

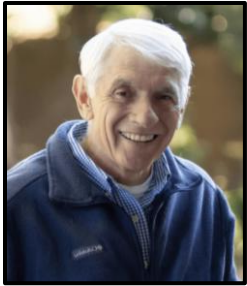
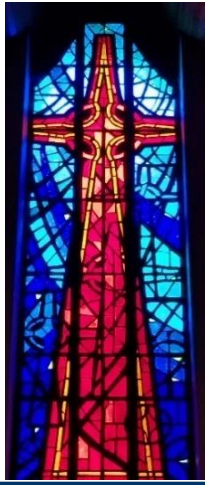
FIRST  
PRESBYTERIAN  
CHURCH

EST. 1909

# First Press

THE NEWSLETTER OF FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH  
TURLOCK, CALIFORNIA

## MARCH 2026



One of the most difficult things for Presbyterians is evangelism. Many of us have a hard time talking to others about our faith. I know for years I thought I will just live like a Christian should live and that would be my witness o others. After all,

showing the love of Christ is more important that talking about the love of Christ. The problem is that I don't live out the love of Christ as well as I should. No one has ever walked up to me and said, "I have watched how you live and it has moved me. Tell me about Jesus." I just don't live that well.

What I need to do is tell people about Jesus, for my words will normally be better than my actions. My problem is that I am now comfortable talking to others about Jesus. It seems too personal. But if I believe, and I do, that knowing Jesus makes all the difference in how we live our life, then I need to tell others.

Most people I know don't want to talk about Jesus. What worries them the most is to have to talk to strangers about Jesus. I get it, for it is not easy for me either. God does, on occasion, call us to share our faith with strangers, but not all that often. Most of the time, He calls on us to talk with those we know, family members, neighbors, co-workers, fellow students, etc.

In John 1:40-42, we read that when Andrew heard about Jesus, "the first thing Andrew did was to find his brother Simon and tell him, 'We have found Messiah.'" And he brought him to Christ. Andrew told his brother about Jesus.

The disciple Matthew was a tax collector before he became a disciple. But once he followed Jesus, he hosted a dinner and invited his former co-workers to come and hear Jesus. Matthew talked his business acquaintances to come and meet Jesus.

We read an interesting story about Cornelius in Acts 10. Cornelius had invited Peter to come to his house for he wanted to learn more about Jesus. When Peter got there he discovered that Cornelius had invited his relatives and friends to come and hear Peter talk about Jesus.

Talking with strangers about Jesus maybe hard, but our primary call is to talk with family, friends, neighbors and business acquaintances. Make a list of people you want to share with about Jesus. Just pray for those on the list. Ask God to give you an opportunity to talk to them about Jesus. Perhaps you will be surprised how easy it is to do.

Blessings,

*Pastor Rick*



# Announcements

## 2<sup>nd</sup> FRIDAYS Fellowship

IT'S FRIDAY THE 13<sup>TH</sup>!! DON'T TEMPT YOUR LUCK!!

You shouldn't break a mirror, walk under a ladder or step on a crack!! But you CAN have good luck and come out to a delicious dinner with friends!!

**When: Friday Mar 13<sup>th</sup>**

**Time: 6:00 pm**

**Place: Mundo's Latin Grill & Cantina  
687 North Golden State Blvd**

**RSVP to Pat & Ken Weisel  
By March 11<sup>th</sup>  
209.606.0946**

**They will provide Dessert**



## Palm Sunday Bake Sale

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH  
46<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL  
PALM SUNDAY BAKE SALE  
SUNDAY, MARCH 29<sup>th</sup>  
IN VOIGHT HALL AFTER SERVICE

Help us celebrate by bringing your **DONATED** Labeled Baked Goods prior to worship and then return after the service to purchase a delicious baked item.

**ALL** the proceeds will go towards the non-budgeted items to help improve the serving ministries of the church.

Thank you for your support!

