



Rev. Kristi Denham, Pastor Emerita, succumbs to pancreatic cancer at 75



Kristi at Chocolate Fest

By Micki Carter

The life and legacy of the Rev. Kristi Lynn Denham will be celebrated at a memorial service Saturday, Aug. 10, at 2 p.m. at the Congregational Church of the Peninsula where Rev. Denham served as pastor from 1999-2019.

Pastor Kristi died Wednesday, June 19, at her home in Novato with her two sons, Jesse and Gabriel, at her bedside after a yearlong struggle with pancreatic cancer. Death came just three weeks after many of us gathered to celebrate her 75th birthday



Kristi, Irene Hall and Maura Whitmore in the CCP Dining Room

at a party at the San Rafael home of her son, Jesse, and his wife Susanna.

The Sunday before her death, members of the choir and other members of the congregation stayed after church to record our voices singing *Spirit* and *In the Midst of New Dimensions*, two hymns that were particularly meaningful to Kristi. We emailed those audio recordings along with the links to the choir singing *Amazing Grace* and our Christmas playlist. Jesse said he and Gabe played them for her over and over again during those last days. Although she was no longer opening her eyes, he said she smiled!

Pastor Kristi was born May 28, 1949, to Audrey Jean Cochrane and Wes Martin in Redding, the first daughter in a family that would include two others. A graduate of the University of California at Davis,

she earned her degree in ministry from the San Francisco Theological Seminary in San Anselmo. She was ordained to ministry by the Northern California Nevada Conference of the United Church of Christ.

Then in 1997, as a single mother with two young biracial sons, she moved across the continent to accept a call as associate pastor of the First Congregational Church of Atlanta, Ga. In 1999, she chose to return to her Northern California roots. The Congregational Church of Belmont (later the Congregational Church of the Peninsula) was searching for a pastor, and the young woman with a head of big curly red hair was a great fit. The church honored her with the title Pastor Emerita in February.

In her 20 years at CCB, Kristi pastored young men incarcerated at Hillcrest Juvenile Hall, served as a chaplain to the Belmont Police Department and fostered cooperation
See PASTOR KRISTI, Page 4

We are an Open and Affirming Congregation valuing everyone's race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, age, class, physical and mental abilities.

A summer greeting from Pastor Jim

By Rev. Jim Mitulski

It's summertime and I know many people are traveling at different times. I am planning to be away later in August, including a much anticipated trip to Maine with old friends. And I want to assure you that we are here every Sunday with music, preaching, prayer and fellowship.



Rev. Jim Mitulski

Do you have friends or family visiting or staying with you? Bring them along and let us meet them. If you are gone on a weekend, come to the mid-week on-line prayer meetings (Wednesday at 11 a.m. or Thursdays at 6 p.m. with our friends from Island United Church in Foster City). Join our weekly online book discussion on Tuesdays at 1:30 p.m. (there were 14 of us today from all around the country!).

We are already making plans for a wonderful Fall, with several changes in store programmatically. Plan to stay in touch this summer. Plan to be with us on the first Sunday in August as we celebrate one full year since we chose to become Congregational Church of the Peninsula. We'll be here and hope you will too.

With love,
Pastor Jim



Pastor Warren's Wonderings

By Rev. Warren Dale

Well, friends, I am seeing RED! The most significant time, of course, is on the day of Pentecost. And yes, I am remembering our dear Pastor Kristi on Pentecost wearing a full red outfit. Actually, I am remembering red well before that time. I am remembering walking into the Congregational Church of Belmont, seeing red hair as Pastor Kristi shared her faith, her passion, and her joy with us.



Rev. Warren Dale

I am seeing red, when she touched the prayer bell, quieting our space as we entered into prayer time with the youth. I remember in our shared prayers the tingles that I would get when she would say, "There is nothing we can do, nothing we can say, nothing we can think, that can keep God from loving us. We call this God's Grace."

I remember her sharing her message engaging me, talking me down the slippery slopes to discomfort and then finishing with the hope of faith. "May it be so," she would say.

