

Shared Life

The Monthly Newsletter of Old First Presbyterian Church

July/August 2017

Maggi's' Musings

Some of you know that I am reader. In this town I have three library cards: The Public Library, the Mechanics' Institute Library and the Library at the Jewish Community Center. I have a “to read” shelf at church that has much of the latest in church thinking and classics begging to be read. I have a Kindle so I can have books when I travel, be it on Muni or on a plane to France. Though I have a Kindle, I am still a “book person.” I am a hold-it-in-my-hand-and-touch-the-paper kind of gal. I take secret pleasure in recording the titles and authors of each book I read in a worn orange note book.

Yet, if confessions be made, I don't read all the books I check out, borrow, or own. I read about a third of what I check out from the library and I skim more church books these days than read them cover from cover. But one thing I read every month is the *Christian Century Magazine*. (See www.christiancentury.org.) I was introduced to it by a senior pastor some twenty years ago, when he “regifted” me the old copies he had. I said thank you, glanced through them and recycled them. Somewhere along the way I started actually reading the magazine. I discovered the articles kept my sometimes dusty mind out of lingering in the past or away from creeping into laziness. Its writings spoke to my world and challenged me on issues I hadn't had the time or compassion to pay attention to. I now tear out articles and share them with members and put articles away in files to access later. You often see clippings that I find provocative on the bulletin board downstairs near the Munro Room. This year I have found the writings on political matters in the United States and around the globe particularly insightful. I know a magazine is rather old fashioned but it keeps me in community with Christians and people of faith across the country and around the world. I find that when I have to turn the pages I read more broadly than I do when I click on articles in the on-line edition. Who knew I would become so “old school?” The pages inspire and challenge me, and sometimes the words make me laugh.

In May, the week after our six confirmands joined the church, I found myself chuckling over an article written by the publisher Peter W. Marty about questions from his confirmation class. (Marty is the senior pastor of St Paul's Lutheran Church in a town in Iowa. He caught the depth and the mischievousness of confirmands, and his words reflect why Erwin Barron and I felt blessed to teach confirmands. You can read some of the article below.

So my challenge to you these summer months is for you to dust off your library card – or get one for the first time! Take time to read something and give it your attention and your heart. Maybe it will breathe a bit of life into your soul, your imagination, your tiredness. See what speaks to your life or your faith. Heck, be wild, pick up a Bible! Read a chapter of the Gospel of Mark or John. Read a few pages every couple of days. Try a psalm a day, or the same psalm all week long. And – by now you know this is coming – check out *The Christian Century* at www.christiancentury.org... or go old school and subscribe.

Peace, Maggi

Upcoming

LGBTQ Group Meets, July 9

The LGBTQ small group will meet for fellowship and food at the home of Bob Hermann and Dan Joraanstad on Sunday, July 9, 2017, at 6:00 pm. Watch the church bulletin for more details or speak to Erwin Barron, Susan Ashton, Dan Joraanstad or Bob Hermann.

Death and Dying Discussion, July 16 and 30

The subject of death and dying will be explored in a panel discussion, including Dr. George Fitzgerald (retired Director of Spiritual Care Services at Stanford University Medical Center, and Presbyterian pastor), Dr. George Becker (Old First member and elder, psychiatrist and orthopedic surgeon), and Dr. Bill Feister (Old First member and elder, and clinical psychologist). The spiritual, psychological and medical aspects of death, dying and grief will be addressed. Please come with your questions and perspectives to enrich this thoughtful discussion: Munro Room, 12:30 pm.

Presbyterian Team at AIDS Walk SF, July 16



The Presbyterian Team for AIDS Walk SF turns twenty-one this year! You can register free and on-line at sf.aidswalk.net/Presbyterians/ – and as in past years, there are lots of opportunities to participate, such as walking the 10 km, or setting up our team's post-walk picnic while others walk, or being a “virtual walker,” or sponsoring another walker. There is no minimum donation to sponsor a walker, if you contribute by cash or check rather than by credit card.

