

Shared Life

The Monthly Newsletter of Old First Presbyterian Church

November 2012

Church Website: www.oldfirst.org

Church Photostream: www.flickr.com/photos/oldfirst

Old First Concerts: www.oldfirstconcerts.org

MAGGI'S MUSINGS

During the last month, since I have been back from the sabbatical, I have heard a number of statements again and again: “We are glad you are back, we missed you. You look well rested. What did you do?”

Well, I am glad to be back. I come back strengthened in my conviction that I am called to be the pastor at Old First Presbyterian Church and feel like this is just where God wants me to be. I come back with a hunger to see how we will be God’s church and follow in Jesus’ way in the unique place we find ourselves, right here, at Sacramento and Van Ness.

I am indeed well rested and hope I can set and keep the healthy patterns of work, play and spiritual practices I developed during my sabbatical. If the truth be told, I will not be one of those pastors who works into to their 70s and 80s - I will do just fine in retirement.

What did I do is a harder question to answer in any kind of succinct manner! I enjoyed a mixture of travel, study, play, planned time and *unplanned* time. I took a two-week preaching class at San Francisco Theological Seminary, participated in a Missional Workshop, joined a one day seminar with Dr. Barnwell of the gospel-music group *Sweet Honey in the Rock*, participated in a conference called Wild Goose (See more at www.wildgoosefestival.org), took a class on mindfulness (on board a cruise ship!) and began a program for the Certificate in Executive Leadership offered by McCormick Seminary, Chicago. I spent time with nature on St. John, one of the U.S. Virgin Islands, and in the Pacific Northwest. I volunteered for two weeks at the Montreat Youth Conference in North Carolina. I also traveled and hiked in California and enjoyed much of what draws tourists from all over the world to our state. And I just enjoyed the heck out of San Francisco.

What great town to live in! I enjoyed friends and family and found time to renew friendships from college and seminary days. I brought a whole pile of books from the office which I meant to read and only read one. I read books on church and the faith that came from my classes or simply captured my interest. I read lots of fiction and non-fiction, just whatever struck my fancy. All in all, I had a renewing, delightful, restful, learning time during sabbatical. Thank you for the gift of this sabbatical season.

On both Sunday, November 4, and Sunday, November 11, I will be preaching from the book of Ruth. The book is often referenced at weddings: “Where you go, I will go; where you lodge, I will lodge; your people shall be my people and your God my God,” –Ruth 1:16. Many people are surprised that this is said by the young widow Ruth to her similarly widowed mother-in-law Naomi, when Naomi tells Ruth to return to her own people. Linda Day said “The book of Ruth is a tightly knit gem of a story. Its dialogue is pithy and dramatic, wordplay abounds and the repetition of key words and phrases tie the story together. Themes of emptiness and fullness, food, and fertility are highlighted. The book addresses ethnic and class concerns. It is a story of women making their way in a man’s world. Ultimately, the story presents a vision of an ideal society. There, characters show each other the same type of faithfulness and loyalty that God alone usually expresses.”

Simply put, the book of Ruth is a rich and wonderful story *in only four short chapters!* I invite you to read through Ruth with me: Take out your pencil and mark places that surprise you, that make you want to learn more, that you want to come back to. I will have a discussion on Ruth after worship on October 28 and on November 4. Let's see how Ruth will speak to us this Fall!

–Peace, Pastor Maggi

OLD FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH: STEWARDSHIP 2013

Party like a Presbyterian... and Give like a Child of God

I don't know about you, but it seems like 2012 is quickly fading and 2013 is almost upon us, or said in another way: Stewardship season is here!

This culminates a three year stewardship campaign that has featured a focus on membership. The first year the stewardship committee prepared a brochure that communicated the importance of our church and mission activities, last year we completed an every member visitation program and this year—ok, wait for it—we are going to Party like Presbyterians!

This year the members of Old First Presbyterian Church will be gathering together for parties in members' homes across San Francisco. The focus is on fun and camaraderie and attendance will include prospective new members and other friends. These gatherings will happen during weekends beginning in early November and end in early December.

We have a wonderful list of party hosts, including Sally Spencer, Sidney Hollar, Lori Yamauchi and Jim Fagler, Betsy and Ted Chiao, Bob Hermann and Dan Joraanstad, Nina and Michael Berg, Pam and Jeff Byers, Marilyn and Bill Campbell, Jan Hammock and Art Bender, and Erwin Barron and Coy Abellano.

