

The Living Word

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www.vallejochristian.org
www.facebook.com/FCCVallejo

Come to the Garden

The Sustainable Solano Garden Committee would like to invite you all to a Garden Tour and Dedication of the much improved Johnson Garden! This will take place on 8/9/20 at a time TBD. Gabriela with Sustainable Solano will present the new Garden Plan and show us what is newly planted. Then we will have a small service to dedicate the garden and thank Sustainable Solano for all of their help.

This will be an in-person outdoor socially distanced event, so please bring your masks, and chairs if you need them. We are also working on covering the event live on Facebook or recording for those of you who may not want to come out to the church.

What a great tie-in to our Pentecost season theme, *Welcoming the Spirit*, focusing on the various ways the Spirit manifests in a garden—digging, planting, watering, blooming, sharing.



If you have any questions, please contact Allison Mezzera. Thank you!



Living Stones

*Leaf blowers are an instrument of the devil. / They snarl from across the street
while you were trying to sleep / and pollute the air with dust and gas
and pointlessly blow leaves around / for the next gust to bring right back
where they started. Good people / use a rake or a broom, as God intended.
I knew this, clear as day, until / the dads showed up at the protest,
joined the wall of moms with fists upraised, / singing hands up, don't shoot
in tones that could comfort a baby. / The dads brought hockey sticks
to bat away the canisters of tear gas. / And leaf blowers to disperse the gas
back whence it came
I don't trust anyone / who tells me what God intends.
Nonetheless, I will tell you this: / God means for us to use
the tools we have on hand / to protect what is threatened and growing.
—“Leaf Blowers” by Lynn Ungar*

Many times lately, I have struggled with all the things that are clearly far out of my control. I like to plan. I like to have a sense of where and how things are moving. I like to visit Clivie's classroom before the first day of school. But this is not where we are, moving into August 2020. And yet, still, there are grace and justice-filled opportunities budding out all around us. I may not be in control (as if I ever was!), but we still have tools on hand that God means for us to use to make a positive difference in this world. ***What are some of those tools you have on hand?*** Leaf blowers (who would have thought?), masks, our free little pantry, vegetable seeds, flowers, a hand written letter, homemade bread, a protest sign, a phone call. . . . Yes, there is much that we do not know or have control over. But God is still leading and guiding and giving us courage. So, let's pick up our tools and go to work.

See you in (zoom) church,
Christy

ZOOM WORSHIP

As we continue to shelter-in-place, we will continue to worship together online using Zoom. Bible Study begins at 9:30. Worship begins at 10:30. Please join us for any or all of this time together by clicking the link below and joining us through video. Or alternatively, you can 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 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.

Bible Study and Worship

Weekly on Sundays, 9:30 a.m.—Bible Study

10:30 a.m.—Worship

**COMMON GROUND UPDATE**

The Covid-19 pandemic has inflicted a toll on Vallejo's people and economy, and is revealing the underlying disparities in our society. Across California, African-Americans, Latinos, and Asian-Pacific Islanders have double the mortality rate of white residents. People living in the poorest neighborhoods have a mortality rate that is four times that of people living in the wealthiest neighborhoods. Common Ground's conversations with the community paint a familiar picture: these groups are more likely to have to work outside the home to survive, and are more likely to be forced to live in crowded housing, and to have underlying health conditions.

These factors reflect our society's historic disinvestment in institutions and services that support the well-being of marginalized groups, and communities of color, as well as decades of discrimination that have kept these groups, especially African-Americans, from gaining wealth. Violence, including at the hands of police, is part of this picture.

In dozens of meetings and conversations over the last month, Common Ground has been hearing from residents spanning Solano and Napa Counties racial and economic diversity. While funds for basic services are desperately needed in this time of Covid-19, many residents are also feeling a lack of trust in city government, especially in the police department.

So we are stepping into action. Along with continuing to hear stories from the community, the Covid Team is making suggestions to Solano County on how the \$46 million CARES Act should be past. And the Public Safety Team is meeting with the Vallejo Police Chief, County Supervisors, City Council members, and community activists to gather info from them and to tell them what our community wants from our Public Servants.

