May 2
“The Power of Love”
1 John 4:7-21

May 9
“Maundy”
John 15:9-17

May 16
“Our Polar Star”
John 17:6-19

May 23
“Visions and Dreams”
Acts 2:1-21

May 30
Maggie’s final Sunday with us

Register for our Sunday morning worship services (and Holy Week services) at bit.ly/reg4worship.
Because of the shelter in place orders, please do not come into the office. You can call the office 510-797-0895 to leave a message for any staff member.

Mikele Kearney’s email is admin@nilesdiscoverychurch.org. She will be on vacation April 5-9.

Cecilia Le’s email is cecilia@nilesdiscoverychurch.org

You are encouraged to use the pastors’ Calendly apps to make an appointment for a phone call or a Zoom meeting if you would like; their contact information is to the right.

The office will be closed on Monday, May 31, in observance of Memorial Day.

Notice is hereby given that the 2021 Annual Meeting of Niles Discovery Church will be held on Sunday, May 2, 2021, on Zoom immediately following the worship service (at approximately 11:00 a.m.). The attendance of members of the congregation is urgently and prayerfully requested. The meeting will take place in the same Zoom “meeting” as our worship services. Members who are not yet registered for Zoom worship should do so at bit.ly/reg4worship.

At the meeting, the congregation will receive the Annual Report, approve minutes of Congregational Meetings held in the past year, elect officers and Cabinet members, and any other business that may legally come before the congregation. If you cannot access the Annual Report online at bit.ly/ndcar2021, please contact Mikele Kearney in the church office (510-797-0895; admin@nilesdiscoverychurch.org) and she will mail you a copy.

Please send announcements and articles as you write them to Mikele at admin@nilesdiscoverychurch.org. She will post them on our News Blog as she receives them and will submit them for publication in the following issue of The Bell (if appropriate in terms of timing). The deadline for submissions for the June 2021 edition of The Bell is 10:00 p.m. on Wednesday, May 12. In addition to typical newsletter news, we hope to fill each issue of The Bell with reflections, photographs, poems, and so forth by members and friends of the congregation.
The Ministry Teams will hold their first meetings of the new program year on Monday, May 3, at 7:30. If you have wondered what a Ministry Team does and/or how you can be involved, you’re invited to attend this (or any) meeting. This meeting will be on Zoom; go to bit.ly/MinTeamMtgs to register.

**Ministry Teams Invite New Participants**

**Don’t Miss Your Shot!**

As we go to press, the state of California has opened up Covid-19 vaccinations to all youth and adults, ages 16 and up. Your pastors and church leaders are encouraging all church members and friends to be vaccinated, so we can keep each other as safe as possible as we begin to gather in person again in the coming months. If you’re unsure how to get an appointment for a vaccine, contact your healthcare provider directly, or try the following resources:

**Washington Hospital:** Patients of Washington Township Healthcare System, or anyone who lives in the Tri-Cities, Sunol, or South Hayward may sign up for a vaccine appointment (this is how Pastor Jeff got his shot):

Go to: mychart.whhs.com/mychart/covid19#/ or call: (510) 248-8200

**Haller’s Pharmacy:** Haller’s Pharmacy is offering vaccines to any Alameda County resident on weekends at the Fremont Fire Tactical Center. They have a waitlist, so even if you don’t get an appointment right away, you can get in line for when one opens up (this is how Pastor Brenda got her shot):

Go to: hallerspharmacy.com/covid19-vaccination-clinic-information

**Bay Area Community Health:** BACH has two vaccine clinics, one for those who live or work in Alameda County (at the Mission Valley ROP center adjacent to Kennedy High School), and one for Santa Clara County residents:

Go to: bach.health/vaccine/ or call: 510.770.8040

**State of California:** Sign up for an appointment through the California Department of Public Health:

Go to: myturn.ca.gov/ or call: 833-422-4255

**Alameda County:** Sign up for an appointment through the Alameda County Public Health Department:

Go to: primarybio.com/r/alco-vax-signup or call: 510-208-4VAX

**Safe Church Policies Amended**

The Ministry of Christian Education Team is beginning to plan for how Sunday School will happen as we return to meeting inside the Niles Discovery Church building. We will follow the recommended safety guidelines in effect when we return. We are currently following up on Cleared Worker requirements that have expired over the last year.

In addition, to safeguard the health of both adults and children as much as possible, we would like all the cleared workers with children/youth and other vulnerable persons to have been vaccinated against COVID-19. This necessitates an amendment to the Safe Church Policies which was approved by the Cabinet on April 19, 2021. The amendment is as follows:

All ministers working with children and youth and/or other vulnerable persons will have completed a course of vaccine against COVID-19. A copy of both sides of the vaccination card will be kept in a locked file in the church office along with other required confidential forms.

