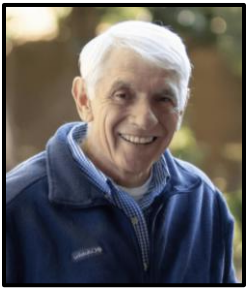


FIRST
PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH
EST. 1909

First Press

THE NEWSLETTER OF FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
TURLOCK, CALIFORNIA

MAY 2026



Prayer has been on my mind lately. I suspect that is part of the reason I have preached my last two sermons on the topic of prayer. I wish I had a better prayer life, but there is one problem. To have a better prayer life takes time.

It seems that prayer gets squeezed out of our lives because we don't have the time to pray. I try to walk for exercise most days and on those days, I use that walking time to pray. It works really well for me.

But on occasion I wake up and think, "I can get up now and take my walk, or I can sleep in. I can't do both because at 9:00 I have a commitment. Sleep can win and walking (praying) gets squeezed out. Sometimes, someone will ask me if they can walk with me. I say sure, but my desire to talk to them means I can't pray when I walk. It gets squeezed out again. I can't really walk on Sunday mornings, because I have to leave Oakhurst by 7:00 AM in order to get to Turlock by 9:00 AM. So it is my work as a pastor that can squeeze out my walking (praying) time. By now you get the gist of my story.

I have discovered that I am not alone. Dr. Hans Kung was a very well-known Roman Catholic scholar. I read and appreciated some of his writings when I was in seminary. This man was a theological heavyweight. He had his earned doctorate and 15 honorary doctorates to his credit. He served as the theological advisor to the Second Vatican Council.

He published a book entitled, "On Being a Christian" in 1974. This is a most thoughtful book exploring the historical Jesus, ethics and the role of the church. It has 720 pages and I don't think there are many pictures.

But readers soon noticed that Kung had no section on prayer, now even a substantive entry about prayer. Kung later admitted that the omission was a "serious oversight". He explained that during the writing process, he was under intense pressure from the Vatican, and he faced tight publisher deadlines, and the result was he simply forgot to include prayer.

I think Kung can teach me (us) a lesson. The pressures and deadlines of life can cause us to simply forget to pray or convince us that we don't have time to pray.

I once found a \$20 bill in a grocery parking lot, but I have never found 20 minutes in a grocery parking lot. Brothers and sisters, we don't find time to pray, we must make time to pray. We cannot find time; we can only make time. Please. Let us all make time to pray.

~ Pastor Rick

Announcements

SAVE THE DATE!

Gaffney's BOCCCE TOURNAMENT



2nd Friday Fellowship

Friday, May 8, 2026
6:00 – 8:00 pm
Mexican Food Catered

\$15 per person
RSVP Rick by May 6th
559.916.6633

end of the year SCHOOL PARTY

We could certainly use your help at our End of the Year Tutoring Tea Party on Wednesday, May 13th in Voight Hall. If you would like to help, please contact Terri Rodger or the office for more information. Thank you.



"Let there be light and there was light."

Many thanks to Acme Electric and our very own Buildings & Grounds Crew, especially Dan Hardsy, Jay Mirza, Dave Posluch, Cindy Peterson, and Wade Fullmer who oversaw and repaired all the lights in our sanctuary.

LAUNCHING NEW BIBLE STUDY

By Christian Education Committee

Sunday afternoons Bible Study
Focus on 1 Corinthians

Rotation Based and Led by Candace Peterson & members of the group

If interested, please contact Candace Peterson or John Miles.

VBS

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

VBS is returning to First Pres on July 27 - 31

We have not had a Vacation Bible School in many years, so we are very excited. I already have commitments from several tutoring parents. We hope **you** will invite your grandchildren or neighbors. Pastor Rick is on board and as well as some of our high schoolers and current tutors. My hope is that the entire congregation helps in some way. I am looking for helpers and people who can help or provide snacks or other things like help with crafts, or teach a class. I will be providing more information in weeks to come. A little more information.

- Theme - God Creates the World
- BIBLE Lessons - Genesis 7, Psalm 1:39 1 Samuel 23 - 24, Luke 22 39, Luke 24:12, Revelation 7:17 and Revelation 21 and 22
- Mission Project - Water for Tanzania

Help me spread the excitement!
More information to come!

