



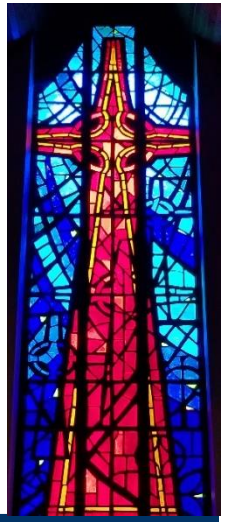
FIRST
PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH

EST. 1909

First Press

THE NEWSLETTER OF FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
TURLOCK, CALIFORNIA

MARCH 2025



*What if tomorrow you met Jesus
Face to face on the street
Would you be happy to see Him
And, would you sit down at His feet?
Or, would you turn away and walk on by
Pretending not to see
What if tomorrow you met Jesus
Would He be the man you want Him to be?*

It is Lent again. Last year, we considered what led Jesus to the cross and what his choices mean to us. This year, I am going to challenge how we see Jesus here and now and how we might confront this Holy Season with humility and honesty. Because, sometimes we forget who Jesus is and what he came to achieve. Sometimes, we get so caught up in our own successes and tribulations, our own daily grind, that we consign Jesus to a little corner of our mind and don't really keep Him central to all our thoughts. So, let's talk about it. Let's talk about how we think about Jesus, and how He wants us to know Him.

Because, what *if*, tomorrow you met Jesus, face to face, on the street. What if in the middle of your busy, everyday life, you looked up and He was just standing there. What do you think he would like? Would He be someone you would immediately start talking to? Would you walk around Him, just smile politely and keep on going? Or would you fall down in worship at the feet of the Risen Savior? I know how we want to answer. We want to say that we would *immediately* know it was Jesus. But, can we say that? What *do* we think Jesus would look like?

This man led an itinerant ministry for three years before being executed as a seditious rabble rouser. He didn't have a stable home, he likely didn't always eat every day, he almost certainly didn't bathe or wear clean clothes daily. He was in the sun most of the time, walked everywhere, and relied on the gifts of others for any money he had. He didn't travel alone, but with at least 12 other men, and likely a larger group whose members changed often. He was run out of cities more than once, attacked by crowds even more often, and scorned by most people who had any sort of power or prestige. He claimed to hear God's voice, he claimed to be able to heal by touch, he spent hours teaching morality lessons to literally anyone who listened, but he would also run away from the crowds following him. He openly challenged the right of the religious elite to do and say the things they had been doing and saying for generations; accused them of knowing that their words and actions were against God's will. He turned to the lowest dregs of society and welcomed them like they were royalty, but spurned overtures from the elite to become one of them. He taught lessons that flew in the face of common sense, but oozed with love, grace, and mercy.

He lived as He taught, and He died as He lived. But, what would He look like today? And, would you recognize Him if you met Him face to face?

In His Faithfulness,

Niki Higdon



Announcements

Celebrate St. Patrick's Day 🍀 at our Next

2nd FRIDAYS

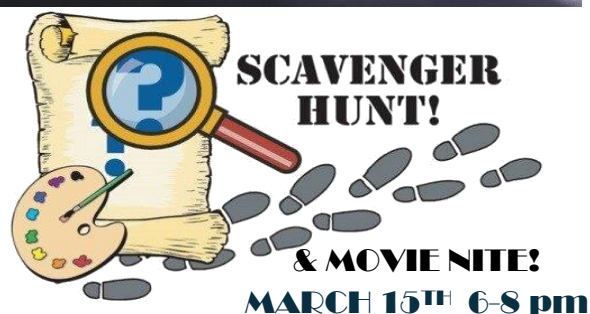
Date: Friday March 14, 2025

Time: 6:00 pm

Place: Newtown Cafe

Address: 811 W. Hawkeye (used to be Los Gallos, across from new Transportation Station)

RSVP: Pat Weisel @ 209.606.0946
OR Pweisel33@gmail.com



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 2025 per capita apportionment of **\$32.00** per member supports our Presbytery office, Synod, and General Assembly. We ask that you respond by returning your contribution to the church office.



Lancaster Painting recently repainted the exterior walls of the sanctuary. This picture of the south wall shows the men at work. Great care was taken to make sure our beautiful stained glass window was kept safe throughout the process.



We are in need of individuals to help with opening the church doors on Sundays @ 8:30 am and help prepare coffee for fellowship time. Please contact the office, if you are willing to help.

The church was recently gifted new awnings for our children's playground structure. Thank you for your donation.





