

## **Shared Life of Old First Presbyterian Church**

**September 2011**

OFPC Website: [oldfirst.org](http://oldfirst.org)

OFPC Photostream: [www.flickr.com/photos/oldfirst/](http://www.flickr.com/photos/oldfirst/)

**Shared Life: submissions to [molberg@earthlink.net](mailto:molberg@earthlink.net)**

**Deadlines:**

- **October issue: by September 11**
- **November issue: by October 9**

Sept. 4        Name tag Sunday. *Wear your own name tag and look at others'.*  
Sept. 11       Children/Adult Sunday School begins. Bring school supplies for Redding School. Tenth Anniversary Observance of 9/11 attacks.  
Sept. 18       Ice Cream Social  
Sept. 25       Alberto Barrios Memorial Children's Library.  
October 2      Old First Picnic – Lafayette Park

**LECTIONARY**

SEPTEMBER 4

*23<sup>RD</sup> SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME*

EXOD.12:1-14; PS.149; ROM.13:8-14; MATT.18:15-20

SEPTEMBER 11

*24<sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME*

EXOD.14:19-31; PS. 114 OR EXOD. 15:1B-11, 20-21; ROM.14:1-12; MATT.18:21-35

SEPTEMBER 18

*25<sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME*

EXOD.16:2-15; PS.105:1-6, 37-45; PHIL.1:21-30; MATT.20:1-16

SEPTEMBER 25

*26<sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME*

EXOD.17:1-7; PS.78:1-4, 12-16; PHIL.2:1-13; MATT.21:23-32

Alberto Barrios Memorial Children's Library.

All are welcome to come to an open house for the Alberto Barrios Memorial Children's Library in the Fellowship Hall on Sunday, September 25, after worship.

**Maggi's Musings**

I am struck this fall how quickly time passes. I suspect this might be brought on my recent 50th birthday but it isn't all about me. It seems only weeks ago that Sunday School stopped for the summer, and now will begin for adults and children on September 11, the anniversary of the 9/11 terrorist attacks. I am perplexed over how to celebrate Sunday School, and at the same time mark the 9/11 anniversary. Should we focus on the children in worship and think about the future, letting the 9/11 anniversary be a footnote more than a focus? It is for those children that we long for peace. We want all the children of the world to have a future in which they can grow surrounded by joy and peace, not fear and hate. We want to mark this day because we follow the Prince of Peace who loves this world. I want to mark this day because we believe in the God of love and light even when it seems that darkness overwhelms. I long for a service, for a day, that offers the opportunity for remembrance, comfort and hope.

**Remember the powerful and transforming power of prayer in times of fear and tragedy.**

God of compassion: you watch the ways of humanity, and weave out of terrible happenings wonders of goodness and grace. Surround those who have been shaken by tragedy with a sense of your present love, and hold them in faith. Though they are lost in grief, may they find you and be comforted; through Jesus Christ, who was dead, but lives, and rules this world with you. Amen.

Adapted from The Worship book (Westminster, 1970)

Peace, Pastor Maggi

**Please try to join myself and others from our church and from our city in the following events.****September 10<sup>th</sup>**

- Church members visit a local mosque

**September 11<sup>th</sup>**

- Service of Remembrance at 5:47 am on Crissy Field
- Adult Sunday School Class at 9:30 book discussion on *Broken We Kneel* by Diane Butler Bass
- The San Francisco Interfaith Council, Mayor Ed Lee's office, and the San Francisco Opera will mark this day with the San Francisco Opera's annual Opera in the Park at 2:00 p.m., **Sunday, Sept. 11** in Sharon Meadows, Golden Gate Park. The program will feature Mozart's Requiem, and works by Christopher Theofanidis, Harold Arlen, Samuel Barber, Leonard Bernstein, Aaron Copland and John Williams. Music Director Nicola Luisotti will conduct. During the Mozart Requiem, meditational texts will be read by representatives of various religious traditions that make up the San Francisco Interfaith Council. ***More details on these events will be available on our website [www.oldfirst.org](http://www.oldfirst.org)***

- San Francisco Interfaith Council Executive Director Michael Pappas commented: "Immediately after the tragic events of Sept. 11, 2001, former Mayor Willie Brown turned to the San Francisco Interfaith Council to bring people of our City's diverse faiths together for prayer and solidarity. Now, ten years later, the SFIC is grateful to Mayor Lee and the San Francisco Opera for this uniquely San Franciscan occasion to remember those who perished in the attacks, to honor the first responders and to reflect upon lessons learned over the last decade, not the least of which is the need for civil discourse. It is our collective hope that this civic observance will inspire all who will gather to sow the seeds of peace in our city and world."

