

Sierra Christian Church

An Open and Affirming Congregation

And Then God Made Mothers...

Happy Mothers Day to all of you! Not everyone reading this is a mother in the strictest sense of the word, but the notion of mothering is universal. It involves nurturing and defending, loving and supporting, believing in and reaching out to—and we are all blessed with that opportunity and good fortune.

You know, E.B. White once wrote, “There are those who say a novel should be a work of art solely, and you must not preach in it, you must not teach in it. That may be true as regards novels but it is not true as regards humor. Humor must not professedly teach, and it must not professedly preach, but it must do both if it would live forever. By forever, I mean thirty years. With all its preaching it is not likely to outlive so long a term as that.

“I don't think I agree that humor must preach in order to live; it need only speak the truth—and I notice it always does.”

The following is from the late humorist Erma Bombeck. It was published on May 12, 1974:

When the Good Lord was creating mothers, He was into His sixth day of "overtime" when the angel appeared and said. “You're doing a lot of fiddling around on this one.” And God said, “Have you read the specs on this order? She has to be completely washable, but not plastic. Have 180 moveable parts...all replaceable. Run on black coffee and leftovers. Have a lap that disappears when she stands up. A kiss that can cure anything from a broken leg to a disappointed love affair. And six pairs of hands.”

The angel shook her head slowly and said. “Six pairs of hands.... no way.” “It's not the hands that are causing me problems,” God remarked, “it's the three pairs of eyes that mothers have to have.”

“That's on the standard model?” asked the angel.

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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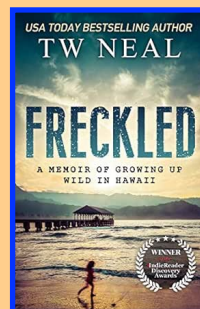


MEN'S BREAKFAST FELLOWSHIP

Saturday, May 2, 9 am.
Have your breakfast ready, your fellowship bib on and let's Zoom.

BOOKS THAT BIND

Sierra Christian's Book Club, Books That Bind, next meets Thursday, June 18, at 6:30 on Zoom. We are reading "Freckled." It is a memoir about growing up wild in Hawaii.



BOARD MEETING

Sierra Christian's Board of Directors meets on Wednesday, May 20 at 6:30 pm. It will be a Zoom meeting.

PITCH

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God nodded. "One pair that sees through closed doors when she asks, 'What are you kids doing in there?'" when she already knows. Another here in the back of her head that sees what she shouldn't but what she has to know, and of course the ones here in front that can look at a child when he goofs up and say, 'I understand and I love you' without so much as uttering a word."

"God," said the angel, "Get some rest." "I can't," said God, "I'm so close to creating something so close to myself. Already I have one who heals herself when she is sick...can feed a family of six on one pound of hamburger...and can get a nine-year-old to stand under a shower."

The angel circled the model of a mother very slowly. "It's too soft," she sighed.

"But tough!" said God excitedly. "You can imagine what this mother can do or endure."

"Can it think?"

"Not only can it think, but it can reason and compromise," said the Creator.

Finally, the angel bent over and ran her finger across the cheek. "There's a leak," she pronounced. "I told You that You were trying to put too much into this model."

"It's not a leak," said the Lord, "It's a tear."

"What's it for?"

"It's for joy, sadness, disappointment, pain, loneliness, and pride."

"You are a genius," said the angel.

Somberly, God said, "I didn't put it there."

A Mother's Day Prayer

"Why do I say 'Him'? Is it because for so long men have thought of God as the Father/. Yet he must also be the Mother." --Robert Nathan, The Summer Meadows

Most Sunday mornings, I take a few prayerful moments before worship. I stand outside and marvel at the spiritual might of our property, and if my sermon feels solid in my head and heart, I zero in on the people in my life and send them my love and respect on currents of air, maybe carried on the wings of angels. I cannot say for sure.

On Mother's Day, my thoughts turn especially to the women I know and have known, who have shown me how to be a strong woman, a woman of compassion and worth, some of them so full of hope and thanksgiving I weep, and others crumbling under the weight of unresolved baggage and fear I weep. Sometimes love means weeping.

