

Shared Life of Old First – May 2010

Old First's May 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/>

- May 2 Name Tag Sunday *Wear your own name tag and take a look at others'*
May 2 Sign Up continues for Old First Anniversary Luncheon
New Members Join/Baptisms
Glenda Hope Preaches
May 10 Leaps and Bounds
May 16 Bay to Breakers – Leave early; traffic routes may be changed.
May 22 Fund Raiser – Free Farm Afternoon
May 23 **Pentecost/Pentecost Offering**
Confirmants join the Church
Old First Anniversary Luncheon

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

4 June issue Sunday, May 16

4 July/August issue Sunday, June 20

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Lectionary

- May 2 *5th Sunday of Easter* – Acts 11:1-18; Ps 148; Rev.21:1-6;John 13:31-35
May 9 *6th Sunday of Easter* – Acts 16:9-15; Ps 67; Rev.21:10;21; 22-22:5;John 14:23-29 or John5:1-9
May 16 *7th Sunday of Easter* – Acts 16:16-34; ; Ps 97; Rev.22:12-14,16-17,20-21; John 17:20-26 John 5:1-6; John 15:9-17
May 23 *Pentecost* - Acts 2:1-21 or Gen.11:1-9; Ps.104:24-34, 35b; Rom 8:14-17 or Acts 2:1
May 30 *Trinity Sunday* – Prov.8:1-4m 22-31; Ps.8; Rom.5:1-5; John 16:12-15

Maggi's Musings

May has been celebrated as the coming of spring, the time of new beginnings. May at Old First will hold a delightful combination of celebrating where we have been and seeing where we will go.

May 2–Glenda Hope will celebrate the 40th anniversary of her ordination, when she was called to be the Assistant Pastor at Old First. She was the first woman to be ordained in the Synod of the Golden Gate. Since her time at Old First, Glenda has served San Francisco with compassion and challenge at Network Ministries www.sfnetworkministries.org.

May 23 We will remember **Pentecost** (*please wear red clothing!*) the birthday of the church and enjoy our 163 Anniversary Lunch.

Celebrating the present, the now:

May 2–New members will join and there will be at least one baptism;

May 16–Officer Installation: Glen Potter will be installed as a Deacon and Sidney Hollar and Greg Free as Elders;

May 23 Confirmands Samuel Cheng, Logan Donaldson, Jemma Fagler, Camryn Hollar-Smith will join the church.

As I write this, it is hard to separate a remembering moment from a future event. They weave through each other and move us forward. At Pentecost we remember, and still try to live out, the words that challenged, guided, and inspired Christians: ***“God declares that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh and your sons and daughters shall prophesy and your young men (women) shall see visions and your old men (women) shall dream dreams.”*** *Acts 2:17*. History that still speaks to us today.

We will celebrate those that formed Old First 161 years ago, yet strive to have the **old** in our name not mean it has always been this way and should stay this way. Indeed the **radical old** of living out what Acts declares: that we listen for and trust the Spirit as our young and our old dream dreams, plant visions for the church here and now, all the while moving into God's future.

May will also be a time of renewal for me as I will be taking a week vacation. Andrew Hoeksema, who preached here a number of times last year as part of his Seminary internship, will preach on May 9. He is graduating from San Francisco School of Theology this spring and seeking a call.

May 30 will find me at Montreat Conference Center in NC directing the **Proclaiming the Text** conference which is for pastors, lay leaders, seminary students, and all who seek the tools and inspiration needed for proclaiming the Good News.

The theme is: ***“Lift Up Your Voice with Strength”*** *Get you a high mountain, O Zion, herald of good tidings; Lift up your voice with strength O Jerusalem, herald of good tidings, Lift it up, fear not; Say to cities of Judah, “Behold your God.”* – **Isaiah 40:9**. Preaching requires the courage to speak the word of scripture to particular people in particular places who seek to find meaning in their ordinary lives in extraordinary times. This conference offers the biblical scholarship, theological insights, and contemporary tools for preaching and workshops that help preachers proclaim a confident, exuberant, and expansive faith. (www.montreat.org) This time is part of my call and service to the greater church.

May is a time of celebrating where we have come from, and where we are now. It's an opportunity to listen for and follow the Spirit into the future. Why don't you take this month to pray for all those involved in these May Sundays and take time to listen for the Spirit who still blows through the buildings, hearts, and minds of us today.

