

Weekly Newsletter

September 29, 2024

Temple Tidings

First Presbyterian Church of Oakland

Making God's Welcome Known



Ruth and Naomi by Kelli Latimore

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

Covenant Hymn

Welcome

by Donna Peña and Marty Haugen

Call to Worship

One: As a deer longs for flowing streams, so my soul longs for God.

All: My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. When shall I come and behold God's face?

One: My tears have been my food day and night, while people say to me continually,
"Where is your God?"

All: Why are you cast down, O my soul, and why are you disquieted within me?

One: I will place my hope in God, my rock and my redeemer.

All: I will praise the Lord, my help and my salvation.

One: Come, let us worship.

Gathering Prayer

One: God of Compassion, you love the world with a complete, joyful, and selfless love. You call us to love you and our neighbor in the same way. Teach us to be generous in love and ready to serve. Inspire us to share our talents and our time. Help us to live with such passion and purpose, that we may one day look back and smile at what we have given to others in the name of your love.

All: Amen.

Please rise in body or spirit
Hymn

#65: Guide Me, O Thou Great Jehovah

C O N F E S S 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: Holy One, we long to perceive ourselves as you see us. We yearn to look through your eyes and envision who you created us to be. Help us love ourselves, that we may truly love others. Help us give freely from our bounty, that we may rejoice in the gifts of others. In Christ's name, 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
Hymn

695: Change My Heart, O God

Assurance of Pardon

One: Let your soul receive this rest: The God whose friends fell asleep in the garden on the night he needed them desperately has mercy on you now. Just as this sacred company rose to be loved by God evermore, may you also know and receive this same forgiveness, extending it to all whom you've chosen to love and be loved by.

All: Amen.

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.

P R A Y E R S o f t h e P E O P L E

Sharing of Joys & Concerns

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

Prayer

One: We watch as Ruth says, ‘Where you go, I’ll go.’ And we watch as Orpah decides to return, knowing that she’d rather be with her family than burden Naomi. And we watch Naomi, a husk of herself, go back to where she came from, wondering what her welcome will be like. And we do not understand. Help us, as we do not understand, to watch, listen, believe, and trust, that the things people do in desperation are – usually – the best they can imagine to do. And move us from judgment to belief: belief of these three women making choices they never thought they’d have to make. Help us keep distance, not imagining that we would do better in circumstances like these. Because how would we know? May we watch. May we honor. May we believe. May we support where support is asked for. May we learn where learning is needed.

All: Amen.

Please rise in body or spirit
Song

#450: Be Thou My Vision

THE WORD

Scripture Lesson

Ruth 4. 1 - 17 NRSV

No sooner had Boaz gone up to the gate and sat down there than the next-of-kin of whom Boaz had spoken came passing by. So Boaz said, “Come over; sit down here.” And he went over and sat down. Then Boaz took ten men of the elders of the town and said, “Sit down here,” so they sat down. He then said to the next-of-kin, “Naomi, who has come back from the country of Moab, is selling the parcel of land that belonged to our kinsman Elimelech. So I thought I would tell you of it and say: Buy it in the presence of those sitting here and in the presence of the elders of my people. If you will redeem it, redeem it; but if you will not, tell me, so that I may know; for there is no one prior to you to redeem it, and I come after you.” So he said, “I will redeem it.” Then Boaz said, “The day you acquire the field from the hand of Naomi, you are also acquiring Ruth the Moabite, the widow of the dead man, to maintain the dead man’s name on his inheritance.” At this, the next-of-kin said, “I cannot redeem it for myself without damaging my own inheritance. Take my right of redemption yourself, for I cannot redeem it.”

Now this was the custom in former times in Israel concerning redeeming and exchanging to confirm a transaction: the one took off a sandal and gave it to the other; this was the manner of attesting in Israel. So when the next-of-kin said to Boaz, “Acquire it for yourself,” he took off his sandal. Then Boaz said to the elders and all the people, “You are witnesses today that I have acquired from the

hand of Naomi all that belonged to Elimelech and all that belonged to Chilion and Mahlon. I have also acquired Ruth the Moabite, the wife of Mahlon, to be my wife, to maintain the dead man's name on his inheritance, in order that the name of the dead may not be cut off from his kindred and from the gate of his native place; today you are witnesses." Then all the people who were at the gate, along with the elders, said, "We are witnesses. May the LORD make the woman who is coming into your house like Rachel and Leah, who together built up the house of Israel. May you produce children in Ephrathah and bestow a name in Bethlehem; and, through the children that the LORD will give you by this young woman, may your house be like the house of Perez, whom Tamar bore to Judah."

