

Sunday, December 28, 2025

First Presbyterian Church Oakland

Making God's Welcome Known



Holy Innocents of Bethlehem

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

The First Noel

Welcome

Hark! The Herald Angels Sing

Call to Worship

One: Praise the God of mercy and love.

All: Praise God with angels in the highest heavens.

One: Praise Christ, who came as a child.

All: Praise Christ with all God's children, young and old alike.

One: Praise the Holy Spirit, who calls us here.

All: Praise the Spirit from the depths of our souls.

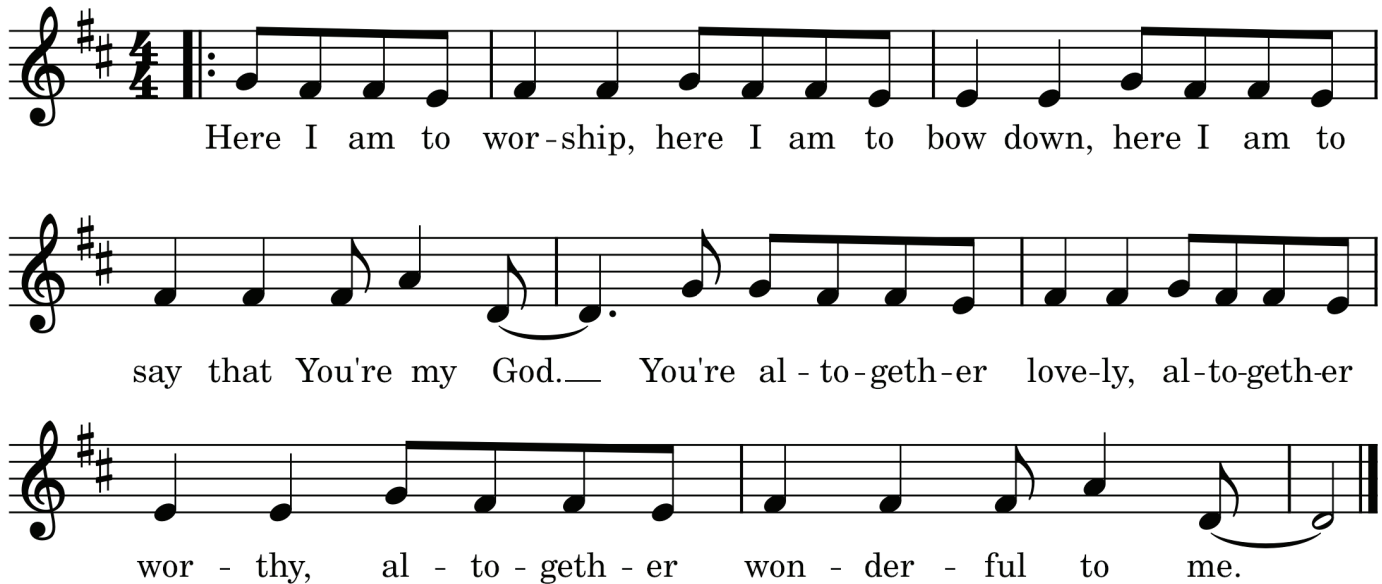
Gathering Prayer

One: Loving God, we come into your presence with joy in this holiday season. But we also come with sorrow for a world struggling in pain. Bring hope to our weary world. Bring love to our hearts. Bring joy to our lives. And help us bring hope, love, and joy to others, as we follow your Son, Christ Jesus.

All: Amen.

Song

Here I Am to Worship



CONFESSION of SIN & ASSURANCE of GRACE

Confession

One: Merciful God, we yearn to be merciful and gracious, as you have been merciful and gracious to us. Grant us the mercy to redeem our lives, and give us the strength to live as those who are redeemed. Help us resist the forces of evil and cruelty that kill our hope and destroy our souls. Fill us with your light and love, that we may overflow with mercy, compassion, help and hope for our world . In your holy 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: In love and mercy, God redeems us.
In grace and joy, God lifts us.
In strength and security, God carries us all the days of our lives.