### **Upcoming Events**

#### **Ice Cream Social September 18**

The ice cream social sponsored by the Board of Deacons will be held September 11 after worship. There will be all-you-can-eat ice cream and toppings for \$3.00. Proceeds will benefit the Redding School after-school program. The deacons are also contributing and requesting contributions of school supplies to the after-school program; items such as, pencils, pads, notebooks, markers, etc. Contributions of ice cream toppings and other goodies are also appreciated.

#### **Old First Picnic October 2**

You're Invited! All Church Picnic October 2

Following Worship on World Wide Communion Sunday October 2, the Congregation will adjourn to nearby Lafayette Park. Food fun and fellowship are likely to result and you are all invited!!

During September, please sign up after church in the Social Hall to bring your favorite picnic food: side dish, salad, dessert, or beverage. Carrying out the World Wide theme, think about bringing a dish that represents your favorite community, place, or people. Dress comfortably for church. Wear or bring a hat, a light jacket, a blanket or a folding chair. Bring a guest! It's an easy walk up Sacramento to the park but we are also transportation people back and forth to the picnic. Games for children and adults, talking and eating and drinking—what could be more fun for the Old First crowd? This is an all new take on our semi regular annual picnic. Let's make it a tradition. Sponsored by the Deacons.

### **News/Features**

#### **Giving During Troubled Times**

These times call for the best we have to offer. As the financial markets rise and fall, as property values fluctuate, as even the work that we do shifts and sometimes disappears, practicing a disciplined habit of giving may be good therapy for you, an expression of faith, and living a life more fully in accord with

how Jesus asked us to live. And it may help bring light and life to another person's world.

As our dollars grow scarcer, consider that you have the power to make a difference with your assets. Whether great or small, consistently giving to Old First, for example, allows you to be powerful. You make things happen in different parts of our beloved community, local and global, via your gift.

Through our shared belief, shared goals and shared lives, we can help eliminate the imbalance that exists in the world. To give consistently and thoughtfully is a type of devotion.

**Flu Season 2011-2012: Prevent Influenza, get a flu shot.**

Influenza is a serious disease that can lead to hospitalization and sometimes even death. Every flu season is different, and influenza infection can affect people differently. Even healthy people can become sick from the flu and spread it to others. During a regular flu season, about 90 percent of deaths occur in people 65 years and older.

The "seasonal flu season" in the United States is usually from November through April each year. During this time, flu viruses are circulating in the population. An annual seasonal flu vaccine (either the flu shot or the nasal-spray flu vaccine) is the best way to reduce the chances that you will get seasonal flu and lessen the chance that you will spread it to others. When more people get vaccinated against the flu, less flu can spread through that community. The "flu shot" – an inactivated vaccine (containing killed virus) that is given with a needle, usually in the arm. The flu shot is approved for use in people older than 6 months, including healthy people and people with chronic medical conditions.

You should get a flu shot as soon as it becomes available, often in October or early November. The availability of flu vaccine will be widely announced. You may obtain the vaccine thru your health care provider if you have one or at local pharmacies such as Walgreens/Rite Aid. It's important protection for you and for your family and friends! Get vaccinated - Remember... "An ounce of prevention...." Be well, and God bless you!

**Somalia Situation Report Update Presbyterian** Disaster Assistance (PDA) is responding in Somalia and parts of Kenya as a member of the ACT (Action by Churches Together) Alliance. ACT members who have experience and partnerships in the area are already responding to the crisis. PDA made an initial contribution of \$100,000 from One Great Hour of Sharing funds to assist newly displaced people in Mogadishu, drought- affected people in the Gedo region, refugees in the Dadaab camp in Kenya, and host communities in both Kenya and Somalia.

Assistance includes:

- temporary shelter
- provision of water and sanitation
- emergency/therapeutic feeding and nutrition, including special feeding of malnourished refugees
- essential personal and domestic items (jerry cans, blankets, sleeping mats, sanitary pads & kitchen sets)
- energy-efficient stoves, firewood
- access to primary health care, hygiene and education services
- provision for emergency health interventions.

In addition, funds will help provide protection monitoring along border entry points, the camps and camp outskirts. Assistance is especially targeted to single women, children, and unaccompanied or separated children.

### **How You Can Help**

We ask you to stand in the GAP for families affected by disasters and help the PC (USA) in its response.

