

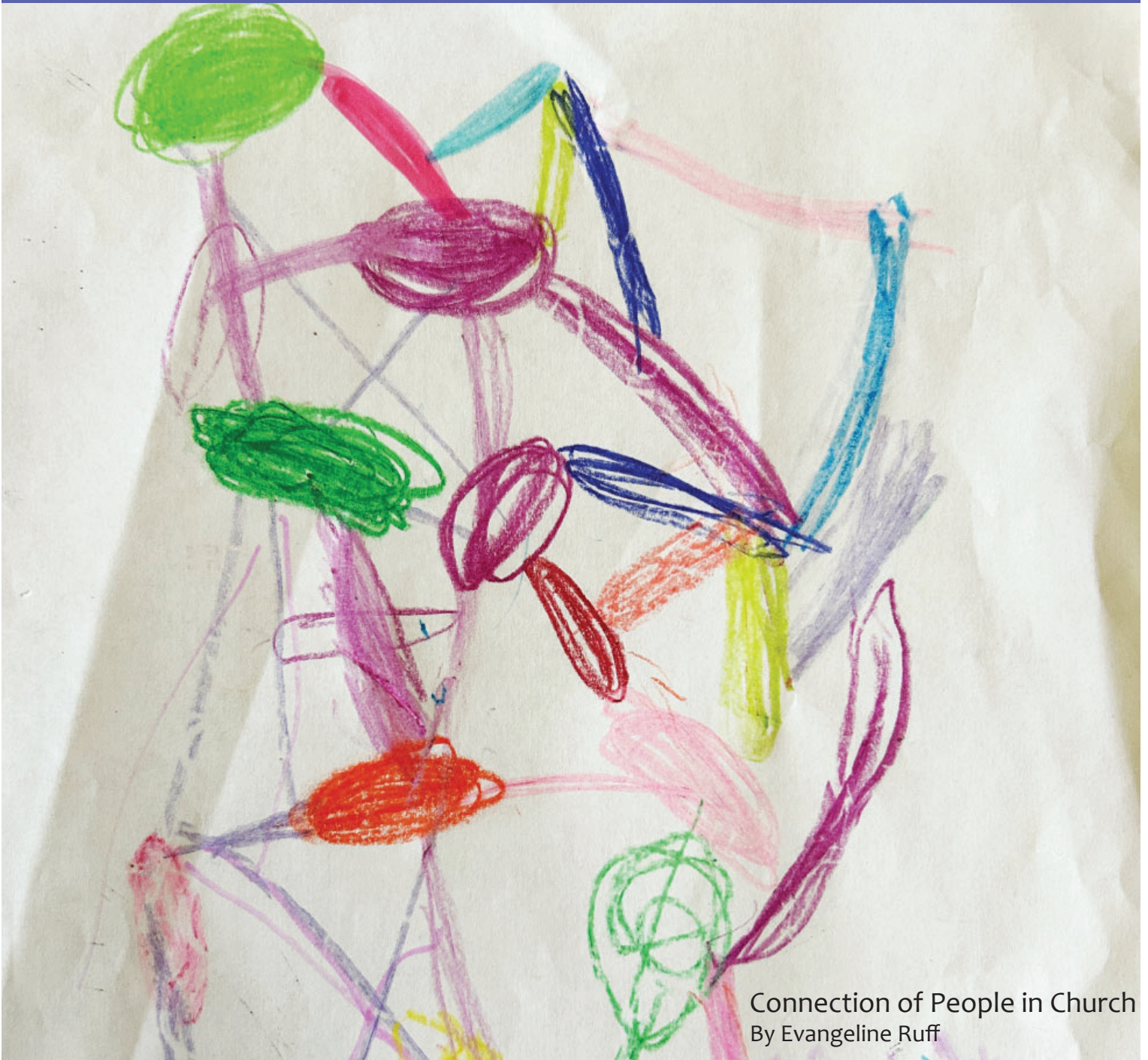
Weekly Newsletter

September 8, 2024

# Temple Tidings

First Presbyterian Church of Oakland

Making God's Welcome Known



Connection of People in Church  
By Evangeline Ruff

# W E L C O M E

## Visitors:

- If you would like to be added to our email list, please go to [firstchurchoakland.org](http://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

Welcome

Call to Worship

One: Place your trust in God.