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We Help the Homeless & Hurting
FIND HOPE IN CHRIST

Continuing our Meal Deliveries Every Second Sunday of the Month to Turlock Gospel Mission Between 4-5pm.

If you'd like to be part of this great ministry, please contact the office.

♪♪ Notes from the Music Room ♪♪



I think January / February as “rest” months. After all the busyness of the holidays, with all the Christmas music to perform, the music department takes a moment to relax. But notice, I said only a “moment”. Choir and handbell ensembles are in full rehearsal-performance mode. Now in the month of March both ensembles will be performing for Sunday worship as well as working toward the beautiful music of Lent and Easter. On Saturday, March 15th, the choir will have a special rehearsal to work on music for Palm Sunday, Good Friday, and Easter.

In each rehearsal, we enjoy the fellowship of making music together; with the goal to be a blessing to you, our church family, and lift our song in praise and worship of our Lord Jesus. As the hymnist Bryan Leech writes: *“Lord, when we praise You with glorious music; Lord, when we give You the best we can bring...here we’re rehearsing themes that in heaven we’ll fully explore...praising You then with a perfect devotion, bowing before You to love and adore.”*

Serving in song,

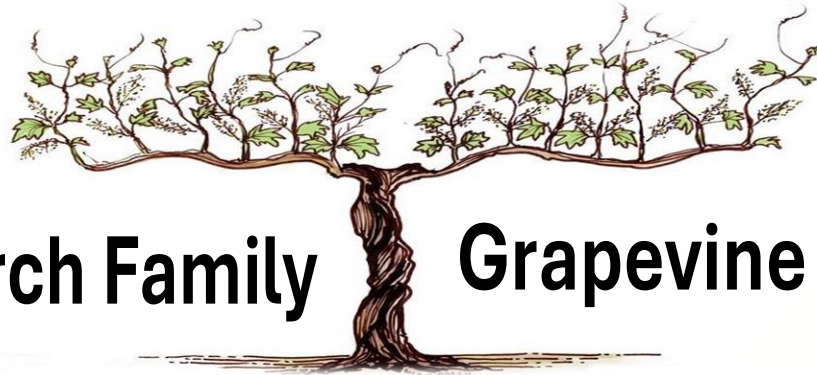
Marilyn Fullmer
Director of Music



PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN BIBLE STUDY

We continue to meet every third Wednesday of the month at 10:30 am in Voight Hall. We also have a Zoom link available for anyone who'd like to participate online. The Zoom link is available on our webpage, fpturlock.com.

Our current study, *“Climate Change”* from the book, **Let Justice Roll Down**, will be covered on March 19th at 10:30 am. This lesson's main theme is to portray that more people than ever are now convinced that climate change is a human caused immediate threat. Scripture teaches us to listen to prophets that warn of these threats; avoid complacency, self-concern, and participate with joy in the work God has given us to do. Some of the scripture references are from: Ecclesiastes, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Luke, and 1 Corinthians. We are also happy to announce that we will be hosting the Sunday worship on March 2nd where we will organize and participate as a group to lead in worship. Kindly join us as we come together and worship our Risen Lord.



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

- Bishop, Emily (H)
- Blixt, Elizabeth (H)
- Callahan, Julie(H)
- Hickman, Pat (H)
- Jones, Melba (H)**
- Lanchester, Irene (H)
- Lowe, Marge (H)
- Marsh, Lois (H)
- Posluch, Lynn (H)
- Reeves & Jordan Families (G)**
- Rubalcava, Pat (H)
- Runsten, Tricia (Darlene's Daughter) (H)
- Smith, Jayne (H)
- Taylor, Paul (H)
- Ulrich, Saralee (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



MARCH 2025

Communion Team – March

Dave Posluch, Dean Sasman {Elders}
Bill Bishop, Jo Coffman {Deacons}

Worship Assistants

- March 2nd P.W. Group
- March 9th Lynette Betts
- March 16th Dave Posluch
- March 23rd Pat Wallace
- March 30th Dean Sasman



Welcome!



greeters

SUNDAY GREETERS FOR MARCH

- March 2nd Darlene Runsten & Kim Sasman
- March 9th Bob & Sally Phillips
- March 16th Michael & Polet Yonan
- March 23rd Pat Hickman & Jayne Smith
- March 30th Michael & Lynette Betts & Family

SESSION HIGHLIGHTS

Session has been very busy working on the congregation's behalf these past few months.

