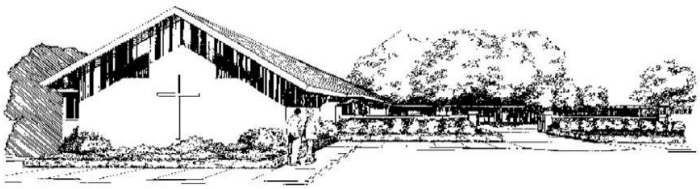
FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF SAN RAFAEL
June 14, 2026 10 am



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

"I found that this promise of freedom is only as strong as those who chose to uphold it".
Opal Lee (Campaigned to make Juneteenth a National Holiday)

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 (Adaptation of Lift every Voice and Sing)**

One: Celebration rises, up from the deep places,
finding voice in the light and air no longer denied.
All: Lift every voice and sing, sing till earth and heaven ring, ring with the harmonies of liberty.
One: Celebration rises, not blind to the suffering, not blind to the sorrow. Celebration comes at a cost.
All: **Stony the road we trod, bitter the chastening rod,**
felt in the days when hope unborn had died; yet with a steady beat have not our weary feet come to the place for which our parents sighed.
One: Celebration rises, remembering the way we have come,
the paths taken that have brought us here now to this place and time of celebration**.** Celebration rises, up and up, full of remembering.
Remembering the ones led to freedom by Harriet;
Remembering lives and freedom stolen
All: **We have come over a way that with tears has been watered;**
we have come treading our path through the blood of the slaughtered, out from the gloomy past till now we stand at last where the white gleam of our bright star is cast.
One: Celebration rises, recognizing what has been done and left undone,
knowing there is still and yet much to do, so much further to go.
Celebration rises, naming the victories, recognizing the challenges yet ahead. Celebration rises on voices offering unfinished praise.
All: Lest our feet stray from the places,
our God where we met thee;
lest our hearts drunk with the wine of the world we forget thee;
One: Celebration rises, resisting illusions,
to be embraced by the real and abiding presence of God who breaks our chains, and sets us free for freedom, in power and love and joy.
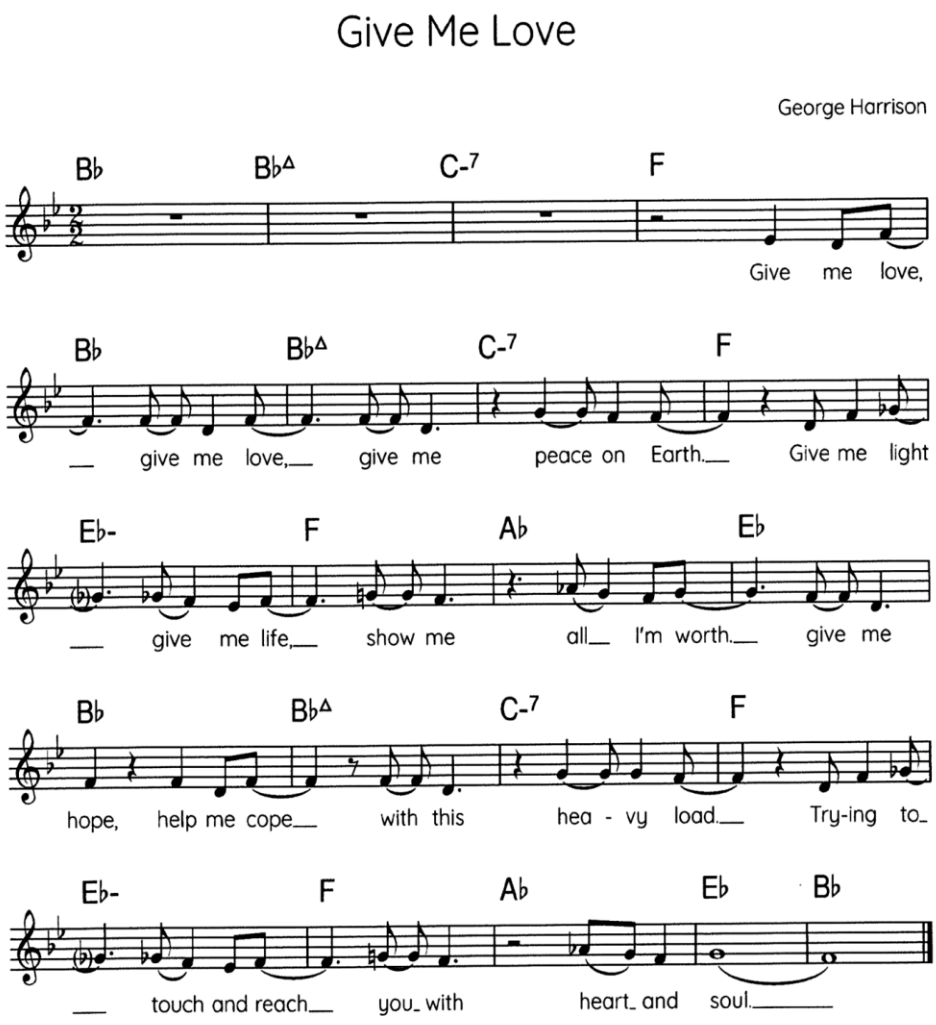
All: **God of our weary years, God of our silent tears**
thou who hast brought us thus far on our way;
thou who has by thy might led us into the light,
keep us forever in the path, we pray.