Peace, Maggi

The Rev. Glenda Hope and Old First

As an urban church in the center of a diverse and constantly changing social climate in the mid—1960's, Old First faced their role in the controversies of the time, and realized that, in order to prevail, indeed to survive, they needed to attract younger people to the church. A Call was issued to Glenda Hope to assume the leadership as Assistant Pastor in January 1970. Hope had grown up in the South and studied religion in the late 1950's, which made her sensitive to the issues facing young people and how the church might fit their needs.

At that time, there were no women ministers in the Presbyterian Church in the United States (the Southern church), of which she was a member and very few in the United Presbyterian Church (USA). Hope graduated from San Francisco Theological Seminary and had experienced negative acceptance because of her gender, until Old First called her.

On May 17, 1970, The Rev. Glenda Hope was ordained at Old First, becoming the only ordained female clergy person in the Synod of the Golden Gate. The San Francisco Chronicle headlined: "A New First for Old First."

Hope did indeed attract many young people into the church, encouraging use of the church meeting rooms for interactive discussions with local writers and artists. She brought the first production of the popular *Jesus Christ Superstar* to the church.

In 1972, Hope left Old First, concluding that she would better fulfill her ministry to those outside the organized church. She founded the San Francisco Network Ministries that she continues to lead, in addition to providing shelter and support for women leaving the sex industry. For her work in the Tenderloin, she has received the Women of Faith award from the Presbyterian Church (USA) and numerous other awards. She has been affectionately called the "Mother Theresa of the Tenderloin."

Source: Pioneer Community of Faith. Old First Presbyterian Church 1849-1999. Stephen L. Taber.



Adult Education May 2 and 9

May 2 Jesus Film Festival: 12:30: Erwin Barron

May 9 Jesus Film Festival 12:30 Erwin Barron

Jesus Film Festival

Have you ever read a Bible story and wondered what it might look like in real life? Well, film directors have always had that problem. They must struggle with how to adapt a sometimes-sketchy description from the Bible into a detailed, movie set and script. We will spend some time over these few weeks having a Jesus film festival. We will read stories about Jesus in the Bible and then look at several film versions to see which ones we think best represent the biblical vision.

Leaps and Bounds at Old First on Monday May 10th at 7:00 p.m.

The Affording Hope Project presents Leaps and Bounds, a one woman show that explores the intersection of faith, ecology, and the global economy. Developed and performed by Tevyn East, this show is circulating among a variety of faith communities and institutions of higher learning in 2010. Using a number of creative tools including storytelling, song, poetry, prayer, movement, and film, this work of theater sheds light on the driving factors of our ecological crisis while awakening the

imagination to a new way of living with and relating to Earth. Grounded in theological reflection, Leaps and Bounds, embodies an adventure, searching for the values that would support an economic system that promotes human well-being and ecological health.

The Affording Hope Project accesses the transformative power of art to inspire the Christian church to be a prophetic witness to alternative economic systems of sufficiency and solidarity. With a commitment to having our transactions embody the principles of the project, we are adopting a pay-it-forward model. Each audience, with a free will donation, will pay for the next audience's experience of the performance, having received its own performance as a gift.

Tevyn East is the daughter of Presbyterian ministers and is on tour in the Bay Area and we have the opportunity to host this show. Spread the word and don't miss this unique opportunity. Learn more by visiting the show website WWW.affordinghopeproject.org.



Welcome Fundraiser: A Free Farm Afternoon May 22nd 2:30 - 4:30pm

A family friendly afternoon at the Free Farm located at the corner of Gough & Eddy in San Francisco. Food from Mama's on Washington Square, Green's Restaurant and many more. Wine tasting. Coffee from Farm Table Cafe. Carla's kid's corner. Music and Poetry. A fun and very special afternoon.

A special talk by Novella Carpenter, author of Farm City, a book about her first year running Ghost Town Farm in Oakland: www.ghosttownfarm.wordpress.com. Novella will speak at 3:30 p.m. Join us and support WELCOME, a communal response to poverty with a simple philosophy of providing food, education and counseling to the communities we serve. Learn more at www.sfwelcome.org.

