



Pastor's Reflection

This Lent our theme for worship is Embracing...

Embracing ourselves, each other, the unresolved, the church for the 21st Century, and the Mystical. A more contemplative series for our Lenten season as we look at practices of ourselves and our culture that might inhibit us from becoming all that God would call us to. I'm especially looking forward to Lent this year because I feel a need to connect back to the roots of my faith and re-center and focus on Christ, who is at the center of all that we are and all that we are called to do.

This world and the many voices, obligations, injustices, frustrations, sadness, often leaves me feeling depleted and I look forward to a season of Embracing...

I hope you too will join me with an openness that the season calls for, as we being our walk towards the cross and Holy Week and Easter.

I want to share with you Jan Richardson's blessing of the Dust that I read at our Ash Wednesday service as a way of centering ourselves as we enter this season:

Blessing the Dust For Ash Wednesday

All those days
you felt like dust,
like dirt,
as if all you had to do
was turn your face
toward the wind
and be scattered
to the four corners
or swept away
by the smallest breath
as insubstantial—

did you not know
what the Holy One
can do with dust?

This is the day
we freely say
we are scorched.

This is the hour
we are marked
by what has made it
through the burning.

This is the moment
we ask for the blessing
that lives within
the ancient ashes,
that makes its home
inside the soil of
this sacred earth.

So let us be marked
not for sorrow.
And let us be marked
not for shame.
Let us be marked
not for false humility
or for thinking
we are less
than we are

but for claiming
what God can do
within the dust,
within the dirt,
within the stuff
of which the world
is made
and the stars that blaze
in our bones
and the galaxies that spiral
inside the smudge
we bear.

—Jan Richardson

"Blessing the Dust" appears
in my new book *Circle of
Grace: A Book of Blessings
for the Seasons*.

In Christ's Love,
Sadie

Dismaying, Yes; But Not Surprising, Devastating

By Bruce Pettit
Lay Member to Annual Conference

It was called to find “a way forward.” It ended taking “a way backward.”

To find a way forward, people in disagreement have to compromise and give up something. The progressives yielded – no longer insisting that all pastors must be allowed to perform LG weddings, nor that all conferences must approve LGBTQ clergy.

But the evangelicals yielded on nothing. That is dismaying, indeed. But I find it not surprising, nor am I devastated.

It is dismaying because, after 47 years, we have not been able to persuade the other side to what we are certain is theological assurance – God loves everyone without condition. The other side has lots of theological education, so it’s puzzling how they miss this point. But then again, maybe they don’t miss it. Maybe they just are appalled at the thought of LGBTQ sex, and no education can dispel that. Or maybe they just like exercising power.

What happened in St. Louis Feb. 23-26 is not surprising. Political factions tend not to compromise when they are confident they have the majority. The Wesleyan Covenant Association had confidence. So not only did it not compromise; it doubled down – even adding more punitive measures. Would our side have compromised if we were confident of a majority? Some folks on our side did not like that we would permit conferences and local churches to refuse LGBTQ clergy or LG marriages. To them the good (allowing localities to decide) was the enemy of the perfect.

Nor is what happened devastating. The Western Jurisdiction, and some of the pastors of mega-UMCs and in the Northeast are saying that nothing will change. They will still perform LG weddings and ordain LGBTQ clergy. Punitive measures are not workable in the face of unity.

The only real difference I see was how the media regarded St. Louis. The New York Times had covered every four years how Methodists reaffirmed “incompatibility.” But they never gave it front-page, top right column treatment – the major story of a day – as they did this year. They must really have seen a split coming – finally.

Neither is the possibility of a split devastating. Splits have been rampant throughout Christian history. Starting with Sts. Peter and Paul saying c. AD 50 that you didn’t have to become Jewish before becoming Christian. Continuing with the West and the East disagreeing on the nature of Christ in the Trinity in AD 451, and finally splitting as the Catholic pope and the Orthodox patriarch excommunicated each other in AD 1054. Continuing through the many Protestant splits of the Reformation. Continuing as John Wesley was evicted from Anglican pulpits because he preached outdoors in 1739 to the lowly Bristol coal miners, telling them the love of God was for them, too. Continuing as the Methodist Episcopal Church in America split in 1844 over slavery.

Splits allow people with different ideas about ministry – for their areas, and for their times – to surge ahead with new energy and effectiveness. There is “a way forward” after all.



