

Weekly Newsletter

June 30, 2024

Temple Tidings

First Presbyterian Church of Oakland

Making God's Welcome Known



W E L C O M E

Visitors:

- If you would like to be added to our email list, please go to firstchurchoakland.org and fill out the form at the bottom
- Need help hearing? Ushers can provide **hearing devices** to assist you.
- Please feel free to take the Sanctuary flowers home to enjoy after the service.

Visiting Parents:

- Ushers can guide you to the **nursery** for certified childcare for children age three years and younger.
- You may also make use of the **Parent Corners** at the rear sanctuary entrance or up front by the font.
- Children's **worship bags** are available in the narthex or from the ushers with worship play items.
- On the first Sunday of the month we celebrate **Family Worship & Communion** and children remain in worship.
- **Godly Play** is offered for children all other Sundays. Children are escorted to Classroom 2 during *Passing of the Peace* and rejoin their families during Fellowship Time.

O R D E R o f S E R V I C E

First Presbyterian Church of Oakland is a **More Light** faith family,
on a journey toward becoming the **Beloved Community**.

We welcome and affirm persons of every age,
national origin, racial and ethnic heritage, gender identity, sexual orientation,
socio-economic status, physical ability and spiritual leaning.

I N V I T A T I O N t o W O R S H I P

Prelude

Let It Be Me
The Indigo Girls

Welcome

Call to Worship

One: Out of the depths, we cry to you, LORD.

All: Hear our prayers and supplications.

One: Heed the anguish of our pleas.

All: Our souls wait for you alone, LORD,

One: More than those who wait for the morning.

All: We are here to worship you this day.

Gathering Prayer

One: Holy One, in peace or in pain, we call to you, and you answer. Hear our voices, God,
and the cries of our hearts. Come and bring us your presence. Come and bring us your
peace.

All: Amen

Please rise in body or spirit

Hymn

#716: God, Whose Giving Knows No Ending

CONFESSION of SIN & ASSURANCE of GRACE

Confession

One: God of Justice, God of Compassion, God of Sacred and Scandalous ways,
We have so much still to learn.
By your grace, we have come to know love more deeply –
its mess, its complexity, its stubborn and tender truths transform us more each day.
Through fires that refine and valleys of death, you have guided us.
You draw us into the heart of Wisdom,
Saving us from the lies of destruction.
Turning us towards hope that liberates.
But still, O God, we struggle to trust in you..
And so, when we are afraid. Or hurt. Or weary...
We betray the very One who brought us thus far.
We confess, we still shame Jesus, when he turns over tables.
We confess, we still condemn Jesus, when he breaks the rules to which we are loyal.
Our priorities are not your own.
Search our hearts, O God, and see if there is any fear within us.
Meet us there with your good news that sets the captives free.
Forgive us from the harm we have done as we seek to harm no more.

All: Amen.

Silent Reflection

You are invited into a time of silent, personal reflection

One: In the name of the one who loves unconditionally, we pray.

All: Amen

Please rise in body or spirit

Assurance of Pardon

Christ gave us his weakness, that we might become strong. He gave us the wealth of his wisdom, that we might know what is true. He offered his own vulnerability, making himself defenseless, that we might actually learn love. It is that faith Christ has given us that has made us well; the power of God's love that heals and redeems. There is forgiveness in God, and a hope that makes us whole.

Passing of the Peace of Christ

One: May the peace of Christ be with you.

All: And also with you.

One: Let us offer each other a sign of Christ's peace

Greet those around you with a sign of Christ's peace.

PRAYERS of the PEOPLE

Sharing of Joys & Concerns

You may share requests for prayer with the congregation aloud. Children may go with leaders to Godly Play.

Prayer

**Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.
Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.**

Please rise in body or spirit Song

One Voice (The Wailin' Jennys)

**This is the sound of all of us
singing with love and the will to trust.
Leave the rest behind; it will turn to dust.
This is the sound of all of us.**

THE WORD

Scripture Lesson

2 Cor. 8. 7 – 15 NRSV

One: Now as you excel in everything—in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in utmost eagerness, and in our love for you—so we want you to excel also in this generous undertaking.

