

June 2010 Shared Life of Old First Presbyterian

Church

Old First's March calendar

http://www.mychurchevents.com/calendar/calendar.aspx?cei=196947443&event_date=3/30/2007&ci=L6H2G1J4F0K5N8N8H2&igd=

Old First Photostream website -- <http://www.flickr.com/photos/oldfirst/>

- June 6 Name tag Sunday. *Wear your own name tag and take a look at others'.*
June 6 Final day of Children's Church School.
June 6 Fund Raising for Children's Library
June 12 San Francisco Gay Men's Chorus with San Francisco Girls' Chorus Alumnae 2 p.m.,
 and 8 p.m. Old First Church
June 12 Memorial Service for Mary Lou Lindstrom Bodo.

The family of Mary Lou Lindstrom Bodo, wife of former pastor John Bodo, invites the congregation to a memorial service at 10:30 June 12th in the Sanctuary with a reception following in the Munro Room.

The final day of Children's Church School is June 6th and will resume again September 12th. Adult classes at 9:30 will also cease during the summer. Watch for special summer adult offerings.

Shared Life Deadlines -- e-mail articles to molberg@earthlink.net

_ July/August issue — Sunday, June 20

_ September issue Sunday, August 15

Lectionary

June 6 1 Kings 17:8-16 (17-24); Ps. 146; Gal.1:11-24; Luke 7:11-17

June 13 1 Kings 21:1-10 (11-14); 15-21a; Ps. 5:1-8; Gal.2:15-21; Luke 7:36-8:3

June 20 1 Kings 19:1-4(5-7);8-15a; Ps. 42 and 43; Gal.3:23-29; Luke 8:26-39

June 27 2 Kings 2:1-2; 6-14; Ps 77:1-2, 11-20, Gal 5:1, 13-25; Luke 9:51-62

Little by little a bird completes her nest

Bob and Kristi Rice are members of San Francisco Presbytery. Read about their work and please keep them in your prayers.

Greetings from the village of Tshikaji, in the Democratic Republic of Congo. We just spent a month learning language in the bush! We

cooked all our meals over a charcoal fire, did our laundry by hand, bathed in the lake, and learned to keep leftovers without a fridge (for 1 day, at least!). We learned a LOT, and would love to share some of the highlights! You can read more about Bob and Kristi at www.pcusa.org/missionconnections/profiles/riceb.htm or go to www.pcusa.org and search for Bob and Kristi Rice.

Maggi's musings

What is happening around Old First this summer? The exciting news is our Summer Seminary Intern Arlo Jones will join us for 10 weeks. As you know from the past newsletter, she grew up in San Diego, has just completed her second year of seminary at Columbia Theological Seminary in Decatur, GA., and is very excited about being here at Old First this summer. Arlo has a strong desire to learn what is like to do ministry and be a pastor in an urban church setting. This internship is a part of her degree program at Columbia and is encouraged by her local presbytery. I will be Arlo's supervisor and she will also work with Supervised Ministry Committee made of lay folks in the church. But an internship really is the work and privilege of the whole church as she learns, develops, and "tries on" the role of minister. What is your part in this relationship? First, pray for Arlo and our ministry together this summer. Take the time to get to know her, tell her your name not once but many times. Take her to a meal, invite her to meet you at your place of work, and invite her into your home. If you are meeting with your small group or a committee, invite Arlo. If you are passionate about a mission or outreach project in the church or city invite Arlo to do it with you. If you have an extra ticket to a baseball game or a show, are excited to see an exhibit or go to street fair, invite Arlo. Share with Arlo why you are passionate about Old First and how you see yourself serving Christ in this place here and now. Arlo will share the second floor office with Genie Kinney from the Senior Center. Arlo's email is arlo@oldfirst.org. What an exciting growing time this summer will be for Old First and Arlo!