The Stewardship committee will announce these events on flyers that will describe each event including the date and time and location and then attendees can select the event that suits their wishes. Attendance is limited to ten guests per party. We will post the flyers on a board during coffee hours and people can sign up for the party that suits their schedule.

This is a great opportunity to invite folks who are close to Old First to an intimate gathering to meet interesting people and hear about the great work we are doing here in San Francisco. Get your party hats on, folks and show the world how to Party Like a Presbyterian!

Save the date: Our stewardship campaign culminates on Stewardship Sunday, November 18. Everyone is encouraged to present their completed stewardship pledge card for 2013 during our Sunday service that day. Your pledge card will be mailed to you in early November.

–Stewardship Committee 2013

PRESBYTERIAN DISASTER APPEAL: HURRICANE SANDY

From the tiny islands of the Caribbean and the densely populated U.S. eastern seaboard to the eastern provinces of Canada, millions of our sisters and brothers have been impacted by Sandy and now face the sobering challenges brought by the many deaths and historic destruction left in her wake.

God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. – Psalm 46:1

Though the coming days and weeks will be filled with trials and uncertainty, we affirm our faith in God's promise to provide refuge and strength in times of trouble. As the winds and waters subside, we will respond to God's faithfulness by supporting our sisters and brothers as they recover from the devastation caused by this storm.

In addition to Presbyterian Disaster Assistance (PDA) volunteers now on the ground, PDA is continuing to connect with presbyteries in the affected and potentially affected areas. Supplies have been inventoried, and additional teams of PDA volunteers stand ready to help in many aspects of the clean-up and long-term recovery process. Your generosity will only increase the effectiveness of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)'s response.

What You Can Do: GAP - Give, Act, Pray

We ask that you stand in the *GAP* for those who are being affected by this devastating storm:

- Give: Even after the clouds have lifted, long-term challenges brought by Sandy will be faced by millions; we ask that you prayerfully consider giving online to DR000187. You can give \$10 now by texting PDA to 20222.
- Act: Assemble Gift of the Heart kits—clean up buckets, baby kits, hygiene kits, and school kits. Contact the PDA Call Center at (866) 732-6121 for details on how to volunteer your team's skills to efforts on the ground.
- Pray: Please pray for those who have already been impacted by the storm, including those who will face the additional challenges brought by further inclement weather. Pray for affected families and those who will help with emergency, relief, and recovery efforts. Pray that the hope of Christ will be evident in our response.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Standard Time Resumes, November 4

California resumes Pacific Standard Time in the wee hours of Sunday morning, November 4. Remember to let your clocks "fall back" one hour before retiring for the night on Saturday evening November 3. (If you forget, however, you will merely arrive at church an hour ahead of schedule!)

Pastor's Sermon and Discussions: Preaching on Ruth, November 4 and 11

Please read the Old Testament book of Ruth in preparation for the next two weeks of worship, when Pastor Maggi will preach on the book. Ruth is a good short story that can be read quickly – it consists of only four short chapters. You can also join her for a deeper look at the book following worship on both of these Sundays.

Adult Education Forum: Election 2012, November 4

Betty Voris chairs the San Francisco Simplification Committee, which writes all the analysis of measures for the Voter Information Pamphlet, as well as the voting information contained in that Pamphlet. She has graciously offered to lead a discussion regarding the various propositions that are on the ballot for this year's election. We will meet in the Munro Room after the service on November 4. So, grab some coffee and plan to join us with your questions and concerns.

Installation of Presbyter Pastor for Mission and Vision, November 13

The Presbytery of San Francisco will install the Reverend Jeff Hutcheson as Presbytery Pastor for Mission and Vision on Tuesday, November 13, during worship at the upcoming presbytery meeting at Walnut Creek Presbyterian Church. The installation service will begin at 7:30 pm.

Doris Krauss Senior Center Thanksgiving Lunch, November 19

On Monday, November 19, the Senior Center will host its annual Thanksgiving lunch. Please join us, if you can, for this festive luncheon. Volunteers are always needed to help serve our meal and to visit with our senior guests.

