

Shared Life

The Monthly Newsletter of Old First Presbyterian Church

June 2019

Telephone 415-776-5552

Website www.oldfirst.org

Old First Concerts: www.oldfirstconcerts.org

Maggi's Musings



Just talking about Lodestar – a church camp nestled in the Sierra Nevada foothills that I attended as child and youth – softens my heart. I remember the fun, the contentment, the joy, and the faith development that went on in those weeks away from home. There was this wonderful mixture of freedom, play, the experience of being loved and of faith becoming my own. When I get together with my childhood friends even now, often our conversations flow back to camp.

Camp and conference centers are still key to young people's lives and Christian camps have a special role in the life of faith. Youth are still going to camp in the 21st

century. In 2017 Jacob Sorenson, PhD, a practical theologian and researcher, wrote that:

*More than 2 million young people attend Christian camps in the United States every summer. Data from the National Study of Youth and Religion indicate that 39% of all American teenagers have been to a religious summer camp at least once, and this includes more than half of all Mainline Protestants...**

That is good news because Christian camps do have long-term impacts on the lives of those who participate. Sorenson continues:

Campers' increased interest in worship services faded shortly after camp, but their increased agreement in the value of belonging to a church persisted, along with the belief that they could turn to Christian friends or adults at church in times of need. Campers were also participating more frequently in devotional practices that sustain faith long-term: including Bible study, prayer, church attendance, and conversations with their family about faith...

Participants in the study who attended religious camp as teenagers or youth were significantly more likely in their young adult years to participate in communal religious practices like group Bible studies, college religious groups, and church attendance than those who never attended summer camp.

*Even more astounding, those who attended religious summer camp as children or youth were over three times more likely to remain religious five years later than those who did not attend...**

That is why the Presbyterian Church USA and our Presbytery of San Francisco support two camps and conference centers in our area: Westminster Woods among the redwoods of Sonoma County – <https://www.westminsterwoods.org/> – and Zephyr Point Conference Center on the shores of Lake Tahoe – <https://www.zephyrpoint.org/>.

After thirteen summers serving as a pastor in San Francisco, I am going to be a Pastor-in-Residence at Zephyr Point June 21 through 28. This is a camp for all ages with the theme "We are All Stewards of the Earth: Interfaith Approaches to Earth Consciousness." Families and individuals stay in cabins or hotel-style rooms. There are programs and activities for children, youth and adults. (You could think about going to Zephyr with your family – children or grandchildren!) I will lead a worship service, lead devotions, and offer pastoral presence for the campers and staff during the week. I am also hoping to get in some hiking, kayaking and time in nature. I ask your prayers for me and all those at Zephyr Point that week.

Peace, Maggi

* From “The Lasting Impact of Christian Summer Camp,” Jake Sorenson,
<https://www.buildfaith.org/lasting-impact-christian-summer-camp/> , retrieved May 23, 2019.

SOTA Chamber Choir in Worship, Sunday, June 2

San Francisco's Ruth Asawa School of the Arts Chamber Choir will be the guest choir at worship on Sunday, June 2. Directed by Old First's tenor section leader, Michael Desnoyers, these SOTA students will sing selections from their recent 2019 Spring Concert as part of our worship service. Time-honored sacred works by Gesualdo, J.S. Bach and Debussy will be augmented with contemporary classics by Williametta Spencer and Jaakko Mäntyjärvi.

Old First Staffs the Interfaith Food Pantry, Saturday, June 8

Please mark your calendar and let Dana Nojima know that you can lend a hand at the Interfaith Food Pantry on Saturday, June 8. Send Dana an E-mail: nojidt@gmail.com. We need helpers anytime from 7:30 am to 10:45 am to unload the truck, to distribute food, and to clean up.

Our Pentecost Offering, June 9

Our Pentecost Offering Helps Ministries Across the Globe and Two World-Calls Non-Profits Started by Old First



Each year on Pentecost Sunday, we celebrate the gift of the Holy Spirit and the “birthday” of the Christian church. Our denomination’s annual Pentecost Offering is devoted to ministries that support our young people during their first third of life, from childhood through young adulthood. This is a time when spirituality, emotional health, cognitive development and relationships take shape. This time influences life choices and actions well into the future.

