

Sunday, January 18, 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

Great Day
arr. Andrea de Segurola

Welcome

Call to Worship

One: Can you hear God's call?

All: Christ's voice is heard far and near.

One: Can you discern God's Word?

All: Christ calls one and all.

One: God speaks of light and life.

All: Christ's love reaches us all.

One: The Spirit breathes joy and compassion.

All: We are called in fellowship together.

Gathering Prayer

One: Oh God, our gracious Heavenly Father, we thank Thee for the privilege above all privileges, and that is the privilege to worship Thee. Grant that we will never misuse worship, that we will direct it in the proper channel and receive all of the great rewards that come as a result of our kneeling before Thee in humble submission and worshipping Thee throughout the whole wide world. In the name and spirit of Jesus, we pray.

All: Amen.

Song

Draw the Circle Wide

by Mark Miller, sung by the choir

Four simple words we sing today
with these four words we ought to pray
and take to heart this sacred phrase:
“More Love, less hate.”
It seems so easy on its face
four words to heal the human race
and yet we struggle to create
more love, less hate.
For love we stand! More love in this land!

Will you join? Come take my hand!
More love, less hate!
When fear and violence touch our lives
hate separates, seeks to divide
our faith in love won't be denied
More love, less hate
Just as the night gives way to dawn
Justice shines forth before too long
until that day we will sing on
More love, less hate!

CONFESSIO N o f S I N & A S S U R A N C E o f G R A C E

Confession

One: Merciful God, when we succumb to despair and get lost in our fears of inadequacy, remind us who we are and whose we are. We long to feel worthy of your love and to rest secure in your call to join your redemptive work in the world. Remind us, Loving Presence, to speak words of hope and words of encouragement and words of truth.

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: You are forgiven people of God. Let us live as people of forgiveness. Let us be known as people of forgiveness.

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

*The Higher Principle of Love
Dr. Martin Luther King Jr*

God grant that the resources that you have will be used to do that, the great resources of education, the resources of wealth, and that we will be able to move into this new world, a world in which men will live together as brothers; a world in which men will no longer take necessities from the masses to give luxuries to the classes. A world in which men will throw down the sword and live by the higher principle of love. The time when we shall be able to emerge from the bleak and desolate midnight of man's inhumanity to man into the bright and glittering daylight of freedom and justice.

That there will be the time we will be able to stand before the universe and say with joy-The kingdom of this world has become the kingdom of our Lord and our Christ! And he shall reign forever and ever! Hallelujah!

Song

*Lead Me, Guide Me
African American Heritage Hymnal #474*

THE WORD

Scripture Lesson

Psalm 40 and Amos 5. 21-24 NRSV

I waited patiently for the Lord; he inclined to me and heard my cry.
He drew me up from the desolate pit, out of the miry bog,
and set my feet upon a rock, making my steps secure.
He put a new song in my mouth, a song of praise to our God.
Many will see and fear and put their trust in the Lord.
Happy are those who make the Lord their trust,
who do not turn to the proud, to those who go astray after false gods.
You have multiplied, O Lord my God, your wondrous deeds and your thoughts toward us; none can compare with you.
Were I to proclaim and tell of them, they would be more than can be counted.
Sacrifice and offering you do not desire, but you have given me an open ear.
Burnt offering and sin offering you have not required.
Then I said, "Here I am; in the scroll of the book it is written of me.
I delight to do your will, O my God; your law is within my heart."

I have told the glad news of deliverance in the great congregation;
see, I have not restrained my lips, as you know, O Lord.
I have not hidden your saving help within my heart;
I have spoken of your faithfulness and your salvation;
I have not concealed your steadfast love and your faithfulness
from the great congregation.
Do not, O Lord, withhold your mercy from me;
let your steadfast love and your faithfulness
keep me safe forever.
For evils have encompassed me without number;
my iniquities have overtaken me until I cannot see;
they are more than the hairs of my head, and my heart fails me.
Be pleased, O Lord, to deliver me; O Lord, make haste to help me.
Let all those be put to shame and confusion who seek to snatch away my life;
let those be turned back and brought to dishonor who desire my hurt. Let those
be appalled because of their shame who say to me, "Aha, Aha!"
But may all who seek you rejoice and be glad in you; may those who love your
salvation say continually, "Great is the Lord!"
As for me, I am poor and needy, but the Lord takes thought for me.
You are my help and my deliverer; do not delay, O my God.
"I hate, I despise your feasts, and I take no delight in your solemn assemblies.
Even though you offer me your burnt offerings and grain offerings, I will not ac-
cept them; and the peace offerings of your fattened animals,
I will not look upon them. Take away from me the noise of your songs;
to the melody of your harps I will not listen. But let justice roll down like waters,
and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream.

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

All: Thanks be to God.

Sermon

R E S P O N S E t o t h e W O R D

Sermon Continued

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

Song

*Precious Lord, Take My Hand
African American Heritage Hymnal #471*

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

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

Were You There?

Prayer

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

Invitation to Community Life

Song

*Leaning on the Everlasting Arms (What a Fellowship) --
African American Heritage Hymnal #371*

Benediction

*The Buoyancy of Hope
by Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.*

And now unto Him who is able to keep us from falling. And now unto him who is able to lift us from the fatigue of despair to the buoyancy of hope. And now unto Him who is able to solve the race problem if we will cooperate with Him. And now unto Him who is able to transform this cosmic energy into constructive force. Now unto Him who is able to transform this midnight of injustice into a glowing daybreak of freedom and justice. To Him be power and authority, majesty and dominion, now, henceforth, and forever more.

