

FIRST
PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH

EST. 1909

First Press

THE NEWSLETTER OF FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
TURLOCK, CALIFORNIA

MARCH 2024



Grace and peace to you,

As we move further into the Season of Lent, I hope you will find time for reflection and the practices you find to be renewing. As we pray for personal guidance and growth, let us remember to pray for the church;

may we be thankful for the ways it has blessed and enriched our lives. May our hearts and minds be open to all who need the faith we share, and the love that strengthens us in Christ Jesus.

In a collection of the late Henri Nouwen's writings on the spiritual life, there is a short piece entitled "Time Enough to Minister". It contains good advice for anyone who is unexpectedly called upon to lend an ear, or to offer a word of counsel or encouragement to someone in need.

Nouwen (1932-1996) tells the story of a time when he had gone on a personal retreat, that he describes as a short prayer sabbatical from his teaching at Yale Divinity School. He had gone to a Trappist monastery in Western New York State, as he was suffering burnout from a heavy load of teaching, travel and lecturing.

It was on his second day of refuge at the monastery, that a group of students from a nearby school had gotten word of Nouwen's arrival. They came to him and asked, "Henri, can you give us a retreat?"

In keeping with the customs of the monastery, Nouwen

went to the Abbot in charge and asked for permission to decline the students' request. After all, he had come to the monastery seeking relief from such demands. However, much to Nouwen's initial displeasure, the Abbot instructed him to do as the students asked.

The Abbot said to Nouwen, "Don't fuss about your need for preparation in readying to be with these young people; what they want is to be a part of your life in God for a few days. If you pray for half an hour in the morning, sing in our choir for an hour, and do your spiritual reading, you'll have so much to say, you could give ten retreats."

Nouwen drew a lesson from this experience of being asked to provide for others when he felt in particular need of receiving provision for himself. The lesson, he said, is to do what one must to live in a state of ongoing preparedness; so that when someone needs to be part of our life in God, we can give as it is asked of us.

Blessings to you in this Season of Lent.

In Christ,

Pastor Steve Smith



Announcements



**SPECIAL
CONGREGATIONAL
MEETING
SUNDAY, MARCH 17, 2024**

In accordance with our bylaws, a special congregational meeting has been called for Sunday, March 17, 2024. The call is to elect four (4) members-at-large for FPC's 2024 Nominating Committee. This short but important meeting will take place in the sanctuary immediately following worship.

Elder representatives for the Nominating Committee are Priscilla Peters and David Posluch; the deacon representative is Jane Steckling.

One of the duties to be performed by the 2024 Nominating Committee will be to identify individuals to serve on the Pastor Nominating Committee (PNC.) If you are someone who wants to serve on the PNC, you should not also serve on the Nominating Committee. We encourage you to be thinking of individuals who might be good candidates for the Nominating Committee and to ask them in advance of the meeting if they are willing to serve so you can put their name in nomination at the special congregational meeting.

WE ARE BACK!

**Wednesday
— NIGHT —
DINNERS**
Food • Family • Fellowship

EACH FOURTH WEDNESDAY • 5-6pm

We NEED volunteers to help with Preparing, Serving, & cleaning on monthly basis. Please contact the church office if you'd like to help. Thank you in advance for your serving heart.

2nd FRIDAYS Fellowship



JOIN IN THE FUN & BRING A FAVORITE DISH AND BEVERAGE TO SHARE. YOUR HOSTESS, LORNA SCHMIDT, WILL PROVIDE THE DESSERT!

**WHEN: MARCH 8TH
TIME: 6:00 PM
RSVP: LORNA SCHMIDT
BY MARCH 5TH**



Palm Sunday Bake Sale

**Sunday, March 24th
11:00 am – 12:30 pm**

Voight Fellowship Hall

Choose from a Variety of Delicious Easter Cakes, Breads, Cookies, Muffins, Fudge, Cupcakes made by our parishioners and local bakers.

All sales proceeds will directly benefit FPC
Kindly bring your donated items to the kitchen prior to worship service.

