

# Shared Life

The Monthly Newsletter of Old First Presbyterian Church

March 2012

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Church Website: [oldfirst.org](http://oldfirst.org)

Church Photostream: [www.flickr.com/photos/oldfirst](http://www.flickr.com/photos/oldfirst)

Old First Concerts: [www.oldfirstconcerts.org](http://www.oldfirstconcerts.org)

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## MAGGI'S MUSINGS

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Once in a while a pastor listens to her own words...

This Lent I have been brought back to the simple truth that this season is a gift and opportunity and that I need it. This Lent I am going to commit myself to make an effort to pay attention to my spiritual life. I've preached that this season is a spiritual journey towards Easter and this year I am purposefully going to move forward on that journey to long for, to seek after the deepening relationship that I preach about and live for. I expect that the journey will sometimes move forward easily and that sometimes it will be a chore simply to move one foot in front of the other, but I am not going to give into the inertia.

Below I offer you some words of God's wiser people who have walked this journey before us, words which I pray will move me, nudge me, even pull me forward on the Lenten path towards Easter.

–Peace, Pastor Maggi

“Would you become like a pilgrim on the road of love? The first condition is that you make yourself humble as dust and ashes.” – Khajah Abdullah Ansari of Herat (1006–1088)

“In many cultures there is an ancient custom of giving a tenth of each year's income to some holy use. For Christians, to observe forty days of Lent is to do the same thing with roughly a tenth of each year's days. After being baptized by John in the River Jordan, Jesus went off alone into the wilderness where he spent forty days asking himself the question what it meant to be Jesus. During Lent, Christians are supposed to ask, one way or another, what it means to be themselves.” – Frederick Buechner (born 1926)

“Temptation is like a river that is difficult to cross. Those who are not overwhelmed by temptation are good swimmers; they cross the river without sinking. But those who cannot swim are submerged when they enter the river.” – Cyril of Jerusalem (ca. 313–386)

“To be a saint does not mean never to sin. It means to start again with humility and joy after each fall.” – Dom Hélder Pessoa Câmara (1909-1999)

“To keep Lent is to discover and remember who in heaven’s name we are, as person and as community. We pray against all that confuses our true identity and vocation. We know this means standing before the cross and making some choices... The grace of this season is that Jesus suffers the choice with us. He’s been over the turf and is our brother exactly on that score, with us in the struggles of our hearts. Let the further race be that we make our choices as disciples, in the mind and heart of Christ.” –Bill Wylie-Kellermann (born ca. 1960)

“The problems arise when we as people of faith decided to be nice rather than holy.” –Barbara Brown Taylor (born 1951)

"God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, courage to change the things I can change, and wisdom to know the difference." –attributed to Reinhold Niebuhr (1892-1971)

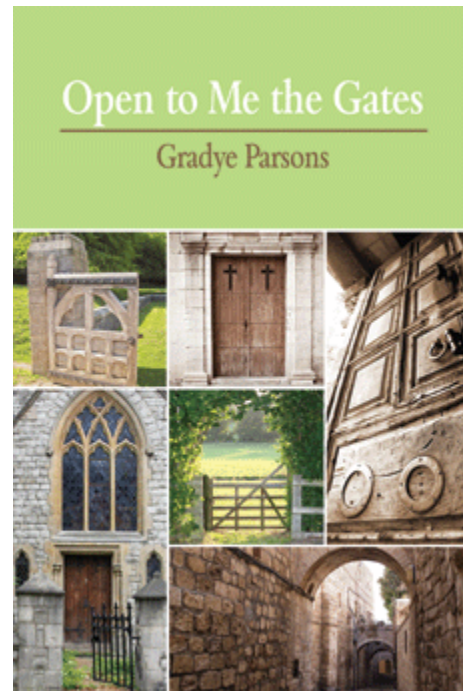
### **LENTEN REFLECTION SEMINAR WITH SOUP**

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Recently, I found a great book– *Open to Me the Gates* by Gradye Parsons – for use in a seminar this Lent. In the book, Gradye Parsons, a former stated clerk of the Presbyterian Church (USA) explores how gates are conceptually used throughout the Bible. These places of entry, found in both Old and New Testament stories, are often metaphors for modern Christian beliefs and practices, such as justice and equality.