Tickets \$75, \$50, \$25. Pay what you can afford. Consider buying two tickets to sponsor one of our community members.

Pentecost Sunday, May 23, 2010

*We are all Children of God
We are all Adopted by God*

Pentecost is the Birthday of the Christian Church. It is the event 50 days after Easter when the Holy Spirit astounded the disciples of Jesus and bewildered all the Jews who had gathered in Jerusalem with the phenomena of wind, fire, water, energy and speaking in tongues. It was when the formation of our Church was solidified. This year Pentecost also coincides with the Birthday of Old First.

The theme of Pentecost 2010 is the recognition of our personal birthday celebrations in the adoption experience we **all** have when we join the Christian community. It is about the gifts we receive when we enter into the community. And, it's about the gifts we bring with us as well as those we develop while we live together in our Christianity.

The scripture passages for Pentecost this year focus on Acts 2:1-21 and Romans 8:14-17. Give them a read – there will be opportunities to volunteer as readers, speakers and crafts. And, don't wear silk on May 23rd – there will be name tags involving straight pins!

Pentecost Offering

The Pentecost Offering is traditionally received on the day of Pentecost (May 23, 2010). It provides a direct way to meet the needs of children at risk, youth, and young adults. Congregations are encouraged to keep 40 percent of the Offering to support ministry with children at risk in their communities. The General Assembly's portion (60 percent) provides leadership development opportunities for Presbyterian youth and young adults and supports children-at-risk programs at the national level. Since 1998, Presbyterians of all ages have raised over \$7 million for these ministries that benefit younger members of God's family.

! Old First Celebrates 161 Years, May 23, 2010!

The Anniversary Lunch provides an opportunity to celebrate in the joy and history of our beloved community. As the oldest continuously operating Protestant congregation in the State of California, Old First holds the Anniversary lunch to provide an opportunity to meet and mingle with friends, OFPC church members, and visitors. Signups for a potluck luncheon continues May 2-16 in the Social Hour downstairs. If you are not able to bring something, we *suggest a donation* of \$5 that will be used to offset any costs incurred by the Community Building Committee. Come and join us!

As you reflect on 161 years of Old First history, look at the church, perhaps, as you've not done before. Consider again our rich church history, its architecture, its personal meaning to you. Look at our Hutchings organ, our marvelous stained glass windows, our children's chapel, the Exonarthax. Discover something you've never seen before, and share that discovery and fellowship with your neighbors at the luncheon.

In connection with the Anniversary of Old First, the following long-time members are acknowledged.
Gold Circle – Members of Old First for 50 years or more

Emma Lee	1945
Bill Wunsch	1953
Euphemia Felicitas	1956
Doris Bebb	1958
Mary Culp	1960

Silver Circle – Members of Old First for 25 years or more

Mary Lou Wilson, 1961; Peggy Utterback, 1963; Josephine Yee, 1963; Jessie McFadyen, 1964; Joan Dills St Clair, 1964; Mary MacWilliam, 1965; Joe Ballard -1965; Charles Olson, 1966; Charles Burns, 1970; Charles Rambo, 1970; Bill Campbell, 1971; Marilyn Campbell, 1971; John Sebastian, 1972; Pam Sebastian, 1972; Cindy Burt, 1973; David Maxwell, 1974; Chris Burt, 1975; Bill Feister, 1978; Steve Taber, 1979; Sarah Taber, 1980; Michael Wilson, 1980; Phil Pollock, 1980; Augusta Duncan, 1980; Tina Wilson, 1980; Rose Marie Springer, 1980; Jerry Stuart, 1981; Rosemary Bledsoe, 1982; Nancy Day, 1982; Katie Olson, 1982; Lori Yamauchi, 1982; Mary Culp, 1983; Buddy Tate Choy, 1984; Jim Fagler, 1984; Dan Joraanstad, 1984; Glen Potter, 1984; Bart Crosby, 1983; Greg Free, 1983; Pam Free, 1983; Mary Carter, 1985; Heather Losse, 1985; Robin Raborn, 1985; Sally Spencer, 1985.



Hello from our Summer Intern, Arlo Jones

Hi, my name Laura Arlowyn Jones, but most people call me Arlo. I am very excited to be the intern at Old First Presbyterian Church this summer! I am originally from San Diego California. When I was growing up my family attended Christ Presbyterian Church. When I was older I served on the Praise Team, helped with VBS, and volunteered with the Jr. and Sr. High Youth Groups at my home church. After high school I attended the University of California, Santa Barbara and studied Theatre.

