



# Shared Life

November 2016

The Monthly Newsletter of Old First Presbyterian Church

Church Website: [www.oldfirst.org](http://www.oldfirst.org)

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## Maggi's Musings

One of the joys of a sabbatical break is rediscovering what gives me joy, and then finding ways to bring that back into my life and work.

During this past sabbatical, I rediscovered how reading keeps my imagination fed and my mind curious and in the learning mode. I have decided that I will try to read every day at work. That might sound like a no-brainer, but it takes a commitment to set the time aside.

I am now reading *The Great Spiritual Migration: How the World's Largest Religion is Seeking a Better Way to be Christian* by Brian D. McLaren, *Tired of Apologizing for a Church I Don't Belong To* by Lillian Daniel and *Wise Thoughts for Every Day – On God, Love, the Human Spirit and Living a Good Life* by Leo Tolstoy yes, *that* Tolstoy!

I walked at least 4 miles a day on my sabbatical-keeps me fit and healthy. I have now discovered that I can talk on the phone and walk around the sanctuary and into the balcony. If you have a “two miler” conversation with me, you’ll know we’ve talked a while.

I also am clear how travel and spiritual pilgrimage feeds my soul. I was thrilled when I was asked to be one of the leaders of the “Portals on the Sacred Pilgrimages” with Jeff Gaines from Seventh Avenue Presbyterian Church. Our first trip is in the summer of 2017. Please take time to read more about it. Thank you once again for the sabbatical time away.

Peace, Maggi

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## Portals to the Sacred: Pilgrimage to Burgundy, June 13-16, 2017



Have you wanted to experience the sights of Paris, the mystery of Vezelay, the prayer of Taize, the delights of Dijon and the majesty of Chartres?

Portals to the Sacred Pilgrimages believes that all experiences in life provide portals through which we are able to experience the sacred.

During this 14-day pilgrimage you will join the footsteps of some of the early monks of medieval France as you experience and encounter passageways to the Holy. Your pilgrim guides will provide opportunities to explore sites held sacred by the faithful down through the centuries.

For more information contact Jeff Gaines:

415-337-7310

[jgaines@seventhavenuechurch.org](mailto:jgaines@seventhavenuechurch.org)

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

## OFPC Stewardship Pledge Drive 2016: Fearless Generosity

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*Now to God who by the power at work within us  
can accomplish abundantly far more than all we can ask or imagine,  
to God be the glory in the Church,  
and to Christ Jesus in all generations,  
forever and ever. Amen.*

Ephesians 3:20-21

These encouraging words from the apostle Paul are truly words of blessing. God does far more abundantly than anything we can ask for – or even think about – asking! Perhaps even more amazingly, God chooses to work through us to accomplish more than we can imagine. What does that mean for Old First in the heart of San Francisco on the corner of Van Ness and Sacramento? At Old First we know firsthand the amazing things God can accomplish when we open ourselves up to be the living body of Christ in our city. If you need to be reminded, just look at the stained-glass windows on the north side of our sanctuary next Sunday – our tradition is actually one of being the *BOLD* First Presbyterian Church!

November 6, 2016, will be the beginning of a four-week stewardship emphasis and annual pledge drive for our congregation called “Fearless Generosity.” It’s a time for us to challenge each other to become more faithful stewards as we explore what it means to practice fearless living; fearless service; fearless sowing; and fearless giving. Open your heart and mind to the next bold things God is calling us to accomplish.

Each week we will focus on one of these concepts during worship in creative and inviting ways. We hope you will be present each week. And then, on Thanksgiving Sunday, November 27, 2016, we will join together to present our estimates or commitments of giving in support of the ministry and mission to which we are called as Old First Presbyterian Church of San Francisco.

As we strive to practice fearless generosity, we can remember Paul's blessing to the church in Ephesians 3:20-21. Using us as “willing vessels,” God through the Holy Spirit – the power at work within us like the hands on the banners in our sanctuary this Fall – can accomplish way far more than we can ask or imagine.