Since teams are assigned the size of their tables based on advance registrations, please register this week, if you have not already done so. And invite friends and family to do likewise! For more information, contact Marc at Mission Bay Community Church: marc@missionbaycc.org

New Member/Inquirer class, July 16 and 23

There will be a new member/inquirer class on Sunday, July 16, 2017, 9:00 a.m. in the library and in the Munro room on Sunday, July 23, 2017, 9:00 a.m.. Please let the church office know if you are interested.

Take a College Bible Class, Beginning August 23

You are invited to join Erwin Barron and other students this fall in a college survey course of the Bible as literature. Erwin is teaching this class on Wednesday nights at City College on Ocean Avenue beginning August 23. It is an excellent way to get an overview of the whole Bible and learn modern biblical criticism in an academic setting. And, if you are a city resident, the courses at City College are FREE. Several members of Old First have taken the class before and loved it. Ask Phil Pollock, Annie Scott Rogers, Michael and Nina Berg, and others about it. Register and sign up on line at www.ccsf.edu. The course number is English 48K.

All-Church Retreat, October 20-22

The annual all-church retreat will be held at Mount Hermon, October 20–22, 2017. Mark your calendars.

May Session Report

The session has had several meetings and has approved baptisms and received new members.

- At the meeting on May 23, the Personnel Committee moved an amendment to the Personnel Handbook regarding the definition of employees at Old First.
- Bill Campbell reported on the Presbytery of San Francisco meeting, which included the following highlights:
 - Pastor Henderson submitted an application for OFPC to participate in coaching for Congregational Transformation in a Post-Christendom Culture.
 - Pastor Henderson and Bill would like to pool our funding with other SF or West Bay congregations to enhance impact and partnering.
- Worship Committee opened a discussion on volunteering and outreach for liturgists, prayers, food pantry, and other committee work. Anyone needing more information may speak to an Elder. It was announced that on Pentecost Sunday, June 4, communion would involve eight servers and will be served in the round on the floor of the sanctuary.
- Elders approved a Mission Committee motion that worshipers at Old First Church be invited to bring gift cards (Safeway, Target, Old Navy) or checks to Old First to be donated to the International Rescue Committee. John Kramar would lead a refugee-related adult Christian Education program on Sunday, June 18. Old First is co-sponsoring a community briefing on “Helping Refugees Today: What We Need to Know, What We Need to Do” on Wednesday, June 21 at St. Mark’s Lutheran Church. Old First generously contributed \$3,000 to the One Great Hour of Sharing national offering.
- The officers’ retreat would take place on either the third or fourth weekend of July.
- The monthly Financial Statement for April 2017 was circulated, and Kristi Hoerauf has been working with ADP on improving the payroll system for automatic deposits.
- A church clean-up day would take place on June 17.
- Chris Burt noted that the online and print directory would be augmented with new members and friends.

Tom Culp, Clerk of Session

News

Outpouring of Generosity Raised Over \$5,000 for Gift Cards for Refugees

Your generosity raised over \$3,000 in June for gift cards for refugees who are being resettled in the Bay Area. Old First will add \$2,000 to these contributions, so our gifts will enable the International Rescue Committee to put over \$5,000 into refugee families’ pockets. Thank you!

Celebration for Past Service – New Interim Director for DK Senior Center

Monday, July 26, was the Doris Krauss Senior Center celebrated Gina Winters for the four years of service she has provided to the center as its director. Her resignation prompted an outpouring of thanks from the seniors in attendance and from members of the Senior Center Commission.

As of July 1, Megan Sue Belefonte takes the role of interim director. She has pledged to continue the tasty and healthy hot meals on Monday as well as to offer new programs and entertainment.

All seniors are invited and welcome to attend the Doris Krauss Senior Center on Mondays with programs beginning at 10:00 am and lunch served promptly at 12:00 noon.

“Helping Refugees Today” Briefing Draws 140 and Offers Ways to Help

Minutes before the community briefing on “Helping Refugees Today: What We Need to Know, What We Need to Do,” a line was at the door and Pastor Ron Moe-Lobeta of host congregation St. Mark’s Lutheran Church was setting up more chairs in the back of the room. Attendance far exceeded RSVPs and the most optimistic guestimates.