Church Events & Worship Servers

Holy Week Schedule



PALM SUNDAY, MARCH 24

10:00 am Worship Service
11:00 am 43RD ANNUAL BAKE SALE

GOOD FRIDAY, MARCH 29

7:00 pm Worship Service

SATURDAY, MARCH 30

9:30 am EGGSTRAVAGANZA

Easter Sunday, March 31

10:00 am Worship Service
There is no Sunday School



Welcome!



March 2024

Communion Team – March

Kim Sasman; Jane Steckling;
Kathleen Gunn, Donna Harrison

Elder Assistants

March 3rd Kathleen Gunn
March 10th Pat Rubalcava
March 17th Niki Higdon
March 24th Pat Weisel {Palm Sunday}
March 31st Priscilla Peters {Easter}



greeters

SUNDAY GREETERS FOR MARCH

March 3rd John Miles & Priscilla Peters
March 10th Dave Posluch & Bill Bishop
March 17th Brent & Donna Harrison
March 24th Jerel & Jane Steckling
March 31st Martin & Jana Purdy



FPC Mission Study & Short-Term Project

YOU ARE INVITED TO

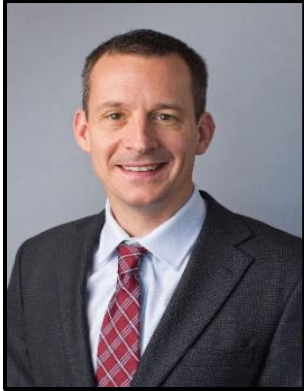
HELP US FORMULATE A CHURCH MISSION STUDY



Come and Meet Rev. Joseph Moore,

Our representative from the Presbyterian Foundation in this Two-Day Event

Rev. Moore will give us the tools and guide us in grasping an in-depth look into our church's Mission, Vision, and Values



FRIDAY, MARCH 22, 2024

6:00 pm – 8:30 pm
Dinner will be served

SATURDAY MARCH 23, 2024

9:00 am – 1:00 pm
Includes Lunch

WEEKEND MISSION WORK – MUCH HELP NEEDED!

PARADISE, CALIFORNIA

Share Your Heart and Hands with Others in Need

SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES FOR CHURCH TEAMS

1. Oroville Trinity Church-Hosting Church Teams

(Presbyterian Disaster Assistance Host Site)

- Re-build projects are needed from the devastating 2018 Campfire.

Please contact Kathleen Gunn or the church office to reserve your space for the FPC Team. Great accommodations for up to 20 volunteers.

July 12 – 14, 2024

Help us Help the Residents of Paradise Rebuild their Homes.

We will carpool from the church parking lot.



Mission Ministry

Lent is a time for reflection, and for FPC it is also the time when we receive the One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS) special offering. For 75 years, Presbyterians have participated in One Great Hour of Sharing, an ecumenical effort that was begun soon after the end of WWII and now involves 9 denominations as well as Church World Service (CWS).

Within the Presbyterian denomination, funds received as OGHS offerings are divided among three major programs: Presbyterian Disaster Assistance (PDA), the Presbyterian Hunger Program (PHP), and the Self-Development of People (SDOP.) This is the single largest way that Presbyterians join together to share God's love with our neighbors in need around the world.



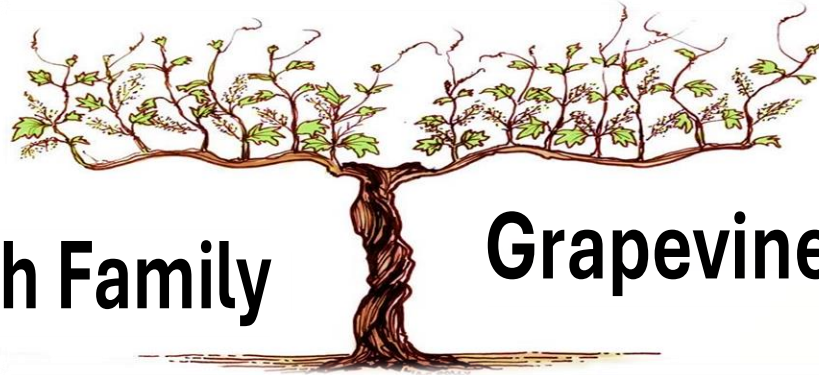
Duncan finds especially significant being part of a community: "Meeting people and forming relationships, where we share common things—our struggle with mental health, our struggle with homelessness—we're able to have that support and support each other."

