

Sunday, August 31, 2025

# First Presbyterian Church 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](http://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

*Für Elise*  
*Ludwig van Beethoven*

### Welcome

### Call to Worship

One: Good and merciful God, you call us to gather along the road we know as community,

**All: With our neighbors all around, speak to us in these complicated times.**

One: We are people of the covenant, called to care for one another without exception.

**All: Within and beyond our walls, our neighbors are struggling. Within and beyond these walls, we may be the one who is struggling.**

One: Just as Jesus lived a commitment of coming near, abide in, with and through us.

**All: Send us. Encourage us to come near in your name.**

One: We are ready to open our hearts to receive new strength and to open our lives to new understanding. Gather us near.

### Gathering Prayer

One: Holy God, as we come together, we open ourselves to your spirit. Who is our neighbor and who was this Samaritan called good? Bring fresh understanding to why he alone drew near to danger, unafraid, giving compassion, and bringing hope. Guide us in being open to helping the stranger, the outcast, and the one without community.

**All: Amen.**

*Please rise in body or spirit*

Song

Sweet, Sweet Spirit

*African American Heritage Hymnal #326*

## CONFESSION of SIN & ASSURANCE of GRACE

Confession

One: God we pray, inspire courage and compassion and open us beyond the usual boundaries that come with fear and privilege. We name that we have failed to see our neighbors unless it is convenient and scheduled. We know that the Good Samaritan comes near as one who knows the Kin(g)dom is near. And the Kin(g)dom of God comes near when we do the same. But Creator God, coming near is not easy. It's easier to withdraw and to hide in our homes. The division that plagues our nation will require a new kind of coming together in understanding and love. Forgive our hesitation and make bold our faith. Make bold our witness.

**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

One: Be at peace as the people of God who daily find strength in hope. Be at peace knowing that God draws near; that God is omnipresent and walking with us in our struggle to follow boldly. May we be bold ambassadors of courage and Christ.

**All: Amen.**

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 remain in the Sanctuary during the month of August.*

## PRAYERS of the PEOPLE

### 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

*Blessing the Lifting for When the World is Heavy  
by Erina Kim-Eubanks*

One: So remind us in these days,  
that to be human is to have agency.  
Help us reclaim the strength we need,  
to lift what we can.

Bless our giving—of care, of presence, of mutual aid, that creates alternative economies and abundant ecosystems.

Bless us as we lift up the needs of our kin, as more valuable than corporate profit.

Bless our protesting—our blaring commitment to truth-telling, our refusal to succumb to evil, our resistance to growing numb to the injustice and violence we see.

Bless us as we raise our voices to keep uplifting human dignity. Bless our political organizing—our building of coalition, our mobilization of resources, our targeting of policy and action that catalyzes our movement of moments.

Bless us as we reclaim the power found in “we the people.”

And in all this lifting, tend to our spirits to sustain us for the work at hand.

Grand us the gift of Divine Presence, the energy of human connection, the blessing of ancestral wisdom, and the force of hope to remember that in all our lifting, we are never alone.

**All: Amen.**

## Song

Jesu, Jesu

Je - su, Je - su, fill us with your love; show us how to serve the  
neigh-bors we have from you. Neigh-bors are wealth-y and poor,  
These are the ones we should serve;  
var-ied in col-or and race; neigh-bors are near us and far a - way.  
these are the ones we should love; all these are neigh-bors to us and you.

## THE WORD

### Scripture Lesson

Luke 10. 25 - 37 The Message

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

All: **Thanks be to God.**

### Discussion

How to Love our Neighbors Well

## Song

Psalm 91  
by Keith Ogden

**Those who dwell in the shelter of the Most High  
will rest in the shadow of the Almighty (repeat)  
I will say of the Lord, God is my refuge, God is my fortress (repeat)  
My refuge, My fortress, My God in whom I trust.**

### Invitation to the Offering

One: We are people of generosity because of God's generosity to us. Let us gather our offerings together to practice generosity as a church community.

*Ushers will collect the weekly offering. Donations can be placed in the offering plate. You may also make a donation by scanning this QR code with your smartphone, or by texting your donation to 510.880.1329.*



## Offertory



## Prayer for the Offering

One: Gathered we have given in your name– blessed to be a blessing. Generous God, bless and consecrate these gifts and use them to bring hope and healing to our community and beyond. Enliven us to share even ourselves with the world you love.

All: Amen.

## SENDING OUT to be THE CHURCH

### Invitation to Community Life

### Song

*Let the Glory of the Lord Endure Forever*

1 2

Let the glo - ry of the Lord en - dure for - ev - er, let the

Lord be glad in— all the earth. I will sing praise to my God as

long as I live. I will sing praise to my God while I have my be-ing.