I do not say this as a command, but I am, by mentioning the eagerness of others, testing the genuineness of your love. For you know the generous act[c] of our LORD Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, so that by his poverty you might become rich. And in this matter I am giving my opinion: it is beneficial for you who began last year not only to do something but even to desire to do something. Now finish doing it, so that your eagerness may be matched by completing it according to your means. For if the eagerness is there, the gift is acceptable according to what one has, not according to what one does not have. For I do not mean that there should be relief for others and hardship for you, but it is a question of equality between your present abundance and their need, so that their abundance may also supply your need, in order that there may be equality. As it is written,

“The one who had much did not have too much,
and the one who had little did not have too little.”

One: For the Word in Scripture, the Word made flesh and the Word in our hearts.

All: **Thanks be to God.**

Sermon

Enough is Enough

R E S P O N S E t o t h e W O R D

Sermon Continued

Please rise in body or spirit

Song

697: Take My Life

Invitation to the Offering

With songs of joy and hearts of love, let us bring our offerings and gifts in gratitude to God.

Offertory - Sung by the First Church Choir

We Walk in Love
Deanna Witkowski

Ushers will collect the weekly offering. Donations can be placed in the offering plate. You may also make a donation by using this QR code on your smart phone:



Prayer of Dedication

One: Merciful God, misery and despair touch our world each day. Multiply the gifts we bring before you, that no one may suffer want. And if our fortunes are one day reversed, may we receive with the same grace and gratitude we have offered this day.

All: **Amen.**

S E N D I N G O U T t o b e T H E C H U R C H

Please rise in body or spirit

Song

#700: I'm Gonna Live So God Can Use Me

Invitation to Community Life

Music for Reflection

Now Thank We All Our God
Sigfrid Karg-Elert

Benediction

One: Go in the hope and promise of God.

All: We will share God's love and grace.

One: Go in the wholeness of life with Christ.

All: We will share the good news of Christ's healing.

One: Go in the power of the Holy Spirit.

All: We will share the Spirit of peace with the world.

S E R V I N G i n W O R S H I P T O D A Y

Preacher: Maggie Harmon

Liturgist: Dorrie Dodge

Music Director: Jake Fontana

Song Leader: Anne Margaret Manay

Liturgy: confession by enfleshed collective

Head Usher: Matthew Inadomi

Godly Play: Di Pagel and Aaron Ruff

Fellowship Time Refreshments: Nancy Ogden

How do we Choose the Music for Sunday Worship at First Church?

By Jake Fontana



A few weeks back, you may remember singing traditional hymns with the pipe organ, gospel standards accompanied on the Hammond, and some modern folk music too. The postlude was organ music by a twentieth century queer woman, and the prelude was “I Will Survive,” played on the Hammond, piano, and guitar.

How does such a combination all come together? As music director, I am always looking to balance tradition and modernity, comfort and challenge, and old favorites with new ideas. I start by checking the scripture for the week. There are lots of resources that point to good songs -- there’s even a scriptural index in the back of our hymnal. I check in with the preacher about the message they will share, and I talk to the song leader about what music is on their mind. To me it adds something meaningful to worship when music, prayer, and preaching work together.

I also speak to Pastor Matt and other worship leaders to get their thoughts. It’s an exercise in free association: what music comes to mind when you consider this scripture passage or this theme? For an important occasion, I might ask: what music says “Juneteenth” or “Pride Month” to you? We also think about exploring the many ways the congregation can sing, such as a call-and-response style song or a repeated

Taizé chant. We consider how we could call on the many musical gifts in the congregation -- singers, jazz pianists, guitarists, bassoonists and oboists, and more. I’m amazed how generative these brainstorming sessions can be when many heads are put together.

