

THE NUGGET

First Congregational Church of Murphys, United Church of Christ



We are in the EASTER season! The color is white



*We are
the
Church*

Re-opening Update

Thank you for your patience!

The ad hoc re-opening committee is meeting again in a week and will report back to the Finance & Facilities team at their next meeting on the 12th of May. At that time we will begin voting on the re-opening process.

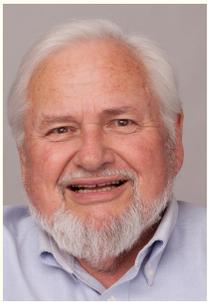
The committee has established July 4th as the likely date for meeting in person. It will be an outdoor service and we are looking for an appropriate location.

The re-opening plan will be adjusted for changing CDC and state guidelines.

At the next Finance & Facilities meeting we should be able to confirm the return to in-person services as well as provide guidelines for small group meetings in-person.

We appreciate the congregation's patience as we make progress to re-open safely and equitably.





EASTER DREAMIN'

"Now after the Sabbath, toward the dawn of the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to see the tomb.

And behold, there was a great earthquake, for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven and came and rolled back the stone and sat on it. His appearance was like lightning and his clothing white as snow."

Matthew's telling 28:1-3

T'was the night before Easter Sunday amid the COVID pandemic: Traditionally a time when for over forty years my thoughts were filled with Easter sermons and the anticipation of greeting the "beloved communities" of congregations and kin. But not this year, imprisoned as I was in a tomb of grief and loss. Sometime after midnight I dreamed of Matthew's telling of that first Easter morn. The story unfolded like a political cartoon. The imprisoning stone was labeled "COVID 19" and the liberating angel looked a lot like Dr. Anthony Fauci, resplendent in lab coat. Psychiatrist Karl Jung's theory of compensation or "balancing" of our psychic life suggests that when we set out to interpret a dream, it is always helpful to ask: What conscious attitude does it compensate?"

After a year of pandemic fatigue and severe limits on freedoms we tend to take for granted, Easter 2021 brings some promising news of vaccine freedoms, as well as a warning about moving away from common sense public health measures too soon. While I long for returning to public face-to-face worship, I recognize that it's probably just "too soon" to go back to the way it was. So instead, in the spirit of Easter dreamin', I'm watching and praying and looking ahead to the healing of our beloved Pastor Bonnie, the strengthening of Dr. Daryl in his twin ministries of caregiver and worship leader, and the wonderful support of our staff and volunteers. God bless and keep us all safe, healthy and hopefilled.

John Randlett, Pastor Emeritus



Home for Hope

Both Jerry at Sierra HOPE and Faith Lutheran Church will have necessary inspections by the end of the week to allow occupancy at Home for Hope. We will let you know when Jerry is planning to move furniture, so that our crew can plan to bring things in soon after. Shouldn't be long now.

Also, Faith Lutheran Church is holding a dedication ceremony on Saturday, May 1, from 1-2 pm. We are extending this invitation to you and the members at First Congregational who may wish to attend. Thanks so much for all your contributions.

For those who would prefer to attend by zoom, here's the link:

**Join Zoom Meeting
[https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84012893386?](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84012893386)
 893386?
 pwd=RERuTXFrB09SQnRySDIEaW
 FiOE8vUT09**

**Meeting ID: 840 1289 3386
 Passcode: 272271**

**Judy Earthman
 VP, Faith Lutheran Church**



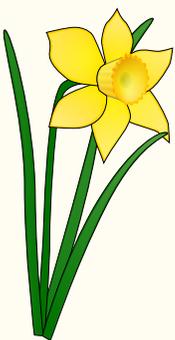
Happy Spring!

The beautiful wildflowers, God’s gifts to us , reminds us of his love. It is a busy time of the year with gardening, hiking and horseback riding. We need to remember to continue to attend worship, via Zoom, and take care of ourselves and others. The church Executive council, Parish care, Peter and Daryl have been busy organizing worship and keeping things going in Bonnie’s absence.

Thanks to everyone for stepping up and helping. While we are enjoying nature in this colorful time of year remember to reach out to others and keep our Church and its members in our prayers.

Enjoy the sunshine and keep healthy.

Patty



THANK YOU



Camp Tamarack in on track and planning to have camp this Summer!

