

Weekly Newsletter

March 16, 2025

Temple Tidings

First Presbyterian Church of Oakland

Making God's Welcome Known



Water from the Rock

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

Dusk
Nkeiru Okoye

Welcome

Call to Worship

One: Worship the Lord and sing God's praises.

All: We come into the Lord's presence with songs of thanksgiving.

One: Make a joyful noise for the rock of our salvation.

All: We rejoice in our time together.

One: Drink of Christ's living water.

All: We thirst for God's love!

Gathering Prayer

One: Ever-present God, even as you are present with us this day, we yearn to feel your presence in our midst each and every day of our lives. Speak to us with words of grace. Reveal yourself with the power of your love. Flow over us with the presence of your Holy Spirit. Help us know the glory of your love and experience the wonder of your grace. In the name of your love, we pray.

All: Amen.

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: Faithful One, we long to trust your steadfast faithfulness. We yearn to know your life-giving love. Love us into faithful living. Wash over us with your grace. Nourish us with the water of your presence, and lead us to eternal life. In the name of your love, we pray.

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

Like the people of God in the wilderness, and the woman at the well, living water is within reach. We need not thirst for eternal life ever again, for the well of God's blessings is full and God's love is poured out for all.

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.

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 17. 1 - 7 NRSV

From the wilderness of Sin the whole congregation of the Israelites journeyed by stages, as the Lord commanded. They camped at Rephidim, but there was no water for the people to drink. The people quarreled with Moses and said, "Give us water to drink." Moses said to them, "Why do you quarrel with me? Why do you test the Lord?" But the people thirsted there for water, and the people complained against Moses and said, "Why did you bring us out of Egypt, to kill us and our children and livestock with thirst?" So Moses cried out to the Lord, "What shall I do for this people? They are almost ready to stone me." The Lord said to Moses, "Go on ahead of the people and take some of the elders of Israel with you; take in your hand the staff with which you struck the Nile and go. I will be standing there in front of you on the rock at Horeb. Strike the rock, and water will come out of it, so that the people may drink." Moses did so, in the sight of the elders of Israel. He called the place Massah and Meribah, because the Israelites quarreled and tested the Lord, saying, "Is the Lord among us or not?"

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

All: Thanks be to God.

Sermon

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.

Songs

Sung by The Voices of Legacy

Walk Together Children

I Can Tell the World

Invitation to the Lord's Supper

Prayer of Thanksgiving

One: The bread of heaven is here, leading us into life.

All: We draw strength from the bread of life.

One: The cup of blessing is at hand, bringing us salvation.

All: We find life in the cup of salvation

One: Eat and drink, for Christ is here, offering us eternal life

All: Thanks be to God.

Words of Institution

Communion Music

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:



Prayer

Invitation to Community Life

SENDING OUT to be THE CHURCH

Hymn

Wade in the Water
African American Heritage Hymnal #676

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

Liturgist: Dorothy Dugger

Music Director: Jake Fontana

Song Leader: Marilyn Reynolds

Guest Choir: The Voices of Legacy; Velmar Brown, Director

Head Usher: Martha Bauman

Godly Play: Di Pagel and Aaron Ruff

Fellowship Time Refreshments: Sarah Potsma and Aaron Ruff

2025 FPCO Church Directory Available Sunday at Coffee Hour

The updated directory has been printed and will be available for pick up during coffee hour.

If you would like one mailed to you, please contact your deacon or Pastor Matt.

Thank you to Martha Bauman for her work in getting the directory updated.



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.

Join the PICO Practice Circles

Fridays through April 11, 12-12:30 pm



In moments of great fear and suffering, how can we be the calm center? In distressful times, how can we act with clarity and courage? How can we nurture ourselves so that we are able to show up fully and powerfully for our communities?

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

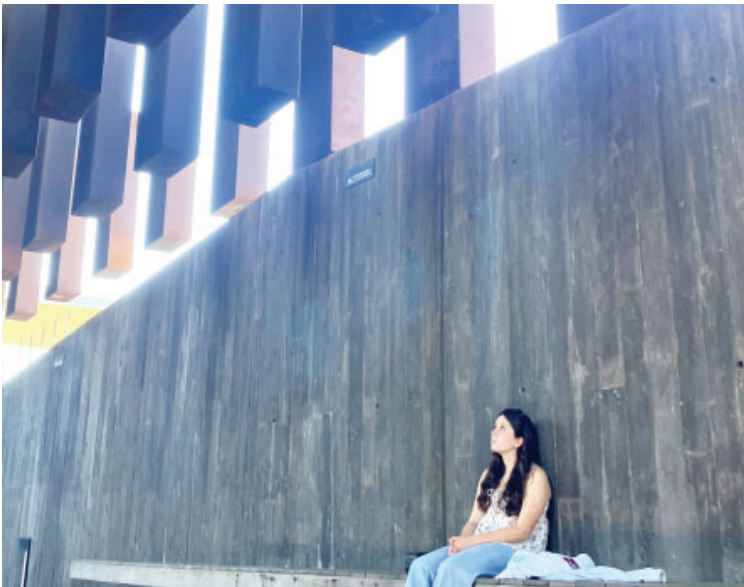
and contemplative space in order to transform both ourselves and the world around us.

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: picalifornia.zoom.us/join/register/85clCRFgRoeK-ppWMLmBKg#

Pastor Matt and Ruby Join Empower Initiative Learning Lab in Alabama



Hop Aboard Erick's Meal Train after 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.

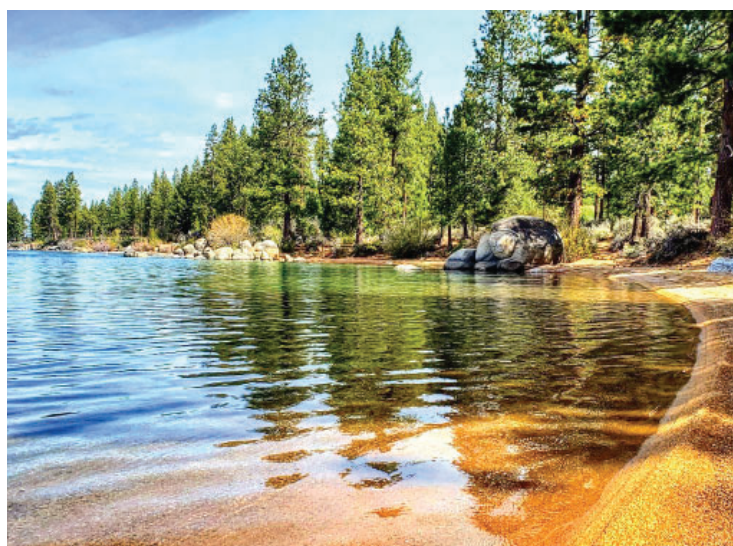
Upcoming Ceasefire Nightwalks

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.



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.



First Church Super Bowl Party



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

Derrick Polk, Su Coburn, Pauline Ahanotu,
Monrovia Prinz, Martha Bauman, Charmaine
Irmiter, Pam Prinz

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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