

Sunday, September 7, 2025

First Presbyterian Church Oakland

Making God's Welcome Known



Galatians 5:22-23

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

Prelude on Hyfrydol
by Ralph Vaughan Williams

Welcome

Call to Worship

One: Come, all ye faithful...

All: to worship, praise, and pray.

One: Come, all ye unfaithful...

All: for God's love welcomes us home.

One: Come into the presence of Christ...

All: for Christ's grace makes us new and whole.

Gathering Prayer

One: Faithful God of ages past and present, welcome us into your love, as we worship you this day. Draw closer to us, that we might trust your promises and follow your ways. In hope and faith, we pray.

All: Amen.



CONFESSION of SIN & ASSURANCE of GRACE

Confession

One: God, welcome us home when we wander afar. Restore us with your compassion and love. Transform us with your miraculous grace, that we might become the new creations you envision us to be. Strengthen us with the power of your Holy Spirit, that we might offer others the same welcome, grace, and love that you have offered us. In your beloved name, 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

One: Everything old has passed away. In Christ, you are a new creation, full of mercy and grace.

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 for Family Worship.

PRAYERS of the PEOPLE

Sharing of Joys & Concerns

Write a word or prayer for what you hope on one side of your prayer tag and word/prayer for what you fear in this season on the other side. Bring your prayer tag forward and attach it to the prayer tree.

Solo

*Prelude on Amazing Grace
by George Shearing*

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.**

THE WORD

Scripture Lesson

Galatians 5.22 - 25 and Luke 15. 11 – 32 NRSV

By contrast, the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against such things. And those who belong to Christ have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. If we live by the Spirit, let us also be guided by the Spirit.

Then Jesus said, “There was a man who had two sons. The younger of them said to his father, ‘Father, give me the share of the wealth that will belong to me.’ So he divided his assets between them. A few days later the younger son gathered all he had and traveled to a distant region, and there he squandered his wealth in dissolute living. When he had spent everything, a severe famine took place throughout that region, and he began to be in need. So he went and hired himself out to one of the citizens of that region, who sent him to his fields to feed the pigs. He would gladly have filled his stomach with the pods that the pigs were eating, and no one gave him anything. But when he came to his senses he said, ‘How many of my father’s hired hands have bread enough and to spare, but here I am dying of hunger! I will get up and go to my father, and I will say to him, “Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son; treat me like one of your hired hands.” ’ So he set off and went to his father. But while he was still far off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion; he ran and put his arms around him and kissed him. Then the son said to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son.’ But the father said to his slaves, ‘Quickly, bring out a robe—the best one—and put it

on him; put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. And get the fatted calf and kill it, and let us eat and celebrate, for this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found!’ And they began to celebrate.

“Now his elder son was in the field, and as he came and approached the house, he heard music and dancing. He called one of the slaves and asked what was going on. He replied, ‘Your brother has come, and your father has killed the fatted calf because he has got him back safe and sound.’ Then he became angry and refused to go in. His father came out and began to plead with him. But he answered his father, ‘Listen! For all these years I have been working like a slave for you, and I have never disobeyed your command, yet you have never given me even a young goat so that I might celebrate with my friends. But when this son of yours came back, who has devoured your assets with prostitutes, you killed the fatted calf for him!’ Then the father said to him, ‘Son, you are always with me, and all that is mine is yours.’”

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

All: Thanks be to God.

Reflection

Invitation to the Lord’s Supper

Song for preparing the table

Spirit of God, Descend upon My Heart
African American Heritage Hymnal #312

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

Sharing of the Holy Meal & Offering

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.



Communion Music

Though I May Speak

Prayer

SENDING OUT to be THE CHURCH

Invitation to Community Life

Song

Lead Me, Guide Me

Please come forward while singing to stand around the Hammond organ as a church community.