I am remembering how, upon retirement, she chose to join us at First Church and on Easter Sun Rise in the parking lot, she danced to *The Lord of the Dance*, reminding us of the joy of Resurrection. She never seemed to stop giving.

I am remembering her sharing her whirlwind tour of the Holy Land, important places touching her heart, shared with us as lasting monuments of her travels with us.

I am remembering the Day of Giving as

we sang at the Special Senior Homes and the Prayers for Peace celebrating her gift to us in co-founding the Peninsula Multifaith Coalition.

And I am remembering her sharing her journey with us as we anointed her Pastor Emerita as we sang *In the Midst of New Dimensions*.

And how glad I am that we were able to establish a scholarship for those moving from an incarcerated status to student accessing possibility at the College of San Mateo.

Years ago, as Chaplain of Mills Hospital, I wrote a pamphlet, *When Someone You Love Dies*. In it, I wrote that one may experience different stages of grief:

- Shock;
- Pining and Longing;
- Deep Sadness of the loss;
- Recovery

Many people view grief through the stages of Elisabeth Kubler-Ross, I remember her telling us of how she wrote the stages in dealing with people facing life threatening illnesses.

However we view grief, I am remembering the words of our dear Pastor Kristi, "I love so many people and feel so blessed. I will live as long as I am needed here. I will love for all eternity."

"May it be so..."

Blessings to all,
The Rev. Warren



Jim Van Buskirk held a second Death Cafe event at CCP on June 20.

To go to the Congregational Church of the Peninsula website, click [here](#).

CCP seeks to hire an AV technician

By Micki Carter

The position of an audio/visual technician who would manage CCP's sound and recording on Sunday mornings has been created by action of the Church Council.

The AV tech would advise us on creating an efficient system for recording and dis-

seminating the Sunday morning services, manage that system for church and non-church events in the Sanctuary and schedule and direct our youth AV tech workers for Sunday mornings.

A job description will be ready soon, and the job will be posted online. We are looking

for someone with experience and familiarity with the needs of a church setting.

If you are aware of someone who might be interested in the position, let me know and I will get the job description to him or her.

Pastor Kristi

Continued from Page One

with other faiths on the Peninsula. It was that passion that led her to co-found the Peninsula Multifaith Coalition that sponsors the Martin Luther King Jr. Day of Service in San Mateo County every January.

She also taught Liberation Theology at Notre Dame de Namur University in Belmont.

Among her gifts was her skill as a liturgical dancer. Congregants remember her dancing among the cars as church members gathered in a Redwood City parking lot during Covid. At her recognition as Pastor Emerita at CCP in March, she danced to the hymn, *In the Midst of New Dimensions*, even as she was reeling from the effects of chemotherapy.

Rev. Denham is survived by her sons Jesse (Susanna) of San Rafael and Gabriel (Joy) of New York City; her sisters, Wendy Biggam and Heidi Martin, both of Longview, Texas; and her grandchildren, Audrey, Esben and Oliver Denham.

For anyone who would like to honor Kristi's memory, the family suggests donations to the Rev. Kristi Denham Scholarship with Project Change which surrounds formerly incarcerated young people with support as they navigate the path through higher education. The establishment of the scholarship was announced at her 75th birthday party last month. Just drop it in the collection plate with the notation that it's for Pastor Kristi's scholarship.

The memorial service will be followed by a reception in the church Dining Room. If you would like to help with the reception, contact Mike Venturino or a Deacon.

A favorite phrase of Kristi's was "death is just a door." She's passed through that portal now, but some of us sort of expect her to lean her head back through and give us a sign, a wink, that everything is fine.



Children were a special passion for Pastor Kristi. Here she dances with kids at Summer Camp and leads Time With the Children early in her pastorate.



To go to the Congregational Church of the Peninsula website, click [here](#).

