

Weekly Newsletter

March 9, 2025

Temple Tidings

First Presbyterian Church of Oakland

Making God's Welcome Known



Deep in the Wilderness

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 in D Minor
by Clara Schumann*

Welcome

Call to Worship

One: Sing to God, for God has triumphed gloriously!

All: God is our strength and our might!

One: Long ago God freed the slaves from Egypt, opening passage through the Red Sea waters.

All: Here and now, God is our salvation, leading us through dangerous waters.

One: Who is like our God, majestic in holiness and awesome in splendor?

All: Every knee shall bow, every voice shall praise the God of wonder.

Gathering Prayer

One: We sing to you, God, for you have been our strength. You open the waters of suffering and lead us safely through. You uphold us in times of deep distress and we exalt your holy name. Receive our honor and thanks, mighty God.

All: Amen.

Please rise in body or spirit
Hymn

The Glory of These Forty Days
Glory to God #165

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: When we hear praises of your past help and triumph, we wonder where you are today, God.

We look at our lives and see hurtful relationships.

We look at our nation and see communities suffering under oppression.

We look at our world and see injustice and brutality.

We need your mighty arm to shatter wrongdoing and corruption.

When we are weak, strengthen our faith.

When we despair, renew our hope.

When we give up, stand us up in your just cause, that we might live for you.

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

We stand before God – a God of justice, a God of forgiveness and acceptance. This God raises us up and upholds us in our living. Praise be to God!

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 or fill out a prayer card and place it in the offering plate to privately share your prayer need with the pastor. 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

Come and Seek the Ways of Wisdom



Come and seek the ways of Wis-dom, she who danced when earth was new.
Sis - ter Wis-dom, come, as-sist us; nur-ture all who seek re-birth.



Fol-low close-ly what she teach-es, for her words are right and true.
Spir-it-guide and close com-pan-ion, bring to light our sa - cred worth.



Wis - dom clears the path to jus-tice, show-ing us what love must do.
Free us to be-come your peo-ple, ho - ly friends of God and earth.

March is Women's History Month.

THE WORD

Scripture Lesson

Exodus 14. 10 – 14; 21 - 30 NRSV

As Pharaoh drew near, the Israelites looked back, and there were the Egyptians advancing on them. In great fear the Israelites cried out to the Lord. They said to Moses, “Was it because there were no graves in Egypt that you have taken us away to die in the wilderness? What have you done to us, bringing us out of Egypt? Is this not the very thing we told you in Egypt, ‘Let us alone so that we can serve the Egyptians’? For it would have been better for us to serve the Egyptians than to die in the wilderness.” But Moses said to the people, “Do not be afraid, stand firm, and see the deliverance that the Lord will accomplish for you today, for the Egyptians whom you see today you shall never see again. The Lord will fight for you, and you have only to keep still.”

Then Moses stretched out his hand over the sea. The Lord drove the sea back by a strong east wind all night and turned the sea into dry land, and the waters were divided. The Israelites went into the sea on dry ground, the waters forming

a wall for them on their right and on their left. The Egyptians pursued and went into the sea after them, all of Pharaoh's horses, chariots, and chariot drivers. At the morning watch the Lord, in the pillar of fire and cloud, looked down on the Egyptian army and threw the Egyptian army into a panic. He clogged their chariot wheels so that they turned with difficulty. The Egyptians said, "Let us flee from the Israelites, for the Lord is fighting for them against Egypt."

Then the Lord said to Moses, "Stretch out your hand over the sea, so that the water may come back upon the Egyptians, upon their chariots and chariot drivers." So Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and at dawn the sea returned to its normal depth. As the Egyptians fled before it, the Lord tossed the Egyptians into the sea. The waters returned and covered the chariots and the chariot drivers, the entire army of Pharaoh that had followed them into the sea; not one of them remained. But the Israelites walked on dry ground through the sea, the waters forming a wall for them on their right and on their left.

Thus the Lord saved Israel that day from the Egyptians, and Israel saw the Egyptians dead on the seashore. Israel saw the great work that the Lord did against the Egyptians. So the people feared the Lord and believed in the Lord and in his servant Moses

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

All: **Thanks be to God.**

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.

Song

*I Want Jesus to Walk With Me
African American Heritage Hymnal #563*

Invitation to the Offering

Lets us share gifts of every kind in service of God's healing justice and love.

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

*Change Our Hearts
by Rory Cooney*

Doxology

**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: Savior God, you look at our world with compassion. You also look at our world with clarity and zeal for justice. Use all we bring to life, and all we bring to you today, to fight for justice with mercy and compassion. Make us and our gifts part of the healing of the world.

All: Amen.

Invitation to Community Life

SENDING OUT to be THE CHURCH

Hymn

*Guide Me, O Thou Great Jehovah
Glory to God #65*

Benediction

One: May God bless you with a restless discomfort about easy answers, half-truths and superficial relationships, so that you may seek truth boldly and love deep within your heart.

