

Shared Life

The Monthly Newsletter of Old First Presbyterian Church

January 2018

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LATER by Ann Weems

Later
after the angels,
after the stable,
after the Child,
they went back...
as we always must,
back to the world that doesn't understand
our talk of angels and stars
and especially not the Child.
We go back complaining that it doesn't last.
They went back signing praises to God!
We do have to go back,
but we can still sing the alleluias!

Maggi's Musings

We will celebrate the Epiphany on Sunday, January 7, 2018, when the Reverend Deb Avery, the former pastor of First Presbyterian Oakland, will preach for us. We will continue the celebration with potluck lunch after church. We will recall the wise men from the East that followed the star to Bethlehem to worship the infant Jesus (Matthew 2:1-12).

Epiphany is the celebration of God's manifestation or self-revelation to the world in Jesus Christ. In particular, we celebrate the revelation of God's promise and purpose to the nations of the world, as the magi came from the East to worship to the Christ child, and God's covenant of grace is extended to all who believe the good news of Christ Jesus. The symbolism of light is important: not only because of the star that guided the magi, but as it relates to the bright dawning of God's self-revelation in Christ.

—from the Companion to the Book of Common Worship

The word “epiphany” – from the Greek epiphaneia – means “appearance” or “manifestation” of God, and shares roots with the word for sunrise or dawn. In ancient times, an epiphany meant either a visible manifestation of a god or the solemn visit of a ruler venerated as a god. For Christians, Christmas marks the coming of God to us; Epiphany celebrates the appearance of the Lord in the midst of all humanity. For many, this has been a time to reflect on what we will offer of ourselves to God as followers of Jesus this new year of 2018.

Last year people picked up Epiphany star words at worship. These included words such as “discovery,” “forgiveness,” “vigilance,” “zeal,” “confession,” “examination,” “heart,” “lenience,” and “grace” – but to name a few. Mine was “graciousness.” I invite you to dust off your 2017 word and to reflect on how it may have shaped or informed your year. In worship on January 7 you will receive a new word. If you're not in worship you can get one from the ushers in the coming weeks. Let us – as individuals and as a community – look for moments of God's light, for the *aha!* moments, for clarity as we seek to follow Jesus anew this season, this year.

Peace, Pastor Maggi

Thanks for Your Pledges!

I want to thank you for your pledges. It means a lot for the growth of Old First. Each pledge is vital to the support of the church in God's work. Again, thank you for your support.

Priscilla Yu, Stewardship Committee Chair

New Contribution for Flowers in Worship

After many years the contribution for our Sunday flowers is going up to \$60. Please sign up to sponsor flowers for worship on the downstairs bulletin board and put a check in the offering plate. You may also send a dedication for the flowers to Brad in the office by a note in the offering plate or by E-mail: brad@oldfirst.org

Linda Reyder, Worship Committee Co-Chair

Thanks to Worship Leaders during Advent and Christmas!

Thank you to all who have made Advent and Christmas such a joyful experience: garland “wranglers,” banner makers, advent candle lighters, our dancer, poinsettia procurers and water-ers, readers, singers, Worship Committee members, Larry Marietta, choir members, and everyone who made the work light during the season.

Peace, Pastor Maggi

Potluck Lunch, Sunday, January 7

Next Sunday, January 7, we will share a potluck for the New Year. Bring a dish to share. However, if you won't have opportunity to cook, you can make a small donation toward the meal instead.

Inquirers/New Members Class, Sundays, January 14 and 21

The pastor will lead a class for inquirers and new members on Sunday, January 14 from 12:30 pm to 2:00 pm in the Library, and on Sunday, January 21 at 9:00 am in the Library. On Sunday, January 14 lunch will be included. Please let pastor Maggi (maggi@oldfirst.org) know if you are interested in finding out about membership.

MLK Day March and Commemoration, Monday, January 15


Old First Friends and members are invited to march together on Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, January 15. We will meet at the CalTrain Station at 4th and King Streets in San Francisco at 10:30 am. Look for other Old Firsters and for our sign. We will then join the march to Yerba Buena Plaza for the commemoration. If you are planning to join us for the march, please contact Pastor Henderson. See opposite page for further details.

Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day Interfaith Activities

Monday, January 15, 2018

11:00 am (March/Parade)
From Caltrain Depot at 4th and Townsend

“The Urgency of Now”



“We are now faced with the fact that tomorrow is today. We are confronted with the fierce urgency of now. In this unfolding conundrum of life and history, there “is” such a thing as being too late.

This is no time for apathy or complacency. This is a time for vigorous and postive action.”

— Martin Luther King Jr.

The San Francisco Interfaith Council invites faith leaders and their congregants to join in the 2018 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Birthday Celebrations to be held on Monday, January 15, 2018 at San Francisco’s Yerba Buena Gardens. The 2018 March/Parade will begin promptly at 11:00 am (arrive early) from the Caltrain Depot at 4th and Townsend. Once the March/Parade arrives at the Yerba Buena Gardens, the 8th Annual Interfaith Commemoration Ceremony will commence.

A host of other activities and programs that will take place to mark the occasion may be found on the San Francisco Interfaith Council partner organization’s website:

<http://norcalmlkfoundation.org/Events.html>

Nominating Committee Begins Discernment of Elders and Deacons

In this Season of new beginnings, Old First Presbyterian Church, is truly blessed by its active members. We are the body of Christ and each of our members has a part to play as we follow the ways of Jesus. That means that you too have role here.

As the New Year arrives, it time again for us to nominate deacons and elders to serve on the board of deacons and the session, respectively. Deacons and elders constitute the skeleton of the body and give it its pulse.

Deacons and elders are chosen by the people. Our Book of Order says that “Elders should be persons of faith, dedication, and good judgment. Their manner of life should be a demonstration of the Christian gospel, both within the church and in the world.” It furthers says that the office of deacon as set forth in Scripture is a ministry of “sympathy, witness, and service after the example of Jesus Christ. Persons of spiritual character, honest repute, of exemplary lives, brotherly and sisterly love, warm sympathies and sound judgment should be chosen for this office.”

Would you please pray and think about who might be called to be a deacon and or an elder? The Nominating Committee needs your suggestions.

Please speak to the people you’re considering and ask if they are willing to be nominated. Or you might speak to a member of the church and ask them to reflect on those you think might be called to serve. You can also contact the Nominating Committee by sending an E-mail to nomcom@oldfirst.org or by speaking to the chair, John Kramar, or one of the other members of the committee: Dan Joraanstad, Sydney Holler, Karen Bene, Betsy Chiao, Betty Voris.

November Session Meeting Report

- There was a short discussion on the current Stewardship Campaign which will conclude with outreach to members who have not yet pledged.
- There was a brief verbal report on the Potrero Hill Neighborhood House (known as the NABE).
- Details of the recent San Francisco Presbytery Meeting were shared and a flyer presenting areas to serve as leaders and in Presbytery working groups was distributed. It was announced that the next Western Regional Presbytery meeting will be on December 13 at Covenant Presbyterian Church on Taravel Street.
- The Worship Committee said that liturgist slots for upcoming months next year will be filled starting in January.
- The Planning Committee reported that the PneuMatrix consulting contract with Reverend Kitchens began in November with the first of 10 meetings planned for a year, that the Old First Garage Corporation has extended the agreement with Express Parking, and that OFPC has signed and submitted the second support letter for the local neighborhood benefit district.
- The Operations Committee reported that there will be an audio update, new carpet in the Munro Room, lighting changes, wall patching, Room A upgrades, new office computers and grills for Sacramento Street windows.
- Community Building reported that the re-conceived pew cards are now in development, and a new members class is planned for early in the new year.
- The Mission Committee reported about work on a homeless meeting, our energetic and colorful Mission Fair, a benefit concert for Interfaith Welcome, and a Holiday Gift Drive for Larkin Street youth.

Tom Culp, Clerk of Session

The Call for a Navigation Center in District 3

Our faith leads us to speak out and speak up for the rights of all God's people. Last month many of our members and neighbors took part in a community meeting about developing a Navigation Center for our homeless neighbors in District 3. This letter was written by our members and submitted earlier in December with seventy-three signatures in addition to Maggi's.

