

Shared Life

The Monthly Newsletter of Old First Presbyterian Church

February 2012

Church Website: oldfirst.org

Church Photostream: www.flickr.com/photos/oldfirst

Old First Concerts: www.oldfirstconcerts.org

MAGGI'S MUSINGS

On Epiphany Sunday many of you joined in writing your prayers and your longings for this coming year on white stars and then pinned them to the curtain in Chapel. During the following weeks more stars appeared and it began to look like a constellation of hope. I've had the privilege of reading those prayers and longings, and I have to admit I am in awe of the awareness, depth, hope and vision reflected in your writing. I challenge you during these last weeks before we begin Lent to use these stars as a focus of your prayer and devotional life. Here are some suggestions for you to try, but use whatever means works for you.

- You might read and pray over these lists and see whether some things on each list speak to you. Then you could start asking God to help you live with them and work on them.
- You might pray a few of them in the morning and discover how you can live into them during the coming day or week.
- You could simply pray through these lists or you could move from prayer and reflection into an on-going commitment or project.

With God's help, we, both as individuals and as the church, can be transformed. We can reflect both God's hope that we look and act like God's beloved children and God's dream that God's kingdom come on earth as in heaven.

What is God's dream for you in this coming year?

Many of your responses expressed longing to have an enriched spiritual life: to deepen our relationships with God, to pray more, to answer God's call, or to live in and through forgiveness and grace towards stronger belief. Other responses talked about being a committed, active part of this faith community: to be a leader, to be a courageous follower, to do one's part, to be a friend, to provide time and funds or to complete tasks. There was a general longing for all to experience less doubt: to be happy, joyful, successful or healthy and to worry less and to trust God more.

What is God's dream for our community and your role in it?

You longed that Old First Presbyterian would grow in numbers but also in spiritual depth and growth in God, that people would find a place of worship here, that we would be a shining presence in the city, filled with willing servants, where we would be open to the possibilities and learn to dream. You longed that we could become a place where all who enter our doors are offered sustenance through, love, art, prayer, support, education and faith. There was strong sense of commitment to serve the community: to serve with acts of kindness, to be points of light, to serve and love our neighbors, to smile at everyone as individuals and as a church, to be an active presence in our community and city. You longed that the city, our country and the whole world know economic justice, safety and peace.

Peace,
Pastor Maggi

LENT BEGINS

Joint Ash Wednesday Service, February 22, 6:30 pm at St. Luke's Episcopal Church

This year Old First Presbyterian Church and St. Luke's Episcopal Church join congregations and choirs for a joint Ash Wednesday Service at 6:30 pm at St. Luke's Episcopal Church at the corner of Van Ness Avenue and Clay Street.

The Season of Lent

Lent begins on Ash Wednesday, February 22, and lasts through Holy Week, which begins on Palm Sunday – also known as Passion Sunday – on April 1. Lent and Holy Week lead up to and culminate in Easter, Christianity's great celebration of Christ's resurrection, which this year falls on April 8.

The season of Lent is a time of prayer, fasting and self-examination in preparation for Easter. Lent lasts forty days, as do the flood of Genesis, Moses' sojourn at Mount Sinai, Elijah's journey to Mount Horeb, Jonah's call to the city of Ninevah to repent, and Jesus' time of testing in the wilderness as well. (The Sundays in Lent are not counted as part of Lent, as every Sunday – the Lord's Day – is a celebration of the resurrection of Jesus Christ.)

In the early church, Lent was also a time of preparation for the celebration of baptism at the Easter Vigil. In many communities of faith it remains a time to equip and nurture candidates for baptism and confirmation and to reflect deeply on the theme of baptismal discipleship.

Begin a daily devotional this Lent. You can use this great on-line resource with people of faith all over the nation; simply navigate to <http://www.d365.org/todaysdevotion>

UPCOMING EVENTS

Adult Book Seminar, Sunday, February 5

The Adult Book group will discuss the acclaimed short story, "The Garden Party," by Katherine Mansfield at 9:30 am on Sunday, February 5, in the Munro Room. At once a story of the effect social class distinctions in the mid-1900's have on a young girl, it also reveals how these distinctions frame the relationship between mother and daughter. Please join in this discussion. If you need a copy of the story, contact Diane Molberg at molberg@earthlink.net.

