

Shared Life

The Monthly Newsletter of Old First Presbyterian Church

June 2013

Church Website: oldfirst.org

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

Old First Concerts: www.oldfirstconcerts.org/

MAGGI'S MUSINGS

In light of the tragic tornadoes in Oklahoma, I find myself almost overwhelmed and trying hard not to be numbed by the immensity of the tragedy. In times such as this, I remember that, as the church, we are part of a bigger body that includes those in Moore, Oklahoma, and that our particular part of body of Christ, the Presbyterian part, can join others in offering our prayers and gifts for those in need. Together, we can make a difference in the healing in Oklahoma in ways we couldn't, if acting alone. Today and in the days to come I am committing myself to praying, to staying involved and to giving for the healing and wholeness of all those touched by the devastation in Oklahoma.

Try it: Pray, Stay Involved, Give.

Pray: A Prayer in the wake of the May 20 tornado in Moore-Oklahoma City

O God of love, whose Spirit in creation moved over the face of chaos, bringing life: hear our prayers, as we bear witness this day to the awful power of wind, whose might raged over your people in Moore, Oklahoma, changing lives and landscapes in an instant. Even now, as first responders still labor to seek those who are lost and succor those who are bereaved and bereft, even as stories of terror and hurt are still unfolding,

We touch your hand of mercy.

In teachers who sheltered with their bodies the children entrusted to their care, as you, O God, like a mother hen spread her wings over her people Israel:

We see your face and feel your tender embrace.

In neighbors who rallied to one another's need, in houses of worship which opened their doors to give shelter, in volunteers who set their personal needs aside to assist those in grave danger and those awaiting a hand of compassion

We feel the heart of your compassion.

In the courageous resolve of first responders, who listen for cries in the dark, dig through the rubble, tenderly bind up wounds and comfort the bereaved,

We experience the steadfastness of your love.

We are grateful for the signs of your presence in responders, neighbors, strangers and families of faith, who come together as one common body to save, support, and salve the wounds of those who suffer.

For all these visible signs of your invisible grace, we bless your name.

Our Rock and Redeemer, who from the bonds of death rose to resurrection life for the sake of Love, be a strong presence among those who, having survived this chaos, now face grief, uncertainty and weary days:

Be in us, and through our prayers and actions make us a source of holy comfort and a channel of healing grace.

May the peace of God move through us. May the rest of God abide with those who have endured terrors and sorrow. And, in the season of rebuilding, may the life of God bring out of formless chaos, a new creation. Amen.

Stay Involved: Situation Report - Oklahoma Tornado as of June 1, 2013

Presbyterian Disaster Assistance (PDA) will be responding with One Great Hour of Sharing funds and members of the National Response Team to a devastating tornado that struck Moore, a populous suburb of Oklahoma City, OK.

The 200 mph, F-4 tornado struck Monday evening and destroyed whole neighborhoods. Two elementary schools were in the tornado's path and one school sustained a direct hit. Five counties in Oklahoma have been declared federal disaster areas. The Oklahoma VOAD has reported that many unsolicited volunteers have been showing up. They have pleaded that the information get out that **volunteers are not yet needed**. First responders need first to complete their work.

PDA previously responded to the 1999 tornado in Moore that caused \$1 billion worth of damage, including extensive damage to the First Presbyterian Church in Moore. PDA will be working with Presbyterian leadership to help meet the needs of families most impacted by this crisis.



Give: Share your financial blessings by designating gifts to the Presbyterian Disaster Assistance Relief Fund.

- You can write a check to OFPC with the “Oklahoma” on the memo line.
- You can give on-line at www.presbyterianmission.org/give/DR000015.
- You can mail a check to Presbyterian Church (USA), P.O. Box 643700, Pittsburgh, PA 15264-3700; add the memo “DR000015–Oklahoma.”
- You can text PDA at 20222 to donate \$10 for disaster response.
- You can call PresbyTel at (800) 872-3283 to give by credit card.

