



## Tributaries

Now is the needed time for us to be thinking about the future of this congregation and the ways in which we can support her unique ministries in this time and place.

Now is the time for us to be stewards of a vision where we are called to be a welcoming, inclusive community of faith, gathered to worship and to share God's love.

Now is the time for us to trust the promise that what we need is here and that it is all a gift from the Creator.

"Abundance does not happen automatically. It is created when we have the sense to choose community, to come together to celebrate and share our common store. Whether the scarce resource is money or love or power or words, the true law of life is that we generate more of whatever seems scarce by trusting its supply and passing it around.

Authentic abundance does not lie in secured stockpiles of food or cash or influence or affection but in belonging to a community where we can give those goods to others who need them—and receive them from others when we are in need."

These words by Parker Palmer, in his book Let Your Life Speak, are a wonderful description of the essence of stewardship. You have chosen this community as your place to celebrate and to share, to be yourself with fellow pilgrims on the way, and giving to those who need help, knowing that you have been the recipient of grace yourself.

Our Stewardship, Budget and Nominating Committees are all working hard to turn your gifts of time, talent and treasure into the foundation for the vision of 2016.

As you consider what you can give through your financial pledge, volunteering to serve on a committee, or being a part of the many services we provide to this community, I invite you to trust the promise and pass it around. Now is the blessing time.

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### Camino de Sonoma Summary

On August 22, 50 of us gathered for the Camino de Sonoma visioning retreat facilitated by Rev. Carol Barriger. The intention of this retreat was not like a planning retreat where we came up with specific goals. Instead we created a safe space for the soul to show up so that people could freely share their responses to the following questions:

What are the core values of this church? What would you want to tell your new minister about this church if he or she was sitting here right now? What do you want the Sanctuary Renovation Committee to know about your values for the Sanctuary? What are the next steps we need to take during this interim time?

The responses to these questions will provide guidance to the Pastoral Search Committee, the Sanctuary Renovation Committee, your Interim Minister, and all the committees of this church.

If you would like to see a summary of these responses please contact me or go to our web page at <http://sonomaucc.org/about-us/members-only/>. The password is 252Amen.

Your Camino companion,

Alan Claassen

# COMMITTEE NEWS

## *Church Council*

*(Another Camino postcard)*

There is never a dull moment at FCC Sonoma. I'm constantly amazed at what I see: the pace of change, innovation and problem-solving. What I like best is how we all pull together and make changes, decisions and plans with a "can-do" attitude. Even though we may not all agree on the fine points to begin with, we are able to reach consensus and move ahead as a united congregation. Those strengths are undeniable but there is always room for improvement.

Council has taken to heart Alan's observations about how we as a congregation are organized and how we might benefit from some changes. He has provided good insights for us about how we communicate with each other (or fail to communicate!) and we intend to follow up with a careful look at the structure of our church's council, officers, committees, adhoc committees and lay ministries. Early next year Council will be appointing a Bylaws Revision Adhoc Committee who will have the task of studying how we are currently organized and recommending to the congregation some changes in our bylaws.

We hope the changes they'll recommend will lead to much better communication between council and all the other committees and groups, simplifying and clarifying the wording of our bylaws, and changing the bylaws where appropriate to reflect the reality of how our congregation functions at its best. As Alan continues to remind us, we're all on this road together!

*--Margie Mitchell*



## *Pastoral Search Committee*

Your Pastoral Search Committee has been focusing on researching and writing the Local Church Profile, which is the document we submit to UCC for all potential candidates to first review to learn about us as they consider our opportunity for a new pastor.

Your input through the small Inquiry groups in July, through the Camino de Sonoma event, through our discussions with all of the church's committees, and finally through a Questionnaire you recently received in the mail, is the primary source for the Profile. We thank you for your participation, thoughts, and ideas that will direct and define the content of the Profile.

Please complete your Questionnaire and return it by mail, drop it off at the church office, or drop it in the offering plate on Sunday. Thank you.

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We are entering the Stewardship season and Campaign. As you may have heard, the Stewardship Committee is presenting an aspirational budget this year for the first time. Your various committees have presented their vision for the coming year including programs and activities that will require our financial support. The Pastoral Search Committee has a significant impact on our vision and aspirations which is expressed in the budget through the compensation for our new Pastor.

