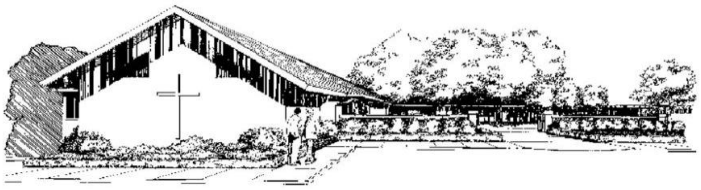
FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF SAN RAFAEL
September 6, 2026 10 am
Holy Communion



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

The Table of Hospitality requires that we question our own boundaries of "who is in" and "who is out."
It asks us to accept that the Spirit may move in surprising ways,
through surprising people,
and we might just miss out on the beauty and fullness of life
if we insist on limiting invitations to the feast

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."
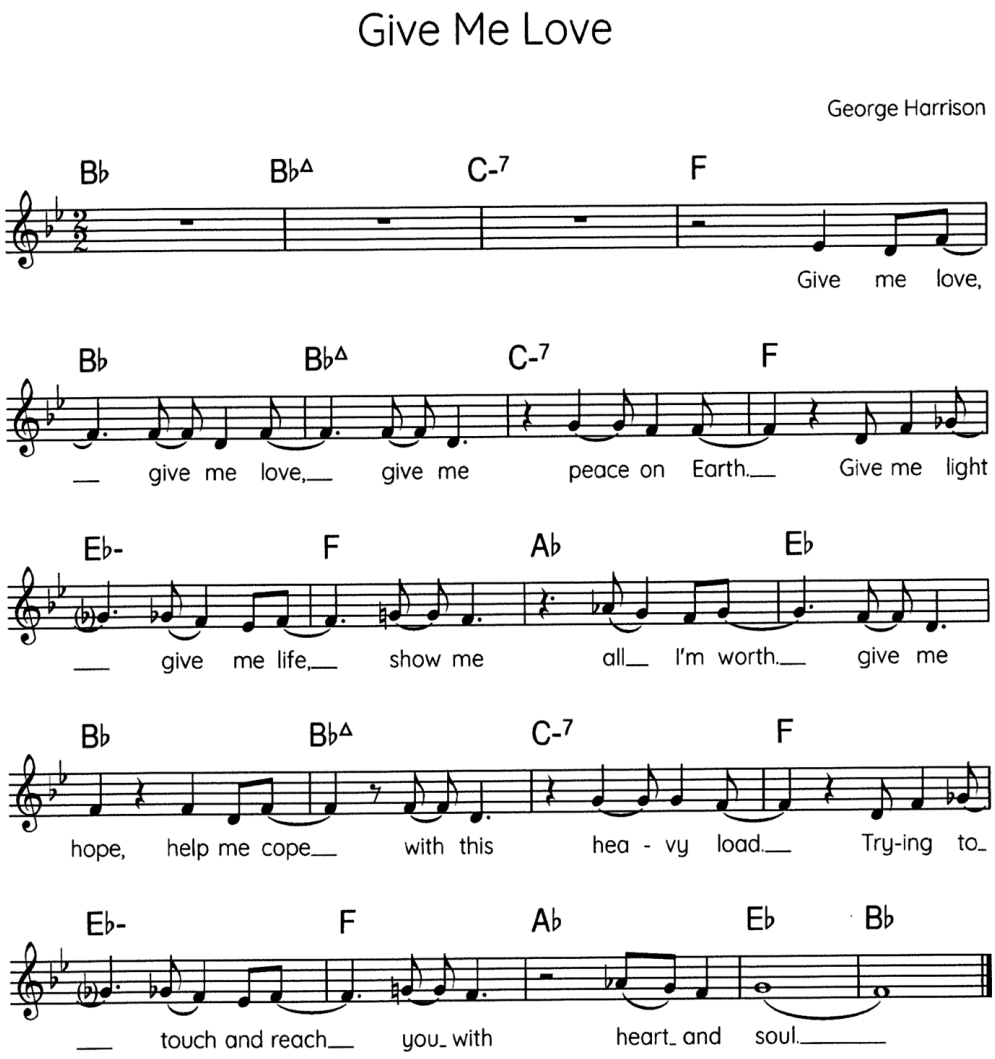
***Opening Litany**
One: Come and seek together the shalom of God.
All: Welcome the stranger.
One: Redistribute resources.
All: Tend needs and practice mutual care.
One: Abolish all that imprisons.
All: This is the way of Christ.
One: Let the old ways be left behind.
All: Love has come to free us.
Amen