Please watch for bulletin inserts during March to learn more about beneficiaries of OGHS funds. We are the church together, and when everyone gives a little, it adds up to a lot. Please give generously so that together we can help provide relief from natural disasters, food for the hungry, and support for the poor and oppressed.

Testimony from recipients of OGHS funds reveals the impact of this offering. A Dalit widow in India whose family lost its thatched hut and the sewing machine that enabled her to provide for her family in a recent tsunami says: "Because of people's gifts to One Great Hour of Sharing, we now live in a permanent and disaster-resistant shelter, my kids are back in school, I am able to feed and clothe them, and when they get sick, I am able to take care of their medication, too." A Presbyterian Disaster Assistance aid worker for Asia and Africa noted that one of the key tenets followed by PDA is to partner with local aid agencies. This means that aid is delivered in such a way that community stakeholders are consulted and allowed to prioritize needs. Closer to home, OGHS helps fund Caridad Gardens in Las Vegas, NV which works to restore houseless veterans and neighbors back into community. Duncan, a client of Caridad, expressed gratitude for the stable housing and employment Caridad Gardens facilitated for him as well as for helping him get the counseling and medication he needs.



Prayers & Praises



Church Family

Grapevine

Ongoing Prayer Needs Key Code:

P-Personal, F-Family, G-Grief, H-Health, S-Surgery, PG- Pregnancy, E-Employment, ST-Safe Travel, A-Adoption, SA-Salvation, M-Military

- Blixt, Elizabeth (H)
- Brugger, Betty (H)
- Callahan, Julie(H)
- Lowe, Marge (H)
- Marsh, Lois (H)
- Meiselman, Sophie (H)
- Narita, Leona (H)
- Neely, Dale (H)**
- Reeves, Jean (H)
- Runsten, Tricia (Darlene's Daughter) (H)
- Seaver, Nancy & Family (G)
- Taylor, Paul (H)
- Ulrich, SaraLee (H)
- Wallace, Pat (H)**
- Vesperman, Richard (H)

*Please praise God continuously for who He is and what He has done in your life...
Blessed is His Holy Name.*



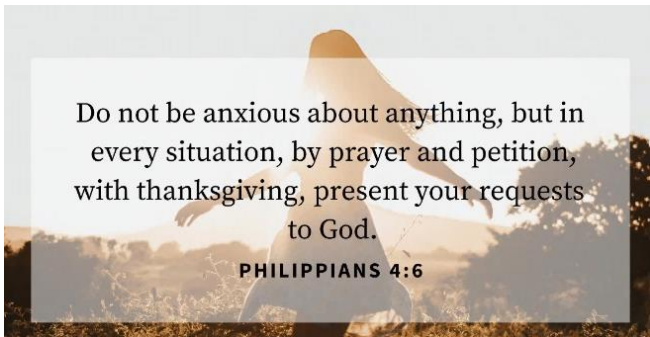
Birthdays

- Mar 1 Elizabeth Arakelian
- Mar 1 Meghan Young
- Mar 3 Pat Rubalcava
- Mar 3 Margaret Steel
- Mar 6 Donna Harrison
- Mar 9 Sarah Kane
- Mar 14 Lynette Betts
- Mar 20 Julie Neely
- Mar 23 Barbara Bort
- Mar 24 Aislyn Castillo
- Mar 26 Dan Hardesty
- Mar 27 Rick Gaffney
- Mar 29 Barbara Hardesty
- Mar 29 Kendra Reyes

Anniversaries

- Mar 11 Robert & Susan England
- Mar 20 Rev. Nancy & J.F. Clegg

If we have missed your birthday or anniversary, please contact the church office.



Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.

PHILIPPIANS 4:6



We are here for you

First Presbyterian Church is a praying family. Please let the church office know of your prayer needs and we will gladly add your name to our prayer chain.