To make a reasonable, appropriate, and wise decision on Pastoral compensation, we reviewed the range and norms for churches our size across the UCC. Because Nancy Taylor was near the low end of the national range for churches our size; because we anticipate calling a Pastor with prior experience; and because we want to attract a high quality candidate with a competitive compensation package, we have proposed a significant increase in Pastoral compensation over the current budget. We want you to be aware of this change so you can consider and pray about the role you feel called to play in supporting our aspirations and vision.

*--Ray Snipes*

## Outreach

**Neighbors in Need (NIN)** is a special mission offering of the UCC that supports ministries of justice and compassion throughout the United States. One-third of NIN funds support the Council for American Indian Ministry (CAIM). Two-thirds of the offering is used by the UCC's Justice and Witness Ministries (JWM) to support a variety of justice initiatives, advocacy efforts, and direct service projects through grants. Watch for colorful inserts in our weekly bulletin that tell more about this autumnal offering to be taken on October 11.

**Upcoming Event:** Alternative Gift Fair in November  
Make a holiday donation, instead of a purchase for family or friends, to one or several of the many wonderful organizations that we support!

-- Janice Mattison

## Sanctuary Renovation Committee

The committee has been strengthened with the addition of new members and now consists of Kathleen Gray, Terry Jensen (ex officio), Nancy Ladd, Diane Lumiere, Helen Rowntree and Brian Smucker (chair). Vic Conforti will advise and consult.

We are clear that the congregation wants flexibility, better light and views, and a traditional look and feel to the space. We are working with a design consultant to develop some what-if sketches to bring to the congregation for feedback, hopefully in about a month.

--Brian Smucker

## Treasurer Report

Through the end of August the church's income is over budget and expenses are under budget. This is just what a treasurer likes to see.

Income actual	\$158,252
Income budgeted	<u>\$156,888</u>
Income over budget	\$1,364
Expenses actual	\$145,338
Expenses budgeted	<u>\$153,164</u>
Expenses under budget	\$(7,826)

Thanks to all who contribute both by giving and by keeping expenses in line. Financial statements are in the church office and electronic versions are available on request. Let Candi Horton know if you would like to receive these via email.

--Candi Horton

## Earth Care Committee

- Hosted public viewing and discussion of Pope Francis' address to Congress on September 24, Sanctuary (via live-streaming).
- Speaker Program, October 20 - "Climate Crisis: The Case for a Carbon Tax-Dividend Policy" with Dr. Peter Joseph, Marin Chapter of Citizens Climate Lobby (7 PM, Burlingame Hall).
- Drafted new documents: "The Earth Care Committee's Mandate & Its Management of 'FCC Sonoma Advocates for Earth Care' -Taking Public Policy Positions for Climate Action." Drafts available in FCC Office or from [donnelyj63@gmail.com](mailto:donnelyj63@gmail.com).
- Developing "Take Action" options for FCC Sonoma Advocates for Earth Care (inspired by Pope Francis' encyclical as a call to action).
- Re-organizing FCC cleaning supplies to replace current inventory with "green," earth-friendly supplies in keeping with our Earth Care Covenant.
- Developing Earth Care Guidelines to educate and promote healthy/local food choices, purchasing and practices for FCC campus.
- Developing Film, Speaker, and Field Trip programs. Suggestions welcome.

--John Donnelly



## Worship Committee

We had a Worship planning retreat on Sept 20 after service. Rev Alan provided a look at the Sundays remaining through Pentecost and Advent. We will be working together for special services during these seasons.

While many of our members will be at Camp Caz, World Communion Sunday will be on October 4. This service will be an opportunity to experience Holy Communion with the global community of faith.

Attracting new members will also be a topic that the Worship Committee will be discussing in the upcoming months. Any ideas? Will keep you posted.

--Nancy Denkin

## Stewardship

### You Are Invited to a YEAR-LONG PARTY!!

**WHAT:** First Congregational Church of Sonoma UCC is having a year-long party celebrating and creating FCC 2016 with NEW GOALS, NEW DREAMS and NEW POSSIBILITIES.

**WHEN:** The party starts on **Pledge Sunday, Oct. 25, 2015**. That's when we make our pledges of time, talent, and financial support to get the ball rolling for all the incredible things our committees (which means YOU) have dreamed and prayed about for our church in the coming year.