The briefing focused on today’s landscape for refugees who seek safety and freedom in the U.S. and how people and groups can help. One example suggested by Karen Ferguson, executive director for Northern California of the International Rescue Committee, is urging state senators to vote for two bills that the State Assembly already has passed.

AB 343 would make refugees and Iraqi and Afghan immigrants who faced serious threat because they helped our military (Special Immigrant Visa recipients) immediately eligible for California resident tuition at community colleges. AB 349 would rank Special Immigrant Visa recipients who have passed the California civil service entrance exam at the top of the state civil service employment eligibility list, but not above a veteran or a widow or widower of a veteran. Both bills that will help immigrants gain education and employment. Scott Weiner is the senator for San Francisco. If you would like to make your opinion known, you can call Senator Wiener’s district office at (415) 557 1300.

Other speakers who participated in the briefing were Nina Sachdev of U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services and Kathryn Winogura of Jewish Family & Community Services-East Bay. Bill Campbell organized and moderated the briefing.

Other Old First volunteers who helped make the briefing possible included Marilyn Campbell, Levi Knippel, Riley Kramer, Sarah Taber, and the amazing Sally Spencer, who was responsible for refreshments for the attendees.

Interfaith Welcome: Bay Area Refugee Support was the briefing sponsor, with member congregations Old First, St. Mark’s, Calvary Presbyterian Church, Congregation Emanu-El, Grace Cathedral and Most Holy Redeemer Catholic Church.

Notes from the Worship Committee

Here is how one of our sister Presbyterian churches illustrated the Holy Spirit arriving at Pentecost. Covenant Presbyterian recently hosted the Presbytery of San Francisco at their church. They left up their artwork so we others could enjoy it. Perhaps it will inspire some of our response next year.

We are now in period known as “ordinary time” in the church year. Each season has a color and in ordinary time we use green. Our green so far is from our ferns. Each window niche in the sanctuary has one or two.

Ordinary time is the longest period in the church calendar, running between Pentecost and the First Sunday of Advent. Ordinary Time can mean the



same for the church as it does in the dictionary: routine, normal, ordinary!

Historically in the lectionaries, the Sundays are simply numbered. All the Sundays outside Advent-Christmas and Lent-Easter have ordinal numbers; first, second, third, and so on. One of the ideas related to this time that it reminds us that we can discover the presence of God anew every day: A special high holiday is not required!

Linda Reyder, Worship Co-Chair

Becoming a School Chaplain, by Delaine Zody, from *Presbyterians Today*, May 26, 2017

Fresno, California – When I retired from teaching in an inner city high school in Fresno I thought I was done with being involved with the local school district. Twenty-one years as a teacher was enough for me. My retirement plan was to move to San Francisco and get a job with a nonprofit. But I could not get a job. I returned to Fresno and was at loose ends. What did I want to do with the rest of my life? More importantly, what did God want me to do with the rest of my life?



At lunch at a local church, I sat with a man who was a chaplain in a neighboring school district. I was intrigued by what he did and wondered if my local district had such a program. The chaplain worked at a school, offering care and comfort to students and staff as well as working with first graders to build resiliency. He said he thought I would be very good at doing

this, but I laughed. I loved the concept of social-emotional education and believed someone should be doing it, just not me.

Then, I saw a notice about Fresno Police Department Chaplaincy working with Fresno Unified School District, the district where I had taught for 21 years. Again, I thought it was a good idea — for someone else. Then another notice caught my attention, only this time when I saw the words “school chaplain.” My interest was very piqued.

I read that there were chaplains in Fresno schools and a need for more. I could hear God prompting me to send in the application. I really didn’t expect to hear back. As an older worker, I’d been discouraged by my attempts in San Francisco to find a meaningful position.

But, I went forward and filled out a 29-page application and met with some of the folks. Then silence. “Lord,” I prayed, “If this is what you want me to do, then you will make it happen; otherwise, fine.”