So Boaz took Ruth, and she became his wife. When they came together, the LORD made her conceive, and she bore a son. Then the women said to Naomi, "Blessed be the LORD, who has not left you this day without next-of-kin, and may his name be renowned in Israel! He shall be to you a restorer of life and a nourisher of your old age, for your daughter-in-law who loves you, who is more to you than seven sons, has borne him." Then Naomi took the child and laid him in her bosom and became his nurse. The women of the neighborhood gave him a name, saying, "A son has been born to Naomi." They named him Obed; he became the father of Jesse, the father of David.

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

All: **Thanks be to God.**

Sermon

The Stories We Tell

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

Sermon Continued

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

Please rise in body or spirit

Song

Wherever you may go

Wherever you may go, I will follow, and your people shall be my people too.

Wherever you may go, I will follow, for I would be faithful, loyal, and true.

Invitation to the Offering

One: 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

“Chosen Family”

by Rina Sawayama and Elton John

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: Free our hearts, gracious God, that your great purposes may work through our love, as they did for Naomi and Ruth before us. Multiply our gifts, Holy One, that all people may be built into a spiritual house—a house that no one can bring down.

All: Amen.

SENDING OUT to be THE CHURCH

Please rise in body or spirit

Song

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

Invitation to Community Life

Music for Reflection

*Postlude in F Minor
by Luise Adolpha Le Beau*

Ask the Holy Spirit to remind you of a word of inspiration or comfort from the worship service and to prepare you for the week ahead. Please receive in silence.

Benediction

One: Go out in love to care for strangers.
Go out in love to care for kin.
Go out in love to care for neighbors.
Go out in love to care for yourselves, beloved of God.

All: Amen.

SERVING in WORSHIP TODAY

Pastor: Rev. Matt Prinz

Liturgist: Linda Carter

Music Director: Jake Fontana

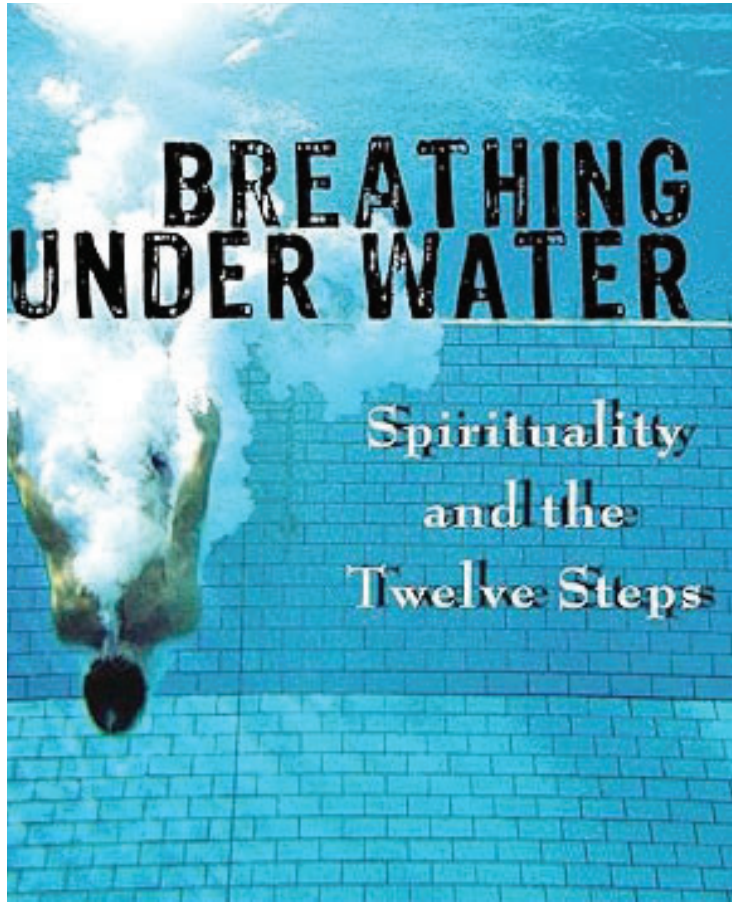
Song Leader: Anne Margaret Manay

Head Usher: Matthew Inadomi

Godly Play: Dorrie Dodge and Aaron Ruff

Fellowship Time Refreshments: Nina and Eric Lapachet

Join us for the Final Contemplative Study on September 29



Please join us at First Church as we continue our dive into the spirituality of awakening into our life as beloved children of God. Over the course of the summer we have been exploring *Breathing Under Water* by Father Richard Rohr. This book guides 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