Mayor Lee, Supervisor Breed, Supervisor Peskin,

Old First Presbyterian Church has been active in the heart of San Francisco since 1849, and has worshiped at our current location on the corner of Van Ness and Sacramento Street since 1882. As a community of believers, we answer the call of Jesus Christ to help those less fortunate, for faith without good works is not faith at all (James 2:17). Old First has been involved with several prominent charities in the community including Faithful Fools and Larkin Street Youth Services, which both aim to change the lives of our homeless neighbors here in San Francisco.

In the last year, we have seen an increase in the visibility of the homeless population in the middle Polk corridor. Many new faces have begun calling our neighborhood home. Some have been sleeping in tents, some under tarps, and others with no shelter but piece of cardboard between themselves and the concrete. We have seen some encampments set up and later dispersed by the city, only for the same homeless neighbors to return a few weeks later. There is simply no place for them to go.

For this reason, we at Old First are in strong support of the navigation centers that we have seen utilized in other districts. The navigation centers do more than just provide shelter for their inhabitants: they provide career counseling, addiction specialists, and social workers in a synergistic approach to help people get off the street for good. We understand that initial results have shown a high success rate, with nearly 80% finding permanent housing or utilizing the homeward bound program to return to family members in another city.

At a community forum held in November (attended by over 200 residents) Supervisor Peskin asked if he had our support to bring a navigation center to District 3, and was answered with loud applause. We too at Old First wish to applaud this idea. We are asking all of you – Mayor Lee and Supervisor Breed, as well as our own Supervisor Peskin – to work together to bring a navigation center to our district as soon as possible.

Please note the three attached pages with signatures of the many members and friends of Old First Presbyterian Church who join me in supporting a navigation center in our district.

Sincerely,

Maggi Henderson, Pastor

San Francisco Homeless Resources

St Anthony's Free Clothing Program: 121 Golden Gate Ave at Jones St, 415-241-2600

Men & Women service hours: Monday–Friday, sign-in 7:30 am – 8:00 am, first-come, first-served.

Family Service hours: Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday, 2:30 pm, by lottery

Families who are homeless or in critical need can be seen by appointment rather than going through the lottery. Appointments can ONLY be made by a case worker or social worker. For more information please call 415-592-2843. In addition to the ongoing services at the Clothing Program's location, an emergency clothing closet next door to St. Anthony's Dining Room provides emergency clothing to guests who would not otherwise make it to clothing services. Through this expanded service we can ensure that seniors and guests with disabilities receive clothes necessary for their safety, comfort and dignity.

Ring Out, Wild Bells by Alfred Lord Tennyson, 1809 – 1892

Ring out, wild bells to the wild sky,
The flying cloud, the frosty light:
The year is dying in the night;
Ring out, wild bells, and let him die.

Ring out the old, ring in the new,
Ring, happy bells, across the snow:
The year is going, let him go;
Ring out the false, ring in the true.

Ring out false pride in place and blood,
The civic slander and the spite;
Ring in the love of truth and right,
Ring in the common love of good.

Ring in the valiant man and free,
The larger heart, the kindlier hand;
Ring out the darkness of the land,
Ring in the Christ that is to be.

Prayers for Healing and Wholeness

For Carol Carter recovering at home from surgery.
For Jack Rozell with chronic neuropathy pain.
For James Uren, who has a broken arm.

For Mary Lou Wilson for mental clarity
For George Yu recovering at home from surgery.
For Priscilla Yu for supportive prayers.

Prayers of Mourning

For John Kramar upon the death of his mother.

Dates to Remember

January 3	Wednesday	Mission Committee, Munro Room, 6:30 pm
January 7	Sunday	Potluck Lunch, Fellowship Hall, 12:30 pm
January 14	Sunday	Deadline for February Issue of <i>Shared Life</i> Inquirers/New Members Class, Library, 12:30 pm to 2:00 pm Board of Deacons, Munro Room, 12:30 pm
January 16	Tuesday	Worship Committee, Library, 6:00 pm
January 20	Saturday	Presbyterian Women, Library, 12:00 noon
January 21	Sunday	Inquirers/New Members Class, Library, 9:00 am
January 23	Tuesday	Session, Munro Room, 7:00 pm
January 27	Saturday	Saturday Community Dinner, Fellowship Hall, 5:30 pm

OFPC Church 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