

Sierra Christian Church

An Open and Affirming Congregation

Apparently, I Am Now Part of the Radical Left

Like most, I was horrified at the manner of Charlie Kirk's death, and after he died, I was, like many, horrified at the unnecessary and inaccurate and highly vitriolic rhetoric his murder sparked. And like some, after he was killed, I came to learn more about who he was in life. He was a promoter of Christian nationalism, which is the thin notion that Christians (i.e white Christians) should control government and the moral and social direction of this country.

(He claimed that passing the Civil Rights Act of 1964 was a "huge mistake" that has become an "anti-white weapon". And:

- He concluded that Joy Reid and Michelle Obama and Sheila Jackson Lee and Ketanji Brown Jackson were affirmative action picks, because they do not have the brain processing power to otherwise be taken really seriously. They had to steal a white person's slot to go be taken somewhat seriously.

- He said, "If I'm dealing with somebody in customer service who's a moronic Black woman, I wonder, is she there because of her excellence, or is she there because of affirmative action?"

- While speaking at a church in Utah he said, "It's worth it to have a cost of, unfortunately, some gun deaths every single year, so that we can have the Sec-

ond Amendment to protect our other God-given rights. That is a prudent deal."

- He argued that "the great replacement strategy" is a very real strategy to replace white rural America with something different.

In fact, I'm pretty sure that most people reside here in this place alongside me: the desire for compassion and diversity and equality and justice; that these things aren't fringe ideologies or extremist positions — but simply the best way to be human.

- Kirk decried what he described as the "myth" of Martin Luther King Jr, calling him "awful" and "not a good person", another time declaring him "a serial adulterer, an alleged rapist, a reparations proponent, and a race Marxist."

- A fierce opponent of DEI initiatives designed to give underrepresented and marginalized communities equal opportunities, he said, "If I see a Black pilot, I'm going to be like, boy, I hope he's qualified."

- He claimed, "Large dedicated Islamic areas are a threat to America."

- He quoted a Leviticus passage calling for gay people to be stoned to death, referring to it as "God's perfect law," and called for "a Nuremberg-style trial for every gender-affirming clinic doctor."

- And though a Christian, a purported follower of Jesus' life and ministry, which overflowed with compassion for the poor, the sick, the vulnerable, Kirk infamously said, "I can't stand the word empathy, actually. I think empathy is a made-up, new-age term that does a lot of damage.")

Because I find his views and opinions antithetical to what I, a Christian woman, a pastor, mother, wife, friend, confidant, walking, breathing member of this

Pastor's Pitch



Sierra Christian Church's pastor is the Rev. Christine Pobanz-Hartmire. Her challenge to us is to embrace the beautiful truth that everyone is always welcomed at Jesus' table.

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PITCH

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human race who shares space with everyone else, believes, apparently, I am now a card-carrying member of the radical left. This, according to a lot of powerful people who probably should know better.

To begin with, I believe empathy matters. Our capacity to stay soft-hearted in a world that increasingly rewards cynicism and cruelty is the greatest human aspiration, because, simply put, if we lose compassion for people who are hurting, we squander our time here and are turning our backs on Jesus' teachings.

I had never considered myself radical before. I just thought I was normal, ordinary, usual. I thought equity was important to everyone. I imagined America was filled with people who took that Life, Liberty, and Pursuit of Happiness stuff seriously—for all people. I thought the Golden Rule was actually mainstream.

Recently I took an inventory of my positions, searching for my newly identified radicalness:

- I believe in full LGBTQ rights.
- I believe we should protect the planet.
- I believe everyone deserves healthcare.
- I believe all religions are equally valid.
- I believe the world is bigger than America.
- I believe to be “pro-life,” means to treasure all of it.
- I believe women should have autonomy over their own bodies.
- I believe whiteness isn't superior and it is not the baseline of humanity.
- I believe we are all one interdependent community.

- I believe people and places are made better by diversity.
- I believe people shouldn't be forced to abide by anyone else's religion.
- I believe non-American human beings have as much value as American ones.
- I believe generosity is greater than greed, compassion better than contempt, and kindness superior to derision.
- I believe there is enough in this world for everyone: enough food, enough money, enough room, enough care—if we unleash our creativity and unclench our fists.

I'm not sure how these ideas became radical, though it seems to have happened in the last few years.

I grew up being taught they were just part of being a decent human being. I grew up believing that loving my neighbor as myself, meant that I actually worked for their welfare as much as my own. I was taught that caring for the least in the world, was the measure of my devotion to God. I thought that inalienable rights of other people were supposed to be a priority as a decent participant in the world.

