

First Presbyterian Church of Oakland

Sunday, April 13, 2025

Making God's
Welcome Known



Peace Donkey on Palm Sunday by Brian Zahnd

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** by the Hammond organ and in the back of the sanctuary.
- 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

Calvary

Welcome

by Paul Rodney

Call to Worship

One: In joy, we gather this day.

All: Hosanna to Jesus, the Christ.

One: In remembrance, we gather this day.

All: Hosanna to the son of David.

One: In festive celebration and quiet reflection, we gather to worship and pray.

All: Hosanna to the Son of God.

Gathering Prayer

One: Foundation of our faith, you Son humbled himself on the back of a colt. Then he entered Jerusalem in lowly estate to bring joy to the hearts of children. Forsaking his place at your side, Jesus emptied himself of prestige and power to become a servant to all. On this day of joy and remembrance, sin in our hearts once more, that we too may dance with the children- for to such belong the kingdom of heaven.

All: Amen

Please rise in body or spirit
Song

All Glory, Laud, and Honor
African American Heritage Hymnal #226

CONFESSIO N o f SIN & ASSURANCE o f GRACE

One: God of righteousness, draw near to us in the coming week. We yearn to keep singing our hosannas, but fear that we too may lose our convictions in the face of an angry mob. We long to see ourselves as your champions, but fear that we too might deny you or betray you with a kiss. Strengthen our resolve during Holy Week, that we may remain your faithful disciples,

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

God's face of love shines upon us.

Christ's eyes of forgiveness gaze upon our souls with mercy and compassion.

The Spirit's sustenance offers us grace and hope, that we may rise and walk forth in joy.

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

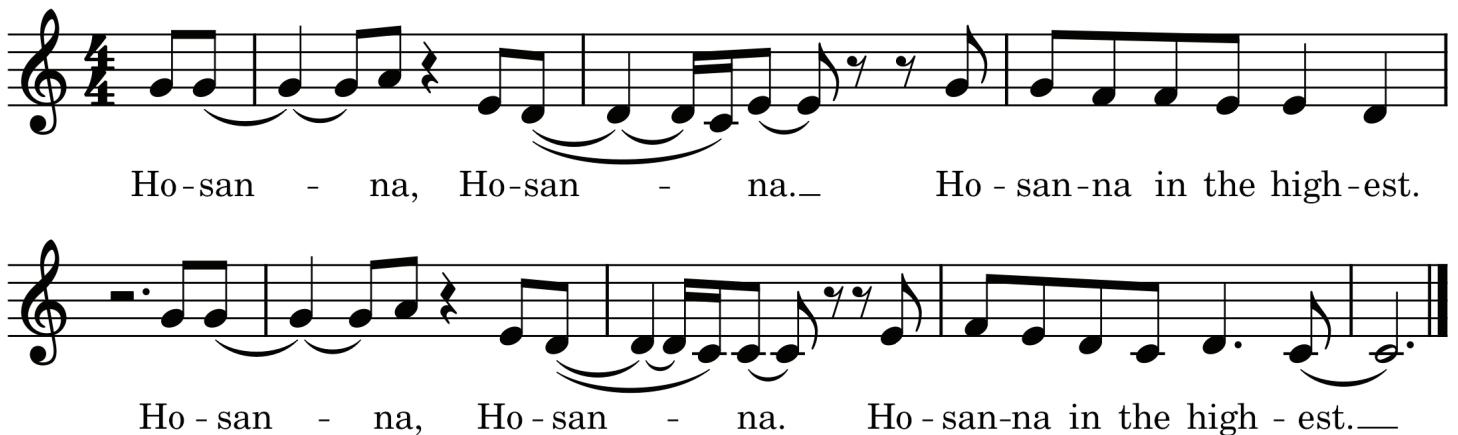
God of the Palms,

Thank you for drawing near to us. We have known what it is to encounter “help” that isn’t truly help. We have known white savior complexes and the narrative of white heroism, which has always secretly delighted in suffering, so it might be the hero again and again. Thank you for showing us a different way: a God who rejects privilege, a God who is unbothered by sitting on a donkey if it means you are drawing near to us. As we wait, take away the fear that has settled on our souls. Help us to trust in the arrival of goodness even in the wake of suffering. Let this Palm Sunday speak the language of welcome: that we would never turn hope away when it appears to us. Amen.

Inhale: Do not be afraid. Exhale: Liberation is coming.

Song

Hosannah



THE WORD

Scripture Lesson

Luke 19: 29 - 40 NRSV

When he had come near Bethphage and Bethany, at the place called the Mount of Olives, he sent two of the disciples, saying, “Go into the village ahead of you, and as you enter it you will find tied there a colt that has never been ridden. Untie it and bring it here. If anyone asks you, ‘Why are you untying it?’ just say this, ‘The Lord needs it.’ ” So those who were sent departed and found it as he had told them. As they were untying the colt, its owners asked them, “Why are you untying the colt?” They said, “The Lord needs it.” Then they brought it to Jesus, and after throwing their cloaks on the colt, they set Jesus on it. As he rode along, people kept spreading their cloaks on the road. Now as he was approaching the path down from the Mount of Olives, the whole multitude of the disciples began to praise God joyfully with a loud voice for all the deeds of power that they had seen, saying,

“Blessed is the king
who comes in the name of the Lord!
Peace in heaven,
and glory in the highest heaven!”

