

# Shared Life

**The Monthly Newsletter of Old First Presbyterian Church**

**November 2019**

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Telephone 415-776-5552

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

Old First Concerts: [www.oldfirstconcerts.org](http://www.oldfirstconcerts.org)

## **Maggi's Musings**

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The session and I are thrilled to announce that Sam Lundquist will be our Pastoral Resident over the coming year, November 2019 through May 2020. Many of you have heard Sam preach during the past year and have told me how you have appreciated his presence.



Sam is a member of Mission Bay Community Church in San Francisco and spent his internship at Grace Cathedral up the block. He graduated from San Francisco Theological Seminary this past spring. He is now looking for a place to learn from an established congregation. Sam says, "I hope to gain administrative, pastoral, preaching, evangelism, educational and community engagement experience."

Sam also has a vision, a seed, a nudge, a conviction that there is a need for a new type of Christian community in San Francisco. From his work with two start-up churches, to his creative work at Grace on the Beyoncé Mass (google it!), and being a part of the of the City's LGBTQ community he knows "SF is eager for new spiritual experiences." He imagines "having conversations and listening deeply too begin to learn and understand what people really need in their spiritual lives."

Old First is in a perfect place to offer him a base to learn from our loving, justice, welcoming church. We, in turn, can learn from his experience and his explorations. We are calling him a Pastoral Resident to reflect that we have much to teach him and that he has much to teach us. We will learn together. It gives me energy to imagine working alongside and learning from Sam Lundquist during the coming year.

Peace, Pastor Maggi

## **What's Your Story? Stewardship 2020: God's Story/Our Story**

### **November 3 Through the Gathering of Pledges on November 24**

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More often than not, our lives are documented by way of stories – accounts that recount events and document lessons learned and revelations received. Each person's life can be expressed in multiple stories. A community, such as Old First, can be understood through the merging of many stories into a collective story about a community seeking God through Jesus Christ.

This year's stewardship campaign celebrates the multiple stories that make up Old First. We acknowledge the story of Old First, itself – a community of faith that has existed since 1849, as a witness for Jesus Christ in a diverse, growing and dynamic city. Within this larger story are the multitude of stories of its members, clergy and friends.

We tell the story of the arrival of our original founders by ship in 1849, the destruction of our building in the 1906 earthquake and its rebuilding, our efforts to achieve justice for our LGBTQ members, and our contribution to San Francisco's cultural heritage through Old First Concerts. Each of our members has his or her own story, how we came to accept Jesus Christ as lord and savior, and how our faith has supported and comforted us in times of trial. Our collective story tells

of our various contributions of time, talent and money to make Old First what it is today and to proclaim the Gospel and to evidence Christ's saving grace in a world in turmoil.

Our story has often been one of learning to dream God's dreams and to make them a reality. We caught a glimpse of the dream of how we can be a place of learning about ministry and help the future leaders of our church. So we called Sam Lundquist to be our Pastoral Resident at Old in 2019 and 2020. (We are trusting that your gifts this year will match the step in faith we took in hiring Sam.) We trust that we will shape his dream of being a pastor and his story, his vision and energy will shape our story of how we be God's church on this corner, in this city and the world.

All of these stories merge into the church that we love and support. As we near the end of the year, the Stewardship Committee urges each of Old First's members and friends to think of your own story, as a child of God. We urge you to consider your pledge for the coming year – and increase it a little... or a lot! – in light of the continuation of Old First's story and the future stories of the manifestation of God's love, mercy and justice in San Francisco. Old First Stewardship Committee

### **Vision and Strategic Planning, November 3 and 17**

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For the past few years, Old First has been moving toward the formulation of a long-range plan designed to chart a course for the future in order to assure that Old First remains a vibrant and successful witness to Jesus Christ in this city.

The plan involves several elements, implementing a planning process that draw from successful principles of organizational renewal. The steps in this program can be summarized as follows:

- a) formulate a mission statement,
- b) based on the mission, formulate a vision statement,
- c) formulate "true north pillars", which are principles that guide our work,
- d) identify "adaptive changes" that could advance these principles,
- e) identify challenges that must be overcome,
- f) formulate goals to facilitate the adaptive changes,
- g) identify priorities and interventions to achieve the goals, and
- h) finally, adopt an action plan, including controlled experiments and goals.

As our first step in this process, we have adopted a mission statement, which reads: "Sharing God's love, welcome, and justice on our corner, in our city, and in the world."

We are now at a point at which we will create the "vision statement," that is, we will identify specific actions and directions that we envision Old First doing to effectively carry out this mission. In order for it to be productive, the vision statement should be relatively unconstrained – that is, we should express our dreams and visions, not overly constrained by practical concerns (they will come later).

The Planning Committee will hold two discussion sessions in November: one on Sunday, November 3, and another on Sunday November 17, at 12:30 pm, at which the congregation can contribute ideas for Old First's future. Please plan to attend these important meetings.