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

*What Child is This
Glory to God #145*

THE WORD

Scripture Lesson

Matthew 2. 13 - 23 NRSV

Now after they had left, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, "Get up, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there until I tell you, for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him." Then Joseph got up, took the child and his mother by night, and went to Egypt and remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet, "Out of Egypt I have called my son.

When Herod saw that he had been tricked by the magi, he was infuriated, and he sent and killed all the children in and around Bethlehem who were two years old or under, according to the time that he had learned from the magi. Then what had been spoken through the prophet Jeremiah was fulfilled:

"A voice was heard in Ramah,
wailing and loud lamentation,
Rachel weeping for her children;
she refused to be consoled, because they are no more."

When Herod died, an angel of the Lord suddenly appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt and said, "Get up, take the child and his mother, and go to the land of Israel, for those who were seeking the child's life are dead." Then Joseph got up, took the child and his mother, and went to the land of Israel. But when he heard that Archelaus was ruling Judea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there.

And after being warned in a dream, he went away to the district of Galilee. There he made his home in a town called Nazareth, so that what had been spoken through the prophets might be fulfilled, “He will be called a Nazarene.”

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

All: **Thanks be to God.**

Sermon

RESPONSE to the WORD

Response to the Word

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

Song

Light of the World



Invitation to the Offering

One: Just as visitors from the East brought gifts to the Christ child, we too are invited to bring gifts to Christ's church in service of God's work in the world. Any gift of love is a gift of gold.

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

Christmas Time is Here

Prayer for the Offering

One: Generous God, thank you for the gift of Christ Jesus in our lives and in our world. Thank you for the gifts we return to you now. Bless these gifts, that they may support Christ's loving presence in our ministry, in our community, and in our world.

All: **Amen.**

SENDING OUT to be THE CHURCH

Invitation to Community Life

Song

Joy to the World
Glory to God #134

Benediction

One: In love and mercy, God send us forth.

All: In love and mercy, we go to serve.

One: Let Christ lead the way.

SERVING in WORSHIP TODAY

Pastor: Rev. Matt Prinz

Liturgist: Joshua Day Marquez

Music Director: Jake Fontana

Song Leader: Susannah Prinz

Musician: Keith Ogden

Pianists: Micah Ogden and Myles Ogden

Head Usher: Matthew Inadomi

Godly Play: Raenelle Tauro and Dorrie Dodge

Fellowship Time Refreshments: Nancy Ogden

Poinsettia Dedications Honor and Memorialize Family and Friends



Di Pagel

In honor of my children Annie, Caroline, Elizabeth and Mark and my grandchildren Jacob, Zoe and Ethan.

Henry Gardner

In memory of my mother, Annie B. Gardner, of my grandmother, Rosa B. Underwood, of Taylor's great-grandmother, Betty Wiegand, and of Winifred McCleod.

Linda Carter

In honor of my mother Diane Hill and in memory of family members who are no longer with us.

Diane Hill

In memory of my parents Adele and Vic Wrasse and Sister Carolyn Josephian and my daughter Linda Carter.

Barbara and Wayne Goodroe

In memory of our parents and in honor of our family.

Dorrie Dodge

In memory of Lisa Dodge.

Dorothy Dugger

In memory of my brother Lee Dugger

Lorraine Kennix Provost

In Honor of my children and grandchildren and their mother: Chad and Shani; Carter, Cole and Mom: Nicole and in Memory of my parents: Mack and Anita Kennix.

Charmaine Irmiter

In memory of my brother, Paul S. Caga-anan, Sr.

Martha and Jim Bauman

In memory of the Smith & Bauman families

Jan Busch

In memory of Henry and Elene Busch and Teresa Harnden.

Louise Hill

In memory of my mother.

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.



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.



Mark your Calendar for our October 2-4, 2026 Church Retreat



Join us next year at Zephyr Point at Lake Tahoe for an opportunity to gather in a beautiful space, to step away from everyday rhythms of life, to build community with other members, and to connect with God.

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, Cassandra Flipper

Church Staff

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matt@firstchurchoakland.org

510.488.3812

email to make an appointment

Rev. Joel Mackey, Parish Associate

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Jake Fontana, Music Director

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Micheline La Mont, Community Relationships Manager

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

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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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