Women everywhere wake up on Mother's Day with joy, or heartache, some with their love beside

them or in the backyard playing with the dogs. Some alone and struggling to make ends meet; some with an aging parent in the next room and others with little ones crawling over them clutching handmade cards and delivering a breakfast only a mother could stomach.

To all of us, we offer the following Mother's Day prayer:

May you know that God is with you if you are like Tamar, struggling with infertility, or a miscarriage.

May you know that God is with you if you are like Rachel, counting the women among your family and friends who year by year and month by month get pregnant, while you wait.

May you know that God is with you if you are like Naomi, and have known the bitter sting of a child's death.

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PRAYER

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May you know that God is with you if you are like Joseph and Benjamin, and your Mom has died.

May you know that God is with you if your relationship with your Mom was marked by trauma, abuse, or abandonment, or she just couldn't parent you the way you needed.

May you know that God is with you if you've been like Moses' mother and put a child up for adoption, trusting another family to love your child into adulthood.

May you know that God is with you if you've been like Pharaoh's daughter, called to love children who are not yours by birth (and thus the mother who brought that child into your life, even if it is complicated).

May you know that God is with you if you, like many, are watching (or have watched) your mother age and disappear into the long goodbye of dementia or Alzheimer's.

May you know that God is with you if you, like Mary, are pregnant for the very first time and waiting breathlessly for the miracle of your first child.

May you know that God is with you if your children have turned away from you, painfully closing the door on relationship, leaving you holding your broken heart in your hands. And like Hagar, now you are mothering alone.

May you know that God is with you if motherhood is your greatest joy and toughest struggle all rolled into one.

May you know that God is with you if you are watching your child battle substance abuse, a public legal situation, mental illness, or another situation which you can merely watch unfold.

I find myself worrying most
that when we hand our children phones
we steal their boredom from them.

As a result, we are raising a generation
of writers who will never start writing,
artists who will never start doodling,
chefs who will never make a
mess of the kitchen,
athletes who will never kick a ball
against a wall,
musicians who will never pick up
their aunt's guitar and start strumming.

May you know that God is with you if you, like so many women before you, do not wish to be a mother, are not married, or in so many other ways do not fit into societal norms.

May you know that God is with you if you see your-self reflected in all, or none of these stories. This mother's day, wherever and whoever you are, we walk with you. You are loved. You are seen. You are worthy.

And may you know the deep love without end of our big, wild, beautiful God who is the very best example of a parent that we know.

Amen

(Written by Amy Young, and adapted by Heidi Carrington Heath)



TROUBLE NO MATTER HOW YOU FRAME IT
 Above, cherished Sierra Christian musician Bob Wyrick at his keyboard, and at right, well, we have no words: Pictured from left are, Beth Murphy, Liz Throne, Pastor Christine Pobanz-Hartmire, and Pam Margo mugging for the camera after worship.

Teacher: How old is your father?
 Kid: He is 6 years.
 Teacher: What? How is this possible?
 Kid: He became father only when I was born.
 (Logic!! Children are quick and always speak their minds.)

TEACHER: Maria, go to the map and find North America.
 MARIA: Here it is.
 TEACHER: Correct. Now, Class, who discovered America?
 CLASS: Maria.

TEACHER: Glenn, how do you spell 'crocodile?'
 GLENN: K-R-O-K-O-D-I-A-L'
 TEACHER: No, that's wrong
 GLENN: Maybe it is wrong, but you asked me how I spell it.
 (I love this child.)

TEACHER: Donald, what is the chemical formula for water?
 DONALD: H I J K L M N O.
 TEACHER: What are you talking about?
 DONALD: Yesterday you said it's H to O.

TEACHER: Clyde, your composition on 'My Dog' is exactly the same as your brother's. Did you copy his?
 CLYDE: No, sir; It's the same dog.
 (I want to adopt this kid!!!)

TEACHER: Harold, what do you call a person who keeps on talking when people are no longer interested?
 HAROLD: A teacher.

