

The Living Word

1035 Indiana St.
Vallejo CA 94590
707-643-7973



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

The Global Holiday Faire is Here!

By Jon Mezzera



“One Stop Shopping - Double Your Holiday Giving” is the slogan for the Ecumenical Global Holiday Faire. Usually, that one stop is the Fellowship Hall on the first Saturday of December. This year, we are doing things differently, and that one stop is our virtual marketplace at www.globalholidayfaire.org which is already up and running! Plus unlike our first 22 years, this year’s Faire will be going from October through December.

Visit the website now to shop at five non-profit organizations - SERRV International, Concern America, Global Mamas, Women’s Bean Project and Gifts for the Journey. You can find something for everyone on your list at these sites. And for the person who has everything? Think about an alternative gift through Heifer International or Arbor Day Foundation, which are also part of our marketplace. When you shop through any of them, your purchase helps someone in need - thus doubling your holiday giving. Plus, some of these organizations have given the Faire’s shoppers exclusive coupon codes which you can find on the website.

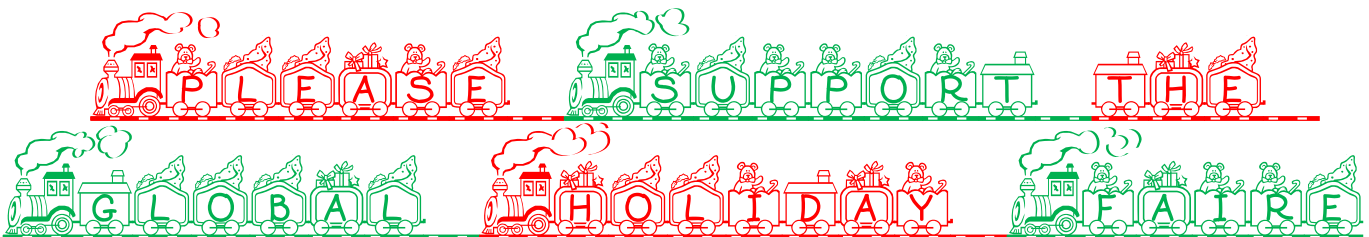
Every year, the Faire also supports several Vallejo charities. On the website, you will find information about them and ways to donate to them to help carry out their important work. On the site, you can also make a donation to the Faire itself. The money collected through

those donations will be split between the Amador St. Hope Center, Genesis House and the dePaul Women’s Center (checks for donations can also be mailed to the church - just make sure you make the check out to First Christian Church and memo it Global Holiday Faire). In the past, if you have donated crafts, gift baskets or baked goods, please consider a financial donation this year. It will be greatly appreciated!

In addition to skipping Amazon in favor of our virtual marketplace, there are other ways you can shop to benefit the Faire. Like we do every year, we will be taking “pre-orders” for SERRV and Women’s Bean Project to place around November 1. If you would like to participate in these orders, you can visit their websites and write down anything you want to order (you can also get a physical copy of the SERRV catalog from Helen Mezzera). Once you know what you want from either or both of these organizations, send the order to Helen. For SERRV, she will need the item number and name (ie 95737 Peace on Earth Organic Dark Coffee). For Women’s Bean Project, she will just need the item name (ie 10 Bean Soup). By ordering through us instead of their websites, you will not have to pay shipping. That 10 Bean Soup costs \$5.95 plus \$9 for shipping. Some of you have done this in the past, but for some of you this new. If you have any questions about the process, please ask me or Helen and we can walk you through it. Keep in mind, that SERRV’s best seller at the Faire is individual Divine Chocolate bars. Through their website, you have to order cases of 10 bars. That may be good for some people, but if you only want a bar or two, you need to order through us. This is your only chance to get them!

Another way to help is to spread the word. Tell people about it. Post a link to the website on your social media. Email it out to everyone you know. There are people who can’t shop the Faire in person who now can participate for the first time. Soon, we will send out a flier which can be distributed electronically too, so keep an eye out for that. Getting the word out and encouraging as many people as possible to do their online holiday shopping through www.globalholidayfaire.org instead of commercial websites is key.

This is a totally new way of doing our Faire and we hope we can have a similar impact to last year when we raised over \$15,600. Look for more announcements about other ways that you can support the Faire in the upcoming weeks (and months). And again, if you have any questions, please don’t hesitate to ask.



