

Shared Life

The Monthly Newsletter of Old First Presbyterian Church

September 2018

Telephone 415-776-5552

Website www.oldfirst.org

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Maggi's Musings

Life in September: time to begin anew!

I wonder if you still have that "September itch" when a new season has started and you miss the red leaves of fall we find in other parts of the country? Do you pass displays of school supplies and have an urge to buy pencils or new pens? Do you miss the rhythms of putting away your summer clothes and getting your brain into learning mode again? Well, San Francisco may have a different kind of fall (October is really our summer) but there are still opportunities to set new patterns, expand your mind, and look forward to what is next. We will see this in worship. The choir will return. Extra hymnals will need to be put in pews. And children's time will resume on the 2nd and 4th Sundays.

Also, I will preach on the book of Ruth this September. Biblical scholar Linda Day reminds us "that it is tightly knit gem of a story. It is story of women making their way in a man's world. It is a story of love and grief. It deals with ethnic and class concerns. It causes us to reconsider family values, to reassess who is family and who are our neighbors." I will add that it is a story of immigration and new beginnings. It is an ancient tale but one that speaks loudly to our 21st Century world.

All this is contained in just four chapters! So, I challenge you to read them all and then re-read a chapter a week before and after the Sunday sermon. I am excited to see how God can work in us through Ruth this fall!

To expand your mind and open your hearts Eva DeLair is offering a class Our Convicted Savior "Mass Incarceration and Christianity Sept 9, 24 and October 7. You can join in with those studying Tod Bolsinger's *Canoeing the Mountains: Christian Leadership in Uncharted Territory*.

You can do a fall cleaning by sharing your used books and lap tops and join us in our fall (Northern California's summer) retreat at Mount Hermon October 19-21.

May we all fall into patterns of new life this month.

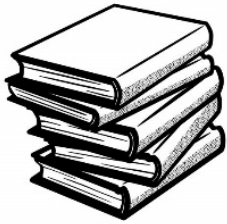
Peace,

Pastor Maggi

Our Convicted Savior: Mass Incarceration and Christianity September 9 and 23, October 7

Please join us for a discussion of imprisonment and persecution through the criminal system, and why and how we can act as Christians on this important issue. The discussion will take place on three Sundays: September 9 and 23, and October 7. We will meet in the Munro Room, from 12:30 pm to 1:30 pm.

Book Drive for the Prisoner Literature Project



Old First will be collecting books to donate to the Prisoner Literature Project through the months of September and October in conjunction with our Christian Education program, Our Convicted Savior. Whether you can attend the discussions or not, please consider donating a few books to be sent to incarcerated people around the country. Please drop your books in the box in the narthex (in the back of sanctuary). Books most requested by prisoners include: dictionaries, paperback reference books, how-to books, books on African-American, Latino/a or Native American culture, and books on politics, sociology, psychology, philosophy, science or mathematics, to name a few. Thank you for your contributions.

Lap Top Needed



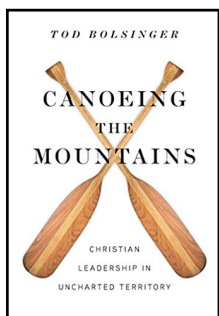
Do you have an old lap top sitting around gathering dust? One of Old First's homebound members would love one to get on-line: to connect in with the world, to E-mail family, and to check out library books on-line! If you have one, speak to Pastor Maggi or call Brad in the church office.

Join Our "Canoeing the Mountain" Team!

"Challenging," "Learned a lot," "frustrating and complex," "energizing." These are some of the descriptions used to describe our meeting in which we threw out ideas and had a lively discussion about everything from 'core values of our congregation' to 'how we attract people in a post-Christian era' to 'where should we put our resources and invest our talents.' While it may sound a bit unfocused and diffuse, our conversation was anything but: we are thinking together, in a hard and very serious way, about how we as a Christian community move forward to grow in faith, discipleship, community, outreach, and service.

Join us! We meet twice a month, on Mondays from 6:30 to 8:00 pm and you can join us via a video or audio link. Contact John Kramar at 415-316-9004 or jwkramar@msn.com or Elaine Lyford-Nojima at 510-710-9250 or elaineln@pacbell.net

About the Book: *Canoeing the Mountains*



If you were at worship on August 25 (if not, go to our website and www.oldfirst.org to hear it) you heard Pastor Maggi preach about this book and her admission that she had not been trained for the 21st Century church. In that confession there is a freedom to find new ways to be the church and to be a leader in the church. *Canoeing the Mountains* is inspiring her to think and work in different ways. One wise person, Kirk Kirlin, said when what you do isn't working, there are two things you CAN NOT DO: 1. what you have already done or 2. do nothing." So we are seeking a third way: learning a new thing: much harder and deeper work the one that can give life. Why don't you begin on learning some new vocabulary as a first step in this journey? Technical problems and adaptive change have been eye openers for Maggi.