SAVE THE DATES FOR SUMMER CHURCH CAMP FUN

Back to Camp 2026

30303 Chicken Hawk Road, Foresthill, CA

Adult Camp	June 4-7 ages 18 and older
Junior Camp	June 21-25 Graduates of 3 rd , 4 th , and 5 th grades
Chi Rho Camp	June 21-27 Graduates of 6 th , 7 th , and 8 th grades
CYF Camp	June 21-27 Graduates of 9 th , 10, 11, 12, 12 th grades
JOY Camp	June 27-29 - Graduates of K, 1 st , and 2 nd grades with an adult companion

The Region is offering 50% scholarships for everyone again he year!

Registration and details coming later to CNNCN.org

See you at camp!

Some Notes Worth Noting

1. Books That Bind meets Thursday, June 18 at 6:30 pm on Zoom. We are reading "Freckled," by T.W. Neal. It is her memoir of growing up "wild" in a quasi-commune on Kauai. As one reviewer wrote, "For anyone who's ever been bullied, threatened, beaten or otherwise harassed, Neal's life is an inspiring example of what it means to grow, to move on, and to heal."
2. June 4-7 is the date for the Disciples' Adult Camp held at the Community of the Great Commission. Key noter is Dr. Sharon Jacob, the John Wesley Associate Professor of New Testament and Postcolonial Studies at Claremont School of Theology. Registration information to come.
3. Save the Date—The Women's Tri-Regional Retreat will be held May 15-17 at Christ the King Passionist Retreat Center in Citrus Heights. This is the link to register for the: [Women's Tri-Regional Gathering, May 15-17](#)
4. Men's Fellowship meets Saturday, May 2 at 9 am on Zoom.
5. The editor is not going to chase anyone down. Work on updating the Sierra Christian Church directory could be underway. If you have moved in the past year, don't think you have to wait for an invitation—feel free to send any and all changes you may have to your listing to jhartmire1@mac.com. Here is the link to the most recent version: [Sierra Christian Church Directory](#). Please confirm that the information contained in the most recent version of the directory is correct.
6. Happy Mother's Day! Oh, a most cherished and happy day!
7. Board of Directors meets Wednesday, May 20, 6:30 pm., on Zoom
8. Pastor Christine, John, Sidney Stone and the architects will meet with the Loomis development director at the church to tour the property and discuss amending the preliminary plans for affordable housing on the site. Most likely on June 5. Loomis has expressed its support for the idea.
9. We're sending loving and powerful Sierra Christian Church healing energy to Joy Reed, as hip a friend we have.

Sierra Christian Church Monthly Calendar

May 2026

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
31 10:30 am Worship					1	2 9 am Men's Fellowship Breakfast
3 10:30 am Worship	4	5	6	7	8	9
10 10:30 am Worship Zoom Only	11	12	13	14	15	16
17 10:30 am Worship	18	19	20 Board of Directors 6:30, Zoom	21	22	23
24 10:30 am Worship	25 Memorial Day	26	27	28	29	30

List & Links of Regional Events

May 15-17, 2026: Women's Tri-Regional Gathering (Save the Date)

June 4-7, 2026: Adult Camp, Community of the Great Commission

June 21-25, 2026: Junior Camp

June 21-27, 2026: Chi-Rho Camp

June 27-29, 2026: Joy Camp

What can church look like for those who have experienced religious trauma?

Founded by Pastor Larry Gipson, the Springs of Life Church in Texas serves a diverse group— from LGBTQ+ folks to ex-evangelicals to unchurched people. Together, they worship God, seek justice, and gather in authentic community.

On May 17 and 24, the **Pentecost Offering** supports emerging and affiliating congregations like Springs of Life —churches that are opening their door to anyone who wants to step inside, who are putting love into action.

[Read more](#)



TO DO JUSTICE, LOVE KINDNESS, AND WALK HUMBLLY WITH YOUR GOD. -MICAH 6:8

LOVE IN ACTION.