Living Stones

“The principle of compassion lies at the heart of all religious, ethical and spiritual traditions, calling us always to treat all others as we wish to be treated ourselves. Compassion impels us to work tirelessly to alleviate the suffering of our fellow creatures, to dethrone ourselves from the centre of our world and put another there, and to honor the inviolable sanctity of every single human being, treating everybody, without exception, with absolute justice, equity and respect. It is also necessary in both public and private life to refrain consistently and empathically from inflicting pain. To act or speak violently out of spite, chauvinism or self-interest, to impoverish, exploit or deny basic rights to anybody, and to incite hatred by denigrating others - even our enemies - is a denial of our common humanity.”

—from *Twelve Steps to a Compassionate Life* by Karen Armstrong

We need more compassion—a deeper sense of our common humanity—in our lives, in our world, in all aspects of our society, and most especially in the principles and policies of those who seek to govern. This is a deeply spiritual concern—not only a political, economic, or social one. And yet, the intense anger I feel about the state of our country is almost blinding. My anger often eclipses the compassion I need personally and the compassion I want to give. ***How do I access that necessary, quenching reservoir of compassion? How might I pray—honestly and earnestly—and not lose heart?***

I recognize, in the great diversity of creation, God’s unfailing abundance and blessings, and I also recognize, within that diversity, my faithful responsibility and call to action. Perhaps compassion is the force that draws my prayer and action together. Perhaps compassion embodies the antidote to the intense intolerance, hatred, distrust, and extremism that has been stirred up this election season. Perhaps compassion holds the grace that can see us through. I believe this is possible.

This past week, I read an invitation from the Church historian Diana Butler Bass. There are now less than 40 days until the Nov. 3 election. And she invites us to consider this time like we would consider Lent—as a time devoted to prayer and practice. **Pray. Act. Every day for 40 days.**

She frames it like this: **1) Pray daily for some specific issue or candidate.** “Prayer takes many forms - I often think of Anne Lamott’s triad: help, thanks, wow. This is a time for all three sorts of prayers. Ask God for *help* if you are angry, afraid, despairing. Ask for help on behalf of others, intercede for specific issues and candidates. Honestly, the nation and the world are in a desperate state right now - don’t hesitate to pray “help, help, help” on behalf of yourself, for all those who are fearful and suffering, and for the healing of the planet. Find *gratitude* in the midst of it all - for truth tellers, activists, courageous voters, politicians who care about the common good, for those willing to take risks. For exhausted campaign workers, brave preachers, overworked parents. Say thank you to God, to the universe, to your friends and neighbors. Remember these words of Maya Angelou: ‘*Let gratitude be the pillow upon which you kneel to say your nightly prayer. And let faith be the bridge you build to overcome evil and welcome good.*’ Open yourself to *awe* - you’re going to need the “wow” of

birdsong and blue skies, of starry nights or laughing on zoom. Even now, especially now, praise is possible, and it is the song of life. Give yourself moments of wonder.”

2) Take action every day. “Donate money, make calls, vote early, write postcards, encourage others, go to a Zoom rally, distribute signs. Light candles. Join a protest or vigil (safely, of course). Help others understand new voting procedures. Volunteer if you are to assist at the polls. Post smart, reliable information and important news stories on social media. Correct rumors and gossip. Be loud. . . .

“Your prayers needn’t be dissertations or polished liturgies. Your actions needn’t be earth-shattering. Heartfelt, even wordless, prayers speak magic into the universe. Small actions add up, daily acts compound goodness.” Let us loose great, unadulterated compassion into this world!

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

SAVE THE DATE - October 5, 2020

Finding COMMON GROUND is hard work! Hard to set aside ingrained feelings, experiences and, well, prejudices about lots of things – but in this regard, what’s happened and is happening on our communities. Hard to listen and truly understand, be listened to and understood, so that implementing change does not become us vs. them (or them vs. us) but together making a difference. Hard to perhaps realize that finding solutions together is more than bringing attention to the matter(s); it is being at the table and part of the process.

You already know about our involvement in COMMON GROUND. You may know – but just in case a reminder – that there are three teams within CG that focus on these issues/concerns within our community. Safety. COVID19 response. Housing. They’re not separate issues/concern - just different pieces of a picture that wants the best for all of us. To build that picture takes, well, remember the first sentence? Hard work!

On October 5th COMMON GROUND will hold a Zoom event in which we will continue to build relationships and mutual accountability with city officials and with candidates for Mayor. You’ll hear stories on police reform, economic development and investment in schools and community programs. You’ll be updated on our COMMON GROUND agenda. Come. Listen. Participate with your Common Ground team: Allison Mezzera, Carl Cordes, Suzanne Awalt, Sara Morgado and Glenda Goode.

