



FPC Press

SINCE 1909

THE NEWSLETTER OF FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH



Turlock, California

August 2022

Published Monthly



A Message From Our Pastor's Heart Rev. Dr. Craig J. Wright

August Greetings Church Family,

I have been thinking a lot about spiritual growth in the last few months. I wonder if you have picked up on it in the sermons and other conversations at church. At the beginning of July, an image of a ladder came to mind, and it was a simple illustration of where we are and where we need to go in our faith life. The bottom rung of the ladder was of course that which we would call "base." It represented our worst selves, filled with hate, jealousy, pride, and prejudice. The top rung was of course representative of our best self. It was the place where we are most like Christ, filled with love, grace, and openness to others. The simple confession that we all know where God wants us after years of being believers is understood by all. God wants us to be like Christ. Each step we take up the ladder, be it baby steps or giant leaps, makes us more like Christ, again that is the goal.

So, I would like to ask us all to take a moment of introspection and ask ourselves, not where we are on the ladder of grace, openness, and love, but rather, are we climbing at all. Are you moving up the ladder? Or are you stuck? Perhaps you have found a comfortable place in the middle somewhere. So, I would like to ask us all to take a moment of introspection and ask ourselves, not where we are on the ladder of grace, openness, and love, but rather, are we climbing at all. Are you moving up the ladder? Or are you stuck? Perhaps you have found a comfortable place in the middle somewhere. Again, don't shoot me for saying this, but did you know all those people out there, with all those ideas that drive you crazy, are being used by God to move you up the ladder of grace, openness, and love? Oh yes, it is true, it is so true! The universal pattern of humanity is to surround ourselves with people who think as we think, who agree with our positions and attitudes, and make us feel like we belong. Belonging gives us safety and power in virtually all aspects of life, even faith life. Yet, God

commands us to open our hearts to those who are not like us. And this very fact will, thank God, irritate us to move up the ladder.

I am teaching through the book of Acts currently, and this pattern is so apparent. It seems that every rung the early church climbed, they would camp out there, put down roots, pat themselves on the backs for stepping up a rung, and remind one another why they are right. But the Spirit of Christ would not have it. The first Christians were primarily a homogenous group of God-fearing Jews who came to faith in Christ. You may remember that both the law of Moses and their culture reinforced the idea of their tribe remaining exclusive. Jews here, gentiles there, that is the way God wants it. Until God became flesh and canceled the old covenant of law and separation and exclusivity. In its place, Christ established a new covenant, a covenant of grace, openness, and love for all. You can quote that verse by memory, "God so loved the world -yes the world..." Yes, even those people that irritate us, that threaten us, that push our buttons every time they open their mouths. Hmm.

Last week I bumped a Christian friend with a question about politics and he said, I don't care about anything anymore, I am just angry about everything now. I was not being trite when I responded, it sounds like a "spiritual issue." When we find ourselves in that situation, it is past time to take a step up the ladder of grace, openness, and love. Here is some practical advice on how to move up a rung – identify someone that is rubbing you the wrong way, someone who is causing you concern, grief, or possibly even making you angry, and show them grace, openness, and love. I know it is hard to step up a rung, but each step, no matter how small, will make you more like Christ. That is God's goal for each of us! GO AHEAD AND JUMP!

In Christ's Service
Pastor Craig

CHILDREN'S Sunday School

Student Ministries plans to restart Sunday School between services in September. We need some help from the church family to make that happen.

- Prayerfully consider teaching. With enough teachers, we can rotate weekly or monthly. Professional teaching experience is not needed. The lessons from PCUSA are easy to understand and use, and have lots of optional ideas so you'll never be at a loss for something interesting to do. We'll schedule a training meeting to introduce the curriculum, your students, and a typical Sunday morning.
- Right now we don't know how best to divide the students into classrooms. Right now we have 10 kids, but we know there are potentially more. Whether they plan to attend regularly or almost never, we want a rough count all of our kids from entering pre-K through entering 6th grade.

Please contact Candace Peterson (209-634-3393) or peterson_candace@hotmail.com for either or both the "kid census" and teacher recruitment.

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

Sundays during worship hour we will learn about two women with books of the Bible named after them, Ruth and Esther. Who are they and what did they do? Come find out!