On behalf of Session and the Stewardship Committee, I ask that in your personal prayers and as you gather in fellowship with others, please remember to invite God's guidance through this annual OFPC Pledge Drive. May Paul's prayer for the church at Ephesus be our prayer for the church at San Francisco as we begin this exciting time of exploring how God is calling us to be fearless givers, courageous givers - and fearless and brave stewards – as individuals and as a community of faith.

In Christian fellowship,

The Stewardship Committee

Cindy Burt, Dan Joraanstad, Courtney Blake,  
and John Kramar, Planning Elder

## Thanksgiving 2016

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### Musical Notes from Larry

*Now thank we all our God  
with heart and hands and voices,  
who wondrous things has done,  
in whom this world rejoices;  
who from our mothers' arms  
has blessed us on our way  
with countless gifts of love,  
and still is ours today.*



This well-loved hymn is known as the “German *Te Deum*.” The words were written by Martin Rinkart, a Lutheran minister (1586-1649) in Germany at near the close of the end of the Thirty Years' War. The plague of 1637 had decimated the town leaving 8,000 people dead including Rinckert's wife. Martin often officiated at forty or fifty funerals a day. It is rather astounding that such a hymn would be written under these circumstances.

The first two stanzas, intended for his family as a grace to be sung before meals, is based on a doxology from the apocryphal biblical text of Sirach – more fully known as “The Wisdom of Jesus, the son of Sirach” and also called “Ecclesiasticus.” The text runs

*And now bless the God of all, who everywhere works great wonders, who fosters our growth from birth, and deals with us according to his mercy. May he give us gladness of heart, and may there be peace in our days!* Sirach 50:22-24

The tune, called NUN DANKET ALLE GOTT after the words of the German text, was composed in 1648 by German musician and teacher Johann Crüger (1598-1662), and appeared with Rinkart's text in *Praxis Pietatis Melica*, published in 1647. The harmonization we sing is adapted from Felix Mendelssohn's *Lobegesang*, 1840.

Larry Marietta, Music Director

### SF Interfaith Thanksgiving Day Service, November 24

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The 12th Annual Interfaith Thanksgiving Day Service will be held on Thursday, November 24, 2016 at 10:00am at the San Francisco **Swedenborgian Church, 2107 Lyon Street** at Washington Street in San Francisco.

For further information contact Cynthia Zamboukos:  
415-474-1321 or [cynthiaz@sfinterfaithcouncil.org](mailto:cynthiaz@sfinterfaithcouncil.org).



**The Hallowed Season**

*Some say that ever 'gainst that season comes  
Wherein our Saviour's birth is celebrated,  
The bird of damning singeth all night long:  
And then, they say, no spirit dare stir abroad,  
The nights are wholesome, then no planets strike,  
No fairy takes nor witch hath power to charm,  
So hallow'd and so gracious is the time.*

William Shakespeare, 1564-1616

**Worship Committee Announces Advent Devotional**

This year's Advent booklet will be available November 20, the Sunday prior to Advent. The worship committee has selected "From Heaven Above" by Michael Hay. It is based on the hymns of Martin Luther.

**Festive Christmas Potluck**

Our festive Christmas potluck December 4th promises a full array of holiday foods and conversation. Join us after worship in the Fellowship Hall for a Turkey dinner and all the trimmings supplied by our wonderful Old First members. As usual, those who do not cook can join us for a small donation to help cover costs. Mark your calendars now!! Not to be missed!!

Betty Voris

**Brighten the Holidays for a Homeless Young Person**

Bring a Christmas gift to church and help Larkin Street Youth Services brighten the holidays for over 450 young people who stay in Larkin Street's emergency shelters and transitional living facilities or access Larkin Street's drop-in centers and programs.