Forty percent of the PC(USA) Pentecost Offering is used locally, to help congregations impact the lives of young people in their communities. This year, Old First’s 170th anniversary, the Mission Committee decided to donate Old First’s 40% of the offering to two nonprofits that Old First started and whose work continues to inspire us, Edgewood Center for Children and Families and Larkin Street Youth Services.

Founded in 1851 as a refuge for orphans of the Gold Rush, Edgewood today operates residential, community-based and school-based programs throughout San Francisco, San Mateo and Alameda counties. By taking both individual and family-centered approaches, Edgewood helps thousands of children, youth and their families each year who are struggling with mental health challenges achieve their potential. Old First’s historic connection with Edgewood is represented in one of our sanctuary windows, and in 2017 Edgewood named one of its buildings for Old First’s first pastor.

Since Larkin Street opened its doors thirty-five years ago, it has helped over 75,000 of San Francisco’s most vulnerable young people move beyond homelessness and equipped them for productive lives. Larkin Street provides a spectrum of services to address the needs of homeless young people by meeting them where they are, attending to their immediate needs and giving them a safe and stable place to live and a supportive environment. Larkin Street offers housing options from emergency shelters to permanent housing. Larkin Street is internationally recognized for its innovative and effective care for young people experiencing homelessness. Three out of four young people who complete Larkin Street’s programs exit street life.

The remaining 60% of the Pentecost Offering supports three ministries of the Presbyterian Mission Agency: Young Adult Volunteers provides opportunities for young adults to serve in communities around the world and grow as leaders through transformative Christian service. Ministries with Youth supports ministries with youth, ages 12–18 and those called to accompany them. Children-at-Risk supports ministries to improve education and provide a safe haven for children across the globe.

Pentecost Sunday reminds us of the Spirit's power to transform lives. We will receive the offering on Pentecost Sunday, June 9. Please give generously! *God, from my youth you have taught me.* —Psalm 71:17

Music and Color for Pentecost, June 9

Old First's choir will return for Pentecost, Sunday, June 9, singing "The Day of Pentecost," an exciting contemporary anthem that includes a unique spoken section, titled "The Tongues of Many Nations." This section portrays the ecstatic experience that occurred at the gift of the Holy Spirit.

The choir will then continue to sing through the end of June with this Sunday morning schedule: 9:30 am rehearsal and 11:00 am worship. July and August will be welcomed choir vacation months until rehearsals resume after Labor Day. Our Section Leaders will be on vacation for the final three Sundays in June, so additional voices are always welcome.

Finally, red is the color of the Holy Spirit, God's gift to and presence in the church. Remember to wear a touch of red on the Day of Pentecost, June 9.

Deadline for July/August Issue of Shared Life, June 16

There will only be one issue of Shared Life for July and August. Please submit all feature articles and news for July and August to editor David Griffith by Sunday, June 16.

Chamber Music Concert to Benefit Refugees, Sunday, June 23

Interfaith Refugee Welcome is hosting the Chamber Music Society of San Francisco in a benefit concert for refugees. The Chamber Music Society will offer a classical music program, including Shostakovich's 8th String Quartet and Beethoven's Harp Quartet, sure to be enjoyed by all.

The performance will be in an intimate setting in and Davidson Bidwell-Waite's home in San Francisco's historic Clocktower, 461 Second Street, on Sunday, June 23, 6pm. Wine and cheese will be served before the performance and a light buffet afterward, and the requested donation is \$50.

All donations will support Jewish Family and Community Services-East Bay's refugee resettlement program. JFCS-EB serves refugees from around the world who have experienced persecution based on their religion, ethnicity, sexual orientation or gender identity. Tickets are available on Eventbrite.com; browse JFCS. Capacity is limited to 36, so secure your seats soon. Details are in flyers outside Fellowship Hall.

Interfaith Refugee Welcome is a group of Bay Area congregations working together to help refugees find safety, welcome, freedom and independence, partner with refugee resettlement agencies so they can do more for refugees, and engage congregations and communities to provide awareness, advocacy, direct service and financial support.