We will run 3 week-long sessions of camp:

Junior Camp (entering 4th-6th grade) July 18-24

Jr. High Camp (entering 7th-9th grade) July 25-31

Sr. High Camp (entering 10th grade-graduated 2021 senior) Aug 1-7

Camper registration has started! Go here to register <https://ncncucc.org/nurturing-local-churches/youth-outdoor-ministries/>

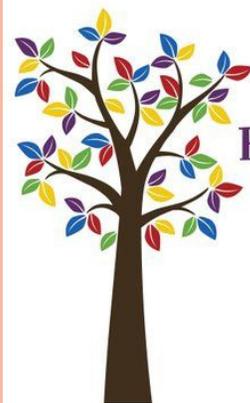
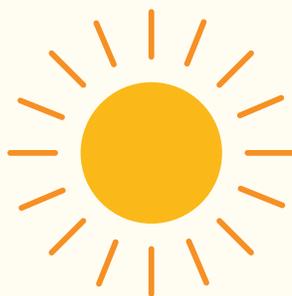
Register before May 1st for the Early Bird discount.

We have camperships available to help cover the cost of this wonderful program - just contact the church office if you are interested in a campership.

We hope that your child/grandchild will participate!



From the Treasurer

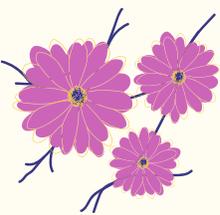


Play,
Learn
and
Grow,
Together.

The news is again good. We are sincerely grateful for the continued generosity of our membership and friends. The budget prepared by our former Treasurer, Sally Elliott, based on a half year of anticipated COVID shutdown, is on track. Budget expense categories may shift with some more than expected and others under by significant margins. The bottom line should balance out. Any additional expenses for pulpit support will be offset by salary paid to Pastor Bonnie through disability insurance and the PPP loan/grant received. The balances of our endowment funds continue to grow. We are using designated interest earned from some as directed for special Christian Education projects and Music. Plus, because of generous donations to the Pastor's Discretionary Fund, we are continuing to help those in need as if she were not on leave. God is good and we can rejoice.

Blessings to you all.

Mandy De Smidt, Your Treasurer



Grateful



Christian Enrichment
Since things are getting a little bit better, the Christian Enrichment team is changing a few things with the family program to allow for some non-Zoom activities. Specifically, we will now only meet once per month over Zoom, on the 3rd Tuesday each month. Peter would like to meet up with your child/children/grandchildren in person to build social interactions and relationships through sport games, hikes or walks. Peter would be reaching out to families to set this up.





Earth Day 2021

For Earth Day 2021 the Green Team put together family-oriented projects that celebrate and protect the environment. These projects were collected and contained in a shoe box. The shoe boxes were delivered to the fifteen homes of church families with children. Each shoe box contained wildflower and luffa seeds to plant and materials for creating a bird feeder. Instructions for a scavenger hunt focused on "spotting" objects or sites that protect the environment. A checklist of Earth Day activities was added so families could choose how they wish to celebrate and care for nature. Flyers about California nature reserves to visit were also included.

Finally, young children were encouraged to reuse the shoe box itself by creating a nature diorama. The idea was for families to have fun while working together on these projects. On April 22 Earth Day 2021 families can have fun and show that kids care too!



Recycling

MAY 5TH, 2021

8:30am to 10:00am

No more GLASS! It would be a tremendous help to us if you could possibly flatten your aluminum cans. As always be sure to pre-sort the aluminum and plastic in separate bags. Always take lids off of plastic bottles.

Since Sanders and Gary are generally doing this by themselves they welcome any help on those Wednesday mornings!



FCN Thoughts: The Merry, Merry Month of May



The month of May brings many merry things to our attention. May brings National Strawberry Month; Intergalactic Star Wars Day; National Motorcycle Awareness Month and National Chamber Music Month. May also brings us Mental Health Awareness Month, which may not feel so merry, but perhaps as we look at ways to reframe our thoughts and actions, we can help ourselves and others to begin to see anew.

Our mental health is a part of who we are. “Mental Illness” is normal. Often those who are diagnosed with mental illness feel different, separate, apart from the norm. Nothing could be further from the truth. A recent study found only 17% avoided mental illness, while 42% identified a short-lived mental illness and 41% had a mental health condition that lasted many years. Depression is the leading cause of disability worldwide, with anxiety and substance abuse not far behind—and this was pre-COVID!

Mental Health Awareness Month brings us an opportunity to talk about mental health, to be kind to ourselves and others as we deal with life’s challenges, and let others know they are not alone. So, what can each of us do this month to participate and bring about change?