But then, the police office that does all background checks got a rush call for three chaplains. Within two weeks I had my ID, my uniform and an assignment. I am now officially a Fresno Police Department School Resource Chaplain assigned to Columbia Elementary School in Fresno.

Two days a week I work with first graders at an inner-city elementary school. I eat lunch with them, join them on the playground and read them stories in their classrooms to help them make better decisions as they continue through school.

Although the lunches throughout the school district are free due to the high incidence of poverty, the first graders were not eating the vegetables and throwing most of their lunch in the garbage. I was so disappointed to see good food going to waste. The school where I am chaplain sits in a food desert, with only one grocery store for the whole zip code area. I set out to convince the students how important it is to eat their fruits and vegetables. I started buying a school lunch each day that I was on campus, and I would sit with the first graders and eat my lunch, talking about the various foods and what they did for our bodies.

The food, I found, was tasty! I started telling my friends about this and they wanted to see the lunches. I would take pictures of the lunch and post them to Instagram. After a couple of weeks,

more students were eating the vegetables and showing me that they had eaten them. They have written thank you letters and mentioned how I wanted them to eat better.

Even though I'm retired, I have experience, energy and knowledge that should not be ignored, but rather put to work in communities. God is still using me and my faith for important work.

Delaine Zody is a retired school teacher who has found an encore career as a school resource chaplain. She is a wife, mother, and grandmother. She serves as the moderator of the deacons at Westminster Presbyterian Church in Fresno.

OFPC Work Day

Wow! What a crew! We had eleven Old Firsters come out on a Saturday afternoon in June to give Old First some loving care. We host over 500 people per week and, at 106 years old, our building can be expected to show some wear and tear. There was painting, deep cleaning, repairing of walls, and even cleaning out of the pigeon spikes on the outside of the building. Give a high five to these hard workers when you see them!!!

Dana Nojima, Operations Chair

Work Day Volunteers: Randy Smith, Andrea Segura-Smith, John Kramar, Sally Spencer, Mary Russell, Kim Pham, Peter McDermott, Barry Dunaway, Chris Burt, Cindy Burt, Dana Nojima



Another “Ask the Pastor” Session with the Confirmation Class

by Peter W. Marty, May 18, 2017 *Article used with permission*

For the final night of our church’s seventh and eighth grade confirmation class, members of the pastoral staff divide up the kids and send them off to different parts of the building for the popular “Ask the Pastor” session. Perched on stools, those of us fielding questions are supposed to take anything thrown at us. I did my best.

Will we get to be with our family in heaven?

Let’s imagine so. But maybe we need to think of heaven less as an opportunity to love the people we already know and more as a chance to love everyone we meet. Heaven had better be something greater than having our wants satisfied. Right? It’s about God, not about us. God is at the center of life eternal.

Do you believe God thinks pineapple should be a pizza topping?

Absolutely... why wouldn’t Hawaii’s most valuable cash crop belong on pizza?

Why is everything in the Bible so complicated? Can’t it just be straightforward?

Well, you have to remember that the Bible was written by all kinds of people. Some of them never had the benefit of going through confirmation before they put down their ideas.

Why are there only 12 disciples?

I don’t really know, but I’m thinking it must be because somebody hadn’t yet invented the 15-passenger van.

Who do you think goes to heaven and who goes to hell?

First, I wouldn’t worry about who goes where. Instead, just love God in incredibly generous ways. Second, according to Jesus, people who walk over the destitute and delight in judging, insulting, and excluding others seem bent on keeping themselves at the center of everything—which is hell. Heaven appears to be unending joy for all who delight in attending to those who know too few blessings in life.

Does God play sports?

Whoa. That’s a big one. Lots to do in overseeing the universe. If God plays a sport, let’s assume it’s tennis, because God likes to let love serve.

Does being a pastor interfere with your family life, especially on holidays?

Well, being a pastor means pretty much giving up weekends for life. Between weddings and preaching and a whole lot of church stuff, I’m very busy. But the way we love and take care of each other in a family isn’t confined to the weekends. I wish my kids were here to answer your question.

