

# Shared Life

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

**January 2020**

Telephone 415-776-5552

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

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

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## **Joy to the World! Let Heaven and Nature Sing!**

**Sam Lundquist, Pastoral Resident**

I'm writing this still basking in the quiet glow of our Christmas Eve candlelight service. What a wonderful evening! Let me tell you what I experienced: dozens and dozens of warm hugs; the beauty of candlelit sanctuary; so many new faces; and the comfort of Christmas scripture, stories, and songs. I am so grateful that I got to experience that with you, and I hope that you, too, felt enveloped in the spirit of Christmas and the closeness of God.

Thank you for an incredible past two months as your Pastoral Resident. It has been such a gift to get to know you all, and see, hear, and be a part of all of the beautiful things happening at Old First. I even got to climb up into the rafters to help hang that Christmas star! Never thought I'd get to do that.

One of my favorite moments has been the Community Dinner. In one evening, I went from slicing ham to serving up gravy to hanging out with some of our neighbors while we shared holiday stories. I even got to meet some of our neighborhood pets: two adorable dogs and a pair of rats (that's right, rats!) named Mario and Luigi. Thank you to everyone who helps put that monthly event together. It was truly a blessing to be a part of it and serve our community in such a profound way.

As the new year begins, I have no idea what will unfold. And that's what excites me. 2020 (can you believe it!?) begins with Epiphany, a day in which we remember the story of the Magi who visit the infant Jesus. That story begins with a star and, as the hymn says, a sense of wonder. If Advent was about the deep longings we have for God, Epiphany is an invitation to move forward with wonder.

So, in this new year, I'm excited to be led by wonder, curiosity, and surprise. One of my projects in 2020 is to start recording stories and reflections from people in San Francisco who no longer feel drawn to faith communities. I'm looking forward to learning from them and discovering how we might start reimagining what it means to be a church today and in the future. I can't wait to share this with you soon.

May the wonder of God guide us to God's perfect light.

Hugs and high fives,

*Sam*

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## **Old First Potluck Lunch, January 5**

Old First will hold a potluck luncheon on Sunday, January 5, after worship. Old First is providing the meat main courses. You bring the side-dishes. Bring a dish, your hunger and your conversation.

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## **Poinsettia Pick-Up, Thanks to Volunteers**

If you sponsored poinsettias for Advent and Christmas, you may take them home after worship on Sunday, January 5, 2020. Old First recognizes and thanks all those who participated in decorating the church with the poinsettias, the garlands and the lights!

### **Please Return Your 2020 Pledge Card**

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In the busy-ness of the month please take a moment to fulfill your 2020 card and drop it in the offering plate.

<b>OLD FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH</b> In gratitude to God and for the support of Old First Presbyterian Church, after reflecting on God's goodness to me, I will give to the church: \$ _____ [Weekly] [Monthly] [Annually] (circle one)		
Name _____	Address _____	
State _____ Zip _____	City _____ Telephone _____ (H)	
_____, (W), e-mail _____		
Signature(s) _____ I / We understand that this pledge amount may be increased or decreased because of changing circumstances.		

### **Christmas Joy Offering, Christmas Eve Offering: You Were Generous!**

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This year Old First received \$525 toward the Christmas Joy Offering and \$876.60 for the Christmas Eve Offering.

The Christmas Joy Offering provides assistance to current and retired church workers in their time of need and also develops our future leaders at Presbyterian-related schools and colleges equipping communities of color.

The Christmas Eve Offering this year will be divided evenly between The Homeless Prenatal Program, which works with families to break the cycle of childhood poverty, and Catholic Charities' Center for Immigration Legal & Support Services, which provides critically needed immigration legal and supportive services for vulnerable newcomers.

### **MLK 2020 March and Commemoration, Monday, January 20**

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Old First Friends and members are invited to march together on Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, January 20. We will meet at the CalTrain Station at 4th and King Streets in San Francisco at 10:30 am. Look for other Old Firsters and for our sign. We will then join the march to Yerba Buena Plaza for the MLK 2020 Interfaith Commemoration. If you are planning to join us for the march, please contact Pastor Henderson.

### **Nominating New Deacons and Elders for 2020**

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Greetings, it is time to think whom to nominate for elders and deacons next year. The deacons and elders form the structure and heartbeat of the church.

Deacons and elders are chosen by the people. The Book of Order states that "Elders should be persons of faith, dedication, and good judgment. Their manner of life should be a demonstration of the Christian gospel, both within the church and in the world." As for deacons "The office of deacon as set forth in Scripture is one of sympathy, witness, and service after the example of Jesus Christ. Persons of spiritual character, honest repute, of exemplary lives, brotherly and sisterly love, warm sympathies, and sound judgment should be chosen for this office."