Highlights of the Session meeting of February 18, 2025:

- This meeting is considered the annual organizational meeting for 2025. We welcomed the Elder Class of 2027: Kathleen Gunn, Candace Peterson, and Dean Sasman
- Approved Special Offerings for 2025
- Approved the communion schedule for 2025
- Approved money counters and check signers for 2025
- Elected Pat Wallace as Clerk of Session for 2025
- Elected Corporation Officers: John Sims (President), Pat Wallace (Secretary) and Mark Aldax (Treasurer)
- Elected Donna Harrison and Adria Sanders as the elder representatives to the 2025 Nominating Committee
- Elected Candace Peterson and Pat Wallace as Commissioners to the Presbytery of North Central California for 2025
- Approved January 25, 2026, as the date for the annual Congregational Meeting
- Adopted the 2025 budget
- Approved purchase of a replacement freezer utilizing memorial and bake sale funds
- There was consensus not to hold an Ash Wednesday worship service this year

Highlights of the Session meeting of January 21, 2025:

- Welcomed Rev. Steve Netniss as the Moderator of the FPC Session for a period of six months
- Approved a motion to schedule an all-church yard sale on May 3, 2025, to raise funds for mission efforts, including the Turlock Gospel Mission meal ministry, short-term mission trips, and support of youth ministry mission-related needs
- Approved a motion establishing the Administration Committee (a combining of Finance, Personnel, and Legacy Committees) as a permanent committee of Session
- Approved motion to continue communion by intinction the first Sunday of the month
- Approved a motion that in the absence of a called pastor, the Session designates the President of the Corporation to be the Head of Staff with one direct report who is the Administrative Assistant. All other staff report to the Administrative Assistant
- Approved a motion to charge members for facilities, a minimum of \$50 anytime they use church facilities for non-church business

In **His** Service,

Pat Wallace

Clerk of Session

DEACON'S CORNER

The beginning of the year is always a season of change, of reflection, and of renewal for our First Presbyterian Turlock Deacons. As we look back at the past year, we remember the friends and family that have left us, we celebrate the ministry of the companions that have finished their service, and we anticipate the year ahead with our new Deacons.

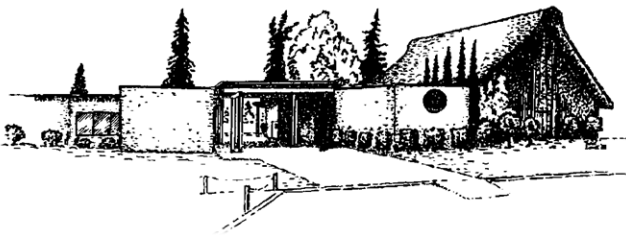
We give our thanks to the Deacon Class of 2024, Donna Lansing, Elaine Neely, Pat Rubalcava, Nancy Seaver, and Meghan Young, who served this Church Family with love and faith. We look forward to continuing to work Nancy and Donna as they both recommitted to new terms. We welcome our new Deacons of the Class of 2027, John Coffman, Heather Gordon, Darlene Runsten, and Heidi Shearer.

We have also elected our 2025 Deacon Officers and anticipate a wonderful year with Moderator Diane Arakelian. Vice Moderator Darlene Runsten, Recording Secretary Heather Gordon, and Treasurer Kim Sasman.

Our new shepherding flocks have been decided, and if you have a new Deacon, you will be receiving a welcome letter from them very soon. We know this coming year will be one filled with love, with hope, and with faith.

Peace and grace,

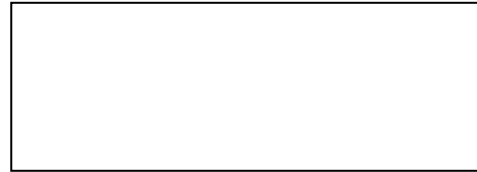
Niki Higdon



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Turlock, CA 95382

Phone # (209) 202-3977
E-mail: fpcturlock@att.net
Website: www.fpturlock.com

Facebook:
www.facebook.com/firstpresbyterianchur



Church Staff

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
 Pianist: Dr. Wayne Kidwell
 Janitor: Michael Morris

ELECTED DEACONS AND SESSION OFFICERS

Elders
Class of 2025
 Dan Hardesty
 Adria Sanders
 Pat Wallace

Elders
Class of 2026
 Michael Betts
 Susie England
 Donna Harrison
 David Posluch

Elders
Class of 2027
 Kathleen Gunn
 Candace Peterson
 Dean Sasman

Deacons
Class of 2025
 Bill Bishop
 Niki Higdon
 Jana Purdy
 Jeannie Staley

Deacons
Class of 2026
 Lynn Posluch
 Kim Sasman
 Lorna Schmidt

Deacons
Class of 2027
 Jo Coffman
 Heather Gordon
 Darlene Runsten
 Heidi Shearer