1. **Share Your Story:** Keep the topic of mental health in the conversation. When you share your struggles and victories it helps others to see and believe they are not alone and there is hope. Share only what you are comfortable sharing with those you are comfortable sharing it with.
2. **Educate Yourself on Mental Health and Wellness:** Learn about mental health and wellness topics such as how to incorporate good self-care habits into your life or about specific mental illnesses you do not understand. Learning about mental illness and how it affects sufferers helps you have more empathy and decrease stigma that shrouds these diagnoses. These websites may be a good start <https://nami.org> or <https://www.nimh.nih.gov>.
3. **Talk to a Therapist:** Locate a therapist to address any mental health challenges you currently are facing. These challenges may be anxiety or depression, troubled relationships, or other struggles you are facing in life, or the feeling you are stuck in a rut. Many will set up video visits if you desire
4. **Focus on Self-Care:** Sufficient sleep, healthy food, regular activity are each important. In the same way, taking time for enjoyable interests are essential to our mental health, helping to re-energize us and help us focus on the good things of life. Contact the Faith Community Nurse to help support you in these activities.
5. **Support Those Around You:** Consider how you can support others. Mental health issues may be difficult to see with our eyes, but as we learn about symptoms, we may be able to identify problems those we care about may be facing. It does not mean you are responsible for fixing anyone, nor should you try to, but rather to be available to provide support in ways the person may identify. Make sure they know they are not alone.

“Anxiety in a man’s heart weighs it down, but a good word makes it glad.” Proverbs 12:25. I pray we can all find “a good word” in support of our families, friends, neighbors and ourselves.



An article from the Green Team

VINEGAR

The natural non-toxic cleaner and herbicide

Praise the Lord! Springtime is here with God's fulfilled promise of rebirth and renewal! For many of us this is the time of year to tend to our gardens and/or do a thorough Spring cleaning of our homes. Unfortunately, more and more studies are showing that the commercial cleaners and herbicides we use are toxic to us, our pets, and the environment. Herbicides, such as Roundup, contain Glyphosates which has been linked to cancers in humans and animals. I became interested in natural herbicide and cleaning alternatives several years ago, when, in the course of 3 years, I lost 2 of my beloved German Shepherd dogs, at the young age of 6, to cancer of the blood vessels.

The dogs were not related and literally came from 3,000 miles apart. I did some research and began suspecting that household chemicals I used may have been the cause. I stopped the use of commercial herbicides and cleansers and began using alternative cleaning products. I'm happy to report that I now have 3 healthy dogs aged 14.5, 11.5, and 8. While my cat passed away a year ago, she was 20.5 years old. Vinegar has become my go-to for most of my cleaning and herbicide needs.

When I first began using vinegar, I was discouraged at how ineffective it seemed until I discovered that all vinegars are not created equal. Vinegar strength is determined by its percentage of acetic acid. Vinegars on the shelves of grocery stores are 5% acetic acid. For my cleaning and herbicide formulas I use vinegar that is 45% acetic acid. Below are the formulas I use:

Household cleaner and shower spray:

- Peels from 2 lemons or 2 limes (save juice for other uses).
- ½ cup fresh mint or rosemary sprigs.
- 1 ½ cups 45% vinegar.

Put all ingredients in a pint-sized jar and put a lid on the jar. Leave undisturbed for at least 5 days. Strain through a fine metal strainer. Put liquid in a spray bottle. Dilute with water to suit your purposes. A word of caution, undiluted, this mixture is really strong!

Toilet cleaner or pet laundry additive:

- ½ cup 45% vinegar.
- ½ cup baking soda.

Put in your toilet bowl or your laundry drum and watch those "scrubbing bubbles" go.

Herbicide:

- 1 ½ cups 45% vinegar
- ½ cup water
- ¼ cup salt
- 1 Tbsp dish soap.

Put all ingredients in a spray bottle and spray on unwanted plants and weeds. A word of caution this formula does not differentiate between wanted and unwanted plants so make sure you're careful where you spray.

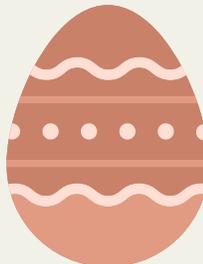
May God bless your homes, and your gardens and may they restore your spirits and bring you comfort, joy, and peace.