**WHERE:** On our campus, in the surrounding community, and anywhere our dreams take us.

**RSVP to yourselves** as you pledge your time, money, and talent to help create the church you want.

**Okay, so this isn't a traditional party**, but it is a reason to come together in many ways and forms over the coming year. The Budget Committee asked our church committees to dream about what they might do in 2016, and used those dreams to put together an aspiration budget that was distributed at the end of September (check with the church office if you didn't receive an email or print copy). To fulfill this budget, we would need to increase our pledges by 29 percent.

Can we dream that big?

Can we work together to create the church we want and need for our time?

As you fill out your pledge card, please reflect thoughtfully on what you want and need your church to be.

If you are at your limit already, bless you and thank you. If you are on a fixed income and do what you can, bless you and thank you. And if, upon reflection, you find that you can deepen your commitment, bless you and thank you.

**Please bring your completed pledge cards** to church on Pledge Sunday, Oct. 25, 2015. If you can't be in church that day, please drop your pledge card by the office or mail it in.

--Bill Hutchinson

## Thrift Shop / Women's Fellowship

Women's Fellowship is happy to report that things are bustling at its West Spain Thrift Shop, with a steady increase in both income and donations. We recently donated clothing, toys and games to Cal Fire to distribute to the victims of the devastating Valley Fire. Our thanks to Lory and Gene Campagna for assisting Cal Fire with this effort. In addition, Women's Fellowship has committed \$500 to the Redwood Credit Union for the Valley Fire Relief Fund.

**Driver Needed:** If an item is not appropriate or does not sell in our shop, we pass it along to several other groups. As part of this process, we're looking for a **volunteer driver** to pick up bags of items at our shop at least once a week, and take them to a Goodwill drop-off location in Sonoma Valley. If you think you could help with this, please contact shop manager Patricia Serota at 707-815-2759 or [patriciaads@comcast.net](mailto:patriciaads@comcast.net) for more details.

To keep our campus looking neat and tidy, we ask that all donations be brought to the Thrift Shop during regular store hours and when the donation room is open. Hours are shown on last page of this Grapevine. If you want to donate items on Sunday before or after church, a shop volunteer will be happy to open up the workroom or shop so you can deposit your donations.

In addition to paying monthly rent to the church for our space, we pledge half the money raised by the thrift shop to the church general fund and the pastor's discretionary fund. The rest of the money raised is distributed in quarterly checks to several local nonprofit organizations:

Brown Baggers  
Meals on Wheels of Sonoma  
Old Adobe School  
Redwood Empire Food Bank  
Sonoma Overnight Services  
Sonoma Valley Teen Services  
Valley of the Moon Teen Parent Program

Our thanks to all the folks -- our donors, our customers, and our volunteers - who make the West Spain Thrift Shop a vital, sustainable part of our community.

--Patricia Henley

## Church Council Passes Unanimous Resolution in Support of Plans Providing for the Transformation of the Sonoma Developmental Center

On September 3, Council passed a resolution, introduced by Council member Bob Rowntree, to support the effort of the Sonoma Coalition that has organized to oppose the closing of the Sonoma Developmental Center.

By now, everyone is probably aware that Governor Jerry Brown submitted a budget proposal in May 2015 calling for the closure of the Sonoma Developmental Center by the end of 2018. A large number of persons in Sonoma and throughout the Valley, including several members from our Congregation, have organized in support of the aging medically acute and psychologically fragile residents still housed at the Center who wish to stay. In addition to support for the residents, there are strong feelings about the future purposing of the Center property and the need to keep environmental considerations like protection of the wildlife corridor and public access to the land intact.

The Sonoma Coalition has organized to develop a plan with significant community input that will integrate community values, sustainability, and economic viability to achieve these higher purposes. The preferred scenario is a trust or wholly-owned government corporation that would invite public-private partnerships that, in addition to permitting the current residents to stay, would examine a satellite campus, health service institution, and other complementary uses in accordance with the core values and purposes endorsed by the community of the Sonoma Valley.

The Council stated its belief that the proposed resolution in support of the Coalition's intention to seek this transformation of the Sonoma Development Center would receive strong support from our congregation, and perceiving little opposition, decided that the resolution would not be required to follow the new process for taking a public stand. For the full resolution you can contact the church office or go to our web page at

<http://sonomaucc.org/about-us/what-we-believe/resolutions>.

