

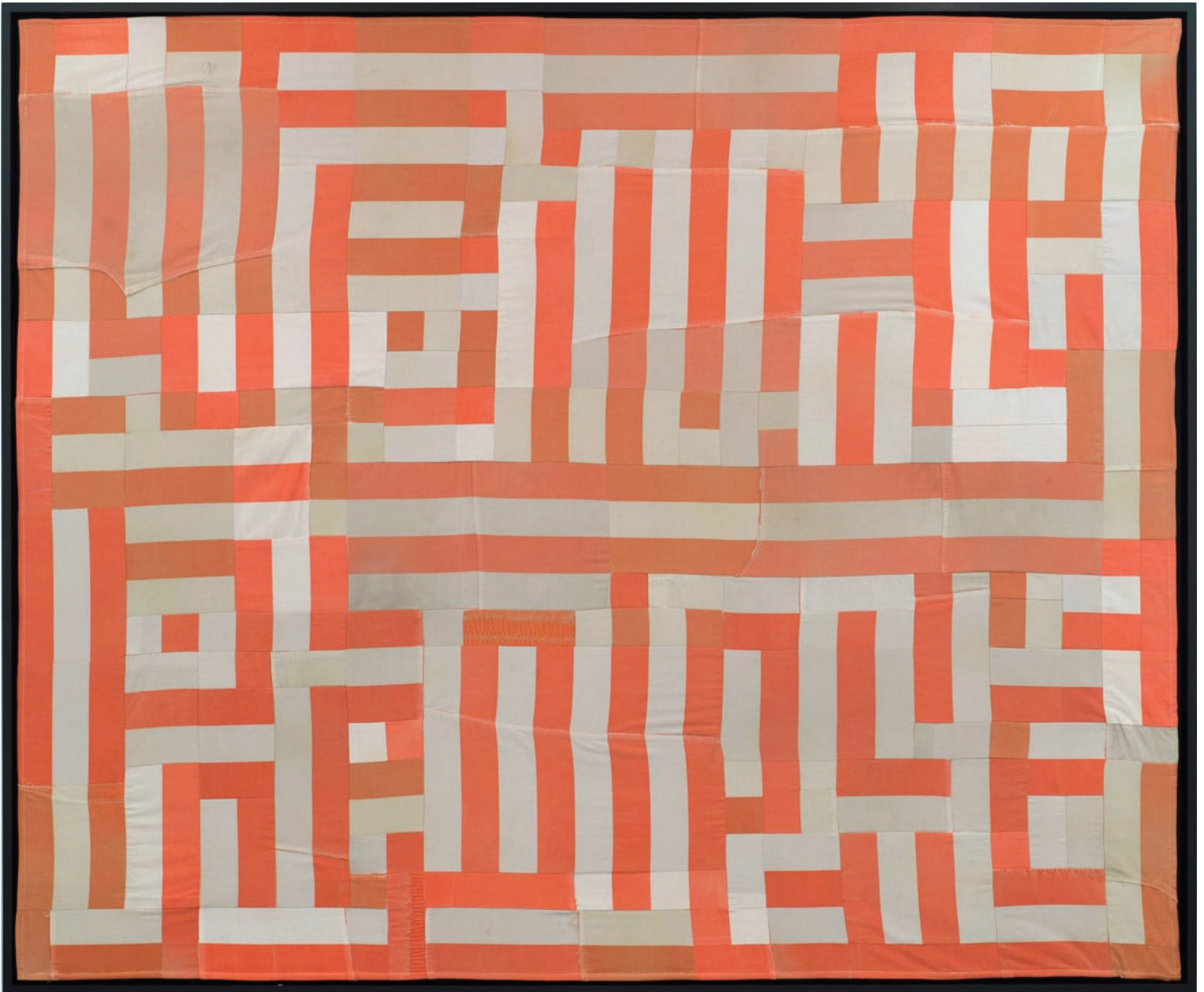
Weekly Newsletter

February 23, 2025

Temple Tidings

First Presbyterian Church of Oakland

Making God's Welcome Known



Hank Wills Thomas 'We the People'
(2015, decommissioned prison uniforms sewn on Sintra)

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

"The light that's in your eyes" - an excerpt from the book Nothing Personal by James Baldwin

Prelude

Welcome

Call to Worship

One: When I look at what your hands have made. O Lord.

All: Our Lord.

One: Your name.