Then, it’s just putting it all together — bearing a few important things in mind. What order of music makes the best flow for worship? Is there a good balance of the familiar and the new? Will this combination encourage the congregation to grow in its spiritual engagement with music? And are we representing the diversity of identities, traditions, and values in the church? Are there moments of healing, hope, joy, and inspiration? The Sunday that I described above felt like a day when we hit a lot of these marks. Other days, we might change the music spontaneously during the service, when it feels like an opportunity comes up to express something deeper than what’s printed in the bulletin.

Please be in touch if you’d like to contribute to the process of music-making at First Church. I can’t promise we’ll be able to fit all your favorite songs, but I would love to hear what music speaks to you and why, and how we can bring that spirit to worship.

Queer Theology: An Essay by Jen Edwell

There are so many beautiful things that exist at the intersection of faith and LGBTQ+ lived experience - Queer faith leaders speaking truth and hope, affirming communities holding space for healing and belonging, and queer theology that invites us to know and talk about God in expansive, life-giving ways. This week, I'd like to unpack what queer theology means to me and why I think it's important.

First, what is "queer?" To me, queerness is this great expansive space beyond sexual and gender norms. The land of the "normal" often feels like an empire, huge and oppressive. But what is normal? Why is normal the ideal? Who really lives there? When you start to push, the land of the normal seems to shrink—like an optical illusion. The idealized center of normativity is actually a tiny island for cis- hetero, monogamous, Christian, and (in the United States at least) white folks. Nonetheless, a whole lot of people try to be on the island. Proximity to the island of normativity comes with power, but every step away from it brings us into the uncharted, untamed wilderness of queerness. And the further you get from the island, the queerer it gets. (In my opinion, things are more fun out here.)

So, what about theology? Theology is the study of divinity or, more plainly, thinking and talking about God. Theology off the island of normativity is not wholly untethered from tradition, but it does not mistake the norms of tradition for the truths of God. For example, Patrick S. Cheng, in *Radical love*, argues that "Christian theology itself is a fundamentally queer enterprise because it [...] challenges and deconstructs—through radical love—all kinds of binary categories that on the surface seem fixed and unchangeable



(such as life vs. death, or divine vs. human), but that ultimately are fluid and malleable" (p. 10).

Queer theology invites us to understand God beyond the gender binary: God as trans, God as genderqueer, God as genderless. Queer theology invites us to understand God's love for humanity/ the world beyond heteronormative metaphors: God's love as Sapphic, God's love as asexual, God's love as like a surrogate who celebrates the queer family she helps create. Queer theology invites to know the Trinity more fully: God as gender-expansive, God as polyamorous.

Queer theology breaks binaries and unbinds our understanding of God. Because God is not bound by tradition or limited by our definition of "normal." Queer theology reminds me that, while we are made in God's image, God is not limited to our reflection. God doesn't live only on the island of normativity, but is eager to meet us in the wilderness of queerness.

National Convention of the American Guild of Organists Coming Tomorrow - Jake Fontana Seek Volunteers to Usher



NICOLE KELLER



ROSALES ORGAN BUILDERS, INC.
OPUS 16 (1993)
(SEE PAGE 88)

Monday, July 1
First Presbyterian Church
Rosales Organ Builders, Opus 16 (1993)
2:00–2:45 PM and 3:30–4:15 PM

Oakland

GENEROUSLY SPONSORED BY A GIFT FROM ROSALES ORGAN BUILDERS

Voluntary for Organ

Wisdom

Twentieth Sonata
1. Allegramente
2. Adagio
3. Scherzando
4. Allegro

3 Improvisations
Prélude
Petit Canon
Improvisation

Variations on Two Themes

William Bolcom (b. 1938)

Carl Rütti (b. 1949)
Dancing Wisdom – Brother Glacier’s Farewell
Mea culpa – Hope – La sapienza di San Francesco
Commissioned by the San Francisco 2024 AGO National Convention

Rayner Brown (1912–1999)

Nadia Boulanger (1887–1979)

Naji Hakim (b. 1955)

