



**UCC
Petaluma**

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

Sunday, April 14, 2024

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*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...

SPIRIT & MATTER(s)

If you've been a part of UCCP since I arrived in February of 2019, you'll remember that before Pandemic, I wrote a regular reflection series entitled, "Spirit & Matter(s) - "an occasional reflection on my collisions with Spirit (Love in Action) and Matter(s)." The idea for the title was that if you look deeply, one can see Love as a practiced-action (some people call this God, some call it Love) in nearly every bit of physical "matter" in the world. The reason for the ellipses "()" in the title suggest that we can also see Love in nearly all that "matter(s)" - meaning what matters between us. One of our community members recently suggested that I return to offering this series as a way for us all to connect regarding our work building "a life of deeper meaning and greater value that is workable for All." And so I shall begin again - once a month to start!

This week I met one of our Council members downtown to talk about the long list of things they are doing in service of our congregation. As we left the cafe, I noticed that a clergy colleague I hadn't seen in a few years was seated at a nearby table with a friend. So I stopped by to say hello. I sauntered up to the table and greeted her by name, expressed how glad I was to see her and asked if she was finding retirement joyful. I introduced myself to her tablemate and then my clergy friend's whole body seemed to relax into a deep recognition. You see, she retired not long after I came to Petaluma, and so we hadn't seen each other in a while. In those intervening years, I had forgotten that I had experienced something of an Easter - a "resurrection" in my own life. It began with a death of sorts, and then it evolved over time such that I even looked physically different to many who had known me before. Indeed, I had forgotten that my friend had always known me as a guy with no hair! And so, I was nearly unrecognizable to her! My friend was desperately trying to place this seemingly-familiar silver-haired guy in front of her - someone who appeared to know and appreciate her in ways that made little sense if we were only strangers!

All this to say, that if we think about it, we humans use pattern recognition almost all the time to remember things, and even people. *And when we change or transform*, whether it is our look or our opinion, even people we have known and loved for a long time can get confused. From our perspective, we've already forgotten most of the change that felt so intense and is no so surprising to someone who hasn't been with us while it happened. Experiences like this can

help us to remember that there is really only one constant in the world, and that is evolutionary change. Both the creation story, which invites to be co-creators of all this change, and the resurrection story, which reminds us that change invites a season of uncertainty and unfamiliarity before things look and feel “normal” again. This is the way it is... it will never be another way. Our calling is to cooperate with this powerful reality. One way to do that is to keep the Easter story alive as our guide - setting forth our lives into the change that will always come, with the hope that our seeds, once planted in uncertainty, will become familiar and wonderful fruit for a world that is more workable, for everyone. May it be so.

This Sunday at UCC Petaluma

As we enter Eastertide, the season following Easter, we are encouraged by our sacred story to ask “what it would look like to practice Easter” with our one precious Life. This Sunday we explore the Spiritual Ability to “be like seeds” and “make room” and how this practice invites us to make covenants that can open us to the practice of Easter - a next possibility starting from a seed once-planted in the dark waters of the earth. View this week’s Digital Bulletin [HERE!](#)

2nd Hour this Sunday, April 14:

Join with members of our church Council and Pr Jason as we share and reflect on the Council’s January retreat. We welcome your insights into the future of our congregation's life and work!

Online Offerings



If you find it helpful to make your offerings online, please use this QR code to take you to our website and click the Donate button. Your gift will make a difference!

Mark Your Calendar

Tuesday April 16 at 10 am.

UCC Petaluma Book Group will continue discussing: "Becoming Kin; An Indigenous Call to Unforgetting the Past and Reimagining Our Future" by Patty Krawec. This is a good time to join the group, which meets by Zoom. For more information contact Paul Eklof at peklof@pacbell.net

Saturday, April 20th at 11am.

2024 UCC Annual Earth Summit live-stream via Zoom. Join author and activist Bill McKibben delivering the Jim Antal Keynote Lecture with the title, "Energy from Heaven or Energy from Hell?" Additionally, a panel of award-winning activists will speak about the multi-national struggle against the pollution of Formosa Plastics, one of the world's largest plastics producers. [Click here](#) to learn more and register for the event.

Monday, April 22nd at 10am.

Join a long-standing group exploring the biblical story in the library. This is a lay-led Bible study open to all levels of biblical knowledge and experience

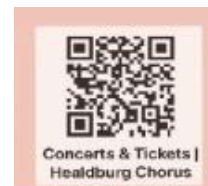
Saturday, April 27 & Sunday, April 28

Join the Healdsburg chorus in their 36th year at their Spring concert! April 27th and 28th at 3pm at the Raven Theater. See flier and QR code below, or [CLICK HERE](#) for more information!

Opportunities for Spiritual Learning & Action



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Continuing to Support Justice for Women

Just because Women's history month is over, doesn't mean we should sit back. Take action now to support justice for women. Now more than ever, we must speak up!

[Click here](#) to contact your representative! Our voices matter. Talking to your representative is the best way to make sure it is heard.

Join in our National Denomination's Educational Webinars

Our National denomination offers a variety of thoughtful educational webinars on topics from local to international interest relevant to our mission and vision. [Click here](#) to see their many offerings.

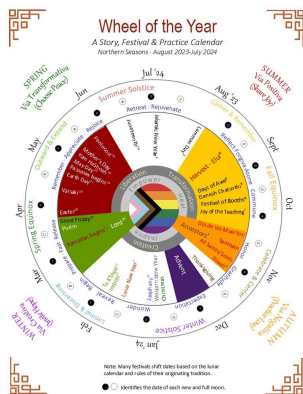
Blue Zones

Articles, recipes, resources, and tools for transforming personal and communal well-being and longevity. Curated from research done by Dan Buettner (National Geographic Explorer and Fellow) on the world's healthiest, longest-living populations. [Click here](#) to read their latest articles.

Sonoma County LGBTQIA+ Community Needs Assessment

Please join us in collaborating with the wonderful [Positive Images \(PI\)](#) to share [this amazing survey](#) they created to get MUCH-needed data for those in the LGBTQIA+ Sonoma County community. If you or anyone you know is in the LGBTQIA+ community, please consider taking/sharing the survey or scan the QR code below to take the survey.

[Click Here](#) to download a new Wheel of the Year for 2023-24.



The Wheel of the Year is a helpful guide to your spiritual practice - connecting your household's unique understandings and traditions to the stories, festivals, and practices of billions of others around the globe

APRIL BIRTHDAYS

- 8: Craig Wilcox
- 13: Judy Frankel
- 15: Jeff Flick
- 19: Tim Talamantes
- 21: Sharlene Castle
- 28: Grace Ruddell
- 30: Marcos and Nico Carballal