

The Living Word

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www.vallejochristian.org

www.facebook.com/fccvallejo

BOOK DISCUSSION - CARL CORDES

Do you have nothing to do on Monday evenings? Would you like to have some fun discussions with friends? Well starting on February 27th at 7:00 pm we will be studying this book; ***“Laugh your way to Grace, Reclaiming the Spiritual Power of Humor”*** by Rev. Susan Sparks.

This is what Garrison Keillor, author, storyteller and humorist says; *“Humor is not a trick, not jokes. Humor is a presence in the world, like a grace, and shines on everyone.”* And Moshe Cohen, founder of Clowns Without Borders-USA says *“A great read. Humor yourself all the way to spiritual enlightenment. A humorous ride to a zillion and one reasons to invite laughter into your spiritual house.”*

Please just let me know if you are interested. It will be on Zoom. Also, this is open to anyone who would like to participate. Let us come together and refresh our minds as we start the Lenten Season. From the book; *“Laughter is, in fact, a way of coming at the world. It challenges how we perceive ourselves and our circumstances, it reframes how we see others, and it changes the very way we engage with God.”*

Here is a link for Amazon to purchase the book;

https://www.amazon.com/Laugh-Your-Way-Grace-Reclaiming/dp/1594732809/ref=sr_1_1?crid=1M8EIL2M35022&keywords=laugh+your+way+to+grace&qid=1674588208&srefix=laugh+your+way+%2Caps%2C190&sr=8-1

JOKE OF THE MONTH

What did the graham cracker say to the marshmallow on Valentine's Day?

I love you s'more and s'more each day.

LIVING STONES

*It is not that the path / has disappeared. It is only
that, stunned with grief / and kicked by fear,
we sometimes lose our will / to put one foot
in front of the other. / But we are not lost.
Already in the dark / we have found each other.
What astonishes / is that there are so many of us,
and already with our voices / we are building bridges
made of light. / The world shakes,
we stumble / and we help each other rise,
and now it is time / for us again to put one foot
in front of the other— / not to escape what frightens us
but to walk unflinchingly / toward the messy center of things.
The path we choose now / is not one we've walked
or even seen before, / the path is one that appears
beneath our feet / with each step,
and we persist, / travelers in the frozen dark
who begin to see the light / as it shapes the horizon
and know, though it's cold, / that the change we dream of
has already begun to arrive.*

— “Directions” by Rosemerry Wahtola Trommer

Three images/ideas strike me in this poem: “building bridges made of light,” “the messy center of things,” and “the change we dream of that has already begun to arrive.” Do any of these ideas strike you? Or maybe there is something else that captures your thought and imagination.

I wonder what our bridges made of light are leading us toward? Where do we want them to lead? What change are you dreaming of—for your life, for our church, for our community and world? And it might be easy to discount the “messiness” of the center of things, but I find that messiness can simply mean that more than one person (and more than one community) is involved and must be taken into account. The positive changes I want to see in the world will not always happen neat and tidy and precisely according to my tastes and comfort. They will be much messier than that—organic, evolving, including ideas and creativity from people vastly different from me. I see tremendous grace in that. Perhaps that is building bridges made of light. It invites me to grow. It challenges me to be more welcoming and hospitable and open and full of wonder. It takes me somewhere I might not have planned or expected to go.

I believe our church is actively building bridges made of light as we continue to open ourselves to the leading of the Holy Spirit, as we share our gifts, and as we wholeheartedly dream and move—one foot in front of the other—toward the beautiful, loving, welcoming, messy center of that dream.

“ A Morning Walk” at First Christian Church of Vallejo on Feb. 18th. We are located at 1035 Indiana St (the corner of Colusa and Indiana).



We invite anyone to walk the labyrinth, to have a time to reflect, a time to be still, a time to meditate. Let this walk be a remembrance of those who came before us. Our doors will be open from 9:30 to 11 am on Saturday Feb. 18th. There is no cost, no pressure, just walking and thinking. Rain or shine we will be here. Please check us out at www.vallejochristian.org.