NICOLE KELLER

Nicole Keller is in demand as a concert artist, adjudicator, and clinician. She has concertized in the States and abroad in venues such as St. Patrick’s Cathedral, New York; Cathédrale Notre-Dame, Paris; Dom St. Stephan, Passau; St. Patrick’s Cathedral, Armagh, Northern Ireland; and The Kazakh National University for the Arts, Astana, Kazakhstan. Ms. Keller specializes in eclectic programs suited to instrument and audience with a desire to expand the listener’s horizons, pairing familiar sounds and genres with less familiar ones. Her performances with orchestras includes concertos, works for small chamber orchestra, and large works involving organ, harpsichord, and piano. She has extensive experience as a chamber musician and as a continuo player, including many performances of Bach’s *St. Matthew* and *St. John Passions*, the *Christmas Oratorio*, and the *Mass in B minor* in addition to a host of cantatas and baroque chamber music.

As a teacher, Ms. Keller strives to foster and model a commitment to excellence in performance, scholarship and self-growth as students deepen their love of music and their instrument. Her students have been accepted into and attended prestigious graduate schools throughout the country and enjoy successful musical careers in a variety of settings. She was on the faculty at the Conservatory of Music at Baldwin Wallace University for more than 20 years as an instructor of organ, harpsichord, church music, and chamber music coach. She was recently appointed to the faculty of the School of Music, Theatre & Dance at the University of Michigan.

Ms. Keller received the Performer’s Certificate and the Master of Music Degree in Organ Performance and Literature at the Eastman School of Music in Rochester, New York under the tutelage of David Higgs. While at Eastman, she studied continuo with Arthur Haas and improvisation with Gerre Hancock. She received the Bachelor of Music Degree in Piano Performance from the Baldwin Wallace Conservatory of Music in Berea, Ohio, where she studied piano with George Cherry and Jean Stell and organ with Margaret Scharf.

Special Offering for Oakland LGBTQ Center

During Pride month 2023, we gathered as a church community to read and reflect upon Andrea Gibson's powerful collection of poems *You Better Be Lighting*. Jen Edwell hosted our conversation and guided us to read together Gibson's poem 'Queer Youth are five times more likely to die by suicide.' Some of us learned and others were reminded of the hardships of growing up as a LGBTQ youth in American society. We ask the question, "How do we support the youth in our church and in our community? What groups in our community are creating safe and nurturing spaces for our LGBTQ youth?"

Oakland LGBTQ center is one local organization that seeks to support local youth through a crisis hotline, youth LGBTQ support groups, and mentorships. Oakland LGBTQ center is dedicated to enhancing and sustaining the well-being of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ) individuals, our families and allies, by providing educational, social, and health related activities, programs and services.

Throughout this month we will be gathering a special offering, above and beyond our tithes/ offerings, to support the work of the Oakland LGBTQ Center. At the end of the June we will send in our collected donation to support youth services at Oakland LGBTQ Center, to help vulnerable youth. (please note on your check or donation if it should be a part of this special offering.)



Excerpt from 'Queer Youth are Five times more likely to die by Suicide' by Andrea Gibson
means:

You lived five times harder than you should have had to
to still have a body when you graduated high school.

means:

Hate worked five times harder
to make your spirit its wishbone.

means:

When your mother asked what was wrong,
you were five times more likely to believe you'd lose her if you spoke the truth.

means:

You were told five times more often
you'd go to hell when you died.

means:

Burning for eternity seemed five times more doable than another day in the school lunchroom.

means:

You were five times more inclined
to triple-padlock your diary.

means:

You were five times more likely
to stop writing your story down.

means:

I write my heart out now.

Queer youth are five times more likely to:
see you how you dream of seeing yourself.
To write something in your yearbook that will get you
through the next decade. To spot a stranger crying
and ask if there's anything they can do to help.
Five times more likely to:
need us to do the same.

Food Ministry Kitchen Report

By Bill Coburn

Wednesday, June 19

Cornelia made sandwiches for MACRO.