The situation



Sunday, March 17th
at 3:00pm - 5:00 pm
1270 Sanchez Street
San Francisco

Cristina Palabay

Amnesty International and ICHRP-US invites Cristina Palabay to share stories of human rights violations and tales of resistance against fascism in the Philippines. Learn what you can do to help stop the killings.



This forum comes at a time when the humanitarian crisis in the Philippines is at an all-time high, even worse than under Marcos. Three priests were killed in the Summer of 2018 alone with over 200 activists slain during that year. Over 27,000 people have been executed on the streets and in their homes without trial in the War on Drugs. Cristina Palabay has come to the US by the invitation of Amnesty International and ICHRP-US (International Coalition for Human Rights in the Philippines) and in coordination with Malaya Movement. She'll share how Americans are tied to these atrocities and what we can do to stop it.

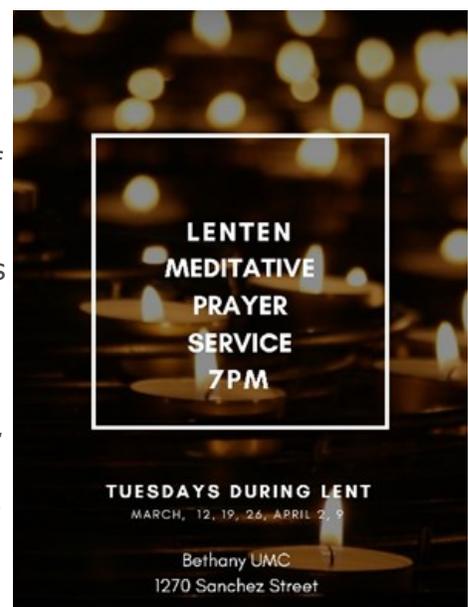
Cristina Palabay is the Secretary General of the Filipino Human Rights Coalition called KARAPATAN (Alliance for the Advancement of People's Rights). She is a Regional Council member of the Asia Pacific Forum on Women, Law and Development and an advisor to the Urgent Action Fund for Women's Human Rights.

A relentless human rights advocate, Palabay has participated in numerous rapid response, fact-finding and humanitarian missions to document and investigate human rights violations, conduct advocacy activities and lead mass actions, and assist the victims of rights violations and their families. She has provided paralegal assistance to victims and kin in filing cases and complaints to courts and other redress mechanisms, initiated dialogues with government institutions and inter-governmental bodies, conducted lobby efforts for the enactment of various legislation for human rights such as the Bill for the Protection of the Rights of Human Rights Defenders, and has made several jail visits to political prisoners to look into their situation.

She is also known for her advocacy for women's rights as among the founders and later on the Secretary General of the Gabriela Women's Party. Palabay is also a lesbian activist, having been a Board Member of Kapederasyon, an organization of lesbians, gays, bisexuals and transgenders in the Philippines.



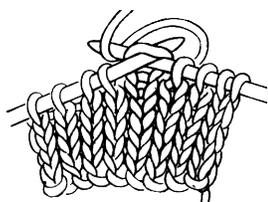
Join us each Tuesday for a 30-minute contemplative prayer service during the season of Lent.



On our First Sunday of Lent we buried an Alleluia banner and bid farewell to what we call the "A-word" during the season of Lent, on Easter in the celebration of Jesus' resurrection we release our Alleluias. While I do this tradition primarily as an exercise for the children in our church, (and my kids are experts at catching me or anyone using the word) the tradition of suspending the use of Alleluia during the Lenten season goes back to at least the 5th century, and the custom of actually bidding the word farewell, with some sort of formality, originated in the Middle Ages.



Alleluia means "Praise the Lord" something we are encouraged to do at all times. However, the Lenten season takes on a more inwardly reflective time. Starting with examining our mortality on Ash Wednesday. So, we bury the Alleluia on the first Sunday of Lent and on Easter Sunday with great joy and celebration we will celebrate our risen lord.



Ray with knitting master colleague and friend, Eleanor Aldrich



Bethany Knits during Lent!

Our "class" continues to grow and evolve! While my primary objective remains giving instruction and free materials to guests, we are gradually becoming a formidable group of seasoned knitters and it's continually exciting and inspiring to see what people bring to the group. We have seen some incredible color work (multi-colored hats with different shapes/themes/designs), a beautiful, hand-sewn quilt, two exquisite Tunisian crochet baby blankets, shawls, wraps, scarves, and even a knitting repair or two (those projects can be the hardest!).

