

Weekly Newsletter

January 26, 2025

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

Méditation
by Maurice Duruflé

Welcome

Call to Worship

One: Fount of Life, Glorious One, your great works are full of honor and majesty:

All: the earth that we stand on, the trees that shade us, the birds that soar above us.

One: Ever-Living God, Generous One, your goodness and faithfulness endure forever:

All: the wisdom we learn, the justice we long and work for, the hope you offer.

One: Sheltering God, Healing One, you remember your covenant and its promises to us:

All: the grace and mercy you give, the healing you offer, the tenderness you show to us.

One: The works of your hands are faithful and just. Your teachings are trustworthy and true.

All: Your praise endures forever! Amen.

Gathering Prayer

One: God of Wisdom, we come to sit at Jesus' feet and learn what he would teach us. With the heavens above and the earth below, we rejoice in the good news he brings: succor to the poor, release to the captives, recovery of sight to the blind, and freedom for the oppressed. Reveal the mystery of your precepts, that we might hear the music of the heavens- the whisper of the land and roar of the seas, the prayer of the caterpillar and song of the hummingbird. Speak to us through the fullness of creation, we pray.

All: Amen.

Please rise in body or spirit
Hymn

Take My Life (verses 1-4)
Glory to God #697

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

One: Merciful God, as we seek to know your ways, may we be more ready to receive the gifts of others than to trumpet the gifts we have received. Lay your call to faithfulness on our hearts, as we listen to your commands and seek to live them each day. As the heavens proclaim you praise, and the day and night reveal your truth, open our hearts to those who need our care.

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

Assurance of Pardon

You are no longer abandoned, deserted, or defeated. In God's steadfast love, and through the Spirit's powerful presence, you are claimed as God's delight. You are gifted to serve God's world with love.

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.

Children may go with leaders to Godly Play.

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

Shine on Me



THE WORD

Scripture Lesson

Luke 4. 14 -21 NRSV

Then Jesus, in the power of the Spirit, returned to Galilee, and a report about him spread through all the surrounding region. He began to teach in their synagogues and was praised by everyone.

When he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, he went to the synagogue on the Sabbath day, as was his custom. He stood up to read, and the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to him. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written:

“The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,
because he has anointed me
to bring good news to the poor.
He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives
and recovery of sight to the blind,
to set free those who are oppressed,
to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.”
And he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant, and sat down. The eyes
of all in the synagogue were fixed on him. Then he began to say to them, “Today
this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing.”

One: For the Word in Scripture, the Word made flesh and the Word in our hearts.
All: **Thanks be to God.**

Sermon

Having Courage Today

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 in reflection on reading and sermon.

Hymn

*This Little Light of Mine
African American Heritage Hymnal #549*

Invitation to the Offering

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.

*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:*



Offertory

Lord, Make Me an Instrument

Doxology

*Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow
Glory to God #607*

**Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
praise Christ, all people here below;
praise Holy Spirit evermore;
praise Triune God, whom we adore. Amen.**

Prayer for the Offering

One: God of our ancestors, Caretaker of our future, thank you for your faithful love. May the gifts we bring before you this day honor the many ways you bless this church. And may our offering reflect our commitment to lead lives of love, as we continue Jesus' mission to bring good news to the poor, release to the captives, sight to the blind, and freedom to the oppressed. In your holy name, we pray.

All: Amen

SENDING OUT to be THE CHURCH

Invitation to Community Life

Please rise in body or spirit

Song

I'm Gonna Live So God Can Use Me

Glory to God #700

Benediction

"Fear and prejudices against minority communities are too easy to evoke and exaggerate, often to serve the political agendas of those who promote those fears."

"If you have the feeling that something is wrong, don't be afraid to speak up."

Fred Korematsu

SERVING in WORSHIP TODAY

Pastor: Rev. Matt Prinz

Preacher: Rev. Sally Steele

Liturgist: Suzie Inadomi

Music Director: Jake Fontana

Song Leader: Raenelle Tauro

Godly Play: Di Pagel and Ruby Prinz

Head Usher: Matthew Inadomi

Fellowship Time Refreshments: Pam and Tom Prinz



Sally Steele is an ordained minister in the RCA (Reformed Church in America), an experienced nonprofit executive, and outdoor enthusiast committed to fostering social impact, equity, and inclusive community. She's worked with churches and faith-based organizations for the past 15 years, most recently serving as Co-Executive Director of City Hope San Francisco, an organization providing meals, transitional housing, and a deep sense of belonging to San Francisco's most vulnerable residents. Throughout her adult life Sally has found her sense of rootedness and connection in the outdoors, and this year she embarked on her newest adventure as co-founder and CEO of Outdoorithm, a company dedicated to making camping more accessible to urban families by removing the key friction points of knowledge, gear, and community.

Celebrate Fred Korematsu Day on January 30

January 30 is Fred Korematsu Day of Civil Liberties and the Constitution. Fred was born and raised in Oakland. After WWII, he met and married Kathryn in Michigan before coming back to the Bay Area to raise their children. They were members here at First Pres. This is a brief biography from korematsuinstitute.org. Please visit the website for more information.