Keeping up Chocolate Fest momentum in the summer

By Jill Visor

You might think that not much related to Chocolate Fest happens in the summer months — after all the event isn't until Oct. 19. Although it is a slower pace than September/October, there is still a LOT going on:

Vendors/Sponsor Recruitment:

Every month an email goes out to potential vendors, and so far we have had a great response! We now have 11 vendors committed and another email is due to go out at the beginning of July. Also we continue to reach out to new and prior sponsors. A little lingo here: A “sponsor” donates, but does not sell product and a “vendor” provides samples and sells product. Vendors have to pay a fee to San Mateo County.

Captains:

Our amazing non-profit beneficiary this year is LifeMoves. They will provide all of the volunteers we need on the day of the event, which is beyond fabulous. However, CCP must have an organizing “captain” for each area of operation, some of whom will be responsible for volunteer oversight on the day of the event.

We are so lucky to have a fabulous group this year: Micki Carter (publicity), Greg Thornhill (operations), Maura Whitmore (decorations), Georgi LaBerge (silent auction), Carol Chivers (door prizes), Marcia Rapozo (kitchen) and Lea Mavroudis (website, online ticketing, organization/tracking, etc, etc).

I'm responsible for vendors and the event application to the county. Anyone who is interested in getting involved with this exciting fund-raiser, please let me know. We have a



place for you! (jillvisor@gmail.com).

Online Ticketing (Eventbrite):

We are finalizing content and ticket prices to have Eventbrite up and ready to sell tickets by the end of July!

Communications:

Micki has lots on her plate at this time of year: Save the Date announcements for prior attendees, the banner over Ralston Avenue, A-board signs and postcards ready for the Greek Festival at the Orthodox church down the street, online event posting, press releases and the constant search for ways to get the word about Chocolate Fest out.

Website:

The website is continuously updated with addition of new vendors, and Micki and Lea create fresh content both here and on Facebook

Music:

Michael Medwid and his trio have agreed to delight the guests once again with amazing jazz music, creating the perfect party/relaxation music for the event!

So underneath the water the little chocolate legs continue to paddle as we “relax” through our summer.

Book group starts their July selection

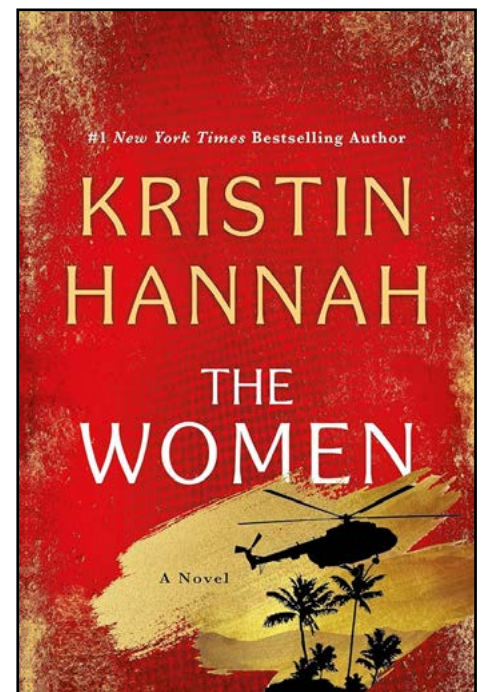
The Chat ‘n Chew online book group has begun their new book for July. This month, they are reading *The Women* by Kristin Hannah. Here is a [link](#) to the Goodreads review. See Pastor Jim if you would like a copy.

Suggested reading schedule:

- July 2: chapters 1-8, through page 88
- July 9: chapters 9-18, through page 220
- July 16: chapters 19-27, through page 353
- July 23: chapter 28 to the end

Find a three minute interview with and about Kristin Hannah [here](#) and a one minute introduction to the book [here](#). You can also watch a 17 minute interview on PBS about the historical context [here](#).

The group meets via Zoom on Tuesdays from 1:30-2:30 p.m. Join the Zoom at this [link](#).



To go to the Congregational Church of the Peninsula website, click [here](#).

Pastor Kristi's cats need new homes

By Micki Carter

For those of you who loved Pastor Kristi, there is one more gracious gift you might be able to offer.

