

Shared Life

The Monthly Newsletter of Old First Presbyterian Church

February 2016

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THE SEASON OF LENT:

A GIFT OF TIME, AN OPPORTUNITY TO DEEPEN OUR SPIRITUAL LIFE

On the Presbyterian Church (USA) website we read this description of Lent:

The season of Lent is a time of prayer, fasting and self-examination in preparation for the celebration of the resurrection of the Lord at Easter. It is a period of 40 days — like the flood of Genesis, Moses' sojourn at Mount Sinai, Elijah's journey to Mount Horeb, Jonah's call to Ninevah to repent, and Jesus' time of testing in the wilderness. (The Sundays in Lent are not counted in this reckoning of the time between Ash Wednesday and Easter, as every Lord's Day is a celebration of the resurrection of Jesus Christ.) In the early church, Lent was 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.

At Old First Presbyterian we see Lent as an opportunity, an invitation – maybe even as a kick in the pants – to deepen our spiritual lives, to let go what binds up our minds and hearts and to make room for God. I think it was Henri Nouwen who reminded me that we need to empty our minds and hearts so we can “hear” God’s voice, feel God’s nudge, and witness God’s interaction in our lives. For me, emptying means making time to focus on the spiritual, on the words and ways of Jesus, on listening to others’ wisdom and on praying for something new to sink roots into my mind and heart.

What I value about Old First is the many opportunities for spiritual growth. I hope that there may be one or more that work for you: art, music, devotionals, classes. I am particularly excited that this year we are offering a three week seminar starting February 21 on learning, experiencing, trying new and old spiritual practices.

So join me at Ash Wednesday worship, February 10 at 7:00 at St Luke’s Episcopal Church for the beginning of a Holy Lent.

Peace,
Maggi

NOTICE: NO MORE PARKING IN BOFA PARKING LOT ON SUNDAYS

January was the last month of our lease for parking the Bank of America lot for Sunday worship. Beginning Sunday, February 7, please park in the Old First Garage or use on-street parking.

LENT 2016

Shrove Tuesday/Mardi Gras, February 9, 6:00 pm at St Luke's Church

St. Luke's Episcopal Church is holding a Mardi Gras party to support their Summer Mission Trip to Guatemala. The Shrove Tuesday/Mardi Gras will start with a pancake supper (English tradition) at 6:00 pm. And later Iko Yaya, a Zydeco band, will play (New Orleans tradition). Old Firsters are invited to eat, dance and support their Summer Mission Trip. Admission is only \$10.00.

Ash Wednesday, February 10, 7:00 pm at St. Luke's Episcopal Church

For Ash Wednesday worship this year, Old First Presbyterian Church will join our neighbors at St. Luke's Episcopal, 1755 Clay Street at the corner of Van Ness Avenue, at 7:00 pm. Pastor Henderson, will preach.

Devotionals for Lent Available the First Sunday in Lent, February 14

Two different devotionals will be available beginning on the First Sunday in Lent. Copies of *The Lenten Tree: Devotions for Children and Adults to Prepare for Christ's Death and His Resurrection* will be available for families with children; see Linda Reyder or Hsiaochien Chuang of the Worship Committee. And *Mercy Passion & Joy Reflections on the Writings of C.S. Lewis* will be available for everyone; please see an usher or contact the church office to have one mailed to you.



Adult Education during Lent:

Christian Spirituality with Diana Cheifetz, Beginning February 21

Presbyterian teaching elder and spiritual director, the Reverend Diana Cheifetz, will lead a three session course on Christian spirituality on three successive Sundays, February 21 through March 6. The sessions will last from 12:30 pm to 2:00 pm in the Munro Room and will include lunch. In the sessions, Diana will introduce us to different ways of deepening our prayer life, our spiritual life, our relationship

with God.

FEBRUARY 2016

During one short week this February, there will be Valentine's Day, the Super Bowl, Chinese New Year (Year of the Monkey), Mardi Gras and Ash Wednesday. Presidents Day will follow quickly and there will be a fifth Monday this month, because it's a leap year. So do something out of the ordinary on this out-of-the-ordinary date. You'll get another chance in four years, but why wait? Ride a Muni bus line you've never ridden, visit a park you've never seen in San Francisco, eat in a new restaurant or cook a new recipe, or something else that interests you.

Leslie Veen Guest Preacher, February 7

Our guest preacher on Sunday, February 7, will be the Reverend Leslie Veen, a one-time seminarian intern at Old First Presbyterian.