If you are currently a Cleared Worker, you can send a copy of both sides of your vaccination record at this time to Pastor Jeff, or hand it to him as soon as we can return to the building. Thank you.
**Restorative Justice For Indigenous Peoples**

The 2020 Annual Gathering of the Northern California Nevada Conference of the United Church of Christ (NCNC-UCC) adopted a resolution titled “Taking Action towards Making Amends for a Colonizing Past,” a call for education and “acknowledgement of our inherited history, an opportunity to pray for repair and the righting of relationships, and for taking courageous and humble action for land protection and justice.” This undertaking first involves studying the history of our ancestor’s treatment of the indigenous peoples who lived in the area from Big Sur to the San Francisco Bay Area. For those of us who did not grow up in California, it means starting from the beginning – discarding everything we learned in school studying “Indians” from other states. Life along this coastal area was unique.

The Ministry of Social Concerns Team invites you to join us in our study. As we learn more, we will plan towards Niles Discovery Church accepting the call to take proactive steps to healing the wrongs of the past – legacies of colonialism and the genocide of Indigenous peoples. We would like to:

- Seek ways to work with Indigenous-led organizations seeking to recover lands/land use to local indigenous communities.
- Learn about the Indigenous communities on whose unceded territory we reside using
- both study of written materials and talking with the ancestors of the original residents.
- Create relationships of restorative justice with the ancestors of these Indigenous peoples.

Please contact Judy Zlatnik (510-509-8165 or jzlatnik@yahoo.com) if you are interested in working with the Ministry of Social Concerns Team in studying and planning, or if you would like more information. The team is very excited about the possibilities that this NCNC-UCC resolution has opened for us.

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**Let’s Go Camping**

The Northern California Nevada Conference has announced that camps will be held this summer at Camp Tamarack. Many of our families have missed the opportunity to attend the summer camps offered through our conference. This year, Camp Tamarack will be implementing COVID-19 precautions and regulations based on CDC, American Camp Association, and Fresno County Department of Health guidelines.

- Early Bird Registration: $250/camper for registration before May 1.
- Niles Discovery Church will contribute $200 per camper toward the camp fees.

The registration links are posted on the conference website. Click [here](#) for more information. Please let Cathy West-Jancoski know if you need additional information or if you will be registering for camp.

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**“Pray Their Names” Returns**

We are planning to host the Pray Their Names art exhibit again, for one month beginning in mid-May. If you missed experiencing this moving work of art, now’s your chance. If you’d like to help with the installation, contact Moderator John Smith, and watch the “This Week” email for more information.
No amount of therapy, love,  
And corrective theology  
Can stop Good Friday, “My God, My  
God,  
Why have you abandoned me?”  
Existential crisis. Not when  
raised  
On Substitutionary  
Atonement  
In an abusive home,  
oppressive society,  
Of victim blaming, left, right,  
and center.  
From the Lent worship dish  
Of substitute beach glass,  
I choose a long flat black pearl,  
Full of iridescent colors.  
It’s irregular, ragged and bumpy,  
As my life has been.  
Among last words Jesus spoke today,  
Were ones telling one or more disciples,  
And his, maybe every, mom,  
You are family, here on out.  
Am I? Which one? With whom?  
The flat black pearl is not the stone  
Rolled across the entrance  
Of the cave, his grave, I first perceived.  
Not a scroll holding his last words.  
The pearl is not inscribed,  
“Enter into paradise with me, today,”  
Like he told a thief crucified by his side.  
Not inscribed, “Forgive them  
For they don’t know what they are doing,”

Which he said about the soldiers,  
Stripping, mocking, nailing him to a cross to die.  
Not inscribed with end-all brokenness,  
“I thirst,” and pain.  
End-all wholeness, “I give my spirit to  
God.”  
“It is finished,” the end.  
Black pearl is more like resurrected  
Jesus,  
Saying, “Peace be with you,”  
Every Easter Sunday.  
While having breakfast by the sea.  
Or on the road to Emmaus  
In the breaking of the bread.  
More like Jesus saying, “Peace be with you,”  
When we are afraid, all alone, unwanted, lost.  
Afraid, we’re unforgivable, failures.  
More like Jesus saying, “Peace be with you,”  
You are precious, loved as is,  
As God created you to be. Keep choosing life.  
More like Jesus saying, “Peace be with you,”  
Keep stealing away until there is enough  
For you, for all, to live, to be well, whole.  
To find belonging with one another, God.  
Keep offering paradise to anyone with less  
To eat, less reach, less understanding,  
Less breath to breathe.  
Black pearl is more like Jesus saying, sharing,  
Every first, in-between, last, everlasting word,  
There is to convince us all,  
we’re all very good creation, likeness,  
of God’s eyes, heart, and hands.
May Special Offering: 
SAVE-ing The Abused

“We believe that every person has the right to live in peace.” – SAVE Mission Statement

Safe Alternatives to Violent Environments (SAVE) is a local organization that provides shelter, support, and educational opportunities for individuals and families so they may end the cycle of abuse, heal, and have the freedom to reach their full potential. The program includes a shelter/transitional housing program and an Empowerment Center offering crisis support, referrals, and assistance with food, clothing and, even, restraining orders. SAVE has also created education programs for police officers and medical personnel specifically addressing the needs of domestic violence victims and provides Teen Dating Violence Awareness presentations to schools.