Brother Rohr may just take you to places you've both avoided and longed for, to truth, union, joy, laughter, and the greatest of all, to your own precious self, here on earth with us, a child of God.

- Anne Lamott, from the forward

More about the book:

We all suffer from unhealthy dependencies that we continually return to in hopes of having a better life. But after yet another TV show is streamed or another drink is swallowed, we find we once again feel worse, not better, than we did before. Where is the hope for that fully awakened life we long to live?

World-renowned author Richard Rohr says we can only be healed and find true fulfillment by facing our dependencies head-on. *Breathing Under Water* will guide you to:

- Disentangle from cultural cycles of sin and emptiness
- Discover how to get free from your personal dependencies
- Learn how the Twelve Step program can supplement Christian teaching
- Find compassion for others and yourself
- Enjoy a deeper spiritual life, feeling God's love for you.

Those who are ready to break negative patterns and experience greater internal freedom will find bold hope and transformation in this insightful book.

Phone Banking Opportunities Available with Training Provided



**DO YOU WANT TO MAKE AN
IMPACT DURING THIS ELECTION?**

Volunteering to phone bank is a great opportunity to encourage people to vote and empower the community with information about what will be on the ballot

REGISTER

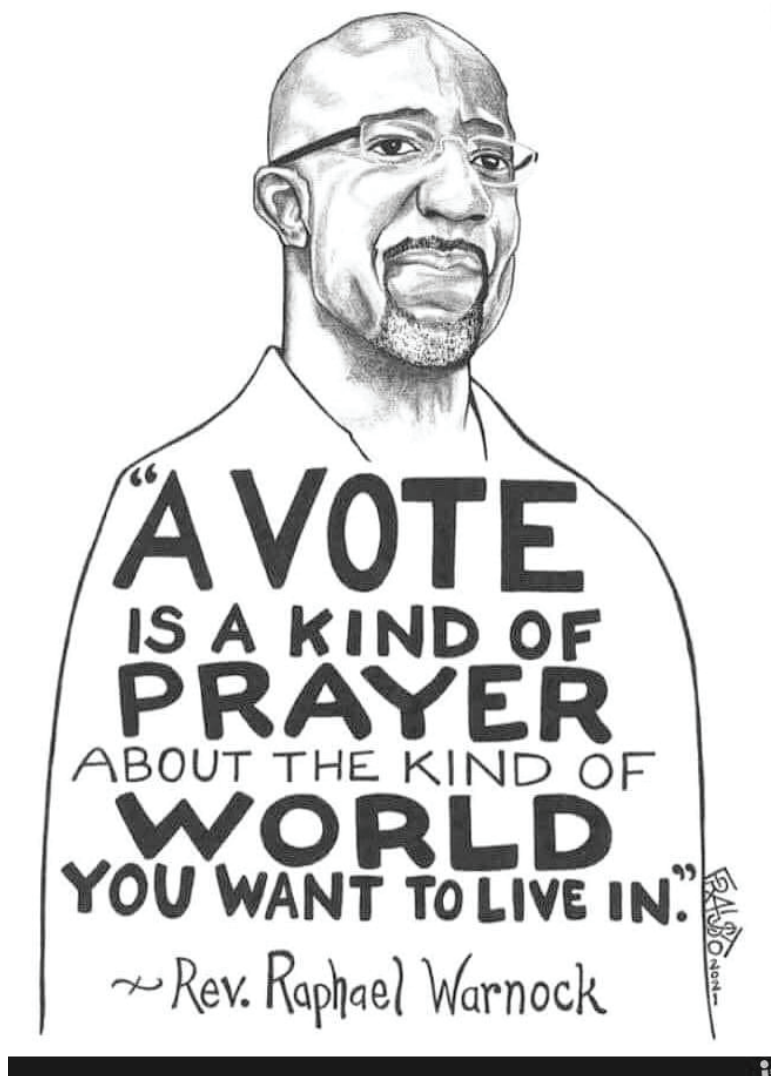
- Tuesdays on zoom from 6 - 8 p.m.
tinyurl.com/fiaebtuesdays
- Thursdays on zoom from 5:30 - 7:30 p.m.
tinyurl.com/fiaebthursdays