From the Book: Technical Problems vs. Adaptive Challenges

Speaking of "technical problems" implies that applying current knowledge, skills and tools can resolve a problem, that fixing a program will change things. Speaking of an "adaptive challenge" implies that things cannot be solved with existing knowledge, skills and tools, but rather a shift in values, expectations, attitudes or habits of behavior will be needed to make change.

We are seeking to learn how to make adaptive changes that are unique to Old First and to our community in San Francisco, so we can prepare for the future we do not know while all the time trusting that God, the Alpha and Omega, is surely there!

View this quick overview and introduction to why Tod Bolsinger was compelled to write the book: <https://vimeo.com/146047978>

Performance by Unique Organ Duo to Support International Refugee Aid, September 21



Old First and other Interfaith Welcome congregations invite you to an evening with Pacific Northwest musicians Timothy and Nancy LeRoi Nickel. As an organ duet team, the **LeRoi Nickel Duo** has performed throughout the US and Europe. A German reviewer called their performance, “virtuosic playing” and “a virtual swirling dance.” The duo has recorded two albums of organ music and three CDs of piano duet music.

100% of the evening’s donations will go directly to **Sea of Solidarity** for its work providing direct assistance to the refugees who continue to arrive at and are trapped on Lesbos, Greece. **Sea of Solidarity** is an all-volunteer nonprofit meeting the daily needs of refugees at landing sites and camps through simple, direct material support. Suggested donation: \$15/person; \$25/family (cash, credit card, or check payable to Sea of Solidarity). No reservations necessary. A reception will follow the performance.

The concert venue will be Zion Lutheran Church, 495 9th Avenue (at Anza), and the concert will be **Friday, September 21, 7:30 pm.**

Inquirers/New Members Class, September 16 and 23

Would you like to know more about partnering with or being a member of the Old First Presbyterian community? We will offer a class on Sunday, September 16 in the Library at 12:30 pm and also on September 23 at 10:00 am. Please contact Pastor Henderson for more information.

Peace and Global Witness Offering: “Blessed Are the Peacemakers,” October 7

The Peace & Global Witness Offering is received during the Season of Peace, which ends on World Communion Sunday. Old First will take this offering on that Sunday, October 7.

Here is how our gifts are used: A gift to the Peace & Global Witness Offering enables the church to promote the Peace of Christ by addressing systems of injustice across the world. Individual congregations are encouraged to utilize up to 25% of this Offering to connect with the global witness of Christ's peace. Mid councils retain an additional 25% for ministries of peace and reconciliation. The remaining 50% is used by the Presbyterian Mission Agency to advocate for peace and justice in cultures of violence, including our own, through collaborative projects of education and Christian witness.

Old First will donate its 25% of this Offering to (Gabby) Giffords Law Center to Prevent Gun Violence, <http://lawcenter.giffords.org>, a San Francisco-based nonprofit that researches, crafts and defends laws, policies and programs to prevent gun violence and save lives, both in our local communities and nationwide.

“Prepare Ye The Way of The Lord,” October 14, 21

As I’ve been thinking about this Shared Life article, I keep singing that refrain from the 1973 *Godspell* production, “Prepare ye the way of the Lord.” In this production, a clear tenor voice sings out this refrain over the city, and people drop what they are doing and gather in a large park - that

tenor voice has gotten their attention... I realize that I'm showing my age when I use that reference - but that's what a good liturgist can do - a good liturgist gets our attention, calls us together, inspires and moves us to worship, to reflection, to understanding. So, join us for two classes on "How to be a Better Liturgist." Whether you have been a liturgist for years or you are interested in learning how, these classes will give us time to think together about this role - indeed, a ministry - in creating our worship services to be meaningful and moving. We'll practice reading scripture, think about how to transition from one part of the service to another, even think about the messages we send as we sit up front. We'll do some videotaping and lots of practice. Dates: Sunday October 14 and Sunday October 21 from 12:30 to 1:30. Led by Elaine Lyford-Nojima.

Save the Dates: All-Church Retreat at Mt. Hermon, October 19-21

There has been a bit of a change in the composition of the retreat participants this year. Calvary Presbyterian Church will not be joining us; however, Old First will still team with First Presbyterian Church of Burlingame.

