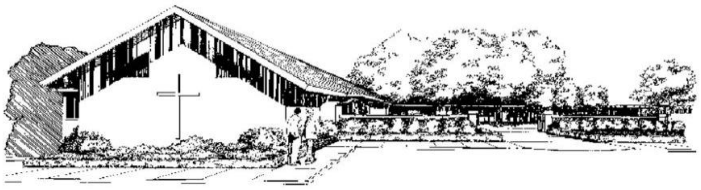
FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF SAN RAFAEL
August 2, 2026 10 am
Holy Communion



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
This is not
the age of information.
This is *not*
the age of information.
Forget the news,
and the radio,
and the blurred screen.
This is the time of loaves
and fishes.
People are hungry,
and one good word is bread
for a thousand.
David Whyte

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."
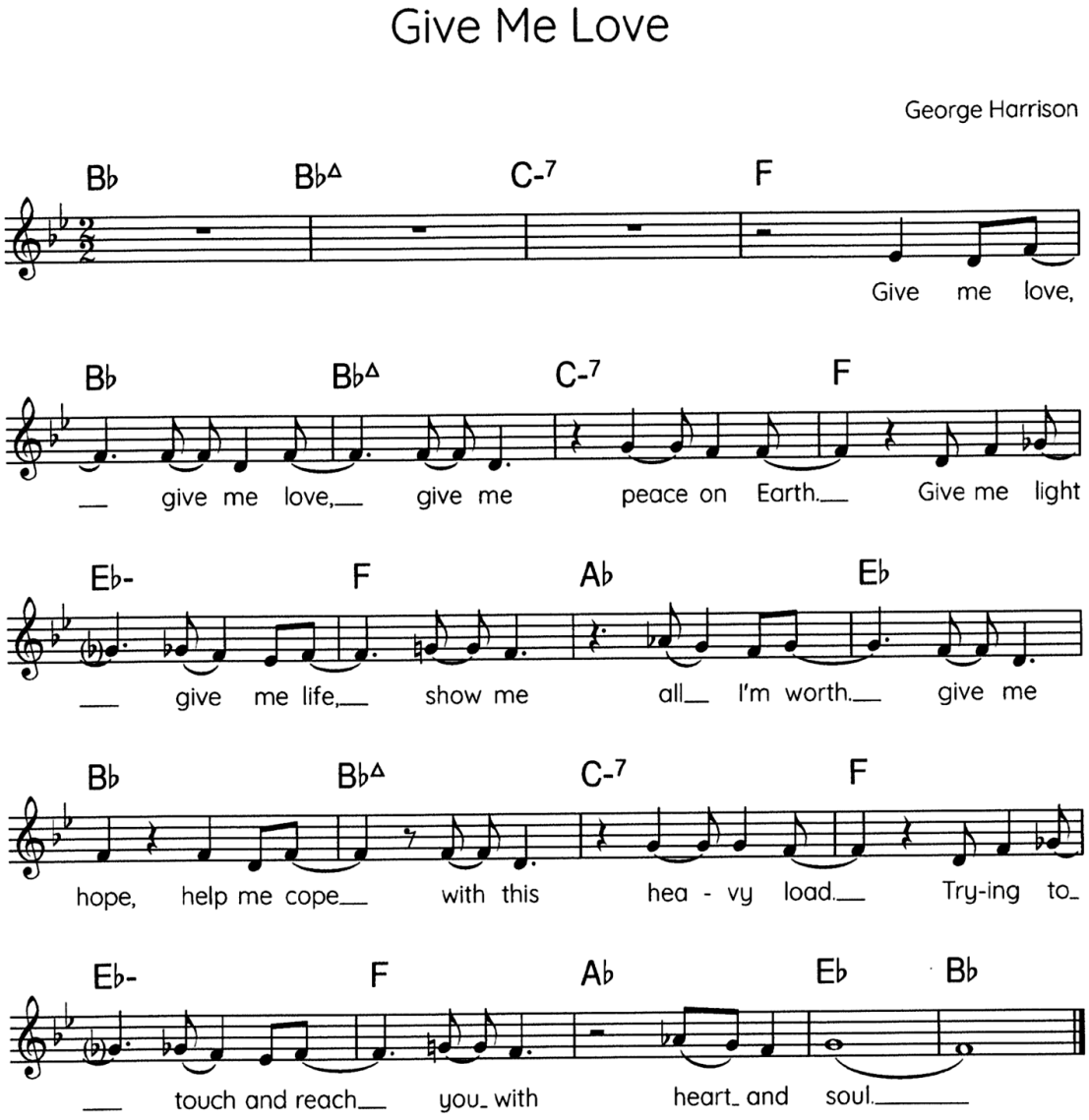
***Opening Litany**
One: What miracles of God might unfold among us?
All: We gather in shared hope and possibility
One: Concerned with exploitation of land and people
All: We are weary with empire's greed
One: In faith, we trust the Spirit is with us
All: There will be a breaking open
One: Let the people come together in solidarity of struggle
All: God will rise among us

