

The Living Word

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New Class Coming! - Helen Mezzera

There is no ED_CATION without "U":

Dear Friends:

"U" are invited to join me for an interesting exchange of ideas, thoughts, questions, feelings and knowledge as we explore the Bible, including scriptures, stories, myths, and miracles. We will be meeting hybrid style, both in church and on Zoom from 9:30 am to 10:15 am Sunday mornings. Those who wish to meet at church will meet in the Fellowship Hall; those who prefer to meet on Zoom will use the same Zoom link used for worship.

We are going to begin our study with scripture. Each week 3 people will be asked to bring to our study a scripture — a favorite, one that is troublesome, one that is difficult to understand or one that is challenging in some other way. It may be a scripture you think would be interesting to explore. There will be no time limit; we may get thru only one scripture in a week, or we may get through 2 or 3. But we will plan to have 2 or preferably 3 people prepared each week with a scripture. When Christy sends out the Zoom link each week, she will include the scripture citations, so that we can take a look at them ahead of time.

For our first class on September 5th, the congregation will all be gathering together on Zoom for worship, as well as Bible Study. Through our discussions and sharing of scriptures, we will hopefully gain new knowledge and insight which will help us to understand not only scripture but also ourselves more fully. When we have exhausted the scriptures we wish to discuss, we will move on to other stories in the Bible. If you have any questions, please get in touch with me. I am excited to get started — I look forward to hearing and seeing scripture through you.

I hope to see "U" in attendance!

LIVING STONES FROM CHRISTY

*No one / Swims / Alone:
An old rule / In the home / Where I
Grew up / Along the lake / Safety first.
No one / Swims alone / No matter
What their / Strength.
So here, / As well, / In azure seas
For those of us / Swimming / Through losses
In our lives, / No one /
Should / Swim / Alone.*

— “No One Swims Alone” by Judy Brown

For better or worse—and regardless of how alone you may feel at times—we are all in this together. This journey of life. This journey of faith. This journey through the time of pandemic. This journey through loss. This journey through hope and celebration. This journey through the mundane, everyday stuff we all go through. And we each come to this journey with different levels of strength, different levels of skill, different levels of ability and knowledge and training and insight. No matter whether we feel confident and competent enough to make it on our own, the poet’s advice is sound: “no one swims alone.” I have been astounded over the past few months as people who have been vaccinated for COVID-19 start to act like they are suddenly islands with no moral or social responsibility for others. They stop wearing masks altogether and stop physical distancing and stop taking other precautions. The reality is that the pandemic continues. And our moral and social responsibilities include being vaccinated AND continuing to care for the well-being of the whole—using whatever gifts and abilities we’ve been given. This includes recognizing our interconnectedness with those who are immunocompromised and unable to get the vaccine yet (primarily children). No one swims alone. We are all in this together! And the well-being of our entire communities depends on our recognizing it and living into it.

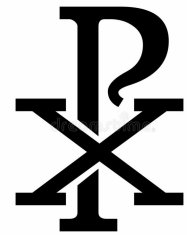
See you in church,
Christy

YOUTH MINISTRIES - NOT THE SAME OLD STORY! - Dave Mezzera

If you or a child or grandchild grew up within the Disciple's tradition, chances are you're familiar with the **Youth Ministries Program** of the Church. FCC-V is always kept apprised of **Youth Ministries** especially through Carl Cordes' updating us on CGC (Community of the Great Commission) events.

Are you aware that **Youth Ministries** has three distinct levels for youth participation? **CYF** (Christian Youth Fellowship) for high schoolers, **Chi Rho** for middle schoolers and **Juniors** for elementary schoolers. What was that middle one again? **Chi Rho**? Where did that name come from for the middle school program? As long as anyone at FCC-V can remember, that has been the name assigned to that age group. But why **Chi Rho**? What is a **Chi Rho**?