### **An Invitation to Visit the Columbarium, All Saint's Sunday, November 3**

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When we observe All Saints' Sunday on November 3, the columbarium will remain open after worship for visitation and a time of individual prayer and reflection. All are invited to come in and to consider our church's own cloud of witnesses—represented by the twenty-eight whose ashes are now inurned in niches or memorialized in commemorative plaques in the columbarium.

It will be good to take a few minutes to think of these people, whose lives in the church are receding farther into memory and becoming less defined over time. To newer members of our congregation, many of them may be only names inscribed on the columbarium walls. With this in mind, a few members of Old First recently shared some personal remembrances of three of our saints: Pam Byers, Bill Wunsch, and Frances Gray. Their stories begin on the next page.

**Pam Byers** has been gone from us for five years now—and has become recognized as an important figure in the Presbyterian Church (USA). In the late 1990s, she left a successful career in book publishing to serve as the first executive director of the Covenant Network of Presbyterians, formed to further the full inclusion of LGBTQ persons in the life of the denomination. Jeanne Kirkwood worked with Pam as a volunteer and recalls that Pam, although “she wore herself to a frazzle” working to establish the Covenant Network, was yet “a powerhouse,” whose faith never wavered. Although serious in her work, Pam had a good capacity for joy. She loved to sing, and was also an energetic evangelist for Old First. “From her vantage point in the choir,” Jeanne recalls, “she was on the lookout for any visitors” at worship. “When she spotted one, she would fling off her choir robe and race to the narthex” to greet the visitor before that person could slip out the door. We love and miss her.

**Bill Wunsch**, settling in San Francisco as a young lawyer from Albuquerque, joined Old First in 1953 and was devoted to the work of the church for the rest of his long life, serving many terms on session, where, Mary Russell recalls, he would sometimes hold forth at length. “He couldn’t tell a short story,” Mary said. During Bill’s early years at Old First, he was active in the large and lively social group that flourished here at that time, the Van-Sacs, named for our corner of Van Ness and Sacramento. There he formed his enduring friendship with Merle Montgomery; they always went out on each other’s birthdays, to the end of her life. In addition, throughout the years, along with his regular practice and his church activities, he performed extensive *pro bono* legal work, especially for the interests of Native Americans in California. “He was so kind,” Mary summed up, “and a gentleman.”

**Frances Gray**, from Little Rock, Arkansas, became a cosmopolitan university president and scholar during a life of service in the Presbyterian Church. A force for women’s education in the Middle East, she taught at the Presbyterian-affiliated Beirut College for Women, in Lebanon, and then became the college’s president. In these years she learned the art of “the golden begging bowl,” as she put it, raising funds for her institution. She then went on to Tehran, Iran, becoming the first president of Damavand College, which she developed into a four-year liberal arts college for women. For her work in higher education for women, she received the Gold Medal of the Cedars from Lebanon’s president and was awarded the Order of the Taj by the Shah of Iran. During her retirement years in San Francisco, she became active in Old First and was a member of our church’s Presbyterian Women’s group. Two of her PW friends, Linda Reyder and Betty Voris, remember Frances as very caring and always gracious, and both recall that she generously shared her considerable knowledge with the congregation in teaching many Christian-education classes on religious art. What Betty remembers most, though: “how happy Frances was to be living at the Sequoias—because it is Presbyterian.”

These are three of our saints. But there are others, too, and all of them gave something unique to the life of our church. On November 3 we can honor them with a visit and a prayer.

**Film Screening on DACA, Wednesday, November 6**

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Calvary Presbyterian Church welcomes you to a screening of *Waking Dream: Young, Undocumented. Future Unknown*, a short film by director Theo Rigby. The screening will take place Wednesday, November 6, at 6:00 pm, at Calvary, 2515 Fillmore Street at Jackson Street. For more information and to RSVP, visit <https://www.calvarypresbyterian.org/event/focus-on-migration-film-series-waking-dream/>

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### **Old First Staffs the Interfaith Food Pantry, November 9**

Please mark your calendar and let Dana Nojima know that you can lend a hand at the Interfaith Food Pantry on Saturday, November 9. Send Dana an E-mail: [nojidt@gmail.com](mailto: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.



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### **Memorial Service for Leota Parker, November 10**

On Sunday, November 10, at 1:30 pm we will gather to witness to the resurrection and to give thanks for the life of Old First member, Leota Parker, who died October 21. Include her son, Jim Billings, her family and friends in your prayers.

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### **Turkey Chefs for the Saturday Community Dinner: Pick Up Your Turkeys November 17**

Plan to roast one or more turkeys for November's Saturday Community Dinner. You can pick up your frozen turkeys on Sunday, November 17, or during the following work week.

You then return them to the church roasted, and preferably carved, by 2:00 pm on November 23, the day of the dinner. Contact Pastor Maggi to reserve your turkey: [maggi@oldfirst.org](mailto:maggi@oldfirst.org)

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### **Saturday Community Dinner, November 23**

Come and help prepare, serve and eat the Saturday Community Dinner on the fourth Saturday of every month: 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. Contact [saturdaymeals@oldfirst.org](mailto:saturdaymeals@oldfirst.org) to volunteer your time.