In college I was a student leader at Lutheran Campus Ministry, and I also spent several months abroad in London. I am currently in my second year at Columbia Theological Seminary in Georgia. At Columbia, I am moderator of the student organization Imago Dei, which works towards LGBTQ inclusion in the church and provides support to LGBTQ students on campus. I also volunteer at the non-profit organization Stand Up for Kids in Atlanta. Stand Up for Kids works with homeless and at-risk teenagers. I also enjoy reading, improvisational theatre, writing, swimming, and spending time in nature. Thank you so much for letting me come, serve, and learn at Old First Presbyterian Church! I look forward to getting to know everyone this summer!



How Shared Life Was Started Bill Campbell

Old First has a newsletter because an interim pastor “shamed” us into it. At least that’s the way I remember it. In 1977, we had an interim pastor named Rod Fridlund. He was with us less than a year, such a short time that Steve Taber’s fine history of Old First doesn’t mention him. But if you think nothing lasting can be accomplished during an interim pastor’s tenure, read on. While helping clear out Bill Wunsch’s law office recently, I looked over some binders of Bill’s Old First material. Several include old *Shared Life* issues, the earliest dating to November 1977. Seeing it took me back to one of my first conversations with Rod Fridlund.

We had completed a meeting, possibly his interview for the interim position, and were chatting in the hall outside the kitchen, when Rod asked about our church newsletter. “We don’t have a newsletter,” I said. Rod was incredulous. In his mind, a congregation without a newsletter was unthinkable. The first *Shared Life* issue was published November 1977 and was eight pages. The December issue was meatier, 20 pages, and it included Rod’s farewell. The next month, Old First’s new pastor, Roger Hull, began his ministry.

I recently checked the Session minutes to see if they say anything about this. In the succinct way minutes boil things down, Sessions writes that Rod Fridlund’s first Session meeting at Old First was February 22, 1977. The minutes record: “Mr. Fridlund said he plans to start a church newsletter which will go out monthly and can be used as an evangelistic tool.” Putting together the newsletter fell to the church administrator. Bear in mind, this was before word processing, not to mention Rosemary Bledsoe.

The minutes show that 1977 was an eventful year in other ways, too. In his second Session meeting, Rod Fridlund “expressed a wish that to have pew Bibles in the Sanctuary.” We got them. The Mission Review Committee recommended that the Board of Deacons, which had been disbanded earlier, be reconstituted. It was.



Larkin Street-A look back: Part 1 of 2 Bill Campbell

“What is your church doing to help these kids on the street?”

A visitor from Cleveland asked this of Roger Hull, pastor of Old First Presbyterian Church, in early 1981. At about the same time, a Polk Street merchant came to a meeting of the San Francisco Interfaith Council and raised a similar concern. A few blocks from the door of Old

First, teenage boys stood on the stretch of Polk Street where older men bought sex. Teenage girls stood on street corners in the Tenderloin, a few blocks away. Dr. Hull raised awareness of the plight of these young people with the Old First congregation, and a Polk Street Outreach Committee was formed to consider whether the church should try to address the needs of young people who found themselves on the street, most of whom were homeless: neglected, sexually abused, beaten up, and kicked out. Many were not runaways, but throwaways, discards. They were children who had no one to care for them, nowhere to live, and no way to survive without hustling.

"If kids were on the street for more than a month, they got caught up in street life," recalls Jean Richardson, a seminary intern at Old First in 1981. "They had no money, no permanent residence, no job skills, and they hadn't completed school. Once they began receiving money through survival sex or drug dealing, we couldn't tell them it was just as profitable to work at McDonald's—because it wasn't." But McDonald's was safer.

In the fall of 1981, Old First hosted the first of many Polk Street Town Hall community meetings. Neighbors, merchants, members of the religious community, and street kids met in working groups on such topics as health, safety, housing, substance abuse, sexual minority youth, and prostitution. A steering committee was formed to seek solutions.