May God bless you with holy anger at injustice, oppression, and exploitation of people, so that you may tirelessly work for justice, freedom, and peace among all people.

May God bless you with the gift of tears to shed with those who suffer from pain, rejection, starvation, or the loss of all that they cherish, so that you may reach out your hand to comfort them and transform their pain into joy.

May God bless you with enough foolishness to believe that you really can make a difference in this world, so that you are able, with God's grace, to do what others claim cannot be done.

All: Amen.

SERVING in WORSHIP TODAY

Pastor: Rev. Matt Prinz

Song Leader: Linda Carter

Liturgist: Lachlan Welsh

Head Usher: Matthew Inadomi

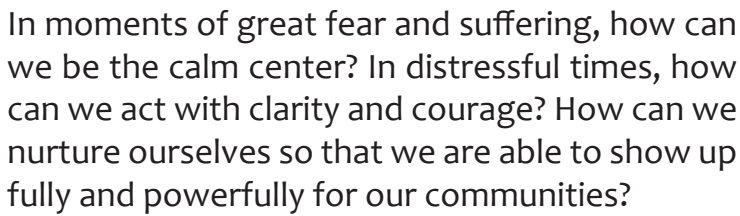
Music Director: Jake Fontana

Godly Play: Rannelle Tauro and Ruby Prinz

Fellowship Time Refreshments: Prinz Family

Fridays, March 7 through April 11, 12-12:30 pm

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Awakened action takes inner development. Register for the next 6-week cycle of PICO Practice Circles, where each Friday from 12 - 12:30 pm you can join with like-minded people across the state to take a sacred pause grounded in our diverse wisdom traditions. Whether it be contemplation, breath work, song, prayer, ritual or reflection, Practice Circles offer a consistent

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Each session is led by a different guest teacher from a variety of faith, spiritual and indigenous traditions, and facilitated by the Rev. Dr. Joy Johnson, a public theologian who leads and mobilizes around social justice grounded in faith. Dr. Johnson is the founding pastor of Higher Hope Christian Church and a key leader and architect of Community Healing Circles to heal the social and emotional trauma of Black and justice impacted men and women throughout Sacramento.

This 6-week cycle of Practice Circles will be Fridays 12-12:30 pm via zoom from March 7 through April 11. Sessions are in both English and Spanish. Everyone in the PICO network is welcome to join regardless of faith tradition.

To register: picocalifornia.zoom.us/join/register/85cICRFgRoeK-ppWMLmBKg#/



Volunteer Trip to Philippines an Enlightening Experience

By Elizabeth Cureton

On Feb 6 I traveled to the Philippines to volunteer for a surgical mission along with more than 40 other surgeons, anesthesia staff, nurses and nonmedical personnel (some from where I work at Kaiser Oakland, some from other hospitals in the US; many are from the Philippines). The nonprofit Bay Area Surgical Mission was started >20 years ago and still run by a nurse I have worked with for many years, to help patients in her hometown. After flying to Manila, we took a 12-hour bus ride via typhoon damaged roads, through rice fields and groves of banana trees, villages and fast-food restaurants, to Daet, the largest town in the province of Camarines Norte, on the coconut-strewn coast in the Bicol region of the island of Luzon. We were working at Camarines Norte Provincial Hospital, a public hospital where patients could receive care through national health care system but would have to pay a significant amount of money to take prescribed medicines, or to have surgery - including having to go out and purchase the sutures needed for the case. Major medical problems in the community include infectious diseases such as dengue, tuberculosis and rabies, as well as high blood pressure and heart disease. There are huge disparities between care which can be available in major cities vs towns and rural areas in the provinces.



After a day of seeing patients in clinic and sorting through boxes of donated and borrowed supplies we had brought from the US, we made our schedule and started our week - we did general, breast, gyn and head and neck surgery (a total of 189 total major and minor cases). Patients were referred by local doctors and came on their own. Many had not had regular medical care or any of the screening we often take for granted here, and had advanced conditions – large hernias, goiters, and other masses. This can often mean trickier, sometimes higher risk surgeries even in the best of conditions, and unknown medical problems manifesting themselves due to anesthesia. There were two beds per operating room where we worked simultaneously, and a shared back



table of limited sterile supplies that had to last us all day. In the few minutes between our planned cases, we rounded on the patients postop in a large, hot room of all the pre- and postop patients and their families, and we performed smaller procedures in the hallways of people who would walk in requesting a longstanding mass be removed. We had anesthesia medicines and equipment in the operating room but in the hallway, there was local anesthetic only, dim lighting, and minimal supplies in poor condition.



