

THE NUGGET

First Congregational Church of Murphys, United Church of Christ



We are in the EASTER season! The color is white

ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING-JUNE 13TH

PLEASE JOIN US ON ZOOM FOLLOWING WORSHIP! YOU ARE NEEDED TO VOTE ON POSSIBLE BY-LAW CHANGES, NEW OFFICERS AND MORE.

Mark your calendars-the first outside service will be June 27th at 10:00 in the church parking lot. More information will be coming.





ZOOM WORSHIP, THE CHALLENGES AND JOYS

Since the beginning of the pandemic we have had a variety of online worship experiences. First, Pastor Bonnie and Daryl led worship from the sanctuary live on Sunday mornings. Then they switched to recording it ahead of Sunday and posting the recording on YouTube and Facebook. When Pastor Bonnie had to have surgery, we switched to Zoom worship at 11 AM on Sundays. Now Penny and I and a few others join Daryl for those services. They have their joys and their challenges!

Among the challenges:

- We miss a lot of people – those who can't or don't use Zoom or don't have good internet connection. We see a smaller group every Sunday. And we miss hugs!
- We miss the variety of music – piano, organ, special soloists.
- We are probably missing the funds that come in from the plate collections when we are in person. We must remember to send a check or go online.
- For me, the preacher, I would prefer not to have to look at my own face while I preach! If I choose speaker view, it is like talking to a mirror. If I choose gallery view, I can get distracted by people moving around. (When we are in our own home it can be easier to act on impulses – snack, check messages, pet the cat....)
- And then there are the internet connection issues – like Mickey and Penny being kicked off internet three times as they tried to finish a sermon

But there are some joys!

- People who don't live in the area don't have to miss church! We often get to see Dodi and Alan, Laura and Sally, and others. We can have a countrywide congregation!
- We can build discussion time into the service. In the sanctuary we tend to stay more formal and don't think to pause and ask people what they are seeing.
- We save paper! No order of worship needed! It's a green service!
- Daryl can work from home as he takes care of Pastor Bonnie.
- I don't have to worry about what to wear!
- We aren't tempted by a table full of sugary treats – better for our health.
- And we don't have to drive to church, making it even more of an ecological event.

So now as we begin to think about the transition to what is next, we can look at these challenges and joys. Maybe when we return to in-person worship, there might be things we could do differently. May we return not to normal but to a new normal!

Rev. Mickey



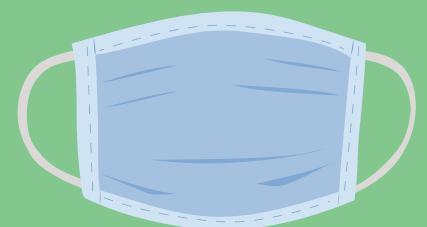
SMALL GROUPS

We are indeed Phasing Forward and making progress with opening.

Our first step is to address groups of a small size. While we realize CDC COVID guidelines have recently changed we must follow California's guidelines and will continue to seek the safest avenue for us to gather. We will send further updates as they are determined by the Phasing Forward Ad Hoc Committee and Council.

You may address any questions to Diane Hosmer RN MSN IBCLC at

dhosmerMSN@gmail.com or call/text the number in the directory.



MODERATOR'S MUSINGS

JOB 38:19 "WHAT IS THE WAY TO THE REALM OF LIGHT? WHERE DOES DARKNESS RESIDE?"



As I write this today, I truly wonder, as Job did, what is the way to the light? We have all endured extraordinary times this past year +; some very difficult, some wonderful and comforting. Did you renew relations with close family members in your "pod"? Or maybe reconnect with some far away friends via Zoom or social media? I feel certain that it wasn't all difficult in spite of Covid, separation, illness, loss. And now we are nearly ready to turn to the realm of light!

The Phased Re-opening Ad-hoc team is hard at work reviewing current regulations and incorporating new ones as they come out of CDC and the state of California. The goal is to resume in-person meetings as soon as practical, as the team deals with questions of sanctuary size, sound systems, parking, Sunday School classes, etc. It's not an easy task but the bottom line is, the team and Council want to protect the entire congregation from exposure and potential illness and move forward with the utmost care.

The Council is planning the annual meeting to be held, via Zoom, on Sunday, June 13th. Please plan to attend as we will be voting on the slate of officers and team members for the upcoming year, the discussion of any possible budget adjustments and the awarding of the "Unsung Hero" award. Look for your meeting packet via email or mail in early June. Please plan to attend and participate!