**All: God's faithfulness is unshakeable.**

One: May our worship this day strengthen our faith.

**All: May our faithfulness be unshakeable.**

One: May our words and actions be good and true.

**All: May we grow in godliness each and every day.**

## Gathering Prayer

**One:** The early disciples devoted themselves to prayer, the teaching of the apostles, and sharing the bread of life. They were a people of prayer, who shared their joys and concerns, their passions and sorrows, with one another and with the LORD. For burdens shared are burdens lessened, and joys shared are joys enriched. Come, let us follow their example and lift up our prayers and worship to God.

**All: Amen**

*Please rise in body or spirit*

Hymn

*#301: Let Us Build a House*

## CONFESS I O N o f S I N & A S S U R A N C E o f G R A C E

### Confession

**One:** Loving Savior, Shepherd with the voice we know, be with us when we stray. For we often hear the voices of strangers and follow them to dry pastures and dark valleys. We forget your voice of love and begin to feel small and lost. We fear that we will not have enough to go on, much less have a surplus to offer others. And yet you know us by heart and by name. Call us once again. Restore our souls. Walk ahead of us on the right paths, and we will follow you. Remembering your voice, we pray.

**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*

### Sung Assurance

*#695: Change My Heart, O God*

### 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

*for the courage to do something difficult*

*by Kate Bowler*

God, I am struggling to face the difficult thing I know I should do. The conversation I've been avoiding. The help I should have asked for months ago. The symptom I have long ignored. Oh God, help me. I am afraid to act, but afraid to admit my inaction might be making things worse. Blessed are we who recognize that we are struggling under the weight of the nothing that has happened but needs to. Blessed are we who say honestly, God this is so hard, and I don't know why. The longer I leave it, the worse it gets. God, help me begin-or even begin to begin- though I can't know how this will go. Fill that inner space where I am quietly overwhelmed and stuck in the mud. Or maybe it's quicksand. I hear you say "I will strengthen you and help." You go before us and you are right here with us. Even no. In our panicking, in our anxieties, in our master-avoidance. You never fail. Amen.

*Please rise in body or spirit*

Song

*#697: Take My Life*

## THE WORD

### Scripture Lesson

*Act. 2: 42 – 47 NRSV*

One: They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. Awe came upon everyone because many wonders and signs were being done through the apostles. All who believed were together and had all things in common; they would sell their possessions and goods and distribute the proceeds to all, as any had need. Day by day, as they spent much time together in the temple, they broke bread at home and ate their food with glad and generous[c] hearts, praising God and having the goodwill of all the people. And day by day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved.

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

**All: Thanks be to God.**

### Sermon

*LORD Help Us See*

## RESPONSE to the WORD

### Sermon Continued

*Pastor Matt will lead the congregation on reflection on reading and sermon.*

*Please rise in body or spirit*  
Song

*#775: I Want Jesus to Walk With Me*

Invitation to the Offering

God's grace is abundant. Wherever we wander, God remains our God. The profoundness of God's love stands in contrast to the harsh judgment of our world. In response to this unfailing love, let us bring our time, talents, and treasures to serve the ministries to which we are called.

Offertory

*Good To Me*

*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: God of abundant life, we devote ourselves and these gifts to your vision of a community that meets the needs of any and all. We give our gifts of money and work, of prayer and praise, of presence and purpose to our friends and neighbors. Bless our offering, that it may meet the needs of small and large, of your great and generous blessings.

**All: Amen.**

## **SENDING OUT to be THE CHURCH**

*Please rise in body or spirit*  
Song

*#853: We Are Marching in the Light of God*

Invitation to Community Life

Music for Reflection

Benediction

One: God heals the broken and makes the wounded whole.

**All: We go with peace in our hearts.**

One: God finds the lost and gives them a home.

**All: We go with joy and thanksgiving.**

One: God visits the lonely and makes them family.

