

Shared Life

The Monthly Newsletter of Old First Presbyterian Church

November 2017

Church Website: www.oldfirst.org

Like Us on Facebook

Old First Concerts: www.oldfirstconcerts.org

Maggi's Musings: Gratitude and Generosity

As Thanksgiving Day approaches, we are reminded that sometimes small acts of generosity to others help focus our own gratitude for all that we receive. Try practicing gratitude this November by purchasing much need items for the San Francisco/Marin Food Bank while you are out shopping for groceries or household supplies. These items can be put in the Food Bank Food Barrel located in the narthex. Here are suggestions for each Sunday in November.

November 5: Peanut butter in plastic containers.

November 12: Oatmeal

November 19: Tuna

November 26: Spam or other tinned meat.

And as you place the items you've purchased in the barrel, why not offer a prayer of thanks as well?

SF District 3 Community Meeting on Homelessness, November 1, 6:00 pm

Share your thoughts and concerns regarding the growing number of homeless residents in District 3 with the city's Department of Homelessness and Supportive Housing, Department of Public Works, and Supervisor Aaron Peskin. 435 Broadway (between Kearny and Montgomery), Wednesday, November 1, 6:00 to 7:30 pm.

"Forced from Home:" Experience the Realities Refugees Face, Oakland, October 30-November 5

"Forced from Home" offers a free, interactive tour of the realities refugees face using materials from refugee camps, sea rescue missions and emergency medical projects. Sponsored by Doctors without Borders, this installation brings to life the individual stories behind the refugee crisis – the experience of 65 million displaced people around the world. It is located at lake Merritt Amphitheater, on Lake Merritt Blvd between 12th Street and 1st Avenue. Learn more at the website: forcedfromhome.com

Benefit Concert for Interfaith Welcome, Friday, November 10, 7:30pm

Acclaimed pianist Sarah Cahill will perform a concert of classical music to support Interfaith Welcome. Interfaith Welcome is a group of Bay Area congregations working together to help refugees. Interfaith Welcome will devote 100% of the concert proceeds to the Vision Project, which empowers refugee girls in Oakland schools. The Vision Project is a new initiative of the International Rescue Committee. The suggested donation is \$15 per person or \$25 per family. Refreshments will be served: Zion Lutheran Church, 495 9th Avenue at Anza. Use the 38-Geary bus stop at 9th Avenue. Information: 415-221-7500.

Turkey Chefs Needed for November's Saturday Community Meal

On Saturday, November 25, Old First Presbyterian Church will serve a home cooked Thanksgiving feast for our guests. We need volunteers to cook turkeys! We will supply the frozen turkeys starting Sunday, November 18, and you can bring them back to the church on Monday, Tuesday or Wednesday, November 20, 21 or 22 – or right to the Saturday Community Dinner on November 25. We need all sorts of help cooking and serving. Contact Pastor Maggi to reserve your turkey: maggi@oldfirst.org. Contact saturdaymeals@oldfirst.org to volunteer your time.

SF Interfaith Thanksgiving Day Service, November 23, 10:00 am

The thirteenth annual Interfaith Thanksgiving Day Service sponsored by the San Francisco Interfaith Council will be held here, at Old First Presbyterian Church on Thanksgiving Day, Thursday, November 23, beginning at 10:00 am. Ushers are needed! Please contact seminary intern Liz Zupp and let her know you can usher: liz@oldfirst.org

OFPC Stewardship Pledge Drive 2017: Live Generously

“They are to do good, to be rich in good works, generous and ready to share, thus storing up for themselves the treasure of a good foundation for the future, so that they can take hold of the life that really is life.” 1 Timothy 6: 18-19.

November 2017 marks the beginning of our Stewardship drive at Old First Presbyterian Church, the precursor of which we celebrated October 29 with a delicious pot luck luncheon co-organized with the Community Building Committee. We had James C. Snipes as a special luncheon speaker who spoke on the importance of stewardship.

Stewardship is about how we manage our resources; what we do with our money and our time. Stewardship is how we care for the community, the city, the nation, and the world. Stewardship is about how we care for peace, justice, and those in need; it is about how we reach out and help others.

Old First has organized small group gatherings at homes and the church where informally we communicate, listen and share the church’s theme and mission. Discussions of scripture topics based on the theme of Live Generously will be examined during October and November. This is a wonderful way of building support and forming new ideas about *LIVING GENEROUSLY*.

Each Sunday in November, we will have members of the congregation speak during worship on Minutes for Stewardship, relating to the theme of *LIVE GENEROUSLY*: how God is calling us to do good, perform good deeds and be generous and willing to share; how God is calling us with a cheerful heart to lead a generous and joyful life; how God is calling us to let go of our worries and think of others, and how God is calling us to be generous and serve the least and the lost.