Please pray and reflect who might be called to be a deacon and or an elder. The Nominating Committee needs your suggestions. You may speak to the person you're considering and ask if they're willing to be nominated. Another way is you can also contact the Committee through E-mail to [nomcom@oldfirst.org](mailto:nomcom@oldfirst.org) or by contacting Committee members directly.

The Nominating Committee

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**Coming in February: Evangelism with Leslie Veen. Mark Your Calendars!**

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The Reverend Leslie Veen, Director of Contextual Education at Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary of California Lutheran University and ordained Presbyterian minister (and previously seminary intern at Old First), will be teaching an evangelism class at Old First on February 16, February 23 and March 1.

Dr. Veen is a long-time friend and frequent guest preacher at Old First. The classes will take place after worship service, starting at 12:30 pm. Light refreshments will be served.

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**Letter from the Editor, David Griffith**

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Dear OFPC family, for the past three and one half years I have had the great pleasure of serving as your editor for *Shared Life*. I have always believed that the church newsletter is a vital vehicle for communicating church events and happenings to our membership and friends near and far. However, not a believer in holding most positions long term, I welcome new ideas and renewed enthusiasm. Therefor I feel it is time to “retire” from the position of editor at the publishing of this January edition.

Looking back at my tenure of editor, I recall early on my feeling that we needed some column of personal concerns, a noting of members and friends that were facing real life crises or joys. With Pastor Maggi’s blessing, the Prayers for Health and Wholeness (and Prayers for Mourning when appropriate) was instituted. Due to privacy concerns the names that I submitted were always approved by the Deacon Moderator. I am also a lover of poetry and have usually included a poem that touched my heart strings. I trust you might have found some of these small contributions meaningful.

As a newer Old First member, I have related to Pastor Maggi, how this position of editor has provided a valuable enlightening experience of what our church does and the opportunity to know and admire each of you better. In that thought it is with delight that I commit the editorship of *Shared Life* to the capable hands of a most recent new member, Betsy Lutz. As she assumes the responsibility for the February issue I am certain that you will extend to her every kindness and support that you have always given me.

I would be remiss if I did not express my sincere thanks to our church administrator, Brad Peterson, who expertly advises and assembles all submissions and publishes them electronically and in printed form. Also to Betsy Chiao and Pat Amdur who faithfully over the past years have assisted with the printed mailings. And to our dear Pastor Maggi whose kind words of support and encouragement have meant so very much.

In conclusion I leave you with one of my favorite poems. It was spoken at the funeral of Diana, Princess of Wales by her sister, Jane Fellowes.

**“For Katrina’s Sun Dial” by Henry van Dyke 1852-1933**

Time is too slow for those who wait,  
Too swift for those who fear,  
Too long for those who grieve,  
Too short for those who rejoice,  
But for those who love, time is Eternity.

In peace and love, David

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**An Easy Way to Practice Your Faith Every Day: It’s Not Just for Advent!**

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Want to practice your faith every day? Try “D365” (<https://d365.org>)! D365 is a daily devotional app that you can upload on your phone, iPad or laptop, and look at every day just like you look at your email or social media. And it’s free!

What do you see on D365? Each day, D365 presents a devotion which includes five brief pages focused on a theme for the day. The five pages are Pause, Listen, Think, Pray and Go.

How do you access D365? If you go to the App Store on your iPhone or to Googleplay on your Android device or the D365 website, you can get D365 Daily Devotionals for free and open it on your device. Don’t confuse this app with the Microsoft Dynamics 365 app for business solutions, which

requires a paid subscription. Deepening your faith takes practice, and there's nothing like an easy app to practice your spiritual exercises!

Lori Yamauchi

### **Planning for Old First's Future Update**

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Following on the past three years of reflection and assessment, Old First is engaged in a strategic planning process, which began in April. A small task force of elders is working with Pastor Maggi on developing a strategic plan for the next three to five years that is intended to advance Old First's mission and vision, and increase its energy, morale, vitality and capacity toward a unified direction. If you are interested in learning more about this process, please contact Pastor Maggi, Steve Taber, Tom Culp, or Lori Yamauchi.

The planning process started with a mission statement and vision statement. A new mission statement was developed over the summer (see below), and themes from discussions held in November such as cherishing the past and present, reimagining the church, appealing to those seeking ethical/moral guidance, and reaching out, will inform the vision statement (see below). Once the Vision Statement is complete, the plan will identify the "true North" pillars or the primary ways to execute the vision such as worship, people, resources and partnerships. Then, the plan will identify the "adaptive challenges", or forces internal and external to the church which Old First must face in order to realize its vision. These adaptive challenges may require that Old First make "adaptive changes", or changes to the ways that we perceive the world and do the work of the church, in order to meet the adaptive challenges. For example, an adaptive challenge may be that people are not joining organizations anymore. The adaptive change in response to the challenge may be to de-emphasize the concept of membership and emphasize other ways for people to interact with the church.