Terri Rodger, Tutoring Coordinator

Outreach Ministries

The Learning Zone Tutoring Program

What a blessing this tutoring year has been. We had a few growing pains, but overall it was a **wonderful** year and we learned a lot. Our last day will be Wednesday, May 13th with a Celebration of Learning and then we will take the summer off. We had many positive things happen this year.

Positives

- Congregational Support
- Increased visibility due to banners and emails to Turlock teachers and parents.
- Word of mouth recommendations
- Tutors from outside our church and Turlock High School Key Club
- Returning students
- New students
- Building relationships
- Academic growth

I can honestly say that the only negative was that we are running out of space in Room 6 and need to expand. We grew leaps and bounds this year:

- 29 students (13 last year)
- 30 tutors and 2 regular substitutes

GOD IS GOOD and I am confident that he will continue to bless our program next year. We will start up again on September 8th and 9th and end the last week of April 2027.

Stay tuned for Vacation Bible School July 27 – 31!



Give an Invitation

If you have been meeting with John Fong, you have been learning ways to connect with more people in the community. One way is to simply invite someone you already know to participate in some way. This may include worship, a special event, an activity, a special program held at the church, or perhaps someone whom you know that may be interested in being a tutor or a child needs tutoring. John even gave an example of holding a food drive for a neighbor and asking for contribution. Another idea was to invite someone who used to attend back to worship and letting them know they are dearly missed. All these are examples of low stress yet high impact way to energize our congregation. Please consider one of these ways and invite someone to attend. To keep track of our progress, please let the church office know of anyone who has accepted your invitation.

Missions Ministry

One Great Hour of Sharing

Our One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS) special offering on Easter Sunday raised **\$6,529**. The funds raised across all churches in PCUSA are used to provide immediate disaster relief, sustainable food sources, clean water, healthcare, and education to vulnerable populations globally. In our state, one of the ways the OGHS funds are helping is to provide Disaster Emotional and Spiritual Care for those affected by the devastating wildfires in South California in January of 2025. During the third installment of the Disaster Emotional and Spiritual Care Academy offered online by [Presbyterian Disaster Assistance](#) and its partners, Victoria Villa, who provides training for the [Southwest California Synod](#) of the [Evangelical Lutheran Church in America](#), led an introduction on trauma-informed care and listed some of the tools to support those who have experienced trauma.

Trauma-informed care “is not just about being kind,” Villa said, quoting Dr. Sandra Bloom. “It’s about being radically aware of what people carry and making sure we do no more harm.”

Simply put, trauma can be described in this way: “Something happens to you that shakes you up and changes the way you navigate the things around you,” Villa said. Trauma can come from any number of sources: physical, sexual and emotional abuse; childhood neglect; poverty; racism, discrimination and oppression; even a sudden, unexplained separation from a loved one.

Everyone’s reaction to trauma is different and can be shaped by their experiences, available support, cultural background and the response of the larger community. Reactions can be delayed or immediate, subtle or destructive. Traumatic stress reactions “are normal reactions to abnormal circumstances,” she said. “We hear from people, ‘I feel like I’m going crazy and there’s something wrong with me.’ There’s nothing inherently wrong with them.”

“It’s not that people who experience trauma are choosing to behave a certain way or not choosing to heal on a certain timeline,” she said. “Their body has thrown them into survival mode, and the way they experience the world has changed.” “Without cultural awareness, even well-intentioned support can feel unsafe, dismissive or unhelpful.” “The good news is that trauma and its effects can heal and its impacts reversed with the right support and treatment,” Villa said. “Anyone can be trauma-informed. The important thing to remember is that people just need someone who can talk to them without passing judgment or making assumptions on their behalf.”

The full article can be found at <https://pcusa.org/news-storytelling/news/2026/4/9/disaster-assistance-and-its-partners-offer-webinar-trauma-informed-care>

PER CAPITA

As a connectional church, our work is maintained and funded by a financial system called “Per Capita.” In this system, each governing body above the local congregation’s session determines how much it will cost to do what the Book of Order and the next higher governing council require. Each body also calculates what it will cost to do the ministries we believe God is calling us to do. And the General Assembly determines the cost of maintaining the structures and systems at the national level that support the internal work of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and its relationships with other faith communities around the world.

As members, we pay per capita, in addition to one’s annual gift, recognizing that the Presbyterian Church (PCUSA) is a connectional church and we are part of a larger family throughout the country. This connection includes our Presbyteries, Synods, and General Assembly. Our financial support keeps us connected and able to support the work and mission of our Presbytery and our sister churches. Our 2026 per capita apportionment of **\$34.00** per member supports our Presbytery office, Synod, and General Assembly. We ask that you respond by returning your contribution to the church office.