February Deacon's Meeting, February 5

The board of deacons will meet on Sunday, February 5, instead of the second Sunday of the month due to the annual meeting on that Sunday

Christianity and Politics, Tuesday, February 7

As the race for the presidency heats up, religion will be a topic. For Christians, we will want to ask how our faith is reflected in the political realm and in the positions of the candidates. To help address these questions, Steve Taber is hosting a discussion on February 7 at the Tabers' home, 1170 Green Street. Starting at 6:30 pm with a light supper, there will be a short background talk, describing how Christianity has shaped and informed America's political discourse, and a general discussion of the positions taken by the candidates and how they reflect (or do not reflect) various religious traditions.

It is not the purpose of this discussion to impart a particular point of view. Rather, it is intended to allow for thoughtful analysis of a wide variety of perspectives represented by the candidates considering the underlying American political culture as well as various religious perspectives. If you are interested in participating, please call Steve at home or E-mail him at stephen@sstaber.com.

OFPC Annual Meeting followed by Luncheon, Sunday, February 12

On Sunday, February 12, Old First Presbyterian Church will hold its annual meeting in the sanctuary immediately following the worship service. A potluck luncheon in the Fellowship Hall celebrating “The Church We Love” will follow the annual meeting.

A ham will be provided for the meal. Those attending are asked to bring a salad, side dish or dessert for the potluck. If not bringing food, a \$5 donation is requested. You can sign up for a contribution to the potluck today during coffee hour.

CROP Hunger Walk, April 29, 2012

The annual CROP Hunger Walk was not held in October last year, but instead has been rescheduled to April 29, 2012, again around Lake Merced. The Presbytery organizers hope the date change will help us avoid last year's torrential downpour and the competition for space with the Nike Women's Marathon! We want to have ten walkers this year so mark your calendars. See Mary Russell for details.

NEWS

Joe Ballard's New Address

Joe Ballard, a longtime member of Old First Presbyterian Church, has moved to Florida. Contact the church office for his address and phone number. He would especially appreciate phone calls.

Chloe Pollock, Newest Member

Chloe Pollock, brother of Spencer Pollock, daughter of Sally Spencer and of Philip Pollock, became the newest member of Old First Presbyterian Church upon professing her faith at worship on Sunday, January 15. Congratulations to Chloe.

Doris Krauss Senior Center: Welcome Back, Genie – Thank You, Jan and Sarah

The Reverend Eugenia “Genie” Kinney is back at her post as director of the Doris Krauss Senior Center after recuperating from surgery three months ago. At times she still takes advantage of a cane or walker, but she's back to walking without pain. Thanks go to Jan Hammock for filling in during Genie's absence. Thanks also go to Sarah Taber for her many hours working for the senior center; Sarah is taking a well-deserved sabbath rest from the senior center.

Interfaith Food Pantry Receives Grant

The Mission Partnership Working Group of the Presbytery of San Francisco has approved a \$3,000 grant for the Interfaith Food Pantry.

This grant is funded through the Peacemaking Offering, in which Old First Presbyterian Church takes part each year. The grant application stated that “The grant would enable the Pantry to offer protein – chicken or sausage – more often; or it would allow us to order slightly larger quantities. (We can only offer small quantities of most items, for example, one green pepper, two onions, etc. And some food items often run out before the last people are served.) To increase our budget by 25 cents per family per week would cost \$3,750 (25 cents x 300 families served x 50 weeks).” Twenty-five cents still goes a long way! Thank you to Pam Byers and Bill Campbell on all their work on making this happen.

A Witness to our Welcome: Old First Marches on MLK Day

Fifteen members and friends of Old First Presbyterian Church marched together under a brand-new Old First sign – sporting our exonarthex dove along with a rainbow – in the Martin Luther King Day parade on January 16. Under chilly but brilliantly blue skies, a crowd of a few thousand walked 1.5 miles from the CalTrain station at 4th and King Streets past AT&T Park (and its Willie Mays statue) to the King memorial waterfall in Yerba Buena Gardens, where the San Francisco Interfaith Council offered a service of commemoration to kick off an afternoon of educational and celebratory activities.

Participants from Old First included Susan Ashton, Pam Byers, Bill Campbell, Ted and Betsy Chiao, Robin Currier and Bryan Nichols, Maggi Henderson, Jeanne Kirkwood, Rowena Richie with Skyla and Julius, Mary Russell, and Sally Spencer and Chloe Spencer Pollock. Our group's participation was mentioned in the SF Chronicle's news story about the march.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE REPORT

At the meeting of the congregation on Sunday, February 12, the Nominating Committee will nominate the following members for the office of elder for a term of three years: George Becker, Michael Berg, Barry Clagett, Randy Smith. The committee will also nominate William Feister for a term of two years.

At the same meeting, the Nominating Committee will nominate the following members for the office of deacon, all for a term of three (3) years: Samuel Cheng, Joy Crosser, Craig Kehne, Diane Lewis, Leota Parker.