Some of the Pharisees in the crowd said to him, “Teacher, order your disciples to stop.” He answered, “I tell you, if these were silent, the stones would shout out.”

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.

Song

*Open the Eyes of My Heart
Glory to God #452*

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

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: We thank you, God, for your generous Spirit. We praise you for Christ's gift of self, and your never-failing love. For your many gifts, we thank you. For walking with us in our weakness, we praise you. Receive these gifts in token and thanks for the love you offer us—a love that makes us well and whole.

All: Amen.

Invitation to Community Life

SENDING OUT to be THE CHURCH

Song

“Lament” by Mark Miller

sung by the choir

SERVING in WORSHIP TODAY

Pastor: Rev. Matt Prinz

Liturgist: Lorraine Provost

Music Director: Jake Fontana

Song Leader: Susannah Prinz

Trombonist: Chase Waterbury

Head Usher: Matthew Inadomi

Godly Play: Raenelle Tauro and Aaron Ruff

Fellowship Time Refreshments: Taco Truck!

Seeking Easter Bunny Helpers



We are planning our annual Easter Egg hunt on the lawn on Easter Sunday, April 20th to the delight of all children and many adults. We would like your help to have an abundance of candy-filled eggs to hide.

Please drop off candy-filled plastic eggs to Pastor Matt's office any time before April 20. No nuts.

Join us for Good Friday Worship April 18 at 6 p.m.



Please come and join us as we reflect on the final hours of Jesus' life.



Maundy Thursday Seder April 17

Please join Maggie and Chris Harmon to celebrate the Passover on Maundy Thursday, April 17th from 5:30-8pm. We will use a traditional haggadah format (ritual liturgy) that was recently published by Maggie to explore more deeply what Passover meant for Jesus, his disciples, and followers of Christ in the world today.

Limited space so please respond if you would like to attend to Maggie at 510-688-8595 or maggieharmon@me.com.

Sharing our Hospitality: Sign up for Easter Sunday Refreshments



We anticipate many guests for our Easter Sunday Service on April 20th. Let's show them our hospitality by providing a nice spread of refreshments for our fellowship time.

If you can bring a baked good, fruit or other snack for Easter Sunday, please let Julia Marquez know. jmarquez@fbcl-visa.com.

Campus Discernment Process Summary

By The Session

Thank you to everyone who has participated in the focused campus discernment work over the last couple of months, in whatever way you were able to do that.

For many years First Presbyterian Church as a congregation has been thoughtfully engaged in the stewardship of our shared resources; using our campus as a hub for local non-profit operations, community events, and most importantly as sacred space for gathering, worshipping, and growing together.



Discerning God's will for one's own life is not an easy task, discerning God's will for a community is even harder. We each see with different eyes, we each hear with different ears. Bringing together those messages to guide where and how we go together requires deep faith and trust in the process. Thank you to every person who has prayed, listened, completed a survey, or participated in a conversation. We have collectively, and through individual action, sought God's guidance as we seek to be the hands and feet of Christ in the world.

The challenges facing our city are not new and they are not unique; we know too that we can not solve them all by ourselves. Just as we as individuals have different gifts that are made whole as we come together, we know as a congregation that we are a part of something larger. The contribution we can make through the use of our campus is one part of that greater community effort. We will achieve more, more effectively if we each bring our greatest strength to service rather than trying to do it all on our own.

Over two thirds of our membership participated in a survey, dozens took tours of the buildings on campus, met community partners, and engaged in thoughtful discussion. What we have heard, as a congregation, is that we believe our strength lies in being a hub for local non-profit services, social-service outreach and support, and community gathering. This does not mean we dismiss the importance of the other needs facing our community. It does mean that our collective focus will be on those areas of strength, opportunity, and activities that are most aligned to our unique congregational call.



“For as in one body we have many members, and not all the members have the same function, so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually we are members of one another. We have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us: prophecy, in proportion to faith; ministry, in ministering; the teacher, in teaching; the exhorter, in exhortation; the giver, in generosity; the leader, in diligence; the compassionate, in cheerfulness.” - Romans 12:4-8

Focusing our energy and resources on serving as a non-profit hub and event venue is what we feel to be right today and we understand that as circumstances change in the life of our congregation and community we may need to shift our focus. Listening and responding to God does not happen once; we actively listen, we thoughtfully respond, and we continue to seek that guidance as we move through our changing days.



We want to attract more tenants who are doing work to serve the needs of our city: feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, educating children, peacemaking, and more. We want to be a place where the community can come to create and share art, celebrate life, and gather. To do this we will need to make changes to our campus and buildings that may include adding features like an elevator for accessibility, upgrading

or remodeling certain spaces like bathrooms, enhancing the acoustic experience, and others. It will also take a team working together, and the participation of everyone in the congregation in different ways.