**YOUTH
BEACH TRIP
CAPITOLA**

SATURDAY | AUG. 20TH | 8-8PM



**Join One-to-One
Tutoring**

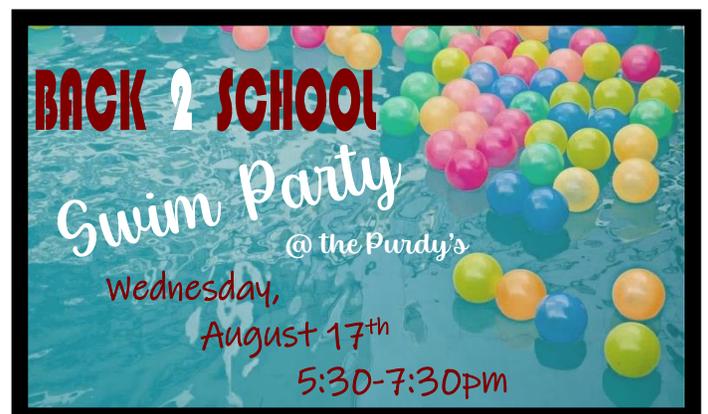
Beginning September 6th
Tutors are needed one day a week
Tuesday, Wednesday, or Thursday

Make a difference!



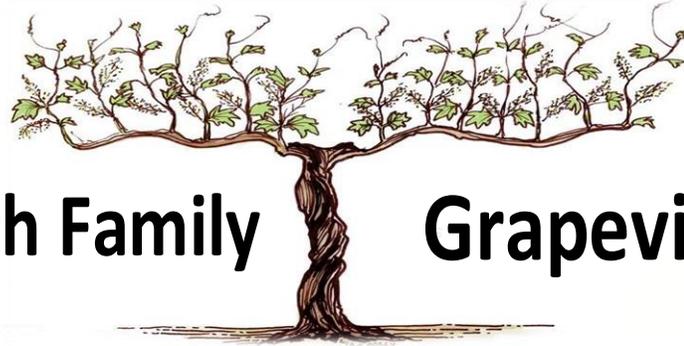
Let's Meet Marcy @ the Movies
Children K-6th
Wednesday, August 3rd
FREE 10:45 -1:00pm

THE CROODS



BACK 2 SCHOOL

Swim Party
@ the Purdy's
Wednesday,
August 17th
5:30-7:30pm



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



Avilla, Robby (S,H)
Blixt, Elizabeth (H)
Brugger, Betty (H)
Brunton, Bob (H)
McBride, Neil (H)
Narita, Leona (H)
Peterson Family (G)
Reeves, Jean (H)
Runsten, Tricia (Darlene's Daughter) (H)
Smith, Betty (H)
Smith, Jayne (H)
Vesperman, Dick (H)
Wiegman, Joyce (H)

Continue Prayers for all the families and individuals affected by the wildfires in the Mariposa County and surrounding areas. To grant wisdom and speed to leaders and government agencies to bring relief and aid to sustain some measure of stability within communities. Please praise God continuously for who He is and what He has done in your life... Blessed is His Holy Name.



Birthdays

Aug 1	Steve Arakalian
Aug 1	Madison Staley
Aug 4	Christian McPherson
Aug 8	Lisa Wellman
Aug 11	Mabel Franklin
Aug 13	Delilah Betts
Aug 16	Kathleen Gunn
Aug 22	Michael Yonan, Jr.
Aug 23	Turan Tuman
Aug 26	Dale Neely

Anniversaries

Aug 2	Bob & Marilyn Brunton
Aug 4	Bob & Joanne Abraham
Aug 4	Don & Saralee Ulrich
Aug 4	David & Diane Arakalian
Aug 9	Roy & Delores Haug
Aug 13	Daniel & Heather Gordon
Aug 18	Dave & Lynn Posluch



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



Need prayer?

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.



Guatemala 2022

A team of 10 went to San Pedro Carcha, a small village of Coban, Guatemala, on the edge of the rainforest.

Three families received new homes complete with bathrooms, stoves, bunkbeds, and 2,500 liter water tanks.

Many lives were touched and prayers answered as we visited families and listened to their needs and encouraged them in their faith. Twenty families were blessed with a month's worth of food. Sixty-five individuals received the gift of mobility as we fitted them into wheelchairs.

Additional needs we found while there, three 2,500 liter water tanks, cement floor and sidewalk for Alex, two bunk beds, a stove, a tortilla business start up, a piglet (business start), emergency house build for Ana Fernanda and her daughters Mildred and Shely, complete with a house, bathroom, water tank, bed, stove, and wash station. are going to be met because of your generosity!! Their prayer is that God would bless you double for your generosity.



ADDITIONAL NEEDS:

We were surprised at the lack of good medical care available in the village. We found many people needing to travel to the city for medical diagnosis and treatment.