***Opening Song We Cannot Own the Sunlit Sky** NCH #563

Opening Prayer
Holy Provider, though your abundance was meant for the flourishing of all life, your resources are hoarded among the few. Your people are worked to the bone. Left without healthcare or food. Abandoned to suffering in isolation and without homes. Do not let us be deceived by crumbs doled out by death-dealing systems. Teach us of economies built upon redistribution, rest, and repair. Teach us how to care for each other in these days of struggle.
Amen.

Words of Assurance
People of God, God lifts up the lowly and brings down thrones on high. May we be co-conspirators in this work of love Resisting the glorification of wealth
Humbling ourselves before the earth and its creatures Dreaming together of the world we might create anew. Know that God's Spirit will be our guide
Amen.

Song of Response



First Reading: Matthew 14:13-21 Jesus Feeds the Five Thousand

When Jesus heard what had happened, he withdrew by boat privately to a solitary place. Hearing of this, the crowds followed him on foot from the towns. When Jesus landed and saw a large crowd, he had compassion on them and healed their sick. As evening approached, the disciples came to him and said, "This is a remote place, and it's already getting late. Send the crowds away, so they can go to the villages and buy themselves some food." Jesus replied, "They do not need to go away. You give them something to eat." "We have here only five loaves of bread and two fish," they answered. "Bring them here to me," he said. And he directed the people to sit down on the grass. Taking the five loaves and the two fish and looking up to heaven, he gave thanks and broke the loaves. Then he gave them to the disciples, and the disciples gave them to the people. They all ate and were satisfied, and the disciples picked up twelve basketfuls of broken pieces that were left over. The number of those who ate was about five thousand men, besides women and children.

Second Reading: A Report from José Andrés on the work of the World Central Kitchen, 2025

From the start of this terrible war between Hamas and Israel, we have prioritized one thing, and one thing alone: to feed as many hungry people, as quickly as possible.
Our results speak for themselves: well over 100 million meals cooked and distributed in Gaza. Our goal is to cook and distribute one million hot meals a day across Gaza. That is around five times what we're cooking today, but it is possible, and it is vital.
When you see our teams at work, in the kitchens, warehouses, and bakeries in Gaza, you can see the best of humanity. Palestinians cooking for Palestinians, taking care of strangers, taking care of their community one plate at a time.
When you see the giant pots of food cooking in Deir al-Balah, when you taste the fresh pita bread rolling off our mobile bakeries, you get a sense of hope in the future. A sense that someone cares. With the scale of suffering in Gaza and Israel, it can sometimes feel like there is little room for compassion in the middle of so much grief.
But I heard time and again from Palestinians and Israelis who see the humanity in one another. At World Central Kitchen, we believe that our shared humanity begins by sharing a plate of food. I know you believe that, too. Thank you for understanding the power of food to change the world.

***Hymn of Preparation Here, O My Lord, I see You Face to Face** – NCH #336, vs 1-4

Sermon "Glimmers"

