

Weekly Newsletter

November 24, 2024

Temple Tidings

First Presbyterian Church of Oakland

Making God's Welcome Known



Pharisee and Tax Collector Praying

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

Prelude on There's a Wideness in God's Mercy
by David Harris

Welcome

Call to Worship

One: God has called us to gather, young and old alike.

All: We are here to answer God's call.

One: Let us rejoice in the many gifts God had provided.

All: We are here to praise God's goodness.

One: Let us worship and praise God with all our might.

Gathering Prayer

One: Amazing God, we come to give you thanks for everything your people have received.
Open us to your call, to witness to your grace, in the words and actions of our lives.
Help us pray without pride or guile, that we may receive the greatest gift of all—
being in your presence forever and always.

All: Amen.

Please rise in body or spirit
Hymn

Glory to God #435: There's a Wideness in God's Mercy

CONFESSION of SIN & ASSURANCE of GRACE

Confession

One: We are here, God, to worship and to pray. We are here to give you thanks for all you have given us. Forgive us when we feel proud of our prayers and our actions as your people. Remake us when we look down on the marginalized and those who are different. Help us see all people as your beloved ones and act accordingly. Help us truly be children of your love, who know what we are called to do no matter our age or circumstances. Help us dream dreams of justice, and then live those dreams into reality, as we strive to be your beloved community. When we take your gifts for granted, help us run the race you set before us, and help us work to make the world what you created it to be.

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 of Pardon *African American Heritage Hymnal #414 I Don't Feel No Ways Tired*

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. If you would like, there are two tables set up with candles for prayer and salt water for lament.

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.

Song

My Eyes for Beauty Pine
by Herbert Howells, sung by the choir

Children may go with leaders to Godly Play.

THE WORD

Scripture Lesson

Luke 18 : 9 - 14 NRSV

He also told this parable to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous and regarded others with contempt: “Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. The Pharisee, standing by himself, was praying thus, ‘God, I thank you that I am not like other people: thieves, rogues, adulterers, or even like this tax collector. I fast twice a week; I give a tenth of all my income.’ But the tax collector, standing far off, would not even lift up his eyes to heaven but was beating his breast and saying, ‘God, be merciful to me, a sinner!’ I tell you, this man went down to his home justified rather than the other, for all who exalt themselves will be humbled, but all who humble themselves will be exalted.”

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 Joel will lead the congregation in reflection on reading and sermon.

Song

Glory to God #727: Will You Let Me Be Your Servant

Invitation to the Offering

One: God has dealt wonderfully with us. We have what we need. Now we are called to share from our abundance to support the work of God through this church. May we give gladly, to thank God for our call to be Christ's hands and feet in the world.

Offertory

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 for the Offering

One: God, we are so grateful that you name and claim us as your beloved ones. We thank you with all our hearts for the cleansing rain in our souls. And so we offer you what we have: our resources, our time, our energy, our very selves for your ministry in the world.

All: Amen

Prayer

SENDING OUT to be THE CHURCH

Please rise in body or spirit
Song

Glory to God # 757: Today We All Are Called to Be Disciples

Invitation to Community Life

Music for Reflection

*Prelude and Fugue in E Minor
by Dieterich Buxtehude*

Benediction

One: Go forth without shame to proclaim the goodness of God.
Go forth to spread God's love with all, giving thanks for how much you are loved.
Go forth, knowing that the wind of the Spirit blows you to where you need to be.

All: Amen.

SERVING in WORSHIP TODAY

Pastor: Rev. Joel Mackey

Liturgist: Lorraine Provost

Music Director: Jake Fontana

Song Leader: Dorrie Dodge

Head Usher: Mathew Inadomi

Godly Play: Raenelle Tauro and Anne Margaret Manay

Fellowship Time Refreshments: Lapachet Family

Advent Dinners Return Every Wednesday Before Christmas

Each Wednesday in December we will gather in a members' home to share a meal, reflect upon Advent, and enjoying being together.

Please let Julia Marquez or the host know if you are planning on attending. We hope you can join us.

