

Sunday, September 14, 2025

First Presbyterian Church Oakland

Making God's Welcome Known



Artwork by Aaron Ruff

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

Now Pray We to the Holy Spirit
Dieterich Buxtehude

Welcome

Call to Worship

One: Did you hear the whisper of God calling us to worship?

All: God, help us listen as you call.

One: Do you sense the beautiful people God is creating us to become?

All: God, help us to see your image within.

One: Are we ready to listen, learn, and grow?

All: God, open our hearts and minds to your loving and challenging guidance.

Gathering Prayer

One: Creator God, you have crafted us in your image and created us to share your love, justice, and compassion. Help us to live into this creation. Strengthen us, as we seek to answer your call. When we go astray, guide us back to your ways. When we fall apart, put us back together again. When we shrink in fear, lift our heads, that we may see your love and grace welcoming us home.

All: Amen.

CONFESSION of SIN & ASSURANCE of GRACE

Confession

One: Spirit of love, you know the yearning for love that rests in each and every one of us. Help us to love one another, even when hatred and anger well up within us. Bring us peace and patience even when restlessness and enmity fill our hearts. Inspire us to live with generosity of spirit when we are immersed in self-centered thoughts and selfish actions. Shower us with joy and hope when fear and despair are all around. Bear your fruit in our lives, through the power of your grace and forgiveness, that we may be children of your Spirit, living by your power and following where you lead. In gratitude and trust, 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: If you live by the Spirit, we will be guided by the Spirit. Guided by the Spirit, we are children of the Spirit, healed by God's love, and blessed by Christ's 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 may go with leaders to Godly Play.

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

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

Holy Spirit, Come to Us



THE WORD

Scripture Lesson

Galatians 5. 22 - 25 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.

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

All: **Thanks be to God.**

Sermon

Who Deserves our Patience?

Song

*Help Us Accept Each Other
Glory to God #754*

Invitation to the Offering

One: Created by God to give and to share, let's give and share with love and generosity, not just in this time of offering, but in the days and weeks ahead.

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.



Music at the Offering

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: Bountiful God, your love bears the fruit of hope and grace; your ways lead to fullness of life. May today's offering bear fruit in our world, that your love may cause old hatreds to cease, old wounds to heal and old divisions to mend.

All: Amen.

S E N D I N G O U T t o b e T H E C H U R C H

Receiving of New Members

Sarah and Paul Roberts

Aaron Ruff

Susannah and Monrovia Prinz

Nancy Ogden

Invitation to Community Life

Song

*I Don't Feel No Ways Tired
African American Heritage Hymnal #414*

Benediction

One: Go be fruitful in all that you do! Bring love, joy, peace and patience to everyone you meet. Share kindness, gentleness, and generosity in every encounter. In doing so, you not only live by the Spirit, you bring the Spirit with you.

All: Amen.

S E R V I N G i n W O R S H I P T O D A Y

Pastor: Rev. Matt Prinz

Liturgist: Nina Lapachet

Music Director: Jake Fontana

Song Leader: Linda Carter

Head Usher: Matthew Inadomi

Godly Play: Di Pagel and Dorrie Dodge

Fellowship Time Refreshments: Elizabeth Cureton and Shawn Jones

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 in the Reception Room.

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.

Mandela Partners Cohort Graduates and Begins Restaurant Work



Mandela Partners Family Meal to celebrate the work of their current learning cohort. The culinary employment pathway creates pathways to employment with local food businesses by providing paid kitchen and culinary training for community members facing barriers to employment, with a focus on the re-entry

population. Cohort members will now intern at local restaurants for the next two months.

First Presbyterian Church was appreciated at the family meal for creating an affordable kitchen for the cohort to learn culinary skills. and loving service to all.

Sunday Worship Filled with Music and Fellowship



Join the American Federation for Suicide Prevention Out of the Darkness Walk on Saturday, October 18

You and your family are invited to join the American Federation for Suicide Prevention's Out of the Darkness Walk on Saturday, October 18. The walk starts at Snow Park at the corner of 19 & Harrison near Lake Merritt.

Check In starts at 6 a.m. and the walk starts at 7 a.m.
Event Start Time: 7:00 AM (PDT)

Suicide prevention starts with everyday people. By connecting with others, you can help save lives. The Out of the Darkness Walks are happening across the country and these events give people the courage to open up about their own connections to the cause, and a platform to raise awareness about mental health and suicide prevention.



Friends, family members, neighbors and coworkers walk side-by-side, supporting each other and in memory of those we've lost. Register today and be part of the movement. Visit afspwalks.donordrive.com/Oakland for more information and to register.

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. *Come and join us on Wednesdays at 7 p.m. on Zoom. To receive the invitation to the Bible Study, sign up for our e-newsletter at the bottom of the home page: firstchurchoakland.org.*

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."

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."

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. 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.

Fellowship Hall Floor Refinishing set for September 26 and 27

The floors in the Fellowship Hall were damaged during an event earlier this month so the hall will be closed all day Friday and Saturday for repairs. The Food Ministry team will need to access the refrigerator on the stage via the classrooms and the kitchen doors will be locked to prevent anyone from entering the hall.

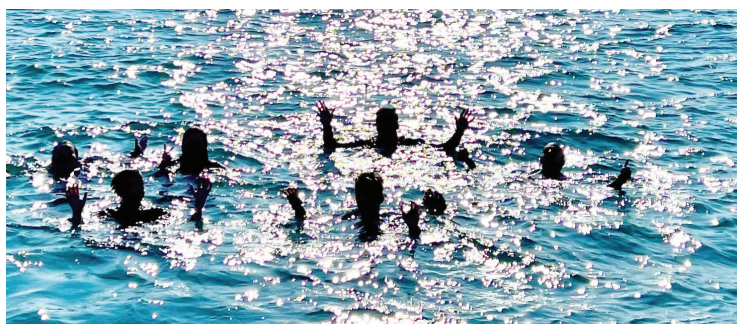
The work will be completed in time for the Sunday morning sandwich assembly line and the Cantare rehearsal on Sunday afternoon.

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.



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.

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.



**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
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 Maggie Harmon: Finance
 Julia Marquez: Community Life
 Suzie Inadomi: Building the Beloved Community

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Temple Tidings

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