

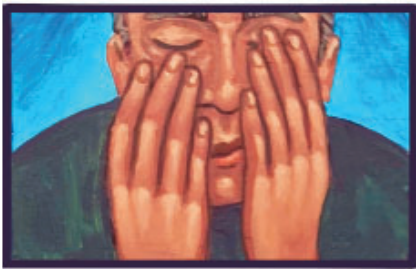
Weekly Newsletter

November 17, 2024

Temple Tidings

First Presbyterian Church of Oakland

Making God's Welcome Known



• THE BEATITUDES •



Art by Kelly 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

Wade in the Water
arr. William Farley Smith

Welcome

Call to Worship

One: Blessed are the poor in spirit,

All: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

One: Blessed are those who mourn,

All: for they will be comforted.

One: Blessed are the meek,

All: for they will inherit the earth.

One: Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness,

All: for they will be filled.

One: Blessed are the merciful,

All: for they will receive mercy.

One: Blessed are the pure in heart,

All: for they will see God.

One: Blessed are the peacemakers,

All: for they will be called children of God.

Gathering Prayer

One: Great and mighty God, open our hearts to the power of your Holy Spirit. Open our minds to the wisdom of your Word. Help us run the race of life with faithful perseverance and with steadfast love.

All: Amen.

Please rise in body or spirit

Hymn *Glory to God #735: I Need Thee Every Hour*

CONFESSIO N of SIN & ASSURANCE of GRACE

Confession

One: We are ashamed. We confess that we have not loved the way this world deserves. We have allowed children to starve. We have cast way generations of Black people behind bars, often for ‘crimes’ that were necessary for our survival. We have been spineless about holding law enforcement accountable to their actions. We’ve been more concerned with performative activism and online diatribes than looking our own neighbor in the eye, than demanding more for the marginalized in our communities. We have not voted with compassion. We have not voted at all. We have changed our very benches to keep the homeless from their rest. We have exploited land and sea, allowing our own filth to colonize the deepest beauties of the world. As we contend with all the ways we’ve perverted the glory of the world, we hardly feel worthy of forgiveness. But we humbly ask that you would forgive us. Have mercy on us, all our heartlessness, that we would be filled with the fullness of our humanity.

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

Song *African American Heritage Hymnal #414: I Don’t Feel No Ways Tired*

Assurance of Pardon

One: Let your soul receive this rest: The God who sends thunder and lightning seeks to obliterate every system that threatens the dignity and shalom of the cosmos. Accept what mercy is available after what we’ve made of this precious sacred world—what we’ve made of one another. In all our greed, our deceit, our apathy, our moral deficiencies, may the divine forgive us, and work so that every injustice would at last be made right.

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 of the P E O P L E

Sharing of Joys & Concerns

You may share requests for prayer with the congregation aloud. If you would like, there are two tables set up with candles for prayer and salt water for lament.

Children may go with leaders to Godly Play.

Songs by the Lucy Kinchen Chorale

*Hear My Prayer
Fix Me, Jesus*

T H E W O R D

Scripture Lesson

Isaiah 61. 1 – 2; Matthew 5. 10 - 12 NRSV

The spirit of the Lord God is upon me
because the Lord has anointed me;
he has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed,
to bind up the brokenhearted,
to proclaim liberty to the captives
and release to the prisoners,
to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor
and the day of vengeance of our God,
to comfort all who mourn,

“Blessed are those who are persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

“Blessed are you when people revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

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

All: Thanks be to God.

Sermon

RESPONSE to the WORD

Reflection

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

Songs by the Lucy Kinchen Chorale

*I'm Gonna Sing 'til the Spirit Moves in My Heart
Wade in the Water*

Invitation to the LORD's Supper

Please rise in body or spirit

Song

Glory to God #507: Come to the Table of Grace

Prayer of Thanksgiving

One: The bread of heaven is here, leading us into life.

All: We draw strength from the bread of life.

One: The cup of blessing is at hand, bringing us salvation.

All: We find life in the cup of salvation

One: Eat and drink, for Christ is here, offering us eternal life

All: Thanks be to God.

Words of Institution

Communion Music

I'd Rather Have Jesus

Sharing of the Holy Meal & Offering

*Please come forward when invited by ushers. Communion is non alcoholic
and gluten free. Donations can be placed in the offering plate.
Donations may also be made using this QR Code:*



Prayer

SENDING OUT to be THE CHURCH

Please rise in body or spirit

Song

Glory to God #775: I Want Jesus to Walk with Me

Invitation to Community Life

Music for Reflection

*A Pleasant Thought
by Florence Price*

Benediction

One: Go with heads bowed, in humility toward all you have done and not done to protect every living thing. May you be sewn into the complicated tapestry of oppressed and oppressor, know you are more than one thing. May you march and write and sing and educate and use what power you have to call forth justice. And may you contend daily with all the ways the curse still dwells in the hidden parts of you, that you would be a person of constant searching, self-honesty, confession, and forgiveness.