Our retreat speaker will be Steve Schibsted who is currently serving as interim senior pastor at First Presbyterian Church in Berkeley. He is an ordained PC(USA) pastor with a doctor of ministry from Fuller Theological Seminary. He has over twenty years of service, lately seeking ways to connect with those outside the doors of the church, while they look for ways to serve. He has interest in social justice areas such as welcoming and enfolded immigrants into the USA and Habitat for Humanity projects. His lectures will be enthusiastic and inspiring. He is married with adult children and still enjoys barbecuing! [Story continues on next page.]

The general format will be as usual with six meals: Friday dinner, Saturday three squares, and Sunday breakfast and lunch. We will have small groups after the general sessions. Saturday night there will be line dancing with a professional caller! What a treat to move around after a day of meetings.

Important: spaces are first-come-first-served so get your bids in early. There are economy, standard and some deluxe facilities available. All are *en suite*. Registration forms must be accompanied by a \$50.00 deposit. Old First will have partial scholarships available above the \$50.00 deposit fee.

The registration form is enclosed as an insert in the print version of this issue of Shared Life or can be found in the E-mail to which the electronic version of this issue has been attached. You can also see Jeanne Kirkwood or Cindy Burt for extra copies.

Turn in your registration form and either the deposit or the full payment to Jeanne or Cindy. Jeanne's folder, the membership folder, can be found in the Other Important Information file bucket, and Cindy's folder can be found in the Deacons' file bucket. You may also give your form and check to one of them in person.

BOLD First Joins Neighborhood Coalition

Scripture is full of stories and references to God's creation working together to create change and to grow - "Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their toil" (Eccl 4:9), and "Do two walk together unless they have agreed to meet?" (Amos 3:3). And with the early church in Corinth, we hear that "there are those that plant, and others that water, and still others that reap" - but it is God who gives growth! (1 Cor. 3:7)

It's a priority at BOLD FIRST to leverage partnerships and build coalitions to share Christ's message of love and to care for one another. On Tuesday, July 24th, OFPC and other commercial property owners voted to support special assessments to provide supplemental cleaning, security, and economic enhancements in our Middle Polk neighborhood. The very next day our new Mayor

London N. Breed, our Supervisor Aaron Peskin, the Office of Economic and Workforce Development, and the Discover Polk Steering Committee announced the creation of the Discover Polk Community Benefit District (CBD).

We see joining this neighborhood group as a natural outreach of our need - and interest- to build relationships with our neighbors, and working with our neighbors to improve our community. Who knows what these relationships and this partnership may bring to us at Bold First? This is a new step for us and we expect to be making more of these in the days ahead.

The new Discover Polk joins 15 other benefit districts that have been created in neighborhoods citywide, with the goal of ensuring a welcoming, clean, and economically vibrant area. "Community Benefit Districts have been a successful model throughout our city and are critical to keeping their areas clean and safe," said Mayor Breed. "I am excited that neighbors, merchants, and property owners have come together on this effort and I look forward to residents and visitors noticing a difference on our streets. "

The Discover Polk CBD was formed after a majority vote by property owners in the area - including Bold First. But we will receive two rate reductions - for owning a historic building in the City and also for being a non-profit corporation. The boundaries of the District include approximately 14 blocks bounded by Polk Street, California Street, Broadway Street, and Van Ness Avenue. The very neighborhood BOLD FIRST seeks to serve.

"I am incredibly proud of this neighborhood's three year-long effort to transform how services are delivered to the community," said Supervisor Peskin (as if our Supervisor knew that OFPC is here to serve the community)! Old First member George Yu has served for over three years on the Middle Polk CBD Steering Committee. His tireless efforts are a demonstration of his commitment to both OFPC and our neighborhood.

The services that the Discover Polk CBD will provide include:

- Maintenance teams that sweep, scrub, and pressure wash sidewalks and public spaces to remove litter, graffiti, and trash.
- Beautification improvements to make Discover Polk more visually attractive, which may include green spaces, way-finding signage, trashcans, and enhanced streetscapes.
- Business liaison services to connect merchants to available resources and build a stronger economic climate.
- Marketing and district branding to promote a positive image of Discover Polk as a regional destination.

As with all partnerships we create in life, Proverbs 27:17 reminds us that "Iron sharpens iron, and one person sharpens another." Look for ways that YOU can sharpen our BOLD FIRST presence in the neighborhood and Middle Polk community through our new CBD! If you have questions about Discover Polk ask George Yu, Steve Taber, or John Kramar.