Finally, at the same meeting, the Nominating Committee will nominate the following members for the Congregation Members of the 2012 Nominating Committee: Betsy Chiao, Pam Free, Jerry Stuart, Lori Yamauchi, and Rose Marie Springer, Alternate. The alternate candidate will serve only if one of the first four is unable to serve. Electing an alternate for this purpose now avoids the need for a special congregational meeting to elect a replacement should one of the four elected members be unable to serve. The 2012 Nominating Committee will also include two serving elders chosen by the session and one deacon chosen by the board of deacons.

Opportunities to Make a Difference

Scanning Skills Needed!

Help Old First move into the 21st century. We have many pictures and slides that sit in dark and dusty corners and are showing the ravages of age and the changes of technology. Are you able to scan photos or slides? Can you transfer a video tape to a DVD? Could you help make sure our history can be enjoyed today and in the years to come? If you could help, please contact Pastor Maggi at maggi@oldfirst.org.

New Bibles and Hymnals

The Bibles and hymnals in the pews get used and borrowed, so from time to time they need to be replenished. We have purchased twenty-five new Bibles and twenty-five new hymnals, and, for the first time, we will purchase ten new children's Bibles to have in the pews as well.

These new purchases become an opportunity for you to make a donation for a Bible or hymnal and have a dedication to honor someone appear on a bookplate inside the front cover. There is a sign-up sheet on the bulletin board if you are interested in sponsoring a new book. The average cost of each book is \$25.

Toothpaste and Tooth Brushes Needed

One Sunday a guest asked if I had any deodorant, toothpaste or a toothbrush. I went into Welcome's supply closet and couldn't find any. I have come to learn these things are much requested items. A church member observing me said "why don't we ask folks when they go to the dentist for extras that one always gets at our visits." What a brilliant and simple idea! So on your next visit why not say "Yes, I will floss every day and may I have some extras samples so that I can bring them to the Welcome Ministry at our church?"

WISDOM: BAY BRIDGE PARTIALLY CLOSED, FEBRUARY 18-20

Over the Presidents' Day weekend the westbound (to San Francisco) lanes of the Bay Bridge will be closed as part of the on-going construction of the new Eastern segment of the bridge. This means, though traffic will be able to leave San Francisco and travel to the East Bay on the bridge, a return trip to the City will require the use of the San Mateo Bridge or the Richmond and Golden Gate Bridges. Wise East Bay members of Old First Presbyterian Church will take note.

FEBRUARY DATES

Saturday	February 4	Old First Presbyterian hosts Interfaith Food Pantry
Sunday	February 5	Name Tag Sunday: Wear your name tag and take a look at others'.
Sunday	February 5	Deacons' Meeting, 12:30 pm
Tuesday	February 7	"Christianity and Politics," Adult Discussion, Home of Steve and Sarah Taber, 6:30 pm
Saturday	February 11	Welcome: Community Dinner, 5:30 pm
Sunday	February 12	Worship with Annual Meeting and Luncheon
Sunday	February 12	Deadline for March Issue of Share Life
Monday	February 20	Presidents' Day: Church Office Closed
Wednesday	February 22	Lent Begins: Joint Ash Wednesday Service with St Luke's Episcopal Church, Van Ness Avenue and Clay Street, 6:30 pm
Saturday	February 25	Welcome: Community Dinner, 5:30 pm
Tuesday	February 28	Session Meeting, Munro Room, 7:00 pm
Wednesday	February 29	Leap Day

The Officers of Old First Presbyterian Church

Session

George Becker, personnel; Michael Berg, mission and giving; Chris Burt, worship; Pam Byers, community-building; Saskia de Vries, worship; Gregory Free, finance; Kristi Hoerauf, finance; Jeanne Kirkwood, clerk of session; Mary Russell, mission and giving; John Sebastian, planning; Steve Taber, operations; Betty Voris, community-building; George Yu, Christian education

Board of Deacons

Nina Berg, funding requests, communion clean up, flowers/memorial donations; Carol Carter, funding requests, communion cleanup; Tracy Clagett, secretary; Dan Joraanstad, co-moderator; Craig Kehne, coffee hour, communion clean-up; Diane Lewis, funding requests, cards; Harriet MacLean, memorial receptions and meals; Dana Nojima, co-moderator, merchandise sales; Glen Potter, transportation; AnnieScott Rogers, deacons' prayer chain; Oliver Spencer, special events; Sarah Taber, memorial Receptions and Meals; Hornghsheng Tu, Technology; Priscilla Yu, Funding Requests