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: Susannah Prinz

Music Director: Jake Fontana

Song Leader: Marilyn Reynolds

Choir: The First Church Choir

Head Usher: Matthew Inadomi

Godly Play: Raenelle Tauro and Monrovia Prinz

Fellowship Time Refreshments: Ben and Martha Baab

Black History Month Celebration Concert on Saturday, February 7

This February 7th at 3pm, we have the pleasure of welcoming organist and composer Mark Miller to First Church. Mark will lead our choir and the choir of Lafayette-Orinda Presbyterian Church in a concert celebrating Black History Month.

The concert will include congregational songs, solos, Mark's choral music, and poetry written by historical and contemporary Black poets. Mark is a graduate of Juilliard and Yale University who is equally at home in classical, gospel, and contemporary styles, and his music blends all three. He often writes his own lyrics for his songs, and many of the texts emphasize themes of social justice and building the beloved community.

If you'd like to be involved in welcoming Mark and LOPC to our church, please be in touch, and be sure to attend this special event!



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!

Jan 23 ~ St. Columba, 6401 San Pablo Ave.,
Jan 30 ~ At Thy Word, 8915 International Blvd
Feb 13 ~ First Mt. Sinai, 1970 86th Avenue
Feb 20 ~ St. Patrick's, 1023 Peralta St
Feb 27 ~ At Thy Word, 8915 International Blvd

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

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.

Mandela Partners Seeks Participants for its February 23 Cohort



Mandela Partners is recruiting for its upcoming Culinary Employment Pathways (CEP) program. CEP is a 13 week culinary training program that pays community members facing barriers to employment to participate in hands-on kitchen training, soft skill development, and internships

with the goal of long term employment in the culinary industry. Applications available s open January 14 and close February 2. For more information, please visit: mandelapartners.org/culinary-employment-pathways

Excerpts from Dr. King's 1963 'Letter from the Birmingham Jail'

"You may well ask: "Why direct action? Why sit ins, marches and so forth? Isn't negotiation a better path?" You are quite right in calling for negotiation. Indeed, this is the very purpose of direct action. Nonviolent direct action seeks to create such a crisis and foster such a tension that a community which has constantly refused to negotiate is forced to confront the issue. It seeks so to dramatize the issue that it can no longer be ignored. My citing the creation of tension as part of the work of the nonviolent resister may sound rather shocking. But I must confess that I am not afraid of the word "tension." I have earnestly opposed violent tension, but there is a type of constructive, nonviolent tension which is necessary for growth. Just as Socrates felt that it was necessary to create a tension in the mind so that individuals could rise from the bondage of myths and half truths to the unfettered realm of creative analysis and objective appraisal, so must we see the need for nonviolent gadflies to create the kind of tension in society that will help men rise from the dark depths of prejudice and racism to the majestic heights of understanding and brotherhood. The purpose of our direct action program is to create a situation so crisis packed that it will inevitably open the door to negotiation. I therefore concur with you in your call for negotiation. Too long has our beloved Southland been bogged down in a tragic effort to live in monologue rather than dialogue.

My friends, I must say to you that we have not made a single gain in civil rights without determined legal and nonviolent pressure. Lamentably, it is an historical fact that privileged groups seldom give up their privileges voluntarily. Individuals may see the moral light and voluntarily give up their unjust posture; but, as Reinhold Niebuhr has reminded us, groups tend to be more immoral than individuals."

"We know through painful experience that freedom is never voluntarily given by the oppressor; it must be demanded by the oppressed. Frankly, I have yet to engage in a direct action campaign that was "well timed" in the view of those who have not suffered unduly from the disease of segregation. For years now I have heard the word "Wait!" It rings in the ear of every Negro with piercing familiarity. This "Wait" has almost always meant "Never." We must come to see, with one of our distinguished jurists, that "justice too long delayed is justice denied."

"In deep disappointment I have wept over the laxity of the church. But be assured that my tears have been tears of love. There can be no deep disappointment where there is not deep love. Yes, I love the church. How could I do otherwise? I am in the rather unique position of being the son, the grandson and the great grandson of preachers. Yes, I see the church as the body of Christ. But, oh! How we have blemished and scarred that body through social neglect and through fear of being nonconformists.

There was a time when the church was very powerful—in the time when the early Christians rejoiced at being deemed worthy to suffer for what they believed. In those days the church was not merely a thermometer that recorded the ideas and principles of popular opinion; it was a thermostat that transformed the mores of society. Whenever the early Christians entered a town, the people in power became disturbed and immediately sought to convict the Christians for being "disturbers of the peace" and "outside agitators." But the Christians pressed on, in the conviction that they were "a colony of heaven," called to obey God rather than man. Small in number, they were big in commitment. They were too God-intoxicated to be "astronomically intimidated." By their effort and example they brought an end to such ancient evils as infanticide and gladiatorial contests. Things are different now. So often the contemporary church is a weak, ineffectual voice with an uncertain sound. So often it is an archdefender of the status quo. Far from being disturbed by the presence of the church, the power structure of the average community is consoled by the church's silent—and often even vocal—sanction of things as they are.

But the judgment of God is upon the church as never before. If today's church does not recapture the sacrificial spirit of the early church, it will lose its authenticity, forfeit the loyalty of millions, and be dismissed as an irrelevant social club with no meaning for the twentieth century. Every day I meet young people whose disappointment with the church has turned into outright disgust"

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.



Trees Removed to make way for Driveway Repairs



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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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

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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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