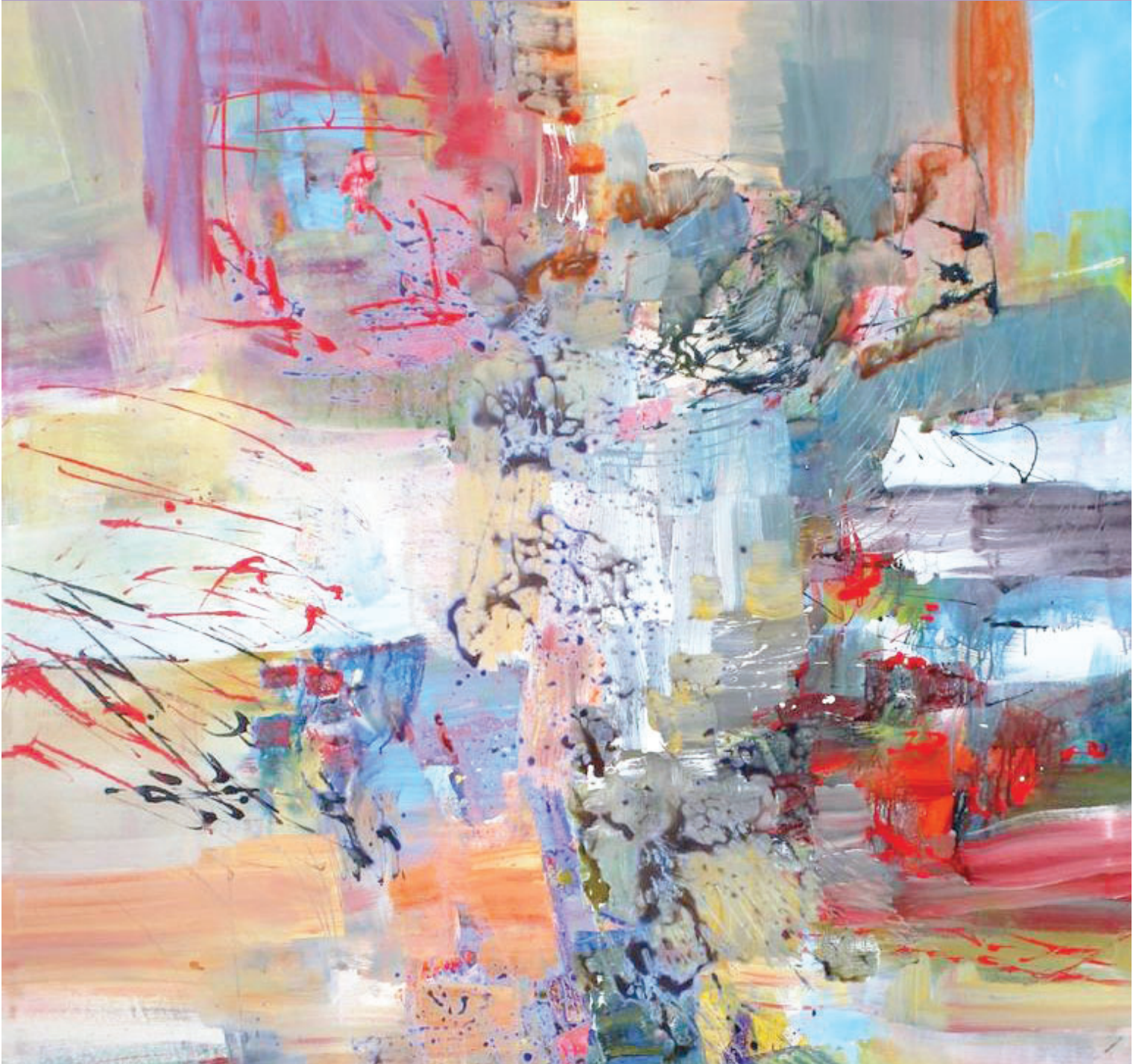


Sunday, December 21, 2025

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 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

*Magnificat V
by Marcel Dupré*

Welcome

Call to Worship

One: Christ's love has called us here.

All: Our spirits rejoice in God, our Savior.

One: Christ's love is transforming the world.

All: In joy, we'll give thanks and sing.

One: Christ's love calls us to justice and peace.

All: In faith, we'll answer the call.

Gathering Prayer

One: God of ancient days and future visions, we come into your presence to celebrate the joy of your Holy Spirit and the blessing of your Son, Christ Jesus. Fill us with your Holy Spirit, as you filled Elizabeth long ago. Sing through our songs of joy, as you sang through Mary. Speak through our words and our thoughts, that we may grow closer to the justice and peace of Christ Jesus, who calls us here today. In Christ's holy and blessed name, we pray.