June also marks sixth month since we finished that great Old First Food Pantry thanks to the passion and hard work of Buddy Tate Choy and Betsy Chiao and many members and neighbors. As you know, in these last months times have seemed harder for many of our neighbors. Many have dreamed about ways to take the lessons from our great run and find a way to have a group of churches take on this vision and work so that no one in our neighborhood goes hungry. I have been meeting with other pastors and we have been dreaming, visioning and talking with others to come up with a way to share the work and gift of service of the food pantry. Our vision is to have six supporting churches who would, together, be in charge on one Sunday each six months, and also come together to support a coordinator to help keep the details in a line. The food pantry would be held at Old First but the work and responsibility would be shared by six local churches. Today I met with the pastors from Saint Luke's Episcopal, Calvary Presbyterian, Grace Cathedral, and First Unitarians-Universalist church. We are committed to put flesh on these bones, to enable this vision, and to see if we might be able to start feeding people in August or September. This is still in the very first stages but I find myself excited to see local faith groups coming together to make a difference in this neighborhood. Please keep this project in your prayers.
Peace, Maggi

Welcome Our New Members!

We welcome the following people, who joined Old First on May 2, 2010:

Michael Bene and Karen Chi live south of Market and began attending Old First just this spring. They will be married at Old First in October. Michael and Karen both work in IT for a local software company. When not working on their next IT project, Karen and Michael love to try new restaurants, catch up with friends and spend time outside. Currently, Michael spends any additional free time training for his next run and Karen spends her free time wedding planning. Karen joined by Reaffirmation of Faith and Mike by Baptism and Profession of Faith.

Sehjin Han lives with her husband Moses Hohman in the Castro. Their baby Cyrus Balthazar Hohman was also baptized on May 2. Sehjin grew up in the Korean Carmel Presbyterian Church in Chicago. After college and medical school, she made her way back to church by attending First Presbyterian Church in Gulf Shores, Alabama, where she completed her facial plastic and reconstructive surgery fellowship. In her spare time she enjoys painting and making art. She also takes on small random projects like making bibs for baby Cyrus even though it would be more cost-effective to purchase them from the store. She joined by Reaffirmation of Faith.

Bob Fleming, a retired banker, joined Old First by Letter of Transfer from Forest Hill Christian Church here in the City. Bob lives with his partner in Glen Park and enjoys travel; they recently returned from a trip to Australia and New Zealand. Bob began attending Old First last fall, to help with our Recession Response Food Pantry.

Bob Schmitt, a Glen Park neighbor of Bob Fleming, affiliated with Old First as a "Friend," while retaining his membership at Grace Cathedral. He and Bob Fleming volunteered together at our Food Pantry several times last fall, and both enjoy Old First's fellowship and music program.

Pentecost Celebration

On May 23, Confirmands Sam Cheng, Logan Donaldson, Jemma Fagler, Camryn Holler-Smith, joined the church. The confirmands met for over two months. They studied the Bible, faith, theology, and Presbyterian history and Polity, and many other topics. They wrote in prayer journals, participated in a service project, chose and memorized scripture, memorized 11 "We Belong" catechism questions and answers, and wrote a faith statement. Many thanks to their teachers Erwin Barron and Maggi Henderson.

Fund Raising for the Alberto Barrios Children's Library June 6, 2010,

Come one and come all to select choice books for the Children's Library. These books will be used not only for recreational reading, but also to correlate with the teaching curriculum of the Church School Ministry, as the children embark on the road to a life's journey of Faith in Jesus Christ. The fund raising

will occur immediately after the Worship service, June 6, in the Fellowship Hall.

Church school closes for the year on June 6 when the last Sunday for regular church school will be held. We will have an end-of-the-year picnic after church on either June 6 or 13 to celebrate the hard
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work of children, teachers and parents in helping the next generation learn about our faith. Though there will be no church school during the summer, we hope to have some children's activity packets every Sunday so they can explore the day's bible passage during worship.

Church school will begin again on September 12. By then we hope to have hired someone to help with administration for two hours each week. We will also need two more teachers in the fall to teach one Sunday a month so think about helping us out. It is a great way to explore your own faith!! You will be part of a teaching team so no experience is necessary just a willing heart. If you can teach, contact Erwin Barron, erwinbarron@yahoo.com, or Jeanne Choy Tate, choytate@gmail.com. Many thanks to the teachers for all their hard work this past year: Sally, Krista, Chloe, Erwin, Christian, Nina, Jemma, Mary, Yvonne, Andy, and Sam. And many, many thanks to the parents for your support and enthusiasm.