***Opening Song Enter, Rejoice and Come In – NCH 73**

Opening Prayer
Spirit of God, Holy is your wisdom. You reveal all that has narrowed our imagination, confined our worldviews, and distorted our sense of what's possible. Come and help us create anew. Within and between us, nurture our creativity in the simple and serious work of love.
Amen.

Words of Assurance
People of God,
By the grace of God, we are drawn into shalom
We were strangers, and we have been welcomed.
We were guests, and we have been given a place at the table.
Generosity and mutuality are the inheritance of our faith.
Shalom is not a peace we keep to ourselves
it is a table we set for one another,
a door we leave open,
a welcome we extend
even to the parts of ourselves we thought unworthy of a seat.
The Spirit sends us with joy and with hope
to live into the shalom of love
to welcome as we have been welcomed,
to make room as room was made for us. **Amen.**

Song of Response



First Reading: Matthew 2:13-15
When they had gone, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream. “Get up,” he said, “take the child and his mother and escape to Egypt. Stay there until I tell you, for Herod is going to search for the child to kill him.”
So he got up, took the child and his mother during the night and left for Egypt, where he stayed until the death of Herod. And so was fulfilled what the Lord had said through the prophet: “Out of Egypt I called my son.”

Second Reading: Excerpts from Matthew 25:31-46

"Then Jesus will say: 'Come, you who are blessed by my God; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world. For I was hungry, and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty, and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.'

They will answer him, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you? When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?'

Hear this reply, 'Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.' And whatever you did not do for one of the least of these, you did not do for me.

***Hymn of Preparation For Everyone Born - Insert**

Sermon The Table of Hospitality

Quiet Reflection

Special Music

Sharing Our Joys & Concerns

After each joy or concern, Pastor leads the congregation to respond "Lord, hear our prayer."
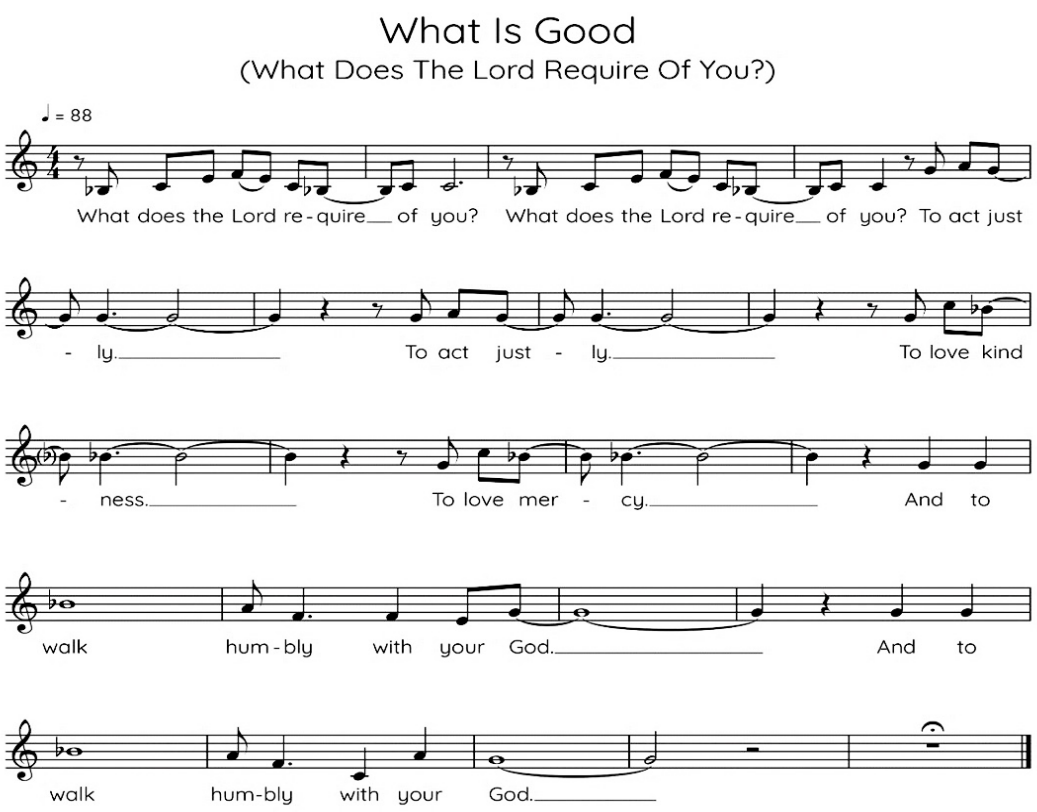
Pastoral Prayer