Above: A tornado-destroyed home in Oklahoma, May 2013, Photo by Evan Silverstein

Peace, Maggi

1 KINGS: OLD FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH’S JUNE BOOK-OF-THE-MONTH

This June, Pastor Maggi will preach four sermons on the vivid stories from the First Book of Kings. This book recounts the often tense and conflicted relationship between God and the kings of ancient Israel. Maggi invites you to read the book in advance so you can absorb the fascinating stories.

These are the texts Maggi will preach on in June:

June 2 1 Kings 18:20-21 (22-29) 30-39

June 9 1 Kings 17:8-16 (17-24)

June 16 1 Kings 21:1-10 (11-14), 15:21

June 23 1 Kings 19:1-4 (5-7) 8-15a

NEWS

Interfaith Food Pantry, June 8, June 22

There are two days when you will be able to volunteer in June, June 8 and 22. On June 8, Old First Presbyterian Church is solely responsible for staffing the Food Pantry. On June 22, all the participating churches work together, so just a few volunteers are needed from our church.

Please check your calendar for Saturday, June 8 to see if you can help us with this mission work in our community. Helpers are needed starting at 7:30 who can lift and carry as we unload the truck. The

pantry opens at 9:00, and wraps up with clean up by 11:15 or so. Please let me know if you are available for part of all of the morning, or if you have ideas of anyone who is looking for service projects who could assist. As always, thanks for your consideration of this service of Old First. –Joy Crosser

Old First Presbyterian Church to Host Youth/Young Adult Groups in June

Youth from **Journey Church** (Sacramento, CA) will be staying overnight at Old First Presbyterian Church from June 3 through 6. They will be getting to know the realities of the city and hope to serve folks in need as well. Journey's Youth Ministry Director, Regan Archer, is already in contact with the San Francisco Night Ministry for organizing their efforts in our community. They may put in some ministry time at our church, too. For more information on Journey, an example of the so-called emerging church, navigate on-line to: liveyourjourney.net

From June 14 through 16, members of the **4K for Cancer Running Team** will be staying overnight at Old First Presbyterian Church. This group of twenty-three young adults is going to run across the United States - literally. 4K for Cancer is "dedicated to empowering young adults to unite communities across the country in the fight against cancer through service and support." To raise funds for cancer research they will run from San Francisco all the way to Baltimore arriving in July. For more information, navigate on-line to: 4kforcancer.org

From June 24 to 29, youth from **Sunnyvale Presbyterian Church** will be staying overnight while they have a week of learning and serving under the guidance of Glide Memorial Church in the Tenderloin. Their group is so large they will be staying overnight in several churches in the city. Sunnyvale's website is this: www.svpc.us

Brad Peterson on Vacation, June 12-26

Our office administrator Brad Peterson will take time off in June. During his vacation the church office will be staffed for only limited hours and the church voice mail and his E-mail will be checked only twice a week. During this time E-mail will be the best way to contact our pastor, Maggi Henderson (maggi@oldfirst.org), and our sexton, Fernando González (fernando@oldfirst.org), and will be the best way to leave a message for Brad upon his return.

Congratulations to Nancy Holve on Her Ordination, June 23

Our former staff member, Nancy Holve has been called as pastor to Valley Community Presbyterian Church in Richfield, Utah. She will be ordained there on June 23.

Pentecost Offering

Old First Presbyterian Church collected almost \$600.00 for the Pentecost Offering: Thank you for your generous support.

OFPC ANNIVERSARY LUNCHEON ADDRESS, MAY 5, BY JOE BEYER

The Shared History of Calvary and Old First Presbyterian Churches

Greetings from Calvary Presbyterian, your much younger sister church (five years younger). I've been asked to share some of Calvary's history and also a few of the many connections between our two churches.

Calvary might not exist except for the approval of your church. As San Francisco continued its rapid growth in the 1850s, a group of citizens decided it was time to consider adding another Presbyterian church. They invited a New Orleans minister, William Anderson Scott, to be the organizing pastor. Scott refused to come without the prior approval of your session and also a letter from your pastor, who was

then the Reverend Albert Williams. Your session gave its approval, Williams wrote the letter, Scott came, and Calvary was founded on July 23, 1854...and we thank you. Calvary's first location, from 1854 to 1868, was on the north side of Bush Street, between Montgomery and Sansome (about where the Mills building is today).