Gifts do not need to be expensive. Gift cards are always popular, especially from retailers such as Ross, Gap, Payless, Macy's, Old Navy, REI, Safeway, Trader Joe's, Target, Sports Basement, Peet's, Starbucks, Walgreens and Best Buy. All gifts must be new and unwrapped. Everyday items are much needed. Besides gift cards, items on young people's wish lists include:

New Gifts	New Personal Care Items	New Clothing and Household Items
MP3 players, headphones, home electronics, cameras	shampoo, conditioner, lotions	socks (preferably black), underwear, sports bras
watches, flashlights	deodorant, soap	shoes, sneakers, flip flops
bike helmets	first aid kits	hooded sweatshirts, jackets
backpacks, sleeping bags, tarps	brushes, combs, beauty products	ponchos, rain boots, umbrellas
school and art supplies	makeup and shaving kits	towels, sheets, blankets
Muni /BART passes	perfume, cologne	alarm clocks, small appliances
purses, wallets	hair dryers, straighteners	plates, bowls, dishes, cups, pots, pans
2017 day planners, journals	toothbrushes, toothpaste	sewing kits

We have two options for delivering gifts: One is to bring them to church on Sunday, November 20, 27 or December 4. Look for the Larkin Street Christmas gift box in the Narthex before the worship service or Fellowship Hall during the coffee hour, or Bill or Marilyn Campbell. The other option is to take or send gifts to Larkin Street's Engagement and Community Center at 134 Golden Gate Ave. (between Jones and Leavenworth) weekdays, 9:30-4:30, attention Jason Giblin, by Friday, December 9.)

Larkin Street offers innovative and comprehensive services that give homeless and at-risk youth ages 12-24 all the tools they need to reclaim their lives and become self-sufficient adults. Three out of four youth who complete Larkin Street's comprehensive program exit the street.

Bill Campbell

### **DK Senior Center FunRaiser**

The Doris Krauss Senior Center Commission expresses their appreciation to everyone who contributed to and/or attended the 2016 FunRaiser. Its success was due to Old First members who pitched in where needed.

Betty Voris

### **Art in Worship**

If you came during the Peace & Global Witness and World Communion Sunday, you must have noticed the new banner and communion altar cloth made by the Worship Committee and the volunteers. Like what you see? Come join us in the art making next time!

Hsiaochien Chuang



OFPC Chancel



Hsiaochien Chuang



Anniescott Rogers



Left to Right: Cynthia Burt, Linda Reyder, Sarah Taber



Kurt Schwartzman



Christopher Burt and Kurt Schwartzman

### **Welcome Kits Delivered for Seven Refugee Families**

Old First volunteers delivered Welcome Kits for seven refugee families to the International Rescue Committee in Oakland. Each family's kit includes kitchen items, linens, household items, cleaning supplies and toiletries.

Members and friends of Old First, augmented by members of the seniors group San Francisco Village, made in-kind donations of Welcome Kit contents or gave monetary contributions to buy all the items needed for the kits. Each kit also included a "Welcome to the United States of America!" greeting card that many signed during the coffee hour and Safeway and Target gift cards. The initial goal envisioned for the Welcome Kit project was a kit for one family. Old First was able to deliver kits for seven families only because the congregation and community embraced this effort in the most amazing and wonderful way. A huge thank you to the dozens of generous people and the We Choose Welcome team who made this vibrant welcome to refugee families possible!

Bill Campbell

## **Session Report for September and October Meetings**

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Session held a regular meeting on Tuesday, September 27 and had a follow-up Special Meeting on Sunday, October 2. Following are some highlights:

- A draft motion was presented to extend the lease of the Old First Parking Garage. After careful review at the Special Meeting, it was agreed to proceed with extending the lease.
- Reports on the August 27 and September 16 Presbytery meetings were made. Overall, the August 27 meeting was positive and not controversial. The September 16 gathering was the second meeting of the West Bay division and concerned staff re-calibration seeking input on structure of the Presbytery. It was noted that the next Presbytery meeting on November 15 will be more substantive including election of officers, committees, budget adoption and future Presbytery staff design.
- A discussion focused on Next Steps Addressing the Homeless situation on Van Ness Avenue and Sacramento Street was held, and additional advice from the police as well as input from elders was requested.
- The Mission and Giving Committee reported that the Refugee Welcome Kit Drive is nearing a successful completion, and that Old First will apply to the Presbytery for a match to our monetary contribution to the International Rescue Committee.
- The Operations Committee reported that installation of the stained glass window in the Columbarium is complete, and moisture damage seen in the balcony as well as organ maintenance is being addressed.
- The 2016 Stewardship Committee announced that a theme — Fearless Generosity — had been selected, and an initial pledge drive calendar had been formulated. The Committee would like to leverage electronic resources for support of the pledge drive, and also explore options for automatic and electronic giving.
- It was noted that an All Church Directory was being developed... [Note that photographs will also be taken on November 6.]  
Tom Culp, Clerk  
of Session

