



THE MESSENGER

CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF BELMONT

751 Alameda de las Pulgas, Belmont CA 94002 • 650-593-4547 • BelmontUCC@comcast.net • www.UCCBelmont.org



Mike Venturino took a congregational photo for the CCB website in the Sanctuary after church on Jan. 28.

Building a beloved community

By Kristi Denham

In 1999, when I first applied to be your pastor, this little church on the hill said you were looking for someone to “lead you into the 21st Century.” I loved that clear forward thinking and felt instantly drawn to you. Now we are well into this 21st Century and the challenges of building the Beloved Community to serve our fractured world continues to be our longing and our work.

What does it mean to be the church in times like these? Our denomination has made a lovely banner that lists some of the work we try to do together.

Knowing we are beloved by God and challenged to

see the sacred beauty in each person in our midst and beyond our doors are first steps. Practicing the implications of that awareness is the work:



Rev. Kristi Denham

- Staying present to the unique gifts we each can bring.
- Listening more.
- Doing justice.
- Facing our inner fears with compassion.
- Seeing the hurt and fear in others without turning away.
- Finding energy for service.
- Standing up.
- Speaking out.
- Honoring the diversity in our midst and beyond our doors.

See BUILDING, Page 2

February 2018

Liturgy Themes

Feb. 4 ~ Women’s Sunday

I Timothy 2:11-15; Proverbs 8:1-4, 22-31; John 16:12-15.

Feb. 11 ~ Evolution Sunday and Transfiguration Sunday;

2 Kings 2:1-12; Psalm 50:1-6; 2 Corinthians 4:3-6; Mark 9:2-9.

Feb. 14 ~ Ash Wednesday;

Joel 2:1-2, 12-17; Isaiah 58:1-12; Psalm 51:1-17; 2 Corinthians 5:20b-6:10; Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21.

Feb. 18~ First Sunday of Lent -

Journey with Job; Job 1-2; Psalm 25:1-10; I Peter 3:18-22; Mark 1:9-15

Feb. 25 ~ Second Sunday of Lent

– With Friends Like These; Job 2:11-13; Psalm 22:23-31; Romans 4:13-25; Mark 8:31-38

We are an Open and Affirming Congregation valuing everyone’s race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, age, class, physical and mental abilities.

Parish Personals . . .

Kirk Howard, Keith Howard's nephew, has died after being diagnosed with a rare heart disease that his grandfather died from some 33 years ago almost to the day. Prayers of comfort and strength for the family as they deal with this tragedy.

Lois Shouse developed a nasty case of vertigo but seems to be on the mend now. Healing prayers continue.

Bob and Belinda Sims continue to face his rapid decline with bone marrow cancer with remarkable grace. Belinda told me today that she asked for prayers for all of us who are praying for them right now. We hope their care and support, at so great a distance, continues to improve and that Bob is comfortable and Belinda gets some rest. May they know God's sustaining presence through this hard transition.

February Birthdays

- Feb. 2 Mike Venturino
- Feb. 5 Romeo Linares
- Feb. 6 Erika Mannie,
Alex Medwid
- Feb. 8 Belinda Sims
- Feb. 11 Michele Shirakura,
Gabriel Denham
- Feb. 12 Jane Fernald
- Feb. 13 Daniela Salgado,
Gunwoo Kim
- Feb. 14 Rose Whitmore
- Feb. 17 Paul Canavero
- Feb. 18 Katarina Canavero
- Feb. 21 Collin Lucette
- Feb. 22 John McKenzie
- Feb. 25 David Steinhauer
- Feb. 26 Andrew Altofer
- Feb. 27 Danielle Chamberlin
- Feb. 28 Elizabeth Nordt

Note: If you haven't told us your family birthdays, please let Pastor Kristi know so we can celebrate with you. Thanks!

Patty Ebner's Ordination Feb. 11

Our former minister-in-training, Patty Ebner, will be ordained to Christian ministry in the United Church of Christ on Feb. 11 at 2:30 p.m. Her home church, First Congregational Church of San Jose, 1980 E. Hamilton Ave., San Jose, CA 95125, will host the celebration, and we are invited. She has already moved to Bellevue, Wash., where she is serving as associate minister for congregational care and outreach.

Thank you from Home & Hope: Thank you for all the ways you support Home & Hope. Your check for \$2,140 and your willingness to help displaced families in our community weather the crises in their lives makes all the difference for them.