All: Is majestic.

One: The moon, the stars and the heavens declare. O Lord.

All: Our Lord.

One: Your name.

All: Is majestic.

One: You still the voice of my enemies. O Lord.

All: Our Lord.

One: Your name.

All: Is majestic.

One: You are great and yet you care for us. O Lord.

All: Our Lord.

One: Your name.

All: Is majestic.

One: O Lord.

All: Our Lord.

One: Your name.

All: Is majestic. O Lord, our Lord, your name is majestic!

Gathering Prayer

One: Holy One, we come together to pause, pray, and praise. Be with us in this place, that we may touch your mercy. You provide for us; help us claim the power of your love for our lives. Help us to measure out grace, shaking it together with forgiveness and give them to others as you would have us do.

All: Amen.

Please rise in body or spirit

Hymn

Lead Me, Guide Me

African American Heritage Hymnal #474

CONFESSIO N of SIN & ASSURANCE of GRACE

One: Powerful God, we confess that we have wielded power against one another, as opposed to using our power in protection of others. In a world of so much chaos and unpredictability, we have become feverish for any semblance of control even if that control is used to neglect, exclude, and oppress others. We have pulled triggers, we have sent drones, we have sat by while powerful men wreak havoc on the world's most vulnerable. And our daily power, we have used to maintain the status quo. We have stolen the bodily agency of others. We have dismissed the voices of our children and the elderly. For all that we've done or witnessed done, we are truly sorry. Forgive us and have mercy on us that we might know an empowered life, grounded in our own voices without suffocating those others.

All: Amen.

Please rise in body or spirit

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

Assurance of Pardon

Let your soul receive this rest: the God who wove order and direction into the very earth around us so too reveals all that they have relinquished control over. All the divine to restore your humanity to you, that you would turn from evil deeds and give that power which you have used so terribly, to those who can be trusted to wield it well.

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.

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

Prayer

God of Creation, we bow before you full of wonder, praise and adoration. Today, we pause to remember ancestors who fought and died to change the world for us and for our children. In those days of trampled darkness, you were with us. You ushered in the marvelous light—just before faith died and became a note in the sidebar of our memory journals.

We ask you to wash our tongues when we forget where we came from and are tempted to join the chorus of hate and fear. Forgive us when we look down on one another or forget to hold each other's hands.

We give you thanks for the teachers and leaders, friends and family—even the enemies who helped to shape us. We thank you for the trials and tribulations that encourage us to be humble and flexible. We thank you alone for transformation. On this day, we recommit ourselves to the struggle for justice and equality—not just for the people we know, but for all who suffer oppression.

In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit we exalt you forevermore.

Song

Deep River arr. by Roy Ringwald
Soon Ah Will Be Done arr. by William L. Dawson

THE WORD

Scripture Lesson

Song of Songs 1. 5 - 6 NRSV

I am black and beautiful,
O daughters of Jerusalem,
like the tents of Kedar,
like the curtains of Solomon.
Do not gaze at me because I am dark,
because the sun has gazed on me.
My mother's sons were angry with me;
they made me keeper of the vineyards,
but my own vineyard I have not kept!

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

All: **Thanks be to God.**

Sermon

Say it Loud, I'm Black and I'm Proud

RESPONSE to the WORD

Sermon Continued

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

Song

We Shall Walk Through the Valley In Peace arr. by Moses Hogan
Didn't My Lord Deliver Daniel? arr. by Moses Hogan

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:



Offering

Precious Lord

Prayer for the Offering

One: Holy God, we bring this offering of our money, prayer, and labor to advance your work of mercy. We willingly and joyfully celebrate your generosity, by sharing our abundance with the church, our community, and the world. Bless these gifts, as they go forth to do good in your world without judgment or prejudice.

All: **Amen.**

SENDING OUT to be THE CHURCH

Invitation to Community Life

Hymn

Lift Ev'ry Voice and Sing
African American Heritage Hymnal #540

Benediction

One: May you wake and rest with humility in your hearts.
May you be protected from greed and fear that tempt us to dominate others.
May you possess moral clarity that you would be able to be both leader and follower without threat to your sense of self.
May you live responsibly and tenderly, that your power would never come at the expense of someone else's.

All: Amen.