**GIVE.** The generous sharing of your financial blessings through the One Great Hour of Sharing offering and special designated giving provides resources needed to assist with immediate and long-term recovery needs.

Individuals may give through the [pcusa.org](http://pcusa.org) website or by mail to the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) P.O. Box 643700 Pittsburgh, PA 15264-3700. Please include the special designated giving account DR999999 -International Response

**PRAY.** Our best response is prayer. 1 Thessalonians implores us to pray without ceasing, so your prayers are requested above all else. Please pray for families who are hungry, thirsty, displaced, or need medical care because of this crisis. Also pray for the people responding to the disaster, and for those whose lives are closely linked to both the disaster survivors and the workers who minister to them.

### **Larkin Street Youth**

#### **Edward II Supportive Housing Project for Youth Hinges on Board of Supervisors Hearing**

Every year at least 5,700 youth are forced to live on San Francisco's streets or are at risk of homelessness. Many of these youth are or were in the foster care system and have been shuffled from one unstable living situation to the next. Without necessary support, one in five ends up homeless within 18 months of exiting the foster care system. In response to this crisis, the City proposed

developing 400 new units of transition age youth housing by 2012 in its "Housing for Transition Age Youth: Work Plan."

One of the criteria that the City established for new facilities serving transition aged youth is that the housing be located away from the City's more dangerous neighborhoods. As one step toward meeting this challenge, Community Housing Partnership, a nonprofit housing developer joined forces with Larkin Street Youth Services and the Mayor's Office of Housing to establish a supportive housing project in the former Edward II Hotel at Lombard and Scott Streets.

The Edward II project will provide 24 rental units for youth ages 18 to 24, offering them a safe and stable place to live and build the skills needed to transition successfully into adulthood. Larkin Street will provide services on the Edward II site, as well as through its existing education and employment programs. Residents of the Edward II community will be engaged in the neighborhood and live as any young adult would: paying rent, working or training for a career, community building and completing their education.

In July, the City Planning Commission considered the Planning Department's recommendation to approve the special use district that is necessary for the Edward II project to move forward. In spite of significant neighborhood opposition to the project, many Marina and Cow Hollow residents, as well as numerous housing and planning experts and Larkin Street youth came to the hearing and spoke eloquently on behalf of the project. After a 3-1/2 hour hearing, the Commission approved the project by a margin of 5 to 1. This fall, Community Housing Partnership and Larkin Street will be back at City Hall, first before the Board of Supervisors Land Use Committee, and finally before the full Board. They look forward to once again having at these hearings the articulate and inspiring community and youth support that was so effective in the July hearing.

If you would like to learn more about the Edward II project or to get involved in helping make this much needed facility a reality, visit <http://www.edwardii.org/> and sign up to receive updates. You can also contact Marilyn or Bill Campbell or Mary Russell, all of whom have been actively involved in supporting the project.

.....

### **News From the Choir: The Perfect Christmastide Gift**

The Adult Choir at Old First has been hard at work learning, performing and recording music for our FIRST Christmastide CD. This labor of love started months ago and will continue through September and October. The CD, yet to be titled, will be filled with familiar carols and songs from an intimate version of "Silent Night" with Twila Ehmecke and Kaileen Miller with harp, to renditions of "Hark! The Herald Angels Sing" & "Joy to the World" with chorus, trumpets and organ! We hope that this musical offering will fill your home and the homes of your friends and loved ones, with the spirit God's love. Look for us in the Fellowship Hall after Sunday services in November. We will be the ones with singing Christmas carols!

**What is a Senior Center?**

The 2010-2011 Senior Citizens Resource Directory for San Francisco County states: "A Senior Center is a gathering place where participants have a common need for socialization, companionship, and intellectual, physical, and emotional stimulation." There are over 35 Senior Centers in San Francisco in all neighborhoods. Over the years, the snapshot of a senior citizen has evolved, thus challenging Senior Centers to serve a more ethnically, economically and educationally diverse, senior citizen.

Old First's Doris Krauss Senior Center meets each Monday from 10:00 a.m. until 2:00 pm. Our "coffee house approach" is popular with our seniors. They love to gather for coffee and tea and talk over the news of the day, movies they have seen, books they are reading, and the latest bargains are for food and clothing.

Healthy, balanced, delicious meals are provided for a cost of \$2, and holiday meals are always special. Our volunteer cooks believe that good food is a way of showing love to those who share the meal, and the wonderful desserts are a favorite.

From 1:30-2:30, Rafael Ahedo, a licensed program director for working with seniors, leads participants in exercises to strengthen the body and ease stiff joints. The class is free and all are welcome to participate.