All: Amen.

Translation of Matthew 5 from Glen Stassen

Joyful are those who are poor and humble before God,
for theirs is the reign of God.
Joyful are those who are deeply saddened to the point of action,
for they will be comforted.
Joyful are those whose wills are surrendered to God,
for they will inherit the earth.
Joyful are those who practice compassion in action,
for they will receive God's compassion.
Joyful are those who seek God's will in all they are and do,
for they will see God.
Joyful are the peacemakers,
for they will be called children of God.
Joyful are those who suffer because of restorative justice,
for theirs is the reign of God.
Joyful are you when they criticize, persecute, and slander you, because of me.
Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in God.
For in the same way, they persecuted the prophets before you.

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: Henry Gardner

Music Director: Jake Fontana

Guest Choir: The Lucy Kinchen Chorale - Lori Willis, Director

Song Leader: Raenelle Tauro

Liturgy: Cole Arthur Riley's Black Liturgies

Head Usher: Mathew Inadomi

Godly Play: Dorrie Dodge and Aaron Ruff

Fellowship Time Refreshments: Paula Goodwin & Derek Muller

Holiday Concerts Bring Music and Joy to First Church



First Church is leading the way to a joyous holiday season with multiple musical performances that are sure to delight you and your family. Here are the details you need to enjoy some or all of the fabulous performances by talented community partners and local musicians:

Sunday, December 8, 4 p.m.

Cantare Adult and Youth Choirs

Cantare's Chorale, Chamber Ensemble and Nova, accompanied by full orchestra, present Cantare's annual December Holiday Concert. Always a holiday favorite, the program will include Poulenc's Gloria and several seasonal favorites that reflect the sentiments from assorted sacred and secular traditions.

Tickets: cantareconvivo.org

Sunday, December 15, 4 p.m.

Oakland Gay Men's Chorus

This 90-minute, 2-act concert is packed with heartwarming classics and exciting new arrangements that will have you tapping your toes and singing along. Enjoy timeless hits like "It's Beginning to Look a Lot Like Christmas," "Silver Bells," and "Sleigh Ride," plus our playful twist on "I Saw Daddy Kissing Santa Claus." We'll also be bringing the spirit of inclusivity

with "The Chanukah Song (We Are Lights)" and the reflective beauty of "Winter Song" by Sara Bareilles and Ingrid Michaelson.

Tickets: oaklandgmc.org

Saturday, December 14, 2 p.m.

The Lucy Kinchen Chorale

The Chorale's mission is to preserve and perform the Negro Spiritual in the Bay Area and beyond. In addition to the Negro Spiritual, the Chorale's repertoire includes madrigals, classical, sacred, jazz, and pop.

Tickets: Available at the door.

Thursday, December 19

Sunday, December 22

Candlelight Concerts

Candlelight concerts bring the magic of a live, multi-sensory musical experience to our awe-inspiring location!

Two concerts are offered:

Holiday Special featuring the Nutcracker and other holiday favorites.

Christmas Carols on Strings featuring your favorite holiday songs.

Tickets: feverup.com/en/oakland/candlelight

Advent in the Context of Empire

Awaiting Jesus' Arrival, Then and Now

Dr. Michael Barram, Rev. Brian Woodson, Rev. Kamal Hassan,
Rev. Dr. Grace Kaori Suzuki, Leslie Bowling-Dyer



NEW COLLEGE Berkeley

Sat Dec 7, 1:00 - 3:00 pm
Sojourner Truth Presbyterian Church

The Gospels of Matthew and Luke actually portray the birth of Jesus in quite divergent ways, emphasizing different themes that will resonate throughout their accounts of the messiah's life, death, and resurrection. What the two infancy narratives have in common is an understanding that Jesus was born and lived his life entirely within the context of the world-conquering military and political power of the Roman Empire. Grasping that historical context really matters for those of us today who seek to understand the Gospels as we read from a contemporary environment characterized by empire.

Join biblical scholar Michael Barram and local pastors for a fascinating exploration of the Gospel birth narratives within their imperial contexts, and an engaging discussion about how those accounts can help shape and form our communities of faith for our own contextualized participation in God's mission in the world today.

Michael Barram, PhD is a professor in the Department of Theology & Religious Studies at Saint Mary's College of California. In addition, he is a member of and regularly teaches at First Presbyterian Church of Berkeley.

