

The Living Word

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COMING UP: DISCIPLES DISCOVERY SERIES - REV. SARA STEENHOUSE

Over the summer we'll have several opportunities to engage in conversation about who we are as Disciples of Christ! We'll reflect on our current mission and vision statements, identify our current priorities and take some steps toward our next chapter as a congregation. We'll also get to participate in a study series about our denomination - What makes us unique? What do we believe? What are our values? Stay tuned for ways you can participate in continuing to develop our own vision for FCC Vallejo.

In June we'll be learning about our Global Ministries program in worship. A Global Table: Sharing in God's Abundant Life is a sermon series produced in partnership between Global Ministries and the Proclamation Project to lift up the core values that guide Disciples mission work around the world. We'll explore Community, Mutuality, Justice, Peace, and Presence while we share stories of how this ministry is changing lives around the world with love and compassion on our behalf.



PASTOR'S PEN

There are different kinds of spiritual gifts, but the same Spirit is the source of them all. There are different kinds of service, but we serve the same Lord. God works in different ways, but it is the same God who does the work in all of us.
~1 Corinthians 12:4-6 (NLT)

Our congregational leadership would like to make some administrative changes to how our church approaches the work of 'doing church' in the program year 2026-27. This will be a collaborative process that includes all voices as we work to shape our governing structure, how we make decisions, and how we serve the community into the future. We will have the opportunity to reimagine processes that work better for our current size, decrease burnout, and increase excitement about our common ministry.

In order to do that work faithfully, we will begin by revisiting our current Vision statement and developing new Mission, Vision, and Identity statements that reflect who we are today. Our current Vision statement is clearly displayed on our website and helps to introduce people to our congregation. I recently learned it was developed in 1993 - that's more than 30 years ago!

I invite you to begin by reading it several times in the coming weeks. What parts still ring true? How have we changed in the last thirty years? Is there anything missing that ought to be included now? What values should guide us into the next era of ministry?

I hope you'll engage in this journey of discovery as we find words for our current calling and communicate it to our wider community. Please join me in praying for this process and stay tuned for next steps!

FCC Vallejo Vision Statement (1993)

We are a Christ-centered congregation in ministry to and with God's creation.

We will continue to grow in our understanding and living of the Gospel of Jesus Christ by creating a climate where every individual has the opportunity and encouragement to grow in the knowledge and love of God, empowered by the Spirit.

(Continued...)

PASTOR'S PEN - CONTINUED

We will reach out in love, inviting persons into our fellowship and into relationship with God through Jesus Christ; welcoming persons, accepting them as they are; nurturing and supporting every person as they grow in their own unique ways, engaging them in worship, study, prayer and fellowship that they may deepen their relationship with God; involving each person in ministry and mission.

We will strive to be a living church, embodying God's affirming and inclusive love in relationship with each other and the world.

I'm looking forward to engaging in this work together. We have a beautiful way of being church and I hope our efforts will give us focus and energy to do great things into the future, with God's help and the Spirit's guidance!

God Bless You,
Pastor Sara

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A SPECIAL PRAYER

This prayer that John Grose shared a couple of weeks ago in church seemed to strike a chord with quite a few folk. Here it is for those who did not hear it and anyone who needs to hear it again in these difficult times.

Dear Lord,

Today we ask for the strength to rise above every negative thought, every discouraging word, and every situation that tries to weigh down our spirits. Help us keep our minds focused on what is good, hopeful, and aligned with your will for our lives. Rescue me! Rescue us! Rescue our hearts from bitterness, frustration and anything that tries to steal our peace. Lord help us reach higher today and every day. Lift our perspectives so we don't get stuck in small thinking or temporary problems. Remind us that you are guiding our steps. Give us courage to move forward with confidence, faith, and determination through Love, in Jesus's name.

Amen!

NOTES FROM THE PASTOR

Coffee with the Pastor

Come meet me for coffee! I set aside time every month for folks to come out and meet up for casual conversation and fellowship. It's always a fun time to catch up and have a treat. This month we'll be meeting at **One House Bakery** (918 First Street in Benicia) on **Wednesday, June 17th**. Look for me at the sidewalk tables in front of the restaurant between **9:30 and 11:30 am**. Drop in for a few minutes or stay for the whole time, but be sure to enjoy something from the bakery - delicious!

Bible Study

We continue to meet on the last Sunday of the month to engage in scripture study together. For June we'll meet after worship from **Noon to 1:30** on **Sunday the 28th**. Bring a brown bag lunch and your Bible. We'll meet in the Fellowship Hall and take a look at **Ephesians 3:14-21**. This is the scripture theme for this summer's CC(DOC) General Assembly.