Interfaith Thanksgiving Service, November 22

Come join the faithful of San Francisco at the Interfaith Thanksgiving Service sponsored by the San Francisco Interfaith Council, Thursday, November 22, 10:00 am at the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, 1900 Pacific Avenue San Francisco, CA. Pastor Maggi is part of the Interfaith Council and encourages each of you to join with her on this day of thanksgiving for all our Creator has given us.

World AIDS Day Interfaith Service, November 28

An interfaith service for World AIDS Day will be held on Wednesday, November 28, at 7:00 pm at St. Mark's Lutheran Church, 1111 O'Farrell Street between Gough and Franklin. The theme for the service is "Remembering, Sharing, Acting."

Interfaith Pantry, December 1

A change has been made to the Interfaith Pantry schedule. Old First Presbyterian Church will staff only one date in December: Saturday, December 1. There will be no "All Faith's" date and we will not staff the pantry on December 15 as previously scheduled.

Gay Men's Chorus, December 6

I am excited about the level of music making, production, and stage craft in the upcoming Gay Men's Chorus holiday show on Thursday, December 6, at Davies Symphony Hall. The show is titled: *SantaConcert*, and you will see some familiar Santas on the stage that evening: notably Chris McEwen, Erwin Barron and me.

For more info about this season's show, you can visit www.sfgmc.org. But what you won't experience on the website is the delight that some of our beautiful songs will provide – *Still, Still, Still*, for example, or the wonderful new song for San Francisco, *Christmas by the Bay*, or the comic relief – Santa Claus and the Clausettes – that is scattered throughout, or the sweet spot this show hits for the holidays.

Better yet, since you've attended previous years' shows, so I have bought a block of 40 tickets at a 25% discount. These are orchestra seats that are regularly priced at \$50 but are available to you for only \$37.50. I am so happy to pass this discount on to you. Please let me know what number of tickets you might want. It might also be fun for those attending the concert to gather for dinner in the Civic Center before the show. –Dan Joraanstad

Doris Krauss Senior Center Honors Volunteers, December 19

Cynthia Kang is completing her tenth year as a volunteer at the Senior Center. Cynthia is now serving as the main cook for the Monday luncheon meals. Cynthia buys, cooks, and serves the food we eat each week; she is an excellent cook. We will be honoring Cynthia and other long term volunteers at the Christmas lunch on Monday, December 19. Please help us celebrate the service of volunteers on that day.

YOUR PLEDGE DOLLARS AT WORK: THE INTERFAITH FOOD PANTRY

John 21:15 says, "When they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, 'Simon, son of John, do you love more than these?' He said to him, "Yes Lord, you know that I love you.' Jesus said to him, "Feed my lambs."

The Interfaith Food Pantry began in 2010 as an outgrowth of Old First's running a 6-month special Food Pantry financed by a grant from the San Francisco Food Bank in 2009. The Food Bank asked Old First to continue the food pantry, which at that time had grown to over 200, as they felt there was a need for a pantry in our neighborhood. We did not feel that we had the money or volunteers to continue running a weekly pantry. Pastor Maggi, however, had seen how disappointed the people were who came to the pantry when they heard we were closing. She started looking to see what we could do, and after talking to other churches in the neighborhood, the interfaith pantry was born.

The Interfaith Food Pantry consists of five churches; Old First and Calvary Presbyterian Churches, St. Mark's Lutheran Church, St. Luke's Episcopal Church and First Unitarian Universalist Church. Each church contributes to the cost of the food and the salary of a part-time coordinator who shops at the food bank for each week's groceries, and coordinates the work of the five churches. Each church also supplies volunteers to man the food pantry on a rotating basis.

Every Saturday between 250 and 300 people come to Old First Presbyterian Church to get a bag of groceries from the Interfaith Food Pantry. A typical bag will contain potatoes, rice, onions, a variety of seasonal fruits and vegetables and a protein such as canned tuna, hot dogs, ground turkey or egg. Sometimes we have bread, milk, or canned goods. This is certainly not enough to feed a household of even two for a week, but it does make a difference in how well they will be able to eat.

If you are one of the people who has volunteered you know that over 95% of those who come to the pantry are of Asian ancestry and most of those are ethnic Chinese. There are more women than men; some bring a young child of infant with them. They are mostly in their 30's and 40's, although we now have people of all ages. We serve people from 9:00 to 10:30 in groups of 50. Everyone has a predetermined 15 minute time slot, which has made for a more even flow of guests and less stress for everyone.