The seminar will be held on Wednesday evenings through April 4, the Wednesday in Holy Week. We will start at 6:30 pm the Munro Room. There will be soup to nourish the body as well. The soup is free. The cost of the book is \$10.00... as you are able to pay.

A seminar using the same book (but without the soup) may be held on Sunday, if there is enough interest and willing leaders to take over for me – if one person wanted to lead it all that would fine, though I’m imagining it might be more likely that we could have a couple of leaders leading a session or two and then soliciting successive leaders. *Would you be interested?* I have copies of the book available on Sundays for you to take see. –Maggi



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### DEVOTIONS FOR LENT: PRINT AND ON-LINE

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Maggi also recommends two more resources for devotions during Lent:

- *Daily Feast: Meditations from Feasting on the Word: Year B*, a lectionary-based devotional series for this year's readings is available for \$15.00 at coffee hour after worship.
- *d365.org* is an on-line daily devotional sponsored by the Presbyterian Church (USA), the Episcopal Church and the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship; simply navigate to [www.d365.org](http://www.d365.org).

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### UPCOMING EVENTS

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#### **March Deacon's Meeting, March 11**

The board of deacons will meet on Sunday, March 11, the usual second Sunday of the month.

#### **CROP Hunger Walk, April 29, 2012: *There is Enough for All***

CROP Hunger Walks help children and families worldwide and right here in the US to have food for today, while building for a better tomorrow. Local efforts make a huge difference and Old First Presbyterian Church members, families and friends are once again part of it!

Founded in 1946, Church World Service (CWS) is a cooperative ministry of more than thirty Christian communions working together to eradicate hunger and poverty and promote peace and justice among the world's most vulnerable people. Within the United States, CWS assists communities in responding to local hunger and disasters, resettles refugees, promotes fair national and international policies, provides educational resources, and offers opportunities to join a people-to-people network of local and global caring through participation in CROP Hunger Walks, among other programs.

Look for the signup sheet at coffee hour. You can be a Walker, or you can generously sponsor others to walk. The CROP Hunger Walk is great opportunity for exercise, a beautiful walk all around Lake Merced, and chance to do something that matters.

Location: Lake Merced- Parking Circle at Sunset Blvd/Lake Merced Boulevard

Registration: 1:30 pm, Walk: 2:00 pm

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### NEWS

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#### **New Elders, Deacons, Nominating Committee**

At the meeting of the congregation on Sunday, February 12, the congregation called the following members to the office of elder for a term of three years: George Becker, Michael Berg, Barry Clagett, Randy Smith, and called William Feister to the office of elder for a term of two years.

At the same meeting, the congregation called the following members to the office of deacon, all for a term of three years: Samuel Cheng, Joy Crosser, Craig Kehne, Diane Lewis, Leota Parker.

Finally, the congregation also called the following as Congregation Members of the 2012 Nominating Committee: Betsy Chiao, Pam Free, Jerry Stuart, Lori Yamauchi, and Rose Marie Springer, Alternate. The alternate candidate will serve only if one of the first four is unable to serve. Electing an alternate for this purpose now avoids the need for a special congregational meeting to elect a replacement should one of the four elected members be unable to serve. The 2012 Nominating Committee will also include two serving elders chosen by the session and one deacon chosen by the board of deacons.

### **Thanks to Diane Molberg**

For almost two years, Diane Molberg has solicited articles, written features and edited Old First Presbyterian Church's monthly newsletter *Shared Life*. This March 2012 edition is the last issue that Diane will have helped produce. When you see her, please extend thanks for her time and expertise as editor, and offer her thanks-in-advance for the occasional article we hope to read in future editions of *Shared Life*.

### **Gifts to Old First Presbyterian Church**

- Mary Russell recently was honored by an anonymous gift to the church in recognition of her long-time dedicated service to Old First's Christian Education program.
- A gift in support of the Food Pantry was received from a recent volunteer at this popular Saturday morning program that helps our neighbors.
- Several gifts have been received from visitors as well as from members to purchase new hymnals.

### **THE GARAGE IS (FINALLY) OPEN!**

The last three months have been an adventure for Old First Presbyterian Church members and friends wanting to park near the church. The garage was closed in mid-November by the Police Department because the former operator did not renew all the required permits and bonds. Super Parking decided, and we agreed, to terminate our lease after more than 12 years.