As we leave the darkness behind and move towards the light, I pray that I will see each of you soon, be able to give you a smile and a hug and start to return to our normal joyous church activities.

Moving towards the light...



Carrie Shinn
Moderator



Blessing Box Update

"HELLO DEAR FRIENDS. I HAVE BEEN MONITORING THE BLESSING BOX AND WANTED YOU ALL TO KNOW, THAT IT IS FULLY STOCKED AND WE HAVE CUPBOARDS INSIDE EASTMAN THAT ARE FILLED WITH FOOD. SO, AT THIS TIME WE DON'T NEED ANY MORE FOOD DONATIONS. WE HAVE HAD SOME DONATIONS OF FRESH PRODUCE, WHICH IS HARD TO KEEP FRESH, SO I WOULD ASK YOU NOT TO DONATE FRESH PRODUCE OR ANYTHING THAT NEEDS TO BE REFRIGERATED. THANK YOU ALL FOR YOUR GENEROSITY AND COMPASSION FOR THOSE WHO USE THIS BLESSING BOX."

JERI

many thanks



TREASURER'S REPORT

Thanks in no small part to everyone's generous and consistent support in all areas of church activity, income remains good, but less than anticipated, mostly due to the pandemic.

Expenses are consistent without much happening within the teams, also because of the pandemic.

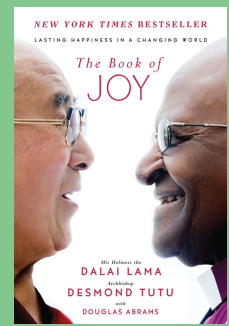
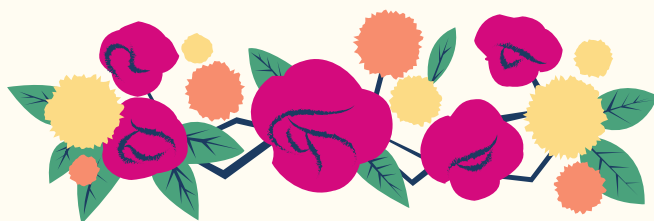
With expenses under budget and the PPP money received in March, we are holding our own.

Endowment growth is averaging approximately \$5000/month and remains our consistent guardian against a huge deficit. Our budget is a moving target with payroll expenses fluctuating and income from church use and fundraisers tentative due to rapidly changing restrictions and concerns for everyone's safety. All in all, First Congregational UCC is in better financial shape than many and we continue to do God's work in spite of the challenges.

Enjoy our wonderful weather and region. Stay safe, and I will see you on Zoom for our annual meeting, Sunday, June 13.

Blessing to you all.

Mandy De Smidt, Treasurer



Book Study Group

The Book Study group is still on hold, as churches and other larger groups that gather are in a transition period. Our church is working diligently to get us back together, safely, as soon as possible. That includes many areas of activities, especially-Small Groups. Our book choice for discussion is "The Book of Joy: Lasting Happiness in a Changing World". The subtitle certainly expresses the world today. When discussing the possibility of a discussion over Zoom many people shared their doubts regarding the process. Many expressed the need of personal contact. Also, some people are "zoomed out", so to speak. Right now we are looking at different options, and may need to wait until we can get together in person as an official church group. We will be contacting everyone who signed up for comments. In the meantime, while waiting, if you would like to join us in the future let us know.

May you find joy today, and often, Liz and Marilyn



Update

Almost a year ago on a sunny Saturday, June 27th, Teri, Ian and Hiro Olivas gathered with friends, family and Habitat for Humanity volunteers to break ground on their new home.



11 months later the house looks amazing and almost ready to move in. When helpers are needed to do some work, we will let you know via email. Stay tuned for more news in this exciting project!



Special 5 for 5 Offering

Stewardship

What an exciting way to be part of the UCC national church! Our offerings support new church growth, initiatives for youth, and help local churches give a witness for the love of God in their communities. You can donate online or mail your gift to the church office. Make your gift to FCCM and put **"Strengthen"** in the memo spot.



What do you think of when you hear about a resilient person? Is it a personality trait you must be born with?

Can resilience be developed? Why is it one person can appear to float through difficulties, and others become devastated by

similar circumstances? Are there ways to help our children develop skills to become more resilient?