OLD FIRST CONCERTS, \$17 General, \$14 Seniors (65 or older) and \$14 full time students with a valid Sunday, June 4 & 6 at 4:00pm

The Paul Drescher Ensemble Double Duo

Karen Bently Pollick, *violin*; **Lisa Moore**, *piano, electronic keyboard*; **Joe Davel**, *percussion/marimba lumina*; **Paul Drescher**, *quadrachord & electric guitar*

Program of contemporary works for acoustic, electro-acoustic and invented instruments by Paul Drescher, Sam Adams and Martin Bresnick.

Friday, June 11 at 8:00 pm

San Francisco Composers Chamber Orchestra

Mark Alburger, *Music Director*

New works by Bay Area composers

Sunday, June 13 at 4:00 pm

Miriam Abramowitsch, *mezzo-soprano* & **Kumaran Arul**, *piano*

With special guest **Larry London**, *clarinet*

Vocal and solo piano works including works by Mahler, Liszt and Schubert.

Sunday, June 27 at 4:00 pm

Jupiter Chamber Players

Victor Romasevich, *violin*; **Michael Jones**, *violin*; **Stephen Levintow**, *viola*; **Paul Rhodes**, *'cello*

Works by Catoire; Andriasov, and Tchaikovsky

MORE MUSIC, MUSIC, MUSIC - Dr. Jay Pierson, Director of Music
100 Musicians in our sanctuary!!!

San Francisco Gay Men's Chorus will perform at Old First on Saturday, June 12 at 2:00 p.m. and 8:00 p.m. They will be joined by the Peninsula Women's Chorus and the SF Women's Philharmonic, in a performance of John Rutter's *Magnificat* and other sacred choral works. Tickets are available at sfgmc.org or by calling 415-865ARTS. The SFGMC has been in existence for 32 years and has never

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performed a concert in our sanctuary. Please plan to attend this wonderful performance and see over 100 musicians on stage and in the choir loft.

A Rising Star from our choir loft!

Kaileen Miller, our soprano section leader will be leaving for the summer to attend the prestigious Central City, Colorado Young Artists' Opera Program. Her last Sunday with us might be May 23. Please wish her well as she pursues what promises to be a successful career. We hope that Kaileen will be back with us in the Fall, but if opportunities present themselves, which would take her outside of SF, then we would sadly say farewell and thank her for enriching our worship services with her beautiful voice.

!And yet another guest chorus at Old First Church!

At our 11:00 am service on June 20th, we will host the Park Hill Youth Chorale from Butler, Pennsylvania. They will join our choir during the service and will perform prelude music starting at 10:45 am in the sanctuary. This group of young adults will be on a "music and service" tour, performing in churches, but also taking part in service projects in their tour cities. As part of their service to San Francisco and Old First Church, they will sing for the residents at Central Gardens Convalescent home at 3:00 pm on Sunday, June 20.

Birthdays — A month in advance, giving you plenty of time to send a card

July 6 – Anne Cheng (7th birthday)
July 10 – Bill Feister
July 11 – George Becker
July 15 – Jim Fagler
July 20 – Johnni Olds
July 21 – Sarah Taber
July 22 – Hugh Thacher
July 25 – Pam Byers
July 25 – Jerry Stuart
July 27 – Gabriele Beck-Engeser, Alastair Moore
July 31 – Emmy Clausing

Many Thanks

Evelyn and Diane want to thank all the many members of Old First who sent beautiful cards, and called when she was recovering from her fall. The kind spirits and love helped so much. Katharine Yee also wants to thank the members of Old First who have offered prayers both for she and her father in his illness, and for the card sent to her from Old First friends.

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The Book Nook

Reviews from the Children's Library

Jan's review offers a personal insight into the relevancy a book had to her family:

Adoption is for Always by Linda Walvoord, Illustrations by Judith Friedman.

Reviewed by Jan Hammock

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In this book, Celia questions wonders, for the first time what being adopted means to her. Celia is confused and frustrated, and even hearing her parents say that they are her mommy and daddy doesn't make her feel better. Through the processes of questioning she learns her birth mother's name, and that in fact her birth parents loved her so much that they choose to give her a home that they could not provide. Her parents now are her parents forever. By reflecting, reading and talking to her parents, Celia is reassured by their love. A pivotal moment for Celia is when she learns she had an adoption day of her own, where the judge declares the adoption is forever.