To provide parking to church members and friends and for attendees at concerts, the Police Department allowed us to open the garage for limited times. We could not charge for the parking, people had to park their own cars and we had to hire attendants to supervise the parking. We operated this way from late in November through December.

After receiving eight bids from potential lessees, reviewing their bids and visiting some of their sites, we decided to lease the building to Express Parking. Express Parking operates four other parking facilities in San Francisco. Ahmet Tasci, the president of Express Parking, was anxious to start the business and was able to open the garage to the public on New Year's Eve.

It had been Ahmet's experience that he could open a garage for public parking while he secured the needed insurance, bonds and City permits. But the rules had changed recently, so a week after opening, Ahmet had to close the garage until he received the needed permits. He was very disappointed and felt that he was letting us down as well as the merchants in the neighborhood.

So we were back in the free, self-parking mode. Ahmet opened the garage for worship services, concerts and some church events, paying one of his employees to staff the garage. We are very grateful for this generous support from Ahmet.

Fortunately, Ahmet received his permit to operate at a hearing on Wednesday, February 15. He opened the garage for public parking late that afternoon. So the tribulations of the past three months are behind us. We don't recognize the parking blessings we have until we lose them.

Until Ahmet comes up with a different system, we will continue to use the Super Parking stickers on the cards we receive from the garage attendants. The attendant we will often see on Sunday mornings is Korzay.

Finally, a word about Ahmet: He was born in Turkey, the youngest of eight children. He says that his family is large by US standards but small by Turkish standards. He moved to the US in January 2001. In 2006 he graduated from San Francisco State University, working long hours at various jobs while in school. He had several jobs before deciding in June 2008 to open his first garage. As mentioned, he operates four, now five, garages and is working to open others. When he is around you will recognize Ahmet as the young man with a round face and a perpetual smile.

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**A LETTER FROM MARGARET WAY, DAUGHTER OF THE LATE JEANNE ENGLEHART**

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Dear Old First friends,

How can I ever thank you for your kindness? Your compassion is overwhelming!

Many people asked about mom's life before she came to OFPC. She was born in Chicago and raised by her Aunt Margaret in a small Iowa town. After high school she went to Washington DC with several friends to work during WWII. They lived together and worked at the Pentagon. My parents met and married in DC. My father was in the Navy at the time. After his service they moved to dad's home in Thermopolis, Wyoming. That's the hamlet where I was born. My two brothers came along to complete our family.

My father was in the oil business and was transferred many times. Mom always (maybe not cheerfully) packed us up to move – from Wyoming to North Dakota to New Mexico to Texas and Montana. She made great friends in every city, many I have contacted since she passed away. As a family we enjoyed month-long road trips seeing much of the USA. Mom and Dad thought it was important to see our country.

In 1969 dad's work took them to Indonesia for two years. They had the opportunity to see many interesting places such as Bali, Singapore and Bangkok. 1971 found them moving to 1835 Franklin Street in San Francisco. They loved the city. Also they enjoyed many cruises and traveling around the USA to visit friends and family.

Mom played tournament-bridge, even earning one life-master. After my youngest brother died in an automobile accident, mom volunteered many years (5000 hours) at St. Francis Medical

Hospital. Mom became a fixture at OFPC in 1995 after my father passed away. She and Sara Barrios remained great friends.

Thank you all for being wonderful friends! I am truly blessed!

Sincerely, Margaret Englehart Way

### **AIDS MEMORIAL QUILT RETURNS TO SAN FRANCISCO**

“AIDS is not over” stood out in block letters on the Quilt panel that we chose to hang in the front window facing Market Street and Noe at the recent week long showing of 40 sections of the AIDS Memorial Quilt in the Castro. The Quilt is a powerful visual reminder of the AIDS pandemic. More than 44,000 individual 3-by-6-foot memorial panels — most commemorating the life of someone who has died of AIDS — have been sewn together by friends, lovers and family members.

The Quilt was conceived in November of 1985 by long-time San Francisco gay rights activist Cleve Jones. He created the first panel for the AIDS Memorial Quilt in memory of his friend Marvin Feldman. In June of 1987, Jones teamed up with Mike Smith and several others to formally organize the NAMES Project Foundation.