## Holy Week Schedule



**PALM SUNDAY & BAKE SALE**  
MARCH 29<sup>th</sup>

**HOLY WEEK**  
MARCH 29<sup>th</sup> – APRIL 5<sup>th</sup>

**MAUNDY THURSDAY WORSHIP SERVICE**  
THURSDAY, APRIL 2<sup>nd</sup> @ 6:30 pm

**GOOD FRIDAY BRUNCH**  
FOR ALL FAMILIES  
APRIL 3<sup>rd</sup> @ 10:30 am

**EASTER WORSHIP SERVICE, APRIL 5<sup>th</sup>**  
SINGLE SERVICE @ 10:00 am

## VBS

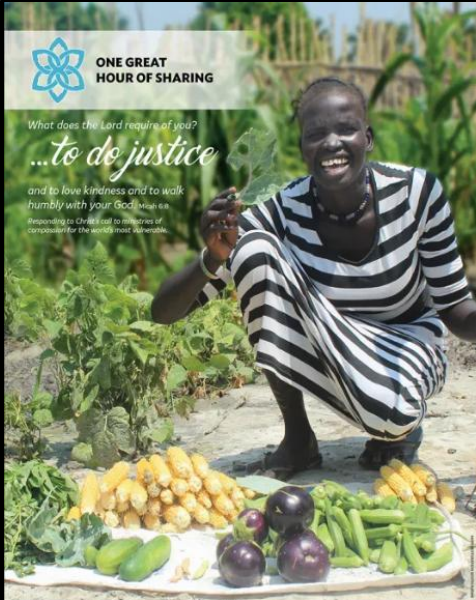
### VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

Do you remember how much fun it was to attend Vacation Bible School each summer? Or how much fun your children had at VBS? Good News! Session has approved VBS 2026. I am looking for a group of people to help me (Terri) plan, organize and implement VBS 2026. We are tentatively planning VBS to be June 22 – 26 or July 6–10. We are looking at different programs. Several of my tutoring families are interested and we are hoping to have children or grandchildren of members join us. We will have lots of opportunities for the congregation to help. Remember "It takes a Village." If you think you can help me plan, please text me (Terri 209-606-3920). More information to come.

*"We can do all things through Christ who strengthens me."*

Terri Rodger

# Missions Ministry



On Easter Sunday, FPC will receive the One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS) offering. This is one of three special offerings collected each year by the Presbyterian Church. It's a tradition that extends back to the year 1949, immediately following the end of World War II when leaders of many denominations joined together in an ecumenical effort to address the devastation caused by that war. Amazingly, this ecumenical effort continues today. Each denomination allocates its gifts differently, but all use their funds for ministries of disaster relief, refugee assistance, and development aid. Today, projects supported by One Great Hour of Sharing are under way in more than one hundred countries, including the United States and Canada.

During the month of March and in early April, we'll be finding in our bulletins inserts that tell stories about projects supported by our gifts to One Great Hour of Sharing. In addition to disaster relief and recovery, One Great Hour of Sharing support goes to causes such as food insecurity, community development and immigration/migration. The projects respond directly to the call to do justice in Micah 6:8, giving us a tangible way to share God's love.

OGHS is the single, largest way Presbyterians come together each year to work for a better world. Let's do our part, for when we all do a little, it adds up to a lot!



## 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 & Tutoring Ministries



## ♪♪ Notes from the Music Room ♪♪

**“The Son of God loved me and gave Himself for me.” Gal. 2:20**

This month our choir and handbell ensembles are busy in rehearsals preparing for all the music to be performed during Easter week. Holy week begins March 29 with exciting music to celebrate Palm Sunday. Our friend, Ed Hass, will join the choir adding his marvelous trumpet to one of our anthems: “Hosanna, Sing a Loud Hosanna!” and handbells will join in the choral introit.

A new event for Lent this year will be a “Maundy Thursday” service on Thursday evening, April 2 at 6:30 pm. The choir will perform a dramatic choral presentation entitled “The Last Sacrifice”. This will include narration, “readers theater”, costuming, drama, and communion. Make plans to attend and mark your calendar to save the date. This evening service will be very meaningful as we remember our Lord’s sacrifice. He is the “Lamb of God”.

