

The Living Word

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www.vallejochristian.org

www.facebook.com/fccvallejo

WHO WILL FIGHT FOR VALLEJO? WILL YOU JOIN US? - ALLISON MEZZERA

People are hurting and it seems that the city and the county do not have a clear vision for the future. Proverbs says, “Without a vision the people will perish”. Solano County will become an inhospitable place to live if WE, the community, our neighbors, AND our officials do not start working together to create the community we want to live in. What do you envision for your community?

A community where people can afford to have a roof over their head

A community where people have food on the table

A community where people can safely own a business without fear of being robbed

A community where people of color can live without fear of racial profiling and police violence

A community where people of differing backgrounds can be in relationship with each other and speak with respect and no hateful rhetoric

Do you want to have a voice in changing the problems in your neighborhoods?

On 2/8/24 Common Ground will host an Accountability Action with candidates for CA State Senate and Solano County Supervisor. With the March Primaries right around the corner, now is the perfect time to share our stories, our struggles, and our vision for the community. We will ask the Candidates to be accountable to us as their constituents, and to work with us as we envision the future. This is not a public forum or a town hall, but a chance for us to be in relationship with each other and show our strength to those who may soon have the power to make concrete changes. Please come and share your voice! We want to hear from you.

Thursday, February 8 | 6:30–8:00pm
Friendship Missionary Baptist Church
1905 Florida St, Vallejo, CA 94590

To register, go to www.tinyurl.com/Feb8CG

LOOKING BACK... LIVING FORWARD - Jon Mezzera

Did you know that our Sunday morning worship services started meeting at 10:30 am (instead of 11) in September of 1974? Do you know why we made this change? The answer is that for the first time in our history, we had formed an agreement to allow another church to meet in our building. Originally, First Christian Church, Vallejo and Liberty Baptist agreed to a 6 month trial to see how the partnership would go. That 6 months is now going on nearly 50 years! Over the years, we have had ministers “swap” places with Liberty Baptist’s ministers on special Sundays, held joint worship services, and invited them to dine with us at our Thanksgiving Dinner. They were also an early partner in the Global Holiday Faire. But, perhaps we haven’t been as strong in that partnership in the last few years? How will it be in the future?

The agreement with Liberty Baptist was not the first major ecumenical effort of FCCV, but the 1970s was definitely a time of expansion in these types of relationships, spearheaded by then Pastor Gary Weatherly. In 1969, a Catholic priest was invited to preach at FCCV for the first time. In 1970, we formed a partnership for a combined Sunday School with Community Congregational Church of Benicia. In 1971, the church joined the newly formed Vallejo chapter of the Consultation of Church Union which included 9 denominations. The purpose of the COCU according to Weatherly was to “reach across barriers which have separated us for hundreds of years.” In a past Looking Back... Living Forward, you read about the ecumenical Lunch-less Mondays program that started in 1976. These are just some examples of the ecumenical spirit of the 1970s, which has continued to this day.

Liberty Baptist isn’t alone among churches which have worshiped in our sanctuary. In 1983, the Filipino-American United Church of Christ started meeting in our building, an arrangement that continued until 1996 when the UCC church got a building of its own. Starting in the early 2000s, under the leadership of Pastor Judith Jones, we again began relationships with churches to use our building starting with St. Victor’s Community Catholic Church which formed a strong partnership with us. While St. Victor’s closed a few years ago, Iglesia Apostolica de la Fe en Cristo Jesus also used our sanctuary for the last several years until very recently. Another congregation which used our upstairs chapel has come and gone in that time too.

In addition to forming partnerships with these churches to use our building, our ecumenical efforts have continued in many forms including the Global Holiday Faire, our partnership with other churches in the Vallejo Hunger Walk, and our membership in Common Ground with several local non-profit organizations including many churches. Over the years, we have donated food to charities run by at least four other Vallejo churches. These and other efforts will continue into the future. As we look forward, what will these relationships look like? Will other congregations use our sanctuary? For one year, we formed “Churches of the Cure”, a team with one other church at the Vallejo/Benicia Relay for Life. Will we try to do that again? What other partnerships might we form? Whatever the answer is to these questions, I know ecumenism will remain a major part of who we are.

WHAT'S IN A (BIBLICAL) NAME? - David Mezzera

When we look at the names of the books in the bible, we notice that some are named for the supposed author (Isaiah, Luke, etc.), some are named for the intended audience (Colossians, Hebrews, etc.), and some are named for the principal character introduced in the book (Daniel, Jonah, etc.). Some of the books, interestingly, have a title that is also a common English noun in addition to being the book's name. Two examples of this are the very first two books of the Pentateuch (Old Testament): Genesis can also be the common English noun "genesis" which means the origin or mode of formation of something - and - Exodus can also be the common English noun "exodus," which means a mass departure of people, especially emigrants. Below is the beginning letter of twelve other books of the bible which also can be used as a common English noun in addition to its name as a biblical book. Can you determine each common noun? The answer appears elsewhere in the Living Word. Hint: these books are listed in the chronological order as they appear in the bible.

