

Sunday, June 5, 2026

First Presbyterian Church Oakland

Making God's Welcome Known



WELCOME

Visitors:

- If you would like to join our email list, please fill out the form at firstchurchoakland.org.
- 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 three and under.
- You may also use the **Parent Corners** in the back and front right corner of the sanctuary.
- Children's **worship bags** are available in the narthex or from the ushers.
- On the first Sunday of the month we celebrate **Family Worship & Communion**. On all other Sundays, children may join in **Godly Play**. Children are escorted to Classroom 2 during the *Passing of the Peace* and rejoin their families during Fellowship Time.

ORDER of SERVICE

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.

INVITATION to WORSHIP

Prelude

Welcome

Call to Worship

One: Sometimes, God, you seem far away.

All: Be with us now, in this time and in this place.

One: Sometimes, God, you are hidden from our eyes.

All: Open them, God, so we may see your Light.

One: Sometimes, God, we feel sad and troubled by all that is happening in the world.

All: Give us strength for the journey.

One: May we learn to trust in the eternal mystery of your presence,

All: All the days of our lives. Amen.

Gathering Prayer

One: Holy God, may we follow in the ways of the child Jesus who came to live amongst us filled with grace and truth. May we become more like him in every way with minds and hearts ready to hear your call.

All: Amen.

Please rise in body or spirit to join in singing.

Hymn *Change My Heart, O God*

Glory to God #695

CONFESSION of SIN and ASSURANCE of GRACE

Confession

One: God, we confess we often lose our way in the darkness of this world. We do what we should not do and leave undone what is right and good in your sight. May we not forget that from the beginning you blessed us and called us very good. Shine your light in our hearts again so that we can change and reflect the light of love in how we live through the love of Christ Jesus.

All: Amen.

You are invited into a time of silent, personal reflection.

One: In the name of the one who loves us unconditionally, we pray:

All: Amen.

Assurance of Pardon

Please rise in body or spirit.

One: God, the Creator of Life, brings us new life, forgiving and redeeming us. May we take hold of that forgiveness and live our lives in the Spirit of Jesus.

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 the Agape Meal.

PRAYERS of the PEOPLE

Prayers of the People

Solo *The Circle Game*

Joni Mitchell

The Lord's Prayer

from the *New Zealand Prayer Book*

**Eternal Spirit,
Earth-Maker, Pain-bearer, Life-giver,
Source of all that is and that shall be,
Father and Mother of us all,
Loving God in whom is heaven:
The hallowing of your name echo through the universe!
The way of your justice be followed by the peoples of the world!
Your heavenly will be done by all created beings!
Your commonwealth of peace and freedom sustain our hope and come on earth.
With the bread we need for today, feed us.
In the hurts we absorb from one another, forgive us.
In times of temptation and test, strengthen us.
From trials too great to endure, spare us.
From the grip of all that is evil, free us.
For you reign in the glory of the power that is love, now and for ever.
Amen.**

THE WORD

Scripture Lesson

Matthew 11:25 NRSV

At that time Jesus said, "I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and the intelligent and have revealed them to infants."

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

All: Thanks be to God.

Message

Aaron Ruff

RESPONSE to the WORD

Invitation to the Agape Meal

One: God's love never ceases.

All: God's mercies never come to an end.

One: Welcome to this meal, in the name of Christ.

All: We come as different people united in Christ as family.

One: We come to share in God's love for the world.

All: We come to receive the gift of God's abundance, not only in food and drink but also the gifts God has given us in each other.

Please come forward with your bulletin and belongings during this song to form a semicircle in front of the altar.

Song *Come to the Table of Grace*

Glory to God #507

Come to the table of grace / love / joy / peace,

come to the table of grace / love / joy / peace.

This is God's table, it's not yours or mine.

Come to the table of grace / love / joy / peace.

Celebration of an Agape Meal

An Agape meal is an ancient tradition of table fellowship and a practice of holy hospitality. In the early church Agape meals were a time of fellowship for the People of the Way. This ritual meal can be celebrated without the presence of a minister in Word and Sacrament yet it acknowledges our koinonia - the fellowship of Christ's body.

Gluten free bread is available. Donations may be placed in the offering plate by the table.

Song During the Agape Meal *Taste and See*



Taste and see, taste and see the good-ness of the Lord.____ Oh,



taste and see, taste and see the good-ness of the Lord,____ of the Lord.

Prayer of Blessing

SENDING OUT to be THE CHURCH

Song *He's Got the Whole World in His Hands*

He's got the whole world in his hands (x3)...

He's got the whole world in his hands!

He's got the little tiny baby in his hands (x3)...

He's got the whole world in his hands!

He's got all the little children in his hands (x3)...

He's got the whole world in his hands!

He's got everybody here in his hands (x3)...

He's got the whole world in his hands!

Benediction

Song Continued

He's got the whole world in his hands (x3)...

He's got the whole world in his hands!

SERVING in WORSHIP TODAY

Liturgist: Di Pagel

The Message: Aaron Ruff

Music Director: Jake Fontana

Song Leader: Linda Carter

Head Usher: Matthew Inadomi

Fellowship Time Refreshments: Pam Prinz

July Poetry: William Stafford

This month we will reflect on the poetry of twentieth-century American poet William Stafford. Born in Kansas in 1914, Stafford was a lifelong pacifist and a conscientious objector during World War II. He became a poet during his middle age and moved to Oregon to teach. Writing poetry was a daily ritual for Stafford, whose poetic themes include nature, humanism, mindfulness, and everyday life. His work deeply reflects his pacifist values as well as a lifelong affinity for Indigenous American culture and storytelling.