Her cats, Tigerlily and Mia, need forever homes now. Richard and Kris Morgan promised Kristi to take the cats when she passed and find good homes for them, and they are now trying to do that.

Kris writes about Mia: "She is a sweet, super-friendly mature (spayed) female cat who is irresistibly affectionate! She's the ultimate companion cat, and a talker, too. Mia will cuddle up next to you and purr the day away; wherever people are, that's where she'll be.

"She has lived with other cats but prefers human company. She doesn't need constant attention. Just your presence in the room is enough to make her happy. As an older cat (12-ish?), she has a health issue that requires an ointment rubbed on the inside of her ear daily and occasional vet checkups for monitoring."

And Tigerlily (Lily, for short): "She is a people-oriented female (spayed) calico cat with thick, soft fur. She is used to being indoors and is happy just stiling in a window or in your lap. We think she's around 5 or 6 years old.

"While she has lived with another cat, she is best as the only cat in the home. She doesn't need constant attention but does love to be petted. She's an easy, low-maintenance fur ball who loves her food and makes a 'num-num' sound that's a crack up."

If you think you might be able to provide a home for one of Kristi's cats, email the church at office@ccpeninsula.org, and we will put you in touch with Richard and Kris.



Pastor Jim, Maura Whitmore and Carol Chivers attended the NCNC Annual Gathering in Fresno where Pastor Jim gave a talk about peace-seeking in Gaza which featured our vandalized ceasefire banner.

To go to the Congregational Church of the Peninsula website, click [here](#).



SafKeep, the Redwood City storage company where the church has two units filled with items from First Congregational Church of Redwood City, is going to have a Garage Sale Sunday, Aug. 25, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Units in the facility will be allowed to open to the public. CCP is planning to open our units, and we are hoping that some of you will be able to help us staff the sale. However, if by some miracle, we manage to empty the units before the sale, we will forgo the sale. In a recent foray to the units, Maura Whitmore, Mike Venturino and Micki Carter uncovered a black Kenmore refrigerator (apartment size) in good condition. If you are interested and would like a closer outlook, contact one of the three. Also, the west unit contains 30 of these very comfortable orange office chairs. If you know of a good home for them, we are ready to deal! SafKeep is located at 2480 Middlefield Rd, Redwood City.

Fellowship Camp at Monte Toyon is coming up Friday, July 19, to Sunday, July 20. The registration deadline is July 11. Sign up right now at this [link](#).

To go to the Congregational Church of the Peninsula website, click [here](#).

How well do you know the UCC?

The United Church of Christ celebrated its 67th birthday in June.

Here are some UCC fun facts! Did you know that...

- Early UCC congregants were among the first to speak out against slavery in America, laying the groundwork for the abolitionist movement.
- It was the Congregationalists who hired former Pres. John Quincy Adams to defend the Amistad mutineers who were fighting to avoid being enslaved. (He won!)
- In 1773, Congregationalists staged a protest which inspired the first act of civil disobedience in U.S. history — the Boston Tea Party.
- Phillis Wheatley, the first published African American writer, was a member of the Old South congregation (later to become UCC).
- The first African American pastor of a mainline congregation in the U.S. (1785), the first woman pastor of a mainline congregation in the U.S. (1853) AND the first openly gay man, Bill Johnson of San Carlos UCC, in the U.S. (1972) were ALL ordained through what is now the United Church of Christ!
- In 1959, television stations in the South imposed a news blackout on the growing Civil Rights movement. Martin Luther King Jr. asked the UCC for help, and Communications Board Chair Everett Parker went to bat for them, winning an historic federal court ruling that airwaves are public property, setting important precedent for years to come.
- In 1995, UCC published the New Century Hymnal, the first hymnal released by a Christian church that honored both male and female images of God.

We are so proud to be a part of this amazing history! May we continue the UCC legacy of serving God by seeking justice and equity.

CCP was abuzz with activities during Pride Month



Our contingent in the San Mateo Pride Parade along with the other churches in our Open & Affirming cluster



Jill Visor brought her dogs to the Pride festival with a Muttt Pride t-shirt.