See y’all there. *Glenda*

Building Power Together



October 5, 2020 6 PM Via Zoom



**Monday, October 5,
2020**

6:00 pm – 7:30pm

You must register in Advance by clicking the Zoom link below. You’ll then receive an email with information to link you to the meeting

<https://zoom.us/meeting/register/tjckcOGtrTwsHNFM4OiefHYIWv4wPd-em9Fj>

WORSHIP NOTES

We have some wonderful worship celebrations coming up. And while we will continue to meet on Zoom at least until the end of the year, we hope you will make plans to join us! The church has never closed; we have only adapted to remain faithful and compassionate during this difficult pandemic time.

On Sunday, **October 4**, we will celebrate **World Communion Sunday**. *On this Sunday, we share communion with Christians around the world. We are one body! As part of this celebration, you are encouraged to bring beautiful foods with you to worship as communion elements that celebrate the diversity of our communities and the gifts of creation!*

On Sunday, **October 18**, we will honor our animal companions with an **Animal Blessing Service**. And since we will be on Zoom, we welcome the opportunity to have more of our animal companions with us in worship! *Please bring your favorite creatures with you so they can be celebrated and blessed!*

On Sunday, **October 25**, we will turn our attention to the spiritual issue of hunger as we lift up **Bread for the World Sunday**.

On Sunday, **November 1**, we will celebrate **All Saints Sunday**. *On this day, you are invited to bring photos and keepsakes that conjure memories of the saints in your life and/or in the life of the church. We will especially honor the life and memory of Wayne Caldwell, who we lost earlier this year.*

WORSHIP LEADER TRAINING

Following worship on **Sunday, Oct. 18**, you are invited to stay on Zoom for a **Worship Leader Training**. This training is for anyone wanting to learn what goes into being Worship Leader and/or for anyone wanting to explore new options for being Worship Leader on Zoom. Everyone is welcome! We look forward to inviting new voices into this leadership role!

ADVENT BEGINS SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 29

Can you believe that Advent is just around the corner—starting November 29?!

Our theme for Advent this year is “**Beholding the Stars**.” Together, we will once again prepare the way for Christ to be born and transform our world.

During the four weeks of Advent, we would like to feature poems, reflections, songs, and visual art created, read, and performed by YOU! Please start thinking of ways you can add beauty and meaning to our Advent theme. And let Christy know you have something in the works!

Week 1—Nov. 29— **Hope: Visualizing the Stars**

Week 2—Dec. 6— **Patience: Painting the Stars**

Week 3—Dec. 13— **Courage: Following the Stars**

Week 4—Dec. 20— **Peace: Praising the Stars**

Also, please mark your calendars now for the Blue Christmas Service, which will take place on the longest night of the year, Monday, December 21, at 6:00 p.m. on Zoom.

CROSS CHAT

The Elders-led Cross Chat scheduled for October 3rd was postponed due to bad air quality; it has been rescheduled for Saturday, October 10th at 9:30 AM in the Peace Garden, weather conditions permitting. This will be a time to nurture our spirits and simply be in community with one another. Bring your masks, bring a chair, bring your hearts wide open. Anticipated duration of the gathering is 45 minutes to an hour. Safety is our top priority! Only do what you are comfortable with. We will be socially distanced, masks on, and hope to see you at some point in coming months! Please let Carl Cordes know if you are planning to attend.

COMING SOON - An Experience of Gratitude!

Let's come together to talk and experience gratitude together. The practice of being grateful and expressing gratitude is known to prolong the human life. As we head into a season of unknown, I wanted to gather us together to learn, practice, talk about gratitude and ways that this practice can benefit us as well as others around us. I look forward to spending this time with you all. ~Shannon

Who: US!

When: October 21st @ 6:30pm

Where: ZOOM from the comfort of your own space

COVID-19, MASKS, AND PRISON MINISTRY

When I read about the number of deaths and covid-19 cases in jails and prisons, I found the article sad and depressing. It made me angry. Men and women in close quarters without sufficient protection isn't right. There is no acceptable excuse for ignoring any part of our population when it comes to trying to keep the corona virus from spreading and to keep people safe. I don't sew, I don't have a sewing machine, but I can buy fabric and would be happy to do so if anyone in our church would like to make masks that we could send to those incarcerated.

Also, we have all heard about families and children in detention centers not having protection. Another area of need. If you sew, and would enjoy a project making masks (there's a video on the computer that shows a simple and quick way), please let me know. We could team up--I'll donate material if you can make the masks. What an important gift to give this Holiday Season.