Then on Easter morning we will fill the sanctuary with music and worship to celebrate our risen Savior! This service will be filled with joyous music from organ, choir, handbells, and our favorite Easter hymns! Then Pastor Rick will share his Easter sermon. What a glorious and blessed morning it will be. So plan to be here with all your family!

“I cannot tell why He, the King of Heaven, should leave the peace of all eternity; why God Himself should lay aside His splendor to leave the Father’s side and come to me. But this I know: our silence filled with singing, and all our darkness fled from heaven’s light....this I know: the Son will rise on one eternal morning when Christ, the Savior of the world, is Lord and King”.

Serving in song,  
Marilyn Fullmer  
Music Director

## The Learning Zone Tutoring Program

We are so excited that our tutoring program now has 30 students. We are truly a multicultural program. Our students come from a variety of backgrounds. All students are welcome. Here are some fun facts:

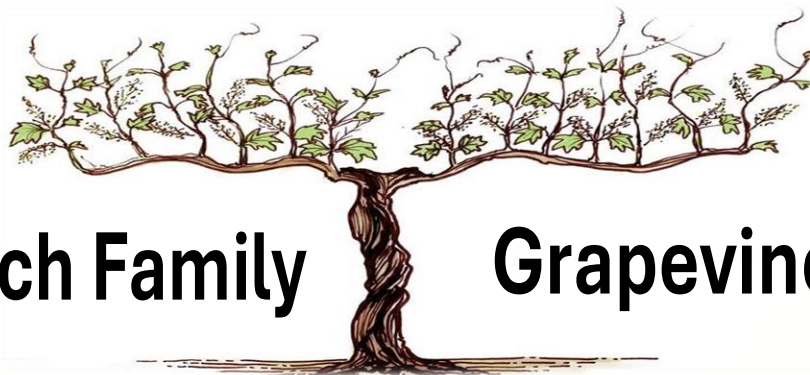
- Ten Girls
- Twenty Boys
- They come from various elementary schools Julien - 4, Crowell- 4, Walnut -5, Medeiros -8, Home School -2, Cunningham -1, Earl - 4, Brown -2 Somebody is missing 😊)
- Our students come from various backgrounds, and we are so proud to learn from each other. We have 3 Sikhs, 5 Muslims and the remainder are 22 Christians

We have enjoyed learning about other religions in **addition to academic assignments**. We recently celebrated Diwali featuring our Sikh children. Their parents brought food for us to try. We read about Diwali and did an art project. Ramadan and Ash Wednesday started on March 18<sup>th</sup>. Ramadan is a Muslim holiday, so we read about it. Some of older students compared the similarities of Ramadan and Lent. It was amazing how similar they are. I wish I had videoed the conversation between the two boys I worked with. Next, we have Holi (Sikh). Holi is a celebration of spring in the Sikh religion and other things, but we are celebrating spring) We will read about it (March 4<sup>th</sup>) but celebrate it at the end of March and beginning of April with our Easter Egg Hunt and the throwing of colors (Holi tradition). We will also be learning about Lent.

If you would like to help us, we could use filled plastic Easter Eggs. If you feel that you don't want to fill them, we would love empty plastic eggs. I believe the Dollar Tree has filled and unfilled and so does Amazon. I need eggs by March 29<sup>th</sup>. I will put a basket in the Narthex.

Our congregation has truly blessed our tutoring program. We so appreciate your prayers and prayers. Please feel free to stop by on any Tuesday or Wednesday to see what we are doing.