In our family we never labeled how our family was formed with the word "adoption," so this book means a lot to us. Last summer children started using "adoption" as a teasing word and that hurt that hurt Eva. But this book provided another way to see adoption. We had not shared details of her adoption day with Eva, not wanting her to feel different and thinking we'd save it until it came up. But upon reading this book, she immediately asked if we had photos of her adoption day as Celia had. In fact, we were able to share with her the most beautiful and touching documentation of our special day in August of 2002. Just as Celia, Eva found that an adoption day is special, almost as special as we, her parents, felt on that day. We also realize each person will see their story as individual. What works for us may not work for another. We have given this book to people to help them understand just another way that loving families are formed. We wish everyone a special journey as you learn and tell your very own story.

God Gave us Love by Lisa Tawn Bergren, art by Laura J. Bryant

Reviewed by Eva and Eli Bender

In this book we learned that God loves us. The little bear learned more about love from his Grandfather; that he should love everyone even if they annoy you like the little otters chasing away the fish while fishing (this was Eli's favorite part.) Eva liked the "kissy" stuff when the mommy and daddy showed their kind of love.

SOME FAVORITES SUMMER READS FROM OLD FIRST READERS

Collected Poems--Wendell Berry--These are beautiful, wise poems. Digesting one each day might change your summer.

The Word is Very Near You--Martin Smith. This is the best book about prayer I have ever read.

The Emperor of the Air--Ethan Canin--Excellent short stories by a S.F. writer. He was young writer with amazing insight when he wrote this in 1989. Rose Marie

Dandelion Wine, Ray Bradbury. One can hardly imagine a more wonderful way to begin summer than to spend it with twelve year old Douglas Spaulding in a small town. One can almost smell the summer grass, feel the summer sun.

The Hummingbird's Daughter-Luis Alberto Urrea. A lyrical, poetic and mystical epic novel. Ideally suited to long summer days and nights.

The Great Gatsby-F. Scott Fitzgerald-Summer lawns that stretch to the sea and the enigmatic Gatsby staring at the green light at the edge of Daisy's dock. An American Classic. Diane Molberg

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Besides all of Jane Austen's six novels, JoyCrosser suggests the Persephone Publisher's revival of out of print titles. "Little Boy Lost" by Marghanita Laski is about a young widower's post-WWII search for his son in France. Terrific character development, great story, quick read.

On that same rich vein of literature - WWII, "Suite Francaise" by Irene Nemirovsky, both the novel, and the story of the writing, loss and rediscovery of this work is astounding. The author gave us a profoundly different angle of culpability in war.

"Atonement", another all-time great read, too, but the WWII theme is sounding like an obsession, so instead, I'm moving off the western Europe theatre into subcontinental Asia with Manil Suri's "The Death of Vishnu". Compelling read about the class and religious intolerance, told on a very intimate level.

And for pure escapism - "I Capture the Castle" by Dodi Smith, or "Cold Comfort Farm" by Stella Gibbons - both fun, and suitable for the teen readers, too.

"Lady Susan" - by Jane Austen, an early Jane, not as well known as the six classics. Susan is an unconventional heroine.

"Assassination Vacation" by Sarah Vowel - an oddity, travel, Americana, history, family values, two sisters and the son/nephew travel around the country to sites of Presidential assassinations (better than it sounds).

Any Miss Julia mystery by Ann B. Ross - cozy light mystery, good for summer reading, the early ones are the best, Miss Julia is a Presbyterian!, some sly observations on Pastors and Sessions in the early books
The Pluto Files by Neil deGrasse Tyson - Why is Pluto not a planet anymore? Well written science with history and public opinion/culture thrown in for good measure.

Heroic Measures by Jill Ciment - a new novel exploring urban angst, real estate, love (a senior couple) and a stalwart dachshund named Dorothy (You will love Dorothy.) Linda Ryeder

LARKIN STREET PART 2-Bill Campbell

Polk Street and the Tenderloin were not the only places where startling numbers of youth were on the street. Homeless teenagers gathered at Times Square in New York City, on the Boston Common, on Sunset Boulevard in Los Angeles, near Pike Place Market in Seattle, and in other cities. In 1983, four San Francisco nonprofits—Youth Advocates, Inc., Central City Hospitality House, Catholic Charities CYO, and the URSA Institute—formed a consortium and secured a 12-month, nonrenewable federal demonstration grant, one of six awarded nationally. The purpose of the grant was to determine whether a program of outreach and counseling could have a positive impact on urban juvenile homelessness and prostitution. The agencies provided services at three locations, but none was in the Polk Gulch area, where most adolescent male prostitution was occurring. Larkin Street sought to fill this void.