Saturday, June 22

Devon and Paul picked up at Good Eggs. Henry and Steve picked up at Whole Foods. Henry brought donations from Arizmendi and Steve picked up at St Vincent's. Bryan let the effort in the kitchen. David prepared MACRO lunches. Teri organized food for Monday lunch and started the hard boiling of eggs for Sunday and Monday.

Sunday, June 23

A small team made it all happen. Ann and Dorothy started early to make egg salad for the sandwiches. Erika added much needed capacity along with Kyong. Lunch: egg salad sandwiches, fruit, dessert, carrots and celery. Jack, Nina and Matt S gave out meals and some extra fruit to guests at 27th St entrance.

Derick, Bonnie, Pauline and Ann handled prep for Monday and finished kitchen cleanup.



Food Ministry Needs You!

The Food Ministry is looking to incorporate many more First Church volunteers into the work of the weekly ministry. Anyone who has not previously volunteered is invited to try one Sunday shift. Volunteering for this ministry is low-stress, hassle free and easy kitchen work. The Food Ministry is primarily sustained by the same volunteer group. It is important for new people to volunteer for the church's primary charitable effort so that the core volunteers do not become overtaxed – teamwork makes the dreamwork!

Here is what you can do:

Sunday Morning Lunchbag Prep (8:30 – 10:00 am)

Arrive early and help put together bagged sandwich lunches. This shift operates with seven volunteers, so you'll have lots of help learning how the assembly line works. The conversation is lively, coffee is hot, and the work concludes when worship starts at 10 am.

Sunday Prep for Monday's Hot Meal (11:30 – 1 pm)

You can join this work after Fellowship Time. Work typically consists of preparing vegetables and side dishes for the hot meal to be prepared on Monday morning. You'll be expected to tidy up the kitchen too. The meal plan is already laid out. This shift typically has three volunteers.

Sunday Lunch Giveaway & Clean-up (11:30 – 1 pm)

You can also volunteer to distribute bagged lunches and coffee/tea at the 27th Street gate. Some days produce and clothes are also given away (depending on what is available). This is a great way to have conversations with our guests and offer some friendly hospitality. You'll be expected to join in the clean-up effort when the lunches are distributed.

To get involved, contact Nina Lapachet, ninalapachet@gmail.com

Pastor Matt on Vacation



Pastor Matt will be on vacation with his family from June 17-July 8. If you require pastoral care while he is away, please contact your deacon, Martha Bauman (moderator of the deacons), or Rev. Bill Beatty who will be on-call. Please pray for a time of rest and refreshment for Pastor Matt, Susannah, Monrovia, and Ruby

First Church proudly supports our COMMUNITY PARTNERS:

- Afterglow Chorus
- Cantare Choirs
- Catalyst Youth Network
- College Awareness
- Community Women's Orchestra
- Downtown Streets Team
- Faith in Action East Bay
- Food Not Bombs
- Habitat For Humanity, East Bay-Silicon Valley
- Mandela Partners
- Oakland Civic Orchestra
- Oakland Early Head Start Preschool
- Oakland Gay Men's Chorus
- Oakland Kids First
- Quinteto Latino
- ReCares
- The Lucy Kinchen Chorale
- Vituity Care Foundation

Elders

Elizabeth Cureton, Chris Weber, Di Pagel, Gay Plair Cobb, Erick Bevington, Elizabeth Goodwin, Maggie Harmon, Julia Marquez

Session Officers

Rev. Matt Prinz, Moderator
Anne Margaret Manay, Clerk
Erick Bevington, Treasurer

Deacons

Marjorie Witt, Barbara Goodroe, Derrick Polk, Su Coburn, Pauline Ahanotu, Monrovia Prinz, Martha Bauman, Charmaine Irmiter

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Temple Tidings Contributors This Week

Writing by Matt Prinz, Jake Fontana, Bill Coburn, Micheline La Mont. Photos by Jen Edwell, Susannah Prinz. *Temple Tidings* is a weekly publication. All are welcome to contribute news, events and opinion. **Sign up to be on our email list:** firstchurchoakland.org/temple-tidings



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