Garrett House joined the San Mateo County Cluster of Open & Affirming Churches booth at the Pride event in San Mateo on June 8.



Rev. Michael of Island United UCC showing off his Pride style



Rev. Jessica and Rev. Álvaro of CCSM pose with their sign.

To go to the Congregational Church of the Peninsula website, click [here](#).



Garrett House carried the CCP sign during the Pride Parade.



Pastor Jim with Rev. Dr. Janie Spahr after her sermon



Rev. Michael, Rabbi Rebecca, Rev. Jessica, and Pastor Jim



Rev. Dr. Janie Spahr, pioneering lesbian minister in the Presbyterian church, joined us as guest minister on June 16



Our own Pride banner displayed on the street in front of the church

To go to the Congregational Church of the Peninsula website, click [here](#).



“Now or Never: A Generation of Climate Warriors”

Documentary Film
Screening &
Discussion with
Local Climate
Action Youth
Leaders

Wednesday
July 3
7:00 PM
On Zoom

Click [here](#) to register for the climate webinar.



LifeMoves

10TH ANNUAL RIDE TO END HOMELESSNESS

SATURDAY, SEPT. 14, 2024
STANFORD RESEARCH PARK

More information and registration [here](#). Register by July 14 to save 20% using the early-bird discount code: RTE-H2024FF.

To go to the Congregational Church of the Peninsula website, click [here](#).



Alex Makeev, a member of the CCP Worship Band and the pianist in this photo, composed three jazz pieces for the band to play June 23. Alex just graduated from Carlmont High School and is off to University of California at Davis in the fall. We're hoping to welcome him back any time he's home from college.