If you haven't volunteered, please think about volunteering the next time there is a request for volunteers. If you cannot volunteer on a Saturday morning, remember that Old First could also use volunteers for the Monday Senior Center, the Tuesday Welcome Center or one of the two Saturday dinners hosted by Welcome. If none of these are possible, please remember to donate to the Food Bank. During the month of November, please bring canned tuna for the Food Bank barrel in the Narthex.

–Betsy Chiao

NEWS

New Address for Evelyn Molberg

Our member, Evelyn Molberg, now resides at the *Irene Swindells Alzheimer's Residential Care Program* (CPMC). Evelyn is still adjusting, and greetings by mail would be welcome. (See mailing address below.) If you would like to arrange a visit in person, please contact her daughter Diane. Diane wants everyone to know that her mother is doing well and appreciates your continued prayers.

Evelyn Molberg
Irene Swindells Alzheimer's Residential Care Program (CPMC)
3698 California Street, 3rd Floor
San Francisco CA 94118

The Message: Bible in Our Language

The Message by Eugene Peterson is now available in at the church office or during coffee hour for \$10.00. This is a great companion to read side by side with the New Revised Standard Version. Pastor Maggi says "I use it to get the essence of a scripture or to look at the scripture in a new way. I really enjoy this version and encourage you to get started using it too." This edition is the New Testament and the Psalms.

Peterson says, "This version in a contemporary idiom keeps the language of the Message current and fresh and understandable in the same language in which we do our shopping, talk with our friends, worry about world affairs and teach our children their table manners. The goal is not a to render a word-for word conversion of Greek into English but rather to convert the tone, rhythm, the events, the ideas into the way we actually think and speak." A limited number of copies will be available in the church.

Being Prepared for the “Big One” with New “App”

Being prepared for earthquake just got easier. A new smart phone “app” is available for receiving information about earthquakes from the Red Cross. This can be an important resource for you yourself and also allow you to help to those around you as we seek to live out God’s compassion in the City.

Features of the new app include:

- Notifications showing the epicenter, magnitude and intensity of earthquakes, as well as historical data for earthquakes in an area over the last 40 years.
- “I’m safe” messaging for users to broadcast reassurance to family and friends via social media
- Locations of open Red Cross shelters;
- Steps to create an emergency plan
- Preloaded emergency preparedness content, available when phones are offline or out of service
- Information about fires, tsunamis and other disasters that could happen in the aftermath of an earthquake
- Emergency tool kits with a flashlight, strobe light and audible alarm
- Interactive quizzes where users can earn badges and share their earthquake knowledge on social networks

Download the earthquake app for free at the Apple App Store and Google Play Store for Android by searching for American Red Cross.

Doris Kraus Senior Center Collects Socks

The Senior Center is collecting socks to be sent to our troops in Afghanistan. Please help us fill the basket. A basket will be in the parish hall for the socks.

Also, please remember the Senior Center when deciding on your Christmas giving to charities and programs. The Doris Kraus Senior Center is a ministry of Old First Presbyterian Church and is supported with endowed funds; however, the center also needs further funding to cover expenses. Thank you for our support of the senior center.

Greetings from Jay Pierson

In early October the church office received a note from Jay Pierson, our recent director of music. He is settling into his new home in North Carolina, but doesn’t have an internet connection yet. He said to pass along his new contact info as well: Jay Pierson/1013 Plateau Lane/Raleigh NC 27615. Home telephone: (919) 866-8029

Thanks from Betty Voris

Betty Voris wishes to thank everyone who helped celebrate her 75th birthday and surrounded her with such love and good wishes. She says that it was a very special evening – one that will always hold a special place in her heart.

Thanks from Brad Peterson

Old First Presbyterian Church office administrator Brad Peterson expresses his thanks to the session for a bonus of five additional paid vacation days recognizing his extra work during Pastor Henderson’s sabbatical this past summer. Brad will be using these days for free time, for work on his research in 16th Century Christianity and for a quiet retreat before the Christmas and New Year’s holidays.