Susan Spencer, our nurse, monitors the health of all seniors in attendance and also provides some home visits for long time members when they are sick or need nursing home care referrals. When a member of the senior center dies, we place their picture with a candle on the piano in the center so everyone can remember their friend in their own way.

Please join us as we discuss ways to grow, change and better meet the needs of our seniors. We always need more volunteers to help serve, lead discussion groups and to serve as a commission member. And of course, we are grateful for donations. Our exercise teacher is a result of contributions made by members of Old First. Please help us continue our vital center for seniors, and thank you for all you have done in the past.

Please call me at 415-585-2620 if you would like to give me your ideas for speakers, programs, and growth. We need you to care now so a program for those 65 and older will have a program to care about when needed. Genie Kinney, Director, Doris Krauss Senior Center

**A Communal Response to Poverty/Homelessness**

As part of Old First's commitment to ministering to and caring for the homeless, the Welcome Ministry offers a weekly meal every Tuesday from 2-4 p.m. to

everyone, regardless of their economic condition or residential status. This weekly ministry is staffed by two volunteers, "Nieves," and Diane Lewis who have worked out an efficient division of labor. Nieves, whose schedule is noon to 4:30 p.m., cooks. Diane's schedule is 1 p.m.- 4:30 p.m. and her responsibilities include making the coffee, serving the visitors, and doing the cleanup.

The meal is simple but adequate: soup, vegetable, fruit and dessert with no second servings. "It's hard to say no when they ask for more," Diane says. The visitors are served in the Munro Room where they sit in a circle. When they finish, they can rest, even sleep, in the Social Hall on the banquettes along the wall but at 4 p.m. they must leave, a rule that's also hard to enforce.

There are more men than women (10-1 ratio) and for the most part, Diane said, they are in good to fair physical condition. They walk in on their own and feed themselves. Their mental health isn't always stable, however. They have to be monitored when verbal abuse gets out of hand, or some pushing/shoving happens. Given the fact that this facility has only one volunteer who interacts directly with the people, it's Diane who has to monitor the behavioral situation. Nieves is always available in an emergency.

When asked if she could reflect on what personal value this volunteer activity had for her, Diane was quick to reply that God called her to do this, and that the Old First family with their spirit of love and giving, make her Call even more special. "I'm where God wants me to be," she said, adding that anyone can drop in and "have a cup of coffee. On the house!"

### **Book Nook**

Joy finished *Funny in Farsi* - by Firoozeh Dumas. This was a light read on the sobering topic of the evolution of xenophobia in the second half of the 20th century, written by a woman who came as a child to California from Iran prior to and again after the Islamic revolution in 1979. Great counterpoint to August's approach to 9/11 in *Broken We Kneel*.

*Lives Like Loaded Guns - Emily Dickinson and her Family Feuds*, by Lyndall Gordon. This Oxford scholar's in depth research ties together many ignored, yet lying in plain sight facts about America's premier poet of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century. Gordon shows how ill informed descendants carried forward misinformation campaigns a hundred years after the poet's death. A very lively and compelling biography about Emily and everyone around her.

"Reading *LLLG* inspired me" Joy says, "to seek out the authors that Emily read. I'm current enjoying George Elliott's *Middlemarch* for the first time. I'm 44% through, and cannot put it down. What fun those 19th Century authors had with their clergy!"

Glenn reads almost nothing but history or biography, his favorite being the *Trilogy on Theodore Roosevelt* by Edmund Morris. He published the first book

in 1979 and the third one was just published in the last year. They are all 700 to 800 pages or more and I have been fascinated by each of them. I must admit that I believed Teddy was the best president we have ever had, even before I read the books. Boy, I sure wish we could get another of him now. I own the first two books and would gladly loan them to anyone who is interested

Mary has been busy! Three books were part of Old First reading groups: *Broken We Kneel: Reflections on Faith & Citizenship* by Diana Butler Bass, *The Future of Faith* by Harvey Cox, and *Strategic Leadership for a Change: Facing Our Losses, Finding Our Future* by Kenneth McFayden. Mary also finished *The Gettysburg Gospel: The Lincoln Speech That Nobody Knows* by Gabor Boritt, that describes the events of the Battle of Gettysburg, July 1-3, 1863 including the staggering effects on the town of Gettysburg itself the massive effort of burying 10,000 bodies and tending to 21,000 wounded, and months of preparation to create the National Cemetery and its dedication on November 19th. Boritt dispels some long-held "gospel" beliefs regarding Lincoln's speech and provides details of Edward Everett, a pre-eminent orator of the day, who gave the main speech. The one, certain, "gospel" truth about this event is that people still well note and have long-remembered what was said in dedication that day.