Music Ministry

♪♪ Notes from the Music Room ♪♪

*There is a time for everything,
And a season for every activity under heaven:
A time to be born and a time to die,
A time to plant and a time to reap.
Ecclesiastes 3:1-2*

(One of my favorite anthems!)

It is **SPRING!!!** Or so it would seem ... OK - I looked it up and Spring really does not begin until March 19! But look around! **SMELL** the flowers in bloom and **LOOK** at the wonders of the plants that God has given to us!

So we are off to the store to purchase seeds and planter boxes and dirt so that God can do what God does with such as these in the sunny window of our kitchen! And so begins our spring - the season of **HOPE!** It is my great joy to watch for the first signs of tiny green sprouts as they emerge from the soil. And each successive week as the seedlings begin to grow taller my excitement grows. Soon the seedlings will need to be transplanted to the garden and be supported as they reach toward the sun.

And then - then - the first fruit appears - and from its green beginnings it begins to turn to pink - and then - after weeks - and months - it is finally **RED!** A deep **RUBY RED!** And my **HOPE** has turned to **JOY** as I pick the first fruit - and taste the sweet juice of a ripe tomato - given by God to grace our table! God bless you all during this delightful season of **HOPE!** And may your Hope turn to Joy as the dreams of your future become the joyful reality of your present.

Rev. Wendy Warner
Director of Music



Adult & Student Ministry



The Slow Work of God



Cedar Lodge



Calvin Crest Admin

WOMEN'S RETREAT 2024
CALVIN CREST CONFERENCES

APRIL 26 – 28, 2024

You are invited to a beautiful weekend of inspirational worship and learning, rest, and recreational activities to replenish your souls.

Our speaker for the weekend is Rev. Kate Wallace Nunneley, who provides pastoral leadership in the areas of adult ministry, discipleship, and missions.

Kate is the co-founder of the Junia Project, a ministry that promotes biblical teaching about the partnership between men and women.

Two Nights Lodging; Five Delicious Meals:
Cedar Lodge \$260; Mountain View Cabin \$210
There is Scholarship Funds available at our church to help with finances for those who are interested.

REGISTER @ WWW.CALVINCREST.COM



Mountain View cabins



Rev. Kate Wallace Nunneley

Eggstravaganza

YOUR HELP IS MUCH NEEDED!

For our Big Eggstravaganza on

Saturday, March 30th

9:30 – 11:30am

- Donate Plastic Eggs
- Bring Small Individually Wrapped Candies
- Children's Filled Easter Baskets
- Child Friendly Gift Cards of \$5-\$10 Cold Stone, McDonalds, Starbucks, Target, Walmart, etc. to give away in our free drawing.

- Work a Craft/Game Station

Please bring your donations to the church office by

Palm Sunday, March 24th

Contact Stephanie Anderson to Help!

FPC LEARNING ZONE

With only three months left in the school calendar year, we are seeking individuals who are willing to volunteer one hour and half of their spare time to help tutor a child either in reading, writing, or arithmetic. Tutoring is on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays from 3:30-5:00pm.

We could certainly use two more tutors on Tuesday afternoons and up to three on Wednesday afternoons. The children vary from 1st-6th grade and your time is greatly needed to help them become a more confident and self-reliant student. If you are spiritually led to help a child, please contact the church office or Stephanie Anderson.

Thank you for your willing heart.



Session, Deacon & Finance Ministries

SESSION HIGHLIGHTS

Session last met on February 20, 2024.

Of interest:

- Approved updated job descriptions prepared by the Personnel Committee
- Approved FPC Personnel Policies and Procedures
- Approved the election of Pat Wallace as Clerk of Session for 2024
- Elected Priscilla Peters and Dave Posluch as the Elder Representatives for the 2024 Nominating Committee
- Approved the 2024 Mission Pledge with \$3,500 going to General Assembly Basic Mission and \$3,500 going to Synod/Presbytery Basic Mission
- Reorganized our committee structure, eliminating Technology as a standalone committee and transferring that responsibility to Buildings & Grounds, and combining Adult and Student Ministries into a single Christian Education Committee
- Appointed two special task forces, one to review the membership roll and another to develop an online FPC calendar accessible to all via the website
- Received an update on an expedited Presbytery-sanctioned method for churches seeking pastors to conduct a Mission Study.

