FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF SAN RAFAEL
July 19, 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

When people or nations try to hoard blessings, they reduce God's abundant grace to a scarce commodity. This hoarding creates systemic poverty and cuts the hoarder off from the true source of life. *Walter Brueggemann*

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** ***A Prayer

One: Holy One, you move through our lives in unexpected ways.
Help us move in concert with your life-giving motion. Accept our thanks and praise for all the blessings of this life, especially for those blessings that our present circumstances make difficult to see.

All: God hear our prayer. Shed the light of your healing love on all who are sick in body, mind, or spirit, that they may find new wholeness illumined by your grace.

One: God hear our prayer. Knit together in your love all whose relationships have frayed, that they may find reconciliation and new beginnings.

All: Bless all who work to improve the health of others, that they may bring hope, care, wisdom, and skill to all they serve.

One: Grant all who turn to you the courage to participate with you in restoring this broken world to wholeness, that everyone and everything may share in the hope of your kingdom.

All: God, hear our prayer

***Opening Song All Are Welcome insert**

Opening Prayer by Joyce Rupp
Holy One, You so generously lavishes our lives with goodness, create in our hearts a deep center of gratitude, a center that grows so strong in its thanksgiving that sharing freely of our treasures becomes the norm and the pattern of our existence. Remind us often of how much you cherish us, of how abundantly you have offered gifts to us, especially in the hours of our greatest need. May we always be grateful for your reaching into our lives with surprises of joy, growth, and unearned love. May we share what we receive with one another and with this broken world.
Amen.

Words of Assurance

People of God,

Even when the days are heavy, God continues to persist in pursuit of all that is good and just.

When it feels as if our prayers go unheard and we cannot find God to our left or to our right, let not our hearts grow weary. Even when we may be pressed by fatigue, fear, or despair, continue to pray for the endurance to remain faithful. Until the day faithfulness springs from the ground and righteousness and peace rise to kiss.

God, our Provider, upholds us.

Amen.

Song of Response



Welcoming New Members

Reading: Genesis 28:10-19
Jacob's Dream at Bethel
Jacob left Beersheba and set out for Harran. When he reached a certain place, he stopped for the night because the sun had set. Taking one of the stones there, he put it under his head and lay down to sleep. He had a dream in which he saw a stairway resting on the earth, with its top reaching to heaven, and the angels of God were ascending and descending on it. There above it stood the Lord, and he said: "I am the Lord, the God of your father Abraham and the God of Isaac. I will give you and your descendants the land on which you are lying.

Your descendants will be like the dust of the earth, and you will spread out to the west and to the east, to the north and to the south. All peoples on earth will be blessed through you and your offspring. I am with you and will watch over you wherever you go, and I will bring you back to this land. I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised you."

When Jacob awoke from his sleep, he thought, "Surely the Lord is in this place, and I was not aware of it." He was afraid and said, "How awesome is this place! This is none other than the house of God; this is the gate of heaven." Early the next morning Jacob took the stone he had placed under his head and set it up as a pillar and poured oil on top of it. He called that place Bethel

***Hymn of Preparation I Was There to Hear Your Borning Cry - NCH 351**

Sermon - "Blessings given are blessings shared'

Surely the presence of our God is in this place
I can feel Your mighty power and Your grace
I can hear the brush of angels' wings
I see glory on each face
Surely the presence of our God is in this place

Quiet Reflection

Special Music When We Are Singing (Words by Kevin T. Padrowski)

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
God's gifts are generous and abundant. Give in the spirit of sufficiency and trust that God has provided for all of our needs. Our gifts enable us to share abundance so that all may feast and rejoice in God's creation.

Offering Song What is Good



Offering Prayer

Holy One, may these gifts reflect our trust in you and your provision. Magnify them for your purpose and grant us discernment to be caretakers of the resources entrusted to us.

Amen.

Announcements/ Life of the Church

***Sending Song "God Who Stretched the Spangled Heavens" NCH 556**

***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

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF SAN RAFAEL

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Website: www.fccsanrafael.org
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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

Announcements

Backpack Sunday, July 26
This is our annual gathering of school supplies for the Ritter Center kids. Please bring your donations to church on July 26; they will be distributed to the kids at Ritter Center in early August, because the school start dates are early.

Here's what is needed:
• New backpacks (boys and girls, high need for elementary school)
• Binders (small/large) and binder paper
• Tabbed dividers and zip pouches
• Pencils (#2/colored), pens, and erasers
• Glue sticks and index cards
• Rulers, staplers, and small scissors
• Markers, crayons, and highlighters
• Pocket folders and spiral one-subject notebooks
• Calculators (especially graphing calculators such as TI-83)
• Geometry drafting sets
There is always a GREAT NEED for department store gift cards and cash donations

Elders Group, Wednesday, July 29, at 6:30 on ZOOM

July Book Club
On Thursday, July 30 at 7:30 PM on Zoom, we will be reading ***The Housekeeper and the Professor***, by Yoko Ogawa**.** 191 pages. It is available from both the Marin and Sonoma County libraries as a book, an e-book, and an audiobook.

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

July 19
Liturgist: David Knopf
Altar: Caryl Hodges
Greeter: Caryl Hodges
Coffee: Caran Cuneo

July 26
Liturgist:
Altar: Cathi Fuller
Greeter: Caryl Hodges
Coffee: Jackie Dema