--Margie Mitchell



The Northern California Nevada Conference UCC is hosting Church Day on Saturday, October 24, from 8:30 a.m. - 4 p.m. at Congregational Church of San Mateo. Church Day is a gathering for lay members and ministers in churches of all shapes and sizes to come together to connect, learn and grow. Workshops include Tech Tools for Ministry, Generosity, and Congregational Growth, among many others. Boundary Training for authorized ministers will be held concurrently. Morning refreshments, lunch and childcare are provided. Registration at \$15 per person is required. Visit <https://ncncucc.org/church-day-returns/> or [click here](#) for a complete description of workshops, schedule, and to register, or contact Alan Claassen.

**Poetry begins again** The Poetry discussion group will be on vacation October 12 and 19 and will resume on Monday, Oct. 26. We will be using Roger Housden's "Ten Poems to Change Your Life," which will truly change your life. The poetry we look at is simple but profound, leading to some wonderful discussions about finding meaning in our lives. Come and try it, you'll like it! Mondays at 4 p.m., Community Room.

--Janet Volkman

### VOICE HEARERS NEED SUPPORT

#### THE SONOMA VOICE HEARERS SUPPORT GROUP

We are facilitating the development of a drop-in peer support group for anyone hearing voices or experiencing out-of-the norm perceptions.

Voice Hearers are a unique and under-supported population in our community, a population that tends to isolate. Contemporary models practicing Peer-to Peer support have proven life-saving and life-affirming. Research has shown that the problem is not hearing voices but the inability to cope with the experience. Support groups offer tools and strategies for coping. Peers share insights and validate each other's experiences.

Valley of the Moon residents have few local mental health resources available to them. It is important to offer local resources to this group whose symptoms can make pursuit of support and resources difficult.

The group is held every second Thursday in the Community Room from 6:15 p.m. to 7:15 p.m. Contact Silvia Chloe at (707) 996- 2930 or Carol Colridge at (707) 738-5115 for further information.

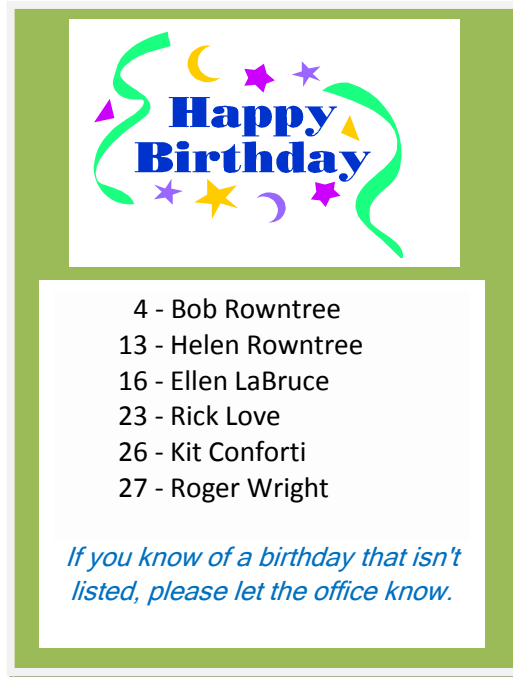
We thank the First Congregational Church of Sonoma for making this endeavor possible.

--Carol Colridge and Sylvia Chloe



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1  4:15 pm CR Bells  7:00 pm CR Church Council	2  8:00 am CR Meditation	3
4  F.I.S.H. Sunday  <b>10:30 am Worship and Communion</b>	5  4:00 pm CR Poetry Group	6  5:00 pm CR Earth Care  7:00 pm S Choir	7  12:30 pm CR Caring Friends  7:30 pm CR Pastoral Search Committee	8  4:15 pm CR Bells  7:00 pm CR Worship Committee	9  8:00 am CR Meditation	10  9:00 am CR + S Congregation Shir Shalom Service
11 9:00 am CR Spiritual Inquiry  <b>10:30 am Worship</b>  Body Prayer after worship	12  7:00 pm CR Seekers	13 11:30 am CR Women's Fellowship  7:00 pm S Choir	14  3:00 pm S Outreach	15  4:15 pm CR Bells	16  8:00 am CR Meditation	17
18  <b>10:30 am Worship Veda Lewis preaching</b>	19 10:00 am S Property and Finance	20 7:00 pm BH Earth Care speaker Peter Joseph  7:00 pm S Choir	21  7:30 pm CR Pastoral Search Committee	22  4:15 pm CR Bells	23 8:00 am CR Meditation  5:00 pm CR + S Congregation Shir Shalom Service	24 10:00 am CR Congregation Shir Shalom Torah Study
25 9:00 am CR Spiritual Inquiry  <b>10:30 am Worship Stewardship Sunday</b>  Body Prayer after worship	26 4:00 pm CR Poetry Group  7:00 pm CR Seekers	27  7:00 pm S Choir	28	29  4:15 pm CR Bells	30  8:00 am CR Meditation	31