Quiet Reflection

Special Music All Who Hunger, Gather Gladly (Words by Sylvia Dunstan; Music by William Moore) **FCC Choir**
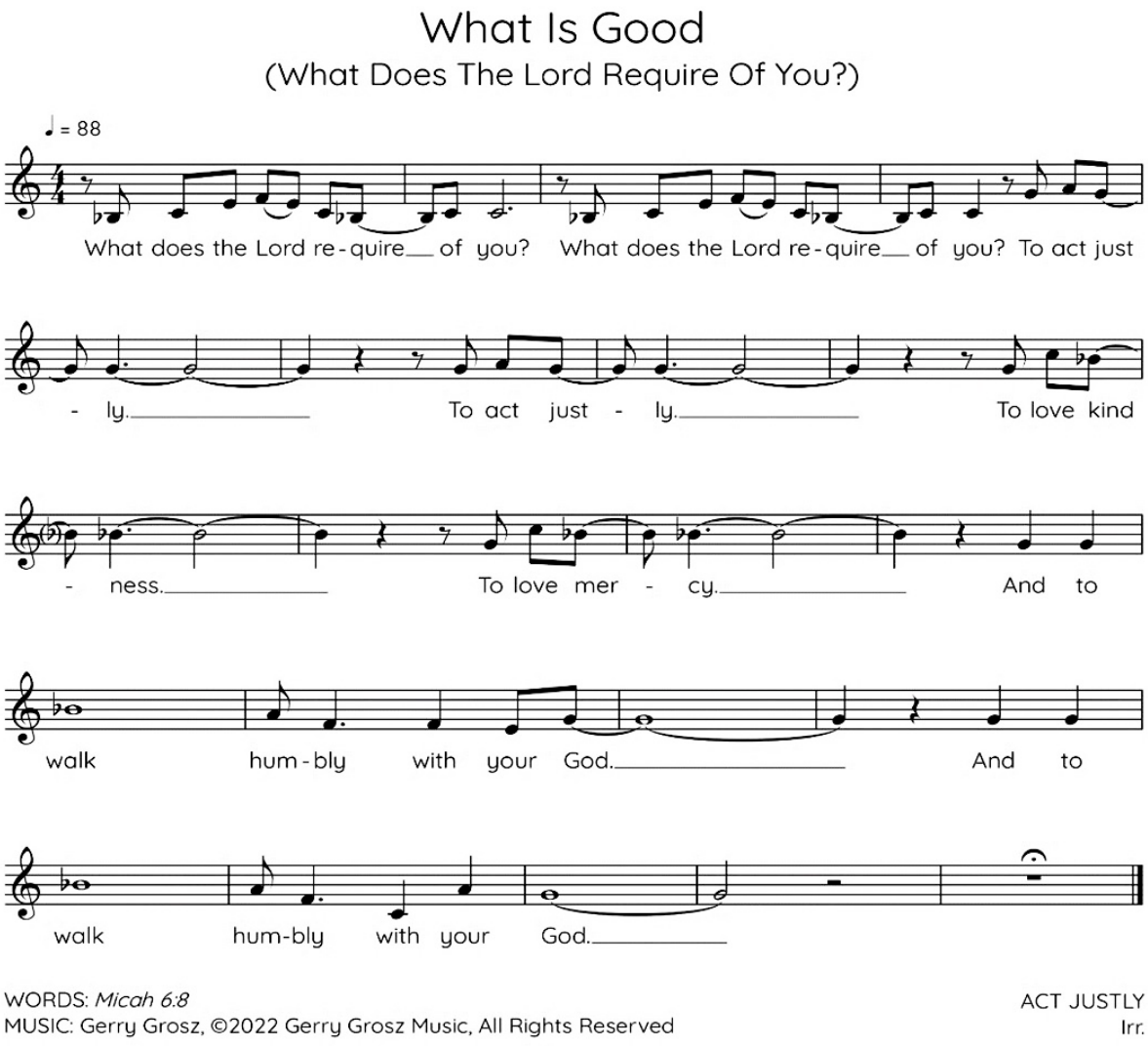
Sharing Our Joys & Concerns
After each joy or concern, Pastor leads the congregation to respond "Lord, hear our prayer."

Pastoral Prayer

Offering

Invitation to Generosity
When we come together, we remember that we are not powerless. That we get to choose - over and over again - how we will live as community. We do not have to replicate systems of evil. God grants us the power, the creativity, the agency to live out our values. In faith, let us bring our resources together.

Offering Song What Is Good



Offering Prayer
Surprising One, in times of difficulty you turn our attention back to community. You remind us of all that's possible when we look out for each other. May these offerings be delivered from barriers to caring freely for each other. Set-free from greed and excess. Set-free from ideas that turn us against the needs of others. That all your people may have food, safety, and belonging.
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 God Be With You** – NCH #81, vs 1,2,4

***Benediction**

***Shalom**

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

Postlude

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

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.

Trustees Meeting
August 6, 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.

August 16
The choir of Unity Church will sing

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.

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

Sunday Servers

August 2
Liturgist: David Knopf
Altar: Megan Fuller
Servers: Jackie Dema, Lucinda Ray
Greeter: Ed Briggs
Coffee: Jackie Dema

August 9
Liturgist: Caran Cuneo
Altar: Cathi Fuller
Greeter:
Coffee: Jackie Dema

August 16:
Liturgist: Lucinda Ray
Altar: Clara Miller
Greeter: Clara Miller
Coffee: David Knopf