**All: We go as the people of God.**

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

**Pastor:** Rev. Matt Prinz

**Liturgist:** Maggie Harmon

**Music Director:** Jake Fontana

**Song Leader:** Linda Carter

**Head Usher:** Matthew Inadomi

**Godly Play:** Di Pagel and Monrovia Prinz

**Fellowship Time Refreshments:** Maggie Harmon

# Church Happens Throughout the Campus on Sundays

By Di Pagel

In worship on Sunday Pastor Matt often reminds us that church is happening all over our campus simultaneously. It's happening in the kitchen where members and friends of our congregation are preparing food for distribution to the food challenged that day. It's happening in Room 2 in the Christian Education wing where adult mentors are worshipping together with our children in Godly Play and also wherever on campus the congregation is meeting through song, liturgy and sacrament. As we experienced this August, worship might be in the sanctuary, Fellowship hall or in the Reception room. Our faith community is certainly spiritually enriched by this diversity of ministry opportunities and offerings each Sunday.

On Sunday, September 8 at the end of worship everyone will be invited to leave the service and stop by to celebrate with those involved in the Food Ministry and Godly Play programs. It is good for all of us to know what is happening on Sunday mornings. There will be the usual refreshments in the Reception room but there will also be an important opportunity to



meet with Elder Maggie Harmon (Finance and Stewardship) who will be at a table to speak with those who are interested about the 2024 church budget and the financial health of our church. There will be a brief overview of what a budget is, how our finances are managed, and the current status of our income and expenses. It will enable all of us to be better informed on how we sustain and grow our Christian ministry in this part of Oakland.



# Practices of our Church Community – Ways to Join Us

**Worship Service** Each Sunday we gather at 10am to sing, pray, confess, and worship God together. We invite our community to participate in our worship services through singing, reading, praying, ushering, or sharing testimony. Do you like to write prayers or help connect music to themes in scripture? Talk with Di Pagel (Elder of Worship), Jake Fontana (Music Director) or Pastor Matt if you would like to help lead/design our worship services. You can also help us create space for conversation and building community through providing food during our coffee hour (11-12). Talk with Julia Marquez if you would like to contribute.

**Food Ministry** Each week, more than 40 volunteers share over 300 meals with our neighbors through our food ministry. Volunteers gather donated food on Fridays and Saturdays from local supermarkets and bakeries. Meals are prepared on Sundays and Mondays and are shared with neighbors and delivered to local encampments. We have opportunities to serve during the week, each Saturday, and Sunday. Talk with Gay Cobb or Dorothy Dugger or Nina Lapachet to get involved.

**Bible Study** Wednesday nights at 7pm via Zoom we gather around the sacred texts of scripture to study and reflect upon our lives and take new steps of faithfulness together. No need to study beforehand, just sign up for our weekly emails, click on the Zoom link and join conversation. Come with a desire to build community and listen for God's Spirit in the midst of scripture. Talk with Henry Gardner or Maggie Harmon or Pastor Matt for more details.

**Building the Beloved Community** Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. constantly spoke about God's work of building the beloved community - a community bridging across the differences of race, class, gender, sexuality, and ability. Building the Beloved Community is one lens we use to look at all of our ministry at First Church. We also host conversations, book groups, attend concerts and art shows, to learn, reflect, and to help us build God's beloved community within our church community, in our neighborhoods, and city. Talk with Suzie Inadomi, Pastor Matt or Pastor Joel to learn about ways to join BBC work at First Presbyterian Church of Oakland.

**Faith in Action** "Justice is what love looks like in the public." Cornel West. How do we put our faith into action to love our neighbors? One way we live out our faith is joining the ministries of Faith in Action East Bay, who for over 40 years have advocated and worked in areas of gun violence, immigration, education, housing, and equity in Oakland and the larger Bay Area. Members of First Pres. regularly join FIA Ceasefire night walks, advocate for affordable housing, and seek to support new structural changes for equity and justice. Talk with Pastor Matt to get involved and our new community organizer Chris Logan.