Offering

Invitation to Generosity

Whether material, relational, or spiritual, we all have an abundance of something the world needs. And likewise, we all have needs unmet. We live under systems and norms that dehumanize and isolate, but we have the power to care for each other. Come with your needs. Come with your offerings. In a spirit of collective mutuality, let us bring them to God.

Offering Song



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

ACT JUSTLY
Irr.

Offering Prayer
Spirit of Love, as we bring our offerings together we do so in acknowledgment of all that needs re-ordering in the world. We grieve the ways resources are hoarded and withheld. We pray that we may be delivered from any temptation to cling to what should be shared with our neighbors. Free us of the lies of individualism and move us ever deeper into solidarity with all life. **Amen.**

Communion
Holy Communion at FCC is served as "Pew Communion," meaning the elements will be brought to you. We serve non-alcoholic grape juice. Gluten-free rice crackers will also be offered.
Please hold the bread and cup until invited to eat or drink by the Pastor. We will eat and drink together.
For those that are live streaming with us from home on You Tube, you are invited to have any sort of bread or cracker along with wine, grape juice, or whatever you have available.

Gathering Song Come to the Table of Grace
Come to the Table of Grace
Come to the Table of Love
Come to the Table of Joy
Come to the Table of Peace

Great Thanksgiving
One: God be with you.
All: And also with you.
One: Let us lift up our hearts.
All: We lift them up to God.
One: Let us give thanks to our God who dwells with us so we can do God's work of justice and love in this good world.
All: It is right to give God our thanks and praise.

Words of Institution and Communion Prayer with Lord's 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 and ever. Amen.**

Sharing the Bread and Cup
Please hold the bread and cup until invited to eat by the Pastor. We will eat and drink together.

Communion Song Let Us Break Bread Together NCH #330

Announcements/ Life of the Church

Sending Song This is the Day of New Beginnings – NCH 417, vs 1,3 and 4

***Benediction**

***Shalom**
Shalom my friends, Shalom my friends,
Shalom, Shalom. We'll see you again,
We'll see you again, Shalom, Shalom.

Postlude

Announcements

Remember the Food Bank Barrel
Please continue to bring in non-perishable food items. Canned goods, chili, peanut butter, cereal, tuna and canned meat, rice, pasta are always welcome. No glass please.

Street Chaplaincy Dinner - September 8
Trustees Meeting - September 9, 7 pm

Worship assistants needed
We are currently in need of liturgists, communion servers, altar set-up, and greeters. Contact Amy in the office if you can help out. Instructions are given. office@fccsanrafael.org or 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

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

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.

Consider volunteering for Sunday duties. We are in need of liturgists, greeters, communion servers, and altar set-up. Instructions are given.

Sunday Servers

September 6
Liturgist: Lucinda Ray
Altar: Cathi Fuller
Servers: Caryl Hodges, Caran Cuneo
Greeter: Ed Briggs
Coffee: Brian Johnson & Frank Lindh

September 13:
Liturgist: David Knopf
Altar: Lucinda Ray
Greeter: Cathi Fuller
Coffee: Church luncheon after worship

September 20:
Liturgist: Caryl Hodges
Altar: Clara Miller
Greeter: Clara Miller
Coffee: Christopher Weddle