Jean Richardson, who became the church's associate pastor, and Jon Herzstam, a young mental health and substance abuse counselor at the San Francisco Health Department, led the Polk Street Town Hall steering committee. From the fall of 1981 to 1983, this group raised awareness and a small amount of funds, almost entirely from the religious community. By January 1983, Larkin Street Youth Services (initially named Polk Street Town Hall) was formally incorporated. Herzstam and Richardson were elected Larkin Street's first board chair and vice chair.

Jon Herzstam's tenure was cut short. "One day, Jon and I were driving on Van Ness Avenue. We were going to the Marina Green to have a picnic," Jean Richardson remembers. "Jon said, 'Jean, there's this terrible disease. It's a plague.' I said, 'You're crazy.' Soon after that, we learned the news about the first cases in New York City of the disease we now call AIDS. There was no treatment then. Jon was one of the first 60 victims of AIDS in San Francisco." In early 1984, Richardson succeeded Herzstam as board chair, a position she held for four years. Old First enabled Richardson to devote 30 percent of her time to Larkin Street. More than any other person, she held the grassroots group together and kept it moving forward in its early years.

From *Larkin Street Youth Services The First 25 Years*, available in the Old First Library. If you would like to order the book, call Larkin Street at 673 0911, ext. 305. Suggested contribution: \$15.

Friendship Banquets Begin Again and are Looking for Sponsors!

The Friendship Banquet began in 1991 as a semi-monthly program in order to build a community with indigent HIV Men and Women in the context of a home-cooked meal served in a warm, safe, and welcoming setting. Given its overwhelmingly popularity, it was expanded into a weekly program soon after it started. Old First took part in these dinners then. In 2007, the Banquet was suspended. We now want to restart the program with your help. Our guests will be served a four-course meal, from appetizer to dessert, by volunteers from local Congregations, Synagogues, Mosques, civic groups, and businesses. The Banquet guests receive good food, a friendly and inviting place to spend Tuesday afternoons, and a chance to socialize. Basically, a welcome respite from their daily struggles. Holidays are celebrated with theme Banquets. Banquet guests face social isolation due to their HIV status, poverty, and perceived lifestyles. Most guests make their homes in either the Tenderloin, South of Market neighborhoods, or on the streets. In addition to the realities, many guests also struggle with substance abuse, and mental/emotional illnesses. Guests learn of the Banquets by referral from both service agencies and service providers. PPSI (Saint Paulus). The people of St. Mark's are dedicated to providing this opportunity, both for the community we serve and those who serve the community. **If anyone at Old First would like lead a project team on this please contact pastor Maggi and/or call Phillip Gibson at Saint Paulus 415 673-8088, or his cell phone 415 756-9510 for more information.**



Old First Concerts - \$17 general admission, \$14 students/seniors – www.oldfirstconcerts.org

Sunday, May 2 at 4 p.m.

Amos Yang, 'cello

'Cello Suite No. 4 in E-flat major by Bach, *'Cello Suite No. 1, Op. 72* by Britten; *Seven Tunes Heard in China* by Bright Sheng; *Julie-O and Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming* by Mark Summer.

Friday, May 7 at 8 p.m.

Robert Schwartz, piano

Pianist Robert Schwartz performs Isaac Albeniz's masterpiece, *Iberia*, in honor of the composer's 150th birthday.

Sunday, May 9 at 4 p.m.

ChamberBridge: Frontiers 2010

Lara Bruckmann, soprano; Eva-Maria Zimmermann, piano

New works by Gabriela Lena Frank and Christian Henking, as well as by emerging composers from the Bay Area and Switzerland.

Tuesday, May 18 at 8 p.m.

Composers Inc.

Magen Solomon directs the San Francisco Choral Artists in an evening of choral music, including Frank La Rocca's *Miserere* and Trevor Gomes' *Sunscape*.

Friday, May 21 at 8 pm

Andrew McKenna Lee, guitar

The guitarist and composer Andrew McKenna Lee makes his San Francisco debut, performing original compositions for guitar in addition to works by Leo Brouwer, Lennox Berkeley, and others.



[AIDS Walk: July 18 2010.](#)

Marcus Jung, coordinator for many years of the San Francisco AIDS Walk's Presbyterian Team, advises that 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 to 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. You can register at www.aidswalk.net/sanfran. Other denominations also have teams at this event, so please be sure to register now, so that we can demonstrate the strength of Presbyterians in the community. Of course, if you already registered for this year's team, feel free to invite your friends and family. I will have a team flyer available soon.

