FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF SAN RAFAEL
June 21, 2026 10 am



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

"Today we honor all that have strengthened and nurtured us in love."

Centering Bell *On hearing the bell, 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, you have searched me and known me.
You know when I sit and when I rise.
All: You understand my thoughts from afar.
One: You search out my path and my lying down;
You are aware of all my ways.
All: Even before a word is on my tongue,
You know all about it, Source of all Love.
One: You gently hem me in behind and before.
All: You have laid Your hand upon me and called me Beloved.
Come, let us worship God.

***Opening Song Surely the Presence of the Lord**
Surely the presence of the Lord is in this place;
I can feel his mighty power and his grace.
I can hear the brush of angels' wings,
I can see glory on each face;
Surely the presence of the Lord is in this place.

Opening Prayer
Where can I go to escape Your Spirit? Where can I flee from Your presence?
If I ascend to the heavens, You are there; if I make my bed in Sheol, You are there.
If I rise on the wings of the dawn, if I settle by the farthest sea, even there Your hand will guide me; Your right hand will hold me fast. If I say, "Surely the darkness will hide me, and the light become night around me."

Words of Assurance
Even the darkness is not dark to You, but the night shines like the day, for darkness is as light to You. Your Love holds me close, in all the seasons of my life. Amen.

Song of Response



First Reading: Thomas Merton, *Conjectures of a Guilty Bystander*
'In Louisville, at the corner of Fourth and Walnut, in the center of the shopping district, I was suddenly overwhelmed with the realization that I loved all those people, that they were mine and I theirs, that we could not be alien to one another even though we were total strangers. It was like waking from a dream of separateness, of spurious self-isolation in a special world, the world of renunciation and supposed holiness… There is no way of telling people that they are all walking around shining like the sun. . . . Then it was as if I suddenly saw the secret beauty of their hearts, the depths of their hearts where neither sin nor desire nor self-knowledge can reach, the core of their reality, the person that each one is in God's eyes. If only they could all see themselves as they really are. If only we could see each other that way all the time. There would be no more war, no more hatred, no more cruelty, no more greed.'

Second Reading: Excerpts from Psalm 139
Ever-creating God: You formed my inmost being; You knit me together in my mother's womb. I praise You, for I am awesomely and wonderfully made.
Marvelous are Your works, and I know this very well.
My frame was not hidden from You when I was made in secret,
when I was woven together in the depths of the earth.
Your eyes saw my unformed body; all my days were written in Your book
and ordained for me before one of them came to be.
How precious to me are Your thoughts, O Living God, how vast is their sum!
If I were to count them, they would outnumber the grains of sand;
and when I awake, I am still with You.

*****Hymn of Preparation **Of the Parent's Heart Begotten verses 1&2 NCH #118**

Sermon "Searched us and Known"

Time to Light Candles in Honor of…..

Special Music All You Need Is Love (J. Lennon & P. McCartney, arr. by G. Grosz)

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 Kindom 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 Kindom, and the Power, and the Glory, forever. Amen.**

Invitation to Generosity
One: All are invited to give joyously to the church that bears witness to Christ's love.
All: Let us give with a joyful heart.
One: God's loving generous love has given us every good and gracious gift.
All: We offer our gratitude for God's abundant blessings in our lives.
One: Now, let us be a blessing to others in the ways that God has faithfully and generously blessed us.

Offering

Offering Song



Offering Prayer
God who lovingly embraces all Creation, we offer our gifts and our lives in your service. Open our hearts to you and all we encounter and for whom we pray this joyous day. **Amen.**

Announcements/ Life of the Church

***Sending Song How Can I Keep From Singing verses 1,2,4 NCH #476**

***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

Announcements

Meditative Garden Retreat - Saturday, June 27
Cathi Fuller and David Knopf will be hosting a half-day retreat in their garden on June 27, from 10 am until 1 pm. It will be a time to integrate the practices of prayer that will be introduced by Pastor Elisabeth in her sermon series in May and June.
All are welcome and encouraged to spend this quiet time together in the Knopf-Fuller's garden and to enjoy a brunch meal together at the close.

Elders Group – June 24
June elders remember a proud moment! (and perhaps one we'd rather forget)
Wednesday, June 24, 6:30 - 7:30 pm.

Pillow Sunday – June 28
The Board of Mission will be collecting pillows for Homeward Bound. This is something that has been so much a part of our congregation's commitment to outreach for many years. It brings joy, both to the givers and to receivers.
If shopping for pillows presents a hardship, please let a Mission Board member know. Thank you for your continued commitment to Homeward Bound's mission. Let's see how many pillows we can provide for beds and for weary heads to rest!

Join us for our Pride Celebration - June 28
We have secured one of the AIDS Quilts.

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
Do you have a prayer request you would like included in the prayer chain? Email Julie Dowling at isabella1472@comcast.net to be added.

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

Sunday Servers
June 21
Liturgist: David Knopf
Altar: Clara Miller
Greeter: Clara Miller
Coffee: Val Sherer, Lucinda Ray
June 28
Liturgist: Annie Song-Hill
Altar: Caryl Hodges
Greeter: Caryl Hodges
Coffee: Megan Fuller

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

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