

# Shared Life

The Monthly Newsletter of Old First Presbyterian Church

September 2019

Telephone 415-776-5552

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

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

## SHARING GOD'S LOVE, WELCOME, AND JUSTICE ON OUR CORNER, IN OUR CITY, AND IN THE WORLD

Thanks go to all the folks who met, shared and shaped this statement of who we are and what we are about. It will be in our bulletin, on the website, and hopefully in our minds and hearts. Our next step will be exploring, discovering, and visioning how we will live this out - imagining who God longs for us to be, and how we will show forth God's love, welcome and justice.

One of the ways we are living into this statement is by generously sharing our space in our building. So much goes on at Old First during the week: the Fellowship Hall, Munro Room and kitchen are regularly used for the Friendship Banquet, a weekly meal for limited income folks living with HIV/AIDS; weekly and monthly AA meetings; Larkin Street Youth Services training for new employees; an infant/mother play group in the nursery; and high school and college youth groups sleeping on our floors during mission trips – including the Illini4000 from the University of Illinois who raise funds for cancer research by riding their bikes all the way from the East Coast to San Francisco each summer!

The sanctuary, particularly, is regularly used for all sorts of rehearsals, recordings, lessons, concerts and visits. Musicians often tell me how thankful they are for the space, how wonderful the sound is and how they feel the holy in this space. At various times Brad or I will open up the sanctuary to give a quick tour to visitors from all over the US and the world. We also welcome people who only seek the peace of the sanctuary to pray.

More recently, we have made the office off the Munro room to the Faithful Fools as a respite from the business of working in the heart of the Tenderloin. (Read more about the Faithful Fools' use of our building in the article on page 2.)

Partnering with others and using our space as a means of welcome and of furthering God's justice and love in the world is in our very DNA. Old First continues to make a difference in our community by sharing our building and location.

Please note that I will be gone three Sundays starting September 22 as a faculty member leading the pilgrimage in France called "Portals to the Sacred" and afterwards enjoying some vacation time. (For more on the pilgrimage, visit <http://portalstothedesacredpilgrimages.org/>.) I am hoping that my French lessons this year will pay off. Please keep me in your prayers as I will keep you in mine.

Peace, Pastor Maggi

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## Thanks and News from Faithful Fools

Our friendship with you is so precious to us and goes back such a long way. Even before Faithful Fools was Faithful Fools, there was a moment of friendship among us. Back then the people of Old First and Kay & Carmen (co-founders of Faithful Fools) sat down with neighbors and business owners to talk together and work on getting a public toilet. The toilet never came to be, but out of those gatherings came a relationship that brought forth Welcome. That was over twenty years ago and we still rely on each other. For the last three years, we've taken a turn at anchoring the monthly Community Meal... and we are sorry to say that we won't be able to do that nowadays due to a change in our staff (but we have hopes that we will again someday in the future).

But that's not an end for spending time together. Not at all. You will find one or another Faithful Fool slipping in and out of the volunteer office, there on the first floor, seeking a little quiet to write, to think, and do the kinds of admin work that need quiet to get done. You see, we had a flood in our space last year and in rebuilding, we shifted the floorplan so there's more community space, but a little less quiet space. We were musing with Pastor Maggi on how to get our work done in these new circumstances and she turned to you with a request for help. You in turn offered us that wonderful little space that once was housed Welcome. It (and you) now welcomes us in the way that only long-time friends can—with an open hand and an open heart.

"Ahhh, thank you," we say, "thank you!!!" This gift of space is precious and the gift of this enduring friendship is priceless.

With great gratitude for your generosity,  
Sam & Carmen  
Faithful Fools

For more information on the Faithful Fools, visit: [www.faithfulfools.org](http://www.faithfulfools.org).

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## Choir Resumes, Thursday, September 5, Sunday September 8



Old First's Chancel Choir returns to worship services on Sunday, September 8, and is always ready to welcome new members!

The choir rehearses on the first Thursday evening of every month from 7:00 pm to 8:30 pm (the next monthly Thursday rehearsal is September 5) and every Sunday morning at 9:30 am.

There is no strict attendance policy and no audition. All you need is the desire to sing a wide variety of music in a group of warm, caring people who sing to glorify God and to enhance our worship.

Questions? Please talk with Larry Marietta or any choir member... or simply come to a rehearsal!