Founding Pastor Scott was very popular with the church members, but became controversial in some portions of the community. He has the distinction of being the only known Presbyterian minister to be hung in effigy... twice! He was a strong believer in the separation of church and state and made enemies in the community by, among other things, refusing to support a proposed law to require the Bible to be read in public schools. In 1859 he wrote,

I understand the compulsory use of the Bible in our schools to mean teaching religion by stress of law, and this, in our country, I consider fanatical, unconstitutional, unjust and tyrannical.

The same year he also wrote:

If ever the liberties of America perish, it will be by the hands of quasi-religious demagogues.

With the start of the Civil War, he really upset some community folks by, refusing to fly the Union flag on the outside of the church and by praying for both Presidents Lincoln and Davis during worship services. In 1861 he was forced to resign after a mob, estimated at around 3,000 people, surrounded the church on Bush Street, decorated it with American flags, and for the second time, hung an effigy of him. Although Scott held services that Sunday, afterwards he had to be rescued from the mob by the Chief of Police, who then told Scott that he could no longer protect him in this community. So, he had to resign. After the Civil War, Dr. Scott returned to San Francisco to be the founding pastor of St. John's Presbyterian Church and, while there, he also founded the San Francisco Theological Seminary.

Calvary's second location, from 1869 to 1900, was on the corner of Powell and Geary Streets, exactly where the St. Francis Hotel is today. That is where our third pastor, John Hemphill, was also hung in effigy. He got in trouble with some elements in the city for preaching in defense of Chinese immigrants, which was controversial in those days.

As that part of the City also became increasingly commercial, the church leaders made the decision to move way out to the corner of Fillmore and Jackson Streets. The land under the Union Square church was sold, but not the building. All the pews, metal balcony supports, much woodwork, the then pipe organ and over one million of the bricks were moved to become part of the current sanctuary [on Fillmore Street]. The first service at our present location was on Thanksgiving 1902.

This move was very fortuitous, coming just three and one half years before the 1906 earthquake and fire, which badly destroyed areas where the church had been, and [which], as you probably know, also resulted in the destruction of buildings on the east side of Van Ness, including Old First Presbyterian Church and St. Luke's Episcopal. After the earthquake Calvary became the temporary home for these two churches and also Temple Emmanuel, which had been located at 450 Sutter Street. The church's basement was turned into a court room for the Superior Court. In addition, many other community groups and meetings were held there.

Over the years our two churches continued to have many connections. For a number of years there were joint Thanksgiving services. Some of you may remember when Tom Nolan was your bass soloist. At the same time, his wife, Marilee Nolan, was Calvary's soprano soloist. Currently Old First Presbyterian Church member Pamela Sebastian is Calvary's soloist. Until recently, almost every day we would see Pam Byers, since the Covenant Network office, where she worked, was located in our church. At the time of your 155th anniversary, Calvary's pastor emeritus, Dr. Emerson, was Old First Presbyterian Church's Interim Pastor.

And now, we come to the exciting new connection between our two churches: In 1997 a young couple joined Old First Presbyterian Church. A year later you elected and ordained the husband as one of your deacons. He then felt a call to the ministry [of teaching elder] and enrolled at the San Francisco Theological Seminary. After graduation, he was called to be an associate pastor for the Lafayette Orinda Presbyterian Church and served there for the past nine years.

In January of this year, the congregation of Calvary Presbyterian Church voted to call that former member of Old First Presbyterian Church, the Reverend John Weems, to be our sixteenth Pastor [and] Head of Staff. We are very excited to have John, his wife, Colleen, and their two young sons all now a part of the Calvary family. And once again, we thank you

Congratulations on your 164th anniversary.... and let's keep the Old First-Calvary connection going.

–Joe Beyer

FEATURE

What Does One do as a Deacon?