### **Old First Concerts**

Kathy Barr, Director

Phone: 415-474-1608

Fax: 415-474-6533

[www.oldfirstconcerts.org](http://www.oldfirstconcerts.org)

\$17 admission

**Sunday, September 4, 4:00PM**

**Mike Greensill & Friends**

**Featuring guest vocalist Wesla Whitfield**

Works from the American songbook plus original compositions

**Friday, September 9, 8:00PM**

**Daniel Glover, piano and Jerome Lenk, organ**

Works by Franck, Dupré, and Liszt Totentanz, Variations on BACH

**Friday, September 16, 8:00PM**

**Quinteto Latino**

Works by Taffanel, Villa-Lobos, and Grainger

**Sunday, September 18, 4:00PM**

**Thomas Schultz, piano**

Works by Beethoven, Busoni, Na and Schumann

**Friday, September 23, 8:00PM**

**The Delphi Trio**

**Jeffrey LaDeur, piano; Liana Berube, violin; Michelle Kwon, cello**

Works by Mozart, Ravel, and Brahms

**Friday, September 30, 8:00PM**

**Ensemble Mik Nawooj**

**Great Integration: A Chamber Hip-Hop Opera**

**JooWan Kim**, *composer & piano*; **Kirby Dominant** and **Rico Pabón**,  
*rapper/lyricists*

The penultimate installment of the ongoing Mik Nawooj saga steeped in an electrifyingly contemporary alloy of Taoist tradition, Western European classical, hip-hop, poetry, and forward looking philosophy.

***Wild Geese* by Mary Oliver**

**You do not have to be good. You do not have to walk on your knees for a hundred miles through the desert, repenting. You only have to let the soft animal of your body love what it loves. Tell me about your despair, yours, and I will tell you mine. Meanwhile the world goes on. Meanwhile the sun and the clear pebbles of the rain are moving across the landscapes, over the prairies and the deep trees, the mountains and the rivers. Meanwhile the wild geese, high in the clean blue air, are heading home again. Whoever you are, no matter how lonely, the world offers itself to your imagination, calls to you like the wild geese, harsh and exciting — over and over announcing your place in the family of things.**

### **Reflections from the Editor**

Award winning American poet, Mary Oliver, writes from a deeply personal and profoundly spiritual core. At times, reading her work, a reader almost feels embarrassed to have intruded on such a private moment. Of her work it was written that Oliver “steps across the threshold of ordinary life into a world of natural and spiritual luminosity.”

In my life as a daughter, a writer, and a Christian, I struggle to find that luminous world that Oliver seems to inhabit so effortlessly, but often the threshold itself is obscured and I’m bound spiritually, creatively, and emotionally. In times like this, I return to a habit I started years ago in graduate school: journaling. I have boxes of lined spiral notebook, my then-careful script filling both sides of the pages. Even as I write this, one such binder is on my left, another propped on my desk.

Journaling is a form of meditation, another way to reach that inner luminosity. Both have the same transcendence as prayer and, like prayer, can lead to self-awareness and wholeness. The goal is to get below “the busyness of surface thoughts.” There are several techniques to make journaling bring us to new insights about our faith, our fears, and ourselves. In his workbook, *Pick Four*, Seth Godin offers some ideas.

- Write down dreams of what/who we’d like to be, do or have.
- Write down fifty or more goals without self-censure. Then narrow them down based on practicality and what you’re willing to sacrifice.
- In the way you live your life, what is more important: (1) what you do, (2) how you do it, or, (3) both?
- What does your inner world want to tell you? What would it tell you if you made time for it?

Flow writing, stream of consciousness writing, learning to trust that wherever you start it will be all right are journal-writing methods that reveal the mind’s agenda underneath the busyness of surface thought. Flow writing is the tip of the iceberg beneath which float your deepest thoughts.

If you’ve never kept a journal (this is for men as well as women) I urge you to start. For those, like myself, who have neglected to keep writing, start again. Here’s the “morning pages” technique. Write three pages-just three pages-and close your journal. Do not read the three pages. Next day, do the same thing and the same thing daily for at least three months before you go back and skim through what you’ve written. Maybe you’ll discover you’re becoming less judgmental, less complacent, happier. Maybe your prayers become deeper. Whatever happens, living without touching that inner life is to live a duller, flatter life.