Fred T. Korematsu was a national civil rights hero. In 1942, at the age of 23, he refused to go to the government's incarceration camps for Japanese Americans. After he was arrested and convicted of defying the government's order, he appealed his case all the way to the Supreme Court. In 1944, the Supreme Court ruled against him, arguing that the incarceration was justified due to military necessity.

In 1983, Prof. Peter Irons, a legal historian, together with researcher Aiko Herzig-Yoshinaga, discovered key documents that government intelligence agencies had hidden from the Supreme Court in 1944. The documents consistently showed that Japanese Americans had committed no acts of treason to justify mass incarceration. With this new evidence, a pro-bono legal team that included the Asian Law Caucus re-opened Korematsu's 40-year-old case on the basis of government misconduct. On November 10, 1983, Korematsu's conviction was overturned in a federal court in San Francisco. It was a pivotal moment in civil rights history.

Korematsu remained an activist throughout his life. In 1998, he received the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the nation's highest civilian honor, from President Bill Clinton. In 2010, the state of California passed the Fred Korematsu Day bill, making January 30 the first day in the U.S. named after an Asian American. Korematsu's



growing legacy continues to inspire people of all backgrounds and demonstrates the importance of speaking up to fight injustice.

On March 30, 2005, Mr. Korematsu died of respiratory failure at the age of 86. Hundreds of people packed his memorial service at First Presbyterian Church in Oakland, CA to pay their final respects to a civil rights icon.

Church Congregational and Lent Planning Meetings Today

At 11 a.m. today, we will gather as a church community to elect new Elders and Deacons to help lead and guide our church ministries. We will look back over this last year and celebrate what God has done in our midst and look forward to what God is calling us into. We will review the 2025 budget and vote on the Pastor's salary. Please plan on staying after the worship service and celebrate what God is doing with us.

From noon to 2 p.m. we will have our Lent planning meeting. Do you have creative ideas about prayers, songs, or scriptures for spiritual formation in the season of Lent? All are welcome to join Pastor Matt, Jake, and Di Pagel (Elder of Worship) as we plan together.

Celebrate 2024 Ministry at First Presbyterian Church Oakland

January Jake Fontana started as our new music director, guiding us in a diversity of musical styles to worship God. We joined the Alameda County Homeless count to walk the census tract surrounding our church building and hear the stories of our unhoused neighbors.

February Black History month celebration each Sunday: youth participation, guest preachers, Lucy Kinchen Chorale, and a joyful community meal. Pastor Joel discussed the book Reading While Black and reflecting on the cultural and racial lens we bring to our sacred scriptures.



March We walked the path of Jesus the final hours of his life on Good Friday and reflected upon God's invitation to courageous faith. Jake restarted our choir and they led us in our Easter celebration.

April We joined Empower Initiative on a pilgrimage to sacred civil rights sites in Montgomery, Selma, and Birmingham Alabama. We studied the power of faith communities to bring change in the past and were renewed in our commitment to work for God's justice in our own city and neighborhoods. Women's circle met and used lectio divino to reflect on scripture and their personal spiritual journey.



May Pastor Matt visited our college students to encourage them and to hear about their school experience. Deacons sent packages to our college students to support them as they prepared to take their school finals. Bible Study met every Wednesday night to read and wrestle with the scriptures and take new steps of faith.



June Pride month was celebrated each Sunday with liturgy by the enfleshed collective, guest preachers, and education to foster belonging. Jen Edwell led us in a discussion of the book 57 Bus and looked at issues of gender, the justice and education system, and race in Oakland.

July We joined the Ceasefire night walk anniversary celebration and walked with others to help reduce gun violence in Oakland. The Ceasefire program led to an over 30% reduction in homicides in 2024. Piano and organ music created sacred space in our Friday night 'Soundscape.' We invited neighbors to enjoy the sacred space for pray and reflect and rest.



August We moved out worship services throughout the church campus from the reception room to the courtyard to the fellowship hall. We reflected on the church as the gathered community and packed bagged lunches for our food ministry during communion. We enjoyed community at one of the last A's games in Oakland. We met in member's homes to discuss Richard Rohr's book Breathing Underwater, a spirituality of the 12 steps.



September We celebrated the life of Bill Coburn and his leadership in our food ministry. Godly Play storytellers created beautiful community and learning space every Sunday with our children. We opened our sanctuary for Working Names Studio to host an ambient sound concert.



October We hosted an art show of Susan Allison Hatch mixed media fabric art on justice, the Psalms, and God's call on our lives. Our session voted to seek community discernment about how to continue to faithfully use our church building and campus to love God and our neighbors. Should we continue to make space for local non-profits and performing arts or explore creating affordable housing or are there other options?

November Lucy Kinchen Chorale blessed us on Sunday morning, singing African American spirituals in our worship service. We hosted an art night with OakLife church. Artists shared their poetry, music, and visual art with the community.

December We gathered in homes for Advent dinners each Wednesday night to reflect upon the coming Christ and enjoy Christian community. We sang carols, acted out the nativity story, and carried Christ's light out onto Broadway Ave.