UNITED SAMARITANS
F O U N D A T I O N

"Helping Hands for the Needy"

United Samaritans Foundation (USF) in Stanislaus County, CA, accepts non-perishable, unopened food donations, including canned goods, peanut butter, cereal, and bottled water to support their daily meal service. High-need items include protein-rich foods, canned fruit, and empty egg cartons, as they serve over 1,500 meals daily.

There is a large **BLUE BARREL** in the office hallway for your donations. Kindly place your donated items to this much needed cause in our community. Thank you for your support.

Music Ministries

♪♪ Notes from the Music Room ♪♪



“Sing to the LORD a new song, let His praises fill the temple.” Psalm 33:3

I have recently been reading through the book, Sacred Pathways by Gary Thomas. One of the chapters discusses *“enthusiastic worship”* which really struck a chord with me (no pun intended). This chapter was a real affirmation that worship includes celebration and music which has a wide grounding in scripture. The Old Testament prescribed three major feasts – Passover, Pentecost, and Tabernacles – and several other celebrations. A musical, celebratory style of worship was one of the hallmarks of King David’s era: “David and all the Israelites were celebrating...with songs, and with harps, lyres, tambourines, cymbals and trumpets” (1 Chronicles 13:8). Jesus and His disciples participated in singing hymns (Matthew 26:30). Paul and Silas sang hymns while in prison (Acts 16:25), and Paul exhorts the Ephesians to use psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs in their worship (Ephesians 5:19). Gary Thomas also mentions that enthusiastic worship must include reverence and that the practice of enthusiastic worship leads to joy.

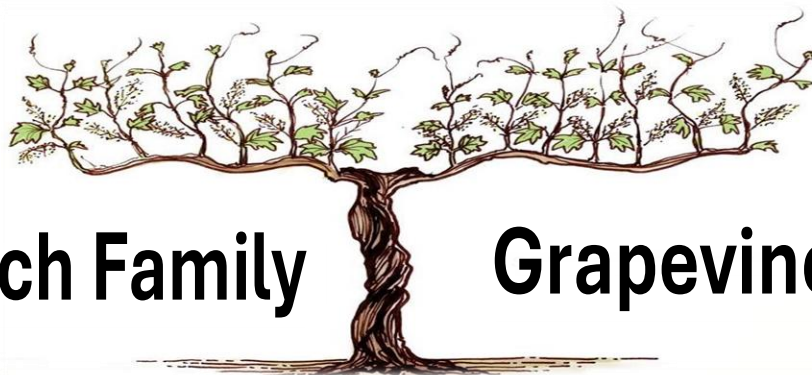
Upon reading that chapter, I realized that we, church family, are doing exactly that! We are worshipping our great God with the singing of hymns, choral anthems, worship songs; and with instruments like flute, violin, cello, brass, and handbells; always offering this praise and worship with reverence and thanksgiving.

Here’s a look to upcoming special music this month. Sunday, May 3rd, Susan Kennelly will add her beautiful flute to both choir and handbell anthems. On May 10th, our friend, Ed Hass, will accompany the choir with trumpet. May 17th, a guest cellist Ryan Gurule will accompany the choir anthem as well as performing a duet with Donna Harrison. May 24th is both Pentecost Sunday and Labor Day Sunday. “Horns of Blessing” will join us for exuberant music. And to finish off the month, on May 31st, our handbell ensemble will be performing. As always, we appreciate Barbara Bort’s beautiful organ preludes and postludes. So, you must plan to be present every Sunday morning this month as we practice *“enthusiastic worship.”*

Serving in song,

Marilyn Fullmer
Music Director

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)
 Callahan, Julie (H)
 Franklin, Mabel (H)
 Kidwell, Wayne (H)
 Lanchester, Irene (H)
 Lowe, Marge (H)
 Mirza, Julius (Jay) (H)
 Neely, Julie (H)
 Philips, Sally (H)

Runsten, Tricia (Darlene's Daughter) (H)
 Sauer, Sheila (Cyndi Sims's sister) (H)
 Taylor, Paul (H)
 Warfield, Sonia (H)