Virtual General Assembly July 10-11 2026

The whole church throughout the United States and Canada, is invited to attend **General Assembly 2026**. **Ephesians 3:14-21** invites the Stone-Campbell tradition of today and tomorrow to be rooted and grounded in the love of God that surpasses knowledge and barriers to build fuller relationships and ministries led by the limitless love of God. The prayer that calls to the church in Ephesus also calls the Christian Church to set a bigger table that surpasses our previous capacity.

More than just a series of meetings, General Assembly is a covenantal table set for education, discussion, worship, business, fellowship, and action. Each congregation is invited to boldly claim their covenantal place at the table by inviting everyone to attend online and by prayerfully designating 3 delegates to vote at General Assembly. Meeting every year online will allow more Disciples to connect more frequently and to work together more fully "to be the church we say we are." If you've never attended General Assembly before, a special welcome is extended to you.

One and all, individuals, Congregations, General Ministries, Regional Ministries, Ministry partners, and friends are invited to actively participate in our new way of being church and our church wide resolve to embody and share God's surpassing love as we gather in July. [Click here for more information and to register.](#)

NOTES FROM THE PASTOR

New FCCV NameTags to Include Pronouns

With the help of Beth Grose we're hoping to print new name tags in the near future. We'd like to include everyone's pronouns this time around. Check in with Pastor Sara to let us know what pronouns work best for you! (Examples: he/him, she/her, they/them, she/they, ze/zir, etc.)

Some have asked: why are we doing this? The simple answer is that it's not always obvious what pronouns people use. By including them on our name tags we can let people know how we're comfortable being addressed.

For most cisgender people (people whose internal sense of gender matches the sex they were assigned at birth) this isn't usually an issue. However, there are many transgender, nonbinary and otherwise gender-expansive people whose internal gender identity doesn't match the sex they were assigned at birth. In addition, there are people whose presentation of gender (whether cis or trans) doesn't conform to societal gender norms. For these beloveds it can be distressing or frustrating to have to correct people all the time. They deserve to be seen as who they are and to be treated with respect by using their correct pronouns.

As a general rule it's a good idea to check in with everyone about pronouns so we're not making assumptions or hurting feelings. If you ever make a mistake and use the wrong pronoun, the best approach is to quickly apologize, correct yourself, and move on.

By including pronouns on our name tags we can help communicate our preferences clearly. We can normalize sharing pronouns without making assumptions. We can help trans and nonbinary people feel welcome by using their correct pronouns and showing that we recognize the beautiful variation that is present within the family of God.

Thanks for helping us live more deeply into our commitment to be an Open and Affirming church by making this small but significant change!

New Pastoral Relations Committee

A new Pastoral Relations Committee has been named and is ready to meet beginning in June. Suzanne Awalt, Glenda Goode, Jon Mezzera, and Carl Bono will be serving through the end of 2026. Thank you for your work to build up the church! A Pastoral Relations Committee (PRC) is a small group of persons who provide support for the pastor and provide a regular channel of communication between the pastor and the congregation. The PRC functions to augment and enhance the variety of informal and formal means of support and communication in the congregation.

TREASURE HUNT FOR JUNE - Dave Mezzera

How familiar are you with our FCC-Vallejo environs? Have you seen the items pictured here? Where can they be found within our church or on the grounds? Answers may be found below.

A.



B.



C.



D.



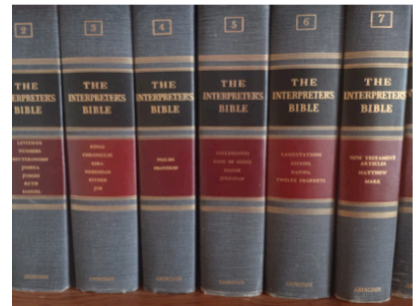
E.



F.



G.



TREASURE HUNT - Answers

- A. This is the mural that is painted on the front wall of the sanctuary inside the baptistry above the basin that is filled with water used for baptisms.
- B. This is a sign found above the piano near the side exit of Fellowship Hall.
- C. This is on one of the posters in the hallway leading from the sanctuary to the kitchen area which were painted by our youth and by our members at a Relay for Life.
- D. This is part of the cork board at the left rear of the sanctuary with notices.
- E. This is the design on one of the doors leading from the front entrance of church into the sanctuary.
- F. Rejoice! This is the brand new water station located to the left of the pantry near the peace garden and the Peace Pole.
- G. Just some of the many books in the church library in the parlor. Have you taken a look at the myriad of books there that you can borrow?