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## All Faiths' Day at the Interfaith Food Pantry, September 21

Please mark your calendar and let Dana Nojima know that you can lend a hand at the Interfaith Food Pantry on Saturday, September 21. On this Saturday, members of all the participating communities will staff the Food Pantry. 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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## Saturday Community Dinner, September 28

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Come and help prepare, serve and eat the Saturday Community Dinners 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.

## Peace and Global Witness Sunday, Guest Preacher, September 29

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What is a Matthew 25 church? Matthew 25:31–46 calls all of us to actively engage in the world around us, so our faith comes alive and we wake up to new possibilities. Convicted by this passage, both the 222nd and 223rd General Assemblies (2016 and 2018) exhorted the PC(USA) to act boldly and compassionately to serve people who are hungry, oppressed, imprisoned or poor. By accepting the Matthew 25 invitation, congregations can help our denomination become a more relevant presence in the world. We recognize Christ's urgent call to be a church of action, where God's love, justice and mercy shine forth and are contagious. And we rejoice how our re-energized faith can unite all Presbyterians for a common and holy purpose: our common identity to do mission.



Old First has invited Peacemaker, the Reverend Arlington Trotman, to preach in worship and to have further conversation with us after worship on Sunday, September 29. He is the former moderator of the Churches' Commission for Migrants in Europe (CCME), an organization of churches and ecumenical councils from eighteen European countries that advocates for migrants, refugees and minority groups. He also served as the former CEO of the Churches' Commission for Racial Justice at Churches Together in Britain and Ireland (CTBI). He is an ordained minister with the Methodist Church in Britain serving in a variety of capacities. He previously served as managing director of AW Trotman Associates doing work on anti-racism

and discrimination as well as equality policy and practice promoting good community relations in church and society. He is an experienced trainer and conference speaker on a variety of topics including professional and personal mentoring and human rights. He has authored a number of publications and books including *Beneath the Surface*, *Hurricane Katrina*, *Fact Finding Addressing Racism in the Southern States*; *Sanctuary*, *Guidelines for Church and Society Offering Asylum Protection*; and *Redeeming the Time*, *All God's People Must Challenge Racism*.

We are looking for people to offer housing for a few days or the whole time that Arlington will be with us. Also since this is his first trip to San Francisco, we need folks to show off Old First's hospitality and also the city we call home. Please contact Bill Campbell or Marry Russell, if you can help.

## Peace & Global Witness Offering, September 29

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At the Peace & Global Witness worship service on September 29, we will also receive the annual Peace & Global Witness Offering. A gift to the Peace & Global Witness Offering enables the church to promote the Peace of Christ by addressing systems of conflict and injustice across the world.

- 25% of this offering stays with Old First to support peacemaking in our community;
- 25% of this offering stays with our presbytery and synod to unite congregations to support peacemaking in our region; and
- 50% of this offering supports ministries of peace and reconciliation being done by Presbyterians across the globe.



The need is great. Conflict and chaos abound in our world. God's peace is sorely needed. Our gifts make a difference. Be generous.

### **Save the Date: Retreat at Mt Hermon, October 18-20, 2019**

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The date for the fabulous church retreat weekend is from dinner on Friday, October 18, through lunch on Sunday, October 20. It will be held at Mt Hermon Conference Center and we will once again join “BurlPres,” aka First Presbyterian Church of Burlingame. This year Lafayette Orinda Presbyterian Church will also be a part of the usual stimulating sessions, spiritual enrichment and plenty of fun and games.

The pricing is the same as last year: \$350 for deluxe, \$300 for standard and \$250 for economy. These are double occupancy per person.



The speaker is Don Baird, who just happens to be the father of BurlPres’s senior pastor, Graham Baird, who preached at Old First on August 4. Don’s topic is **Where the Journey Begins: Traveling with Paul and Barnabas through the Holy Land.** Don has served as pastor in Sacramento, Salt Lake City, and Boise, Idaho. He received his Doctor of Ministry from San Francisco Theological Seminary (San Anselmo, California). He was born and raised in Stockton and comes from a family with a long tradition of Presbyterian ministers.

Mt Hermon is nestled among the towering redwoods of the Santa Cruz Mountains just six miles from Monterey Bay. It has sunny fields, redwood trees, quiet walks and hiking trails, and zip lines. The food is exceptional and the fellowship with other churches is priceless! Our retreats at Mt Hermon offer a great balance of learning, fellowship, worship and free time.

