

# The Franciscan



The Bishop's Committee

## From our Vicar... JULY 2021



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### Why Church?

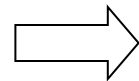
In Eugene Peterson's book, *Practicing Resurrection*, he further elaborates on the book of Ephesians from chapter 2: 11-22. In it, he addresses what Paul writes as he speaks about what the church is.

Indeed, we are fortunate at St. Francis. We have a lovely church building, sanctuary. We are blessed by five and half acres of restful and appealing landscape. We are not in an overcrowded urban area, sandwiched between one building and another. We have space, and contributions of the Labyrinth, Rose Garden and Biblical Garden continue to nourish our souls. However, according to Paul as he is writing to the community in Ephesus, all these things are NOT what church is. Even all the good things that happen inside the church, the music, the preaching, the liturgy, the Eucharist, are NOT what church is.

I like to think of these things as setting the stage, inviting us into church, helping us to be receptive and ready to receive church. Here's how Peterson describes Paul's writing about what church is. "Remember what that transition was like when you crossed the threshold into church, the transition from exclusion to inclusion? Remember the surprise of being an insider to God and his revelation after being an outsider? Remember this well.."

Peterson explains that all the "doing" of church is caught up in function, like the idea of creating the atmosphere around an event that is about to take place. What church is, is that event. "We do not create the church. It is. We enter and participate in what is given to us. There is Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Most of what the church is, not all, is invisible." Church is both what we see and what we don't see. We can't see the ascension of Jesus. We can't see the descent of the Holy Spirit. We can't see sins washed away. We can't see the birth of a soul. We can't see the river of life.

But we can participate and show up to welcome it happening. We can be together as a community and enter in with expectancy that Jesus is there. We can hold out our empty hands and receive bread for life and know that God has filled us.



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Paul says church is not just a place but a live, dynamic, foot-on-the ground place of hospitality where we are welcomed as participants with Jesus. It is a place where we are set apart and God makes Godself known to us personally, in our language, in our circumstances, in word, and in sacrament.

That's practicing resurrection and living into being and experiencing church.



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## STAY CONNECTED WITH US!

- Pastoral Care through the church office (805)526-5141, email [revsarahkitch@gmail.com](mailto:revsarahkitch@gmail.com) or cell 818-442-4514
- Keep up through the St. Francis Website <https://www.stfrancischurchofsimi.org/>
- Sunday Worship Live Streamed with link in the St. Francis Weekly
- Remember to keep in touch with each other through the Phone Tree and stay connected.

Please remember St. Francis with your donations and pledge by

<https://www.stfrancischurchofsimi.org/donate>

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## Wisdom in Practice Advertisement 2021-2022

### What is Wisdom in Practice?

This unique program is an invitation to re-intensify your spiritual life. It is unique nine-month cohort-based experience designed to enrich your relationship with the Divine and support you into further enrichment of your life. You are joined in this journey by fellow seekers, mentors and spiritual teachers.

### Who should consider Wisdom and Practice?

This diverse and inclusive community is open to anyone seeking to go deeper in their spiritual walk. Rooted in the contemplative tradition, all faith traditions are welcomed and affirmed including those who identify as “spiritual independents” who follow no set faith traditions or beliefs.

### What is the format?

Your learning experience consists of several interconnected elements:

- We participate as a cohort in each of Stillpoint’s One Day Spiritual Retreats (6 per year) where we experience learning from a wisdom teacher. We gather during the lunch hour, sharing our insights with one another.
- We join one another in 2 -hour cohort retreats (6 per year) that focus on the teaching and exploration of Spiritual Practices. Such actions and activities are ways of bringing us closer to the holy. This year we will engage in deep experiences of the practices of: Presence, Compassion and Gratitude.
- We will gather as small groups of 4 to 5 as Wisdom Circles (6 per year) to support one another in community and deepen our integration of our spiritual practices.