I don't think I'm alone.

In fact, I'm pretty sure that most people reside here in this place alongside me: the desire for compassion and diversity and equality and justice; that these things aren't fringe ideologies or extremist positions—but simply the best way to be human.

I think most people want more humanity, not less, and I really don't think that is all that radical of an idea.

**Men's Fellowship Gathers on Zoom
on October 4, at 9 am**

**Books That Bind meets Thursday,
October 16, at 6:30 pm on Zoom**

Some Notes Worth Noting

1. October birthday blessings to Steve Kindle, (you remember Steve, right?) born on October 15 a few years ago. Oh, and his wife, Diane Kindle, was born on October 31.
2. And the birthdays keep on coming. Birthday wishes and prayers for all good things to come her way to the recently moved to sparkling new digs Sandy Barry, whose birthday is celebrated on Oct 22. It is possible her boxes will be unpacked and art hung on the wall by then. So she can birthday it up without wondering which box is next. Oh happy days!
3. Men's Retreat at Camp Arroyo October 10-12, 2025. Reflect, Reform, and Resurrect! Comfortable cabins for overnight guest at Camp Arroyo. Bring your sleeping bag, pillow, toiletries, snacks, towel and clothing. Hiking and cool weather events possible. See the Regional website for registration information at ccncn.org Scholarships are available. Pastor Kevin Deibert is the guest speaker.
4. Women's fall retreat is October 31-November 2 at Christ the King Passionist Retreat Center, The Rev. Dr. Boyung Lee is the featured speaker, on the theme "Which Way is Up: No Not Let your Hearts Be Troubled." For more information, go to ccncn.org.
5. Sierra Christian Church's Men's Fellowship meets Saturday, October 4, at 9:00 am on Zoom.
6. Books That Bind meets Thursday, October 16, at 6:30 pm on Zoom. The group is reading "The Girl in His Shadow," by Audrey Blake, an historical novel about a 19th Century woman who dreams of a career in medicine despite the odds and conventions against it. We even squeeze some talk about the books we read when we meet.
7. October 22, in Pomona, CA, will be the grand opening of the Chris Hartmire Plaza, an 88-unit affordable housing complex with supportive services available and a health clinic on site. Twenty-four of the units are designated for veterans, or individuals who are experiencing homelessness. It is managed by the Cesar Chavez Foundation, who developed it John has been asked to be one of the speakers. Who was Chris Hartmire and why has the Cesar Chavez Foundation named this project after him? Click here: [Chris Hartmire](#)
8. The latest from Brian Ridge: "I am sorry to say that I've been unable to get to church this week. The chemo and even more so, the radiation, has really taken its toll. I've been barely able to swallow, and the last three days have been a blur. The pain level has elevated to a 10+ since my radiation started. The oncologist is opposed to opioids and has prescribed a low dose liquid. Then oxy, and now morphine. The last two making me very sick to stomach. "I WILL get through this but i feel derelict in my duties and commitments. Please accept my apology." (Note: The decision was made to insert a feeding tube earlier this week. Our prayers and love!



2025 EARL LECTURE SERIES

MIGRATION

SHAPING THE NARRATIVE

OCTOBER 17-19

PACIFIC SCHOOL OF RELIGION

Earl 2025 - Pacific School of Religion

Join us for the 2025 Earl Lecture Series-this year's theme is Migration: Shaping the Narrative. Through a combination of lectures, workshops, and connections, we'll explore how stories of migration-past and present-can reclaim power, resist erasure, and shape more just and compassionate futures.

[Read More](#)



**THE POWER OF
PROXIMITY
FOR SOCIAL IMPACT**



WITH REV. DR. DIETRA WISE BAKER

Welcome! You are invited to join a webinar: The Power of Proximity for Social Impact. After registering, you will receive a confirmation email about joining the webinar.

This webinar will be a continuation of our previous webinar on Micro-Activism (found at newchurchministry.org/introducing-impact), exploring the question: "How does a church move beyond activism into true community organizing?" We'll explore the difference between organizing and activism, and why proximity has the power to transform both the church and the community. Oct 1, 2025 12:00 PM

[Read More](#)

Drippings of Grace Ministries

Online Training Opportunity:

With Rev. Dr. Lisa Renee Sherman

What Is Chronic Sorrow? How Should the Church Respond?