**2026 PENTECOST OFFERING
SUNDAYS MAY 17 AND MAY 24**

NEW CHURCH MINISTRY

Homelessness: Causes, Consequences, Solutions

12:00 pm – 1:00 pm

May 7, 2026



Want to learn more about the state of the unhoused in the Bay Area? Join us to learn more about what causes homelessness, the societal and economic consequences of it, and how we can work to solve it. Hear insights from Dr. Margot Kushel, M.D. in "Homelessness: Causes, Consequences, Solutions."

This will be a virtual meeting, and a Zoom link will be provided after registering.

[Register Here!](#)

(Note: The newsletter editor worked with Dr. Kushel when he was the manager of the CA Department of Social Services Adult Protective Services Unit. The study Dr. Kushel conducted is eye opening and she is well worth listening to.)

Some “Different” Dates in May’s History

The month of May most likely gets its name from Maia, a goddess from Greek and Roman mythology. While the origin is widely attributed to her, historians and poets have offered a few different theories over the centuries: Maia (Goddess of Growth): May is the month of the flowers, the month of two Bank Holidays and also the month in which important celebrations take place. The month of May was considered an unlucky month particularly for getting married.

‘Marry in May and you’ll rue the day!’ On another side, May is the time when flowers emerge and crops begin to sprout so it is historically a time of great celebrations such as Garland Day or Arbor Tree Day.

May is the National Smile Month. May is also a month of celebrations for foodies and food connoisseurs as it hosts the National Vegetarian Week, the UK Coffee Week, the British Sandwich Week, the National BBQ Week and the Coeliac Awareness Week

May 1, 1860—The first school in California for blind children opened in a small wood frame building in San Francisco. Forty-eight students enrolled in 1866.

May 1, 1952 — The first toy advertised on television is Mr. Potato Head. It hit store shelves that day.

May 2—Brothers and Sisters Day!

May 3, 1942—President Franklin Roosevelt signed Executive Order 9066. It called for evacuating Japanese-Americans from Los Angeles. Some 110,000 Japanese-Americans living on the West Coast were eventually forcibly held in 10 relocation camps through much of World War II.

May 4, 1970—At Kent State University, four students were killed by National Guardsmen who opened fire on a crowd of 1,000 students protesting President Richard Nixon’s decision to invade Cambodia. Eleven others were wounded.

May 4, 1998—A federal judge in Sacramento sentenced Theodore Kaczynski, known as the “Unabomber,” to four life sentences plus 30 years after Kaczynski accepted a plea agreement to avoid the death penalty.

May 4, 1999—Manuel Babbitt, a 50-year-old Vietnam veteran, was executed at San Quentin Federal Prison for murdering an elderly woman in Sacramento. He refused his last meal but asked that the \$50 allotted be given to homeless Vietnam veterans. Babbitt was buried with full military honors in Massachusetts.

May 5, 1862—Cinco de Mayo, when, in the Battle of Puebla, Mexican troops under General Ignacio Zaragoza, outnumbered three to one, defeated the invading French forces of Napoleon III.

May 5, 1907—Streetcar workers in the Carmen’s Union, demanding a \$3 per day for an 8-hour day, went on strike in San Francisco. Patrick Calhoun, president of the United Railroads, hired James Farley to break the union. Thirty-one people died from shootings and streetcar accidents and 1100 were injured.

May 5, 1961—Alan Shepard became the first American in space. He did not orbit the earth. His flight lasted 15 minutes. Ten years later he became the oldest man to walk on the moon. He was 47 and the only one of the original Mercury 7 astronauts to reach the moon.

May 7, 1964—Pacific Air Lines Flight 773 crashed near San Ramon, killing all 44 aboard. The FBI later reported that a cockpit recorder tape indicated the pilot and co-pilot were shot by a suicidal passenger.

May 9, 1926—A bomb exploded in front of the main entrance of Saints Peter and Paul’s Catholic Church in San Francisco. It was targeted by anti-Catholic anarchists, who made five bomb attacks against the building in a year.