## How much does the program cost?

The cost is \$700 and includes a full subscription to all of Stillpoint's One Day Spiritual Retreat programs (a \$420 value). In addition, this tuition includes the half-day Wisdom In Practice Cohort Retreats, facilitated Wisdom Circle gatherings along with a wide array of readings and resources. *Scholarships and payment plans are available*

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## Jesus as Spiritual Director

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*Every culture and religious tradition have some method of passing on spiritual wisdom and for helping individuals to discover their own. The Christian tradition of spiritual direction can find its origin in Jesus' own way of relating to his disciples and the many who sought him out for healing and instruction. Jeannette Bakke emphasizes Jesus' own intimacy with God as the source of his authority that he encourages others to rely on as well.*

Jesus is the ultimate spiritual director because of his intimacy with God, his Abba. Jesus listened and responded to others out of his attentiveness to the Father, out of his participation in the Jewish covenant community, and out of his knowledge of Scripture and Jewish law. But the Father's love and presence and the Holy Spirit's anointing were the most powerful influences in Jesus' life and the source of direction for others. . . .

Jesus taught and offered direction to his disciples and others before and after the resurrection. In each case, he spoke to their personal situation within the framework of God's faithfulness and invited them to recognize God's loving presence and availability to guide and bless. . . .

At Jacob's well Jesus listened to a woman about her relationship with God and her human relationships. Jesus pointed her directly to God.

It's who you are and the way you live that count before God. Your worship must engage your spirit in the pursuit of truth. That's the kind of people the Father is out looking for: those who are simply and honestly *themselves* before him in their worship. God is sheer being itself—Spirit. Those who worship him must do it out of their very being, their spirits, their true selves, in adoration. (John 4:23–24, *The Message*). . . .

When he was speaking to groups, Jesus often told stories—parables—to invite people to listen to and respond to God. He used parables to catch people's attention and to illustrate and clarify the nature of the kingdom of God. His audiences would have been startled by stories of a Samaritan hero (Luke 10:25–37), a justified tax collector (Luke 18:9–14), or a father running to welcome his prodigal son (Luke 15:20). These stories said, “Look, this is what God is like.” Jesus used these stories to offer spiritual direction by challenging people to look more closely at what they believed and why, what their own experience of God was and how they interpreted their experiences with God. This is the essence of spiritual direction—encouraging people to listen to and follow God.

In Scripture we observe Jesus always listening for the voice of his Abba—in relationship to his disciples, other individuals, small groups, and crowds. Present-day spiritual directors attempt to function in the same way by listening to the Holy Spirit and responding to directees and others out of prayerful attentiveness to God.

**Christine Valters Paintner**, from an online resource entitled, *Abbey of the Arts*, writes about Lectio Divina. She describes it this way:

*“In lectio, we read scripture and listen for what word or phrase is shimmering. This practice is always in service of contemplative vision in daily life. Lectio invites us to slowly see more and more of the world as a sacred text, ripe with possibility for meaning. We can expand our contemplative practice to include a kind of visio divina, or sacred seeing, where we gaze on a painting or photograph we love and look for something that shimmers – perhaps a symbol, a color, a brushstroke, the play of light and shadow. And in that shimmering we know there is a gift for us, even if we don’t fully understand its meaning in the moment.”*

*We can then expand our practice of sacred seeing even further to include what we see all around us in our daily lives. What would it be like to move through our day, watching for what shimmers, waiting to receive these moments of revelation, and then savor them?”*

It seems appropriate to consider this practice of lectio or visio divina as we observe the season of Pentecost. We are alive in change and transition and the Spirit is blowing through, catching us up in a new way forward. We need to shake ourselves a little and take a moment to consider what Painter is inviting for us in this season.

We might consider how often when we read our meditations, our Day by Day, a Scripture, even sacred reading, do we let it linger over us for a time? Are we looking for what catches our attention and how God is inviting us into the word for that day?

In my office I have some prayer cards. Each day, I choose one at random for that day. It might say gratitude on it, it might say joy and it might say peace. There is a prayer and a thought on the card that I pray and then put on my desk. As I see it through the day, it reminds me to look for where God’s joy is showing up. Where are places that I am particularly grateful for today? These cards are particularly helpful on days that seem more stressful or, dare I even say, chaotic?