We will be collecting for SAVE the entire month of May. In addition, you can choose to prepare a SAVE Ditty Bag. These bags are filled with things like shampoo and conditioner, soap, deodorant, a toothbrush and toothpaste, etc. When an abused person comes into the local safe house, possibly carrying nothing, they are given one of these bags. These small items will help begin their journey to safety and wellness. Instructions and empty bags are available during the puzzle exchange on Fridays, 3:00 p.m. You can come to the patio entrance at the church to receive materials and to return completed bags which will then be delivered to the shelter.

As with all our special offerings, you are welcome to give at any time (always make checks payable to Niles Discovery Church) or go online to our church webpage and click the “donate” button at the top of the page. Niles Discovery Church receives a different special offering each month. With such varied opportunities for giving, you may want to decide which are most important to you. You can see the schedule of offerings at bit.ly/2021SpecialOffering.

Last month, you donated $728 for the future leaders of the church, which will be split between the Pacific School of Religion and Disciples Seminary Foundation. We are training the future, thanks to your generosity!

Second Saturday Documentary Presents: 
I Am Greta

This film follows Greta Thunberg as she campaigns for the climate like our lives depend on it.

As part of the Second Saturday Documentary Series, I Am Greta will be shown via Zoom Saturday, May 8, 1:30 p.m. There will be a discussion immediately following the film led by Susie Claxton, who is the Green Team Leader at Niles Discovery Church. She has an educational background in Environmental Sciences, and a passion for environmental issues. You can register for the film series at bit.ly/SSDSZoom.

In this moving film the story of teenage climate activist Greta Thunberg is told through compelling, never-before-seen footage. Starting with her one-person school strike for climate action outside the Swedish Parliament, the documentary follows Greta - a shy schoolgirl with Asperger’s – in her rise to prominence, and her galvanizing global impact as she sparks school strikes around the world. The film culminates with her astonishing wind powered voyage across the Atlantic Ocean to speak at the UN Climate Action Summit in New York City, where, in September 2019, at the United Nations Climate Action Summit, she made headlines by condemning world leaders for abandoning today’s children to the ravages of climate change.

Thunberg strikingly upends the stereotype of the young innocent as poster girl. She is not there to give hope to adults – she is there to give them hell, and she knows about the nuances of climate science to back up her statements. Greta Thunberg resists being a walking symbol or letting people off the hook. She is here to fight.
**REGISTRATION REQUIRED**

To enhance the safety of your Zoom experience, we require advanced registration for Zoom meetings held on the church’s Zoom account. You only need to register once for a repeating event. Find the registration links in the descriptions of the scheduled events.

**WEEKLY BIBLE STUDY**

Monday Morning Bible study continues to Zoom from 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. The scripture studied is typically the scripture for the coming Sunday’s worship service. Everyone is welcome. Register at bit.ly/mmbsreg.

**DAYTIME FELLOWSHIP GROUP**

The Daytime Fellowship meets on the third Monday of the month (which is May 17, this month) following the Bible Study. Bring your lunch to this monthly Zoom gathering. We share the same meeting link as the Monday Morning Bible Study, so join by registering for the Bible Study at bit.ly/mmbsreg.

**THE POET IN YOU?** By Cindy Sojourner

Move My Spirit Poetry is currently meeting on Wednesdays from noon to about 2:00 p.m. via Zoom. Anyone is welcome to join us in the writing, reading, appreciating, and/or gentle editing of our poetry. We choose weekly inspirational optional themes, but whatever moves the spirit to write is valued. We do a 10-minute free write on a chosen theme and share those poems too. No experience is required.

This little poetry group keeps producing greater joy, comfort, brain stimulation, loving support, and more and more beautiful poetry. Try it; you might find there is a poet in you longing to give voice to amazing wonders and ordinary everyday life. Contact Cindy Sojourner (cindybsojourner@gmail.com), Veronica Riggs (VMR49@aol.com), or Joy Hurst (joyhurst625@gmail.com) for more information or to join.

**Are You On Facebook?**

If you are on Facebook, please “like” the Niles Discovery Church page. You can find it at facebook.com/NilesDiscoveryChurch. Once you’ve clicked the “Like” button, it will change to “Liked.” Then hover your mouse over the “Following” button and click the pencil image to the right of the word “Notifications.” Select “All” under the “Posts” options then click “Done.” You’ll get notified when we post something on the Page, which you can then share to help promote your church.