Next Steps in Building our Church Community

by Ben Baab

For over 100 years, First Presbyterian Church has worshipped God and served Oakland from the corner of Broadway and 27th St. In 1960, the campus expanded to include a multipurpose Fellowship Hall and classrooms. What is God guiding us to do with what we have inherited?

Trends and Challenges

Our society has changed in many ways during the last 60 years. Regular church attendance has declined for a wide range of reasons. Facilities have fallen into disrepair due to spiraling maintenance costs and dwindling financial resources. Yet, while the resources to respond to these challenges are decreasing, the needs of our neighbors continue to expand. For examples of these challenges and some strategies to meet them, consider reading the essays compiled by Mark Elsdon in *Gone for Good?: Negotiating the Coming Wave of Church Property Transition*. Be prepared to have some of your feelings about church spaces challenged.

Opportunities and Strategies

Even though the challenges may seem daunting, God calls us to love God and each other and gives us encouragement and tools to do God's will. The most obvious tool that we have is our location - close to housing, food, services, transportation, healthcare, and schools. Recent zoning changes may allow us to develop our property to a greater extent than was possible before. For guidance in considering options, review the advice available at the website of RootedGood.org.

Our facilities already serve a vibrant community. Our Sunday worship service, Godly Play, and fellowship hour provide essential spiritual practices and community time for our faith journeys. On Mondays, you will find hot meals being prepared and served. On Tuesdays,



More food is prepared and delivered to the neighborhood. On Wednesdays, lunches are made for the MACRO teams to provide to those in distress on our streets. Food Not Bombs cooks more food on Thursdays. On Fridays and Saturdays, donated ingredients are gathered from local grocery stores/bakeries and organized and meals are planned for Sunday and Monday. Also on Fridays, over 100 people visit the ReCares volunteers who collect and distribute medical equipment. Throughout the week, children, parents, and teachers enliven the Early Head Start classrooms, playground, courtyard, and Fellowship Hall. Many musicians rehearse in our spaces throughout the week, during the day and in the evenings. Habitat for Humanity, Cantare, and our own office personnel work to keep their organizations thriving. Oakland Gay Men's chorus, Cantare Con Vivo, Community Women's Orchestra, Oakland Civic Orchestra and others hold rehearsals weekday evenings.

Opportunities exist to collaborate more fully with our current mission partners and keep

supporting their important work. On a broader scale, we might consider partnering with Alameda County in supporting their Continuum of Care initiative, called EveryOne Home. Visit everyonehome.org to learn more about the initiative and think about ways we might help. A book published in October 2024 written by John Cleghorn, entitled Building Belonging: The Church's Call to Create Community and House Our Neighbors, merges themes related to Ben McBride's work, Troubling the Waters, on Belonging and Othering with the significant challenges of providing affordable housing.

Decisions

First Presbyterian has had several dedicated stewards of the building and grounds over the years - Judy Rowan, Di Pagel, Suzie Inadomi, Chris Weber, and Erick Bevington, to name a few. Chris and Erick, in particular, have drafted conceptual and technical plans to maintain, improve, and develop our campus. We are now at a point where plans need to be finalized, decisions made, goals set, resources gathered, and work scheduled. In the next couple months, we hope to reach a consensus about our specific goals and priorities as they relate to worship, music, food, education, shelter, services/offices, and gathering spaces.

What can you do?

- Pray with us for guidance.
- Inform yourself about the issues - using suggestions listed here or others that you can find online.
- Observe the current weekly activities at First Presbyterian if you are not familiar with them.
- Participate in conversations with other community members and service providers.
- Share your thoughts, dreams, and opinions with Maggie, Pastor Matt, or Ben.
- Support the work to reach a consensus about the future God is calling us to help create.

As you know we are in the process of discerning how to be the best stewards of the property entrusted to our care in the form of this campus. For well over one hundred years the faithful have served from Oakland and we seek to continue our service aligned to the needs of the community and the will of God as we understand that. To that end we are asking you to complete a short survey about the use of the campus and your understanding of our role in the community.

You should have received a link to the survey by email, but if you did not please contact Maggie Harmon for access as we hope to have everyone participate! maggieafh@gmail.com; 510-688-8595.

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.



Mark your Calendar for these upcoming Ceasefire Nightwalks

January 31: 6 p.m.

St. Benedict's Church, 2245 82nd Ave.

February 14, 6 p.m.

First Mt. Sinai, 1970 86th Ave.

February 21, 6 p.m.

St. Columbia, 6401 San Pablo Ave.

February 28, 6 p.m.

At Thy Word, 8915 International Blvd.

March 14, 6 p.m.

First Mt. Sinai, 1970 86th Ave.

March 21, 6 p.m.

Tabernacle Baptist Church, 10115 Edes Ave.

March 28: 6 p.m.

At Thy Word, 8915 International Blvd.

First Church proudly supports our COMMUNITY PARTNERS:

- Afterglow Chorus
- Cantare Choirs
- Catalyst Youth Network
- College Awareness
- Community Women's Orchestra
- 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
- 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

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Temple Tidings Contributors This Week

Writing by Matt Prinz, Ben Baab and Micheline La Mont. 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