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Larkin Street joined the consortium and obtained a commitment of \$70,000 from the City of San Francisco and \$22,000 in additional funding to supplement the one-time federal grant. City funds covered the cost of leasing space for a multiservice drop-in center near Polk Street and for two staff positions, an administrative assistant and a community relations coordinator. Jean Richardson recruited a seminary intern. The other agencies contributed the program staff. Board member Chuck Olson searched the neighborhood for a site

for a center where kids could access services offered by the consortium. The choice came down to a second floor location on Polk Street and a storefront on Larkin Street. Believing that abused and exploited kids would not walk up long stairs and that it would be better to be located near, but not in, the place where the drug dealing and exploitation were occurring, the board chose the storefront. Olson persuaded the building owner that he should lease them space for a drop-in center for street youth and that a startup with a paltry bank account and no operating history could pay the rent.

Helping Kids from a Storefront

The Larkin Street Youth Center opened in January 1984 at 1040 Larkin, a site ideally located to enable outreach teams to engage youth on the street in both Polk Gulch and the nearby Tenderloin. At the same time, a partner organization, Catholic Charities CYO, opened the Diamond Youth Shelter in the Haight-Ashbury. The shelter had 20 beds for emergency, short-term housing. Initially, the shelter was in the basement of a church on Diamond Street. It later moved to a building on Central Avenue built in 1905 as a laundry.

“Larkin Street’s hours were 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. The Diamond Youth Shelter was open from 10 p.m. to 10 a.m.,” recalls Jean Richardson. “We offered a safe refuge, counseling, and referrals during the day. Then we gave kids bus fare, so they could get to Diamond. In the morning, the kids could come back to Larkin Street. It was awkward at best. Later on, we were able to transport kids from one site to another in vans.”

Almost immediately, the five-agency consortium proved that establishing trusting relationships, restoring hope, and offering a positive alternative to street life could work. The staff and volunteers

engaged kids on the street and provided individual and group counseling, food vouchers, and referrals for housing and job training by partner organizations. Soon, a tiny medical clinic, staffed by Department of Public Health professionals, provided basic care and referrals. An onsite school, led by a San Francisco Unified School District teacher, offered assessments and individual instruction. Roger, who was a client some years later, explained how the multiservice approach helped him: “Drop-In has been a really positive experience for me.

Roger, who was a client some years later, explained how the multiservice approach helped him: “Drop-In has been a really positive experience for me. I like hanging out there, and the counselors are easy to talk to. All the different services are also really helpful. I am taking classes at the school and hope to get my G.E.D.”

In the first six months, over three-quarters of the youth who met with counselors four times or more broke free from the street. Some were able to return home. Others found the stable housing or the jobs they needed to begin productive lives. Word of mouth spread on the street.

Larkin Street Model “The Wave of the Future”

Observers hailed Larkin Street’s innovative approach. In November 15, 1984, *The Christian Science Monitor* described Larkin Street’s early success in an article entitled “New Approach to Aiding Runaways is ‘Keeping Many Kids Off the Street.’” Too often, the article said, a community’s solution was to “deport” homeless kids by giving them a one-way bus ticket home. Before Larkin Street, the *Monitor* continued, San Francisco provided services to homeless kids only in an emergency, an attempted suicide, or a drug overdose; and then the services were piecemeal. Homeless kids rarely attempted the social service maze. They didn’t know how or they were wary of being sent to jail or back home. What made Larkin Street different was that it sent outreach workers into the streets to build rapport and offer options:

Except for a few scattered services like overnight shelters or halfway houses, the United States has no social-service network specifically for homeless teenagers. And Larkin Street’s success as a multiservice program—backed by political support in the community—has been called the “wave of the future” for homeless youth. We proud it is still growing strong.

Young/young at heart Adults at Old First

The Young (& young at heart) Adult Group recently enjoyed a day in Napa. The day consisted of a picnic lunch at V. Sattui and tasting at Castello di Amorosa and August Briggs wineries. A picture taken at Castello di Amorosa, a castle winery that includes a drawbridge, dry moat, great hall, courtyard, church, Tuscan farmhouse, lake, stables, towers and an underground tasting room, is posted on the bulletin board by the Fellowship Hall. If you haven’t been there, we would all recommend a tour – it

was great fun even if you're not a wine drinker!