Saturday Community Dinner, Saturday, June 25

Come and help prepare, serve and eat the Saturday Community Dinner: Volunteers are welcome at 4:30 pm (or earlier), and the dinner is served at 5:30 pm. Volunteers who can stay to clean up are very welcome.

Spiritual Practices – Hospitality

Lori Yamauchi

Hospitality means receiving the other, from the heart. It means providing for the need, comfort, and delight of the other with all the openness, respect, freedom, tenderness and joy that love itself embodies. It is essentially an expression of love. It is the act of sharing who we are as well as what we have. The classic elements of hospitality offered to guests are food and drink, shelter and rest, protection and care, enjoyment and peace.



Hospitality begins with God's hospitality toward us – through Creation, through the Incarnation in Christ to restore God's communion with humans by offering forgiveness, healing, reconciliation, comfort, peace, joy and abundant life.

We respond with hospitality to God by receiving what God gives with gratitude, and making ourselves present to God and listening for what the Spirit is communicating.

We show hospitality to God by acting in obedience to what is heard, and doing the will of God in our actions toward others.

Our love for one another is a direct expression of our love for God. By accepting our own weaknesses as well as our gifts, we can learn to love others as they are. True hospitality means giving all guests the freedom to reveal themselves as they choose, and letting the stranger remain a stranger and not having to become friends.

Practicing hospitality of heart takes place in our homes, workplaces, neighborhoods, schools, churches, and in our civic lives.

Civic hospitality may involve working for housing, schools, medical care, and recreation for your communities. Hospitality to the stranger is a way of “doing justice”. The biblical meaning of justice is simply “right relationships” with one another. Showing kindness to the wayfarer, supporting the widow and orphan, taking in the homeless poor, and offering hospitality to strangers – are expressions of just relations with the neighbor in scripture and remain so today.

On-Line Etiquette: Too Many Emails?

I suspect you, like me, are often overwhelmed by the number of E-mails we receive daily. How about making a simple change for mutual kindness? Resist the temptation to hit *REPLY ALL* on your responses. Why not take a moment and discern whether the response needs to go to everyone on the recipient list. Often our replies need to go simply to the sender. Just say “no” to *REPLY ALL* and save our inbox sanity. –Maggi



OGHS Fish Box Coins

Coins do make a difference to the One Great hour of Sharing offering. This year \$300.50 – some 40 lbs. of coins – were received through the “fish boxes.” Way to go,

Old First!

Session Meeting Report for April 23, 2019

Session met on April 23. Following are some highlights from the meeting:

- Commissioners for the next Presbytery Meeting on May 14 in Lafayette were confirmed.
 - A draft strategic plan was presented and discussed. It is noted that the strategy components include our Vision, Mission Statement, Foundation Pillars, Adaptive Challenges, Adaptive Changes and SMART goals. There was some explanation of the process conception as well as the timeline lasting for the remainder of the year.
 - The Worship Committee reported that planning for Pentecost had started.
 - The Operations Committee issued a written report. The new sign board for the Sacramento/Van Ness corner, some lighting improvements, and organ maintenance was mentioned.
 - There was a general thank you to all Deacons for their great help with the Easter pancake breakfast.
 - The Christian Education Committee mentioned continuing discussions of Barbara Brown Taylor’s book “An Alter in the World.”
 - The Mission Committee announced that The Vision Initiative Matching Program had new churches including St. Johns and Park Boulevard Oakland taking advantage of the offer.
- Tom Culp, clerk of session

Prayers for Healing and Wholeness

Betsy Chiao, for increased strength and keeping cancer on hold.

Riley Kramar, for knee healing and improved functional capacity.

Leota Parker, for improved stability and cognitive function.

Sarah Taber, for knee replacement surgery July 16 and rehabilitation.



Prayers for Any Day

George Appleton

O Lord God, who has given me the gift of sight, grant that I may see not only with the eyes of my head but with the eyes of the heart also, that I may perceive the beauty and meaning of all that I behold, and glorify you, the Creator of all, who are blessed forever. Amen.

Summer is for Reading! Post Your Reading List on the Bulletin Board



Many of us take time during the summer to read the books piled up in “to be read” stacks, or the titles we’ve longing to read as a vacation treat. Old First is a church of readers, so why don’t you add your reading list to the bulletin board in the Sacramento Street lobby this summer! We can get reading ideas, share your own and maybe even start some book conversations.