The Way It Is

There's a thread you follow. It goes among
things that change. But it doesn't change.
People wonder about what you are pursuing.
You have to explain about the thread.
But it is hard for others to see.
While you hold it you can't get lost.
Tragedies happen; people get hurt
or die; and you suffer and get old.
Nothing you do can stop time's unfolding.
You don't ever let go of the thread.

For My Young Friends Who Are Afraid

There is a country to cross you will
find in the corner of your eye, in
the quick slip of your foot—air far
down, a snap that might have caught.
And maybe for you, for me, a high, passing
voice that finds its way by being
afraid. That country is there, for us,
carried as it is crossed.
What you fear
will not go away: it will take you into
yourself and bless you and keep you.
That's the world, and we all live there.

FPCO Fall Retreat: October 2-4, 2026



Registration is now open for our Fall Church Retreat. We hope that you are making plans to join us.

This is a great opportunity to gather in a beautiful space, to step away from the everyday rhythms of life in order to build community with people in our community, and to connect with God. You don't want to miss this!

Here are the details:

Where: Zephyr Point Presbyterian Retreat Center, just north of South Lake Tahoe. It is a 3.5-hour drive from Oakland. We will arrange carpool rides for those who need transportation. Friday afternoon traffic to Lake Tahoe can be intense, so if possible, we encourage people to leave midday on Friday.

When: October 2nd-4th. We will gather for dinner and a short program on Friday night. Saturday morning, we will study scripture, reflecting individually and connecting with others. The afternoon will be open to explore retreat grounds, sit by the lake, play games, take a nap, etc. We will have a short program and possibly a campfire on Saturday night. Sunday morning, we will worship together following breakfast and then journey home.

Why: A church retreat creates space to deepen relationships. Through activities and over meals, we take time to go deeper in conversation. Also, the beauty of Lake Tahoe and time away from home allows space for reflection, examination of our lives, and connection with God. To register, please go to firstchurchoakland.org/retreat or scan the code below:



Headlines from the Front Office at FPCO - By Jen Edwell

Head Start 2026 Graduation

As you may know, I am the new Church Administrator. Over the past few weeks, it has been fun learning about all the programs and partnerships at the church as well as meeting folks from the community who have a connection to our space. For example, last week, Head Start held a graduation celebration for 10 students who are moving onto the next stage of their education. The celebration was packed with families and the joyful sounds of little children.

A few days prior, I met with a family planning to host their daughter's college graduation party at the church next month. They told me that their children attended the Head Start preschool here — nearly twenty years ago! Young children and their families in Oakland have been receiving support within our building for years.

I asked Di Pagel about the origin of the Head Start Preschool here at FPCO. In about 2009, Di met with the Head Start Director for the region. At that time, the renovation of the Nursery, the crib room, and two bathrooms in the classroom wing were complete, making it a more habitable space. However, the playground area was a disaster, surrounded by a chain link fence and masses of weeds and trash. In the first contract with Head Start, they offered to split the cost of installing a new playground. Over the years, they have been very good tenants. They take great care of their space; their facility crews freshen up the paint in the classrooms, they installed phone and internet services for the program, and they installed a security chime on the door to their hallway. In return, we allow them to use the Fellowship Hall on rainy days as well as the Reception Room for family celebrations and other spaces as needed. Additionally, we installed a heating/cooling system very recently that prevents the space from getting too hot in the summer (or too hot in the winter, from the old radiator system).

The City of Oakland Head Start is a federally and state funded early childhood education program for low-income families. They prioritize helping families experiencing homelessness, families receiving public assistance, families at or below the national poverty guidelines, children in foster care, and children with disabilities. The center that operates here, Broadway/Uptown, is specifically an “Early Head Start,” meaning they work with 0-3 year olds. This service happens without most of us knowing or doing anything, but the impact is real and valuable to those families. Congrats to the Head Start program on another wonderful year!



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 Anne Margaret Manay, 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). Email Julia Marquez jmarquez@fbcl-visa.com 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. Email Gay Plair Cobb gaycobb@gmail.com, Dorothy Dugger dorothy.dugger@gmail.com, or Nina Lapachet ninalapachet@gmail.com 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.



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.

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 (B's game, beach trip, 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.



Pastor Matt on Vacation



Wish Pastor Matt and the whole Prinz family well as they get some time away! Pastor Matt will return for worship on July 12.

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 smartphone for access to all First Church News and past editions of *Temple Tidings*.

Elders

Ben Baab: Building and Grounds
Aaron Ruff
Gay Plair Cobb: Personnel/Food Ministry
David Alexander
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

Martha Baab, Martha Bauman, Cassandra Flipper, Charmaine Irmiter, Lorraine Provost, Pam Prinz, Paul Roberts

Church Staff

Rev. Matt Prinz, Pastor

matt@firstchurchoakland.org

510.488.3812

email to make an appointment

Rev. Joel Mackey, Parish Associate

joelmackey@comcast.net

510.326.5590

Jen Edwell, Church Administrator

jene@firstchurchoakland.org

Jake Fontana, Music Director

jake@firstchurchoakland.org

Gus Lopez, Head Custodian

510.290.9677

Erick Bevington, Treasurer

erick@firstchurchoakland.org

Temple Tidings

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