In the midst of the Spirit’s power of change, may we take this opportunity to look for where God is speaking to us in God’s word, in our everyday lives? Let’s take this time to look for sacred seeing through our day, watching for what “shimmers” and how these captive moments inform us. It’s important that we recognize the Spirit’s movement all around us that we may participate in what God is doing in the kingdom work.

I look forward to hearing what you see and hear.



## **St. Francis Book Club**

**“The Indigo Girl” by Natasha Boyd  
Everyone is welcome to join!  
Contact Chris McCarty for details.**

## DOK RETREAT

The Dates have been set for the 2022 Women's Retreat! March 25, 26, 27!  
Contact Leslie Lonergan or Pat Udell for Details.



### NEW OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED THROUGH ST. FRANCIS

Our church members have asked what useful items **The Samaritan Center** can use the most. Your donations go directly to feed the needs of our community. Donations can be brought to church or left at the Sam Center kitchen door. Thank you so much.

Here is a link for much needed items for the Samaritan Center:

[https://www.amazon.com/hz/wishlist/ls/BXFBPE9HRPQR?ref=wl\\_share](https://www.amazon.com/hz/wishlist/ls/BXFBPE9HRPQR?ref=wl_share)

All shelf-stable goods are helpful, as well as cleaning products and trash bags.

#### **PLEASE HELP IF YOU CAN WITH...**

- **Men's Jeans, shorts waist 30-34**
  - Men's & Women's work boots
  - Men's belts
  - Men's t-shirts size M or L
- **Unopened/new Men's underwear & socks**
  - Disposable gloves size L or XL
  - Face masks – Disposable
  - Clorox wipes & bleach
  - Unopened plastic utensils (forks & knives)
  - Water bottles (16.9 fl oz)
  - Disposable coffee cups(12 oz)
  - \$10 Gas Card
- **Canned meals (like stew, soups, ravioli, spaghetti'Os)**
- **Paper Towels**
  - Grape Jelly For Sandwiches
  - Peanut Butter (Creamy) for Sandwiches
  - Plastic Forks and Spoons
  - Toilet Paper (Septic Safe)
  - Gallon And Sandwich Size Ziploc Bags
  - Soup Bowls
  - 10 oz Coffee Cups

More Information:

<http://www.thesamaritancenterofsimivalley.org>

Go to [smile.amazon.com/ch/95-2558848](https://smile.amazon.com/ch/95-2558848) and Amazon donates to **St. Francis of Assisi Episcopal Church every time you order through Amazon.**

### BABY CLOSET

Don't forget the needs of the Baby Closet that is ongoing. Please talk with Gerri Harrington if you have questions. The Baby Closet is collecting DIAPERS SIZE 4,5,6. diapers; baby cream; baby wipes. Stock up each week so you c

help fill the closet with Diapers, Wipes and Baby Cream!



### Parish Prayer Needs:

**Healing:** Barbara, Sylvia, Brody, Avalon, Shantel, Lee, Michael, Megan, Jean, Braydon, Hank, Fr. Steve, Al, Mary, Yvonne, Dee, Jeff, Jim, Bill & Leslie, Jan, David, Lee, Trish, Sue, Tony, Mark, Michele, Eric, Louise, Bob & family, Edith, Howard, Mary, Donna, J.D., Frances, Patrick, Margaret, Beverly, Margie. Alan and Alan's family, Kevin, Eve, Amy.

Believe in yourself, to show other people how to believe in you.