***Opening Song** **Now Is the Time Approaching – NCH 609**

Opening Prayer
Holy One, we gather on this Juneteenth to commemorate what has been, and to name, honestly, what remains undone. We remember those who did not live to see the news arrive, those who heard it and wept, those who heard it and danced, those who are still waiting.
Breathe into us the Spirit that anointed Jesus the Spirit that sees the poor, the prisoner, the blinded, the oppressed and send us, as you sent him, not merely to announce good news, but to *be* it, to *live* it, to *persist* in it until your freedom lands in every corner of every heart. Open our eyes this morning. Open our mouths. Open our hands. And keep our weary feet on the path. **Amen**

Words of Assurance
God's liberating love is not waiting for us to earn it, not waiting for the work to be finished, not waiting for us to stop wondering what to do. It meets us in the middle of the struggle, in the unfinished places, in the persistent hoping, in the stubborn refusal to let go of what we are called to do. We are held, called to live as free people and called to continue to find ways to set one another free.
Amen.

Song of Response



First Reading: Luke 4: 16-21

Jesus went to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, and on the Sabbath day he went into the synagogue, as was his custom. He stood up to read, [17] and the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was handed to him. Unrolling it, he found the place where it is written:

[18] "*The Spirit of the Lord is on me,*
because he has anointed me
to proclaim good news to the poor.
He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners
and recovery of sight for the blind,
to set the oppressed free,
[19] *to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor."*
[20] Then he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant and sat down. The eyes of everyone in the synagogue were fastened on him. [21] He began by saying to them, "Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing."

Audio - "Stand Up" *a tribute to the abolitionist Harriet Tubman. The lyrics capture the courage, determination, and resilience it took for Tubman to escape slavery and return to rescue others on the Underground Railroad. (Cynthia Erivo – Singer)* **(See page 6 for lyrics)**

Sermon **"**The Need to Persist"

