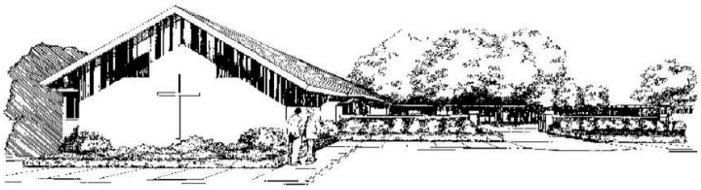
FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF SAN RAFAEL
August 23, 2026 10 am



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

"Real change, enduring change, happens one step at a time." *Ruth Bader Ginsburg*

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** - *Words by Sam Zeigler*

One: Let us pray for peace-
let us march for peace,
call out with voices united,
lift our hands and sing for peace-
cry out that the nations would rest,
the war machines be still.

All: Let us pray that we could become
the same peace that we shout for,
that the storms in our souls
would be quieted,
that we might embody
that for which we pray.

One: Let us pray for unity-
let us join hands with our neighbors,
united as we walk for justice,
we are liberated only
if we are human together,
strangers no longer.

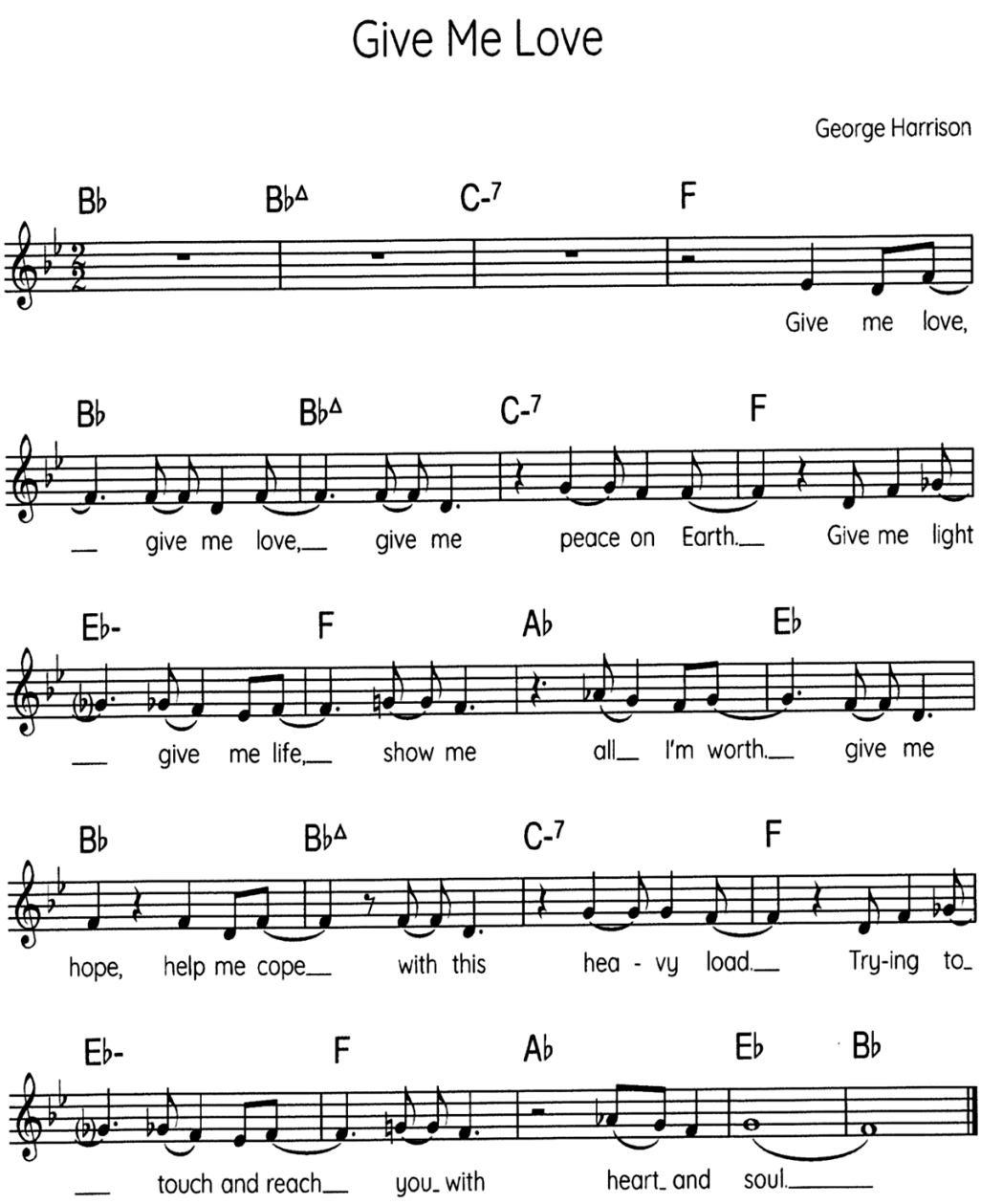
All: Let us pray that we would become,
the unity that we strive for,
that the injustices and injuries
clinging to our lives,
may be willfully and knowingly wiped away,
that we might embody,
that for which we pray.