All: Amen.

Song

Draw the Circle Wide
by Mark Miller
sung by the choir

Draw the circle wide.
No one stands alone, we'll stand side by side.
Draw the circle wide, draw it wider still.
Let this be our song: no one stands alone.
Standing side by side, draw the circle wide.

CONFESSION of SIN & ASSURANCE of GRACE

Confession

One: Merciful Savior, you know the hunger of our hearts, the hurt of our world, and the weakness of our lives. Feed us with faith and hope. Comfort us with love and joy. Forgive us with your grace. Strengthen us with your Spirit and give us the faith of Mary. For we yearn to proclaim your promises and draw strength from your vision of justice and peace in our weary world. In hope 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: Christ's mercy is for you, my friends.
Christ's mercy is for me.
Christ's mercy and grace are sure and assuring.
May it be well with our souls. 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

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel, verses 5-7 --
Glory to God #88

THE WORD

Scripture Lesson

Luke 1. 46 - 55 NRSV

And Mary said,
“My soul magnifies the Lord,
and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,
for he has looked with favor on the lowly state of his servant.
Surely from now on all generations will call me blessed,
for the Mighty One has done great things for me,
and holy is his name;
indeed, his mercy is for those who fear him
from generation to generation.
He has shown strength with his arm;
he has scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts.
He has brought down the powerful from their thrones
and lifted up the lowly;
he has filled the hungry with good things
and sent the rich away empty.
He has come to the aid of his child Israel,
in remembrance of his mercy,
according to the promise he made to our ancestors,
to Abraham and to his descendants forever.”

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

All: Thanks be to God.

RESPONSE to the WORD

Response to the Word

Rev. Matt will lead the congregation in reflection on reading and sermon.

Song

Rise Up, Shepherd, and Follow

1. *There's a star...* Rise up, shep-herd, and fol-low. *It will lead...*
 2. *If you take...* Rise up, shep-herd, and fol-low. *You'll forget...*

Rise up, shep-herd, and fol-low. Fol - low, fol - low,

fol - low, fol - low, Rise up, shep-herd, and fol-low.

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

Sharing of the Holy Meal & Offering

Please come forward when invited by ushers. Communion is non alcoholic and gluten free. 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

*Love Comes True
by Greg Murai*

Prayer

SENDING OUT to be THE CHURCH

Invitation to Community Life

Song

My Soul Cries Out with a Joyful Shout
Glory to God #100

Benediction

One: Go forth with joy.
Go forth in faith.

All: May peace be our way in the world.

SERVING in WORSHIP TODAY

Pastor: Rev. Matt Prinz

Liturgist: Cole Carter

Music Director: Jake Fontana

Song Leader: Raenelle Tauro

Choir: The First Church Choir

Head Usher: Matthew Inadomi

Godly Play: Di Pagel and Monrovia Prinz

Fellowship Time Refreshments: Julia Marquez

Worship News: 2026 Communion

The Pastor, Music Director, Elder for Worship and Head Usher recently discussed making an adjustment to how we celebrate communion in the sanctuary. This was shared with Session at its December meeting.

As our congregation changes, we want to ensure our practices are clear and accessible, especially for visitors. In the past the ushers came down the center aisle as the pastor began the Invitation to the Table and walk backwards inviting worshippers to come forward pew by pew to receive the elements.

This way of ushering people forward was practical when the sanctuary was full. It is overly complicated when our average attendance is about 50 people and many sit in a favorite place leaving empty pews in several parts of the sanctuary.

Beginning on January 4 the pastor will invite people to come forward to receive the elements when they wish or feel ready. Worshippers exit their pews and join the line in the center aisle. After receiving the elements, everyone returns to their pew by the side aisles.

We will make a note in the bulletin on Communion Sundays to this effect. The Staff and worship leaders will review this change after a few months.

Please speak with Di Pagel or Matthew Inadomi if you have any questions.

Stewardship News & Reflections

By Maggie Harmon

It's not too late to make a big impact for the church with your year end gift.

If you are taking your Required Minimum Distribution (or if you are 70 ½) you can direct a Qualified Charitable Donation (QCD) from your IRA to First Presbyterian Church in any amount from \$100 to \$100,000. The gift is not taxable to you as income and can potentially reduce your overall tax rate.*

Gifts of stock or other publicly traded securities can be received by the church. When you make a gift of securities you can deduct the full value of the sale price without having to realize any of the capital gain.*

Cash gifts are also deductible of course, and gifts in any amount are deeply appreciated and enormously valuable to the ongoing life of the community.