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### **Brighten the Holidays for a Homeless Young Person: November 24 or December 1**

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 engagement centers and programs.

Gift cards are most popular: \$25 cards from Ross, Safeway, Target, Walgreens or Visa! Besides gift cards, adult-sized items on young people's wish lists are:

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|-------------------------------|------------------|
| • Hats                        | • Socks (new)    |
| • Underwear, brassieres (new) | • Sleeping bags  |
| • Gloves                      | • T-shirts (new) |
| • Hiking backpacks            | • Art supplies   |

All gifts must be unwrapped. We have two options for delivering them:

- Bring them to church on **Sunday, November 24 or December 1**. Look for the Larkin Street Christmas gift box in the Narthex before the worship service or Fellowship Hall during the coffee hour, or ask Bill or Marilyn Campbell – OR –
- Shop and let Amazon deliver! Shop Larkin Street's wish list on Amazon, and gifts will be sent straight to Larkin Street: [www.larkinstreetyouth.org/wishlist](http://www.larkinstreetyouth.org/wishlist)

Larkin Street offers innovative and comprehensive services that give homeless and at-risk youth ages 12 to 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.

**15th Annual Interfaith Thanksgiving Day Service, Thursday, November 28**

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The SF Interfaith Council will hold a Thanksgiving Day Service on Thursday, November 28, 2019, 10:00 am at the Presidio Chapel, 130 Fisher Loop in the Presidio.



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### **Old First Mission Fair, Sunday, December 1**

Don't miss the Old First Mission Fair during the coffee hour after the worship service on Sunday, December 1. This will be a superb opportunity to learn more about our church's own mission initiatives, as well as great nonprofits, both local and around the world, that we support through our benevolence program and volunteer efforts.

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### **2019 World AIDS Day National Observance, December 1**

The 26<sup>th</sup> annual World AIDS Day National Observance will be held at the National AIDS Memorial Grove in Golden Gate Park on Sunday, December 1, beginning at 12:00 noon sharp. The keynote speaker is **Rick Welts, President and Chief Operating Officer for the Golden State Warriors**. The religious leader offering prayer will be from the Muslim community. There will be a light lunch after the observance. The suggested arrival time for the limited seating is 11:30 am. For more information, visit: <https://aidsmemorial.org/2019-world-aids-day-national-observance/>

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### **Inquirers/New Members Classes, December 8 and 15**

If you are interested in learning more about the church or a deeper commitment to God and this community, you are invited to join us on December 8 and 15 to explore just that. We tailor the meeting dates to fit folks' schedules. Just speak to Pastor Maggi if you're interested.

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### **Prayers of Mourning**

Jim Billings, Leota Parker's son, as he and Leota's family and friends mourn her death.

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### **Prayers for Healing and Wholeness**

Lorraine Bellesi for continuing health issues.  
Betsy Chiao for increased strength and keeping cancer on hold.  
Mary Culp for improved stability and cognitive function.  
Pam Free's mother, who is hospitalized.  
The parents of Kristi Hoerauf, both of whom have been in the hospital.

Jeanne Kirkwood during further consultation on her cancer and its treatment.  
Glen Potter for continuing recovery of strength and mobility.  
Those hurt, harmed and frightened by the wildfires in California, especially the residents and first-responders.

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### **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.

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### **Thank You, Cindy Burt, for Work Supporting the All-Church Retreat**



Special thanks go to Cindy Burt for her hard work and support for the All Church Retreat at Mt. Hermon. A great time was had by all! Mark your calendar for next year's retreat in the third week of October... 2020!

## Dates to Remember

November 3	Sunday	All Saints' Sunday Vision and Strategic Planning, 12:30 pm Financial Work Group, 12:30 pm
November 5	Tuesday	Election Day, Polling Station at Old First, 8:00 am to 8:00 pm
November 9	Saturday	Old First Staffs the Interfaith Food Pantry: 9:00 am
November 10	Sunday	Memorial Service for Leota Parker, 1:30 pm
November 17	Sunday	Deadline for Submissions for December Issue of <i>Shared Life</i> Vision and Strategic Planning, 12:30 pm
November 23	Saturday	Saturday Community Dinner, Fellowship Hall, 5:30 pm
November 24	Sunday	Christ the King Sunday
November 26	Tuesday	Session, Munro Room, 7:00 pm
November 28	Thursday	Thanksgiving Day: Church Office Closed
November 29	Friday	Church Office Closed
December 1	Sunday	1 <sup>st</sup> Sunday of Advent World AIDS Day Old First Mission Fair, 12:30 pm

## Old First Officers

### Session

#### Class of 2020

Linda Reyder  
Bill Campbell  
Hsiaochien Chuang  
Virginia Webb-Pekelnicky  
Lori Yamauchi

#### 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 2022

David Griffith  
Emily Olson  
Maryam  
Riley Kramar