Drs visit for High blood pressure for Fidelina

Drs visit for Angela & Adilson for parasites/malnutrition

Drs visit/tests for Gastrointestinal for Mr. Mercedes

Drs visit/tests for Alex

Drs visit/test for blindness for Maria Delfina

Seizure Medicine \$60/mo or \$720/year for Jhony (14yrs)

SPONSORS NEEDED:

2 food sponsors (\$50/mo or \$600/year)

Rosario & Fidelina

2 school sponsors (\$50/mo or \$600/year)

Mildred & Bryan

1 school sponsor (\$25/mo or \$300/year) Shely





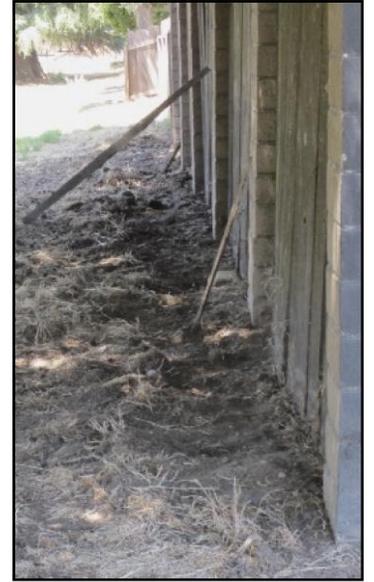
Workday crew hoes and rakes fuel/fire breaks around FPC.

'Hotshot' crew

B&G's workday volunteers mainly scraped a fuel/fire break along our fences. Overall we hoed(!), trimmed greenery, tested sprinklers and revived our drinking fountain. Polet clipped greenery, Dave assessed sprinklers and Dale tweaked the drinking fountain. ❤️❤️



Donna rakes piles of grass from FPC's long west fence.



John Miles hacked away north fence "vegetation" and Priscilla helped clear dead ivy along the condo fence.



Jerel grabs an energy boost. Susie and Tripp stuff Robert's Tundra with "cow fodder".



Tripp clears overgrowth. Polet and Kim trash trimmings.

PRESBTERIAN WOMEN MINISTRY

PW Women's Bible Study is taking a summer break the months of July and August. They will reconvene in September.

Introducing the 2022-23 PW/Horizons Bible Study: [Celebrating Sabbath: Accepting God's Gift of Rest and Delight](#) authored by Carol M. Bechtel. This study begins in September 2022. In the nine lessons of this Bible study – with passages from Genesis, Exodus, Deuteronomy, Isaiah, Matthew, Luke, and Acts – we'll consider Sabbath: as a celebration, not a day of dreary formality; as God's intent for all of creation that includes busy women too; as one day of the week, perhaps a Sunday; as a time to surrender unhealthy striving and frantic busyness, and instead trust that God will provide; as a reminder that life is precious and working too much is against God's plans for our precious lives; as a day devoted to community and justice and not exclusively to self-care. Ultimately, Sabbath reminds us to honor God who honors us by giving us a day each week to reset our pace, our priorities, and our lives.

For any questions or more information, please contact Candace Peterson.

♪♪ Notes from the Music Room ♪♪

*Let the whole creation cry
"Glory to the Lord on High!"*

This is what I felt yesterday as the choir, or many of them, began to come into the sanctuary for rehearsal after their six-week summer break! And then they began to sing. SING! Even after a such a lengthy hiatus, their voices were WONDERFUL! I have missed them, their voices, their smiles, their laughter, their presence. And today I will get to assemble the bell choir! And rejoice in the gathering of that delightful group of musicians! Each week these folk bring their talents together to create music to present to God. And we, the congregation, have the privilege to be a part of that presentation to God! We are all in this together!

At the end of the rehearsal, I asked the choir members to share their favorite anthems and hymns. It was no surprise to me that the list included a wide variety of music, from ancient to very modern, from meditative to lively, and of course favorites of one are not the choirs of another! But we are all individuals, and our lives have shaped us differently which means that our musical preferences span the breadth and depth of the music world. What a joy!

So as we listen to the music of worship each week, let us listen to the rich variety of pieces chosen for that week, and perhaps enjoy the melodies and harmonies which might not have been included in our personal list of favorites before, but might now be heard as a new delight!

And if you would like to have a favorite of yours sung or played, I would be happy to add your choices to my growing list!

Welcome back CHOIR and BELLS! Bring us music to delight God in our worship!