Newly Elected Deacons and Elders Statements of Faith

For the next few months *Shared Life* will feature Statements of Faith by newly elected officers: Elders Tom Culp, Eva DeLair, Bob Fleming, and Deacons Maryam, David Griffith, Karyn Payne, Mary Russell.

Tom Culp, Elder (Class of 2022)

I believe in one God, the Creator and Preserver of all things, infinite in being and perfection, and who exists eternally in three Persons: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, who are of one substance and equal in power and glory.

I live and abide in a state of sin and spiritual death, and from this condition I can be saved only by the grace of God, through faith, on the basis of the work of Christ, and by the agency of the Holy Spirit.

I believe Jesus performs the ministry of intercession which completes the eternal plan of God, and I believe the Holy Spirit applies to man the work of Christ. By justification and adoption, I am given a right standing before God; by regeneration, sanctification, and glorification my nature is renewed.

I believe the gospel is the hope of the world, and is the grand narrative of creation, fall, redemption and consummation ordained by God and orchestrated through the life, death, resurrection and ascension of Jesus Christ.

It is within a service attitude that I come before my family guided by my faith.

Mary Russell, Deacon (Class of 2021)

I’ve been a member of Old First for about 35 years, and through that time I’ve served as both a Deacon and an Elder. I was born and raised Presbyterian, and learned from my parents’ example what it means to respond to the call to serve our members, friends, and the wider community, and what it has meant to my personal growth in faith. My beliefs have been strengthened and deepened over a lifetime. In my life, I’m grateful for the blessings of my family, and friends especially at Old First.

I believe in the Holy Trinity – Father, Son and Holy Spirit; the amazing breadth and power of the meaning of Three in One – All present at the beginning of time.

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 we do not own other human beings, 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 continue to serve as a Deacon to this beloved community.

I believe that faith without works is dead.

I yearn for people to be able to discern more clearly that the Holy Spirit lives in me.

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 Psalm 51, especially these verses in this Lenten season. I keep a printout of the whole chapter on my nightstand to remind me of what God desires for my life:

*Create in me a clean heart, O God, and put a new and right spirit within me.
Restore to me the joy of your salvation, and sustain in me a willing spirit.
O Lord, open my lips, and my mouth will declare your praise.*

Dates to Remember

June 2	Sunday	Ascension Sunday
June 3	Monday	Mission Committee, Munro Room, 6:30 pm
June 8	Saturday	Old First Staffs Interfaith Food Pantry, 9:00 am
June 9	Sunday	Day of Pentecost Board of Deacons, 12:30 pm
June 15	Saturday	Presbyterian Women, Library, 12:00 noon
June 16	Sunday	Trinity Sunday Deadline for July/August Issue of <i>Shared Life</i>
June 18	Tuesday	Worship Committee, Munro Room, 7:00 pm
June 22	Saturday	Saturday Community Dinner, Fellowship Hall, 5:30 pm
June 25	Tuesday	Session, Munro Room, 7:00 pm
June 29	Saturday	Saturday Community Dinner, 5:30 pm

Old First Officers

Session

Class of 2020

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

Class of 2021

Lori Yamauchi
Stephen Taber
Kristi Hoerauf
Dana Nojima

Class of 2022

Bob Fleming
Eva DeLair
George Becker
Tom Culp, clerk

Board of Deacons

Class of 2020

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

Class of 2021

Mary Russell
Karyn Payne
Sarah Taber

Class of 2021

David Griffith
Emily Olson
Maryam
Riley Kramar

Be Strong

Maltbie Davenport Babcock (1858-1901)

Be strong!

We are not here to play, to dream, to drift;
We have hard work to do, and loads to lift;
Shun not the struggle—face it; 'tis God's gift.

Be strong!

Say not, "The days are evil. Who's to blame?"
And fold the hands and acquiesce---oh shame!
Stand up, speak out, and bravely, in God's
name.

Be strong!

It matters not how deep intrenched the wrong,
How hard the battle goes, the day how long;
Faint not---fight on! To-morrow comes the
song.