**Community Life - God is community** Three in one and we are made for community. Creating spaces for community around meals, discussion groups, backyard firepits, and outings together (A's game, beach etc.) are an important ministry within our church community. Do you like to host events, love connecting with others, enjoy building community? Talk with Julia Marquez or Pastor Matt and join them in planning our next community life events.

# First Church Membership is an Important Element of Church Participation and Community

First Church is inviting all who are interested to consider becoming members of the congregation to make First Church a permanent church home. Members are asked to make a “profession of faith” to the elders. This profession generally consists of telling your own story and describing why Christian faith and the church are meaningful for you. New members are then received by the congregation in a brief ceremony where they pledge to follow Christ by loving and supporting each other. This also serves as a form of public declaration to make First Church a permanent church home.

Voting in church is part of the Presbyterian Church’s origin story. During the Age of Enlightenment, church reformers wrested control of their churches away from rule by Bishops, and vested it in the congregation, giving all members a right to elect their leaders (known as elders in English,

or Presbyters in Greek). This form of church government operates very similar to a republic, with elected leaders making decisions of behalf of the congregation. At First Church, we elect our Pastor (Minister of Word and Sacrament), our Ruling Elders (currently we have seven) and our Deacons (numbering nine). All these elected members are responsible for discerning the church’s mission and using the church’s resources to accomplish it.

Only members of the congregation can be nominated for leadership. And only members of the congregation can vote at meetings. The Elders at First Church are responsible for receiving new members, and they enthusiastically welcome any new(ish) person interested in making First Church their home. Anyone interested can discuss membership with Pastor Matt or any Elder.

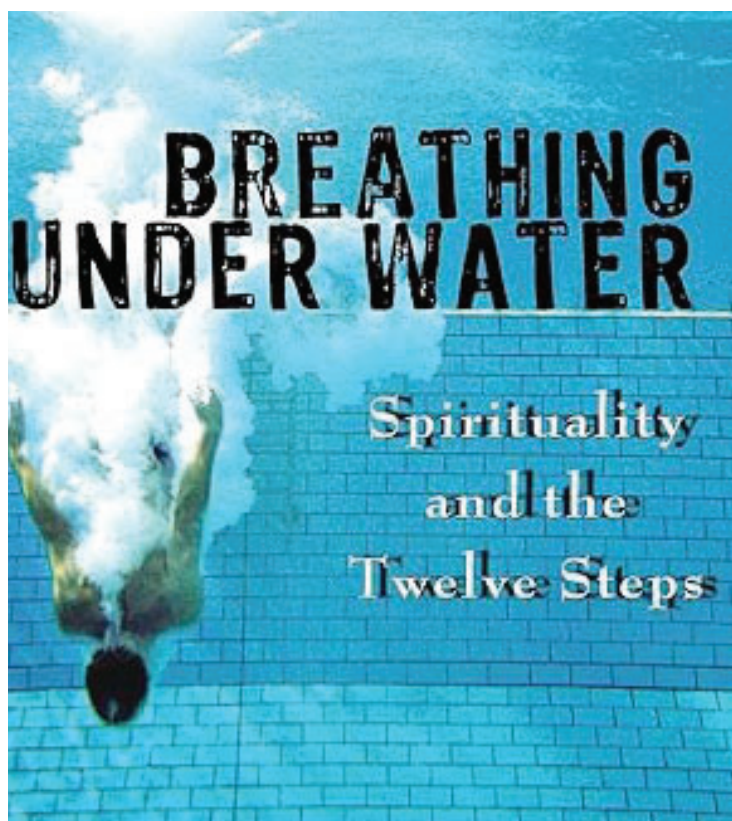


## Anniversary Night Walk on Friday

Join Faith in Action at 6 p.m. this Friday, September 13 at the Allen Temple, 8501 International Blvd, Oakland, to celebrate 12 years of walking our streets to be a ministry of presence in our city. Learn more about the Ceasefire Strategy and an important public safety ballot measure that will strengthen Oakland's violence-reduction work.



## Join us September 29 at Maggie's



Please join as First Church takes a summer break to dive into the spirituality of awakening into our life as beloved children of God. Over the course of three months we will gently explore Breathing Under Water by Father Richard Rohr. This book will guide us in 'breaking negative patterns and experiencing greater internal freedom' to help us find 'bold hope and transformation.'