I find myself surprised by the sense of community I experience being with my knitting friends. Their and my walks of life couldn't be more different—yet we find common ground in our love for the craft, the compassion and joy with which we make our gifts for our loved ones, and of course the funny stories that get shared around the table every time we meet!

If you are interested in learning to knit or crochet, please come to one of our meetups. Any ages / levels / skillset (or lack thereof!) are welcome! Every FIRST and THIRD Tuesday of the month, BUT: during Lent, we will start in the Sanctuary to participate in the weekly meditative worship service from 7:00-7:30 PM. Then, we will move to the multi-purpose room 7:30-8:30 PM. As always, supplies and instruction are provided for FREE.

Need more info? Contact Ray Capiral at: bethanysfmusic@gmail.com or (626) 533-1630.

Second Sunday Concert Series Closeout: Briget Boyle & Co!



Bethany's last concert of the Second Sunday Concert Series, Feb. 10, 2019, featured one of my personal favorite people and songwriters, Briget Boyle. Guitarist and singer Briget is an astonishingly prolific songwriter, her introspective, soulful numbers often retelling her life stories in a way that can evoke powerful emotions from audiences who easily find her music so relatable. Her sweet voice captivated and, at times, moved me to tears as I heard songs of hers I've known for years. Hearing the familiar songs now, having had my share of the same or similar life experiences, has given them fresh meaning for me. And I know that is

likely the case for her many other fans who have followed her career thus far. Briget also sang several songs from her new album, *The Next Line* (2018). It's available through a number of streaming services, including Spotify, Apple Music, and SoundCloud. My favorite tracks are "Magic Trick," "Pick Up," "Before Your Eyes," "Pray for Daybreak," and "Heart-Shaped Mirror." I welcome you to check out her album and see what makes her special brand of magic so powerful!

Briget Boyle was joined by Dillbilly, a self-described "genre-queer [sic] songbird from the rural Midwest, whose sound migrates across folk, Americana, roots, alt-country, and rock influences."

They gave us songs replete with sadness, joy, fragility, strength, cries for justice and hope in love... I had never heard their music before, and I was made an instant fan! Dillbilly's lovely tenor with the rhythmic sounds of folk-strumming on their guitar, made an energetic contrast to Briget's set. They were joined by Briget for a few numbers, the two singers harmonizing exquisitely and inviting the audience to sing along.



Last, but certainly not least, both Briget and Dillbilly were joined for much of the performance by Little Spiral Music, a.k.a., Suzanne Yada. Little Spiral is a gifted pianist and singer, and is herself a formidable songwriter and performer. One might not have automatically perceived this at Briget's concert, because of the more collaborative, subdued role LSM played as accompanist and backing vocals. Truly, Little Spiral deserves her own headline act—it was a great surprise and joy to see her on stage with Briget and Dillbilly!

I encourage you to seek out these outstanding musicians and explore their art for yourselves. Briget can be found at: brigetboyle.com, on Facebook, or on Instagram as [@brigetsongs](https://www.instagram.com/brigetsongs); Dillbilly at dillbillymusic.com and on Instagram as [@ddillbilly](https://www.instagram.com/ddillbilly); Little Spiral Music (Suzanne Yada) can be found at patreon.com/littlespiral and on Instagram as [@littlespiralmusic](https://www.instagram.com/littlespiralmusic).



Upcoming Music Events at Bethany

Dear Bethany Family:

Now that the holidays are well behind us, I am delighted to share some news about music events planned for the coming months. First of all, I want to officially announce that I have decided to discontinue the Second Sunday Concert Series. It was a project I was very passionate about and poured a great deal of extra time and my own money into, and we had some lovely concerts and got to see many new faces in our church, but truthfully it proved a daunting task to find new artists for every month and there were months when it just wasn't possible to book a show. I think there will be other and perhaps better ways for me to use my time at Bethany, and so I thank you all for supporting this endeavor and I hope you saw the good that could come out of it.

That being said, there appears to be a misunderstanding about my vision for the music program, and my discontinuation of the Second Sunday series should not be interpreted as "there will be no further music concerts at Bethany." On the contrary, we already have several amazing events in the books, which I'll briefly describe below. But I want to say first that I will always support hosting music events at Bethany. I just feel it's time to relieve myself of the monthly arduous tasks of finding, booking, and promoting an act. I say, we continue to allow artists to book their events in our space on a rental-basis (and by their own initiative), allowing them to handle all matters surrounding promotion and production. We had great successes with guests such as Katie Garibaldi and our classical music friends who came in February—we filled the house for both of those events!