When: October 25th, 2025 (Saturday)

Time: 10 am – 12pm (2 hrs. Central time zone)

Format: By Zoom

Cost: Free

Registration required, please visit: www.drippingsofgrace.com

Chronic sorrow is not a mental illness. It is a persistent and recurring grief response to a constant state of sadness. It is best described as a pervasive presence of sadness, disappointment, and disruption that doesn't resolve. It is experienced more as a "state of being" verses a typical grief cycle (the 5 stages of grief). This type of grief is associated with situations where losses continue to impact an individual's life, such as chronic illness, long-term care providers for a loved one with a chronic illness or disability.

Goals For the Training:

1. Identifying Chronic Sorrow: Becoming More Aware
2. Examples from the Bible: God's Response
3. Walking alongside Chronic Sorrow: Our Response as Brothers and Sisters in Christ
4. Sharing of Resources

[For More Information](#)

Sierra Christian Church Monthly Calendar

October 2025

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1	2	3	4 9 am Men's Fellowship Breakfast
5 10:30 am Worship	6	7	8	9	10	11
12 10:30 am Worship	13	14	15	16 6:30 pm Books That Bind	17	18
19 10:30 am Worship	20	21	22	23	24	25
26 10:30 am Worship	27	28	29	30	31 Halloween	

List & Links of Regional Events

October 10, 2025: [Men's Ministries Retreat](#)

October 17, 2025: [Women's Fall Retreat](#)

October 25, 2025: [What is Chronic Sorrow](#)

November 7-9, 2025: [Fall Fest](#)

Some Significant October Dates in History

October 2, 1816—A scientist aboard the Russian expedition ship, Rurik, gave the California poppy its latin name *Eschscholzia californica*. Today it is the state flower.

October 2, 1916—San Diego Zoo was founded in Balboa Park. Today it is home to some 3,700 animals of more than 650 species and subspecies. It pioneered open-air, cageless exhibits that re-create natural animal habitats and is one of the few zoos in the world that houses the giant panda.

October 2, 1968—President Lyndon Johnson established the Redwood National Park in northern California, just south of the Oregon border. It covers 106,000 acres and is home to the tallest trees on earth. It also protects prairies, oak woodlands, wild rivers and nearly 40 miles of coastline.

October 3, 1933—The Griffith Park Fire began in Los Angeles. Between 29 and 52 untrained volunteers died fighting the blaze, the deadliest in Los Angeles history.

October 3, 1957—California State Superior Court ruled that Allen Ginsberg's "Howl and Other Poems" was not obscene.

October 3, 1995,—O. J. Simpson was acquitted of murdering Nicole Brown Simpson and Ronald Goldman in Los Angeles.

October 3, 2001—Apple, headquartered in Cupertino, introduced the iPod. The MP3 music player stored up to 1,000 CD-quality songs in a 6.5 ounce design that fit in a pocket. It cost \$399.

October 4, 1880—University of California, now known as University of Southern California, was founded in Los Angeles. Tuition was \$15. There were 53 students and 10 teachers. Today, USC is home to more than 33,000 students and nearly 3,200 full-time faculty,

October 5, 1857—The City of Anaheim in Orange County was founded by 50 German-Americans from San Francisco. After traveling the state looking for a suitable area to grow grapes, they bought land from Rancho San Juan Cajon de Santa Ana for \$2 per acre.

October 5, 2006—A California state appeals court ruled 2-1 that gays and lesbians have no constitutional right to marry in California. Same-sex marriage became legal in California on June 16, 2008.

October 6, 1966—LSD, the psychedelic drug, was declared illegal in California, the first state to do so.

October 6, 2008—Mother's Cookies, an Oakland bakery for 92 years, filed for bankruptcy. It was founded in 1914 when Woodrow Wilson declared that Mother's Day would be a national holiday.

October 7, 1996—CA fire in Monterey County that burned 25,000 acres was started by Jeffrey Alan Avila. He tried to make money by leasing fire-fighting equipment to the U.S. Forest Service.

October 8, 1860—A San Francisco to Los Angeles telegraph line was completed. This became the first modern long-distance communication link in the West.

October 9, 1936—The Hoover Dam on the Colorado River began transmitting electricity to Los Angeles, 266 miles away. It generates 4.2 million megawatt-hours of electricity yearly for Nevada, Arizona and Southern California.

October 9, 1989—In the first NFL game coached by an African American, Art Shell led the Los Angeles Raiders to beat the New York Jets, 14-7.

October 10, 1911—Women's suffrage, the right to vote, passed in California. It was defeated in San Francisco but supported in Los Angeles and won statewide by 3,587 votes. California was the 6th state to recognize women's right to vote.

