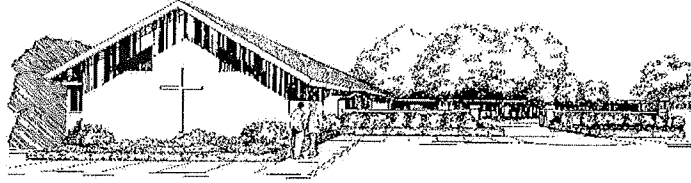


FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF SAN RAFAEL
April 26, 2026 10 am
Fourth Sunday of Easter
A service to honor Earth Day, 2026



Welcome to worship!

We are delighted that you chose to worship with us this morning. We hope you find a warm spirit of hospitality and a worship experience that strengthens your faith and discipleship. You are invited to stand, as you are able, when you see an * in the bulletin.

Centering Thought

“Humankind has not woven the web of life. We are but one thread within it. Whatever we do to the web, we do to ourselves. All things are bound together ... all things connect.” *Chief Seattle*

Centering Bell *On hearing the bell, please settle into a time of centering silence and listening to the Prelude with an open heart.*

Prelude

Welcome/Opening Words (A special welcome if you are joining us online)

Liturgist: "No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey..."

Congregation: "You are welcome here."

***Opening Litany**

One: Holy One, we knew we would find you in gardens.
We knew we would find you in water.

**All: We knew we would find you on mountaintops.
We knew we would find you in wilderness.**

One: But God, we never expected to find you in a marketplace.
...among women.
...at dinner parties.
...on a cross.

**All: We expected to find you in a tomb.
And we still struggle to believe we can find you in our midst.**

One: We still struggle to believe that the matter of this world really matters to you.
Still, you show up in your physical body with messy wounds to eat a real meal in the material world.

All: You show up in a world that is degraded and scarred by the same forces that scarred and degraded Jesus.

One: Make us healers as you heal us.
Bind us in creaturely solidarity with you and with all of creation.

All: Impel us to permeate the world with justice, equity, sustainability and hope. Join us in co-creating your kin-dom on earth as it is in heaven.

Amen.

***Opening Song Morning Has Broken** lyrics by Eleanor Farjeon; tune: Bunessan

Morning has broken like the first morning
Blackbird has spoken like the first bird
Praise for the singing, praise for the morning
Praise for them springing fresh from the world

Sweet the rain's new fall, sunlit from Heaven
Like the first dewfall on the first grass
Praise for the sweetness of the wet garden
Sprung in completeness where God's feet pass

Mine is the sunlight, mine is the morning
Born of the one light, Eden saw play
Praise with elation, praise every morning
God's recreation of the new day

Morning has broken like the first morning
Blackbird has spoken like the first bird
Praise for the singing, praise for the morning
Praise for them springing fresh from the world

Opening Prayer

For our earth and all of creation—we pray for changed hearts and minds in the care of our world and our universe. May each of us be good stewards diligent in our protection and defense of a healthy climate, clean and sustainable water, and diverse natural resources, protecting the need for a great variety of animal and plant species.

Let us all work together this Earth Day and every day to be able to pass along a healthier planet to future generations.

Amen.

Words of Assurance

People of God,

We pray that God will grant us the grace to grow deeper in our respect and care for creation. We call upon God to help us to recognize the sacredness of all of God's creation as signs of God's wondrous love. May we turn from the selfish consumption of resources and see the impact of our choices on the poor and vulnerable.

Amen

Give Me Love

George Harrison

B \flat B \flat ^A C-7 F

Give me love,

B \flat B \flat ^A C-7 F

— give me love,— give me peace on Earth.— Give me light

E \flat - F A \flat E \flat

— give me life,— show me all— I'm worth.— give me

B \flat B \flat ^A C-7 F

hope, help me cope— with this hea - vy load.— Try-ing to—

E \flat - F A \flat E \flat B \flat

— touch and reach— you_ with heart_ and soul._____

Reading: Revelation 21:1-6 and 22:1-2 (NIV)

Then I saw “a new heaven and a new earth,” for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea. I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, “Look! God’s dwelling place is now among the people, and he will dwell with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. ‘He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death’ or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away.”

He who was seated on the throne said, “I am making everything new!” Then he said, “Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true.” He said to me: “It is done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. To the thirsty I will give water without cost from the spring of the water of life.

Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, as clear as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb down the middle of the great street of the city. On each side of the river stood the tree of life, bearing twelve crops of fruit, yielding its fruit every month. And the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations.

Reading: Matthew 20:20-28 (NIV)

Then the mother of Zebedee’s sons came to Jesus with her sons and, kneeling down, asked a favor of him. “What is it you want?” he asked. She said, “Grant that one of these two sons of mine may sit at your right and the other at your left in your kingdom.”

