



UCC Petaluma

A Ministry of Hope | Open & Affirming
Servants of the Just & the Good.

Sun Jan 22, 2023

Web: www.uccpetaluma.org

Facebook: [UCC Petaluma](https://www.facebook.com/UCCPetaluma)

Email: uccpetaluma@gmail.com

*To Heal, Inspire and Empower in the Way of Jesus
So that all people may create lives of deeper meaning and greater value.*

News & Opportunities – Sunday and Beyond...

COVID Safety Update: This week Sonoma County risk factors place us in the Restricted Tier of our [In Person Safety Guidelines](#). This Sunday, *masks and physical distancing are required*. Coffee & Tea will be offered after worship outside. Although we expect there will be room for all who arrive to be seated in physically distanced “pods,” please be aware that we will not be opening the side glass doors and that in order to seat any overflow, we will be asking, without obligation, households who are comfortable sitting together to create bubbles of larger pods should we need more room. Your understanding of this inconvenience is a blessing to the most vulnerable among us!

Calling all Volunteers!

We are greatly in need of your help with simple tasks to make Sunday worship possible. Can you offer your help to greet & seat guests, support safety protocols, prepare coffee, or other simple tasks? Training is provided and you can help out when it works best for you. Please sign up by calling the church at 707-763-2454 or clicking this link: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10cod45a5ae23a1fec43-inperson1#/>

Capital Campaign for Rejuvenation Update!

We have received 14 generous gifts to our Capital Campaign! We are well on our way and now need your reply soon (by Jan 31!). Please help our leadership understand what is possible for you by returning your pledge form or communicating in another way that works better for you to our Team by calling our office at 707-763-2454. If you have not received materials or have any questions, please reply to this email and we will reach out immediately! **Our goal is to be sure that everyone has an opportunity to participate in a way that is deeply meaningful within their unique ability.** Gifts of every and any size can be financial, time, talent or a unique way that fits you best. Please let us know. We know that every single one of us can be fully included!

Mark Your Calendars!

Jan 23: UCC Petaluma Bible Study. Join a long-standing, thoughtful group in Bible study on the 2nd & 4th Mondays in the church library at 10am. Nov. 14 through Feb. 13 we are looking at the Parables of Jesus. Sessions led by various study members. All are welcome whether you have a lifetime of Bible study experience or none at all. To learn more, contact Dorothy Wilcox at 707-540-1796

Jan 28: Tree Planting Dates with ReLeaf

You are welcome to join this wonderful community of Climate Action volunteers. We will send out additional information as the dates grow closer. For now, please sign up [HERE](#) to volunteer for planting and other needs.

Jan 29: 2nd Hour! Explore your experience of recent Sundays by sharing your thoughts and questions with a group committed to listening deeply. We'll practice international listening with each other in order to know and be known through our dialogue. All are welcome to share and listen as the Spirit inspires! Our thanks to Barton Smith for facilitating this 2nd hour conversation.

Feb 5: Our annual meeting will be held in-person after worship in the sanctuary according to the same risk Tier for worship that day. We need your voice and participation to approve our annual budget and consider other important items that will help our congregation to thrive. If you prefer to vote by mail or email, a ballot and instructions will be included with email sent two weeks before the meeting - including an agenda and relevant documents for your review. We look forward to you being a part of our congregation's discernment.

Feb 8: The Genesis Circle (Single women's group): at 12:30pm in the Friendship Hall. This group meets on the second Wednesday of every month. To learn more about this group, please contact Dorothy Wilcox at 707-540-1796

Opportunities for Faith in Action

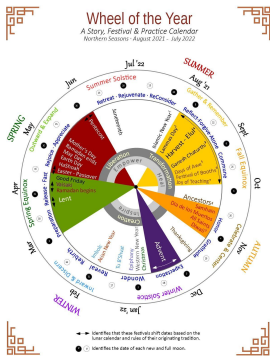
Help define Petaluma's General Plan: You can find more information about the General Plan on the General Plan website: <https://www.planpetaluma.org>

Take action on Gun Violence: The devastation of gun violence in this country is heartbreaking. Gun violence shades every aspect of life in America. And it's no wonder; our country is flooded with guns. Let our prayer become action - not only to lament but to work for a world that is workable for everyone. We are not powerless in making these changes; we can take steps to reduce gun violence. [Click Here to tell your elected leaders to take immediate action.](#)

The Black Therapy Voucher Program: offers up to 12 sessions of mental health counseling with a culturally competent therapist. One need not be Black to receive this valuable benefit. Each session is valued at \$150 per session. Complete funding is provided by the County of Sonoma through the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 and is administered by the Sonoma County Black Forum. [Applications for the Black Therapy Fund open November](#)

2023 Wheel of the Year Published! [Click Here to download a new Wheel of the](#)

[Year for 2023.](#) This helpful visual tool is a helpful guide to your spiritual practice - connecting your unique faith to the festivals of our tradition in relation to the traditions of billions of others around the globe & the unique practices of your household. If you would like a printed copy of the Wheel, we would be pleased to make one for you. Please reply to this email. You can also download a copy at our [website](#).



JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

- 12: Dorothy Wilcox
- 14: Rowena Abulencia
- 18: Juliet Emerson-Colvin
- 28: Michael Vosler

JANUARY ANNIVERSARIES

- 4: Bev & Bob (deceased) Hughes

Worship Sunday Jan 22, 2023

Gathered in Sanctuary at UCC Petaluma

Inspiration *“We have lived our lives by the assumption that what was good for us would be good for the world. We have been wrong. We must change our lives so that it will be possible to live by the contrary assumption, that what is good for the world will be good for us. And that requires that we make the effort to know the world and learn what is good for it.” ~Wendell Berry in “The Long-Legged House”*

Music as We Share Light for Worship

“Variations on Love Came Down at Christmas”

New Century Hymnal #165

Love came down at Christmas,
love all lovely, Love divine;
Love was born at Christmas;
star and angels gave the sign.

Worship we the Godhead,
Love incarnate, Love divine;
worship we our Jesus,
but wherewith for sacred sign?

Love shall be our token;
love be yours and love be mine;
love to God and others,
love for plea and gift and sign.

Responsive Call to Worship

from a New Day's Lyric by the National Youth Poet Laureate, Amanda Gorman

One: May this be the day We come together.

All: Mourning, we come to mend, Withered, we come to weather

One: Torn, we come to tend, Battered, we come to better

All: Tethered by this year of yearning, We are learning

One: That though we weren't ready for this

All: We have been readied by it.

One: We steadily vow that no matter How we are weighed down

All: We must always pave a way forward.

“One More Step”

SLT # 168

One more step,
we will take one more step,
‘til there is peace for us and everyone,
we’ll take one more step.

One more word,
we will say one more word,
‘til every word is heard by everyone,
we’ll say one more word.

One more prayer,
we will say one more prayer,
‘til every prayer is shared by everyone,
we’ll say one more prayer.

One more song,
we will sing one more song,
‘til every song is sung by everyone,
we’ll sing one more song.

Readings & Scriptures

Isaiah 9:2-4 The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep darkness - on them light has shined. You have multiplied exultation; you have increased its joy; they rejoice before you as with joy at the harvest, as people exult when dividing a bounty. For the yoke of their burden and the bar across their shoulders, the rod of their oppressor, you have broken as on the day of the unexpected liberation of Midian.

Matthew 4:18-22 As Jesus walked by the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea—for they were fishers. And he said to them, “Follow me, and I will make you fishers of people.” Immediately they left their nets and followed him. As he went from there, he saw two other brothers, James son of Zebedee and his brother John, in the boat with their father Zebedee, mending their nets, and he called them. Immediately they left the boat and their father and followed him.

Glossary

This glossary is offered as a limited (and hopefully helpful) re-orientation to words that the culture and church have defined in one particular way, but are often more metaphorical and complex in our usage as a pluralist community of spiritual learning. These are terms whose deeper nuance and definition invite reflective study. This glossary is not meant to be complete or definitive, but rather a starting place for your learning.

Darkness & Light: Biblical metaphors for “light” and “dark” are so diverse that their meaning is seldom clear without knowledge of the context of the particular story in which they appear. Biblical references to light & dark include metaphors to the Divine, knowledge, prosperity, righteousness, enlightening communication, the heavens, privacy, guidance, and title of Messiah or Christ (an anointed one). It is essential to understand the deeper history of human reference to dark and light in order to make helpful use of their appearance in the bible. Humanity lived many millennia without the aid of electric light. Thus, references to dark and light by the ancients are tied deeply to the reality that the night brought with it physical predatory dangers and also opportunities for awe that are not typically “front of mind” for a modern listener. Humanity worshiped the sun for thousands of years before biblical scripture suggested an anthropomorphic monotheism beyond the sun. The sun was both a literal and metaphoric “Source of Life,” a god by any other name. Pre-Scientific people spoke of the stars as “holes in the dome of the sky” that revealed the “light of god” that could not be seen in the day. The night however brought not only a unique revelation of the Divine, but also very real threats to human life that are still tied to the modern limbic brain’s priority for survival. As a result, social scientists observe that modern people hold a deep and implicit bias toward darkness as “bad” - something to be feared or rejected. Generally, regardless of one’s race, modern people continue to assume whiteness to be intelligent, moral, and favored by god; darkness to be stupid, depraved, and merely tolerated by god. An awareness of our bias can be a significant help when encountering references to light and dark in scripture and in our everyday lives. The Genesis story itself suggests that all “light” has its genesis in “dark.” We need to be careful to avoid reading this as all goodness “light and white” has its genesis in an original “badness” which is “dark and black.” We can read Genesis with the understanding that dark and light are not inherently moral qualities - but rather essential elements that reveal each other in the co-creation of the world and our daily lives. We prosper when both are embraced.