With your support we provided 50 families last year with a place to live, learn and feel safe. Your donation helps provide a safe haven for homeless families to regain long-term self-sufficiency. In California, over 22,000 families are experiencing homelessness, and about half of California's children

are living in or near poverty, often at risk of losing their homes. Warmly, **Meg Clark**, executive director

Thank you from Samaritan House: Thank you and all our friends at Congregational Church for your faith in our work! We will do wonderful things this year with your recent contribution of \$2,140.

As we all know, San Mateo County is one of the most expensive places to live in the country, yet thousands of our neighbors are financially struggling just to provide basic needs for their loved ones. Your donation brings them a step closer to self-sufficiency, dignity and hope.

Since 1974, Samaritan House has been San Mateo County's leading nonprofit that focuses on providing safety net services to thousands of families and individuals each year. Thank you for partnering with us to provide support care and hope to our neighbors in need.

Sincerely, **Bart A. Charlow**, chief executive officer.

BE THE CHURCH

Protect the environment. Care for the poor.

Forgive often. Reject racism.

Fight for the powerless.

Share earthly and spiritual resources.

Embrace diversity. Love God. Enjoy this life.

God is still speaking,
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Building

Continued from Page One

- Forgiving and receiving forgiveness.
- Trusting and being trustworthy.
- Praying together and alone.
- Attending to one another's griefs.
- Caring for the sick.
- Honoring the God of our understanding through worship, song and word.

We do all these things. And we struggle to learn to do them better.

This is a time of turmoil in our wider world. We come to church to be nurtured and sustained in facing that turmoil. But we also come with our inner struggles and need

to find strength to take care of each other, encourage each other and hang in there when times are tough.

Each of us is a sacred center of holiness. We probably don't feel like that a lot of the time, but it is still true. The world around us needs our quiet commitment to care, to prayer, to show up, to act on behalf of what is good and right as our hearts guide us. It is not always easy. It is almost never easy. But it is always worth the effort. As the poet Tagore says, and always bears repeating:

"I slept and dreamt that life was joy.
I awoke and saw that life was service.
I acted and behold, service was joy."

To go to the Congregational Church of Belmont web site, click on [CCB](#).



CCB joins Multifaith Coalition in MLK Day of Service, Song Fest

By Kristi Denham

The 6th Annual Peninsula Multifaith Coalition Martin Luther King Day of Service on Jan. 15 was another huge success. Elizabeth Mye and Wolfgang Roethig led one of three singing groups that practiced after breakfast and then sang at senior living centers around San Mateo County. Susan and Robin Linares lead a soup-making project that will provide nourishing meals for the hungry for months to come. At least 12 more members of our church helped with some of the 22 building, repair and food hosting projects that made up this year's events.

See additional pictures [here](#).

Mark your calendar for the PMC Multifaith Songfest on March 4, 3 p.m. at Peninsula Sinai Congregation in Foster City.

Once again, we'll gather to hear the music from our many faith partners on the Peninsula including the Buddhist Taiko Drummers, Hindu India Music, a multitude of choirs and cantors and chanters. Every year this event gets better as more folks discover the joy we can share across faith traditions through our many styles of music.

A reception will follow hosted by the synagogue. It will be kosher and delicious! (See flyer!)

To go to the Congregational Church of Belmont web site, click on [CCB](#).



Peninsula Multifaith Coalition
Presents our 5th Annual
MultiFaith Song Fest

Sunday, March 4, 2018, 3-5 p.m.
Peninsula Sinai Congregation
499 Boothbay Ave., Foster City, CA 94404



Shinnyo-en Buddhist Taiko Drummers at 2015 Song Fest

The Joy of Music Unites Us!

Bring your choirs, your cantor, your chants, your songs to share
and join us!

Contact Rev. Kristi Denham at revkristi@aol.com
or (650) 218-3126

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Rev. Kristi leads five of CCB's youth through their First Communion last December.

Search for new DCE is under way once more

By Elizabeth Nordt
Director of Christian Education

January offered our children a chance to get back to regular lessons downstairs after the excitement of the Christmas season. February will take teamwork to provide our kids with the programs we value.

This Sunday, Feb. 4, there will be no

Sunday School. It is Women's Sunday with a rich service planned by Kristi, Alyce, and Josette. All are welcome to stay in the Sanctuary. The nursery will be available to parents who need it, and younger children can begin to make Valentines with our child care staff.

I have been honored to work with our

children as the interim director of Christian education since September and hope that they (and you) have had a positive experience during that time. While there are many aspects of the job that I love, it has proved too difficult to balance it with my family and other obligations at this time in my life.

I have learned a great deal about our program, our families, and our church, in addition to my own spiritual growth during this time. I hope that I can share some of these lessons with those who follow me.

Kristi and I have been in conversation about my situation throughout the fall and the church continues the search for a permanent DCE. I am deeply saddened that I will not be able to continue in my current capacity until a new DCE is ready to start.

After the service on Feb. 4, all who are available are encouraged to join the Board of Christian Education in the parlor to discuss plans for the future.

Bring your calendars and ideas!

Women's Sunday, Evolution Sunday offer focused views on spirituality

By Kristi Denham

On Women's Sunday, Feb. 4, six women will share their thoughts and experiences on "What Equality Means to Me as a Woman."

Our young people helped to design the service and chose the music. The women in our choir have created beautiful special music for this exceptional service that reminds me of what a gift it is to be your pastor!

Evolution Sunday Feb. 11

Calling all scientists! Calling all spiritual explorers!

Every year, on the Sunday closest to

Darwin's birthday, we celebrate the wonder of our created world by learning more about the intersection of science with our faith.

How do you see your intellectual understanding of the world dovetailing with your faith?

We'd love to have you share your thoughts with us. Several of us are immersed in scientific study through our work. Some of us have abstract knowledge of mathematics and particle physics that others of us can only imagine.

See Pastor Kristi if you are willing to share your thoughts on this challenging and inspiring subject.

To go to the Congregational Church of Belmont web site, click on [CCB](#).

Confirmands will visit Hindu temple; youth program for teens in the works

By Kristi Denham

Our Confirmation Class will visit the Hindu Temple in San Bruno on Feb. 3 and then participate in Buddhist Meditation at a Sangha that meets at College Heights Church on Thursday, Feb. 8.

In March, April and May they will continue their study of Christianity so that by Pentecost Sunday, May 20, they will be ready to decide whether to become full members of this community of faith with all the privileges and responsibilities that implies.

But membership is only the beginning of our young people's Christian education. Beginning this summer and moving into the fall we are hoping to develop a full youth program. Several adults in our church have expressed an interest in helping us design a program that will engage our young people and allow them to draw their friends into the creative life of this community.

We'll begin by meeting with all interested youth and adults to explore what we can envision for a lively way to engage us all in activities that meet the needs of our children, youth and young adults. It is time! Let me know if you would like to be a part of the planning process!

View From the Pew Martin Luther King got it all wrong

By Gary Brandenburg

Martin Luther King said, "Capitalism has out lived its usefulness."

I'm afraid he was really a socialist. Too bad he never read the history of capitalism. If he had, he would have discovered that capitalism has created more wealth and more prosperity for more people than any other economic system in history.

Too bad MLK never looked into socialism in Cuba, Venezuela, U.S.S.R. and the early days of the U.S.A. All failures !

Exploring Job, facing shadow during five Sundays of Lent

Lent begins on Ash Wednesday, Feb. 14.

During the five Sundays of Lent (Feb. 18 through March 18) when we are encouraged to examine ourselves in order to deepen our relationship with the sacred, we will explore the Book of Job.

This profound work of poetry lifts up the problem of evil and suffering, asks hard questions, and gives us a mirror into our own questions and challenges in these difficult times.

Was Job really patient? Are we?

Do we respond with compassion or coldness to the suffering of others?

Does the God of our understanding pull the strings in our chaotic world?

How do we respond to the mystery of darkness in the midst of our longing for the light?

"Job is a good man, but not a wise one."

Hopefully, our explorations will help us not only to look inward with clarity but outward with compassion as we discover for ourselves what meaning we might find in this archetypal story.

30 years of ministry to Juvenile Hall marked

Our ministry with the youth at Hillcrest Juvenile Hall has been going on for 30 years thanks to the tireless efforts of First Congregational Church of Redwood City and our own congregation from time to time over the years. On Feb. 11 at 5 p.m. First Church Redwood City, 1155 Broadway #130, Redwood City, will celebrate those 30 years, and we are invited to attend.

Home & Hope dates set for Feb. 26 and 28

We are hosting the homeless through Home & Hope Homeless Shelter Network on Monday, Feb. 26 and Wednesday, Feb. 28, beginning with dinner at 6 p.m. through breakfast the following mornings when families are picked up or head off to school and work at 7 a.m. The Signup Genius should be available soon. Please let Pastor Kristi or Sarah T. know if you are interested

**Don't miss Annual Meeting
on Friday, Feb. 2
in the Dining Room.
Potluck at 6 p.m. and
meeting at 7 p.m.**

Email Rev. Kristi what you are planning to bring.