*Refrain: Lead me, guide me along the way;
For if You lead me, I cannot stray;
Lord, let me walk each day with Thee.
Lead me, O Lord, lead me.*

*I am weak, and I need Thy strength and power
To help me over my weakest hour;
Let me through the darkness Thy face to see,
Lead me, O Lord, lead me. Refrain*

*Help me tread in the paths of righteousness;
Be my aid when Satan and sin oppress.
I am putting all my trust in Thee,
Lead me, O Lord, lead me. Refrain*

*I am lost, if you take your hand from me;
I am blind, without Thy Light to see;
Lord, just always let me Thy servant be,
Lead me, O Lord, lead me. Refrain*

Benediction

SERVING in WORSHIP TODAY

Pastor: Rev. Matt Prinz

Liturgist: Carter Provost

Music Director: Jake Fontana

Song Leader: Raenelle Tauro

Head Usher: Matthew Inadomi

Fellowship Time Refreshments: Martha Bauman

Memorial for Ann Jones Set for Saturday, September 20



Please join the Jones family on Saturday, September 20 at 10 a.m. to celebrate Ann's life. There will be a luncheon reception immediately following the service.

Ann Jones passed away at home on Wednesday morning July 30th surrounded by her husband, Rich, and sons.

Ann grew up at First Presbyterian Oakland and served in many leadership roles through the years. She was known for her kindness, warmth, and loving service to all.

First Church Community Reflects on Impact of Weekly Bible Study

Several members who regularly attend the weekly Bible Study share why they enjoy the study and how it helps their faith grow.

Diane Hill:

"I come to Bible Study to understand the Bible language and how it applies to our language. I really enjoy seeing my friends and sharing. Studying the Bible gives me hope and help in how I live my life."

Julia Marquez:

"I find the Bible to be a very confusing book. Having a faith community puzzle through it with me is extremely helpful. At Bible study I most appreciate the authentic conversations we have about faith. In this group, I am comfortable questioning what doesn't make sense and appreciate hearing others' perspectives. I often learn from others' stories about how a particular passage spoke to them or was relevant to their life. Although often I am tired or busy on a Wednesday evening, I have never regretted the times I logged in for a mid-week check-in with my faith family."

Maggie Harmon:

"The mid week study keeps me rooted in centering God during the week; worship doesn't just happen on Sunday. It has to happen every day and this is a way for me to reconnect to the lessons and community. I also appreciate hearing the different perspectives and experiences of the words, and the connection to the community in a different setting. I look forward to having a shared space where the purpose is to seek God's guidance of our lives. It is the intentionality of the rhythm of attending; I am reminded that I have to show up to God's presence not wait for it to happen to me, that I need to be an active participant in this relationship."

Please Join Faith in Action for these 6 p.m. Friday 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!

Sept. 12 ~ Tabernacle MBC, 10115 Edes Avenue

Sept. 19 ~ New Hope MBC, 892 36th Street

Sept 26 ~ Emmanuel Greater Praise Church,
2025 86th Avenue

Please see Suzie Inadomi or Pastor Matt to plan a Friday to attend together.

First Church Community Enjoys Sunny Courtyard Worship



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.

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.



Church Retreat Sept 26-28



The First Church retreat will take place from September 26-28 at Zephyr Point.

If you are not coming to the retreat, you are invited to attend the 10 a.m. service at College Ave. Presbyterian Church, located at 5951 College Ave in Oakland.

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

Kleenex Drive for Local Teachers

Teachers have to buy many of their own supplies for their classrooms. We are collecting boxes of Kleenex as a creative way to support and encourage our local teachers. Please bring boxes of tissues to church each Sunday in the month of September and we will distribute them to schools.



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



Celebrate September Birthdays!



Sept 13 Myles Ogden

Sept 15 Joan Clerk

Sept 17 Victor Carrillo

Sept 20 Elizabeth Goodwin

Sept 22 Charmaine Irmiter

Sept 22 Chad Provost

Sept 25 Hazel Seiden-Miller

Sept 26 Ann Tisher

Sept 27 Chima Ngumezi

Sept 28 Erick Bevington

Sept 30 Isabella Seiden-Miller

**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

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Temple Tidings

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welcome to contribute news, events and opinion.

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