In October 1996, during my tenure as President of the Board of Directors of the NAMES Project Foundation, the Quilt was laid out in Washington and covered the entire National Mall from the Washington Monument to the Halls of Congress. It was a sight that I will never forget. Nina and I had just joined Old First and several members of our church came to the display with us and brought a Quilt panel that added the names of Louis, Zach, Thomas, Stuart, Larry, Mark, Duane and Albert to the over 90,000 names in panels sewn for the Quilt. We hugged and cried as we turned over the panel to the gentle folk of the Names Project who would later add our panel to 7 others to make up the 12X12 section of which the Old First Quilt is a part. The Old First Quilt was included among the 40 sections displayed in the Castro. It was like having an old friend, an Old First friend, come back for a visit.

Well old friend, it is over 15 years since we met in Washington DC and AIDS is not over. Drugs have helped make battling the disease easier but people are still dying. While we have not cured the disease, we continue the fight. Remember this: We shall always remember your names! – Michael Berg

### **QUICK FACT**

“Lent,” the English name for the preparatory season leading up to Easter is derived from the Anglo-Saxon word for spring – “lente” – and is related to the German poetic word for spring “Lenz.”

## **ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING**

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Old First will again make our offerings to One Great Hour of Sharing as part of our Easter celebration. Since 1949, Presbyterians have joined with millions of other Christians through One Great Hour of Sharing to share God's love with people experiencing need. This year's theme is "Sharing Brings Joy!" The Presbyterian Hunger Program receives 36 percent of undesignated One Great Hour of Sharing gifts, while the Self-Development of People and Presbyterian Disaster Assistance each receive 32 percent. These are some of the ways the OGH funds are used:

The Presbyterian Disaster Assistance (PDA) National Response Team members represent PDA following a disaster in the United States, providing support to affected presbyteries and synods as they assess the impact of the disaster on both the church and the community; and they assist in connecting presbyteries to recovery resources, including identification of sites for hosting volunteer work teams. They continue to assist, among so many other locales, the Presbytery of North Alabama due to spring 2011 tornadoes, the Presbytery of the Northern Plains, North Dakota following June 2011 flooding in Minot; Presbytery of Scioto Valley, Ohio following a shooting in Columbus; Presbytery of Heartland after a church fire in Kansas City; and John Calvin Presbytery still rebuilding from their May 2011 tornado in Joplin. Internationally, aid has gone to Haiti and Japan for rebuilding from their massive 2010 and 2011 earthquakes, and to Sudan suffering the effects of drought and famine.

The Presbyterian Hunger Program (PHP) witnesses to the healing love of Christ and to bring hope to communities and individuals struggling with hunger. PHP works with Presbyterian and other partners to alleviate hunger and eliminate its causes, responding with compassion and justice to poor and hungry people in local communities in the United States and internationally. Through our annual giving, Presbyterians provide PHP with approximately \$4 million per year to support their work to fulfill its mission through strategic grants, print and web educational and worship materials, partnership collaborations and participatory programs that allow us to recognize and love especially the most vulnerable of our neighbors next door and across the planet. About 925 million people – one out of every seven – suffer from hunger.

The Presbyterian Church's Self-Development of People (SDOP) is a ministry that affirms God's concern for humankind. We are Presbyterians and ecumenical partners dissatisfied with poverty and oppression, united in faith and action through sharing, confronting, and enabling. We participate in the empowerment of economically poor, oppressed, and disadvantaged people, seeking to change the structures that perpetuate poverty, oppression and injustice. SDOP has approved grants totaling \$244,400 to thirteen self-help projects in the US, among them a community center in New Orleans that will offer computer training, job skills training, mentoring among peers and job searches; a cooperative restaurant business in Albuquerque that provides employment and capacity building for a group of ex-offenders who were having difficulty finding employment; and a project focused on the creation and sustenance of a training and development center for refugees and other immigrants in Santa Fe.

## **PASTOR'S SABBATICAL**

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“Sabbatical” is a long-established practice for clergy, academics (and staff at a few other enlightened employers). It is a formal “Sabbath” for rest, re-creation, and renewal. Our session and congregation voted to include a three-month sabbatical after four years, in the “Terms of Call” we offered Maggi. She will combine it with her month’s study leave and be away all of this summer.