You can also join our Facebook “group” at facebook.com/groups/nilesdiscoverychurch/ to share ideas, joke, concerns, prayers, and just about anything else among your church family.

And if you want to “friend” our pastors, they are at facebook.com/brenda.loremann and facebook.com/RevJSS. Learn more about healthy social media boundaries in the church at bit.ly/ndcsocmedia.
All Who Are Caring For Sick, Frail, And/Or Elderly Family Members.

Peace Throughout The Earth, Offering Thanks For All Who Through Non-Violent Methods Are Bringing God’s Compassion And Justice To The World.

A reminder about this prayer list:
If you have a prayer request that you’d like added to this list (or removed) please let Pastor Jeff know.

**Prayers For These People And Their Families Because Of Their Health Concerns:**

Grace Rankin; Bonnie Rankin; Cindy Corey; Bruce Roeding; Ginny August; Roy Aiden Lucey-Cose; Bridget Lucey-Cose; Jan Quilici; Martha LeRoy; John Zlatnik; Helen Boyer; JoAn Parker; Charlie Smith; Bill Cutler; Becky Moreno; Isabel Moreno; Nancy Attinger; Diana Roeding; Charlotte O’Donnell; Penn Boyer; Isaiah Espinoza-Carter; Diane Kindle; Sandra Frisbey; Melissa Palleschi’s brother Gene Hayden; Jesse Church’s father, Jim Church; the sister of Pastor Brenda’s friend Alliene Turner; Priscilla Taylor’s father-in-law, Steve Taylor, and mother-in-law, Angie Taylor; Priscilla Taylor’s friend, Kathy Cavalli; Rich Gallegos’ mother, Esther; Joy Barnitz’s dear friend Rev. Jeffrey Cheifetz; Helen Boyer’s sister-in-law, Marjorie Boyer; Marjorie Fremont’s daughter, Lisa; Barbara P. King’s son, Jason King; Cindy Sojourner’s friend Saemi’s brother Don Ladue; Priscilla Taylor’s friend, Lana Artemoff; Associate Conference Minister Rev. Davena Jones; Karen and Keith Moody’s friend, Jerry Miller; Sandra Wong’s friend, Nichelle; the sister of a CleanStart client; Joy Barnitz’s friend, Polly Baxter; Joy Barnitz’s friend Rachel; Joy Barnitz’s friend Alison; Susie Claxton’s sister, Caroline; Becky Moreno’s brother-in-law, Vince; Bee Newell’s nephew, Matt Hovland; the mother of Bridget Lucey-Cose’s co-worker, Will; Sharon Yool’s daughter; Michael Thomson’s sister, Mary Thomson; Alison Kieft’s friend, Judy Huff; Alison Kieft’s sister-in-law, Debbie Thompson; Alison Kieft’s friend undergoing cancer treatment; Grace Rankin’s brother, Jim Carstairs; Katy Wharton’s mother; Janet Butcher; William “Butch” Butcher; Carol Easter’s daughter, Allison; Carol Easter’s mother, Barbara; Maria Garnica’s brother, Victor Garnica; Suzy Mahusay’s sister, Jo Carroll.

**Prayers For All Who Are Grieving, Especially:**

Randy Fewel’s family as they grieve the sudden death of her former husband on March 29;
The family of Judi Eaton who died on February 3;
Doug Swint and his family as they grieve the death of Doug’s mother, Geraldine Swint, on February 1;
Judy Hollowell and her family as they grieve the death of John Hollowell on January 18;
Alliene Turner (a friend of Pastor Brenda) and her family as they grieve the death of her nephew in January;

Girven Hunter and her family as they grieve the death of her husband Dean Hunter on December 26;
Bob and Betty Morris and their family as they grieve the death of their grandson, Sam Morris, on December 25;
John Zlatnik and his family as they grieve the death of his brother-in-law on December 15;
Rich Gallegos and his family as they grieve the death of his aunt Nena, who died on Thanksgiving evening from COVID-19;

**All Who Are Caring For Sick, Frail, And/OR Elderly Family Members.**
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**Pastor Brenda on Study Leave**
THE BELL IS FIRST CLASS

This edition of *The Bell* was graciously edited by Priscilla Taylor. If you received this issue of *The Bell* through the US Mail, then you received it first class mail. You can help reduce our costs (roughly $1.50 per issue you receive in the mail) by receiving *The Bell* via email. Simply go to bit.ly/NDCmailsignup and start filling out the forms. You can select what email lists you want to join – for the newsletter, the weekly prayer requests, the weekly announcements, and more. Then, please leave a phone message or email the church office (510-797-0895; admin@nilesdiscoverychurch.org) so we can note in our database that you don’t need *The Bell* via the US Mail anymore.