“You don’t know what you are asking,” Jesus said to them. “Can you drink the cup I am going to drink?” “We can,” they answered. Jesus said to them, “You will indeed drink from my cup, but to sit at my right or left is not for me to grant. These places belong to those for whom they have been prepared by my Father.” When the ten heard about this, they were indignant with the two brothers. Jesus called them together and said, “You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them. Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be your slave— just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.”

Reading: From The Great Work by Passionist priest and self-described “Geologist,” Fr. Thomas Berry
“The Great Work now, as we move into a new millennium, is to carry out the transition from a period of human devastation of the Earth to a period when humans would be present to the planet in a mutually beneficial manner... Such a transition has no historical parallel since the geobiological transition that took place 67 million years ago when the period of the dinosaurs was terminated and a new biological age begun. So now we awaken to a period of extensive disarray in the biological structure and functioning of the planet.”

***Hymn of Preparation Blue Boat Home** lyrics by Peter Mayer; tune: Hyfrydol **page 8**

Sermon The New Heaven and the New Earth Rev. Lauren Van Ham – Eco-Chaplain and Spiritual Director

Quiet Reflection

Special Music As (Stevie Wonder) Robby Hill, vocals

Sharing Our Joys & Concerns

After each joy or concern, Pastor leads the congregation to respond “Lord, hear our prayer.”

Pastoral Prayer

The Lord’s Prayer

Our Creator (Father, Mother, God) who art in heaven, hallowed be your name. Your Kingdom come; your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For yours is the Kingdom, and the Power, and the Glory, forever. Amen.

Offering


Invitation to Generosity

Generosity is not just about money; it is about sharing the gift of life. Let us walk lightly on the earth with gentleness and love. Let us bring our gifts and our commitment to care for God’s creation

What Is Good

(What Does The Lord Require Of You?)

$\text{♩} = 88$



What does the Lord re-quire of you? What does the Lord re-quire of you? To act just - ly. To act just - ly. To love kind - ness. To love mer - cy. And to walk hum - bly with your God. And to walk hum - bly with your God.

WORDS: *Micah 6:8*
MUSIC: Gerry Grosz, ©2022 Gerry Grosz Music, All Rights Reserved

ACT JUSTLY
lrr.

Prayer of Dedication

Generous God, we pray that these gifts will bring glory to your name and bless your creation through good stewardship, Spirit-led discernment, and generous love.

Amen.

Announcements/ Life of the Church

***Sending Song De Colores (Traditional Latin American folk tune; words adapt. by David Arkin & Gerry Grosz)**

All the colors, yes the colors we see in the springtime with all of its flowers
All the colors, all the colors of birds who sing gaily through the morning hours
All the colors, as a rainbow appears when a storm cloud is touched by the sun
All the colors abound for the whole world around and for everyone under the sun (x2)

All the colors, yes, the colors of people parading on by with their banners
All the colors, yes, the colors of pennants and streamers and plumes and bandanas
All the colors, yes, the colors of people now taking their place in the sun
All the colors abound for the whole world around and for everyone under the sun (x2)

All the colors, yes, the black and the white and the red and the brown and the yellow
All the colors, all the colors of people who smile and shake hands and say "Hello!"
All the colors, yes, the colors of people who strive until freedom is won
All the colors abound for the whole world around and for everyone under the sun (x2)

***Benediction**

***Response**

And God will raise us up on eagles' wings,
bear us on the breath of dawn
make us to shine like the son,
and hold us in the palm of God's hand.

Postlude

Lauren is an ordained interfaith minister. Spiritual growth, art and Earth's teachings infuse her focus in eco-ministry and sacred activism. For 9 years, she served as a hospital chaplain, then served with a consulting firm where she custom-designed employee engagement programs for companies committed to sustainability and culture change. For more than a decade, Lauren was Dean at The Chaplaincy Institute. A spiritual director and guest faculty for several schools, Lauren is also a guest writer for "Progressing Spirit," a weekly exploration of theological and spiritually insightful responses to today's social and political challenges. Lauren serves as Earth Restoration Coordinator for the United Religions Initiative, a global grassroots interfaith organization and is co-founder of Project Adapt, the group that partners with the Marin Interfaith Council to host monthly, "Walks with Reverence," in Marin County.

Announcements

Bread for the World Offering of Letters, today

After worship, the Board of Mission invites you to participate in writing and sending an Offering of Letters. Working together with many other denominations across the country and with Bread for the World, we will write letters to our U.S. Representative and our U.S. Senators urging them to act to help end hunger at home and around the world. By taking part in Bread for the World's 2026 Offering of Letters, you will help support domestic nutrition programs like SNAP and WIC, as well as funding for critical international food assistance programs. Urge your senators and representatives to support healthy, equitable, and sustainable food systems. We will meet in the Community Room after worship, and all the materials you need will be provided, including sample letters and addresses. Please bring return address labels for the letters you send. Please join us!