N _____ J _____ K _____ C _____ J _____ P _____
P _____ W _____ L _____ M _____ J _____
R _____

DO YOU HAIKU? - Suzanne Awalt

(125th Anniversary Edition)

Looking Back

Twelve decades plus five.
When was it that you arrived
and enlarged the quilt?

Location

From Virginia Street
To Indiana Corner
Vallejo our home

WHAT'S IN A (BIBLICAL) NAME? ANSWERS - David Mezzera

numbers **j**udges **k**ings **c**hronicles **j**ob (pronounced differently!) **p**salms

proverbs **w**isdom (not in all translations) **l**amentations. **m**ark **j**ohn (in the Navy)

revelation

MISSION ACTION GIFTS - Allison Mezzera

Our January Mission Action donation will go to Oxfam International. They are working with children and families on the ground in Gaza.

****What is Oxfam doing to help families and children in Gaza?****

(From the Oxfam Website) In the period following the beginning of hostilities in early October 2023, Oxfam has supported the distribution of cash, food, and hygiene items to people in Gaza. In early November 2023, Oxfam began providing food to people from Gaza who were working in the West Bank in October 2023 and have been unable to return home, serving three hot meals per day to more than 1,000 people in Ramallah and Jericho. Oxfam is in discussions with partners about mounting a more comprehensive humanitarian response in Gaza that will begin as soon as is safely possible and likely continue for two years.

If you want more information or would like to make a separate donation:

<https://www.oxfamamerica.org/explore/emergencies/gaza-and-israel-emergency-appeal/>

The February Mission Action Donation will go to Sister Song <https://www.sistersong.net/about-x2>. Sister Song is a reproductive justice coalition of indigenous women and women of color primarily in Atlanta and states where abortion rights and reproductive freedom are gone or on the brink of disappearing.

Sister Song's mission statement: "to strengthen and amplify the collective voices of indigenous women and women of color to achieve reproductive justice by eradicating reproductive oppression and securing human rights."

I first learned about Sister Song on a Podcast called, "The Defenders". It is all about people who fight and advocate for abortion rights and reproductive freedom in the aftermath of the overturning of Roe v Wade. I highly recommend it. You can listen most places where you can get podcasts, or <https://lemonadamedia.com/show/the-defenders/>

If you would like more info on the work of Sister Song or many others fighting this oppression, here is a link to resources. <https://lemonadamedia.com/the-defenders-resource-page/>



IN LOVING MEMORY

*Our
Unsheltered
Friends*



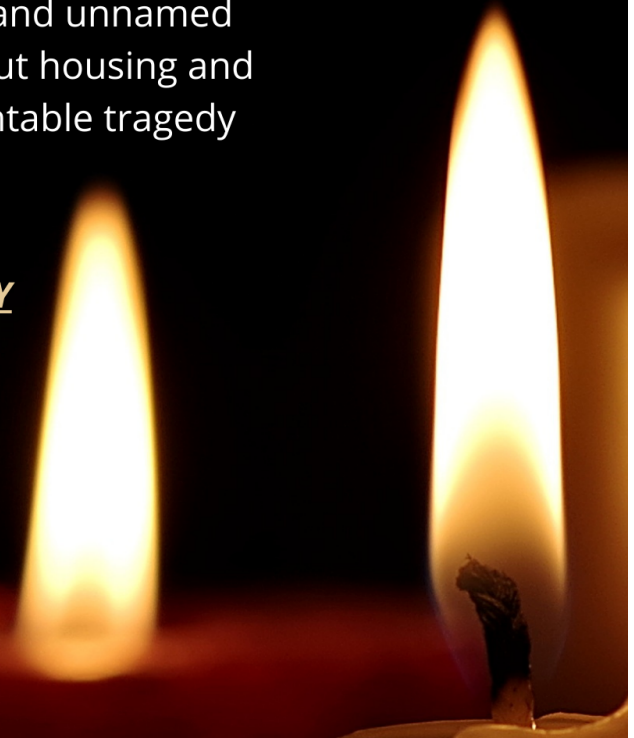
GONE BUT NOT FORGOTTEN

Join us to illuminate named and unnamed people who have died without housing and bring attention to the preventable tragedy of homeless deaths.

ANNUAL MEMORIAL CEREMONY

**Tues. Feb. 27, 2024
5:30 - 6:30 pm
City Hall - Civic Center Plaza
555 Santa Clara St.**

WWW.VALLEJOTOGETHER.ORG



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: 832 0489 1403

Passcode: 157093

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

February 3 - Worship Planning Retreat on Zoom. 10:00 am - 12:00 pm.

February 8 - Common Ground Accountability Action. Friendship Baptist Church, 6:30 pm.

February 9 - Elders meeting on Zoom, 5:00 pm.

February 11 - 125th Anniversary Committee meeting after worship.

February 16 - Admin Council meeting, 5:00 pm on Zoom.

February 17 - A Morning Walk. 10-11 am in the Fellowship Hall.

February 21 - Ministry Council meeting, 5:00 pm on Zoom.

February 27 - Memorial at City Hall for those who were unhoused and passed away. 5:30 pm.

The deadline for the next Living Word is February 21