The past two PNC’s included a sabbatical in our overall compensation for the pastor in order to give our pastor some time away, for study, reflection, and spiritual renewal for the demanding work of pastoral ministry (which of course will ultimately benefit us all). And it’s also a way of caring for our pastor, who cares so well for us. The Alban Institute, a consulting firm that works with pastors and congregations, has in recent years recommended a three-month sabbatical after four years (instead of the previously customary six-month sabbatical after seven years in a pastorate).

The shorter sabbatical earlier in the pastorate is intended to help prevent all-too-common pastoral “burnout.” It’s also envisioned as a short enough period that a church can manage without hiring an interim pastor – making it far more affordable for small and medium-sized congregations like ours. Consider how you might contribute to the on-going ministry of Old First this summer! – Pam Byers

## **Opportunities to Make a Difference**

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### **Scanning Skills Needed!**

Help Old First move into the 21st century. We have many pictures and slides that sit in dark and dusty corners and are showing the ravages of age and the changes of technology. Are you able to scan photos or slides? Can you transfer a video tape to a DVD? Could you help make sure our history can be enjoyed today and in the years to come? If you could help, please contact Pastor Maggi at [maggi@oldfirst.org](mailto:maggi@oldfirst.org).

### **New Bibles and Hymnals**

The Bibles and hymnals in the pews get used and borrowed, so from time to time they need to be replenished. We have purchased twenty-five new Bibles and twenty-five new hymnals, and, for the first time, we will purchase ten new children’s Bibles to have in the pews as well.

These new purchases become an opportunity for you to make a donation for a Bible or hymnal and have a dedication to honor someone appear on a bookplate inside the front cover. There is a sign-up sheet on the bulletin board if you are interested in sponsoring a new book. The average cost of each book is \$25.

### **Toothpaste and Tooth Brushes Needed**

One Sunday a guest asked if I had any deodorant, toothpaste or a toothbrush. I went into Welcome’s supply closet and couldn’t find any. I have come to learn these things are much requested items. A church member observing me said “why don’t we ask folks when they go to the dentist for extras that one always gets at our visits.” What a brilliant and simple idea! So on your next visit why not say “Yes, I will floss every day and may I have some extras samples so that I can bring them to the Welcome Ministry at our church?”



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### SHARED LIFE SEEKS EDITOR

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As of the upcoming April 2012 edition of Shared Life, our monthly newsletter lacks an editor. The editor solicits articles, edits them, writes features, assembles articles and news items, and supervises distribution carried out by the office administrator and volunteers. Most of the work can be done on a home computer, or a computer could be made available at the church office. Would you be interested in being Old First Presbyterian Church's own "Randolph Hearst?" Please speak with Pastor Maggi, if you have any interest or questions about this important ministry in our church.

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### FEBRUARY DATES

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Sunday	March 4	Name Tag Sunday: Wear your name tag and take a look at others'.
Monday	March 5	Officer Training, Day 2, Munro Room, 6:00 pm
Saturday	March 10	Welcome: Community Dinner, 5:30 pm
Sunday	March 11	Deacons' Meeting, 12:30 pm
Sunday	March 11	Deadline for April Issue of Share Life
Saturday	March 17	Interfaith Food Pantry, Hosted by Old First Presbyterian Church
Saturday	March 24	Welcome: Community Dinner, 5:30 pm
Tuesday	March 27	Session Meeting, Munro Room, 7:00 pm

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### The Officers of Old First Presbyterian Church

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#### Session

George Becker, personnel; Michael Berg, mission and giving; Chris Burt, worship; Pam Byers, community-building; Saskia de Vries, worship; Gregory Free, finance; Kristi Hoerauf, finance; Jeanne Kirkwood, clerk of session; Mary Russell, mission and giving; John Sebastian, planning; Steve Taber, operations; Betty Voris, community-building; George Yu, Christian education

#### Board of Deacons

Nina Berg, funding requests, communion clean up, flowers/memorial donations; Carol Carter, funding requests, communion cleanup; Tracy Clagett, secretary; Dan Joraanstad, co-moderator; Craig Kehne, coffee hour, communion clean-up; Diane Lewis, funding requests, cards; Harriet MacLean, memorial receptions and meals; Dana Nojima, co-moderator, merchandise sales; Glen Potter, transportation; AnnieScott Rogers, deacons' prayer chain; Oliver Spencer, special events; Sarah Taber, memorial Receptions and Meals; Horngsheng Tu, Technology; Priscilla Yu, Funding Requests