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



Birthdays

May 2 Joyce Wiegman
 May 3 Riley Wellman
 May 11 Lauren Weisel
 May 13 Sally Phillips
 May 14 Vivien Huntley
 May 17 Pat Hickman
 May 21 Jeannie Staley
 May 27 Trevor Purdy
 May 28 Bill Bishop

Anniversaries

May 20 Dean & Kim Sasman

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



MAY 2026

Communion Team – May

Gail Ballas; Heidi Sharer {Deacons}
 Pat Wallace, Dave Posluch {Elders}

Worship Assistants

May 3rd Pat Wallace
 May 10th Dean Sasman
 May 17th Lynette Lotz
 May 24th Heather Gordon
 May 31st Michael Betts



greeters

SUNDAY GREETERS FOR MAY

May 3rd Pat Rubalcava & Kim Sasman
 May 10th David & Diane Arakelian
 May 17th Bill Bishop & Nancy Seaver
 May 24th Kathleen & Shasta Gunn
 May 31st Donna Harrison & Darlene Runsten

Session & Finance Ministries

SESSION HIGHLIGHTS

Session last met on April 20, 2026.

Of interest:

- Approved the 2026 budget as presented
- Received and accepted, with regret, the resignation of Heather Gordon (Washburn-Moore), Deacon, Class of 2027, effective May 1, 2026
- Consensus to move the Session meeting night to the fourth Monday of the month beginning June 2026
- Approved purchase of Vacation Bible School curriculum
- Approved purchase of Church Directory software application

On behalf of Session, we appreciate your continuing support of the ministries and activities of First Presbyterian Church. Please keep your Pastor Nominating Committee and your Session in your prayers as we discern on your behalf.

In His Service,

Pat Wallace

Clerk of Session

FINANCE UPDATES

Income/Expense Report for March 2026

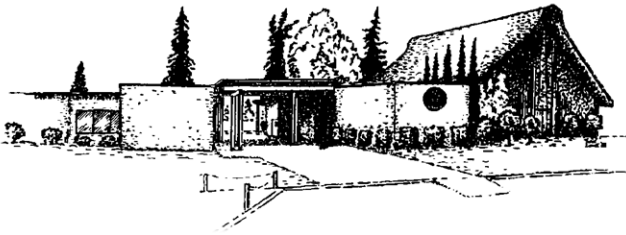
March Contributions	\$ 16,129.00	YTD Contributions	\$ 53,453.75
March Other Income	\$ 2,819.25	YTD Other Income	\$ 6,661.92
March Expenses	\$ (31,737.39)	YTD Expenses	\$ (71,024.31)
Difference:	\$ (12,789.14)	Difference	\$ (10,908.64)

As always, thank you all so much for your continued support for the ministries that we do here at First Presbyterian Church of Turlock. Our finances have been short the last two months, but when we looked back at this time last year, our position was worse than it is now so to me that's good news. So we will take our wins where we can and continue to move forward, working together towards the same goal.

"Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their labor: If either of them falls down, one can help the other up. But pity anyone who falls and has no one to help them up." Ecclesiastes 4: 9-10

In His Mercy & Grace,

FPC Administration Committee



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/firstpresbyterianchur



To Know Christ and
 Make Him Known



Church Staff

Interim Pastor: Rev. Dr. Rick Lemberg
 Music Director: Marilyn Fullmer
 Administrative Assistant: Polet Yonan
 Bookkeeper: Kim Sasman
 Youth Director: Alexis Green
 Assist. Youth Director: Shasta Gunn
 Tutoring Director: Terri Rodger
 Organist: Barbara Bort
 Janitor: Michael Morris

ELECTED DEACONS AND SESSION OFFICERS

<u>Elders</u> <u>Class of 2026</u>	<u>Elders</u> <u>Class of 2027</u>	<u>Elders</u> <u>Class of 2028</u>
Michael Betts Susie England Donna Harrison David Posluch	Kathleen Gunn Candace Peterson Dean Sasman	Marilyn Hoobyar John Miles Martin Purdy
<u>Deacons</u> <u>Class of 2026</u>	<u>Deacons</u> <u>Class of 2027</u>	<u>Deacons</u> <u>Class of 2028</u>
Lynn Posluch Jana Purdy Kim Sasman Lorna Schmidt Nancy Seaver	Bill Bishop Jo Coffman Donna Lansing Darlene Runsten Heidi Shearer	Diane Arakelian Gail Ballas Pat Rubalcava Cyndi Sims