

Shared Life

The Monthly Newsletter of Old First Presbyterian Church

April 2013

Church Website: www.oldfirst.org

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

Old First Concerts: www.oldfirstconcerts.org

MAGGI'S MUSINGS

Sometimes the simplest questions are the deepest.

Recently I've been pondering what the church is. If am not too careful, I get to thinking that the church is the building or that it's a specific congregation of people. I begin to believe that somehow I – as the pastor – am in charge or in control of the church and it can become too much about me and worrying about issues over which I have no control over. And as you can imagine, that really does not lead anywhere that's helpful.

Often when I am pondering questions, I find myself going back to our church's constitution, the Book of Order of the Presbyterian Church USA, which reminds me what I am to be about. It brings me back to the Bible and then gives clarity and depth as it did this time. So read this once and then read it again.

F-1.0301 The Church Is the Body of Christ

The Church is the body of Christ. Christ gives to the Church all the gifts necessary to be his body. The Church strives to demonstrate these gifts in its life as a community in the world (1 Cor. 12:27–28):

The Church is to be a community of faith, entrusting itself to God alone, even at the risk of losing its life.

The Church is to be a community of hope, rejoicing in the sure and certain knowledge that, in Christ, God is making a new creation. This new creation is a new beginning for human life and for all things. The Church lives in the present on the strength of that promised new creation.

The Church is to be a community of love, where sin is forgiven, reconciliation is accomplished, and the dividing walls of hostility are torn down.

The Church is to be a community of witness, pointing beyond itself through word and work to the good news of God's transforming grace in Christ Jesus its Lord.

This is what we are to be about in the world, being the body of Christ. We at 1751 Sacramento Street are just one particular group of people who are striving – alongside many others – to be the church. In these brick walls we attempt to be a community of God's new creation that points beyond ourselves to the transforming God, who is known to us in the risen Jesus.

In some ways, this space is to be a greenhouse, an incubator, a school, a community center for hope and faith. We're aware that how we use our space can be witness for God. I find myself very thankful about how open you are to sharing the building with the wider community. It seems like you just know that **“The property of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A), of its councils and entities, and of its congregations, is a tool for the accomplishment of the mission of Jesus Christ in the world.” (G-4.0201)**

Through the years you have been about giving space to ministries and non-profit programs as they begin, acting like an incubator for vision and growth. And in a city that is so expensive we should never underestimate that gift.

In February, the session offered office space to Heather Grantham, a recent graduate from San Francisco Theological Seminary, who has founded a new ministry to connect youth from churches around San Francisco: San Francisco Presbyterian Youth Group (SFPYG). This group is already up and running, and our own Camryn Hollarsmith is going to the Presbyterian Youth Triennium with the group this summer. (More on that in later edition of *Shared Life*.) If you're in the building on an afternoon you may see Heather in the office also used by the director of the Doris Krauss Senior Center.

Heather writes this:

This office is an extremely generous gift and much needed in order for this ministry to continue.

Thank you.

SFPYG and I are extremely grateful for the offering of the office by Old First. This space allows us to ground ourselves and become a sustainable, ongoing ministry. With the stability offered by this office, we instill a more legitimate feel to the churches we are hoping to serve.

My hope within this program is to show our youth the diversity of people and buildings that our church is made up of by each church hosting a gathering whether or not they have youth who participate. Presbyterians are a connected group and these are all of our youth. We will have a gathering here at Old First and I hope to get folks of all ages from your congregation involved in the hosting.

I also foresee this group as one that the individual churches can share their history with, to inherit the legacy (so to speak). In doing so, this group can tell the church's story in a new, creative way that speaks to the larger population.

May God-for-us, shape us and lead us more and more to be the church with each day.

Peace,

Pastor Maggi

HEATHER GRANTHAM AND THE SFPYG

Heather Grantham

Heather is a recent graduate from SFTS and is certified and ready to receive a call by Eastern Oklahoma Presbytery and feels called to stay in the Bay Area. On Easter Sunday, Heather will start as Assistant Director of Family Ministry at Calvary. Previously, Heather served as a Chaplain at the University of California, San Francisco Medical Center and the Director of Family Ministry at Noe Valley Ministry. She has been and continues to be involved at the national level of the Presbyterian Church (USA) with World Mission, Presbyterian Women, Youth and Young Adults, and other divisions. She served in the Philippines as a Young Adult Volunteer, working with women and children who were survivors of trafficking and/or assault. She also was a Young Adult Intern in Women's Advocacy in the national office. Heather is called to work with families in the area of spiritual development through service and embodied practice.

SFPYG

The San Francisco Presbyterian Youth Group (SFPYG - so named by the youth themselves at a previous gathering) is new, emerging ministry engages the Presbytery of San Francisco's middle and high school youth. This new ministry was launched by a small group of passionate churches within the presbytery with the mission of offering spiritual care and service opportunities to our urban youth within San Francisco, Daly City and Pacifica (previously called District V). The chartering churches were

Broadmoor Presbyterian Church, Mission Bay Community Church, Calvary Presbyterian Church, Noe Valley Ministry, Christ United Presbyterian Church and Korean Presbyterian Church San Francisco. We felt this ministry is much needed due to the fact that the majority of churches within the city have a smaller number of members and lack the funds and/or numbers to adequately care for our youth's spiritual development.