But we were also surrounded by local nursing students wearing matching uniforms all wanting to watch, learn surgical techniques and help. We also worked alongside local surgeons taking care of various other emergencies. In addition to receiving private donations, our surgical mission has been funded partly by the governor of the province (in exchange for good publicity for him), and this funding for the mission has recently helped support the building a permanent new wing of the hospital which we were fortunate to use this year– with a leaky roof but more reliable electricity, running water than the rest

of the hospital. We donated any supplies we did not use during the mission to the hospital. Many supplies were reused and sterilized in ways I did not think was possible. In addition to picking up more Tagalog words for surgical instruments, I learned a few tricks from the staff there of how to use supplies even more efficiently – such as cutting a hole in the paper glove wrapper to use as a sterile drape over the skin (which stayed dry for at least a few minutes before disintegrating). The patients and people in general were kind, religious, full of life and resilient. We had long days (from when the roosters crowed in the morning before sunrise till well after dark) and challenging surgical situations, but we learned a lot and it was gratifying to plan and carry out complex procedures in another location, and especially to see patients get better after surgery. Like many medical missions, this was a short trip. In the best of situations, when medical missions are tailored to the needs of the community, culturally appropriate and build on a single visit to develop collaborative relationships, they can benefit not only those directly involved but can create a wider circle of good will, longer lasting health improvements and cross -cultural partnerships. I pray that our patients in Daet continue to benefit.



Are You a Foot or a Hand?

By Maggie Harmon

I love the imagery Paul uses to talk about being the body of Christ. A foot, an eye, a hand. Alone a very limited ability to have an impact, together something magnificent and powerful. That is how I see our talents, and that is why it is so important that we share them. It is also what makes it wonderful that they are so different. The richness of our unique abilities coming together creates a church community that can learn, grow, and serve in deeply impactful ways.

I have a lot of experience with church finance, planned giving, and writing and so I offer my talents in those areas. Do you have a voice that can contribute to the choir, a passion for the garden, experience in construction or accounting; do you teach, or cook, or know how to do graphic design? We have all been given gifts from God, sometimes these are obvious and sometimes

they are hidden, but to help our congregation grow, to better serve our community we need all of these to come together to make one magnificent body of blessings.

Can you commit to sharing your talents in some way this year? Email pledge@firstchurchoakland.org with your offering and we will get you in touch with a session elder to get you involved.

Upcoming Ceasefire Nightwalks

March 14, 6 p.m.

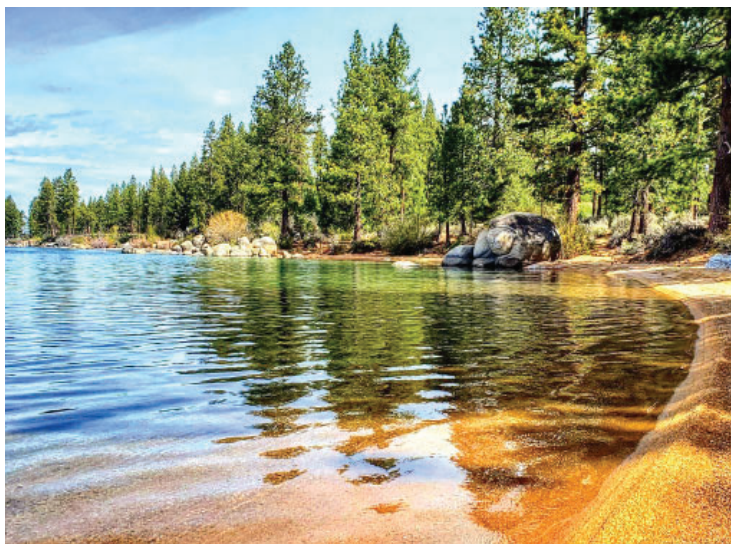
First Mt. Sinai, 1970 86th Ave.

March 21, 6 p.m.

Tabernacle Baptist Church, 10115 Edes Ave.

March 28: 6 p.m.

At Thy Word, 8915 International Blvd.



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.



Pastor Joel Leads Meditation Workshop 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 today and then decide together the best dates for the remaining classes.

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

Hop Aboard Erick's Meal Train for his March 13 Knee Surgery



Our brother Erick Bevington is having knee surgery on March 12. He would appreciate your prayers, cards and well wishes.

If you are so inclined he'd also welcome meal delivery any time in the first weeks of recovery.

To drop off a healthy, uncomplicated meal, please contact Erick directly at (480) 510-4212 to coordinate.

No broccoli please.

2025 Pledge Season Needs You!

Receiving your pledge confirmation for the 2025 year allows us to accurately manage our budget and confidently plan for ministry activities and needs. If you have not made your commitment, or not sent back your form please do so as soon as possible. You can also email your commitment to pledge@firstchurchoakland.org.

We know that this is an extraordinarily generous community in time, talent, and treasure. Please share how and where you are planning to give so we can plan accordingly.

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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Elders

Ben Baab: 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
Suzie Inadomi: Building the Beloved Community

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, 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