Lynne Bird



Even though this year we could not be together with our children for Easter, we did prepare Easter Baskets for them with so much love.

The Christian Enrichment Team



LGBTQ



LGBTQ Youth and supportive friends are invited to join us for dialogue, education, friendship, and support!

~Currently meeting online via Zoom~

When: The 1st and 3rd Tuesday of every month at 7pm

RSVP with your email address at

CalaverasGSRM@gmail.com

or call

(209)352-1828



Spring clean-up

Our grounds have been “spiffed up” with trimming, raking, weeding and cleaning. A very active crew including Connie Cook, Vena and Karl Graves, Mandy DeSmidt, Nancy Burton and Susan Medeiros gave their time and talents on a recent Saturday morning, making our church grounds beautiful. Refreshments for these hard workers were provided by Connie Cook.

THANK YOU ALL!

Before

After



{LOVE}

Always protects
Always trusts
Always hopes
Always perseveres

Love Never Fails

1 Corinthians 13:7



Happy

BIRTHDAY



Susana Crow 1

Susan Medeiros 1

Emma Olivas 6

Barbara Matthews 7

Marilyn Baisel 8

Pastor Bonnie 11

Alan Horvath 14

Rev. John Randlett 16

Justin Glessman 20

Sean Markus 20

Miriam Thorsen 21

Robin Chesnut 22

Norma Fritsche 22

Mary Jean Bissell 23

Caity Johnson 24

Carolyn Anctil 26

Gretchen Thomson 27

Tommy Pratt 31



Prayers answered

The scriptures tell us: "Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God.

Philippians 4:6

We continue to witness the stories of how God answers our prayers!

God hears our cries and answers them.

Let us pray daily for the following members and friends of our community:

All those who are ill

Pastor Bonnie

Susan Giannini Chadwick

Andrew Chadwick

Jara & Max Clark

Tracey & Kelly Ellefritz

Tara Glessman

Hilary Oldenkamp

Angela Patterson

John Randlett & Family

Alan & Dodi Horvath

Gail Withuhn

Josephine Zimbe & Family

Kim Plowman

Soderer Family

Anna Abando & Family

all of the children at the orphanage

Melinda Winship

Deborah Jones

Sanders LaMont

Zach Luchetti

Cathy Kuhn

Caity Johnson

Katelynn Lamont

Matt Soderer

Grassmyer Family

Phil Hosmer

Jesse Hosmer

All medical professions and teachers

MAY 2021

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
2 11am Worship + 	3 STRENGTHEN THE CHURCH OFFERING	4 7pm LGBTQ meeting	5 10:30am Recycling	6	7	8
9 11am Worship +  Mother's Day	10 10am Outreach & Social Justice meeting	11	12 1pm Finance & Facility meeting	13 Ascension Day	14	15
16 11am Worship +  Following Worship Council meeting	17	18 5.30pm Family Program for Children 7pm LGBTQ meeting	19	20	21	22
23 11am Worship + 	24	25	26	27	28	29
30 11am Worship + 	31 					

*God's love echoes through us to all creation.
Website: www.fccmurph.org
Email: nugget@fccmurph.org
Phone: 209.728.3141*

MAY 2021

DATED MATERIAL—DO NOT DELAY

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

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Murphys, CA 95247

THE NUGGET

Staff

Pastor Rev. Dr. Bonnie Hollinger

Pastor Emeritus Rev. Dr. John Randlett

Music Director Dr. Daryl Hollinger

Director of Christian Education Peter Marai-Muro

Secretary Peter Marai-Muro

Officers

Moderator Carrie Shinn

Vice Moderator Patty Haskell

Treasurer Mandy DeSmidt

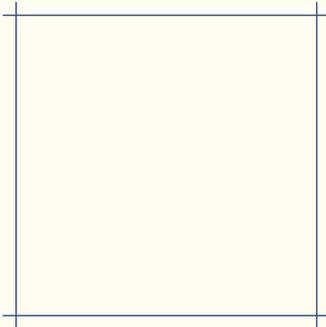
Financial Secretary Shad Sundberg

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST, MURPHYS MISSION
STATEMENT

We believe that all people are beloved by God and we strive to serve as a welcoming and nurturing church community to discern the Bible with insight for today and to live out Christ's teachings.

The Nugget Committee invites you to submit articles of interest and wishes to stress that the deadline is always the 3rd Monday of each month.

The Committee reserves the right to edit submissions for length and content.



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