Build contemplative practices, consider how to break negative patterns, and have fun with your community! This is for believers, non-believers, the spiritually curious, and anyone who is willing to be surprised by God.

Please RSVP so we can plan food.

September 29: @ 4:00pm Maggie Harmon  
maggieafh@gmail.com

## Food Ministry Report

Ben and Martha picked up a new Friday donation from Whole Foods as well as at Western Service Workers. We are likely stopping the very anemic Friday pickup at Good Eggs. Saturday food pickups were made by Paul and Devon at Good Eggs, Steve, David and Michael at Whole Foods.

Bryan, Teri and Dorothy were in the kitchen boiling 350 eggs and helping put groceries away and plan Sunday and Monday menus.

Sunday volunteers included newcomers Shelley Gordon from Temple Sinai and her neighbor Sharon, welcoming back Laura after an extended absence for hip replacement surgery, Aaron, Kyong, Ann, Martha, Julia, Janet, Stewart, Betsy and Dorothy. Lunch was egg salad sandwiches, fruit, dessert and chips. The team from Berkeley Presbyterian Homes distributed food to folks living in the streets. Sarah and Paul Roberts are our new First Sunday of the month servers of lunch to guests at 27th Street entrance. Welcome Sarah and Paul and Thank You!

Monday volunteers Teri, Natalie, Dan, Dan Mc, Trish, Crissi, Beth, Paul, Hunter, Bonnie, Diane, Tai, Pam, Maureen, David and Linda prepared meals of: Rice and Beans, chicken, potatoes and sausage, turkey chili or pulled pork, with couscous or farro. Green salad, fruit salad, dessert and hard boiled eggs. A lot of clothing was given out and toothbrushes were delivered with meals.

77 meals were delivered to people living in the streets and 52 at the 27th Street entrance to the church.

## Food Ministry Roles Available

**Please contact Pastor Matt or Dorothy Dugger to sign up for these opportunities to serve.**

**Saturday 10 a.m. - noon:** Each Saturday morning volunteers go to Whole Foods and Good Eggs to pick up donations. We need help organizing and cleaning up the donation pick-ups. Love our neighbors and build community with others.

**Weekly Communications:** Each week we share in word and picture what is happening within our food ministry to the church community. Would you like to take a few pictures and type up a brief report about the food ministry to encourage and inspire others to join us in loving our neighbors?

**Sunday Lead:** We are seeking another volunteer to lead one Sunday a month before and after our worship service. A Sunday lead follows the meal plan, coordinates volunteers, guides food distribution, and checks on the clean-up. The lead ensures that volunteers have meaningful service and can contribute to this important ministry.

**Laundry day:** We need 1 or 2 volunteers to pick up dirty dishtowels etc mid week, wash and return to the kitchen by Sunday. 1 week per month.

**Organizing dry goods pantry and storage closets:** With many users of the kitchen, things sometimes don't get put away in the best place or with the most logic. Spend an hour or two at the most, once a month to put things back in shape and help keep the kitchen functional.

**Neighbor Liasion:** Get to know the neighbors we serve and guests who come pick up lunch and sometimes groceries at our 27th St entrance. Sundays after fellowship hour. 11:45 to 12:45-1:00. 2 volunteers needed to give out lunch bags and serve coffee and visit with our guests. You can sign up online when you see a vacancy or pick one Sunday a month as a regular time of service.



## 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



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## Elders

Elizabeth Cureton: Youth and Children  
Chris Weber: Building and Grounds  
Di Pagel: Worship and Music/Personnel  
Gay Plair Cobb: Personnel/Food Ministry  
Erick Bevington: Treasurer  
Maggie Harmon: Finance  
Julia Marquez: Community Life

## 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

## Church Staff

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**Joan Clerk**, Bookkeeper

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## Temple Tidings Contributors This Week

Writing by Matt Prinz, April and Jennifer Edwell, and Maggie Harmon. Photos by Suzie Inadomi. *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](http://firstchurchoakland.org/temple-tidings)**