

The Living Word

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COMMON GROUND UPDATE - ALLISON MEZZERA

This Wednesday, Common Ground Leaders met in our Sanctuary to talk together about our issue teams, our frustrations, our hopes, and our upcoming work.

Here are just a few things coming up:

- Accountability Action for City Council Candidates & Others - Tentative Date October 12th, 2022.
- During the Summer we will begin an Independent Donor Investment Campaign.
- Public Safety Team will have a study session for the Vallejo City Council which will be open to the public.
- Public Safety Team will have a meeting with all City Council candidates to teach them about our Civilian Oversight Ordinance.
- The Housing Team will continue to pressure Solano County to follow through with eviction protections.
- We are talking about having several neighborhood walks around the city in the fall.
- We will have house meetings and many many one on one conversations!

As you see, there is a lot happening in the life of Common Ground. As a dues paying member institution, First Christian Church is an owner of this organization and that means we have a voice and we are building our own power. Remember even if you do not attend a meeting, you can take ownership of this work! You should feel proud about what we are accomplishing.

As always, if anyone is interested in discussing more about Common Ground and our work, please do not hesitate to reach out!

A MESSAGE FROM MARTY

Greetings, Church!

I want to express my appreciation for your warm welcome and hospitality. I am grateful for those who gather in the sanctuary and on zoom to be a community in worship on Sunday mornings. I have also been blessed by sharing in meeting times with church leaders. There is such a deep love among you for one another and the world. It shows in your care for each other as you listen and pray and offer support in the joys and sorrows of life. It shows in how you reach out into the community and find ways to serve and love and challenge. I look forward to being with you for the next 3 Sundays!

My heart is also heavy today in the delivery of the final ruling of the Supreme Court to overturn Roe v. Wade. I can hardly find words to express the depth of my grief and anger in the denial of a woman's right to choose and have authority over her own body. I know we will join our hearts in prayer for God's healing and grace and Spirit to fill us with a passion for justice and hope. I tuned into a worship service this afternoon led by UCC national leaders. Rev. Traci Blackmon reminded us that we have been in this kind of place many times and God has been with us in every moment and is with us now. There is a time for lament and there is also a time to get back to work on the ways of justice. God is with us and God will use us to be partners together in creating a just and compassionate world. In that I can find hope.

Blessings and Peace, Pastor Marty

VALLEJO TOGETHER HAPPENINGS - Allison Mezzera

We have met with Vallejo Together regarding the Memorandum of Understanding and now all they need is to make some final adjustments to the dates. Once that is complete, we will sign it and begin our partnership with Vallejo Together! The hope is to have this completed by 7/1/22.

See below for some info on upcoming meetings with Vallejo Together!

Vallejo Together Interfaith Coalition on Homelessness

Monthly Meetings on the 3rd Saturdays from 9-10 am. The next meeting is on July 16. The next topic for that meeting is: Education & Awareness, Join us for Part 2 of the documentary "The Least of These"

•Zoom Meeting ID: 81741992347

Vallejo Homeless Roundtable Meetings (Biweekly on Mondays starting July 6th)

The next meeting is July 6th from 10-11 am.

•Zoom Meeting ID: 885 0372 2197 Passcode: vallejo

Note their new email address: VallejoTogether1@gmail.com

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)

MISSION ACTION UPDATES - Beth Grose

The Rainbow Community Center in Concord was selected to receive our June Mission Action gift. From their website, “Rainbow Community Center builds community, equity, & well-being among Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Questioning & Intersex (LGBTQIA+) people & our allies. Since 1995, we have been offering support & social opportunities to the LGBTQIA+ community & its allies.” While some of their programs are still curtailed due to COVID, they offer community mental health services, HIV education and prevention, Kind Hearts food pantry, youth and adult support programs, houseless transitional youth program, and senior programs. Learn more at <https://www.rainbowcc.org/>.



Our July gift will be going to Vallejo Together. Founded in 2010, Vallejo Together strives to lead and support the healthy development of our community working in collaboration with our partners in the areas of business, culture, education, faith, government and safety. FCCV continues to explore how we can work with Vallejo Together as one of their faith partners towards their mission of fostering change, awakening hope and offering opportunities to neighbors and families impacted by homelessness and related crises. Find out more about the work they do at <https://www.vallejotogethercommunity.org/>.

And mark your calendar for the annual American Cancer Society Relay For Life on August 6, at St. Patrick's track.

DON'T FORGET:

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

- Use www.goodsearch.com (instead of Google) for your internet searches.
- Start at www.goodshop.com or smile.amazon.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.

INDEPENDENCE DAY CHALLENGE - Dave Mezzera

If I were to say that most of the Founding Fathers who signed the Declaration of Independence were not Christians, would you say, “Dave, you’re out of your mind”?

Well, in general, the Founding Fathers were “deists” but not strongly “Christians.” They all believed in God but most attended church irregularly. None that I researched were strong believers in the Divinity of Jesus as the Son of God. They lived in a time where the Church of England was the state-established religion, so they did clearly feel that God had a role to play in the founding of our nation.

George Washington and Benjamin Franklin most often attended Christ Church, an Anglican Parish, in Philadelphia, PA, which, after the Revolutionary War, broke away from the Church of England and declared itself an Episcopal Church. John and Abigail Adams attended United First Parish Church, a Puritan Church in Quincy, MA. Alexander Hamilton from New York attended the Anglican Trinity Church in Manhattan. And Thomas Jefferson (remember he was a slave owner!), apparently did not believe in the doctrine of the Trinity [see below about the Declaration]. After the Revolutionary War, he attended church infrequently at Monticello, VA, at St. Anne’s Episcopal Church. John Hancock, who was a life-long member of Brattle Street Congregational Church in Braintree, MA, frequently mentioned God in his writings, praising and thanking God for his blessings. But again, the name of Jesus would never come up in his speeches or essays.

As for the Declaration of Independence, primarily penning by Jefferson, The word “God” appears once, the word “Creator” appears once, the term “Divine Providence” appears once, but the word “Jesus” does not appear. The document proclaims that we derive rights by the Creator, but that government derives its powers from the consent of the governed. It might be worth your while to do some reading and thinking about the distinction between being a “deist” and a “Christian,” especially on the 4th of July.

JOKE OF THE MONTH

What did pirates call Noah’s boat?

“The *arrrrrrk*.”

Mark Your Calendar

July 10 - Elders Meeting, after worship.

July 13 - Admin Council, 5:15 pm on Zoom. (tentative)

July 20 - Ministry Council, 5:30 pm on Zoom. (tentative)

July 31 - Church Potluck, after worship.

August 6 - American Cancer Society Relay for Life. Starts at 10 am at St. Patrick's track.

The deadline for the next Living Word is July 27