So, on to the current season lineup! So far, we already have an exciting number of concerts coming up at Bethany UMC:

April 14 (Palm Sunday), Time TBD: Ray Capiral Piano Recital: A 1-hr program of virtuosic solo piano pieces to be followed by a light reception. Come enjoy all of the music I have been preparing for touring and auditions—works by J.S. Bach, Chopin, Faure, Rachmaninoff, and others!

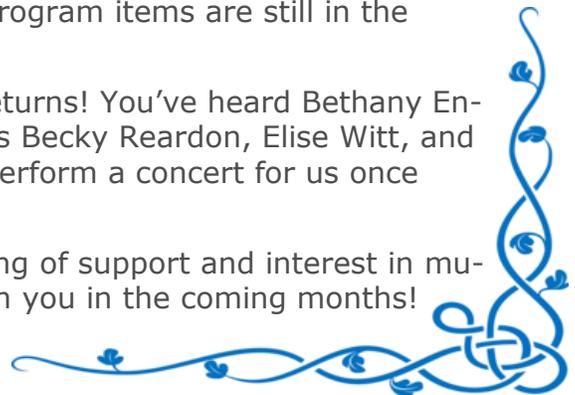
May 12 (Mother's Day), 5:00 PM: Ray Capiral and Friends, Classical Chamber Music Recital: A 1-1.5 hr program of exquisite music for flutes, piano, cello, and ?, featuring John Speers and Jef Caers, flute/alto flute/piccolo; Seldy Cramer, cello; Ray Capiral, piano; and possibly other musical guests!

July 14 (Bastille Day), Time TBD: Organ Recital featuring Michael Hendron and other guests, TBA. Bethany UMC recently acquired a second pedal organ—and to celebrate its arrival, we will have a concert! Specific program items are still in the works, but do stay tuned!

November 10, Time TBD: Natural Rhythms Trio returns! You've heard Bethany Ensemble sing a variety of short pieces by songwriters Becky Reardon, Elise Witt, and Terry Garthwaite. They'll be back in November to perform a concert for us once more!

I am continually grateful for the generous outpouring of support and interest in music at Bethany, and excited to share new music with you in the coming months!

~ Ray



MARCH 2018

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1 Moldovan PS (PS hours: 8:30-5:30)	2 Overnight Youth Group thru 3/9
3 Food Bank Collection Worship 10:45 Fellowship 11:45	4 Moldovan PS Monday Meditation 5p	5 Moldovan PS Curry Without Worry 1-5 Bethany Knits 7-830	6 Moldovan PS SF Sangha Meditation 7-9 Ash Wednesday Service 7pm	7 Moldovan PS Bell Appeal 7-9 Al-anon 7-9	8 Moldovan PS	9
10 <i>*Daylight Savings*</i> Worship 10:45 Fellowship 11:45 SFNM Lunchmaking 12-130p	11 Moldovan PS Monday Meditation 5p	12 Moldovan PS Curry Without Worry 1-5 Lenten Service 7pm	13 Moldovan PS SF Sangha Meditation 7-9	14 Moldovan PS Al-anon 7-9	15 Moldovan PS	16
17 Worship 10:45 Fellowship 11:45 Front Line Resistance 3-5p	18 Moldovan PS Monday Meditation 5p	19 Moldovan PS Curry Without Worry 1-5 Lenten Service 7pm Bethany Knits 730-830	20 Moldovan PS SF Sangha Meditation 7-9	21 Moldovan PS Al-anon 7-9	22 Moldovan PS	23 Overnight Youth Group thru 3/30 Church Planning Meeting 10-3
24 Worship 10:45 Fellowship 11:45	25 Monday Meditation 5p	26 Curry Without Worry 1-5 Lenten Service 7pm	27 SF Sangha Meditation 7-9	28 Al-anon 7-9	29	30
31 Worship 10:45 Fellowship 11:45 Girl Scouts 4-6p						



March Birthdays

- 1: Thomas MacBurney IV
- 4: Reid Bond
- 15: Joan Harp
- 22: Liam Horton O'Connor
- 26: Shirley Perkins



Contact Us

If you have articles, photos or announcements that you would like to share with the Bethany community, please contact us!

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