May 9, 2013—Pamela Marie Devitt, age 63, was fatally mauled by a pack of pit bulls while walking near her home near Palmdale. Alex Jackson, age 29, owner of the dogs, was charged with murder. The dogs guarded his pot-growing operation. Jackson was sentenced to 15 years to life.

May 11, 1880—A U.S. Marshal and deputies faced a group of San Joaquin Valley farmers over a land dispute with the Southern Pacific Railroad. They had

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HISTORY

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claimed the land and won a suit to that effect. Seven men were killed in what became known as the Battle of Mussel Slough.

May 11, 1908—The Hetch Hetchy Dam was approved. The 1906 San Francisco Earthquake and Fire made it clear that the city needed a large, reliable source of water. Hetch Hetchy Valley, northwestern of Yosemite, drained by the Tuolumne River, was selected for development.

May 13, 2007—A mother humpback whale and her calf were spotted swimming up the Sacramento River. On May 29 they returned to San Francisco Bay and were spotted outside the Golden Gate the next day.

May 14, 1856—James Casey shot and killed James King of William. King, a San Francisco newspaper editor, printed articles accusing Casey of being a corrupt politician and an ex-con from New York.

May 14, 1970—For reasons that will eternally elude us, this date forevermore is known as the Dance Like a Chicken Day: While national, this quirky day has been embraced by California's often eccentric town celebrations and school events

May 15, 1856—The second San Francisco Vigilance Committee was organized in response to James Casey's murder of James King of William (see May 14, 1856). They took Casey from the sheriff's custody, gave him a short trial then hanged him.

May 15, 2008—California became the second state to legalize same-sex marriage. Under the direction of Mayor Gavin Newsom of San Francisco in 2004, marriage licenses were issued to approximately 4,000 same-sex couples. Newsom's authority was challenged but upheld by the state Supreme Court. A 2008 ballot measure Proposition 8, however, stopped same-sex marriages until the court decided the ban was unconstitutional.

May 17, 1971—The musical *Godspell*, based on Matthew's gospel, opens at the Cherry Lane Theater in New York.

May 18, 1926—Aimee Semple McPherson disappeared. She vanished soon after arriving near Venice Beach where she went with her secretary to swim

developed an irrigation system that turned the land into an agricultural area. The Railroad

then stumbled from the Mexican desert on June 23rd. The event re-mains a mystery in the life of the evangelist-media celebrity, founder of the Foursquare Church. Many contend-ed it was a staged kidnapping. Others argued she had run off with a former employee for a tryst. It was never really solved to anyone's satisfaction.

May 18, 1980—Following an earthquake with a magnitude of 5.1 on the Richter scale, Mount St. Helens in Washington state erupted in one of the greatest volcanic explosions ever recorded in North America.

May 22, 1908—William Buwalda, U.S. Army Private, was found guilty and sentenced to five years in prison for applauding and shaking hands with anarchist Emma Goldman.

May 22, 1933—The first modern reported sighting of the Loch Ness monster took place, igniting worldwide fascination.

May 25, 1977—"Star Wars," re-titled "Star Wars Episode IV: A New Hope" premiered in theaters, inspiring the Jediism religion and Geek Pride Day holiday. The original Star Wars trilogy is considered one of the best film trilogies in history.

May 26, 1958—San Francisco's Union Square became a state historical landmark. It was named for pro-Union rallies held there on the eve of the Civil War.

May 27, 1937—President Franklin Roosevelt officially opened the Golden Gate Bridge by pushing a button to signal the start of vehicle traffic.

May 29, 1848—The *Californian* Newspaper reported that everybody was suffering from gold fever and the newspaper was being suspended because its staff was leaving for the gold fields.

May 29, 1969—Crosby, Stills and Nash released their very first album. They gained international fame following the release of their eponymous debut album, which features songs, "Marakesh Express" and Suite: Judy Blue Eyes."

May 30, 1934—The first synod of the Confessing Church at Barmen ends. Influenced by Karl Barth, the synod produced the Barmen Declaration and marks the formal establishment of the "Confessing Church," led by Karl Barth, Martin Niemoeller, and Dietrich Bonhoeffer in bold opposition to the Nazi "German Christian" church.