Helen

2020 MEN'S RETREAT

"I am My Brother's Keeper, Building Connection and Care in an Increasingly Divided World" Sign up now! October 23-25, 2020 are the dates of the VIRTUAL Disciples Men's Retreat! [Register here!](#)

GET OUT THE VOTE!

Are you looking for a way to help turn this country around...VOTE!
Feeling like you want to do more... VOTE!
Yes, it is important for *you* to vote, but it is almost more important to get 2 other people, or 4 other people, to vote! There are so many states where the vote is being suppressed and we can help. You could donate, phone bank, send texts, send postcards, be a poll worker, and so much more!

Here is a list of places to look for finding a way to volunteer:

<https://votesaveamerica.com/adopt-a-state/>

<https://www.mobilize.us/>

<https://www.whenweallvote.org/>

<https://metro->

[iaf.org/sites/default/files/info/GOTV%20for%20Metro%20IAF%20Affilites%20FINAL%2093020.pdf](https://www.iaf.org/sites/default/files/info/GOTV%20for%20Metro%20IAF%20Affilites%20FINAL%2093020.pdf)

<https://www.poorpeoplescampaign.org/voting/>

<https://postcardstovoters.org/>

There is only a month left and getting out the vote is more critical now than ever before, but I don't need to tell you that!! So just do it!!

Allison

COMMON GROUND VICTORY

Governor Newsom recently signed into law an expansion of the California Earned Income Tax Credit to include ALL Californians, regardless of immigration status. This decision will extend the credit, year after year, to over 2 million undocumented immigrants.

California IAF leaders have been organizing since March to find relief for immigrant workers who have been disproportionately impacted by the health and economic fallout of Covid-19.

"What we have been pressing for is justice for essential workers, not charity," said Fr. Arturo Corral, Pastor at Our Lady Queen of Angels Church in Los Angeles. "It cannot be disputed that immigrant workers are bearing the brunt of pandemic-related health risks in order to keep all our boats afloat. We could not provide food for our families without their labor. They pay billions in local and state taxes, and they contribute over 180 billion dollars to our economy. And they have been ruthlessly left out of federal relief."

"Governor Newsom's decision to include these taxpayers in the Cal EITC means that our state is finally beginning to recognize our immigrant workforce and to value their labor." *Fr. Arturo Corral*

On May 5, 2020, over [1,200 California IAF leaders convened on Zoom](#), along with 10 Bishops and 9 state legislators to press Governor Newsom to expand the Cal EITC. More than 1,000 faith and community leaders [signed on to a letter](#) in support of the expansion, and in the thick of budget negotiations organized hundreds of leaders to send letters to the Governor and to the top leadership of the senate and assembly.

Congratulations to all involved in this fight, including Common Ground!

[The Old School Organizers Who Got it Done on Zoom](#), *High Country News*

COMMON GROUND LISTENS TO POLICE STORIES

For the last two Mondays, some of the Common Ground constituents listened to our Vallejo Police including Chief Williams. These zoom meetings were not to complain or argue with the Police, they were designed to let the Police tell their stories and for us to tell ours. All in all the meetings were fruitful and enlightening.

Some of the comments made were: we would like to see justice for the victims, I like to talk to the people, we would like to see resolution and I feel disconnected when it doesn't happen, lack of officers...we really want to respond to all calls, there is lot of evil in the world, we will not give up, we want to know the community better, shared partnership.

These comments and more show Common Ground that we are on the right track for better policing in Vallejo. Plans are for more events like this one. The goal is to help reform the Police Department.

This will only happen when we work together. After all, we are all human.

MISSION ACTION GIFT

Our September donation is being sent to Helping Women Period. Helping Women Period is an organization that is part of the Alliance for Period Supplies. It works to provide menstrual supplies to homeless and low income people, which are often difficult for these populations to afford and are in short supply at shelters and other general organizations meant to help them.

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, October 4	World Communion Sunday
Wednesday, October 7	Zoom Administrative Council, 5:30 p.m.
Saturday, October 10	Cross Chat, 9:30 a.m. in the Peace Garden
Sunday, October 11	Zoom Elders' Meeting, following worship
Sunday, October 18	Animal Blessing Sunday Worship Leader Training, following worship
Wednesday, October 21	Zoom Ministry Council, 5:30 p.m.
October 23-25	CCNC-N Men's Retreat
Sunday, October 25	Bread for the World Sunday
Sunday, November 1	All Saints Sunday

*I slept and dreamt that life was joy.
I awoke and saw that life was service.
I acted and behold, service was joy.
- Rabindranath Tagore*