration towards providing a safe, usable, well-maintained, and attractive campus. Becca is in the process of creating a written Facility Use Fee Schedule. She will apply fees according to various types of one-time events and on-going programs.

Facility fees don't apply to church ministry programs. However, to defray basic administrative, custodial and utilities costs, nominal fees may apply to church members hosting non-church events. We offer below market rate fees for non-profit events. These rates are very reasonable and the non-profit organizations who take advantage of our facilities are thrilled with the service we provide, including custodial care, advance planning, attention to detail and an active interest in their event. Market rate fees to for-profit users as is required by law. For-profit businesses can only use the portions of our campus zoned for for-profit use – Memorial Hall and Kitchen.

Facility users need to provide proof of insurance coverage for their events to mitigate our liability.

Now, please click on the link below to read what else was happening at the April 17 Leadership Council meeting.

<https://uccseb.org/docs/2019-April-Council-Meeting-Minutes.pdf>

The congregation is invited to discuss any issues, concerns, ideas or appreciations to any of the Council Members.

The Council Members are:

Michael Ott – Moderator

Kathy Bell – Council Officer for Personnel

John Henel – Council Officer for Finances

Larry Stallings – Council Officer for Facilities

Joyce Cox – Council Member for Outreach

Linda Inman – Council Member for Faith Formation

Bobbie Johanson – Council Member for Care and Fellowship

Linda Roa – Council Member for Worship and Arts

MAY BIRTHDAYS



- 1 Taylor Christy
- 2 Debby McLeod
- 3 Lisa Gonzalez
- 4 Dave Bell
- 5 Genia Thorhaug
- 6 Stacie Del Carpio
- 7 Rosemary Manchester
- 8 Allen Sherman
- 9 Jenna Canfield
- 10 Emerson Dowdney
- 11 Lisa Dawson
- 12 Judy Peterson
- 13 Emilie Jame
- 14 Forrest Templin
- 15 Dale Dougherty
- 16 Muriel Weaver
- 17 Debbie Stewart
- 18 Prue Manley
- 19 Marilyn McHugh
- 20 Michael Moore
- 21 Will Stoll
- 22 Marilyn Lerum
- 23 Carol Holder
- 24 Bob Curtis
- 25 Andrea Card
- 26 Morgan Thomas
- 27 Barbara Deedler
- 28 Jeff Kalemba
- 29 Molly Wreden
- 30 Bill Phillips
- 31 Gavin Christy
- Mary Coleman
- Isaiah Sawyer



FOOD PANTRY SHOPPING

By Steve Beck



I got interested in the role of food banks while I was working for the Forest Service and living in Fresno. Our pastor became involved in a local food bank that was failing and I somehow ended up chairing a committee tasked with turning the foodbank around. To our collective surprise, we rapidly raised the funds needed to get the project going. As a result I worked with another small food bank and ended up becoming the Operations Manager when I retired from the Forest Service. Within a year, with some help from the Sacramento office of the national food-banking network, I had established the required procedures for documenting the receipt and distribution of all food received from any source. We passed inspection by the state office, and the Fresno Food Bank became a full member of the national network, and thus achieved a higher priority for receipt of food donations from national-level food producers to supplement what the Director was receiving from local sources.

When we moved to Sebastopol in 1993 and learned about the beginnings of the local food pantry Gene Nelson had helped get started as the best way to respond to people seeking food assistance, I attended a meeting... not unlike my first food bank experience, I ended up as a board member that night, and offered to help unload food shipments each week that then were ordered and delivered by a food supplier to independent grocery stores. At that time, our food pantry was basically a Quonset Hut on the church campus and the Redwood Empire Food Bank was a very small facility, with not a lot of food to supply the multiple hunger abatement programs in Sonoma Co. A few years later, the primary food buyer's father was struggling with health issues, and I took over. By then, the current director of REFB had been hired and with community support, REFB moved into a new and large, and more sanitary warehouse. There was now much more food available and we had moved our Food Pantry to the upper end of St Stephens Church parking lot. For a number of years every Tuesday morning, after determining what was needed, I drove to REFB, selected what was available, and brought it back to the pantry and restocked the shelves. Working alone, it took me about a half day. That worked well until my health made it impossible for me to continue in that fashion. The food pantry board chair quickly recruited two people to replace me, and I found other ways to volunteer, though I was still a member of the pantry board, and served 4 years as board chair.