COMMON GROUND DELEGATES ASSEMBLY - Allison Mezzera

On February 26 at 4 pm (location tbd) members from Common Ground institutions all over Solano County and Napa County will gather to act in relation with one another and form our platform/agenda for the 2023 year. The Delegates Assembly is a time to hear what existing issues need additional work, solidify our goals for the new year, and most importantly, it is a time to be in relationship with one another as we build our power.

The work of the IAF/Common Ground is slow, persistent, work that makes real change to the lives of people everyday. It takes courage and a tenacious attitude. In Luke 18:1-8 we hear the story of a tenacious widow seeking justice from an ungodly judge who feels threatened by her persistence, and Jesus uses her as a positive character model for his disciples to learn from. We are that tenacious widow. Some may describe her as meek, but she has faith and power in her to fight for justice.

We have that power too and it is time to show the community who we are and what we can do! By coming to the Delegates Assembly we are saying that we are ready to continue our support and mission to have a just world.

So please mark your calendars for 2/26 at 4 pm.

If you would like more info, please contact Allison, Carl, or Glenda (your Core Common Ground Team Members).

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HOPE CENTER UPDATE - Jon Mezzera

After the Global Holiday Faire, we received a lovely thank you letter from Lynn Epp, the Amador Street Hope Center board chair, member of the Faire organizing committee, and friend of the church. She updated us on the work of the Hope Center in 2022 with a look ahead to an exciting new program coming soon.

“Greetings! The Hope Center is in full swing. The number of people we’ve served this year 2022, totals well over 15,000 — 15,546 to be exact. Your faithful support through the proceeds from the Global Holiday Faire has allowed us to do that. Thank you for this most recent check of \$835!... For our first year back after COVID, the Faire was very successful - especially since it was a rainy day!

Our Assistant Director, Donisha Patterson, is doing so much to help the community with our usual fresh produce, meat, boxed and canned foods.

S.O.S. - Solano Options & Support now offers medical help by appointment on Tuesdays. It offers substance use treatment & recovery support services.

(continues...)

HOPE CENTER UPDATE - Continued

Hope Cafe will be opening in February - free soup and sandwiches at first, which may be consumed in the Fellowship Hall or 'to go.'

Thank you again, for your support."

It is quite impressive how much the Hope Center has accomplished and we should be proud that we are a part of that!



The poster features a black background with a large orange flame icon on the left. To the right of the flame, the word "Rekindle" is written in a large, orange, cursive font, with "YOUTH CONFERENCE" in a smaller, bold, yellow, sans-serif font below it. Below the title, the text "A TRI-REGIONAL EVENT FOR MIDDLE AND HIGH SCHOOL YOUTH" is in white, followed by "SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 18, 2023" in large, bold, yellow letters. Below that, the times "PACIFIC TIME: 10 AM - 8 PM | MOUNTAIN TIME: 11 AM - 9 PM" are listed in yellow. A white line separates this from the next section, which reads "1 EVENT • 3 LOCATIONS • 3 REGIONS" in white. Below this is a map of the Western United States in a dark red color, with three white chalice icons marking specific locations. To the right of the map, the text "NORTHERN CALIFORNIA - NEVADA REGION" is in yellow, followed by "FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH OF VALLEJO" and "1035 INDIANA ST, VALLEJO, CA 94590" in white, and "GUEST SPEAKER: SANDHYA JHA" in yellow. In the bottom right corner, the text "Rekindle YOUTH MINISTRY in your church!" is written in a mix of yellow and white, with "Rekindle" in yellow and "YOUTH MINISTRY in your church!" in white. At the bottom of the poster, there is a yellow banner with the text "Register at DOC-West.org/Rekindle" in black, a red chalice icon, and "Cost is \$65 per person (Includes lunch & dinner) Call 626-296-0385 for more information" in black.