This ministry will

- Provide youth with a multicultural experience by creating a forum for fellowship, discipleship and service with other Presbyterian youth from in and around SF.
- Broaden opportunities for activities and service through the power of pooled resources and planning.
- Build community within the Presbytery of San Francisco between member churches.
- Connect youth to the local and national body of the Presbyterian Church (USA).

For an idea of what a gathering looks like, please take a look at this video that was filmed during the second gathering by visiting <https://vimeo.com/51659668>. We are averaging 25 to 35 youth at each gathering but are hoping for an increase once we have funds in place to advertise and evangelize more.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Witness to the Resurrection: Memorial for Evelyn Molberg, April 6

We grieve the death of Old First Presbyterian Church member Evelyn Molberg, who died on March 19. We will bear witness to the resurrection and hold a memorial service for her at the church on Saturday, April 6, at 1:00 pm.

Pentecost Planning Workshop, April 20

For the major seasons of the church year the worship committee invites anyone who is interested, to share creative and thoughtful ideas at a planning workshop. For Pentecost, May 19, there will be a workshop in the sanctuary on Saturday, April 20 from 10:00 am to 12:00 noon. We will discuss the lectionary text to inspire creativity in worship and in artwork. Worship is the artful work of the people, so come if you are curious; willing to help but don't know how; don't have an artistic bone in your body but enjoy working with others who will share and teach.

Interfaith Food Pantry: All Faiths' Day April 20, OFPC's Day April 27

Saturday, April 20, is the day all the churches participating in the Interfaith Food Pantry work together to staff the food pantry. A few Old First Presbyterian Church volunteers are needed to represent us. On Saturday, April 27, we provide the whole staff for the food pantry. Contact Joy Crosser, if you are able to help on one of these dates.

Anniversary Lunch, May 5

Old First Presbyterian Church will celebrate the 164th anniversary of its founding on Sunday, May 5. The church was the first Protestant church in California, organized in May 1849. A catered dinner will be served in the Fellowship Hall immediately following church worship services. Charge for the dinner is \$5.00. Sign-up and reservations will be taken during coffee hour starting April 14. In addition, an interesting and unique program will be presented. Be sure to be a part of this special Old First Presbyterian Church celebration.

Calling All Youth at Old First: Summer Day Camp, July 8-12

Youth who have completed kindergarten through 6th grade are invited to St. Mark's Lutheran Church for summer day camp, July 8-12, each day 9:00 am to 3:00 pm. Aftercare can be provided for families as

needed. Day camp is a unique partnership between Mt. Cross Summer Camp and St. Mark's Lutheran Church. Join us for a week of faith-based fun, which includes group games, arts & crafts, worship, community building activities and Bible Encounters.

Location: St. Mark's Lutheran Church, 1111 O'Farrell St.

Dates: July 8-12, 2013, 9am-3pm (with the possibility of aftercare)

Cost: \$90. Full scholarships are available. For more: www.stmarks-sf.org

OTHER NEWS

Coffee Hour Sponsors Needed

An important part of our Sunday morning is the chance to meet each other informally after worship over a cup of coffee and something sweet. We are a community and our coffee hour is a principal means of checking in with each other and of getting to know newcomers. For a donation of just \$50 you can sponsor coffee hour and have your dedication listed in the bulletin.

Fun, FREE Things to Do

Do you need ideas for things to do with out-of-town guests, or to do yourself this summer? *SF.funcheap.com* has an updated list of free events. Also, there is a schedule of all the free days for each museum in the city.

Something that's free every day for SF residents is the San Francisco Botanical Garden in Golden Gate Park. You can find a list of events and what's blooming at the moment on their website at sanfranciscobotanicalgarden.org. The magnolias are blooming right now, and among magnolia lovers, the SF Botanical Garden magnolias are well known for the variety.

Farewell to Steve and Lin Woodward

After Easter Steve and Lin Woodward will be moving to England. Their new mailing address will be as follows:

Steve and Lin Woodward
Bridge End, The Drive
Abbotsbrook, Bourne End
Buckinghamshire SL8 5RE Great Britain

Welcome: New Training Series Available to All

Welcome is pleased to announce an exciting new collaboration between Welcome and St. Francis Lutheran. We've recently begun working with St. Francis on their Hospitality Hour and the Sr. Center. One of the ways Welcome is supporting St. Francis in their work is to provide monthly trainings for their volunteers on a variety of issues relating to how to best serve those who live outside or suffer from mental health or substance abuse issues as well as basic food safety and other skills necessary for running a safe and healthy food program.

We are pleased to open these trainings up to any churches in San Francisco who would like to send folks to them. The trainings are free and are always on the third Saturday of each month from 1:00p.m to 3:00p.m at St. Francis Lutheran, located at 152 Church Street.