For Old First, Stewardship is about living and giving generously so we can do more of God’s work and do it better. For the coming year the goal is to increase pledges to \$300,000. We need to help the church in its work in building repairs, maintenance, and renovation. (Our building is over 100 years old!) We need to maintain the high caliber music we have enjoyed in the past and to keep our dedicated church staff at salaries competitive and current with the cost of living. Our nation and the world have suffered unbelievably horrible natural disasters this year and Old First has committed to providing more funds for Mission and the national church’s response to our brothers and sisters who are experiencing such pain. The New Testament is filled with images of **generous giving**, faithful giving, and cheerful giving.

In the first week of November you will be receiving a financial commitment card so that on **November 26** we can, as a congregation, present our **pledge cards** on Stewardship Sunday. If you will not be here on that day, you can mail or turn in your pledge card early.

We are very blessed as a city and a congregation. As the need around our own country and the world has been particularly frightening this year, we are asking you to prayerfully consider increasing your pledge so Old First can do more of God’s work.

May the peace and glory of Christ be with you all!

The Stewardship Committee: John Kramar, Riley Kramar, Sarah Taber and Priscilla Yu, chair

“Our Prayer” by George Herbert (1593-1632)



Thou that hast given so much to me,
Give one thing more – a grateful heart;
Not thankful when it pleaseth me,
As if Thy blessings had spare days;
But such a heart, whose pulse may be Thy praise.

September Session Meeting Report

- Elders convened as Voting Members of Old First Center for the Arts (Old First Concerts), heard a comprehensive report from Director, Matt Wolka, and approved the elected officers and the 2017 budget for Old First Concerts.
- There was a presentation on the September 9 Presbytery meeting. Highlights included a report on the workshop lead by Jessica Chavitz about our racist society where individuals are encouraged to observe, reflect, pray and act to counteract racism, an announcement that the new Book of Order and Book of Confessions are now downloadable, and that the Presbytery nominating committee is seeking lay leaders for working groups and committees.
- The Finance Committee reported that the Finance Report came out early this month and the check request form was distributed for immediate use.
- There was an Operations Committee Report which covered several items including audio updates, carpet for Munro Room, rain damage repair, lighting and electrical updates, grills for Sacramento Street windows, custodial work and making rooms more functional.
- Personnel Committee reported that interviews for a new bookkeeper had been extended to November 1.
- The Community Building Committee announced potluck lunches for October 29 and January 7.
- The Worship Committee has completed Advent Planning, noted that the price for flowers was increasing, and Liturgist signups were encouraged.

Tom Culp, Clerk of Session

October 2017 Retreat Update

Twenty-four folks signed up for our journey. Once again, we partnered with First Presbyterian Church, Burlingame and Calvary Presbyterian Church in San Francisco. We are trekking to Mt Hermon Christian Center near Scotts Valley, CA for a weekend of fellowship, challenging lectures, stimulating conversations and FUN! – all while surrounded by the soaring redwoods of the Santa Cruz Mountains. From Old First, we have a crew consisting of The Usual Suspects bolstered by new members and some long time members who are joining for either the first time or for the first time in a long time.

As a member of the retreat committee, I am grateful to all of you who have stayed home to "keep the store open". And, I am humbly grateful for all who donated to the scholarship fund for the retreat. All scholarships granted are traditionally partial, which means that everyone pays something. This year, thanks to your generosity, we were able to provide financial assistance to all who applied. **THANK YOU!**

Since this is being written before the retreat, I can't give any specifics about the events of the retreat -- that will be something to look forward to in the December issue of *Shared Life!*

Jeanne Kirkwood

News from “Fellow Elder, Miles Away” aka “FEMA,” October 2017

Greetings, Old First, from Austin Texas!

I appreciate everyone’s support during my extended assignment supporting FEMA and the Hurricane Harvey survivors. I also appreciate – and understand – your questions regarding what exactly I am doing here! So, here is my explanation based on what I am working on so far. (I write this October 8.)

FEMA provides many services to disaster survivors, from initial boots-on-ground and airlifts, to longer-term financial reimbursement to state-level government emergency funds that in turn flow to county and city governments and to individual homeowners. I have been assigned to support the longer-term financial reimbursement “Public Assistance” program.

Here is how it works: The Town of Randyville (an applicant), in Smith County, requests emergency funds from the State of Texas, based upon their list of damages incurred and cost estimates to restore public services. Such requests can cover immediate needs to repay overtime to town workers for clearing debris from roads; for placement of temporary facilities, such as modular office or classroom trailers or sewage treatment systems; and for permanent repairs. Temporary facilities for Critical Infrastructure get special reviews, to help communities get schools reopened, water treatment systems up and running, government offices and functions – for example, fire and police departments – back in service.