# 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

Veronika Beck (H)  
 Bishop, Emily (H)  
 Blixt, Elizabeth (H)  
 Callahan, Julie(H)  
 Hickman, Pat (H)  
 Kidwell, Wayne (H)  
 Lanchester, Irene (H)  
 Lowe, Marge (H)  
 Mirza, Julius (Jay) (H)  
 Runsten, Tricia (Darlene's Daughter) (H)  
 Taylor, Paul (H)  
**Vesperman, Richard (H)**  
**Wolf, Adele (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 6 Donna Harrison  
 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

### Anniversaries

Mar 11 Robert & Susan England

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



### MARCH 2026

#### Communion Team – March

Cyndi Sims, Kim Sasman {Deacons}  
 Donna Harrison, Susan England {Elders}

#### Worship Assistants

March 1<sup>st</sup> Susan England  
 March 8<sup>th</sup> Heather Gordon  
 March 15<sup>th</sup> Candace Peterson  
 March 22<sup>nd</sup> Dave Posluch  
 March 29<sup>th</sup> Jana Purdy



#### SUNDAY GREETERS FOR MARCH

March 1<sup>st</sup> Martin & Jana Purdy  
 March 8<sup>th</sup> Gail Ballas & Heidi Shearer  
 March 15<sup>th</sup> Dan & Barabar Hardesty  
 March 22<sup>nd</sup> Michael & Lynette Betts  
 March 29<sup>th</sup> Mark & Alison Aldax

# Session, Deacon & Finance Ministries

## SESSION HIGHLIGHTS

Session last met on February 16, 2026. This was the organizational meeting for 2026 with the newly ordained and installed Class of 2028 in attendance.

Of interest:

- Elected Pat Wallace as Clerk of Session for 2026 with voice privilege.
- Elected corporate officers for 2026: John Sims (President), Pat Wallace (Secretary), and Mark Aldax (Treasurer).
- Elected Candace Peterson, John Sims, and Pat Wallace as commissioners to Presbytery. Polet Yonan is an alternate.
- Approved January 24, 2027, for the 2027 Annual Congregational Meeting.
- Approved for 2026: the communion schedule, special offerings, money counters, and check signers.
- Approved December 6, 2026, as the date for the annual Mission Faire.
- Session is still working on the 2026 budget.
- There will not be an Eggstravaganza this year.

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 January 2026**

January Contributions:	\$ 23,305.00	YTD Contributions	\$ 23,305.00
January Other Income:	\$ 2,176.00	YTD Other Income	\$ 2,176.00
January Expenses	\$ (19,837.60)	YTD Expenses	\$(19,837.60)
Difference:	\$ 5,643.40	Difference	\$ 5,643.40

Thank you all for a fabulous 2025 as well as starting out 2026 on a positive note. It is always nice to get these reports and see we are in the black to start the year out. As we start the Lent season may we reflect on Gods word and steward our resources with faith.

*"The LORD your GOD is with you, the Mighty Warrior who saves. He will take great delight in you; in his love he will no longer rebuke you, but will rejoice over you with singing." Zephaniah 3:17*

In His Mercy & Grace,

FPC Administration Committee

## DEACON MINISTRY

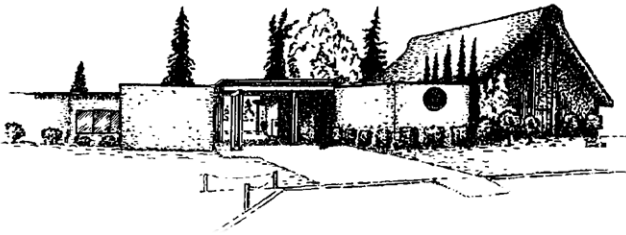
Our deacons met in February to welcome those who became active deacons for this year, and to honor those who were going off term. You will be sent a letter of introduction from your deacon if you were assigned a new one.

Please always feel free to contact the deacons if we can be of any help to you.

We look forward to a year full of blessings. Thank you for your support and prayers.

Pat Rubalcava





**First Presbyterian Church**  
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 Website: [www.fpturlock.com](http://www.fpturlock.com)



Facebook:  
[www.facebook.com/firstpresbyterianchur](http://www.facebook.com/firstpresbyterianchur)

To Know Christ and  
 Make Him Known



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