SERVING in WORSHIP TODAY

Pastor: Rev. Matt Prinz

Guest Preacher: Rev. Riana Shaw Robinson

Liturgist: Gay Cobb

Musician: Joe Warner

Song Leader: Anne Margaret Manay

Guest Choir: The Lucy Kinchen Chorale, Lori Willis, director

Liturgy: Black Liturgies by Cole Arthur Riley and The Africana Worship Book Year C

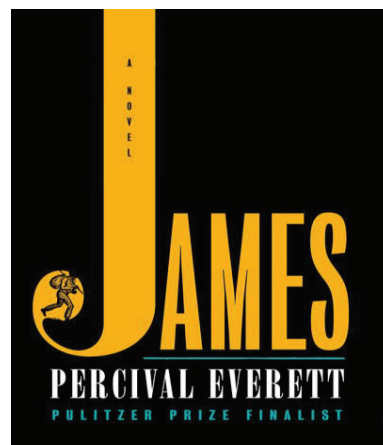
Godly Play: Dorrie Dodge and Anne Margaret Manay

Head Usher: Matthew Inadomi

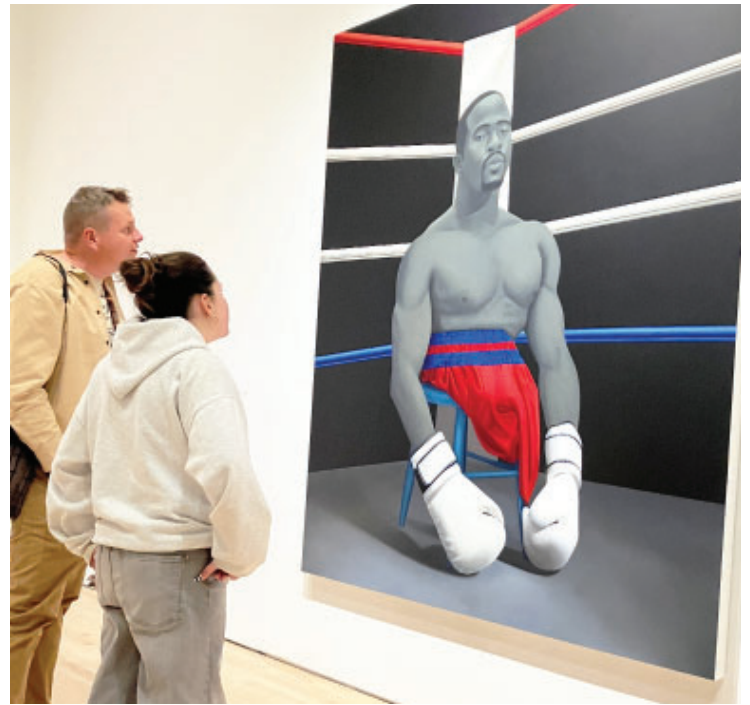
Fellowship Time Refreshments: Church Potluck

Final Black History Month Celebration Event at First Church

Wednesday Feb. 26 – Book discussion of *James*, by Percival Everett. Share a meal and discuss Everett's brilliant novel. Event from 6 – 8 pm at Pastor Matt's house.



Amy Sherald Exhibit Field Trip



Opportunities to Discuss Campus Discernment and Direction

By Maggie Harmon

Hopefully you had the opportunity in the last few weeks to take the campus use survey, visit during one of the walk-arounds, or engage in your own discernment about the use of our campus and property. As we seek to clarify the direction the community and congregation feels pulled toward we invite you to engage in a campus discussion.

On Sunday, March 2nd after worship Ben Baab will facilitate a conversation during coffee hour (no response needed) and then on Tuesday, March 4 I will host a dinner discussion (please let me know you plan to attend as space is limited, maggieharmon@me.com).

Black Poets from the Past Speak with Relevance Today

by Henry Gardner

These are voices from the past, yet they speak to us in a language that resonates today. They represent a deep sense of alienation, hope and faith, a synopsis of the journey of African Americans in the land they claim as their own. Only three of these are widely known: Gwendolyn Brooks, Paul Lawrence Dunbar and Zora Neale Hurston. They all speak poignantly.

The Lawyers' Ways By Paul Laurence Dunbar

I've been list'nin' to them lawyers
In the court house up the street,
An' I've come to the conclusion
That I'm most completely beat.
Fust one feller riz to argy,
An' he boldly waded in
As he dressed the tremblin' pris'ner
In a coat o' deep-dyed sin.