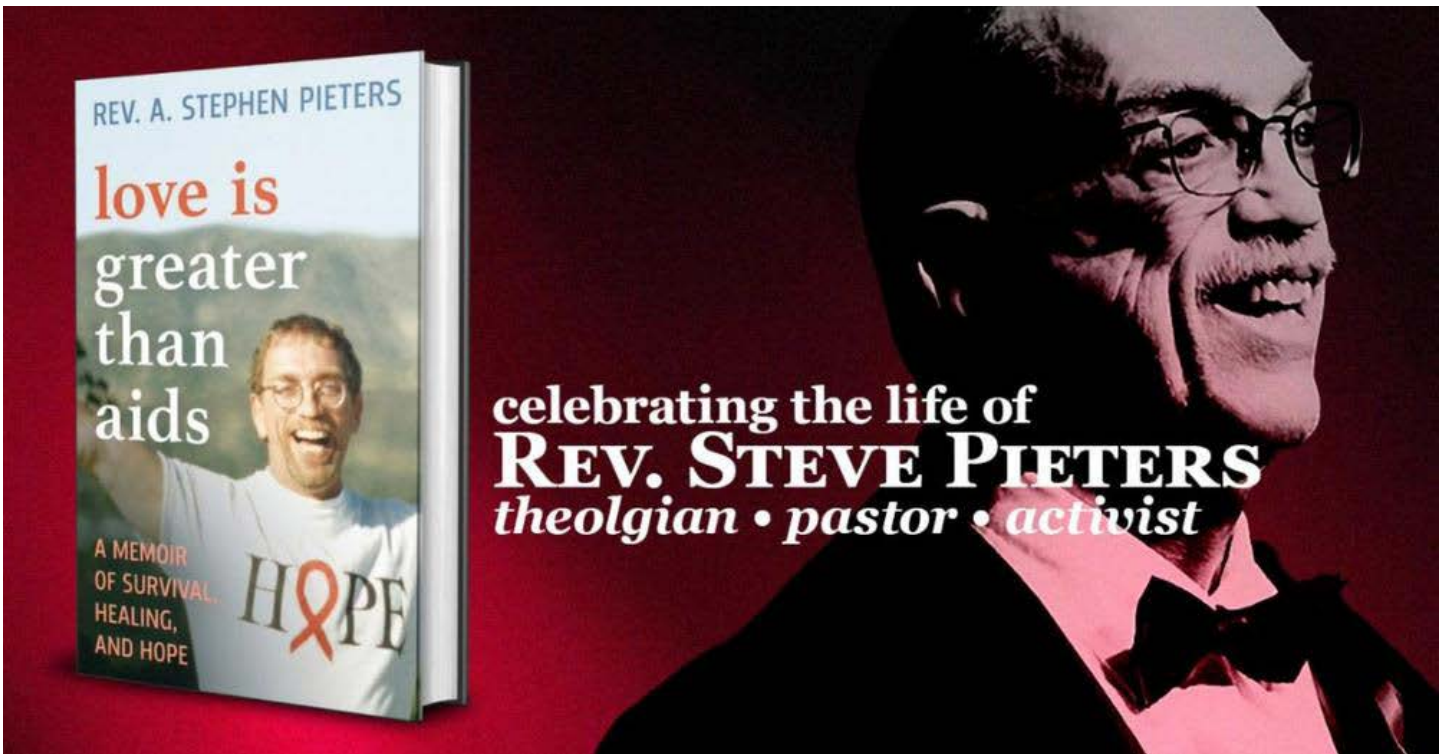


Bob Donovan, who will be 103 this month, showed off his new wheels — a snazzy walker from the VA!



The Peninsula Senior Band played Leonard Cohen's *Hallelujah* and *Amazing Grace* during worship on June 30. The band practices every Friday at CCP. Our own Inkang Kim is a member of the band.

To go to the Congregational Church of the Peninsula website, click [here](#).



Pastor Jim will host this Zoom event on Saturday, July 13, at 2 p.m. celebrating the life of Rev. Steve Pieters, theologian, pastor and activist, highlighting the publication of his autobiography *Love is Greater Than AIDS: A Memoir of Survival, Healing and Hope* (Rowman & Littlefield, 2024), along with a panel of distinguished theologians, activists and pastors, all of whom knew Steve personally. Register [here](#).

Upcoming Worship Themes and Preachers

July – Disability Pride Month

- July 14: Jazz Band; Rev. Jim Mitulski preaching
- July 21: Rev. Warren Dale preaching
- July 28: Rev. Sandhya Jha, Disciples of Christ pastor and doctoral student at the University of Pennsylvania

August

- Aug. 4: First Anniversary of Congregational Church of the Peninsula; Rev. Jim Mitulski preaching
- Aug. 11: Rev. Thomas Crosby preaching; Hymn Sing led by Mike Venturino and Elizabeth Mye
- Aug. 18: Rev. Warren Dale preaching on the History of Jazz
- Aug. 25: Rev. Warren Dale preaching

September

- Sept. 1: Rev. Thomas Crosby preaching
- Sept. 8: Homecoming Sunday; Rev. Jim Mitulski preaching
- Sept. 15: Rev. Warren Dale preaching

Latinx/Hispanic Heritage Month (mid September to mid October)

- Sept. 22: Rev. Jim Mitulski preaching
- Sept. 29: Rev. Jim Mitulski preaching

October

- Oct. 6: World Communion Day, Blessing of the Animals
- Oct. 13: Rev. Roberto Ochoa preaching
- Oct. 20: Chocolate Sunday
- Oct. 27: Reformation Day

To go to the Congregational Church of the Peninsula website, click [here](#).