To make a gift of securities contact elder for finance and stewardship Maggie Harmon, maggieafh@gmail.com.

*talk to your financial advisor for details specific to your circumstances.



The First Church Archives

By Ben Baab

Our Archives preserves the unique history of the First Presbyterian Church of Oakland (aka First Church), documenting its activities, decisions, and community impact for current and future generations through materials like Session minutes, membership records, artifacts, recordings, and photographs. It provides an “institutional memory” by safeguarding and organizing these historical records, making them accessible for genealogical research, church histories, and celebrations.

Did you know...

- * The first minister was sent as a missionary aboard a clipper ship, named Trade Wind, which caught fire a few days after departing from New York. After smoldering for eight days, the fire was doused and the journey continued around the Horn and on to San Francisco.

- * The first worship service was held under a tree, which was then enhanced by a tent purchased from the Episcopalians.

- * Our history is connected to the founding of the University of California.

- * First Presbyterian and Mt. Hamilton share something in common.

- * Other East Bay Protestant churches were started by First Presbyterian, hence the First Church moniker.

Have you ever wondered...

- * How did the Great Migration impact our congregation?

- * What role did the congregation play during the Civil Rights movement?

- * What was the Great Depression like for the congregation?

- * How did First Church respond to the ‘06 and ‘89 earthquakes?

- * What were the 1950s and 1960s like for the congregation?

- * How have the last 20 years here compared with other churches’ experiences?

- * Are these stories relevant for us today?

- * How can we learn and share the stories?

- * What recent stories and people should we be remembering?

- * How can you help?

Contribute a Warm Coat or Blanket to our Neighbors



Do you have unused blankets or gently used jackets that you could donate to them? Please bring items between now and Christmas and we will offer them with our lunches.

Pastor Matt Shares Journey of Presbyterian Delegation in Palestine



Practices of our Church Community – Ways to Join Us

Worship Service Each Sunday we gather at 10am to sing, pray, confess, and worship God together. We invite our community to participate in our worship services through singing, reading, praying, ushering, or sharing testimony. Do you like to write prayers or help connect music to themes in scripture? Talk with Di Pagel (Elder of Worship), Jake Fontana (Music Director) or Pastor Matt if you would like to help lead/design our worship services. You can also help us create space for conversation and building community through providing food during our coffee hour (11-12). Talk with Julia Marquez if you would like to contribute.



Food Ministry Each week, more than 40 volunteers share over 300 meals with our neighbors through our food ministry. Volunteers gather donated food on Fridays and Saturdays from local supermarkets and bakeries. Meals are prepared on Sundays and Mondays and are shared with neighbors and delivered to local encampments. We have opportunities to serve during the week, each Saturday, and Sunday. Talk with Gay Cobb or Dorothy Dugger or Nina Lapachet to get involved.

Bible Study Wednesday nights at 7pm via Zoom we gather around the sacred texts of scripture to study and reflect upon our lives and take new steps of faithfulness together. No need to study beforehand, just sign up for our weekly emails, click on the Zoom link and join conversation. Come with a desire to build community and listen for God's Spirit in the midst of scripture. Talk with Henry Gardner or Maggie Harmon or Pastor Matt for more details.



Building the Beloved Community Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. constantly spoke about God's work of building the beloved community - a community bridging across the differences of race, class, gender, sexuality, and ability. Building the Beloved Community is one lens we use to look at all of our ministry at First Church. We also host conversations, book groups, attend concerts and art shows, to learn, reflect, and to help us build God's beloved community within our church community, in our neighborhoods, and city. Talk with Suzie Inadomi, Pastor Matt or Pastor Joel to learn about ways to join BBC work at First Presbyterian Church of Oakland.



Community Life - God is community Three in one and we are made for community. Creating spaces for community around meals, discussion groups, backyard firepits, and outings together (A's game, beach etc.) are an important ministry within our church community. Do you like to host events, love connecting with others, enjoy building community? Talk with Julia Marquez or Pastor Matt and join them in planning our next community life events.



Faith in Action "Justice is what love looks like in the public." Cornel West. How do we put our faith into action to love our neighbors? One way we live out our faith is joining the ministries of Faith in Action East Bay, who for over 40 years have advocated and worked in areas of gun violence, immigration, education, housing, and equity in Oakland and the larger Bay Area. Members of First Pres. regularly join FIA Ceasefire night walks, advocate for affordable housing, and seek to support new structural changes for equity and justice. Talk with Pastor Matt to get involved and our new community organizer Chris Logan.



Join us on Wednesday, December 24, 6 p.m.
Christmas Eve Candlelight service and Pop-Up Nativity.



**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
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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, Cassandra Flipper

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Temple Tidings

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

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