The figure to the right is called the **Chi Rho**, the two Greek capital letters that make up the symbol. Those two letters are the first letters in the Greek word **ΧΡΙΣΤΟΣ** (*Christos*) meaning Christ, with the symbol created by superimposing the two letters in such a way that the downward stroke of **Rho(P)** intersects the center of the **Chi(X)**. The **Rho** in English Print looks like a capital **P**, but in Greek text and sometimes in fancy designs, the top loop isn't actually closed as can be seen to the right.



Chi Rho is pronounced in Greek (as best we can determine) as "Kai (K-eye) Row," but some people Anglicize it and pronounce it "Key Row."

There is no mention of the **Chi Rho** symbol in the bible, but it gained popularity representing the name *Christos* during the time of Constantine in the fourth century AD and continues to be used today.



Legend has it that while Constantine was trying to conquer the whole of Europe and convert it into the Holy Roman Empire, he was seeking military victory by appealing to the God of the Christian faith. One day, Constantine is said to have had a vision of the cross in the sky and that night had a dream in which Christ Himself told him to use the *Christos* symbol as a protection in battle. Immediately, Constantine had banners made as shown to the left. Attached to a cross-shaped pole, in a golden wreath, he put the **Chi Rho** symbol. And the rest, as they say, is history: Constantine's army was victorious and he continued to use the **Chi Rho** symbol, even having it engraved on his army's armor and helmets. Coins and medallions minted during his reign also bore the **Chi Rho**, and during the fourth and fifth centuries, the **Chi Rho** was being emblazoned on burial tombs and on religious frescoes.

So our **Chi Rho** youth have a history as part of our Youth Ministries, and their moniker has a special history as well, going even further back in time.



Suzanne bringing order to the Peace Garden



Top left: Carol taming Yarrow (or mint or both)
Center: Cheryl wrestling with grass that will never go away. For the moment Cheryl won!

AND NOW...A MOMENT WITH CHERYL, CAROL, SUZANNE AND GLENDA.....
August 26, 2021



Sample of produce donated to the Christian Help Center, one of many donations shared with the Help Center and Faith Food Fridays.

Melons still maturing; green beans as well. Earlier donations included peppers, onions, yellow squash and, of course, tomatoes and a watermelon and tomatoes and potatoes and onions and, yes, tomatoes!!!!



From left to right:
Suzanne Cheryl Carol
Hot Tired Done
(not the first time nor the last for this crew!!)

Add a shout-out to Carl for his continuing hard work, to Jeanne for picking and delivering and to Jean King who continually helps to stock the pantry. **And** to all of you for all you do. Be well and safe. *Glenda*

HYBRID WORSHIP AND FIRST SUNDAYS ON ZOOM

We have successfully begun hybrid worship. This means that on Sunday mornings, 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 life-giving. And we welcome your comments and suggestions to make both formats better for everyone.

Also—*beginning September 5 and continuing on the first Sundays of each month—we will host worship entirely on Zoom for everyone.* There are three primary reasons for this adjustment: 1. We want everyone to be able to see and hear everyone else in our community. 2. We want to recognize that not everyone (primarily our kids) is currently able to be vaccinated and so are essentially excluded from onsite worship. And 3. We want to minimize our community's COVID exposure risk (even a bit—1 out of 4 Sundays) with the increasing surge of the Delta variant.

All worship services begin at 10:30. The instructions to connect through Zoom 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.

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.

WORSHIP PLANNING RETREAT - Christy Newton

On Saturday, September 11, 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 Advent. 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!

Mark Your Calendar

September 5 - Zoom Worship (1st Sunday of the month service only on Zoom).

September 5 - Adult Education resumes, 9:30 am.

September 8 - Admin Council, 5:15 pm on Zoom.

September 11 - Worship Planning Retreat, 10-12 on Zoom.

September 12 - Elders Meeting, following worship.

September 15 - Ministry Council, 5:30 pm on Zoom.

The deadline for the next Living Word is September 29