FEMA, being a federal agency with a big taxpayer-funded checkbook, must review applicant repair plans to make sure: a) they are reasonable in cost; b) they are essential for restoring function; c) they consider mitigation plans to minimize or avoid costly damage during the next storm; and d) the temporary facilities will comply with federal laws, executive orders, and regulations. Such orders and regulations cover issues such as the Clean Water Act; wetlands protection; floodplain protection; historic preservation; endangered species and critical habitat. Applicants may choose to do what they want regardless of these protective regulations – if they choose to disregard these protections, however, they jeopardize FEMA reimbursement.

If FEMA Site Inspectors in the field identify possible conflicts with these protective regulations, the inspectors will call for an environmental and historic preservation specialist to assist with the Applicant communications and facility planning. That’s me – an EHP Specialist, focused on supporting Critical Infrastructure needing Temporary Facilities.

Not exactly what I thought I would be doing, but we are here to work where needed. FEMA’s mantra is “Communicate, Coordinate, Complete.” Mine is easier, I think: I’m here to help people help people.

The anticipated flood (ha ha) of Public Assistance Applicants has not arrived (at the time of this writing) so we are working on standard guidelines and coordinated agency involvement to help us when the deluge arrives. I hope to provide a clearer update in the next Shared Life issue.

Oh, one last item: thanks to a nudge from Pastor Maggi, I have been attending Hope Presbyterian Church in Austin (www.hopeaustin.org). Nice people, familiar hymnal; similar Christ-In-Action approach to those in need. Also, I noticed a posting on the FEMA Field Office wall announcing seminars on stress and support put on by... *Presbyterian Disaster Assistance!*

Thanks again for your support.

Regards, Randy Smith

Brighten the Holidays for a Homeless Young Person



Over 450 young people will spend the Holidays with Larkin Street Youth Services — staying in emergency shelters and transitional living facilities or accessing Larkin Street’s engagement centers and programs. Help make the season special by donating a gift for them!

Gift cards are always popular, especially from retailers like Ross, Gap, Payless, Urban Outfitters, Macy's, Old Navy, REI, Safeway, Trader Joe's, Target, Ikea, Sports Basement, Peet's, Subway, Walgreens and Best Buy. 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, digital cameras	Towels	Socks (preferably black), underwear, sports bras
Watches, flashlights	Makeup and shaving kits	Sheets, blankets
Muni /BART passes	Hair dryers, straighteners	Plates, bowls, dishes, cups pots, pans
Sporting goods, backpacks, sleeping bags, tarps	Brushes, combs	Alarm clocks, small appliances
School and art supplies	Perfume, cologne	First aid kits
2018 day planners, journals		Flashlights

All gifts must be **new and unwrapped**. We have three ways to deliver gifts:

- Bring them to church on **Sunday, November 19** or **26** or **December 3**. 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.
- Shop and let Amazon deliver. Shop Larkin Street’s wish list on Amazon and gifts will be sent straight to Larkin Street. larkinstreetyouth.org/wishlist
- Take or send gifts to Larkin Street’s Engagement and Community Center at 134 Golden Gate Ave. (between Jones and Leavenworth) 94102 weekdays, 9:30-4:30, attention Clare Armbruster, by **Friday, December 8.**)



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.

Prayers for Our Community

Prayers for Healing and Wholeness

For Bart Crosby recovering from shoulder injury.

Prayers of Mourning

For OFPC member James “Jim” Lewallen who died October 25, 2017. Plans for a memorial service are pending.

Dates to Remember

November 5	Sunday	All Saints' Sunday: Stewardship drive begins. Columbarium Society, 12:30 pm Mission Committee Meeting with Homeless, 1:00 pm
November 7	Tuesday	Election Day: Precinct Polling Stations at Old First, All Day
November 12	Sunday	Deadline for December Issue of <i>Shared Life</i> Board of Deacons, 12:30 pm
November 21	Tuesday	Worship Committee, 7:00 pm
November 23	Thursday	Interfaith Thanksgiving Service at Old First, 10:00 am
November 23-24	Thursday Friday	Church Office Closed
November 25	Saturday	Saturday Community Dinner, 5:30 pm
November 26	Sunday	Christ the King Sunday: Presentation of Pledge Cards
November 28	Tuesday	Session Meeting, 7:00 pm

OFPC Church Officers

Session

Class of 2018

Chris Burt
Kristi Hoerauf
Dana Nojima

Class of 2019

Tom Culp, clerk of session
Robin Currier
John Kramar
Lori Yamauchi
Priscilla Yu

Class of 2020

Bill Campbell
Hsiaochien Chuang
Linda Reyder
Daniel Pearch
Virginia Webb-Pekelnicky

Board of Deacons

Class of 2018

Nina Berg
Alfred Martin
Randy Smith
Sarah Taber

Class of 2019

Riley Kramar
Mary Russell
Emily Olson

Class of 2020

Beth Arnaoot
Courtney Blake
Cindy Burt
Glen Potter
Jian Wang