1. Registration is free
2. No minimum fundraising amount
3. Pet-friendly and kid-friendly (Kids' Zone again in 2010)
4. Funds benefit nearly 50 Bay Area nonprofits
5. Never a no-show penalty if your calendar changes
6. No requirement to walk the entire 10 km
7. It's lots of fun, with 25,000 other walkers
8. Thanks to all of you, our team last year reached new highs in size and fundraising

Other denominations also have teams at this event, so please be sure to register now, so that we can demonstrate the strength of Presbyterians in the community. Of course, if you already registered for this year's team, feel free to invite your friends and family. I will have a team flyer available soon.
Peace, Marc

[Birthdays](#) — *A month in advance, giving you plenty of time to send a card*

- June 6 – Pam Sebastian
- June 11 – Sally Spencer
- June 12 – Jasun Harmell
- June 14 – Dianne Middleton
- June 15 – Tom Culp
- June 16 – Logan Hollarsmith
- June 18 – Nina Krietzman
- June 24 – Ariel Krietzman
- June 25 – Evan Wilmouth
- June 30 – Mary Lou Geppinger

Rediscovering Faith through Fiction – Diane R. Molberg
Any Small Thing Can Save You: A Bestiary by Christina Adam

Bestiaries were once instructional guides, gathered from fables and tales told by travelers. Unlike The Canterbury Tales, bestiaries described beasts and fish and fowl that few had ever seen. In Any Small Thing Can Save You: a Bestiary, each brief story works from an image of different animal to reflect a measured truth about love between a husband and wife, a child and parent, a brother and a sister, all at a moment of danger or discovery. Each story carries the title of an animal: “Asp,” “Bat,” “Dove,” and examines those unexpected moments when we are suddenly awakened from daily life, surprised, and restored by the beauty of the natural world and for the love within it.

In “Dove,” a not quite middle aged married couple have left Washington D.C. to live in New Mexico in a house pockmarked with bullet holes from ricocheting bullets left by local hunters who shoot doves. The couple’s first “dove season” terrifies and angers the woman, but her husband declines to speak to the hunters. “A long-lapsed Southern Baptist,” he maintains that “God gave them dominion.”

The woman believes the doves, with their plaintive, melancholy song, *hoo...hoo hoo* should have dominion. Above her window she discovers a gray dove nesting on a “long, tapering limb of a willow tree.” She’s struck by its slender body, round, dark unblinking eyes. She approaches the hunters and asks them to move to the other side of the field. They do. After shooting more doves.

She finds an old Bible that renders “turtle” as “turtle dove.” She searches the King James Version and finds “For, lo, the winter is past/ the rain is over and gone;/ the flowers appear on the earth;/ the time of the singing of/ birds is come, and the voice of/ the turtle is heard in our land.” Helpless to stop the shooting or ease her sorrow, she is dismayed to learn her husband told the hunters there was no problem with their shooting. “Something fell away,” she thinks. The love she’d felt for him changed. She is forced to reconcile herself to forces beyond her control.



A prayer, of course, is not a small thing. Like a dove, it is made of magic and mystery and meaning and it is a gift. When I was given the prayer I read at Tenebrae last Good Friday, I felt a quick jab of shock and recognition. How could something so “small” come to me, much as the slender gray dove came to the woman, and be so relevant? The prayer became a presence in my life. The grace note I needed.

The day after Tenebrae, the day after I read the prayer in our Sanctuary, I found myself alone in a cold, antiseptic hallway outside the x-ray room at Calif. Pacific Medical Center. It was late and my mother was having an x-ray to assess the seriousness of a fall she’d had at home. Standing there, I kept trying to remember the words of the prayer I’d said the night before; to find again what I’d felt reading it. Only the ideas of words came to me, fragments of the last words, but there was something more important than that. I remembered the prayer as a feeling, as a laying on of hands. At once, my breathing eased, my anxiety lessened, I stopped pacing. What “fell away” from me was fear. What came to me was peace and love.

The Prayer

Loving Jesus, we carry the weight of the people we love. We are concerned for their sorrows and suffering. Our care for them is deep, and sometimes there is not much we can do. Come alongside us in the darkness and cradle the ones we love in your strong hands.

