

Sunday, January 4, 2026

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

How Brightly Shines the Morning Star
Dieterich Buxtehude

Welcome

Call to Worship

One: Bring your gifts and bring your love to honor the King of love.

All: Bring your worship and bring your praise to pay homage to Christ Jesus, our King.

Gathering Prayer

One: Gracious God, we come into your presence with joy and praise, grateful for the gift of Christ Jesus in our lives. As we celebrate this gift in our service of worship, fill our hearts with Christmas joy and our spirits with the gift of your Holy Spirit. With joy and gratitude, we pray.

All: Amen.

CONFESSION of SIN & ASSURANCE of GRACE

Confession

One: Christ Jesus, we yearn for your grace to fill our lives. We yearn to accept your love so fully that our hearts might overflow with love for your world. Gift us, not just with your mercy and grace, but with an openness and confidence to receive your gifts. Shine through our hearts, our lives, and our actions, that others may find in us generous friends of grace and love.

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 Christ's grace, we can boldly embrace God's love.
In Christ's mercy, we can confidently proclaim that God's love is enough.

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.

Song

Song of the Magi
by Anaïs Mitchell

Prayer

God of the Magi,

We hold close their demonstration of civil disobedience. When given the choice between the oppressive force of the empire and their responsibility to protect the life and dignity of the vulnerable, they listened to maker and not man. Would you preserve their story in us, that we might become faithful evaluators of the powers in our midst? Help us perceive all the ways the spirit of Herod is alive and well in our leaders how they advocate for policies that benefit themselves and harm those they are meant to serve; how their words and requests, however subtle, have been poisoned by greed and power lust. Make ours a holy rebellion, held and led by those who have been discarded—a diverse number. We will listen as you guide us. Protect us as we make our way home. Amen.

(prayer by Cole Arthur Riley)

**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.**

T H E W O R D

Scripture Lesson

Matthew 2. 1 – 12 NRSV

In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, magi from the east came to Jerusalem, asking, “Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star in the east and have come to pay him homage.” When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him, and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. They told him, “In Bethlehem of Judea, for so it has been written by the prophet:

‘And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah,
are by no means least among the rulers of Judah,
for from you shall come a ruler
who is to shepherd my people Israel.’ ”

Then Herod secretly called for the magi and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. Then he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, “Go and search diligently for the child, and when you have found him, bring me word so that I may also go and pay him homage.” When they had heard the king, they set out, and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen in the east, until it stopped over the place where the child was. When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother, and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road.

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

He Came Down
African American Heritage Hymnal #200

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

Worshippers are invited to come to the table down the center aisle and return to pews along the side aisles. Communion is non alcoholic and gluten free. Donations can be placed in the offering plate by the table. 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

Prayer

Child in a Manger Born
by Mark and Helen Johnson

SENDING OUT to be THE CHURCH

Invitation to Community Life

Song

We Three Kings of Orient Are

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

**1. We three kings of Orient are bearing gifts we traverse afar,
field and fountain, moor and mountain, following yonder star.**

**Refrain: O star of wonder, star of light, star with royal beauty bright,
westward leading, still proceeding, guide us to thy perfect light.**

**2. Born a King on Bethlehem's plain, gold I bring to crown him again,
King forever, ceasing never, over us all to reign.**

Refrain

**3. Frankincense to offer have I; incense owns a Deity nigh;
prayer and praising, voices raising, worshiping God on high.**

Refrain

**4. Myrrh is mine; its bitter perfume breathes a life of gathering gloom;
sorrowing, sighing, bleeding, dying, sealed in the stone-cold tomb.**

Refrain

Benediction

**5. Glorious now behold him arise, King and God and sacrifice.
Alleluia, Alleluia sounds through the earth and skies.**

Refrain

SERVING in WORSHIP TODAY

Pastor: Rev. Matt Prinz

Liturgist: Di Pagel

Music Director: Jake Fontana

Song Leader: Anne Margaret Manay

Soloists: Leah Marquez and Alessandra Mohar

Head Usher: Matthew Inadomi

Fellowship Time Refreshments: Paul and Sarah Roberts

Twelve Questions for the Year that was

by Kate Bowler

- What surprised you with its goodness this year?
- What did you carry farther than you thought you could?
- What have you outgrown, even if you're not quite ready to say goodbye?
- Who helped you survive this year?
- What beauty did you witness that felt like it was just for you?
- What ache are you bringing with you into the new year?
- Where did joy surprise you this year?
- What is one thing you did this year that your past self would be proud of?
- What did you lose that deserves to be remembered?
- What rhythms or rituals carried you through?
- What do you hope to make room for next year—not as a resolution, but as a holy invitation?
- If you could write a blessing for the year ahead, what would it say?

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.

The Immigrant's Creed

I believe in Almighty God, who guided the people in exile and in exodus, the God of Joseph in Egypt and Daniel in Babylon, the God of foreigners and immigrants.

I believe in Jesus Christ, a displaced Galilean, who was born away from his people and his home, who fled his country with his parents when his life was in danger.

When he returned to his own country he suffered under the oppression of Pontius Pilate, the servant of a foreign power.

Jesus was persecuted, beaten, tortured, and unjustly condemned to death.

But on the third day Jesus rose from the dead, not as a scorned foreigner but to offer us citizenship in God's kingdom.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the eternal immigrant from God's kingdom among us, who speaks all languages, lives in all countries, and reunites all races.

I believe that the Church is the secure home for foreigners and for all believers.

I believe that the communion of saints begins when we accept the diversity of the saints.

I believe in forgiveness, which makes us all equal before God, and in reconciliation, which heals our brokenness.

I believe that, in the Resurrection, God will unite us as one people, in which all are distinct and all are alike at the same time.

I believe in life eternal, in which no one will be a foreigner but all will be citizens of the kingdom where God reigns forever and ever. Amen.

Get your copy of A History of Racial Injustice Calendar 2026



EJI's 2026 calendar is a full-color wall calendar that includes hundreds of historical entries and 12 short essays highlighting historical events and issues in our nation's racial history.

To purchase your copy, please visit:
shop.eji.org/products/a-history-of-racial-injustice-calendar-2026

Black History Month Event Scheduled for Sunday, January 25



In preparation for Black History Month, we are planning a trip to the Oakland Museum of California (OCMA) on Sunday, January 25, after church. Martha Baab has arranged a 30-minute guided tour of a special exhibit. Black Spaces: Reclaim & Remain navigates the braided histories of displacement, resistance, and resilience within Black American communities in Oakland and the East Bay. Through new commissions in art,

architecture, and archival research, the exhibition traces how these communities have creatively resisted dispossession and reimagined spaces of home and belonging.

Admission is free but we only have space for 20–25 participants. Please let Suzie Inadomi know if you would like you join us.

First Church Celebrates Christmas with a Pop Up Nativity and more!



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.



Celebrate January Birthdays!



Please wish the following people a very happy birthday this month!

January 10: Eric Witt

January 14: Susannah Prinz

January 17: Sarah Postma

January 21: Cassandra Flipper

January 23: Anna Lisa Fear

January 24: Penny Taylor

January 26: Christine Kovach

January 29: Rev. Bill Beatty

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

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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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