Calendar for July 2024

2 Tue	12:30PM - 2PM	Off-site events	Good Hope Luncheon
	1:30PM - 2:30PM	Off-site events	Online Book Group
4 Thu	6PM - 7PM	Off-site events	Thursday Night Prayer & Check-in
7 Sun	10:30AM - 12:00PM	Worship	Sunday worship
	11:30AM - 12:00PM	Church Events	Coffee Hour
	5PM - 6PM	Off-site events	Zoom worship with Pastor Warren
9 Tue	1:30PM - 2:30PM	Off-site events	Online Book Group
11 Thu	6PM - 7PM	Off-site events	Thursday Night Prayer & Check-in
14 Sun	10:30AM - 12:00PM	Worship	Sunday worship
	11:30AM - 12:00PM	Church Events	Coffee Hour
	5PM - 6PM	Off-site events	Zoom worship with Pastor Warren
16 Tue	1:30PM - 2:30PM	Off-site events	Online Book Group
17 Wed	6:30PM - 8PM	Off-site events	Trustees Meeting (Zoom)
18 Thu	6PM - 7PM	Off-site events	Thursday Night Prayer & Check-in
19 Fri	5AM - 10PM	Off-site events	Family Camp at Monte Toyon
20 Sat	5AM - 10PM	Off-site events	Family Camp at Monte Toyon
21 Sun	5AM - 8AM	Off-site events	Family Camp at Monte Toyon
	10:30AM - 12:00PM	Worship	Sunday worship
	11:30AM - 12:00PM	Church Events	Coffee Hour
	5PM - 6PM	Off-site events	Zoom worship with Pastor Warren
23 Tue	1:30PM - 2:30PM	Off-site events	Online Book Group
24 Wed	7:00PM - 9:00PM	Church Events	CCB Council Meeting
25 Thu	6PM - 7PM	Off-site events	Thursday Night Prayer & Check-in
28 Sun	10:30AM - 12:00PM	Worship	Sunday worship
	11:30AM - 12:00PM	Church Events	Coffee Hour
	5PM - 6PM	Off-site events	Zoom worship with Pastor Warren
30 Tue	1:30PM - 2:30PM	Off-site events	Online Book Group

To go to the Congregational Church of the Peninsula website, click [here](#).

Calendar for August 2024

1 Thu	6PM - 7PM	Off-site events	Thursday Night Prayer & Check-in
4 Sun	10:30AM - 12:00PM	Worship	Sunday worship
	11:30AM - 12:00PM	Church Events	Coffee Hour
	5PM - 6PM	Off-site events	Zoom worship with Pastor Warren
6 Tue	12:30PM - 2PM	Off-site events	Good Hope Luncheon
	1:30PM - 2:30PM	Off-site events	Online Book Group
8 Thu	6PM - 7PM	Off-site events	Thursday Night Prayer & Check-in
11 Sun	10:30AM - 12:00PM	Worship	Sunday worship
	11:30AM - 12:00PM	Church Events	Coffee Hour
	5PM - 6PM	Off-site events	Zoom worship with Pastor Warren
13 Tue	1:30PM - 2:30PM	Off-site events	Online Book Group
15 Thu	6PM - 7PM	Off-site events	Thursday Night Prayer & Check-in
18 Sun	10:30AM - 12:00PM	Worship	Sunday worship
	11:30AM - 12:00PM	Church Events	Coffee Hour
	5PM - 6PM	Off-site events	Zoom worship with Pastor Warren
19 Mon	6:00PM - 7:00PM ✉	Church Events	Deacons' meeting
20 Tue	1:30PM - 2:30PM	Off-site events	Online Book Group
21 Wed	6:30PM - 8PM	Off-site events	Trustees Meeting (Zoom)
22 Thu	6PM - 7PM	Off-site events	Thursday Night Prayer & Check-in
25 Sun	10:30AM - 12:00PM	Worship	Sunday worship
	11:30AM - 12:00PM	Church Events	Coffee Hour
	5PM - 6PM	Off-site events	Zoom worship with Pastor Warren
27 Tue	1:30PM - 2:30PM	Off-site events	Online Book Group
28 Wed	7:00PM - 9:00PM ✉	Church Events	CCB Council Meeting
29 Thu	6PM - 7PM	Off-site events	Thursday Night Prayer & Check-in

To go to the Congregational Church of the Peninsula website, click [here](#).



Let's Celebrate
Pride 365

10 Ways to Live out Your Open and Affirming Covenant
ALL YEAR LONG!



OpenAndAffirming.org

Visit this [link](#) for the list.

September Messenger deadline will be Aug. 21



To go to the Congregational Church of the Peninsula website, click [here](#).