Rekindle
YOUTH CONFERENCE

A TRI-REGIONAL EVENT FOR MIDDLE AND HIGH SCHOOL YOUTH
SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 18, 2023
PACIFIC TIME: 10 AM - 8 PM | MOUNTAIN TIME: 11 AM - 9 PM

1 EVENT • 3 LOCATIONS • 3 REGIONS

NORTHERN CALIFORNIA - NEVADA REGION
FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH OF VALLEJO
1035 INDIANA ST, VALLEJO, CA 94590
GUEST SPEAKER: SANDHYA JHA

Rekindle
YOUTH MINISTRY
in your church!

Register at
DOC-West.org/Rekindle

Cost is \$65 per person (Includes lunch & dinner)
Call 626-296-0385 for more information

ST. VALENTINE - Dave Mezzera

Happy St. Valentine's Day on the 14th.

Was there really a Saint Valentine? Or was he just a myth? And was his story about sending a "Valentine's" card to a sick child and curing her just a legend? For the real story of St. Valentine, check out the following site ==>

https://www.catholic.org/saints/saint.php?saint_id=159



When a boring summer seems inevitable...



GET TO CGC
in 2023!

A savanna scene with a giraffe, an elephant, and a zebra.

Friends & Fun & Fabulous Staff!

Interactive Spiritual Exploration



Community of the Great Commission

SUMMER CAMP

- June 8-11 Adult camp (ages 18+)
- June 18-22 Junior camp (entering 4th-6th grades)
- June 18-24 Chi Rho camp (entering 7th-9th grades)
- June 24-26 J.O.Y. camp (entering K-3rd grades, accompanied by an adult)
- June 25-July 1 CYF camp (entering 10th-12th, including graduated seniors)

Mark your calendars today!
For more info, google: CCNCN Outdoor Ministries



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.

<https://zoom.us/j/94763862611>

Meeting ID: 947 6386 2611

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)

WORSHIP PLANNING RETREAT FEBRUARY 4 - Christy Newton

On Saturday, February 4, from 10:00-12:00, we will have our next Worship Planning Retreat on Zoom. This will be an opportunity for us to come together to envision and chart a course for our worship services over the next 3 months, including Lent. We will read scripture together and brainstorm themes, songs, poems, prayers, art, and ways we might structure our worship time. Everyone is welcome! So, bring yourselves and any ideas you have. We will share a refreshing and life-giving time together, while doing the work of the church. I look forward to seeing you there!

JANUARY MISSION ACTION GIFT - Helen Mezzera

Amnesty International is a global movement of more than 10 million people in over 150 countries and territories who campaign to end abuses of human rights. It's the world's largest grassroots movement for human rights. Amnesty accepts no funding from governments or corporations for their research and campaigns. Amnesty began in 1961 when British lawyer Peter Benenson was outraged upon learning that two Portuguese students were jailed for raising a toast for freedom. He wrote an article in The Observer newspaper (which spread to other newspapers) and launched an appeal for amnesty. That sparked the idea that people everywhere can unite in solidarity for justice and freedom. Amnesty includes research, advocacy & lobbying, campaigns and action. It has grown from seeking the release of political prisoners to upholding the whole spectrum of human rights. Go to their website (<https://www.amnesty.org/en/>) and see all of the areas that they are a part of including Child Rights, Police Violence, Discrimination, Refugees, Detention, Disappearance, Torture, Climate Change, and Armed Conflict just to name a few. They do important and often dangerous justice work. Amnesty International is a non profit that we can be glad that we support with our January Mission Action gift.

Mark Your Calendar

February 4 - Worship Planning Retreat, 10-12 on Zoom.

February 8 - Admin Council, 5:30 pm on Zoom.

February 11 - Elders meeting, 9:00 am on Zoom.

February 15 - Ministry Council, 5:00 pm on Zoom.

February 18 - A Morning Walk, 9:30 - 11 am.

February 18 - Feb Camp. One day event, starts at 10 am.

February 22 - Ash Wednesday.

February 26 - 1st Sunday of Lent.

The deadline for the next Living Word is February 22
