

Weekly Newsletter

December 1, 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

Welcome

Call to Worship

One: The light shines in the darkness and the darkness has not overcome it.

All: The true light that gives light to everyone is coming into the world.

One: Let us get ready to receive the Light.

All: We prepare our hearts, our minds and our souls.

One: Let us worship God.

Gathering Prayer

One: As winter draws near the days grow shorter, and the darkness of night can seem endless. Just when we think the light is about to go out, Advent begins and once again we contemplate the miracle of Christ's birth. Creator of Hope, we pray to be open to your Spirit moving among us this Advent season. May we welcome you into our hearts again.

All: Amen.

Please rise in body or spirit
Hymn

Glory to God #88: O Come, O Come Emmanuel

Soloist sings verses 1 and 2. Congregation joins on the refrain.

Refrain: **Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.**

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 in Unison

All: **Creator of all the light that is light, sometimes we feel weary and the journey long. We pray that you give us hope to help us turn away from grief or despair. May we be filled with the Holy Spirit so that we become a light for others in our homes, our communities and our world. 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

One: Jesus is called Emmanuel, which means “God with us.” God promised, through Christ, to be with us always and forever. Thanks be to God.

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.

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

Children remain in the Sanctuary for Family Worship.

THE WORD

Scripture Lesson

Jeremiah 33: 14-16

The days are surely coming, says the Lord, when I will fulfill the promise I made to the house of Israel and the house of Judah. In those days and at that time I will cause a righteous Branch to spring up for David, and he shall execute justice and righteousness in the land. In those days Judah will be saved, and Jerusalem will live in safety. And this is the name by which it will be called: "The Lord is our righteousness."

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

All: **Thanks be to God.**

Story

Waiting and Hoping

Prayers of the People

Please use this space for coloring, drawing or taking notes.

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.

Invitation to the LORD's Supper

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:



Communion Music

Rise Up Shepherd and Follow

Communion Prayer

SENDING OUT to be THE CHURCH

Invitation to Community Life

Song

Glory to God #105: People, Look East

Please rise in body or spirit

Benediction

Sending Music

SERVING in WORSHIP TODAY

Pastor: Rev. Joel Mackey

Liturgist: Cole Provost

Storyteller: Di Pagel

Music Director: Jake Fontana

Song Leader: Marilyn Reynolds

Guest Musician: Herman Waters

Head Usher: Matthew Inadomi

Fellowship Time Refreshments: Ben & Martha Baab

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

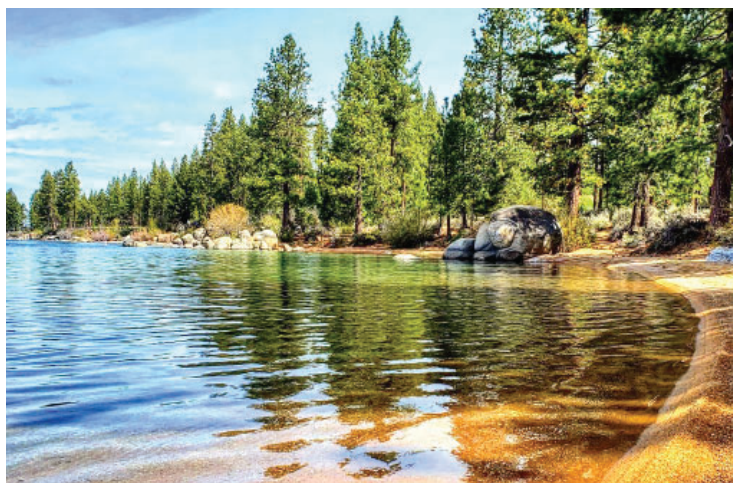
Julia Marquez
5433 Shafter Ave, Oakland, 94618

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.



Join us for Advent Wreath Making, Sunday December 8



Back by popular demand, ALL are invited to create an advent wreath on Sunday, December 8th in the reception room during coffee hour. We provide the greens, ribbons and paraphernalia. Bring your creativity and sense of fun.



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.

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

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.

The responsible overseeing and protection of something considered worth caring for and preserving...

by Maggie Harmon

For over 100 years First Presbyterian church has been cared for by those who worship, share, and create community within its walls. Today it is our turn to assume responsibility for caring for this precious place. Your gift in any amount allows us to continue to live as the beloved community, sharing our resources, and joyfully worshipping together.

Please support the ministry of First Presbyterian with a gift today Your generosity is the greatest gift we can receive.



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.

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.



Celebrate December Birthdays!



Please wish the following people a very happy birthday this month!

December 13: Nancy Ogden

December 18: Rich Jones

December 19: Jake Fontana

December 21: Arav Manay

December 21: Micheline La Mont

December 25: Carol Zell

December 26: Marilyn Reynolds

December 28: Keith Ogden

**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

Rev. Matt Prinz, Pastor

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510.488.3812

email to make an appointment

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Jake Fontana, Music Director

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Micheline La Mont, Community Relationships Manager

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Joan Clerk, Bookkeeper

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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