THANKSGIVING DAY PROCLAMATION: ABRAHAM LINCOLN, 1863

The year that is drawing towards its close, has been filled with the blessings of fruitful fields and healthful skies. To these bounties, which are so constantly enjoyed that we are prone to forget the source from which they come, others have been added, which are of so extraordinary a nature, that they cannot fail to penetrate and soften even the heart which is habitually insensible to the ever watchful providence of Almighty God. In the midst of a civil war of unequalled magnitude and severity, which has sometimes seemed to foreign States to invite and to provoke their aggression, peace has been preserved with all nations, order has been maintained, the laws have been respected and obeyed, and harmony has prevailed everywhere except in the theatre of military conflict; while that theatre has been greatly contracted by the advancing armies and navies of the Union. Needful diversions of wealth and of strength from the fields of peaceful industry to the national defence, have not arrested the plough, the shuttle or the ship; the axe has enlarged the borders of our settlements, and the mines, as well of iron and coal as of the precious metals, have yielded even more abundantly than heretofore. Population has steadily increased, notwithstanding the waste that has been made in the camp, the siege and the battlefield; and the country, rejoicing in the consciousness of augmented strength and vigor, is permitted to expect continuance of years with large increase of freedom. No human counsel hath devised nor hath any mortal hand worked out these great things. They are the gracious gifts of the Most High God, who, while dealing with us in anger for our sins, hath nevertheless remembered mercy. It has seemed to me fit and proper that they should be solemnly, reverently and gratefully acknowledged as with one heart and one voice by the whole American People. I do therefore invite my fellow citizens in every part of the United States, and also those who are at sea and those who are sojourning in foreign lands, to set apart and observe the last Thursday of November next, as a day of Thanksgiving and Praise to our beneficent Father who dwelleth in the Heavens. And I recommend to them that while offering up the ascriptions justly due to Him for such singular deliverances and blessings, they do also, with humble penitence for our national perverseness and disobedience, commend to His tender care all those who have become widows, orphans, mourners or sufferers in the lamentable civil strife in which we are unavoidably engaged, and fervently implore the interposition of the Almighty Hand to heal the wounds of the nation and to restore it as soon as may be consistent with the Divine purposes to the full enjoyment of peace, harmony, tranquility and Union.

In testimony whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Seal of the United States to be affixed.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Abraham Lincoln". The ink is dark and the handwriting is fluid and characteristic of the President.

REVISED COMMON LECTIONARY: THE SUNDAYS IN NOVEMBER, 2012

Date	Day	1 st Reading	Psalm	2 nd Reading	Gospel Reading
Nov 04	Ordinary 31	Ruth 1:1-18	Psalm 146	Hebrews 9:11-14	Mark 12:28-34
Nov 11	Ordinary 32	Ruth 3:1-5, 4:13-17	Psalm 127	Hebrews 9:24-38	Mark 12:28-34
Nov 18	Ordinary 33	1 Samuel 1:4-20	1 Samuel 2:1-10	Hebrews 10:11-14, (15-18), 19-25	Mark 13:1-8
Nov 25	Ordinary 34	2 Samuel 23:1-7	Psalm 132:1-12, (13-18)	Rev.1:4b-8	John 18:33-37

OTHER DATES TO NOTE

Sunday	November 04	All Saints' Sunday, Pastor's Discussion, Adult Education Forum
Sunday	November 11	Pastor's Discussion, Deacons' Meeting
Saturday	November 17	Presbyterian Women
Sunday	November 18	Stewardship Sunday
Thursday	November 22	Thanksgiving Day, Church Office Closed
Friday	November 23	Church Office Closed

The Officers of Old First Presbyterian Church

Session

George Becker, personnel; Michael Berg, mission and giving; Chris Burt, worship; Pam Byers, community-building; Barry Clagett; finance, Saskia de Vries; worship, Bill Feister; Christian Education, Gregory Free; Treasurer, Jeanne Kirkwood; clerk of session, Mary Russell; mission and giving, Randy Smith, Steve Taber; operations, Betty Voris; community-building

Board of Deacons

Nina Berg, communion clean up, flowers/memorial donations; Carol Carter, funding requests, communion cleanup; Samuel Cheng, Joy Crosser, 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; Leota Parker, Glen Potter, transportation; AnnieScott Rogers, deacons' prayer chain; Oliver Spencer, funding requests, special events; Sarah Taber, memorial receptions and meals; Horngsheng Tu, Technology