S = Sanctuary  
 CR = Community Room  
 BH = Burlingame Hall



Date	Deacon	Liturgist	Flowers	Ushers	Coffee Hour
Oct 4	Bev Pearson	Judy Weiner	Kim Pack	Bev Pearson and Florence Porter	Ev Evkhanian and Louise Parnell
Oct 11	Nancy Denkin	Linda States	Diane Lumiere	Mary Beth Halsey and Judy Weiner	Earth Care Committee
Oct 18	Bev Pearson	Mary Evelyn Arnold	Karen Boon	Harry and Karen Boon	Cozette Shenks
Oct 25	Tim Boeve	Janet Volkman	Kim Garcia	Mary Evelyn Arnold and David McFarland	Alan and Susan Kelchner

**First Congregational Church of Sonoma  
252 West Spain St., Sonoma, CA 95476**

www.sonomaucc.org

(707) 996-1328

contact@sonomaucc.org

Worship Service and Sunday School - 10:30 am Sunday

**We are an Open and Affirming Earth Care Church**

**Office Hours:** Wednesday - Friday 8:30 am - 12:30 pm

**Interim Minister:** Alan Claassen, alan@sonomaucc.org

**Music Director:** Terry Lezama-Jensen, thj828@sbcglobal.net

**Pianist:** Sondra Cooper, sonn@vom.com

**Sunday School Teacher:** Emily Webber

**Childcare Providers:** Anna DeSmet & Natalie Baker

**Office & Event Manager:** Angela Ljung

**Facilities Manager:** Steve Cook

**Pastor Emeritus:** David McCracken

**West Spain Thrift Shop**

**Store Hours:**

Thursday 9 am-2 pm and Saturday 10 am- pm

**Donation drop-off hours:**

Regular store hours, and Monday, Tuesday and Friday  
from 9 am-11 am

**Leadership Directory**

**Moderator**

Margie Mitchell, 996-3865, mmitchell73@sonic.net

**Vice Moderator**

Ray Snipes, 999-1492, raysnipes@yahoo.com

**Secretary**

Lori Hutchinson, 935-7654, lori@hutchinsonconsulting.com

**Treasurer**

Candi Horton, 939-1687, csmucker@vom.com

**Property & Finance**

Bill Hutchinson, 935-7654, bill@hutchinsonconsulting.com

**Worship**

Nancy Denkin, 938-0673, ndenkin@vom.com

Brian Smucker, 939-1687, smucker@vom.com

**Youth**

Dotty Abbott, 996-5026, dotabbott@comcast.net

**Outreach**

Janice Mattison, 996-5124, janicemattison@gmail.com

**Earth Care**

John Donnelly, 933-8128, donnellyj63@gmail.com

**Hospitality**

Karen Boon, 815-7970, karenmarieboon@hotmail.com

Nancy Ladd, (415) 608-7843, laddnancy@gmail.com

**Caring Friends**

Alan Claassen, 996-1328

**Nominating**

Patricia Serota, 815-2759, patriciads@comcast.net

**Stewardship**

Patricia Henley, 938-5226, Bill Hutchinson, 935-7654,

Keith Ridenhour, 939-6949

**Women's Fellowship**

Judy Weiner, 938-1318, judyweiner@comcast.net

**Historian**

Patricia Serota, 815-2759, patriciads@comcast.net

**Endowment Committee**

Mary Evelyn Arnold, 938-1578, mearnold@vom.com

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**Thrift Shop Manager**

Patricia Serota, 815-2759, patriciads@comcast.net

**Thrift Shop Communications Coordinator**

Patricia Henley, 938-5226, plhenley@vom.com