One of our favorite moments was our discovery at August Briggs that each wine bottle was imprinted with "May God give you of heaven's dew and of earth's richness - an abundance of grain and new wine" from Genesis 27:28. God's goodness is everywhere and we certainly found that to be true during our day of fellowship and fun! Our next outing is scheduled for June 5th. We plan to go to Castro Valley to play miniature golf. If you are young (or young at heart), we would love to have you join us.

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Resurrection through Literature – Jeanne Choy Tate

I have been pleasantly surprised at how Diane Molberg's classes on poetry and literature have opened new vistas on faith at a time when I am sorely in need of spiritual windows. In the world of literature, I find a new language to express faith experiences that the old formulas of dogma longer contain.

On reading Gabriel Marquez's "The Handsomest Man" for Diane's recent class, my first impression was that I had walked into the experience of resurrection rather than trying to understand it. (I am not going to analyze how Marquez achieved this. Hopefully, if you have read the story, you will know what I mean.) I was particularly intrigued when Diane pointed out that there are three groups of people—children, men and women—who each respond differently to the corpse of the handsomest man.

The children played imaginatively with the body as with a doll or action-figure. Innocent about death and the harshness of life, they were fearless in their creativity. Re-enacting adult rituals of burial, they make death their own and claim it as a communal experience. The men, on the other hand, are reality-

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oriented. Reasonable and factual, they want to take charge and do something action-oriented to take care of things. The women responded with passion. They cared lovingly for the body of the dead man. Clothing him in their own longings and desires, they treat the corpse as a living person, giving him a name and making him, even in death, a part of the community.

Though Diane spoke of this as three different approaches to faith, I found myself thinking more in terms of different life stages. Childish imagination is easy to place first. But is that followed by the men's rationalism or the women's passion? Or are men more likely to take one trajectory first and women another? And then, like Jung's anima/animus, no matter where they start do they need to integrate the undeveloped function as they age?

But stage theory is coming into disrepute as too linear and hierarchical with its rigid lines of division. In my own field of child development, changes in the child are now understood as slowly emerging, dancing back and forth across developmental lines. Pausing now and then to pick up and integrate earlier themes and skills. Development is a process, in this understanding, not the product of a skill that once learned can then be neatly roped off and packaged as a developmental stage.

Thinking of faith in terms of life stages that dip and swing and circle around intrigues me. Recently I have been pondering what it means to be a person of faith of a certain age. I don't know what to call the stage I approach. Though it is unflinchingly termed the "elder" years, I can barely cough out the word "elderly." It sticks to the top of my tongue like unwieldy peanut butter. So I couch the word with terms like "approaching" though, in reality, I have probably already arrived. I have certainly passed any mid-life line that might divide a lifetime in half. What term is there for a life lived between mid-life and elderly? I am confined to some purgatory space betwixt and between, lacking definition.

Like my age, my faith no longer fits neat categories of ready definition. Life experience has shattered any rigid lines of dogma. God is morphing in ways I don't yet understand. Undoubtedly, it is not God who is shifting into unrecognizable shapes but my own understanding of God that is changing in unpredictable ways. But that is not how I experience it. Godself seems to be changing and shifting before my eyes and within my mind. The solid grounding of my faith, where I place my feet amid life's tumultuous ups and downs, now heaves and twists.

Sometimes I feel like an empty vessel with only the outward shell of faith in tact (though actually that's not a bad image for the spiritual life). Well-worn formulas that used to nurture my faith no longer hold the same satisfaction. I struggle to fit what I know of life into the old phrases that used to carry weight—phrases like "resurrection," "died for my sins," "Lord and Savior." On Sunday morning, I sit in the pews with a feeling of uncertain belonging. If people really knew my questions would I fall outside the Christian pale? I look around at people behind me, beside me and across the aisle. What do they believe? How do they make sense of it all? Am I alone in my shattered definitions? Or, like me, do others struggle to fit their life experience into phrases now a size or two too small?

But if there are others like me, we sit isolated as container-selves not speaking of the change or lacking words to give it form. Or, if we speak, we borrow the only language that we know that came long ago years in teen-age commitment, a language no longer adequate to contain a lifetime of experience. If we

could connect and share, would we find a new language to speak a living story? Or, having broken open old formulas to let in life's reality, could we once again reclaim those older words?