The musical score is written on three staves in treble clef with a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#) and a 4/4 time signature. The melody is simple and repetitive, with lyrics written below the notes. The first staff begins with a repeat sign and a box containing the number '1'. The second staff ends with a box containing the number '2'. The third staff ends with a double bar line and repeat dots.

### Benediction

*In the end, I want my heart to be covered in stretch marks*  
By Andrea Gibson

## SERVING in WORSHIP TODAY

**Pastor:** Rev. Matt Prinz

**Liturgist:** Jan Busch

**Liturgy written by:** Rev. Dr. Robyn Provis

**Music Director:** Jake Fontana

**Guest Guitarist:** Keith Ogden

**Guest Pianists:** Micah and Myles Ogden

**Song Leader:** Susannah Prinz

**Head Usher:** Matthew Inadomi

**Fellowship Time Refreshments:** Linda Carter



First Church Community Joins Prayer Vigil with Mothers and Grandmothers of Detained Neighbors





# Help a Child Learn to Read by Volunteering with Children Rising

By Julia Marquez

Children Rising is a nonprofit organization based in Oakland that trains volunteer math and reading tutors and places them in Oakland Public Schools. I served as a volunteer reading tutor last school year and found this to be a life-giving experience. The reading tutor program is very well thought-out and based on scientific studies of how children learn to read. All materials are provided along with step by step guidelines of how to teach reading and measures children's progress.

Every week I met Alisson and Cali in two one hour sessions in a classroom with 7 other tutors and their students. We always started with a check-in. Sometimes I used colors (like the mood colors from Inside Out) to see how they were feeling, and other times I had them finish drawing a face to express their mood. Making sure they were ready to learn, we then played a warm-up game, practiced flash cards, then they read to me – books were color coded to my students' skill level.

Each time a child completed 20 books, she was given a shout out by the other tutors and children and a "super star" sticker. The comradery in the classroom grew. At the end of the session, the program director always asked the children to line up at the door wave a "thank you" to their tutor.



For the most part, the children loved these sessions. They were eager to learn and worked hard. I am looking forward to getting to know two new students this school year. Children Rising is currently assessing which children will need some extra help. There are always many more children needing tutoring than there are volunteers. Wouldn't you like to be a reading tutor this year?

Materials for the Children Rising tutoring programs will be set out in the reception room during coffee hour and I would be happy to answer any questions about this program.



## Stewardship Notes

By Maggie Harmon

"Give liberally and be ungrudging when you do so, for on this account the Lord your God will bless you in all that you undertake. Since there will never cease to be some in need on the earth, I therefore command you, 'Open your hand to the poor and needy neighbor in your land.'" Deuteronomy 15:10

Can you help First Presbyterian do more to support those in need in our community? Your generous gifts or time, talent, and treasure let us build a strong community of care and support as we respond to God's challenge and the needs of our city.



# Interview Outlines Spiritual Practice of Helping Aging Parents

Interview by Rachel Martin with Jason Reynolds' 'Sacred Work of Caregiving'

MARTIN: Is there anything in your life that feels like praying?

REYNOLDS: What a great question. You know, my - yes is the answer. My mother is 79, almost 80, and she's dealing with some health challenges. And these health challenges over the course of the last year has put me in position to be a caretaker. And part of that caretaking means that my mother - I have to take care of very intimate things as it pertains to my mother. I have to wash her and I have to clean her. I have to, you know, pull her panties up and do all sorts of things that, to be honest with you, I - you know, I did some of this stuff when I was 18, when she was ill with cancer a long, long time ago, so it isn't that it's jarring. It's that at this age, it feels different. And at this age, it feels - in the midst of its burden - 'cause it is that, if we're being honest. It is burdensome sometimes.

MARTIN: Yep.

REYNOLDS: It also feels like prayer. It feels like I'm praying at the only creator that I've ever actually physically known, right? I'm...

MARTIN: Your mom.

REYNOLDS: My mother. I'm bowing at the feet. I'm washing the feet of the only God I've ever physically touched. And does it feel like praying? It feels like praying and everything else. This is the hallelujah of all hallelujahs. And I really, really mean that. It doesn't mean it's not difficult. It's painfully difficult. But I'd be lying to you if I didn't tell you that difficulty is only a piece of this experience, right? I went through this with my dad. As my dad was dying, we went through a similar experience, and I felt the same way. And to be honest with you, as a person who's not very religious, I've known prayer - this has been - these two moments have probably been - these two moments, and driving through the desert in Arizona.

MARTIN: (Laughter).