Reflection

Special Music **Steal Away** (Traditional Spiritual, 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.**
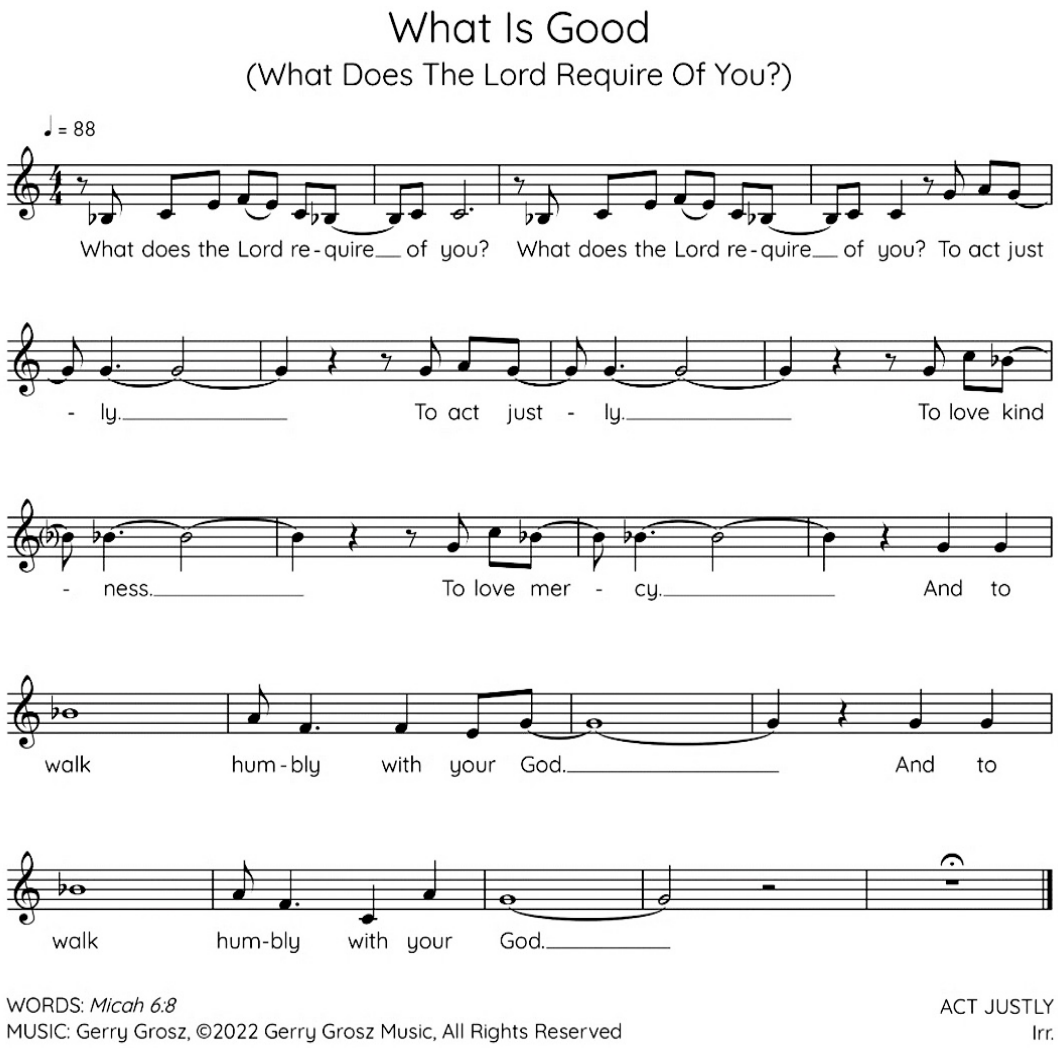
Hymn: There is a Balm in Gilead - NCH 553 vs 1,2

Invitation to Generosity

To heal that which has broken us and to pursue freedom from all that oppresses - this is the work of God and the work to which we are called as a community. In shared pursuit of this Sacred task, let us bring our gifts and offerings.

Offering

Offering Song



Offering Prayer
Gracious One, these are the gifts we have brought forth this morning. Will you weave them together with the gifts that spring forth from our hearts and from the many ways we respond to your call? May goodness and mercy ensue from this offering. **Amen.**

Announcements/ Life of the Church

***Sending Song Ain't Gonna Let Nobody Turn Me 'Round**

1. "Ain't gonna let nobody turn me 'round,
   turn me 'round, turn me 'round.
   Ain't gonna let nobody turn me 'round,
   I'm gonna keep on a-walkin',
   keep on a-talkin',
   marchin' on to freedom land.

2. Ain't gonna let false prophets turn me 'round
3. Ain't gonna let no silence turn me 'round
4. Ain't gonna let no weariness turn me 'round
5. Ain't gonna let nobody turn me 'round

***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

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.

Book Club - Thursday, June 18 at 7:30
The next meeting of the Book Club will be on Thursday, June 18, from 7:30 to 8:30 on Zoom. We will be reading *One Day, Everyone Will Have Always Have Been Against This,* by Omar El Akkad. This short book (187 pages) is available from both the Marin and Sonoma County libraries.

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

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

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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

Weekly email "What's Happening'
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
June 14
Liturgist: Caryl Hodges
Altar: Annie Song-Hill
Greeter:
Coffee: Cathy Krise, Julie Dowling

June 21
Liturgist: David Knopf
Altar: Clara Miller
Greeter: Clara Miller
Coffee:

Audio - “Stand Up” written by *Cynthia Erivo and Joshuah Brian Campbell*

I been walkin'
With my face turned to the sun
Weight on my shoulders
A bullet in my gun
Oh, I got eyes in the back of my head
Just in case I have to run
I do what I can when I can while I can for my people
While the clouds roll back and the stars fill the night

Chorus: That's when I'm gonna stand up
Take my people with me. Together we are going
To a brand new home
Far across the river
Can you hear freedom calling?
Calling me to answer
Gonna keep on keepin' on, I can feel it in my bones

Early in the mornin'
Before the sun begins to shine
We're gonna start movin'
Towards that separating line
I'm wadin' through muddy waters
You know I got a made up mind
And I don't mind if I lose any blood on the way to salvation
And I'll fight with the strength that I got until I die

Chorus:

And I know what's around the bend
Might be hard to face 'cause I'm alone
And I just might fail
But Lord knows I tried
Sure as stars fill up the sky

Chorus