Eventually a new system was set up to recruit eight people to do the shopping in teams, one team for each week of the month. My health had improved and working in a team made it feasible for me to join in on a shopping team so I was one of the original eight. Over the past 15 years three or four of those original eight have passed on, but new replacements were found. I teamed up with Harry Sullivan, a former member of Community Church, several years ago. After we finish our task for the day, we go to lunch together. We check our calendars while dining to see what Tuesdays we are both available and which Tuesday we prefer and any other we are available. When one of the four months with five Tuesdays rolls around, we usually volunteer to do a second shopping day.

Since Harry lives in Santa Rosa, I stop by the pantry either Monday afternoon or early Tuesday morning to see if any additions to the preordered list from the previous Friday are needed.

Several months ago the Food Pantry Board agreed to let clients come twice a month as financial support has increased just as the number of people facing food insecurity has increased. This has significantly increased the amount of food needed to keep the shelves stocked with the items the Board wants to have available, the variety of which has expanded several times over the past 25 years. This means most weeks more than one vehicle is needed to transport the week's food supply back to the pantry, and an extra 30-45 minutes time for shoppers.

I'm now 80, other shoppers Paul Schoch and Don Hanni are at least 5 years older. Harry Sullivan has some potentially serious health issues. As far as I know shopping coordinator Mary and her husband, who are approaching 70 are OK, as are the two sculptors who comprise the 4th team. In conversation with Mary and a couple of the current shoppers, we agreed recruiting potential replacements, who could also take the 5th Tuesdays, is a good idea.

Come join our shopping crew and help us carry on this amazing ministry. To find out more contact me at rottenappleranch@aol.com or give me a call at 707.479.3567.



MISSION HERE & ABROAD

SACK LUNCH PROGRAM

By Chris Jenkins



Did you know that our church has participated in a Sack Lunch Program since 2012? Mission and Outreach and Women's Fellowship organize volunteers and coordinate lunch delivery with Rotary and the Sebastopol Christian Church.

My cousin, Jim Glomb, started this program in response to a growing need. Jim is a geologist whose office window overlooks the Sebastopol Plaza. He noticed that more and more homeless folks were gathering in the plaza each day. His observation began with annoyance but quickly became concern with a desire to help. He went out to talk to the folks, learned their names and asked them what they needed. The response from many was that they had shelter if they needed it and a hot dinner but would appreciate a bag lunch with some non-perishable items that could be saved. Jim and his wife, Eileen, began making lunches and delivering them each day during his lunch break. After a while he realized that he needed help in order to sustain this effort. He brought the issue to his fellow Rotary members and they recognized the value of the program. The Sebastopol Christian Church agreed to hand out the lunches from their centrally located campus across the street from Ives Park. When Jim told me about the program, I thought "How could our church NOT participate?!" I presented it to Mission and Outreach and they agreed!

Our church volunteers make 6 sack lunches and deliver them to the Sebastopol Christian Church Mondays, Tuesdays, and Wednesdays between 9:00 & 9:30 am. Mission and Outreach coordinates the volunteers on Mondays and Wednesdays and Women's Fellowship does Tuesdays. Many thanks to the current volunteers: Mary Coleman, Pat Furber, Chris Jenkins, Peggy Porter, Ellen Stillman, Norma Taddeucci and Norma Watson.

When I deliver the lunches I get to see some of the folks that take them. They always say "thank you" and sometimes say "God bless you"! The members of the Sebastopol Christian Church always say thanks and tell me to let our congregation know how much the lunches are appreciated. I feel wonderful for the rest of the day! This is such an easy way for me to put my faith into action.

This program needs more lunch makers and substitutes in order to keep it running successfully. Would you like to put your faith into action by making and delivering 6 sack lunches one day a month? This would be a wonderful summer project for families with young children. The children might enjoy coloring/decorating the bags and maybe even adding little notes inside. If a Monday or Wednesday works best for you, please call Peggy Porter at 707.291.6353. If a Tuesday is best, please call or text Chris Jenkins at 707.318.2482.