Special Offering for Presbytery of SF Hunger Fund

Old First will make a special offering on **Valentine's Day, Sunday, February 14**, to support the Hunger Fund of the Presbytery of San Francisco. The presbytery's Hunger Fund provides grants to local hunger-relief programs like our own Interfaith Food Pantry.

Another example of an outstanding local program is the Free Breakfast Program of Irvington Presbyterian Church in Fremont. This amazing collaboration between Irvington Presbyterian Church, Centerville Presbyterian Church and community groups:

- Serves hot, nutritious breakfasts three days each week to an average of 165 guests.
- Served 35,000 meals and distributed 9,000 bags of food in 2013.
- Is a volunteer effort with no paid staff.

The presbytery's Hunger Fund supported the Free Breakfast Program in 2014. With our help, the Hunger Fund again can again help support the hunger-relief programs of small congregations that can do so much more with a little help.

Unlike One Great Hour of Sharing, which addresses world-wide hunger, the presbytery's Hunger Fund alleviates hunger in our own community. During 2015, generous gifts from our congregations built the Hunger Fund up to \$4,500. Old First was one of the leading supporters, with a 2105 special offering of \$940 for these high-impact, local programs.

On Valentine's Day, Sunday, February 14, please bring a check to church payable to Old First and put "PSF Hunger Fund" in the memo line, or use a pew envelope and mark the box on the envelope for "Special Offering." Please generously support this offering.

SF Night Ministry Benefit Concert, Sunday, February 14

"Love is in the Aire," a concert to benefit the San Francisco Night Ministry on Sunday February 14, at 3:00 pm at St Mark's Lutheran Church (1111 O'Farrell St between Franklin and Gough) will feature singers from the opera and musical theatre stages. Visit www.sfnightministry.org for more information.

Editor's Note: If you missed hearing John-Elliott Kirk (husband of Brad Peterson, Old First's office admin) sing the role of Teyte in the Hillbarn Theatre's well-received production of Fiddler on the Roof last fall, you can hear him reprise "If I were a Rich Man" and sing "My Heart is so Full of You" from The Most Happy Fella along with many acclaimed local singers at this benefit for the Night Ministry.

Interfaith Food Pantry, Saturday, February 20

Old First is responsible for providing all the volunteers of the Interfaith Food Pantry February 20. Come meet other people of our church you may not know, and work together for our neighborhood. Volunteers are needed to unload the truck, get all the food inside, distribute it, and clean up afterwards. You'll be amazed at how much gets done in such a short time. Contact Dana Nojima or email foodpantry@oldfirst.org.

Congregational Meeting to Elect Church Officers, February 21

A congregation will follow worship on Sunday, February 21. We will elect officers to serve on both the church's session and its board of deacons.

**CATHEDRAL HILL DAY SHELTER VOLUNTEERS NEEDED:
THAT NO ONE BE LEFT OUT IN THE WET AND COLD**

While the City of San Francisco is responding to this year's storm season by offering overnight shelter for up to 1,300 additional people in need in temporary shelters, over 2,000 people will be left out in the wet and cold during the day.

First Unitarian Universalist Society (FUUS) is partnering with the Faithful Fools Street Ministry, the Gubbio Project, and St Mark's Lutheran Church to offer a dry, warm, safe space for those in need of rest during the day, which can make a big difference in the lives of those without reliable shelter.

Monday through Friday each week from **February 1 to March 25**, FUUS will open its doors from 7:30 am to 12:00 noon, to provide warm welcome, rest, a bathroom, and recognition of our common humanity and common human needs.

Volunteers are needed to help with set up, welcome, and clean up daily. Please contact **Alex Darr**, Outreach Minister for the Faithful Fools, at **begforchange@gmail.com** to volunteer. Thanks for your ongoing support of our friends in need, and of interfaith collaboration!

SINCE YOU ASKED: PASTOR'S COMPENSATION PACKAGE

At the annual congregational meeting on January 31, questions arose about the fixed cost of the pastor's package. Some learned for the first time that as a part of each pastor's call the Presbyterian Church USA requires enrollment in the church's health care and pension program.

The Pension Plan, a program of the Benefits Plan of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), is designed to provide clergy with a dependable source of income after retirement. All participating Church organizations share in the financial support for the Pension Plan so that all members receive equitable retirement pension benefits no matter what their circumstances.

This sharing of community needs and resources is demonstrated in both the funding of the Pension Plan and the structuring of the benefits. There is no direct relationship between the dues submitted by the employing organization and the pension benefits received by the members.

Because the Pension Plan uses the church wide median salary as a minimum salary, members can serve smaller churches and earn smaller salaries without sacrificing their retirement pensions. This unique provision is an expression of the community nature of the Benefits Plan and the Presbyterian Church. Employing organizations pay 11% of the pension participation basis for Pension Plan coverage.