REYNOLDS: Which seems so far away from these things, but it's not. It's the acknowledgment of a bigger thing, and the acknowledgment that there are bigger things to acknowledge. In Arizona, it's the mountains and the sky. It's the openness and the emptiness of a world unclouded by buildings and architecture, and - right? Like, this is God if I've ever known God. To my - in my mother's bedroom, it's a similar thing. It's me



acknowledging a vessel that has given me everything that I've become. And as that vessel continues to sort of - to empty, right? It's seeping out. And she's not on E yet, and she's fine, but E is coming. The tank is emptying. And to be there, and to maintain this vessel, to maintain her comfort, to keep - to maintain her dignity by making sure that she's clean and cared for - come on. I mean, what else could prayer be? I - prayer can't just be asking, right? Sometimes, I - it's me saying, I'm so grateful for everything you've given me, that me taking these 45 minutes to bathe you is a very small drop in the bucket of the gratitude that I actually owe you. And I will do everything I can to refill, to pour into this until I can't pour or you don't have a bucket anymore for me to pour into. What a gift. What a gift, honestly.

MARTIN: Yeah.

REYNOLDS: ...It hurts to say it, and I can feel my tears welling up in my eyes, but seriously, I wish my mom wasn't going through what she was going through, but I'm so grateful to be there so that she don't have to go through it by herself. She can go through it with what she made. You made the thing that is meant to come here and make sure that...

MARTIN: Yeah.

REYNOLDS: ...You're all right in the midst of this process. I'm going to help you slide up on out of here. I'm going to help you transition. I'm going to make sure that there's comfort for you. The least I could do, after teaching me how to be bold, how to be caring, how to be sensitive, how to cry, how to be a person whole and unfettered by the pressures of this life. Come on - the least I could do. That is prayer. Freedom, space. Like, that's prayer.

MARTIN: Oh, that was a good one, Jason.

# Weekly Church Campus Ministries and Use

(If you are not on the campus during the week it's difficult to know/realize all that is happening throughout the week. We wanted to share a rough outline so you to celebrate with us all that is taking place each week.)

## Monday

- Offices – Church, Habitat for Humanity, Oakland Gay Men's Chorus, Cantare con Vivo
- Kitchen – Food Ministry led by Temple Sinai, Mandela Partners cooking school
- School – Headstart
- Rehearsal – Cantare con Vivo youth leadership, Chase – trombone, AfterGlow Chorus

## Tuesday

- Offices – Church, Habitat for Humanity, Oakland Gay Men's Chorus, Cantare con Vivo
- Kitchen – Food Not Bombs, Mandela Partners cooking school
- School – Headstart
- Rehearsal – Oakland Gay Men's Chorus

## Wednesday

- Offices – Church, Habitat for Humanity, Oakland Gay Men's Chorus, Cantare con Vivo
- Kitchen – Mandela Partners cooking school
- School – Headstart, Catalyst Youth Network
- Rehearsal – Cantare con Vivo youth, Women's Orchestra, AfterGlow Chorus
- Meetings – AA



## Thursday

- Offices – Church, Habitat for Humanity, Oakland Gay Men's Chorus, Cantare con Vivo
- Kitchen – Food Not Bombs, Mandela Partners cooking school
- School – Headstart
- Rehearsal – Cantare con Vivo, Oakland Civic Orchestra

## Friday

- Offices – Church, Habitat for Humanity, Oakland Gay Men's Chorus, Cantare con Vivo
- Kitchen – Food Ministry pick-up, Mandela Partners cooking school
- School – Headstart

## Saturday

- Single Use Events – Candlelight concerts, Quinceaneras, Weddings, Book discussions, Artshows





First Church Students Excited about Going Back to School





## Sunday Worship and Hygiene Bag Assembly in the Reception Room



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

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

### Church Staff

**Rev. Matt Prinz**, Pastor

[matt@firstchurchoakland.org](mailto:matt@firstchurchoakland.org)

510.488.3812

email to make an appointment

**Rev. Joel Mackey**, Parish Associate

[joelmackey@comcast.net](mailto:joelmackey@comcast.net)

**Jake Fontana**, Music Director

[jake@firstchurchoakland.org](mailto:jake@firstchurchoakland.org)

**Micheline La Mont**, Community Relationships Manager

[micheline@firstchurchoakland.org](mailto:micheline@firstchurchoakland.org)

510.488.3810

Hours: Wednesday 2-4:30/Thursday 9-2:30

**Gus Lopez**, Head Custodian

510.290.9677

**Erick Bevington**, Treasurer

[erick@firstchurchoakland.org](mailto:erick@firstchurchoakland.org)

**Joan Clerk**, Bookkeeper

[joan@firstchurchoakland.org](mailto:joan@firstchurchoakland.org)

### Temple Tidings

*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](http://firstchurchoakland.org/temple-tidings)