When I first moved to San Francisco and ultimately joined Old First Presbyterian Church I had no idea what a deacon or elder was. The last time I was in a church I was in upstate New York, and I was too young to notice or to care. After observing what was going on around me at Old First Presbyterian Church I decided to join the choir and see if I could remember how to sing. For me this was part of the church I grew up in and missed and loved the most. When I found out auditions weren't required I did a quiet little happy dance and introduced myself to Mark Smith after church one day, as I knew I didn't have the courage to walk into the choir room knowing no one.

After a couple of weeks went by and everything was going more smoothly than I ever expected, I discovered money missing from my wallet after church was over. I talked to a couple of choir members about what I should do, and on their recommendations I talked to my deacon. He took over the situation with my grateful permission. The resolution to this problem was simple. All women who wanted to started putting their purses in Mark's locked office during each service. This was all handled confidentially which was a great relief to me.

One responsibility of being a deacon involves memorial service receptions; although the reality is the person's deacon becomes the coordinator, and the rest of us who can help do so by receiving volunteered food, arranging it nicely, see that it all goes smoothly and then discreetly hang around to clean up afterwards. This is not a difficult event to host, because all the deacons available to help are there. Every time I have been involved I have had such an enormous sense of pride being affiliated with such a great group of people. Another example of deacon's service occurred when one of our families tragically lost a son in an accident, and all that they requested was for someone to house-sit while they were away for the service and reception elsewhere. Their deacon did this willingly and easily. All of us wanted to do whatever we could.

The "requirements" of being a deacon? The term is used loosely. If you cannot make a meeting just let a moderator know. My "comfort zone" as a deacon is different from others on the board, and that is okay. The rest of the deacons are available to answer any questions about what should/needs to be done if a particular issue comes up in your parish. Confidentiality is a key element simply because what we do is no one else's business.

I've tried to offer a few examples here of the total picture of what being a deacon is. If you want to try it on for size sometime I promise you are unlikely to regret it. –An Experienced Deacon

REVISED COMMON LECTIONARY: THE SUNDAYS IN JUNE, 2013

| Date | Day | 1st Reading | Psalm | 2nd Reading | Gospel Reading |
|-------------|-------------|-----------------------------------|------------------|--------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| 06/02/13 | Ordinary 9 | 1 Kings 18:20-21 (22-29) 30-39 | 96 | Galatians 1:1-12 | Luke 7:1-10 |
| 06/09/13 | Ordinary 10 | 1 Kings 17:8-16 (17-24) | 146 | Revelation 22:12-14, 16-17, 20-21 | John 17:20-26 |
| 06/16/13 | Ordinary 11 | 1 Kings 21:1-10 (11-14) 15-21a | 5:1-8 | Galatians 2:15-21 | Luke 7:36-8:3 |
| 06/23/13 | Ordinary 12 | 1 Kings 19:1-4 (5-7) 8-15a | 42 and 43 | Galatians 3:32-29 | Luke 8:26-39 |
| 06/30/13 | Ordinary 13 | 2 Kings 2:1-2, 6-14 | 77:1-2, 11-20 | Galatians 5:1, 13-25 | Luke 9:51-26 |

OTHER DATES TO NOTE

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| Saturday | June 8 | Old First Presbyterian Church staffs the Interfaith Food Pantry |
| Sunday | June 9 | Deacons' Meeting, Munro Room, 12:30 pm Deadline for July/August Edition of <i>Shared Life</i> |
| Saturday | June 15 | Presbyterian Women, Munro Room, 12:00 noon |
| Tuesday | June 11 | Worship Committee, Library, 7:00 pm |
| Tuesday | June 18 | Session Meeting, Munro Room, 7:00 pm |
| Saturday | June 22 | All Faiths Day at Interfaith Food Pantry |

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; Bill Feister, Christian education; Gregory Free, treasurer; Jeanne Kirkwood, clerk of session; Jean Olson, Mary Russell, mission and giving; Randy Smith; Sally Spencer; Steve Taber, operations, Betty Voris, community-building; Priscilla Yu

Board of Deacons

Nina Berg, Carol Carter, Samuel Cheng; Joy Crosser, Craig Kehne, Diane Lewis, Dana Nojima, co-moderator, Leota Parker, Glen Potter, AnnieScott Rogers, co-moderator, Sarah Taber, Horngsheng Tu