Start saving your pennies to sign up for this traditionally fun and inspiring get-together! Further information about the schedule and planning will be available shortly. We will have registration forms as soon as we receive them from BurlPres. Scholarships are available on request.

Details will follow; however, with another large congregation partnering, we will need to get our numbers in promptly to reserve rooms. If you are interested, please let Jeanne Kirkwood or Cindy Burt know as soon as possible. Indication of interest will not commit you, immediately.

Jeanne Kirkwood and Cindy Burt

### **Thanks Go to Old First for Supporting International Rescue Committee’s Work**

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Thanks to everyone who contributed items and funding that allowed us to fill four travel bags with comfort items for asylum-seeking families! You raised \$5,102.! Funds, above what was needed to buy and fill the bags on August 18, will be contributed to the International Rescue Committee (IRC) to make up more travel bags.

The bags we assembled have been shipped to the IRC in Phoenix for distribution to people who will travel by bus to their sponsors in the U.S. Each bag contained a variety of useful items for an adult and a child – inflatable pillows, blankets, water bottles, bandages, wet wipes, energy bars, a selection of children’s games and activities such as coloring book, crayons, pad of paper, play figurines, small stuffed animal, mini Etch-a-sketch, puzzles, etc. Also included was a greeting card welcoming the travelers and wishing them well on their journey. We also sent Visa gift cards separately to the IRC for their distribution to the travelers.

In addition to contributions from Old Firsters, we sincerely thank members of First Presbyterian Church of Alameda, Noe Valley Ministry and Seventh Avenue Presbyterian for their incredible generosity in helping us provide funds and gift cards to so many newly-arrived immigrants who hope to find a better, safer life in the United States!

Bill Campbell, Mission Committee



## **Session Meeting Report for June 18 and August 20**

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Session met on June 18 and August 20, 2019. Highlights of the meetings follow:

- Elders were commissioned to attend the next Presbytery meeting on August 27 in Hayward.
- There was a report from the Strategy Working Group on the discussion of the planning framework about practical actions, updates to the mission statement and vision statement, True North pillars, SMART goals and how to serve the neighborhood and beyond.
- The Worship Committee mentioned that there was a work day in the sanctuary for Pentecost.
- The Community Building Committee continues to work on the church website and a current offline version will be reviewed before going live this Fall. The Committee also mentioned that visitor cards and the process of reaching out to worship visitors was being reviewed and enhanced. In addition, plans for pot luck meals during the next year were being formulated.
- There was a report from Pastor Henderson on the discussions in the development of a Mission statement. All those present agreed by consensus on the following new Mission Statement: Sharing God's love, welcome and justice on our corner, in our city and the world.
- The Christian Education Committee reminded elders about the upcoming exhibit "Then They Came for Me: Visit to an Exhibit on Japanese American Incarceration" on August 25 located at the "Futures Without Violence" building at 100 Montgomery Street in the Presidio.
- It was noted that the back-pack project supported by the Mission Committee was a success, and that under the Operations Committee social hall lighting was being upgraded.
- The Finance Committee reported for the most part income and expenses are fine.

Tom Culp, Clerk of Session

## **Retiring Letter from OFPC Member, George Becker**

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July 30, 2019

For my patients:

To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose... a time to toil and a time to refrain from toiling. After practicing medicine for sixty-four years (at age 90) it is my time to refrain from toiling. So, with some sadness, I will be closing the office as of August 15, 2019. A life chapter closes.

Healing the body (soma) as a surgeon and healing the soul (psyche) as a psychiatrist has been a passion, even as I understand that each patient must heal herself/himself/themselves both in body and in mind. For each person who has trusted me with soma and psyche I am deeply grateful.

Going forward there are options. Some may want a respite at this chapter closing.

Most medications can be prescribed by a primary care physician (who could also suggest physicians for continued psychiatric care.) I remain available, at your request, to speak with your physician or psychiatrist for continuity. Best to contact me via email: [sfbonedoc@mac.com](mailto:sfbonedoc@mac.com).

My plans for the future include more time with family, making music, doing photography, reading, travel and attention to maintaining aerobic and musculoskeletal fitness. I may do some volunteer work. Giving is essential to life fulfillment. So, as your new chapter begins, my heartfelt thanks, good wishes and be well.

George Becker



### **New Saturday Community Dinner Coordinator, John Brett**

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Old First welcomes our new Saturday Community Dinner Coordinator, John Brett, who also works with the Gubbio Project. Volunteer for the dinner – held every fourth Saturday of the month – and welcome John and introduce yourself to him.