Session Meeting Report for June 2018

The Session met on June 26. Details of the meeting follow:

- Elders shared their views on two articles in *Presbyterians Today*: "Success is Overrated: Church Needs Creative Outlet to Fail and Learn," and "The New Mission Field: Creative Ways to use Your Church Property."

- Elders heard a report on the Western Region Presbytery Meeting of May 30 held at Lincoln Park Presbyterian Church where immigration and housing issues were discussed and on the full Presbytery Meeting held on June 5.
 - There was a short discussion on the PC (USA) General Assembly held in St. Louis June 16-23.
 - The Planning Committee announced several meetings to digest and discuss the feedback from the congregation and committee members based on *Canoeing the Mountains*.
 - The Mission Committee reported on its many activities highlighting the Gift Card Drive for Refugee Families, the Pentecost offering, a portion of which is designated to Ec House at SF State, the June Refugee Christian Education program, and the Vision Project for Refugee Girls.
 - The Finance Committee reported that pledges are almost up to expectation and that Mary Ann Reynolds had been hired for the bookkeeper position.
 - The Operations Committee noted new electronic display monitors and some discussion of improving the electrical equipment in the garage.
 - Rev. Henderson made a short report covered the upcoming Mission trip to San Diego and announced that Keenan Kelsey would preach August 4.
 - It was confirmed that there would be no meeting in July and that the next session meeting will be on August 28.
- Tom Culp, Clerk of Session

Thank-You from Former Intern Liz Zupp

Old First Family,

Thank you so much for the note and gift. I appreciated it very much. Interning with you was a great experience and I miss seeing you all on Sunday mornings.

I am currently living in the city in the Mission Terrace neighborhood near Balboa Park, and I am working as the Assistant Store Manager at a store in San Mateo.

I hope you all are well, and I would love to visit the church during the holidays.

Liz Zupp, former seminary intern

A Psalm of Life by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, 1807 – 1882

<p>Tell me not, in mournful numbers, Life is but an empty dream!— For the soul is dead that slumbers, And things are not what they seem.</p> <p>Life is real! Life is earnest! And the grave is not its goal; Dust thou art, to dust returnest, Was not spoken of the soul.</p> <p>Lives of great men all remind us We can make our lives sublime,</p>	<p>And, departing, leave behind us Footprints on the sands of time.</p> <p>Footprints, that perhaps another, Sailing o'er life's solemn main, A forlorn and shipwrecked brother, Seeing, shall take heart again.</p> <p>Let us then be up and doing, With a heart for any fate; Still achieving, still pursuing, Learn to labor and to wait.</p>
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Prayers for Healing and Wholeness

For Betsy Chiao as she recovers from surgery and follow-up chemotherapy for cancer, and for her faithful care-giver, Ted.

For Bart Crosby recovering from complications of a recent fall.

For Erwin Barron as he continues recovering from cancer treatments.

For Jean Olson, former member, recovering from surgery in Boston, Massachusetts.

For Edward “Teddy” Pekelnicky, born August 12, 2018 at 8 lbs., 6 oz., and 21¾ inches long, the infant son of Virginia Webb-Pekelnicky and Bob Pekelnicky.

For James Emerson under hospice care.

For James Uren with on-going health issues.

Dates to Remember

September 2	Sunday	Columbarium Ministry Team, 12:30 pm
September 3	Monday	Labor Day: Church Office Closed
September 9	Sunday	Deadline for Submissions for October Issue of Shared Life Board of Deacon, 12:30 pm “Our Convicted Savior,” Christian Education, 12:30 pm
September 15	Saturday	Worship Committee, 10:00 am Presbyterian Women, 12:00 noon
September 16	Sunday	Inquirers/New Members Class, 12:30 pm
September 22	Saturday	Saturday Community Dinner, 5:30 pm
September 23	Sunday	Inquirers/New Members Calls, 10:00 am “Our Convicted Savior,” Christian Education, 12:30 pm
September 25	Tuesday	Session, 7:00 pm

OFPC Church Officers

Session

Class of 2019

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

Class of 2020

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

Class of 2021

Kristi Hoerauf
Dana Nojima
Stephen Taber

Board of Deacons

Class of 2019

Riley Kramar
Emily Olson
AnnieScott Rogers
Mary Russell

Class of 2020

Beth Arnaoot
Courtney Blake
Cindy Burt, moderator
Glen Potter
Jian Wang

Class of 2021

Sarah Taber