This month's training is on setting boundaries and will be held on April 16. We are working on having a speaker from the VA come next month to talk specifically about dealing with veterans, but we'll let you know when the topic is firm. If you would like to have folks from your congregation come and join us, please E-mail Valerie McEntee, at sfcares@welcomeministry.org so we can be sure to have enough materials for everyone. Any questions can also be directed to Valerie at the above address or at 415-673-3572, extension 105. We look forward to having folks from your church come join us for these trainings.

FEATURE

What Kind of Journey?

From the Blog of the Reverend Jan Edmiston - <http://achurchforstarvingartists.wordpress.com>
March 14, 2013



*Gonna take a Sentimental Journey,
Gonna set my heart at ease.
Gonna make a Sentimental Journey,
to renew old memories.*

Sentimental Journey was the No. 1 song on the charts in 1945 and it's still the soundtrack of many of our institutional lives – especially if we're talking about church institutions.

We call ourselves *a Christian nation* but what many of us mean is that we have family and cultural affection for church-related traditions. Many – if not most – of our church conflicts are about sentimentalism rather than theology or spiritual

disciplines. At least that's been my experience:

- The discussion about moving a painting donated by a family years ago from the church library to the... um... basement because (1) it scared people and (2) had no theological connection to anything (it was the portrait of a family relative with no connection to the church)
- The discussion about using a new tune for the *Gloria Patri* which included comments like, “*This is how we've always sung the Gloria*” or “*I want my children to learn it exactly how I learned it.*”
- The discussion about no longer continuing the Fall Fun Fair because (1) it was too expensive and we didn't have enough volunteers and (2) it was not the transformational event we were hoping to offer for the community. But some people were very upset because “*We've always done The Fall Fun Fair*” and “*Our family's whole Columbus Day weekend has always been about the Fall Fun Fair.*”

See a pattern here? “*My family*” “*My children*” “*My heritage*” “*What I want*” “*What I'm used to*” “*What makes me comfortable.*” These are the themes of sentimentalism, which bloom and grow in many established institutions. And churches are supposed to be communities of worship and mission and discipleship. Imagine if congregations spent all their time on a missional journey rather than a sentimental one.

YOUR PLEDGE DOLLARS AT WORK

San Francisco Theological Seminary

One of Old First's mission budget benevolences is San Francisco Theological Seminary. This is SFTS's own statement:

Since its humble beginning in 1871, San Francisco Theological Seminary has played an important role in shaping a future in tune with God's purposes in the world. By engaging students, faculty, staff, alumni, trustees, friends, congregations and other church entities, we respond to the opportunities and challenges facing the Church of Jesus Christ by preparing faith leaders to serve in churches and in the community.

As Old First Presbyterian Church has contributed financially to SFTS, so have we received much in return from the SFTS students and graduates that have been part of our congregation over the years: the Reverend Jeff Cheifetz, as interim pastor, the Reverend Lonna Lee, as associate pastor, the Reverend Keenan Kelsey, the Reverend Leslie Veen, as an intern, and Nancy Holve, as Christian educator.

REVISED COMMON LECTIONARY: THE SUNDAYS IN APRIL, 2013

Date	Day	1 st Reading	Psalm	2 nd Reading	Gospel Reading
April 7	2 nd Sunday of Easter	Acts 5:27-32	Psalm 118:14-29 or 150	Revelation 1:4-8	John 20:19-31
April 14	3 rd Sunday of Easter	Acts 9:1-6 (7-20)	Psalm 30	Revelation 5:11-14	John 21:1-19
April 21	4 th Sunday of Easter	Acts 9:36-43	Psalm 23	Revelation 7:9-17	John 10:22-30
April 28	5 th Sunday of Easter	Acts 11:1-18	Psalm 148	Revelation 21:1-6	John 13:31-35

OTHER DATES TO NOTE

Monday	April 1	Church Office closed
Sunday	April 14	Deacons' Meeting, Munro Room, 12:30 pm
Saturday	April 20	All Faiths' volunteers, Interfaith Food Pantry 7:30 am
Saturday	April 20	Pentecost Planning Workshop, Sanctuary, 10:00 am
Saturday	April 20	Presbyterian Women, Munro Room, Noon
Tuesday	April 23	Session Meeting, Munro Room, 7:00 pm

The Officers of Old First Presbyterian Church

Session

George Becker, personnel; Chris Burt, worship; Pam Byers, community-building; Barry Clagett; finance, Bill Feister; Christian Education, Gregory Free; Treasurer, Jeanne Kirkwood; clerk of session, Jean Olson, Mary Russell, mission and giving; Randy Smith; Sally Spencer; Steve Taber; operations, Betty Voris, community-building; Priscilla Yu

Board of Deacons

Nina Berg, flowers/memorial donations; Carol Carter, funding requests, communion cleanup; Samuel Cheng; Joy Crosser; Craig Kehne, coffee hour, communion clean-up; Diane Lewis, funding requests, cards; Dana Nojima, co-moderator, merchandise sales; Leota Parker; Glen Potter, transportation; Sarah Taber, memorial receptions and meals; Horngsheng Tu, technology