Dec. 4, 6-8pm

Aaron Ruff and Sarah Postma
2143 42nd Ave., Oakland 94601

Dec. 11, 6 - 8pm

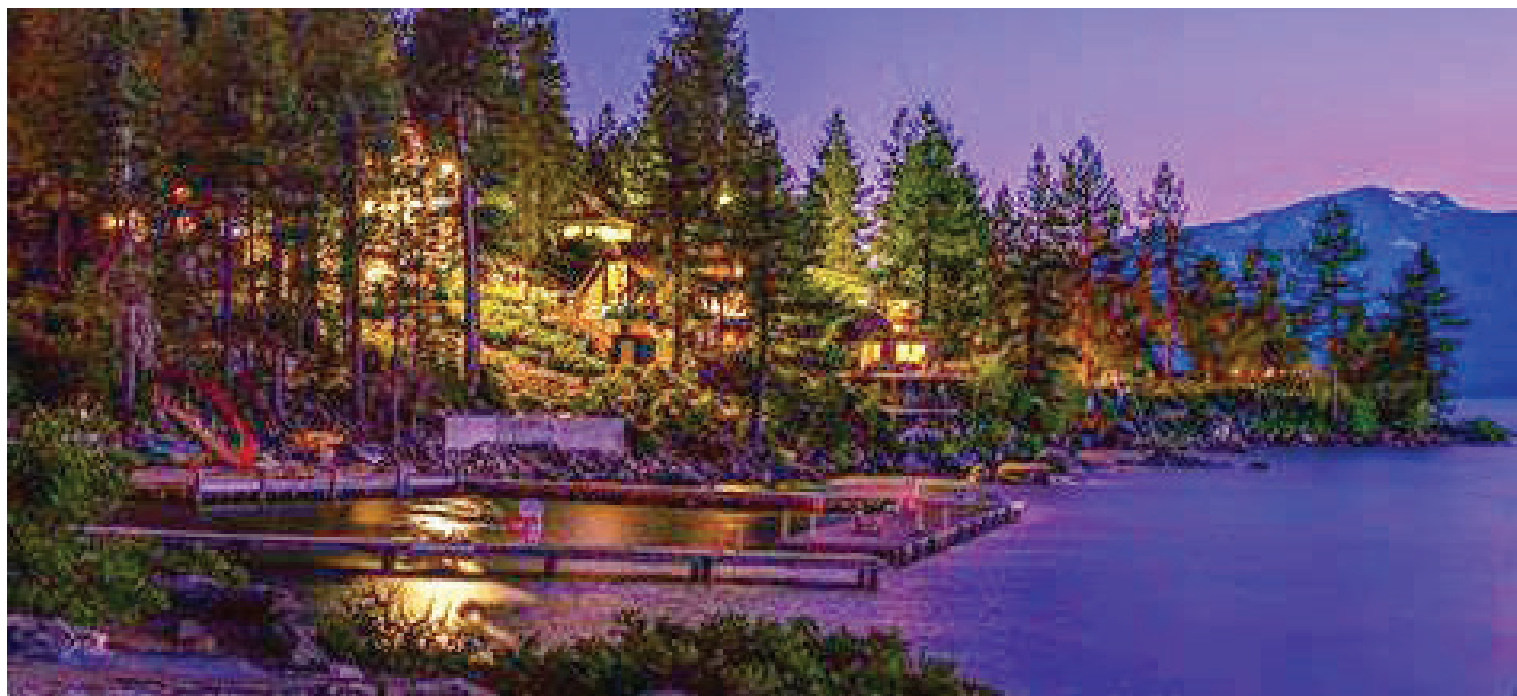
Julia Marquez
5433 Shafter Ave, Oakland, 94618

Dec. 18, 6 - 8pm

Nina and Eric Lapachet
6000 Fairlane Drive, Oakland 94611



Save the Date for our Fall Retreat: September 27-28, 2025



Join us at the beautiful Zephyr Point Presbyterian Center for a weekend of peace and joy.

Please see Pastor Matt if you are interested in helping to plan the retreat.