Diantha Ain

## Who Do You Say That I Am?

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*We all have a yearning to be known by each other and by God. Professor and spiritual director Ruth Takiko West uses Jesus' question, "Who do you say that I am?" as a model for our deepest spiritual questioning.*

"Who do you say that I am?" is a central question of Jesus in the Gospel of Mark, as he helps the disciples clarify their relationship to and with him. It is also a crucial question for Jesus in his own identity clarification. We note the progression of questions: who do people say that I am, who do you say that I am, and, in Matthew's Gospel, who do people say the Son of man is? Each of these questions goes to the heart of every Christian's, or dare I say every person's, longing for a connection to the Divine, to their deepest self, and to the world they live in. . . . [1]

There is an inherently cyclical interrelationship between yearning for the presence of Spirit and learning what and who we are in the presence of Spirit. In the Christian tradition, Jesus asks his disciples, "Who do you say that I am?" He is emphasizing that despite what the crowd might be saying about him, it is imperative that they know who he is. It is equally important that we know who Jesus, God, or the Spirit is for us. Our personal beliefs lead us to yearn to know more about our unique relationship to the Divine. This awareness becomes the foundation upon which our spirituality is built.

Our questions about who God is lead us to simultaneously ponder our own significance to Spirit. Because Jesus taught by modeling, we follow his example and ask God, "Who do you say that I am?" Because we are the *imago Dei* (image of God), I believe God would say that we are God's Beloved, fearfully and wonderfully made. It is important to consider what we might know about ourselves and how we interact or respond in the ways we do, or what we perceive or believe about our own faith, theology, and identity. As we endeavor to live fully into this notion of belovedness, we must be introspective and self-aware, carefully uncovering and discovering our most authentic selves while staying connected to Spirit, utilizing the resources of prayer and other spiritual practices. This is the basis of how we live out our spirituality.

As we look in the mirror and at each other and Creation, once more we ask ourselves, "Who do you say that I am?" How might we represent the Holy in the world? How do we interact with each other and Creation? . . . We must be mindful to revere the Holy in our neighbors—to share our stories about God's goodness and grace, companionship and love in the hopes of becoming the community that God has intended.

# July

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>
					8 pm AA PH	
<b>4 Pentecost 6</b> David Kitch Preaching 10:15 am Eucharist with Music  6:30 Men's AA PH	<b>5</b>  8 pm Men's AA PH	<b>6</b>  6:30 pm Women PH 7 pm AA Clare Rm 8 pm Women's AA PH	<b>7</b> 9am-2 pm Office Hrs. 10 am Healing & Eucharist Service  7:30 pm Men's AA PH	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>  8 pm AA PH	<b>10</b>
<b>11 Pentecost 7</b> Rev. Sarah Kitch, Preaching 10:15 am Eucharist with Music  6:30 Men's AA PH	<b>12</b> 11 am – 5 pm Blood Drive  8 pm Men's AA PH	<b>13</b>  6:30 pm Women PH 7 pm AA Clare Rm 8 pm Women's AA PH	<b>14</b> 9am-2 pm Office Hrs. 10 am Healing & Eucharist Service  11 am-5 pm Blood Drive  6 pm Woodranch HOA  7:30 pm Men's AA PH	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b>  8 pm AA PH	<b>17</b>
<b>18 Pentecost 8</b> David Kitch, Preaching 10:15 am Eucharist with Music  6:30 Men's AA PH	<b>19</b>  8 pm Men's AA PH	<b>20</b>  6:30 pm Women PH 7 pm AA Clare Rm 8 pm Women's AA PH	<b>21</b> 9am-2 pm Office Hrs. 10 am Healing & Eucharist Service  7:30 pm Men's AA PH	<b>22</b> 11 am – 5 pm Blood Drive	<b>23</b>  8 pm AA PH	<b>24</b>
<b>25 Pentecost 9</b> Rev. Sarah Kitch Preaching 10:15 am Eucharist with Music  6 pm Jazz on the Patio 6:30 Men's AA PH	<b>26</b>  8 pm Men's AA PH	<b>27</b>  6:30 pm Women PH 7 pm AA Clare Rm 8 pm Women's AA PH	<b>28</b> 9am-2 pm Office Hrs. 10 am Healing & Eucharist Service  7:30 pm Men's AA PH	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>  8 pm AA PH	<b>31</b>