Join us on October 19 for a Ballot Party Led by Faith In Action

Ballot Party on Oct. 19th from 10 - 11:30am in the Fellowship Hall. Bring your voter guide and sample ballot and learn/discuss local and statewide measures on the ballot. We will look at summaries of each measure/proposition, ask questions, share our ideas with others, and take a straw poll.

Faith in Action organizer Chris Logan will share ways to encourage others to vote. Members of College Ave Presbyterian Church, Bethel Presbyterian Church, St. Augustine's Episcopal Church, and Oaklife Church will be joining us.

Ask Pastor Matt or Nancy Ogden if you have questions or would like further information



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.



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.

Find Peace at Soundscape

Friday, Oct. 4 from 5 - 6:30 p.m.

First Fridays at First Church

LISTEN

REFLECT

MEDITATE

PRAY

SOUNDSCAPE

Soundscape is a meditative, live music experience designed to encourage deep, inward thoughts in a beautiful, safe environment.

Enter and experience the transformative beauty of sound, sight, and solitude.

During Soundscape, consider these questions while you sit and experience the expanse of the Sanctuary and the sounds of live music:

When did you feel most alive this week? When did you feel least alive? Are there concerns you have that weigh you down or make you feel heavy? At the front table, pour salt into water. This represents our communal grief. Do you have hope for renewal or change? Light a candle in the front of the room as a sign of your desire. As the flame burns with the lights of your neighbors, sit and consider how your hope can transform you or what others may hope for.

Food Ministry Report

On Sunday, Martha led the team with help from Ann, Ben, Sean, Matt S, Kyong and our two newest helpers Sharon and Shelly (pictured below). We produced 125 bag lunches with apples or strawberries, chips, egg salad sandwiches, and a delicious dessert.

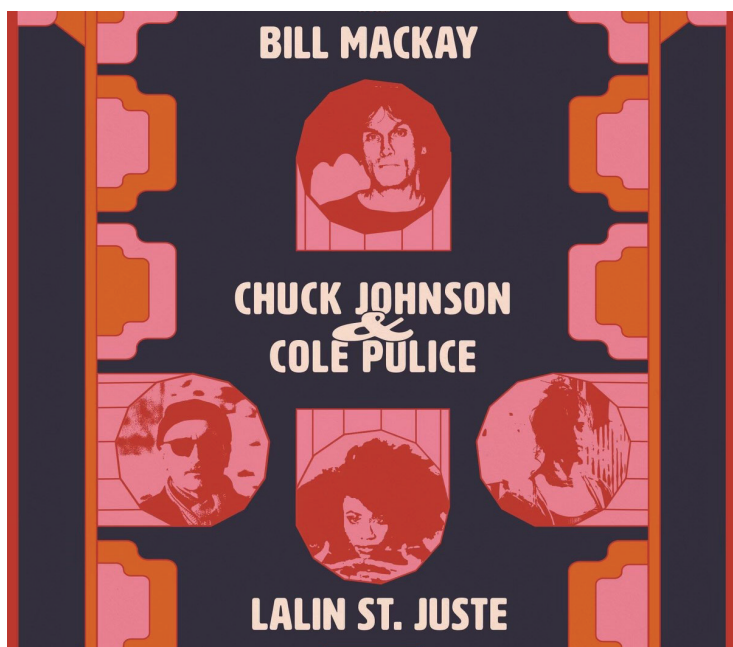
Come join us on a Sunday morning! There are four different prep jobs and generally a team of 2 people on each task.

Contact Nina (ninalapachet@gmail.com) to sign up whenever you are available to help. Let me know if you have any questions. baabmartha@gmail.com



Working Names Studio Concert

Oct. 5 at 7 p.m.



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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and past editions of
Temple Tidings

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

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Temple Tidings Contributors This Week

Writing by Matt Prinz and Maggie Harmon. *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