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HISTORY

(Continued from previous page)

October 11, 1906 –The San Francisco public school board ordered Japanese students be taught in segregated schools, causing Japanese outrage. President Theodore Roosevelt requested the order be reversed and promised to reduce Japanese immigration.

October 12, 1812 –Indians at Mission Santa Cruz revolted and killed Father Andres Quintana. Turns out he was fond of using a metal-tipped whip to punish Indian laborers at the mission.

October 12, 1933 –The Rock opens. Alcatraz Island, in San Francisco Bay transformation to a maximum high-security federal prison to hold prisoners who caused trouble at other federal prisons was completed and opened to its first inmates. It was closed in 1963 when prison incarceration philosophy started embracing the notion of rehabilitation. Today it is a museum that draws some 1.5 million visitors annually.

October 13, 1858 –The California Central Railroad from Lincoln reached Folsom. Groundbreaking took place on June 1, 1858.

October 14, 1848 –Sacramento was founded by Sam Brannan and John Sutter, Jr. at the confluence of the American and Sacramento Rivers.

October 14, 1864 –The Klamath Lake treaty forced Modoc and Northern Paiute people from their traditional homeland, removing them to a reservation on Klamath land, which set the stage for the Modoc War of 1872-73.

October 14, 1947 – “Chuck” Yeager became the first person to travel faster than the speed of sound when he flew the X-1 at Mach 1.07 from Edwards Air Force Base.

October 15, 1966 –Huey Newton and Bobby Seale began the Black Panther Party for Self Defense. Their Ten Point Program called for adequate housing, jobs, education, an end to police brutality and more

October 17, 1989 –The 6.9 Loma Prieta Earthquake struck the San Francisco Bay area during the start to the 3rd game of the World Series: Oakland A's vs San Francisco Giants. 67 people died, 3,000 injured. It caused \$7 billion worth of damage to 28,000 structures and several freeways. 42 people died on the Cypress Freeway.

October 20, 1984 –Monterey Bay Aquarium opened. It showcases habitats and sea life with more than 35,000 creatures, filling 34 major galleries and nearly 200 exhibits.

October 21, 1985 –Dan White committed suicide by carbon monoxide in his wife's car. The former San Francisco Supervisor killed Mayor Moscone and Supervisor Harvey Milk in 1978. Charged with two counts of first degree murder, he served some 5 years after a defense called the “Twinkie defense,” essentially argued (successfully) that junk food made him do it. His excessive sugar diet led him to a state of diminished capacity, his defense argued. The jury bought it.

October 23, 1942 –All 12 passengers and crew aboard an American Airlines airliner were killed when it was struck by a U.S. Army Air Forces bomber near Palm Springs. Among the victims was composer and songwriter Ralph Rainger, “Blue Hawaii” (1937) and “Thanks for the Memory” (1938).

October 24, 1871 –A mob of white men in Los Angeles killed 18 Chinese immigrants in the largest mass lynching in U.S. history.

October 25, 1849 –The Democratic Party in California formed at a meeting held in Portsmouth Square, which today is in San Francisco's Chinatown.

October 27, 1885 –Fresno was incorporated. Today this city in San Joaquin County is the fifth largest in California.

October 31, 2007 –U.C. Berkeley physicists announced production of the world's smallest radio out of a single carbon nanotube 10,000 times thinner than a human hair. They had it play “Layla” by Derek and the Dominos and said it could also function as a transmitter.

Reconciliation Ministry Offering Approaches

The Reconciliation Ministry Special Offering is received each year in congregations on the last Sunday in September and the first Sunday in October (in solidarity with World Communion Sunday). Funds generated by this special emphasis are used throughout the year to provide grants to ministries and congregations actively developing and implementing programs that promote our Church's Pro-Reconciliation and Anti-Racist identity. These programs and efforts seek to reveal, re-educate, and remove systemic and structural barriers in our communities that serve to deny the image of God and human thriving based on race.

Your gifts to Reconciliation Ministry strengthens our Church's witness to God's unending love for all of humanity. With your generosity, leaders, communities, and our congregations are being equipped to witness to God's love and justice in all times and in every season. The time is always ripe to stand up for justice to ensure that all of God's children are treated equitably. Thank you for joining us on this journey through your generosity.

Sunday, September 28th - Sunday, October 5th

2025 Reconciliation Ministry SPECIAL OFFERING



Beyond Brokenness - Building Beloved Community

"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here! All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting people's sins against them. And he committed to us the message of reconciliation.



*We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us.
We implore you on Christ's behalf:
Be reconciled to God."*

2 Corinthians 5:17-20