On behalf of Session, thank you for your continuing support of the mission and ministries of First Presbyterian Church of Turlock.

In Christ,

Priscilla Peters
Clerk Pro-Tem

FINANCE UPDATE

January 2024

Contributions: \$18,589
Other Income: \$112
Total Income: \$18,701
Expenses: \$18,723
Excess Expense: (\$22)

We begin the year seeing our staff perform their jobs fantastically and managing expenses to 30% below budget. Not atypical in January, income was also below budget, resulting in excess expense of \$22. We continue to be grateful for the work our staff accomplishes and thankful of their concern of the financial assets of our church. The finance committee is very comfortable with the beginning of 2024, knowing that Deuteronomy 15:10 states, "You shall give to him freely, and your heart shall not be grudging when you give to him, because for the Lord your God will bless you in all your work and in all that you do". Looking forward to FPC's blessings in 2024.

Your Finance Committee

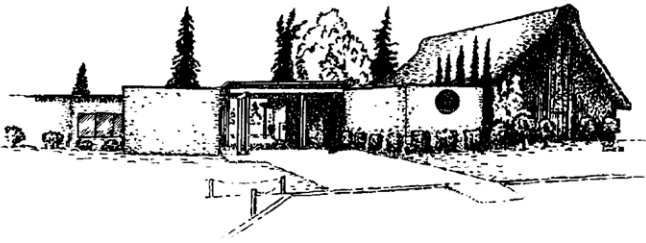
DEACON MINISTRY

After having our first meeting of the new term and greeting our incoming Deacons, we elected the new officers: Jana Purdy as Moderator; Diane Arakelian as co-Moderator; Meghan Young as Vice Moderator; and Pat Rubalcava as secretary.

We are eager to dive into a year of growth and new vistas for our Turlock First Pres family. The Deacons are as ever committed to serving you and your family in all your needs; doing all we can to be the hands and feet of our church. From keeping in touch with our flocks, to preparing and serving Communion, to serving our church as best we can, to finding new opportunities to serve, the Deacons are here, ready to go, and committed to you, our church family, and our Savior who strengthens us all daily and in whose name we all serve.

In His name,

Niki Higdon



First Presbyterian Church
 2619 N. Berkeley Avenue
 Turlock, CA 95382

Phone # (209) 202-3977

E-mail: fpcturlock@att.net

Website: www.fpturlock.com

Facebook:

www.facebook.com/firstpresbyterianchurch



To Know Christ and
 Make Him Known



Church Staff

Interim Pastor: Rev. Dr. Steve Smith
 Youth Ministry Director: Stephanie Anderson
 Administrative Assistant: Polet Yonan
 Bookkeeper: Kim Sasman
 Tutoring Coordinator: Stephanie Anderson
 Director of Music: Rev. Wendy Warner
 Organist: Barbara Bort
 Pianist: Dr. Wayne Kidwell
 Childcare: Rebecca Staley
 Janitor: Michael Morris

ELECTED DEACONS AND SESSION OFFICERS

<u>Elders</u> <u>Class of 2024</u>	<u>Elders</u> <u>Class of 2025</u>	<u>Elders</u> <u>Class of 2026</u>
Mark Aldax Kathleen Gunn Marilyn Hoobyar Priscilla Peters	Dan Hardesty Adria Sanders Jerel Steckling Pat Wallace	Michael Betts Susie England Donna Harrison Davis Posluch
<u>Deacons</u> <u>Class of 2024</u>	<u>Deacons</u> <u>Class of 2025</u>	<u>Deacons</u> <u>Class of 2026</u>
Brent Harrison Donna Lansing Elaine Neely Pat Rubalcava Nancy Seaver Meghan Young	Bill Bishop Niki Higdon Jana Purdy Lorna Schmidt	Diane Arakelian Lynn Posluch Kim Sasman Jane Steckling