### **Change in Brad Peterson's Hours in Old First Office Begins September**

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Brad Peterson's teaching schedule at San Francisco Theological Seminary, now embedded in the University of Redlands, will alter his weekly schedule at Old First. Beginning with the first week of September, instead of working his half-day on Fridays, he will work his half-day on Tuesdays and all day on Fridays. On Tuesdays after the morning at Old First, he'll head up to San Anselmo for a weekly four-hour afternoon class at the seminary. This schedule will continue through the end of the semester in December and resume later in January 2019 continuing through the end of the spring semester in May.

Brad has many ties to the seminary, is thrilled about this opportunity to renew them, and grateful to Pastor Maggi, the Session and its Personnel Committee for making this possible.

### **Newly Elected Deacons and Elders Statements of Faith**

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This month concludes the Statements of Faith by newly elected Elders (Tom Culp, Eva DeLair, Bob Fleming) and Deacons (Maryam, David Griffith, Karyn Payne, Mary Russell).

#### **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.*

**David Griffith, Deacon (Class of 2022)**

I believe in one God, creator of all things.

I affirm God is revealed:

- in the life and teachings of his son Jesus Christ, who was both fully human and divine,
- in the Holy Spirit, who resides within each individual person, and
- in the beauty and preservation of sea, sky, land, and inhabitants of this universe.

As the hymn exclaims, “All nature sings/and round us rings/the music of the spheres.”

I believe the Bible to be written by people inspired by God, to be read and interpreted to enlighten, to inspire, and to strengthen our faith, realizing we must continually strive to re-examine its intentions and meaning.

I believe the church is the collective worshiping body of practicing believers who in their daily lives strive to bring peace, equality, and personal witness by kind gestures to the world.

I believe as Christians we must recognize our role as members of God’s universal family, share with our brothers and sisters the necessities of life: food, shelter, and a sustainable income.

As a prospective deacon, I feel the call to be compassionate, caring, doing deeds of loving kindness and being an advocate for justice, especially for those of God’s family who have no voice, the poor, the disabled, the imprisoned, and the disadvantaged.

**Bob Fleming, Elder (Class of 2022)**

I believe in God, the almighty being, Father and Creator of Heaven, Earth and all beings within the Universe.

I believe that God selected the Jews as his chosen people in the world to bring light and salvation into a world that had become corrupt, and that

God had chosen the humble Virgin Mary to conceive and bear his son Jesus so that Jesus, God’s divine Son, would be destined to bring light and life to a wicked and dis-functional world.

I believe that God sent his Holy Spirit (i.e. God’s divine force) to move and capture the world’s attention in following God’s will here on Earth.

I believe that The Bible (both Old and New Testaments) were written in testimony to God’s work and God’s intentions for all in this world, and as of a historical record of successes, failures and as an everlasting spiritual guidance for us all.

I believe The Church is God’s way of gathering together his followers in local church communities for worship, baptism, prayer, study, communion, planning and executing our Lord’s work in this world throughout time.

I believe that Christians today need to heed the scripture to “let your light shine, so that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in Heaven”.

Now, at age 81, I press ahead to take care of myself to be healthy, alert, active and useful to my Lord, my Church and my beloved friends.

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

Leota Parker for comfort and peace as she deals with a diagnosis of metastatic cancer that will not be treated.

Sarah Taber for rehabilitation after knee replacement surgery.

Betsy Chiao for increased strength and keeping cancer on hold.

Jeanne Kirkwood for healing of her broken bones and surgical recovery.

### **Dates to Remember**

September 2	Monday	Labor Day: Church Office Closed
September 5	Thursday	Choir Rehearsal, Sanctuary, 7:00 pm
September 8	Sunday	Board of Deacons, Munro Room, 12:30 pm
September 8	Sunday	Financial Work Group, Library, 12:30 pm
September 21	Saturday	All Faiths' Day at Interfaith Food Pantry
September 22	Sunday	Columbarium Ministry Team, Library, 12:30 pm
September 24	Tuesday	Session, Munro Room, 7:00 pm
September 28	Saturday	Saturday Community Dinner, Fellowship Hall, 5:30 pm
September 29	Sunday	Peace and Global Witness Sunday, Presbyterian Peacemaking Offering, Guest Preacher Arlington Trotman

### **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 2022**

David Griffith  
Emily Olson  
Maryam  
Riley Kramar