Did you like going to church when you were younger?

Actually I did, most of the time, though not every experience with church or God knocked my socks off. But many of the really valuable things we do in life are not always exciting. I brush my teeth every morning and night but never stand in front of the mirror and consider that a thrill. Someday, however, if I’m old and rickety and still have a smile with real teeth, I’ll be extra grateful for that discipline. Faith is similar in some ways.

Did Jesus have a last name?

Yeah. Christ.

The Chambered Nautilus, by Oliver Wendell Holmes

This is the ship of pearl which, poets feign,
Sails the unshadowed main,-
The venturous bark that flings
On the sweet summer wind its purpled wings
In gulfs enchanted, where the Siren sings,
And coral reefs lie bare,
Where the cold sea-maids rise to sun their streaming hair.



Year after year beheld the silent toil
That spread his lustrous coil;
Still, as the spiral grew,
He left the past year's dwelling for the new,
Stole with soft step its shining archway through,
Built up its idle door,
Stretched in his last-found home, and knew the old no more.

Thanks for the heavenly message brought by thee,
Child of the wandering sea,
Cast from her lap, forlorn!
From thy dead lips a clearer note is born
Than ever Triton blew from wreathed horn!
While on mine ear it rings,
Through the deep caves of thought I hear a voice that sings;-
Build thee more stately mansions, O my soul,
As the swift seasons roll!
Leave thy low-vaulted past!
Let each new temple, nobler than the last,
Shut thee from heaven with a dome more vast,
Till thou at length art free,
Leaving thine outgrown shell by life's unresting sea!

Old First Family and Friends

Prayers for Healing and Wholeness

For Tony, Lorraine Bellesi's friend, undergoing chemotherapy
For Larry Payne, Karyn Payne's brother, undergoing chemotherapy
For Phil Pollock's Father
For Marita Taber, Stephen Taber's mother
For Mary Lou Wilson

Prayers of Mourning

For Gabby Beck-Engeser on the death of her mother, Ilse Beck

Prayers of Thanksgiving

For the Newly Baptized: Julius Frauenheim, Skyla Frauenheim, Bennett Hall, "Amir" Sadeghi
For New Members by Confirmation or Reaffirmation of Faith: Eva Bender, Branch Bender,
Joshua Cheng, Annie Cheng, Anne Marie Milliron, Saeedeh Heidari
For Those Soon to be Baptized: James Milliron, father, and James Milliron, infant son

Dates to Remember

July 9	Sunday	LGBTQ Gathering, 6:00 pm, Home of Hermann and Joraanstad
July 14	Friday	Church Officers' Retreat, Evening, Old First Presbyterian Church
July 15	Saturday	Church Officers' Retreat, Daytime, St Paulus Lutheran Church
July 16	Sunday	Inquirers/New Members Class, 9:00 am, Munro Room
July 23	Sunday	Inquirers/New Members Class, 9:00 am, Library
July 25	Tuesday	Session, 7:00 pm, Munro Room
July 29	Saturday	OFPC staffs Interfaith Food Pantry: 9:00 am Saturday Community Dinner, 5:30 pm
August 13	Sunday	Board of Deacons, 12:30 pm, Munro Room Deadline for Shared Life September issue
August 22	Tuesday	Session Meeting, 7:00 p.m.
August 26	Saturday	Saturday Community Dinner, 5:30 p.m.

OFPC Officers**Session****Class of 2018**

Chris Burt
Kristi Hoerauf
Dana Nojima

Class of 2019

Tom Culp, clerk of session
Robin Currier
John Kramar
Lori Yamauchi
Priscilla Yu

Class of 2020

Bill Campbell
Hsiaochien Chuang
Linda Reyder
Daniel Pearch
Virginia Webb-Pekelnicky

Board of Deacons**Class of 2018**

Nina Berg
Alfred Martin
Randy Smith
Sarah Taber

Class of 2019

Riley Kramar
Mary Russell
Emily Olson

Class of 2020

Beth Arnaoot
Courtney Blake
Cindy Burt
Glen Potter
Jian Wang