BORDER ISSUES

By Joyce Cox & Jane Huneke

Since 1987, BorderLinks has been facilitating educational immersion trips for delegations in the Arizona-Sonora region and beyond the border to Chiapas. Through dynamic educational experiences, BorderLinks connects divided communities, raises awareness about the impact of the border and immigration policies, and inspires action for social transformation.
~<https://www.borderlinks.org>

In February, we spent 5 days in Arizona and Mexico with Borderlinks learning about issues related to the Mexican/U.S. border. We had a chance to visit the border wall, hear about the life of a factory worker in Nogolas, hear the stories of several asylum seekers, attend an immigration court and visit several agencies helping immigrants.



Join us **Sunday, April 28 at 9:00 am** or **Wednesday May 8 at 7:00 pm** in the Media Room to hear about things that surprised us, and what we learned about border issues from those who experience it first hand!

WHO'S WHO & REALM

WHO'S WHO IN THE PEW: MEET BUCK

Have you noticed a previously broken bench has been repaired, or leaking faucet that isn't leaking anymore? Those, and many other projects behind the scenes you probably wouldn't know about are the handywork of Kim Buckman. Many at Community Church know him as Buck and he has been an invaluable member of the Facilities Team in helping maintain the church campus.



Buck grew up in Pennsylvania and has also lived in Chicago, Colorado, and a variety of places in the Bay Area. He first came to the Santa Rosa/Sebastopol area in the 1980s to live with his sister, Dale Phillips and her family. At that time he joined the Phillips crew at services at Community Church, but moved to the South Bay not long after. Buck moved back up to Santa Rosa in 1993 but continued commuting to the San Francisco area for work, where he spent most of his time. After retiring he realized he didn't know much about this area he had been living in for almost two decades so he began to look around, and he eventually found his way back to Community Church about two and a half years ago.

Buck initially went to school to get a degree in Architecture, but changed his path and went into the trades becoming a painter/paperer and a carpenter. Here in the greater Bay Area he worked for a total of 18 years at the Fairmont, keeping the facilities in shape with crews of other trades-people. Did you know that the Fairmont has almost seven miles of corridors?

Besides being one of the go-to people to fix problems around the church campus, Buck has also been an integral part of the recent Adult Mission Trips and he can often be seen on Sundays helping with ushering and other behind the scenes jobs. If you meet Buck some day, ask him about art (something he has loved creating since childhood) or about growing up a Quaker and then being sent to Military School.



GODLY PLAY AND THE WONDER CIRCLE

By Mike Ott

Godly Play is our wonderful children's ministry program that enriches the worship lives of children, encircles our children with love, teaches the message of Jesus, and inspires our children to follow Christ into the world. Each Sunday's Godly Play has three features: a biblical story followed by a wondering about the story, the children's artwork response to the story, and sharing a feast of matzoh crackers and water in holy leisure. The children are guided by two adults through each week's Godly Play journey – a storyteller and a door helper.



The one word that describes the love I have for Godly Play is BURSTING. The children are bursting with excitement, with life, with love. As they gather around the storyteller, they sit like vibrating pods of energy ready to burst into engagement with the story. They are wholehearted in their expectation. It is a refreshing and fulfilling feeling that I don't find anywhere else in my life. During their response time, the children create some really evocative and beautiful artwork, sometimes informed by the story and sometimes not, but always so very interesting. The feast is a time to center ourselves, be quiet and reflect on the story, the wondering and the response. It is a shared time, a prayerful time.

I have been so very fortunate for the opportunity to participate in many Godly Play Sundays, as storyteller and as door helper. It is the greatest of gifts that our church has given me.

Thank you so much to all the volunteers who make Godly Play possible. With more volunteers, we can offer additional Godly Play opportunities this fall! So, please consider joining the wonder circle. Let Julie Reimer, our Children's Ministry Coordinator, know that you would love to learn more about being a Godly Play volunteer.

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*Christ is risen!
He is risen, indeed!*