Why, he painted him all over
In a hue o' blackest crime,
An' he smeared his reputation
With the thickest kind o' grime,
Tell I found myself a-wond'rin',
In a misty way and dim,
How the Lord had come to fashion
Sich an awful man as him.

Then the other lawyer started,
An' with brimmin', tearful eyes,
Said his client was a martyr
That was brought to sacrifice.
An' he give to that same pris'ner
Every blessed human grace,
Tell I saw the light o' virtue
Fairly shinin' from his face.

Then I own 'at I was puzzled
How sich things could rightly be;
An' this aggervatin' question
Seems to keep a-puzzlin' me.
So, will some one please inform me,
An' this mystery unroll—
How an angel an' a devil
Can persess the self-same soul?

Passion By Zora Neale Hurston

When I look back on days already lived
I am content
For I have laughed with the dew on morn,
The calm of night;
With the dawn of youth
And spring's bright days.
Mid-summer's bloom
And autumn's ripening glory
My youth rejoiced.
And when winter bleak
Spread melancholy 'round
I still smiled on.
And I have loved
With quivering arms that
Clung, and throbbing breast --
With all the white-hot blood
Of mating's flaming urge.
My cool white soul
Has oft fared forth
In Astral ways,
For none may lag
When star dust hides the earth.
The wing of dreams
Have swept me up
To touch my feet on cloud
And wander where none
But souls dare climb.



Beverly Hills, Chicago By Gwendolyn Brooks
The dry brown coughing beneath their feet,
(Only a while, for the handyman is on his way)
These people walk their golden gardens.
We say ourselves fortunate to be driving by
today.

That we may look at them, in their gardens where
The summer ripeness rots. But not raggedly.
Even the leaves fall down in lovelier patterns
here.
And the refuse, the refuse is a neat brilliancy.

When they flow sweetly into their houses
With softness and slowness touched by that
everlasting gold,
We know what they go to. To tea. But that does
not mean
They will throw some little black dots into some
water and add sugar and the juice of the cheapest
lemons that are sold,

While downstairs that woman's vague
phonograph bleats, "Knock me a kiss."
And the living all to be made again in the
sweatingest physical manner
Tomorrow ... Not that anybody is saying that
these people have no trouble.
Merely that it is trouble with a gold-flecked
beautiful banner.

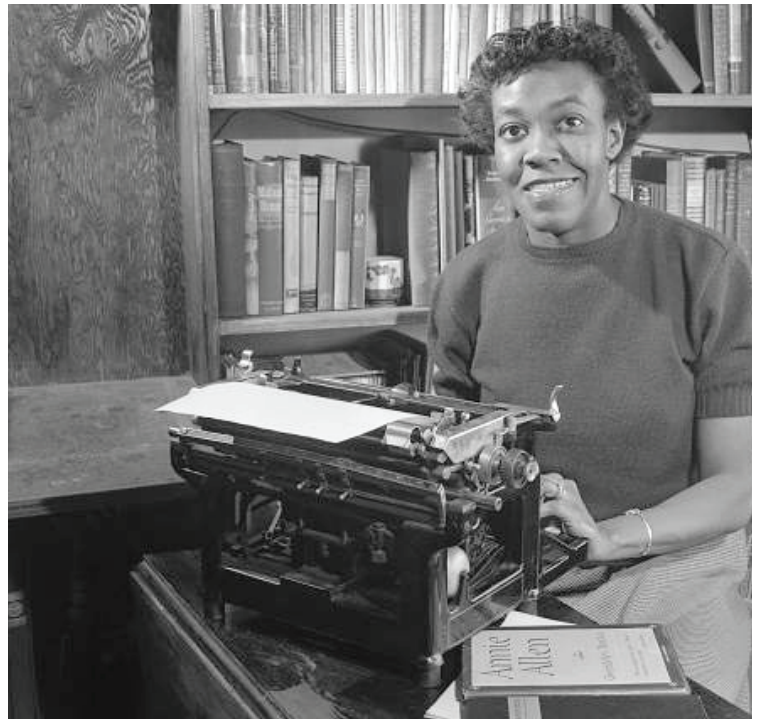
Nobody is saying that these people do not
ultimately cease to be. And
Sometimes their passings are even more painful
than ours.
It is just that so often they live till their hair is
white.
They make excellent corpses, among the
expensive flowers

Nobody is furious. Nobody hates these people.
At least nobody driving by in this car.

It is only natural, however, that it should occur
to us
How much more fortunate they are than we are.