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MISSION ACTION GIFT - Suzanne Awalt, Mission Action Coordinator

The Mission Action monthly donation of \$275 for June will go to the Carl Cordes Camp Scholarship Fund.

From the CCNC-N announcement and ways to donate to this important Regional ministry and fitting tribute to Carl's years of involvement:

“For years, Carl Cordes has poured his heart into our community, first as our dedicated Youth Ministry Director and then as our faithful Men's Ministry Director. Few individuals have shaped as many young lives through the power of fellowship, camp experiences, and faith as Carl has.

To honor Carl's incredible legacy following his retirement in April 2026, and to celebrate his lifelong commitment to our youth, we launched the Carl Cordes Camp Scholarship Fund. This fund will provide scholarships for children and teens to attend summer camps, continuing the vital work Carl championed for decades.

A camp scholarship is more than just a gift—it is an investment in a young person's future, a tradition Carl deeply valued. Please consider donating today to help ensure that financial barriers never stand in the way of a life-changing camp experience.

How to Donate:

Visit <https://ccncn.org/donate.php>

Click the "Outdoor Ministries and the Community of the Great Commission" link.

Select the "Carl Cordes Camp Scholarship Fund" option from the menu.

Thank you for helping us honor Carl and invest in the next generation!”

NOMINATING COMMITTEE - Allison Mezzera

It is that time of the year again! A time to think about how you can help the congregation with your time and talents! This will be an exciting year as we are beginning the process of redefining who we are as a congregation! This year's Nominating Committee for the 2026 - 2027 term is Beth Grose, Allison Mezzera, and Cheryl Patterson.

We have begun meeting to brainstorm and dream about what you all can do to help lead FCC into the new program year. We have many opportunities for you to be engaged in in the life of the church.

Here is a list of all the roles we have to offer!

ADMIN: Vice Moderator, Secretary, Treasurer, Financial Secretary, Maintenance, and Building Use Coordinator

MINISTRY: Stewardship, Education, Mission Action, Communication, Hospitality, and Worship

ELDERS

The Committee will be considering all open roles, and may call on you to fill one. If there are positions such as Treasurer, or Financial Secretary, that you might be interested in, but a little scared of, there are always ways to shadow the current coordinators. Help is available always!

If you are asked to take on a role, please pray on it, think on it, ask questions about it, and please consider it.

Beth, Cheryl, and I are available to discuss any questions or concerns you may have!

You Are Invited

The Christian Church of Woodland invites you to a dialogue and screening of the movie *1946: The Mistranslation that Shifted Culture*. A light dinner and continued conversation will follow. Please register here: <https://1946-CCW.eventbrite.com> and share with your family and friends.

-Pastor Shannon

HYBRID WORSHIP CONTINUES

We continue to develop and improve our hybrid worship abilities. Every Sunday morning, we have some members of our worshipping community onsite in our sanctuary and some members of our worshipping community online on Zoom. We continue to work to make both formats engaging and accessible. Please share comments and suggestions that might make both formats better for everyone.

Our worship services begin at 10:30. To join us for worship on Zoom, click the link below and joining us through video. Or dial in by calling the number below according to your time zone. The instructions to connect are fairly easy, but if you need help, please reach out.

In preparation for Zoom worship, please have communion elements of some form with you so that we can all partake together. This can be bread and juice—or any other elements that evoke the Last Supper for you. You may also want to light a candle near you as we worship together.

Worship on Sundays, 10:30 a.m. PLEASE NOTE THE NEW MEETING INFO!

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/83204891403?pwd=YkJBNTQwWURabEtpRFVoaDU5aU5hQT09>

Meeting ID: 884 4460 0052

Passcode: 503337

Dial by your location

+1 669 900 6833 US (San Jose)

+1 346 248 7799 US (Houston)

+1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago)

+1 929 205 6099 US (New York)

Mark Your Calendar

June 2 - Elders meeting, 6 pm on Zoom.

June 11 - Admin Council Meeting, 5 pm on Zoom.

June 13 - “1946: The Mistranslation That Shifted a Culture” film at Woodland Christian Church.

June 15 - Worship Planning Meeting, 5 pm on Zoom.

June 17 - Coffee with the Pastor, 9:30-11:30 am at One House Bakery in Benicia.

June 18 - PRC Meeting, 1:30 pm in the Parlor.

June 18 - Ministry Council Meeting, 5 pm on Zoom.

June 21-25 - Pastor Sara at Junior Camp at CGC.

June 28 - Bible Study, after worship (bring a lunch).

July 10-11 - CC(DOC) General Assembly.

The deadline for the next Living Word is June 24