Upcoming Events:

Public Safety Team Meeting 7/28/20 6pm - 7:30pm

Covid-19 Response Team Meeting 7/29/20 6pm - 7:30pm

Public Safety Civic Academy ACTION 8/17/20 Time TBD

If you have any questions regarding Common Ground or the upcoming actions, please contact myself or one of our Common Ground Leaders: Rev. Christy Newton, Carl Cordes, Tiffany Altamirano, Glenda Goode, or Sara Morgado.

JUSTICE TODAY

Earlier this month some very good news came out of the US Supreme Court concerning Native land in Oklahoma. In a 5-4 victory, they ruled [eastern Oklahoma, including Tulsa, falls within an Indian reservation](#), and restores the tribal land back to five tribes — the Cherokee, Chickasaw, Choctaw, Muscogee (Creek) and Seminole.

The main focus of the case involved criminal justice practices in the state of Oklahoma vs the Muscogee (Creek) Nation. In the case, *Carpenter v. Murphy*, Patrick Dwayne Murphy, a member of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation, stabbed George Jacobs, another Creek, and left him to die on the side of the road. Trying to avoid the death penalty, Murphy's public defender argued that the murder took place on the tribe's reservation, so the state did not have jurisdiction to prosecute. The state argued that the reservation no longer exists, because it had already been broken up through allotment, a process of giving Native Americans U.S. citizenship if they signed individual land titles to separate where they lived from their tribe.

We all know the US has a complex and devastating history with Native people. This story goes all the way back to 1835 when a Treaty was signed that removed the Cherokee to a reservation in present-day Oklahoma in exchange for their ancestral land in the Southeast. The 1835 Treaty of New Echota was signed by native Cherokees who believed it was their best chance for survival, because of the ways tribes were being brutally removed as white people claimed their land. They were misled, and in 1836 the federal government drove the Creeks from their land for the last time and 3,500 of the 15,000 Cherokees who set out for Oklahoma did not survive the trip. This was only a portion of the travesty known as "The Trail of Tears".

In the Podcast, "This Land", host Rebecca Nagle, a journalist and member of the Cherokee Nation who covers tribal politics, digs into current policy and the backdoor ways industries and corporations have been chipping away at tribal sovereignty for decades. It's a

riveting story that reveals the bigger picture of how tribes have been treated for all of U.S. history. In the past 40 years, 117 cases about tribal law have gone in front of the Supreme Court, and only 12 have been ruled in favor of tribes. This latest decision could reshape the criminal justice system by preventing state authorities from prosecuting offenses there that involve Native Americans.

The decision could also have environmental consequences as about a quarter of Oklahoma's recent oil and gas wells and around 60 percent of its refinery capacity now lie within the tribal territory. And the Bureau of Indian Affairs and other federal agencies may end up getting new authority to run clean air programs within tribal territory and to renew right of way grants for existing pipelines. This will take power away from the large corporate entities that have been draining Oklahoma of money and safe environmental resources.

"This is a historic day," Principal Chief David Hill said in an interview. "This is amazing. It's never too late to make things right." The ruling comes at a time in history where Native Americans are being decimated by COVID, and the fight against systemic racism is gaining speed. In the last few weeks, a fight was won by tribal activists in North Dakota to stop the Dakota Access Pipeline.

"This brings these issues into public consciousness a little bit more," said John Echohawk, executive director of the Native American Rights Fund, a nonprofit organization that has spent five decades fighting for issues like tribal sovereignty and recognition. "That's one of the biggest problems we have, is that most people don't know very much about us."

So I now invite you to learn more!

READ!

https://www.washingtonpost.com/business/2020/07/17/supreme-court-oklahoma-oil-/?utm_campaign=wp_post_most&utm_medium=email&utm_source=newsletter&wpisrc=nl_most

<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/09/us/supreme-court-oklahoma-mcgirt-creek-nation.html>

<https://www.outsideonline.com/2398557/this-land-podcast>

LISTEN!

<https://crooked.com/podcast-series/this-land/>

DONATE!!

-First Nations Development Institute: <https://www.firstnations.org/> Improves economic conditions for -Native Americans through technical assistance & training, advocacy & policy, and direct financial grants

-Native American Rights Fund: <https://www.narf.org/> Advocates for Tribal existence, natural resources, and human rights

-Association of American Indian Affairs: <https://www.indian-affairs.org/> Protecting sovereignty, preserving culture, educating youth and building capacity for Indian Country.