Prayer Breakfast

First Congregational Church of San Rafael has once again purchased a table (seating for 8) at the MIC prayer breakfast on Wednesday, May 6 from 8 am -10 am. If you are interested in attending, please let Caran Cuneo (cwcuneo@comcast.net) or Pastor Elisabeth know by May 1st.

Meetings

Ministry- April 29 11:45 am

We are in need of liturgists, greeters, communion servers. If you are interested contact Amy in the office: office@fccsanrafael.org or call 415-479-2747

Pastoral Visit

Do you want a visit with Pastor Elisabeth? Call the church office 415-479-2747 or email: elismid@yahoo.com

Prayer Chain

E-mail Julie Dowling: isabella1472@comcast.net if you have a prayer request you would like included in the prayer chain

Remember your offering: Ways to give

*Paypal- You can make a one-time donation or set up regular monthly payments using a credit card or debit card. Just click the "Donate Now" button on our website or in each weekly email.

*set up automatic donations through your banking institution

*send your check to: FCC San Rafael: 8 North San Pedro Road, San Rafael, CA 94903

Be in the know! Sign up for our weekly email. Call Amy in the office 415-479-2747 or email office@fccsanrafael.org and leave your name and email.

Sunday Servers

April 26

Liturgist: Caryl Hodges

Altar: Caran Cuneo

Greeter:

Coffee: Lorene Jackson

May 3

Liturgist: David Knopf

Altar: Annie Song-Hill

Servers: Cathi Fuller, Megan Fuller

Greeter:

Coffee: Caryl Hodges

**FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
OF SAN RAFAEL**

8 North San Pedro Road
San Rafael, California 94903
Phone: 415-479-2747

Website: www.fccsanrafael.org
e-mail: office@fccsanrafael.org

Pastor: Rev. Elisabeth Middelberg
Music Director: Gerry Grosz
Office Manager: Amy Powers

Office hours:
Monday and Thursday 10:30 -2 pm

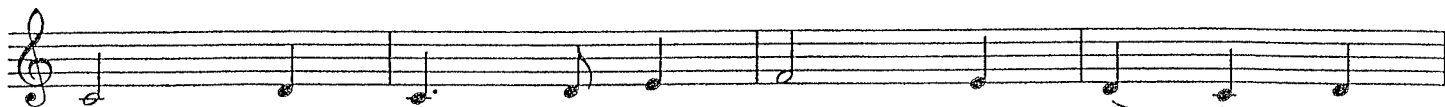
Blue Boat Home



1. Though be - low me, I feel no mo - tion,
2. Sun, my sail, _____ and moon, my rud - der,
3. I give thanks to the waves up - hold - ing me,



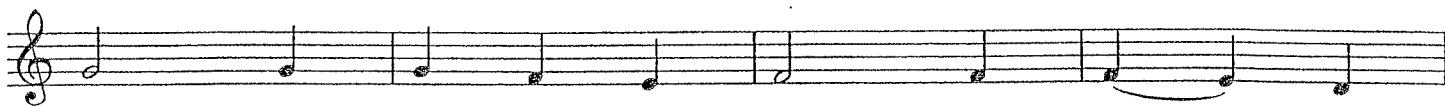
stand - ing on these moun - tains and plains.
as I ply the star - ry sea.
hail the great winds - urg - ing me on.



Far a - way from the roll - ing o - cean,
Lean - ing o - ver the edge in won - der,
Greet the in - fin - ite sea be - fore _____ me,



still my dry land heart _____ can say.
cast - ing ques - tions in - to the deep.
sing the sky, my sail - or's song.



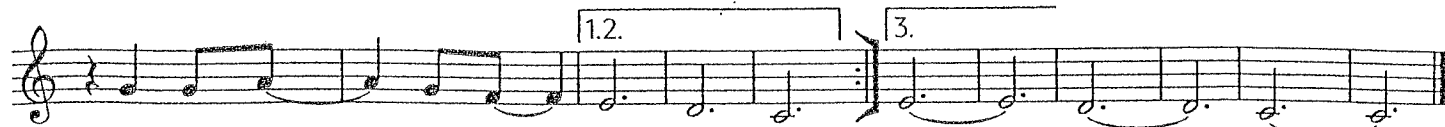
I've been sail - ing all my life _____ now,
Drift - ing here with my ship's com - pa - nions,
I was born _____ up - on the fath - oms,



nev - er har - bor or port have I _____ known. The
all we kin - dred pil - gram - souls. _____
nev - er har - bor or port have I _____ known. The



wide u - ni - verse _____ is the o - cean I trav - el, _____
Mak - ing our way _____ by the lights _____ of the heav - ens _____
wide u - ni - verse _____ is the o - cean I trav - el, _____



and the Earth _____ is my _____ blue boat home.
in our beau - ti - ful _____ blue boat home.
and the Earth _____ is my _____ blue _____ boat _____ home. _____