Reflection on Loving our Neighbors: Walking the Dogs with Roberta One More Time

by Aaron Ruff



Our little neighborhood lost one of our beloved friends. Roberta was a key member of our street who walked her tiny little dog and visited friends across the street. She had lived with her parents in the apartment she lived in and took over the unit when they passed.

Neighbor Pam and others organized a walking vigil to walk her usual route together and we potlucked after. It was a simple activity that felt so sacred. Distant friends showed up, next door neighbors, neighbors who had moved to Alameda, even her landlord came to honor her. It was so moving to see how many people came to honor her life.

When we bought our house we were committed to showing our neighborhood that we knew how to “Love thy neighbor.” I think as Christians we can think we’ve got the secret sauce to loving your neighbor in the BEST way but our neighborhood has humbled us out of that perception. We practice generosity but neighbors who constantly share with us regularly teach us how much more generous you can be. We wish to bring peace but it’s our neighbors who have sat with us in deep sadness and accepted our frantic parenting moments.

We believe in protecting our neighbors but we’ve seen neighbors confronting police when they have come with misguided threats and weapons at the ready.

Our neighborhood will miss Roberta’s little walks and time sitting in the porch. I pray for all our neighbors and her family in her absence and I hope we can show up for our people the way we were shown today.



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.

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

Please Thank our Wonderful Volunteers for their Work!



Ben Baab has been working hard updating the Fellowship Hall bathrooms, including cleaning, painting and changing the lighting fixtures.



Ann Tisher fills the oil candles for worship every Sunday.

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.

Donate to the La Clinica Toy, Book and Food Drive

by Sara Postma



HEALTH CARE FOR ALL

La Clínica was founded in 1971 to address health barriers and create better lives for the underserved. Today, La Clínica is the first choice for providing multi-lingual, accessible full-scope health care services in the East Bay, no matter a patient's income level or insurance status.

Do you need a great excuse to purge your kids' books and stuffies before they get more with the coming holidays????! AND would you like to bring a little joy to some lovely kids this season? AND are you generally feeling down lately and want to help support a population that is about to be targeted YET AGAIN!? Have I got an opportunity for you! On December 7, La Clinica, the medial clinic where I work as a physician, is having a Toy, Book and Food drive for our families this holiday season.

Each kid will be getting a brand new toy, stuffie and book(s). Each family will be getting a gift card and a bag of food. YAY!

BUT we need your help with the book and stuffie part. Do you have any extras lying around? Aaron and i would be happy to come pick them up (text 909-800-6292), or you can drop them by my house (2143 42nd Ave, Oakland).

Thank you all for any generous gifts to a lovely population of people. Please feel free to pass on to anyone local that may also want to contribute.

Reflection on Church Attendance

by Maggie Harmon

Did you know that regular church attendance is considered 1.7 times a month! If you are reading this message it means you are probably a regular. And did you know that the average regularly attending Presbyterian gives \$2,200 a year to their church?

Whether you are average, above average, or not able to reach that amount your contribution

makes a huge difference to the life, ministry, and viability of this community. Please support the work of the church in any amount that is right for you.

Your generosity is the greatest gift we can receive.



Altar for Roberta Lovingly Set Up



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



Scan this code with your
smart phone for access
to all First Church News
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

Church Staff

Rev. Matt Prinz, Pastor

matt@firstchurchoakland.org

510.488.3812

email to make an appointment

Rev. Joel Mackey, Parish Associate

joelmackey@comcast.net

Jake Fontana, Music Director

jake@firstchurchoakland.org

Micheline La Mont, Community Relationships Manager

micheline@firstchurchoakland.org

510.488.3810

Hours: Wednesday 2-4:30/Thursday 9-2:30

Gus Lopez, Head Custodian

510.290.9677

Erick Bevington, Treasurer

erick@firstchurchoakland.org

Joan Clerk, Bookkeeper

joan@firstchurchoakland.org

Temple Tidings Contributors This Week

Writing by Matt Prinz, Sara Postma, Aaron Ruff,
Maggie Harmon 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](http://firstchurchoakland.org/temple-tidings)