If you are ready to be an active part of moving ahead with this call to service please let us know - we need everyone's gifts working together to go boldly following God.

Two planning teams can be working in parallel - one team working with our design architect and one team researching financing and applying for grants that might be available to support accessibility and community services. If you are interested in either area, please talk with Pastor Matt, Maggie, or Ben.



Members Reflect on their Defining Courage' experience

Reflections from Ben Baab

As an experience, the Story Boldly (<https://www.storyboldly.org/>) format immersed us in the historical record. Historical and contemporary film footage, an excellent, live narrator, choral backup, instrumentalist and vocalist performances really brought the heroics and tragedies of these people - soldiers and families - to life. The majority of the audience appeared to be people of Asian background and probably had personal family stories of their own. While powerful forces are attempting to erase and whitewash our true history, they will learn that it will never work. The truth cannot be censored permanently. We must accept that we are flawed, our parents and grandparents were flawed, governments around the world are flawed and we need to repent, ask for forgiveness, and accept and celebrate each other.

From Marie Henderson

Defining courage » is the stage production that narrates the story of the Nisei soldiers during WWII. I didn't know what to expect at first. I had visited the memorial of Manzanar (internment camp for Japanese American families during WWII) a few years ago and was deeply moved by the exhibits. I became interested in this part of American history and so, attending this performance made sense. I didn't know about the Seini soldiers so it was a revelation for me and the performance did a good job showing the courage of those Japanese American soldiers who came to fight in the US army. They were real heroes! Not only the storytelling and interviews as well as the documentary, but also the songs sang by the chorus Raise were awesome. It added a moving touch to the documentary. All in all, I give much praise to the performance. The bonus, of course, was to receive a goody bag at the exit as a souvenir.



This, of course, is a reminder that citizens from other countries living in the USA benefit the nation, despite what Trump says! We cannot forget all the Mexicans and Hispanic people toiling the soil in the strawberry fields and elsewhere. The US economy would NOT be what it is without them. America is and will always be a “melting pot” of diverse nationalities that have enriched the culture and landscape of the country. It is also important to show the young generation what courage is, to give them strong models to look upon and admire. After all, those soldiers were very young when they were fighting in the war.

Reflections from Maggie Harmon

My big takeaway was the sense that being an American is not about what someone looks like - it is about what someone stands for. I had heard of the work of the nisei soldiers in Okinawa and think that in particular is such an important story to tell about the power and richness of being one people with a multiplicity of cultural experience and knowledge. We need each other, we need to work with the gifts each of us uniquely have to do gods work in the world.

Reflections from Pastor Matt

I was surprised to learn about the Neisei soldiers involved in liberating the Dachu concentration camp during World War II, which was discovered fifty years later because American photographers intentionally removed Neisei soldiers before taking photos. The Aliens Enemies Act was used during World War II to justify the imprisonment of Japanese American citizens. I am motivated to oppose the use of this act today as justification for imprisonment and deportation.

Shaping Soundscapes's Future

For a while now, our Friday evening Soundscapes gathering has been a space for prayer, reflection, and live music—a chance to slow down, listen, and reset. As we look ahead, we're thinking about new ways to shape these 90 minutes to better serve our community.

We are considering diving the time into three 30-minute sections: maybe starting with gentle movement like yoga or stretching, flowing into live music, and closing with quiet reflection or guided meditation. Or maybe something entirely different! Would you be willing to help us host and guide this ministry?

We'd love your input and your involvement. If you have ideas or would like to be involved, please contact Jake or Pastor Matt.

Lucy Kinchen Performs April 19

EASTER CELEBRATION!



THE LUCY KINCHEN CHORALE

Join us for an exciting and powerful experience as we perform spirituals to commemorate Easter!

SATURDAY, APRIL 19TH, 2025 2:00 PM

**First Presbyterian Church
2619 Broadway
Oakland, CA**

Free Admission – Donations Accepted

Please Join Faith in Action for these Ceasefire Nightwalks



Stop the gun violence! Oakland Ceasefire is a movement to stop the killings and more people going to jail. We are uniting to build a culture of peace and healing. We are walking our neighborhoods to carry this message: We love you and we want you to be alive and free!

April 25 ~ Mt Zion MBC, 1203 Willow Street
May 9 ~ First Mt. Sinai, 1970 86th Avenue
May 16 ~ St. Columba, 6401 San Pablo Avenue
May 23 ~ New Hope MBC, 892 36th Street
May 30 ~ At Thy Word, 8915 International Blvd.
June 13 ~ Tabernacle MBC, 10115 Edes Avenue
June 20 ~ Emmanuel Greater Praise Church,
2025 86th Avenue
June 27 ~ At Thy Word, 8915 International Blvd.



"I was confused when I got an email saying I had a package ready for pick up because I didn't remember ordering anything, but seeing who it was from made my day. Thank you to everyone for making me feel so loved!" Cami Inadomi

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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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

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 Anne Margaret Manay, Clerk
 Erick Bevington, Treasurer

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Temple Tidings Contributors This Week

Temple Tidings is a weekly publication. All are welcome to contribute news, events and opinion.

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