***Opening Song We Gather Together – NCH 421**

Opening Prayer
Holy One,
We pray for justice, may we find ways to lift all voices together,
shouting for freedom and equity, till the way of the earth bends,
and all her people are free.
Let us pray that we would become, the justice that we yearn for,
that we might use our power to create spaces of safety,
for all to have voice,
and body, and power,
that we might embody,
that for which we pray.
Amen

Words of Assurance
Let us pray now for our prayers,
to lift as more than voices,
to create as more than words,
to live in full embodiment,
who we say we are,
who we pray to be.
Let us remake the world together.
Let us then be justice.
Let us then be united.
Let there then be peace.
Amen.

Song of Response



First Reading: Chronicles 34:1-7 (*The Message) King Josiah*

Josiah was eight years old when he became king. He ruled for thirty-one years in Jerusalem. He behaved well before God. He kept straight on the path blazed by his ancestor David, not one step to the left or right.
When he had been King for eight years—he was still only a teenager—he began to seek the God of David his ancestor. Four years later, the twelfth year of his reign, he set out to cleanse the neighborhood of sex-and-religion shrines and get rid of the sacred Asherah groves and the god and goddess figurines, whether carved or cast, from Judah. He wrecked the Baal shrines, tore down the altars connected with them, and scattered the debris and ashes over the graves of those who had worshipped at them. He burned the bones of the priests on the same altars they had used when alive. He scrubbed the place clean, Judah and Jerusalem, clean inside and out. The cleanup campaign ranged outward to the cities of Manasseh, Ephraim, Simeon, and the surrounding neighborhoods—as far north as Naphtali. Throughout Israel he demolished the altars and Asherah groves, pulverized the god and goddess figures, chopped up the neighborhood shrines into firewood. With Israel once more intact, he returned to Jerusalem.

Second Reading- "Still I Rise" - *Maya Angelou*

You may write me down in history
With your bitter, twisted lies,
You may trod me in the very dirt
But still, like dust, I'll rise.
Does my sassiness upset you?
Why are you beset with gloom?
'Cause I walk like I've got oil wells
Pumping in my living room.

Just like moons and like suns,
With the certainty of tides,
Just like hopes springing high,
Still I'll rise.

Did you want to see me broken?
Bowed head and lowered eyes?
Shoulders falling down like teardrops,
Weakened by my soulful cries?

Does my haughtiness offend you?
Don't you take it awful hard
'Cause I laugh like I've got gold mines
Diggin' in my own backyard.

You may shoot me with your words,
You may cut me with your eyes,
You may kill me with your hatefulness,
But still, like air, I'll rise.

Does my sexiness upset you?
Does it come as a surprise
That I dance like I've got diamonds
At the meeting of my thighs?

Out of the huts of history's shame
I rise
Up from a past that's rooted in pain
I rise
I'm a black ocean, leaping and wide,
Welling and swelling I bear in the tide.

Leaving behind nights of terror and fear
I rise
Into a daybreak that's wondrously clear
I rise
Bringing the gifts that my ancestors gave,
I am the dream and the hope of the slave.
I rise
I rise
I rise.

***Hymn of Preparation Lead Us From Death to Life – NCH 581**

Sermon "It's Who We Are"
Rev. Jess Shine – UCC Minster

Quiet Reflection

Special Music Humble Thyself (Bob Hudson; arr. 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.**

Offering

Invitation to Generosity
When we share our resources in community, we demonstrate our faith and trust in God's provision and in our collective discernment. When we give, we replicate the Holy One's generosity and creativity. When we offer ourselves, we magnify the blessings Creator has bestowed upon us. Let us give in a spirit of joy and hope for the kindom of God.

Offering Song What is Good



Offering Prayer
Gracious God, please receive these gifts for your glory, amplify them for your people, and replicate them for your kindom. May they meet the needs and hopes of the world and community in which we belong.
Amen.

Announcements/ Life of the Church

***Sending Song Sent Forth by God's Blessing – NCH 76**

***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

PILGRIM PARK Summer Picnic - Saturday, August 22 noon- 4 pm

Come join the fun on Saturday for delicious BBQ, games for the kids and lots of great energy with the residents, staff and Board of Directors at Pilgrim Park. The picnic takes place in and around the DeHaan Community Center!

Diaper Donations

We've been asked by Marin Interfaith Council to collect donations of disposable diapers needed by our community. There is a need for sizes 3, 4 and 5. Donation box will be in the narthex under the name badge table!

Upcoming Meetings

Board of Mission Wednesday, August 6 at 12:30 pm via Zoom

Donations

Thank you to everyone who supports the church financially. Your generosity allows us to maintain the building, pay our staff, and sustain the ministries that make this community possible. About 20% of every dollar donated goes right back out to support organizations in the wider community.

If you give through the offering plate on Sundays, consider using the envelopes available at the welcome table. This lets us track your contributions and send you a year-end giving statement for tax purposes.

SEPTEMBER BOOK CLUB

On Thursday, September 3 at 7:30 PM on Zoom, we will be reading ***The Place of Tides***, by James Rebanks***.*** It is available from both the Marin and Sonoma County libraries as a book, an e-book, and an audiobook.

Pastoral Visit

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

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

Sunday Servers

August 23:
Liturgist: Caryl Hodges
Altar: Jackie Dema
Greeter: Jackie Dema
Coffee: Elisabeth Middelberg

August 30
Liturgist: Caran Cuneo
Altar: Megan Fuller
Greeter:
Coffee: Kelly Anderson

September 6
Liturgist: Lucinda Ray
Altar: Cathi Fuller
Servers: Caryl Hodges, Caran Cuneo
Greeter: Ed Briggs
Coffee:

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

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