Greetings and Update from the Midwest and Fly-Over City. Terrill L. Stumpf, Director of Chicago Lights Center for Whole Health, a community outreach program at Fourth Presbyterian Church

Status: Moved from Inquirer to Candidacy as Minister of Word and Sacrament, September 2009

Our Healthy Heart Project for Women received a grant from the Visiting Nurses Foundation and continues to progress at two permanent residences for previously homeless women. Women in the residences have opportunity to engage in self-care activities, healthy lifestyles, how to navigate the health care system, have individual consultations with a Women's Health Advanced Practice Nurse. We have two stipends Peer Leaders, resident women from their communities who now want to expand their roles and functions. So we're looking into local Community Health Worker training and education for them. WE will have our third annual health and wellness celebration in June which last year attracted 150 women and their children. This program is in partnership with Rush University College of Nursing Faculty Practice.

Our Healthy Aging initiative is lodged with the Center for Life and Learning (formerly the Center for Older Adults). We have developed and are nurturing a group of CLL members to become part of a new initiative called Caring Circles. It's based on the Friendly Visitor model. We just finished rounds of interviews and selected three stipend peer leaders who make up the Leadership Team in providing care and outreach to members of the CLL who are experiencing a time of need or crisis in personal life. This initiative is partially funded by a grant received by the CLL from the Henrietta Lange Burk Fund and an anonymous donor.

Our Mental Health Ministry committee just recently developed a Mental Health Resources brochure which is now in all the information racks around the church campus and provides information and resources on "where to find help" and pastoral care for individuals and their family who live with a mental illness. The committee also put together a cover letter to be distributed to all the Fourth Church clergy and professional staff the PCUSA document "Comfort My People: A Policy Statement on Serious Mental Illness with Study Guide." They are in the midst of planning the liturgy and worship for the Seventh Annual Candlelighting Service for Mental Illness Understanding and Recovery to take place in June. Of interest and note, they are planning an initiative for the congregation and community titled "Comfort, Care, and Coffee" for the fall--it'll be a mental health fair of sorts with concurrent sessions for knowledge and skill building around various mental illnesses and situations.

We have our Spring Community Health Fair for our homeless guests of the Social Service Center. We work with the first year medical students from the Feinberg School of Medicine, Northwestern University. Our volunteer Health and Wellness nurse works at Northwestern Memorial Hospital in the Cardiovascular Clinic and she has arranged for two cardiologist and support staff to provide cardiac assessments, EKGs, and screening echocardiograms with appropriate health education and referrals for follow-up care. We also stipend two healthcare professionals to provide conversation and consultation on stress and balance, mental health, and substance abuse recovery. We also have a Creative Arts Expression station where using craft paper, crayons, and pictures, individuals engage in creative expression, such as one time the question was "What is it that keeps you going?" In the past we've had as many as 100 participants. It's held on Sunday afternoon just prior to Fourth at Four worship service and dinner.

On a very sad note, over the Christmas Holidays and while I was actually in Fresno (my home town and where my mother lives), my sister died on December 23rd from pancreatic cancer. Needless to say that became the focus of our holidays and time together. I had encouraged that we have a family conference to plan out our Mom's care when my sister would no longer be with us--so all moved along as planned and is falling into place. My sister did not want a memorial service, but Mom and I had one anyway at Mom's church so that her faith community could come around her in her the loss of her daughter. She and I worked with the clergy in developing the liturgy and the service. It's been very difficult to realize that my sister is dead and no longer with us--brings one's own mortality to up-close-and-personal to say the least. Well, enough already. Be well and at Peace, Terry

The Officers of Old First Church

Deacons —Heather Losee and Dan Joraanstad - Co-moderator Dana Nojima, Secretary Nina Berg, Treasurer, Tracy Clagett, Craig Kehne, Diane Lewis, Mary Culp, Priscilla Yu, Oliver Spencer, AnnieScott Rogers, Harriet MacLean, and Glen Potter

Elders— George Becker, Michael Berg, Christopher Burt, Barry Clagett, Saskia de Vries, Gregory P. Free, Bob Hermann, Kristi Hoerauf, Sidney Hollar, Jeanne Kirkwood, Mary E. Russell, John Sebastian, Steve Taber, George Yu