## **Statements of Faith by New OFPC Deacons and Elders**

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*This concludes the statements of faith by our newly elected deacons and elders.*

### **Mary Russell, Deacon, Class of 2019**

- I believe in the Holy Trinity – Father, Son and Holy Spirit; the amazing depth, breadth and power of the meaning of Three in One.
- I believe in the teachings of the Bible and that we need them to guide our lives.
- I believe that some of those teachings are of their time and we are free to not adhere to those – among them, that we do not stone people we as human beings have no right to judge, that women are not required to keep silent in worship.
- I am guided by our Church’s Book of Order, our Book of Confessions, our prayers, and the way we worship, live, and care for one another in community. Old First is my anchor.
- I am privileged to once again serve as a Deacon to this beloved community.
- I yearn for people to be able to discern more clearly that the Holy Spirit lives in me.
- In my life, I’m grateful for the blessings of my job and coworkers, friends especially at Old First, and my family. We are looking forward to Dad’s 100th birthday in June; he remains the deeply faithful Presbyterian who, with Mom, helped give my life its meaningful spirituality.
- I strive to become more and more aware in my daily prayer life that I need God’s thoughts to be my thoughts, to inform how I think about and interact with others.
- I’m inspired by this brief passage from John 12:17-19, following Jesus’s triumphal entry into Jerusalem; the understanding of Jesus’s meaning for the world is astounding:

- *“So the crowd that had been with him when he called Lazarus out of the tomb and raised him from the dead continued to testify. It was also because they heard that he had performed this sign that the crowd went to meet him. The Pharisees then said to one another, ‘You see, you can do nothing. Look, the world has gone after him!’”*

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**Recommended Websites**

The Presbyterian Church (USA)	pcusa.org
The Presbytery of San Francisco	presbyteryofsf.org
Old First Concerts	oldfirstconcerts.org
Revised Common Lectionary via Vanderbilt University	lectionary.library.vanderbilt.edu

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**Dates to Remember**

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November 12	OFPC staffs the Interfaith Food Pantry.
November 13	Deadline for December Issue of Shared Life Deacons Meeting 12:30 pm
November 20	Larkin Street Christmas Box, Narthex or Fellowship Hall
November 22	Session Meeting, 7:00 pm
November 24	Thanksgiving Day: Church Office Closed
November 25	Church Office Closed
November 26	Community Dinner, Fellowship Hall, 5:30 p.m.
November 27	Advent begins, Larkin Street Christmas Box, Narthex or Fellowship Hall
December 4	Advent/Christmas Potluck, Fellowship Hall, after Worship
December 24	Christmas Eve Potluck at Sarah and Stephen Taber's Home
December 24	Christmas Eve Worship, 8:00 pm

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**Old First Family and Friends****Prayers of Mourning**

We grieve Diane Molberg's death this past September. A memorial service will be held at Old First for Diane on Saturday, November 19 at 2:00 pm.

**Prayers for Health and Wholeness**

- Steve Bacik, Glen Potter's husband
- Mary Lou Wilson

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**Old First Officers****Session**

Bill Campbell, Hsiaochien Chuang, Robin Currier, Kristi Hoerauf, John Kramar, Harriet MacLean, Dana Nojima, Linda Reyder, Betty Voris, Lori Yamauchi, Tom Culp, Clerk of Session

**Board of Deacons**

Bryan Nichols; Moderator, Nina Berg, Cindy Burt, Riley Kramar, Alfred Martin, Emily Olson, Mary Russell, Randy Smith, Sarah Taber, Jian Wang