# July 2021 Schedule for Holy Ministry

	July 4	July 11	July 16	July 25	August 1
<b>10:15 a.m. Holy Eucharist</b>					
Lector (O.T./Psalm)	Chrissy B.	Susan S.	Bernadette	Kerri-Jo H.	Ruth H.
Lector (Epistle/P.O.P)	Eden S.	Chrissy B.	Rueben A.	Eden S.	Chrissy B.
LEM (Chalice)	David K.	David K.	Chrissy B.	David K.	Chrissy B.
Acolyte & Crucifer					
Usher / Greeters	Tony F.	Rebecca S.	Joe Z.	Tony F.	Rebecca
Altar Guild	Cathy G.	Chrissy B.	Chris M.		Ruth H.
Home Communion					
Vestry Counters					
Preaching	David K.	Rev. Sarah	David K.	Rev. Sarah	David K

**If you are unable to serve on the day you are scheduled – please make arrangements with someone else to substitute for you. Please contact the church office to inform them of the changes. Thank you!**



# August 2021 Schedule for Holy Ministry

	August 1	August 8	August 15	August 22	August 29
<b>10:15 a.m. Holy Eucharist</b>					
Lector (O.T./Psalm)	Ruth H.	Susan S.	Bernadette	Kerri-Jo H.	Ruth H.
Lector (Epistle/P.O.P)	Chrissy B.	Chrissy B.	Rueben A.	Eden S.	Chrissy B.
LEM (Chalice)	Chrissy B.	David K.	Chrissy B.	David K.	Chrissy B.
Acolyte & Crucifer					
Usher / Greeters	Rebecca	Rebecca S.	Joe Z.	Tony F.	Rebecca
Altar Guild	Ruth H.	Chrissy B.	Chris M.		Ruth H.
Home Communion					
Vestry Counters					
Preaching	David K.	Rev. Sarah	David K.	Rev. Sarah	David K



## RECYCLING AT ST FRANCIS

Please bring in your Recycling on the **last Sunday of the month** and we'll put those cans and bottles to good use! Our efforts will help support the needs of a family in our community and will be appreciated. See what glass and metal can do? So mark your calendars now with a big "R" for recycling at the end of the month. Thank you ahead of time for all your contributions!

**Jazz**  
on the Patio

**JUNE**  
27

**JULY**  
25

**AUGUST**  
22

**FREE LIVE MUSIC!!**  
**Bring Your Picnic**  
**6PM**

**Baby Closet**  
**REOPENED - MAY 2021**  
280 Royal Avenue, Simi Valley, CA 93065

**DIAPERS**  
**WIPES**  
**DIAPER CREAM**  
**BABY FOOD**

**SUPPLIES WILL BE**  
**DISTRIBUTED TUESDAYS**  
**& THURSDAYS**  
**11:30 AM - 12:25 PM**



Be a part of the  
lifesaving cause.

redcrossblood.org | 1-800-RED CROSS



**American  
Red Cross**

Community of Giving

Join Saint Francis and American Red Cross -

Next Drive: July 12 and July 22

11:00 am - 5:00 pm

The Kiwanis Club of Simi Valley & The Simi Valley Y's Men present

# Pancake Breakfast

*benefiting the Samaritan Center of Simi Valley*

**SATURDAY, AUGUST 14, 2021**

**8AM - 11AM | DONATION: \$5.00**

St. Francis of Assisi Episcopal Church  
280 Royal Ave. | Simi Valley



 **The Samaritan Center**  
Simi Valley restoring lives

For tickets and information  
visit [www.simivalleykiwanis.com](http://www.simivalleykiwanis.com)  
or call 805-807-5100

 **Kiwanis**  
CLUB OF SIMI VALLEY



# *the* Franciscan

St. Francis of Assisi Episcopal Church  
280 Royal Avenue, Simi Valley CA 93065

## Newsletter – July 2021

**TO:**

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#### **Sunday Service:**

**10:15 am**

#### **Wednesdays**

- **10 am Healing Service**