A note from Allison:

After the FCCV Book Study on a “So You Want to Talk About Race”, I wanted to do something to not only expand my own mind on issues pertaining to racial justice, but to share the findings with the church, in the hopes you may learn something new too. With life as it is today, finding topics to research has been easy, yet challenging. Unfortunately, there is so much injustice that it is difficult to pick just one topic. I have found this practice fulfilling and feel that others in the church would also feel the same. We have a lot of smart cookies out there! I would like to invite anyone who has an issue surrounding justice they feel passionate about, to do some research, write about it and share it with us all in the newsletter! It is a good way to continue connecting with each other while we are apart.

Thank you.

NEWS FROM THE REGION



Wednesday Prayer with Terri

Join General Minister President Terri Hord Owens on Facebook Live every Wednesday at noon ET for a time of prayer.

166th CCNC-N Annual Gathering

Amidst the Covid19 pandemic, holding mass gatherings are problematic. So this year the CCNC-N Annual Gathering will be online! It is scheduled for the fourth Saturday in September, but register early. There are several business items to address, so it is important that the delegates and alternates identify themselves as such during registration.

There are plans for different Zoom meetings and webinars over the course of a few weeks that will cover the business meeting, workshops, and celebrations that we have come to expect at an annual gathering. Visit our website for details as they are scheduled.

September 26, 2020

Business Session 10:00 AM - 1:00 PM

IT'S FREE!

Register Here!

Other Annual Gathering Events will be posted as they are scheduled, please check back here:

<https://ccncn.org/HomePage.php>

CAMP BYTES 2020
Light the World

We invite you to register for camp!
Camps by Zoom are on a cost free basis.

Junior and Chi Rho Camp by Zoom
July 31-August 2

Graduated Senior Retreat at CGC
August 7-9

CYF (those going into 9th, 10th, 11th, and 12th grades) by Zoom
August 7-9

Please go to https://ccncn.org/Outdoor_Ministries.php to register.
We are excited to see your faces and to share stories and activities!



CCNC-N
Family Camping at CGC
EXTENDED
Now through Sept 20th



Come enjoy a few days or a week at CGC!

We have distancing protocols in place to ensure a safe family experience
in the beauty of the Sierras.



- Bobbitt Cabins \$70/Night (5 available)**
Each cabin sleeps up to 10. Full Bathroom.
- Summer Cabins \$55/Night (5 available)**
Each cabin sleeps up to 10. Shower House
- Tent Camping \$40/Night for up to 5 people.**
- Claar House \$500/Night.**
Sleeps up to 20. 5 full bathrooms. Full kitchen

Registration required, contact Leanne Stump, Registrar, Jokeca@aol.com or 925-323-3184;
email or call Tina Heck with questions at tinasueheck@uccr.org or 530-265-6636.

DON'T FORGET:

To help earn money for the church beyond your generous donations:

- ✓ Use www.goodsearch.com (instead of Google or Bing) for your internet searches.
- ✓ Start at www.goodshop.com when shopping online.
- ✓ Sign up at www.escrip.com for when you patronize local stores and restaurants.
- ✓ Take your recycling to Valcore (www.valcorerecycling.org) and ask that the money go to the church.
- ✓ Use www.smile.amazon.com. The first time you use it, you will be asked to select a charity to support. Pick our church, and don't forget to bookmark the page!

Mark Your Calendar

Sunday, August 2	Zoom Bible Study and Worship
Wednesday, August 5	Zoom Administrative Council, 5:30 p.m.
Sunday, August 9	Zoom Bible Study and Worship Sustainable Solano – Johnson Garden celebration, time TBA
Sunday, August 16	Zoom Bible Study and Worship Zoom Elders' Meeting, following worship
Sunday, August 23	Zoom Bible Study and Worship
Wednesday, August 19	Zoom Ministry Council, 5:30 p.m.
Sunday, August 30	Zoom Bible Study and Worship

*We pray to God who some call mystery, Beyond all definition, that
 When in the midst of uncertainty - may we know faith.
 When in the midst of anxiety - may we know serenity.
 When in the midst of stress - may we know calm.
 When in the midst of fear - may we know trust.
 When in the midst of bewilderment - may we know assurance.
 When in the midst of confusion - may we know confidence.
 When in the midst of pandemic - may we know peace.
 When in the midst of whatever - may we know love.*

*Rev. John Wesley Oldham
 Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada*