

God, be with us as we do the work of the church!

Ways to Serve

Boards and Committees

The Church Council meets once a month, usually on the third Monday, to review the programs of the church, oversee the budget and staff requirements, and handle the overall governance of the church. The Moderator, Vice-Moderator, Clerk/Secretary, Members-at-Large, and Board Chairs each have a say and a vote in the ongoing work of the church. It is a great way to learn all about all the ways we serve the community.

Trustees meet once a month, usually on the second Sunday before services. They create a budget for Council and Congregational approval each year, manage the finances and the maintenance of our historic building. They make sure we use our funds wisely and monitor the practical needs of the church. A building maintenance coordinator, treasurer, auditor, and bookkeeper all report to this board.

The Board of Christian Education meets monthly, usually on the second Sunday of the month following services. Members of the board plan the various events our children participate in from special Sunday services to Vacation Bible School. Welcome Back Sunday, Children's Sabbath, the Advent Ornament Making Event, the Christmas Pageant and Palm Sunday services are in their hands. Anyone who loves our children and wants to ensure they grow up with the values we share is encouraged to join or just attend.

The Social Action Board meets as needed to decide how best to serve the needs of the wider community. They choose our Special Offerings and how to spend our Fundraising donations. They plan education programs about the needs of the wider world.

The Communications Board meets as needed and handles advertising, social media, our website and The Messenger.

The Board of Deacons meets usually quarterly, following worship, to ensure that the needs of the congregation and the basic running of our Sunday services and special events go smoothly. They help create the beauty in our sanctuary, oversee Communion, Altar Flowers, Music and our Ministries of Care.

Ministries of Care

Our Ministries of Care teams do much of the work of the church behind the scenes. We encourage everyone to pick at least one team to participate in throughout the year. It is a great way to do service to members and friends of the church in ways that come natural to us.

Altar Flowers Team

This team quietly makes sure we have beautiful flower arrangements on our altar each Sunday. They usually take one week a month, with one member doing fifth Sundays when they occur. You can sign up in the Altar Flowers Book to give the flowers in honor or memory of someone.

Food Team

This team delivers food to those who are ill or have a new baby or could just use some tender loving care that comes from a home cooked meal.

Prayer Chain

The Prayer Chain works behind the scenes to provide comfort and support to those who are in need of prayer. Requests are made to me directly or through sharing in worship on Sundays. The team is a source of great comfort and support to all of us even when we are unaware of their constant presence in the challenges and joys of our lives. When we say that we will pray for you, we mean it!

Transportation Team

If you need a ride to a doctor's appointment or to church or to the grocery store, this team is available. It does take time to confirm so if you are able to plan ahead, contact me and we'll find you a ride.

Visitors Team

Some of us love to visit those who are house bound or in the hospital. We do it naturally as a part of our caring. If you would like to be a part of the team, let me know. If you would like a visit, let me know!

Worship Team

Each week I send out an email to folks who have joined this team. I let them know on Monday what I will be focusing on the following Sunday in worship and ask them for suggestions of music, ways to approach the scripture lesson, ideas for structuring the service in a new or unique way. The single most significant indicator that a church is alive and thriving is how many folks are involved in worship creation. Between our choir and special music teams and the involvement provided by the worship team, we clearly are a very alive congregation.

Writing Team

The Writing Team provides cards and notes to celebrate birthdays, acknowledge losses and support recovery from illnesses through our prayers. The members of the team choose a month of responsibility and are provided with cards, stamps and return address labels so that they can reach out to our extended family with support. Thanks to each of you who helped to make this team work.

Sunday School Teachers Team

Teaching our children and providing "doorkeeper" support for our children is a way to have a powerful impact in the spiritual formation of our children. The curriculum is straight-forward and easy to use. The children love the opportunity to get to know new adults in the church, and you benefit by getting to know our amazing children. The key qualification is the capacity to love, which we all have. Teachers sign up to teach one lesson and do so as often or as rarely as

they want. We now have two classes defined by age (the younger children meet downstairs, the older youth class go to the parlor). Teachers work with the ages they feel most comfortable with. Everyone wins. There is always a need here for more help.

Music Ministry

Join the choir! We have an incredibly diverse music program. Our Choir Director, Elizabeth Mye, welcomes all voices, young and old, for the Sanctuary and Youth Choirs. Rehearsals are Thursday evenings from 7:30 to 9 p.m. Children have Youth Group with the pastor if they aren't practicing music. The joy of singing and of being together is contagious!

All-Church Fundraisers

Chocolate Fest All Church Fundraiser. Usually held the second weekend in October, this huge event requires significant hours in preparation, set up, staffing and follow up. We begin in the early spring to contact previous and potential vendors in hopes of getting their confirmation to attend and provide their product for the next event. Phone calls and follow up take time. Then there are the door prizes and raffle prizes to cultivate and collect. There is product to pick up. A boutique to create and a dining room to transform. Finally there is staffing during and clean up after to make this the amazing beloved community event that it is. Everyone can help in some small way but several folks contribute so much time and energy we wonder how they do it.

Family Fun Day. This fundraiser is usually held at the end of April. We take over every corner of our property to provide games and prizes, a bounce house, pony rides and a petting zoo. It is an all-day carnival for families with young children. A picnic-style lunch with healthy options is served in our Dining Room followed by bingo for all ages. All of us, including children, help with balloon animals, face painting, staffing games and more.

Community Outreach

Open Cathedral Lunches for the San Francisco Night Ministry are made on the fifth Sundays (in the month) before services. One of us picks up supplies, and many of us show up to make sandwiches, pack lunch bags with fruit, napkins, snacks and drinks.

Home and Hope Homeless Shelter Network at Hope Lutheran Church. Three to four times a year we provide staff and meals for two days when the shelter comes to Hope Lutheran Church on 42nd Avenue in San Mateo, just west of Alameda de las Pulgas. We usually serve on Monday and Wednesday evening by providing main dish, side dish, salad, dessert and rolls for the approximately 15 guests and volunteers. Two of us staff the evening meal and two more arrive at 9 p.m. to stay overnight until 7 a.m. when families head off to the day center in Burlingame or to school and jobs. Children are welcome to participate, and our families have the opportunity to serve and teach the values we share.

Family-to-Family Christmas Giving through Samaritan House. Each year we adopt four or five families (20 individuals) to provide a holiday meal and gifts. We bring in food donations and someone buys the food supplies that we need. We take requests from the families in

advance, and each of us chooses a couple of gifts to bring in before our distribution day the week before Christmas.

Peninsula Multifaith Coalition Martin Luther King Day of Service brings together more than 500 volunteers who do work projects, sing for seniors, make gifts, gather books for children, share a meal and celebrate their diversity as they work side by side to serve others in honor of our shared values. Building bridges of understanding is a key goal of the PMC. Our church has been involved in leading this event and encourages all of us to volunteer each January!

Opportunities to Give

Annual Stewardship Pledge. Each year in November, the Trustees begin to look at the financial prospects for the year ahead. What new programs do we want to pursue? Would we like to bring a minister-in-training into our midst to share his or her creative input with us and allow us to be the teaching and learning church we love to be? Can we hire or expand our staff? Can we give them a raise? Approximately half our income comes from building use, and those coordinators work long hours as volunteers to ensure we have these funds. Do we want to hire staff to cover this work? There are such basics as water and power to pay for as well. We look to all our members and friends to give generously so that we can live creatively into our future.

Special Offerings and Special Funds. Each month our Board of Social Action offers us envelopes in the pews for a variety of causes from national United Church of Christ requests, to disaster relief and local projects. In addition, we have several Special Funds within the church.

The Music Fund allows us to expand our music program as desired. Funds are used for maintaining our magnificent pipe organ, concert grand piano, hiring musicians for special music and purchasing additional sheet music when desired.

The Ray Gotthold Fund was founded in honor of a member who many years ago received help from our church because of a major medical need. His family donated seed money for a fund that now provides members in need with financial assistance. This confidential fund is supervised by the pastor.

Ways to Learn

Bible Study meets every other Wednesday evening or so at 6 p.m. for a potluck dinner followed by Scripture study from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. We have done a close reading of the entire Hebrew Scriptures and New Testament and are now using a workbook study series provided by the national United Church of Christ Resources that allows us to explore particular books and themes in greater detail. The discussion is always rich, and the relationship-building is a joy.

Adult Book Study, led by Paul Anderson, allows us to explore the Progressive Christian tradition, of which we are proud to be a part, in order to find ways to better express our faith and create a lively community that supports others and grows through engagement. Currently reading *Christianity for the Rest of Us*, by Diana Butler Bass, the group has also studied *The*

Underground Church, by Robin Meyers, *Breathing Under Water*, by Richard Rohr and others. We usually meet before services on Sunday morning. The discussion is lively, and our friendship and understandings grow.

Women's Spirituality Group usually meets once a month on a second or third Tuesday evening from 7:30 to 9 p.m. to share spiritual practice, deepen our friendships and grow our faith. We create sacred space, practice mindful listening, share from our hearts and maintain confidentiality as we explore the challenges in our lives and in our faith. We rotate leadership so that each of us has the opportunity to choose our topics and direct our discussion. Prayer and silence is a part of every session.

Teen Interfaith Leadership Council of San Mateo County, inspired by the work of the Peninsula Multifaith Coalition, was founded by teens from our church before they went off to college. It is a monthly gathering of teens who are excited about doing service and learning about other faiths as they grow their own. This year we are meeting on the first Sunday of each month from 6 to 7:30 p.m. at the Unitarian Universalists Church in San Mateo. Pastor Kristi is primary staff, but other youth group leaders participate. We have pizza, conversation about our faith and support the teens in developing their leadership skills. In the spring we did a presentation at the CSM Youth Leadership Conference on Interfaith Dialogue. Youth from Christian, Jewish, Muslim and Buddhist traditions participate.