Humans of all ages have struggles in life with varying levels of crisis or stress. Life events change our stories—they change us. It often seems some people have an inborn unflappability, but other factors develop one's ability to cope with adversity. We can improve our resilience, allowing us to face adversity with strength and grow in the process. Resiliency research has shown that resilience is ordinary, not extraordinary.

As you grow more resilient, the children in your life will notice.

Tools to Improve Resilience:

Build connections with others – Focus on developing relationships in easier times with those whom you trust to support and validate you. Some people are introverted and tend to isolate during difficult times. Allow yourself some connection in the tough times. It helps to remember you are not alone. Seek groups, like the church, to develop hope, sense of purpose and joy.

Attend to your Health and Wellness – Sleep, hydration, emotions, exercise, purpose (it spells SHEEP☺) are all factors that affect every area of our lives. Attention in these areas can help manage stress and decrease effects of anxiety and depression. Prayer, mindfulness activities and journaling help to build connections and restore hope.

Turning to alcohol, drugs or other substances masks pain without building resiliency.

Be Proactive – Acknowledge and accept your emotions when life is difficult but use the time for self-discovery. Break big problems down to more manageable bites. Develop your strengths in the easier times using tools like those at www.hsq.dukehealth.org/tools. These include 3 Good Things, and other brief short-term tools that may change your life. Seek professional help when you feel stuck or out of control.

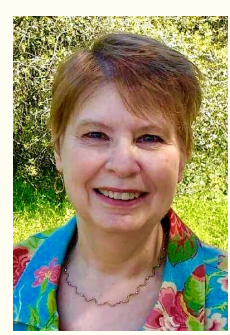
Embrace Healthy Thoughts – Our thoughts control our emotions and our actions. Keep things in perspective by avoiding catastrophic "all or nothing" thinking. You may not be able to change an event, but you may change how you interpret and respond to it.

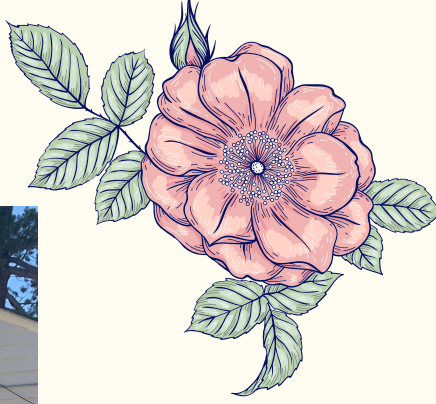
Accept change as part of life. Learn from your past strengths and visualize what you want rather than focus on what you fear.

Grow Resilient Children – Allow children to seek their own solutions rather than fixing problems for them. Be a listening ear, offer support and advice. If your child feels defeated and says, "I can't." teach him to add "yet" to the end of the sentence.

"...We also celebrate our tribulations, knowing that tribulation brings about perseverance; and perseverance, proven character; and proven character, hope. And hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has poured out within our hearts..."

Romans 5:3-4 NASB





If you have driven by the church campus lately, you probably noticed Connie Cook hard at work creating a beautiful garden on the Algiers Street side of the parking lot. Connie has incredible gardening skills and she made this site look beautiful too.

Our one and only Margaret White comes every day and takes care of the roses. Below you will see the fruits of Margaret's labor as the roses are once again blooming beautifully!



With your help we were able to raise \$141

Thank you for your contribution! We are doing recycling every other month on the first Wednesday of the month. We would like to remind you that we can't take any more glass items and please have your items sorted, and crushed if its possible.

Thank you!

Men's Fellowship





Dylan and Hazel Shinn made this lovely birdfeeder from the materials provided for Earth Day by the Green Team. Isn't it beautiful?



A little note from Outreach & Social Justice

We are suspending the pill bottle collection. It has become prohibitively expensive to mail the pill bottles to Africa, and the cost outweighs the benefits. Many thanks to those who have helped us send many, many pill bottles. Kudos to Angela Patterson who brought us the idea and spearheaded the program. Now, no more pill bottles brought to the church, please.

Thank you!



LGBTQ



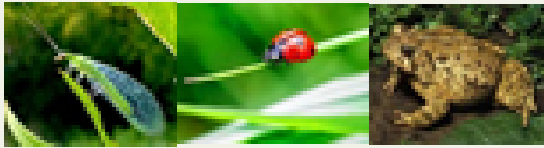
LGBTQ

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





SMALL HEROS IN THE GARDEN



An article from the Green Team

Psalm 50:10-11 “For every beast of the Forest is mine, the cattle on a thousand hills. I know all the birds of the hills, and all that moves in the field is mine”.