Leslie Bowling-Dyer is a PhD candidate at the Graduate Theological Union in Berkeley, CA. A product of the Black church tradition, Leslie embraces the "righteous discontent" of her foremothers, fueling her desire for a more

equitable and just society. She was ordained at Allen Temple Baptist Church in 2010.

Pastor Kamal Hassan is the pastor at Sojourner Truth Presbyterian Church in Richmond, CA. Rev. Hassan has more than 20 years of experience as a religious worker and more than 10 years as an ordained minister in the African Methodist Episcopal Church.

Rev. Dr. Grace Kaori Suzuki, D.Min has been the pastor/head of staff at Christ United Presbyterian Church (CUPC) in San Francisco, CA since 2004. She was born in Japan and grew up in both Japan and the U.S. With CUPC being the oldest Japanese/Japanese American Christian church in Northern America, she is grateful for her experience of being bilingual and bicultural growing up.

Servant Brian K. Woodson, Sr. is the founding pastor of the Bay Area Christian Connection and a bestselling author. Servant BK, is a long time community organizer who in the past has served as the Director of Clergy Development for Faith in Action East Bay (FIAEB), an organizer for the East Bay Alliance for a Sustainable Economy (EBASE) and the Director of the Emerging Leaders Program at the Leadership Institute at Allen Temple.

For tickets, visit: tickettailor.com/events/newcollegeberkeley/1424504

Proposed Process for Property Discernment and Ministry Direction

For many years and through congregational changes, the community of First Presbyterian Church in Oakland has sought to understand God's will in caring for and using the property upon which our sanctuary and community buildings stand. In recent years, there has been a practical need to monetize the campus buildings in support of maintenance and fiscal sustainability, which led to the bifurcation of the operating budget. That budgeting approach highlights the distinction between the campus as a rental facility and the campus as a worshipping community space. During this time, there has also been a social awareness of the need for more diverse housing options to meet the basic needs of individuals at all income levels.

First Presbyterian as a community now finds ourselves at an energetic inflection point in choosing a path forward with respect to the utilization of our property and how we serve the community in which we reside. We have recently lost a rent paying tenant and a number of issues related to desirability of the property for rental have emerged making this the right time to decide what the future use of the campus can and should be.

We seek to “decide” what is next not through our personal will and desire but in alignment with the will of God for this place and with the strength of the Holy Spirit. Guided by the commandment to first love God and to then love our neighbor as ourselves we are recommending a multi-part discernment process that will bring us by the end of March 2025 to a clear decision on how to proceed in the management and/or necessary transformation of the campus property and buildings.

We recognize that there are existing possibilities that are being considered for the property, and we recognize that through this process something else may emerge that we have not imagined. Through this whole process we seek God's will for us as stewards of this place in time.

The process recommended will be initially led by Pastor Matt Prinz, Ben Baab, and Elder Maggie Harmon. Planned activities include:

- An initial, brief qualitative congregational survey
- A brief, more quantitative, survey of our rental partners
- Beginning in November, a series of campus observations and community walks to experience current campus and neighborhood activities
- A visual display of our rental partners to support group discussions with those unable to join observations/walks
- Small group discussion space through hosted meals.

During Advent 2024 we will offer a structured prayerful discernment to aid in this process. Throughout the process we will gather data from participants that will be summarized in February and March of 2025. By the end of March the entire process will be distilled into a directional statement that captures the will of the Spirit as reflected in the members of the congregation and the neighbors who we currently serve and who we may be called to serve.

In April 2025 we will seek approval from Session to act on the directional statement as appropriate.

Come to Faith in Action's Rise up for Justice Reception



Contact Pastor Matt if you can join him at his table for this important event for Faith in Action East Bay.

Food Ministry Report

We had a lively group of volunteers on Sunday: Louise (lead) Ann, Dorothy, Betsy, Stuart, and Kyong. Jan Busch stepped in to help before the service, she was liturgist this Sunday. We made 125 lunches with ham and cheese sandwiches, fruit, desserts, chips and pastries. Some were treated with Halloween treats but not enough for all. 15 of the sandwiches we picked up by MACRO for their clients. Gay and Matt Spowart distributed lunches at gate with coffee and cupcakes. Victor served his great coffee for our guests. Derrick, Pauline, Bonnie and Ann prepped the vegetables. Carmello and friends picked up sandwiches for our unhoused neighbors with a small donation of socks and t-shirts.



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.

Church Staff Thankful for Your Generous Appreciation Baskets!



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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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

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Anne Margaret Manay, Clerk
Erick Bevington, Treasurer

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Su Coburn, Pauline Ahanotu, Monrovia Prinz,
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Temple Tidings Contributors This Week

Writing by Matt Prinz, Jake Fontana and Micheline La Mont. *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