Caregiver Fatigue and Help for the Caregiver-Heather Losee

You may not know a caregiver now, but the chances are strong that you will at some point, or become one yourself. In any case, you need to be aware of Caregiver Fatigue, a condition of physical or mental exhaustion and weariness, that cannot be understated. Spouses, adult children, and family members are susceptible to caregiver fatigue whether they provide direct care twenty-four hours a day, or from a distance. It can include care for elders or for disabled youth. Elder children caregiving for an aging family member face particular challenges as they attempt to provide care while juggling the demands of young

families and/or fulltime careers. Whether caregivers lose actual sleep or simply wear down from the constant worry and obligations, help is needed before feelings of resentment and guilt set in, and the caregivers' health is compromised. Lack of sleep, poor eating habits, lack of exercise, no quiet time, all wear at the caregiver. There are options, but many caregivers wait too long.

IHSS, In Home Support Services, and Institute on Aging can provide information to the caregiver. Caregiver Support groups also provide support. Caregivers need to understand that asking for help is a sign of strength, not weakness. When someone else takes over the caregiving responsibilities, even for a short time, caregivers can step back, focus on themselves, rest and get recharged. In some cases, professional mental help is needed. Personally, the caregiver can rely on prayer, meditation and deep breathing exercises. Stretching can help rejuvenate the body. Drinking water, taking a relaxing bath, reading the Bible or perhaps writing in a journal are positive relaxation techniques. Especially reaching out to members of your community, including church members, neighbors and friends can be a rich source of support. As a member of OFPC – a, good place to start is by sharing your concerns with your Deacon.

Caregiving: Carrying God's Tears in a Bottle, by Wayne Ewing, PhD
Diane Molberg

Dr. Ewing received his doctorate in theological studies from Yale University. He is a writer, teacher and speaks nationally on caregiving and spirituality. In 2002 he wrote God's Tears in a Bottle, a record of the personal journey in caring for his wife, Ann, who had been struck with early on-set Alzheimer's at the age of fifty-five. He recalls his first premonition that things would change when she said to him, "I don't think I'm going to make it to the end of my life."

Many of us think of the end of life as a matter of years: fifty-six is too young to die. Eighty, even ninety—but not fifty six. But for the Alzheimer's patient, life ends when those things associated with the soul: memory, knowledge, intention, tears and laughter end. Yet, in this slim volume, Ewing comes to understand that beyond the quirks and chaos of this disease lies "an unspeakable beauty; a covenant between the Creator and the order/disorder of creation."

In this collection of deeply personal essays, Ewing speaks boldly and honestly of the spiritual challenges he encountered in his "walk with Ann." Each entry opens with a biblical quotation, followed by his experience of the illness-related dementia, his response and how the biblical verse helped him

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interpret his experience. Each piece is followed with a prayer and a blank space where the reader can record her/his own experience.

Reflecting on how Ann's journey has become his own, he sees his wife as a foreshadowing of an entry into the eternal. He writes, in a particularly moving entry: "I prayed that this perception might be, so that Ann was treading softly on God's good ground, that her soul was brushed by the wings of eternity,

that she was exploring the touch of God's presence in both heaven and Sheol, and that what I saw so darkly was really her bright light with God."

In "Pasting it Together," the great American writer F.Scott Fitzgerald wrote: "...at three o'clock in the morning, a forgotten package has the same tragic importance as a death sentence...and in a real dark night of the soul, it is always three o'clock in the morning." Somewhere between Ewing's hope and vision, and Fitzgerald's anguish there is an answer, and solace.

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AIDS Walk: July 18 2010.

Elder Marcus Jung, coordinator for many years of the San Francisco AIDS Walk's Presbyterian team, has provided the following information to encourage early registration! Sign up needs to be early for this year's AIDS Walk San Francisco on July 18. We plan to again have a Presbyterian team, but to qualify for a team table at Sharon Meadow in Golden Gate Park where we can meet and store items while walking, as well as have our team's post-walk BBQ, we need a minimum number of walkers signed up in advance. Families should register each person individually. For example a family of three will have three registrations. **Any team who registers 25 or more walkers by Wednesday, July 7 at NOON qualifies for a Team Meeting Station at the AIDS Walk.** Details also in the May Shared Life. www.aidswalk.net/sanfran.

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