In the last Nugget article, I offered environmentally safe alternatives to using toxic cleaners and herbicides using vinegar as the chief ingredient. May in the foothills is typically the month when Calaveras and Tuolumne County residents plant their gardens so this month’s article is on identifying and attracting those small hero bugs and reptiles to your garden that will dine on garden pests that, if left unchecked, will devour all your plants. I stopped using pesticides in my garden after the second of two of my dogs died. I looked for possible reasons for their deaths and discovered a possible cause was my use of toxic chemicals, particularly pesticides, in the house and garden. The first season being pesticide free was frustrating. I noticed a major increase in pests. I researched and learned the best defense was an army of beneficial bugs and reptiles. After years of pesticide use very few of these wonderful creatures could be found in my garden. I purchased ladybugs and praying mantis cocoons and placed them in my garden areas. Some hung around but most left my yard quickly for greener pastures.

The second year was better. I noticed more ladybugs and praying mantis around the garden early in the season. I also noticed fewer pests. I researched ways to attract and keep the good insects in my garden. If their food source is good, beneficial bugs will lay their eggs in your garden assuring they will be there the next season. When I discovered a toad in my garden early last year, I placed an upside-down clay pot, with a toad-sided opening underneath in two places in my garden. Last year I never saw a toad utilize the shelter. This season however I decided to move one of the pots and found a toad underneath. I left the pot where it was. There are many natural lures you can buy or make to attract beneficial creatures.

This year I am blessed by God with a vibrant and alive garden. Ladybugs, wolf spiders, praying mantis’, and lacewings are hard at work devouring garden pests. Three toads, a tree frog, and two garter snakes are resting in the garden before they begin their evening patrols for garden invaders. Honeybees, Miner Bees, Bumblebees, and butterflies are busy pollinating the flowers. Numerous hummingbirds are taking their turns at one of the four bird feeders. My two very senior dogs are napping in the yard. Life is good!



Lynne Bird





June

BIRTHDAY'S

Liz Armstrong 2

Kim Plowman 3

Jim Reynolds 4

Cynthia Restivo 10

Fred Bender 11

Vee Domazlicky 12

April Friend 13

Melissa Horcasitas 14

Jamie Leigh 15

Cindy (Nugent) Secada 16

J.T. Glessman 19

Liz Tussey 19

Susan (Gianini)

Chadwick 20

Fay Messer 20

Ainsley Ryan 20

Cassie Ryan 21

Doris Williams 26

Gail Withuhn 30



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 & Dr. Daryl

Susan Giannini Chadwick

Jara & Max Clark

Hilary Oldenkamp

Angela Patterson

Gail Withuhn

Josephine Zimbe & Family

all of the children at the orphanage

Kim Plowman

Anna Abando & Family

Deborah Jones

Zack Luchetti

Cathy Kuhn

Caity Johnson

Joanie Singleton

Katelynn Lamont

Shawn Carson-Hull & Sergio

Grassmyer Family

Cynthia Tuttle (Vee's sister)

Vee Domazlicky

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
		1 7pm LGBTQ meeting	2	3	4	5
6 11am Worship 	7 1pm Finance & Facility meeting	8	9	10	11	12
13 11am Worship Following Worship Annual Congregational meeting 	14 10am Outreach & Social Justice meeting	15 7pm LGBTQ meeting	16 9am Executive meeting	17	18	19
20 11am Worship Father's Day 	21	22 5.30pm Family Program for Children	23	24	25 64th Anniversary of the United Church of Christ	26
27 10am Outside Worship in the parking lot 	28	29	30	31		

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

JUNE 2021

DATED MATERIAL— DO NOT DELAY

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

First Congregational Church of Murphys
509 N. Algiers Street
PO Box 48
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

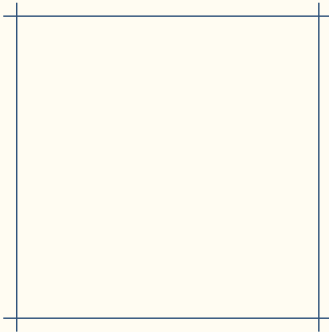
Financial Secretary Shad Sundberg

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.



www.ucc.org