It is only natural that we should look and look
At their wood and brick and stone
And think, while a breath of pine blows,
How different these are from our own.

We do not want them to have less.
But it is only natural that we should think we
have not enough.
We drive on, we drive on.
When we speak to each other our voices are a
little gruff.



And What Shall You Say? By Joseph S. Cotter, Jr.

Brother, come!
And let us go unto our God.
And when we stand before Him
I shall say --
“Lord, I do not hate,
I am hated.
I scourge no one,
I am scourged.
I covet no lands,
My lands are coveted.
I mock no peoples,
My people are mocked.”
And, brother, what shall you say?



Tableau By Countee Cullen

Locked arm in arm they cross the way,
The black boy and the white,
The golden splendor of the day.
The sable pride of night.

From lowered blinds the dark folk stare,
And here the fair folk talk,
Indignant that these two should dare
In unison to walk.

Oblivious to look and word
They pass, and see no wonder
That lightening brilliant as a sword
Should blaze the path of thunder.



The Feet of Judas By George Marion McClellan

Christ washed the feet of Judas!
The dark and evil passions of his soul.
His secret plot, and sordidness complete,
His hate, his purposing, Christ knew the whole,
And still in love he stooped and washed his feet.

Christ washed the feet of Judas!
Yet all his lurking sin was bare to him,
His bargain with the priest, and more than this,
In Olivet, beneath the moonlight dim,
Afore hand knew and felt his treacherous kiss.

Christ washed the feet of Judas!
And so ineffable his love 'twas meet,
That pity filled his great forgiving heart,
And tenderly to wash the traitor's feet,
Who in his Lord had basely sold his part.

Christ washed the feet of Judas!
And thus a girded servant, self-abased,
Taught that no wrong this side the gate of heaven
Was ever too great to wholly be effaced,
And though unmasked, in spirit be forgiven.

And so if we have ever felt the wrong
Of trampled rights, of caste, it matters not,
What e'er the soul has felt or suffered long,
Oh, heart! this one thing should not be forgot:
Christ washed the feet of Judas.



Sharing Time

By Maggie Harmon

When we talk about pledging “time” what does that mean? I think understanding our gifts of time begins with understanding that “church” is not a place we go to; it is something we are a part of. We go to a building to worship and to serve, to gather and to share. But the “church” is the people of God, wherever they may gather, whenever they gather.

A gift of “time,” a pledge of “time” means that you are committing yourself to showing up in different places to be the church. That may mean committing to being at worship a certain number of times per month (in the United States average worship attendance is 1.7 times per month for members of religious institutions), or joining some the ceasefire walks; it may be a commitment to participating in bible study,

or having dinner with someone else in the congregation once a quarter.

Pledging time means you are committing to being an active part of the community in order to make church real and alive not just in one place for an hour on Sunday morning, but throughout the week and year. If you attend worship once a month can you pledge to attend twice? If you come to worship weekly can you pledge to attend a community event once a quarter?

This year we are asking you to make a pledge of time in addition to other gifts because when we gather we make church happen and build the blessings of being a faithful community in an even more expansive way.

Pastor Joel Leads Meditation Workshop March 2 and March 9

Interested in deepening your faith by engaging in the spiritual discipline of mindful meditation? Meditation is well-known to us as a practice connected with yoga, Buddhism, Hinduism, and other religions from various parts of the world. Did you know that meditation is also an ancient practice of the early church, practiced throughout history by many monastic traditions, and perhaps less obvious currently practiced by many Christians. Practitioners of mindful meditation report greater awareness of self and a deeper connection to others.

In this four part series, we will seek to explore how meditation can also bring us to a deeper awareness and connection with the Divine that resides within us. Our four week journey will include a consideration of the various ways



meditation has been understood in various cultures and the history and meaning of meditation within Christian communities. We will also practice meditation during

various parts of each session. We will meet on March 2 and March 9 at noon. We will decide together the best dates for the 2nd and 3rd classes.

Contact Joel Mackey for further details and/or to sign up. Join us.

Upcoming Ceasefire Nightwalks

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



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Di Pagel: Worship and Music/Personnel

Gay Plair Cobb: Personnel/Food Ministry

Erick Bevington: Treasurer

Maggie Harmon: Finance

Julia Marquez: Community Life

Suzie Inadomi: Building the Beloved Community

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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, Henry Gardner, 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