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February 2018

1 Thu	7:30P - 9P	<input type="checkbox"/> Church Events	Choir Rehearsal and Youth Group/DR and Fireplace Room
3 Sat	10A - 11:30A	<input type="checkbox"/> Off-site events	Confirmation Class to visit Hindu Temple in San Bruno
4 Sun	10:30A - 12:00P	<input type="checkbox"/> Worship	Women's Sunday Worship
	12P	<input type="checkbox"/> Church Events	BCE/Parlor
6 Tue	5:45P - 7P	<input type="checkbox"/> Off-site events	Visit Hillcrest Juvenile Hall
7 Wed	6P - 7:30P	<input type="checkbox"/> Church Events	Bible Study with Potluck dinner
8 Thu	7P - 9P	<input type="checkbox"/> Off-site events	Confirmation to visit Buddhist Sangha
	7:30P - 9P	<input type="checkbox"/> Church Events	Choir Rehearsal and Youth Group/DR and Fireplace Room
11 Sun	9A - 10A	<input type="checkbox"/> Church Events	Trustees
	10:30A - 12:00P	<input type="checkbox"/> Worship	Evolution Sunday Worship
	2:30P	<input type="checkbox"/> Off-site events	Patty Ebner's Ordination at First Congregational church of San Jose
	5P	<input type="checkbox"/> Off-site events	Celebration of Hillcrest Ministry at First Congregational church of Redwood City
	5P	<input type="checkbox"/> Off-site events	Celebration of 30 years of Hillcrest Ministry at Redwood City UCC
13 Tue	7P - 9P	<input type="checkbox"/> Off-site events	PMC at Peninsula Sinai Congregation
15 Thu	7:30P - 9P	<input type="checkbox"/> Church Events	Choir Rehearsal and Youth Group/DR and Fireplace Room
18 Sun	10:30A - 12:00P	<input type="checkbox"/> Worship	Worship - Lent I
19 Mon	7P - 9P	<input type="checkbox"/> Church Events	Council/Parlor
21 Wed	6P - 7:30P	<input type="checkbox"/> Church Events	Bible Study with Potluck dinner/parlor or upstairs
22 Thu	7:30P - 9P	<input type="checkbox"/> Church Events	Choir Rehearsal and Youth Group/DR and Fireplace Room
25 Sun	10:30A - 12:00P	<input type="checkbox"/> Worship	Worship - Lent II
26 Mon	6P	<input type="checkbox"/> Off-site events	Home and Hope hosting at Hope Lutheran Church
28 Wed	9A - 10:30A	<input type="checkbox"/> Church Events	Freedom Seder Planning Meeting/Parlor
	5:30P - 7P	<input type="checkbox"/> Off-site events	GGA Board at Pilgrim UCC
	6P	<input type="checkbox"/> Off-site events	Home and Hope hosting at Hope Lutheran Church

Jabulani Village in Zambia revisited

By Elizabeth Nordt

In 2015, we heard from Henry's cousin Ruth that the orphanage she and her husband founded in Zambia was in trouble.

They also started a lumber mill and furniture making business to create jobs and have the orphanage be self-sufficient. The mill was struggling due to problems with the government's management of its nearby tree farm.

Jabulani Children's Village was put up for sale, and the orphanage was facing closure. Ruth, her husband, Tom, and three adopted children were forced to leave Zam-

bia in 2016 and now live in Tom's homeland of Denmark.

CCB stepped up to help the children of Jabulani by providing funds to pay their school fees for the 2016 school year. As of December 2017, Jabulani had not been sold. It continues to struggle day by day under the capable leadership of Zambian, Mary Soneka, with sporadic donations from local businesses.

There are currently 25 children who make their home there. Their school fees for 2017 were not paid, which is making enrollment for 2018 impossible for several

of the children. Mrs. Soneka and a friend of hers are seeking a bank loan of \$400,000 to buy Jabulani.

We hold them in our prayers in this time of major transition and will do some research on school fees for this year to see if we can once again provide them with support.

The Board of Social Action will meet in February to discuss this and other opportunities to help the wider world. Contact Paul Anderson, Alyce T. or me if you are interested in learning more.

March Messenger deadline will be Monday, Feb. 26



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