Rev. Wendy Warner,
Director of Music

DEACONS TEAM MINISTRY

Since our last newsletter article, we have hosted two memorial receptions. The first one was for Mabel Sargis on June 25th. There was an array of delicious food. Thank you to everyone who brought a special dish to share as everything was delicious. Thank you to the many Deacons and others who were able to assist on that day. A huge thank you to Nick Wright who created the 'Chicago Dogs' and the other meat entrée and to Joseph Reyes for his assistance. Their planning and presentation of those two dishes was exceptional. Another huge thank you to Robert England and Dale Neely who assisted in many ways but especially with dishwashing and cleanup.

The second memorial reception was on July 16th for Barbara McClellan. It was an incredible service and reception. Again, thank you to the Deacons and others who were available to assist. Nick Wright, our own 'chef extraordinaire,' prepared delicious tri-tip sliders with an assortment of different cheeses. Absolutely superb! Some of Barbara's friends brought salads and desserts to share. Another huge thank you to Robert England for taking charge of the dishwasher and to Dale Neely for always helping where needed. Thank you, again, to the Deacons who assisted. You are all so very special!

We did not have a Deacon meeting in July, so our next meeting will be on Monday, August 8th, where we will continue our planning for updating our church directory.

Again, we look forward to the remainder of the 2022 year and working together with you.

In Christ,

Darlene Runsten, Moderator

SESSION HIGHLIGHTS

Session last met on July 18, 2022.

There are no action items to report from this meeting. Session received a report from the recent short-term mission trip to Guatemala. It was deemed a success!

As a gentle reminder, giving is often lean during the summer months and can lead to significant cash flow challenges in meeting our monthly obligations. On behalf of Session, thank you for your continuing support to the life and ministries of FPC.

In His service,

Pat Wallace
Clerk of Session

FINANCE UPDATE

Income & Expense Year to Date
Ending June 30, 2022

Contributions: \$117,677

Other Income: \$28,183

Total Income: \$145,860

Expenses: \$188,107

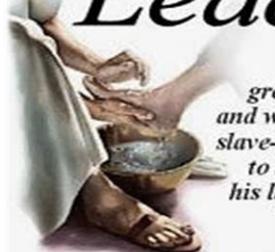
Excess Expense: (\$42,247)

THANK YOU for your generous contributions this year!. Our church staff and volunteers have done a great job of managing our expenses this year but our contribution income is below our budgeted forecast. Any extra financial help you could provide this summer will be greatly appreciated. We are grateful for all you do!

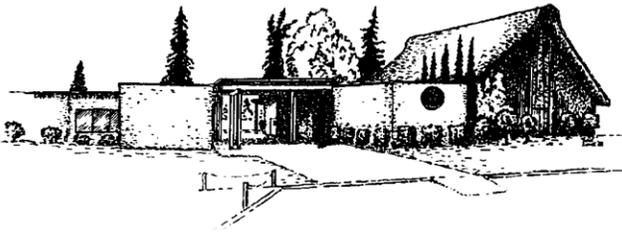
In His Service,

FPC Finance Committee

Servant Leadership



"...whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be your slave--just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."
Matthew 20:26-28



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 Website: www.fpturlock.com

Facebook:
www.facebook.com/firstpresbyterianchurch



Big enough to meet your needs...Small enough to know your name.

Church Staff
Pastor: Rev. Dr. Craig Wright
Parish Associate: Rev. Wendy Warner
Children Ministry Director: Marcy Wright
Youth Ministry Director: Stephanie Anderson
Director of Music: Rev. Wendy Warner
Administrative Assistant: Polet Yonan
Interim Bookkeeper: Rev. Jim Stochl
Bookkeeper in Training: Kim Sasman
Accompanist: Dr. Wayne Kidwell
Organist: Barbara Bort
Child Care: Rebecca Staley
Janitor: Michael Morris

ELECTED DEACONS AND SESSION OFFICERS		
<u>Elders</u> <u>Class of 2022</u> Dan Hardesty Joey Reyes Adria Sanders Patricia Wallace	<u>Elders</u> <u>Class of 2023</u> Michael Betts Donna Harrison Candace Peterson John Sims	<u>Elders</u> <u>Class of 2024</u> Mark Aldax Kathleen Gunn Marilyn Hoobyar Priscilla Peters
<u>Deacons</u> <u>Class of 2022</u> Diane Arakelian Lynette Betts Valerie Keesey Elaine Neely Pat Rubalcava Darlene Runsten Lisa Wellman	<u>Deacons</u> <u>Class of 2023</u> Alison Aldax Niki Higdon Marlena Mizicko Jana Purdy Kendra Reyes Cyndi Sims Jeannie Staley	<u>Deacons</u> <u>Class of 2024</u> Bill Bishop Amber Gonzales Donna Lansing Nancy Seaver Meghan Young Brent Harrison