The Medical Plan, though Blue Cross/Blue Shield, is designed to promote shared responsibility for healthcare costs — and for one's health. The plan is a finite resource, however, which is why members are asked to share in the cost of coverage through deductibles, office copays, and copayments, and, in some instances, at the request of their employers, by sharing in the cost of dues. This is also why many features of the Medical Plan are designed to support good health habits. These healthier life habits also help contain healthcare costs; this benefits both the pastor and the larger church community.

WHERE THANKS ARE DUE

Thank You, Old Firsters, for Your Generosity in 2015

Old First gathered \$695.00 for the Peacemaking Offering in October and \$610.00 for the Christmas Joy Offering in December. Both of these offerings make a difference in our mission.

Letter of Thanks from the Homeless Prenatal Program

December 31, 2015

Thank you for making a generous gift of \$921.69... to the Homeless Prenatal Program (HPP). We are incredibly grateful for your investment in our work.

For over 25 years, HPP has empowered low-income and homeless families, particularly mothers motivated by pregnancy and parenthood, to find within them themselves the strength and confidence they need to change their lives. HPP partners with parents to address family health and stability during the transformative stages from pregnancy through kindergarten. As a holistic family resource center, HPP supports both parents and children in order to strengthen the whole family – and our community.

Again, thank you for your support.

Sincerely,

Martha Ryan

Founder & Executive Director

Southern Feast for the Winter Shelter from Courtney and Amberle

Black-eyed peas, glazed ham, collards, and sugar pie brought a heapin' helpin' of good luck to the annual winter shelter residents at St. Mary's Cathedral on Sunday, January 3. Courtney Blake and her fiancée, Amberle Gallup, cooked an amazing Southern, soul-food feast at our church and served it to the 100 homeless guests at the winter shelter at St. Mary's Cathedral. More than a dozen Old First members helped cook, transport the food, and serve it, but Courtney and Amberle spent a whole day sharing their culinary skills with us. One of the staff at the shelter was overheard on the phone as we left raving to his friend about the amazingly good meal they had that night thanks Courtney and Amberle.

ANOTHER OPPORTUNITY FOR MINISTRY

Shared Life is in need of a new editor. Kristi Hoerauf is resigning as editor, and would love to have someone volunteer to take over *last* month. Think about this, then call her to learn more about the role.

PREACHING TEXTS FOR FEBRUARY, 2016

Date	Day	1 st Reading	2 nd Reading
February 7	Transfiguration of Christ	Exodus 24:12-18	Matthew 17:1-9
February 14	Lent 1	Psalm 91:1-2, 9-16	Luke 4:1-13
February 21	Lent 2	Isaiah 61:1-3, 10-11	Luke 4:14-24
February 28	Lent 3	Psalm 63:1-8	Luke 13:1-10

DATES TO NOTE

Tuesday	February 9	Shrove Tuesday/Mardi Gras Party at St. Luke's Episcopal Church, 6:00 pm, \$10.00
Wednesday	February 10	Ash Wednesday Worship at St. Luke's Episcopal Church, 7:00 pm
Saturday	February 13	No Interfaith Food Pantry
Sunday	February 14	Session Meeting, 10:30 am, location t.b.a. Board of Deacons Meeting, 12:30 pm, Munro Room
Monday	February 15	Presidents Day: Church Office Closed Doris Krauss Senior Center Closed
Saturday	February 20	Old First staffs the Interfaith Food Pantry. Presbyterian Women, 12:00 noon, Library Planning Committee, 1:30 pm Munro Room
Sunday	February 21	Worship with Congregational Meeting, 11:00 am, Sanctuary
Tuesday	February 23	Session Meeting, Munro Room, 7:00 pm
Wednesday	February 24	New Officer Training: Part 1 of 2, 6:00 pm, Munro Room
Sunday	February 28	4th Sunday Small Group meeting, Library, 12:30 pm
Monday	February 29	Leap Day!

OFPC OFFICERS

Session

Christopher Burt; Bill Campbell; Hsiaochien Chuang, worship; Gregory Free, treasurer; Kristi Hoerauf, finance; Dana Nojima, operations; Jean Olson, clerk of session; Linda Reyder, worship; Steve Taber, planning; Betty Voris, community building; Priscilla Yu, Christian education

Board of Deacons

Nina Berg, Cindy Burt, Samuel Cheng, Diane Molberg, Alfred Martin, Bryan Nichols, Mary Russell, Randy Smith, Sarah Taber, Jian Wang