Once the adaptive changes are identified, then the plan will identify strategic priorities and effective interventions to implement the adaptive changes. An effective intervention may be implemented by carefully designed "experiments", to test new ideas incrementally, and evaluate the results and make adjustments to the intervention before continuing with broader efforts.

The effective interventions will be accompanied by discrete "SMART" (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-bound) goals with objectives, metrics, and action plans attached to each goal. Our success in realizing the vision will depend on our follow-through in implementing our action plans. This will require a focused effort on the part of all members and friends. Measuring our progress and celebrating our accomplishments will be critical to our success.

After discussions with the session, deacons, small groups, and other individual members and friends of the congregation about the strategic planning process, Pastor Maggi and the elder task force produced a new mission statement, which was adopted by the session in September. The mission statement, which is printed in the weekly Sunday bulletin, is "Sharing God's Love, Welcome, and Justice On Our Corner, in Our City, and in the World." Hooray for reaching this major milestone!

In November, two brainstorming discussions were held with friends and members to produce ideas about the vision statement. An extensive list of ideas was generated, which the task force will use to produce a new vision statement, for review by the session, deacons, and congregation at large. The ideas build on the mission statement, and will be organized around themes which will populate the vision statement. Themes that emerged from the discussions include: continuing what we cherish, reimagining the church, appealing to those who are looking for ethical/moral guidance or spirituality or community, reaching out to particular groups such as young adults or LGBTQ or retirees, focusing on specific ministries such as healing from burnout or trauma or homeless or refugees or prisoners, and addressing social and political issues such as climate change or racism.

A draft vision statement will be produced in the coming weeks, and shared with the congregation by the end of January. Stay tuned as the process continues!

Lori Yamauchi

## **Session Meeting Report for November 2019**

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Session met on Tuesday, November 26. Below are some highlights from the meeting:

- Pastor Henderson opened the meeting announcing that the Saturday Community Dinner held on November 23 was a success with enough food for all.
- A short Stewardship report indicated that some pledges had been received and that follow-up was being done.
- It was reported that Strategy and Planning activities gathering input from over thirty-two members of the congregation on Vision ideas had yielded a variety of concepts, many without constraint and varied in nature.
- A short presentation on the PC-USA Imperative for the Reformation in being a Transformative Church in our intercultural era was discussed, and it was noted that Lent activities in 2020 would focus on various Mathew 25 activities and themes.
- It was moved, seconded, and passed unanimously to endorse the grant proposal for Renewal of Ecumenical House Campus Ministry at SFSU.
- It was moved, seconded and passed unanimously to endorse the grant proposal that Old First and Calvary Presbyterian Churches collaborating with Catholic Charities would expand legal and support services to immigrants.
- The Operations Committee reported that an energy audit was required, and that a water leak discovered on the south wall of the sanctuary was being investigated and addressed.
- Christian Education announced that the committee has focused on the Mathew 25 work and engaged the Reverend Leslie Veen, a former seminary intern with us, to lead two workshops scheduled for 2020.
- There was a report from the Community Building Committee that new member classes were scheduled for December 8 and 15, that luncheons for Epiphany and Mardi Gras were planned for January 5 and February 23, and that the church website would be finished in December.
- The Mission Committee mentioned several items including the Mission Fair on December 1, the Larkin Street Youth Services holiday gift drive requesting \$25 gift cards, the Christmas Eve offering which will be split between homeless prenatal programs and the Catholic Charities Immigration Legal and Support Services, the results of the Peace and Global Witness Offering —the 25% local portion going to the Gifford Center to Prevent Gun Violence, and the matching funds for the International Rescue Committee Vision project from seven churches and two individuals.
- The Worship Committee mentioned preparing for Advent with art, decorating the sanctuary and an Advent guide available to anyone who wants it.
- There was a short presbytery report; a highlight was comments on the Mathew 25 work.

Tom Culp, Clerk of Session

## **Sad News: The Death of Janice Himes**

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Old First member Janice Himes died December 15. A service to remember Janice in prayer is being planned. Contact the church office for further information.

## **Prayers for Healing and Wholeness**

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Jim Fagler for recovery from hip surgery with improved and pain free mobilization.

Betsy Chiao for increased strength and keeping cancer on hold.

Jeanne Kirkwood for smooth sailing with chemotherapy.

Glen Potter for increasingly confident and fluid mobility.  
Lorraine Bellesi for continuing health issues.



### Dates to Remember

January 1	Wednesday	New Year's Day: Church Office Closed
January 5	Sunday	Epiphany Potluck, after Worship
January 6	Monday	Mission Committee, 6:30 pm
January 12	Sunday	Board of Deacons, 12:30 pm
January 19	Sunday	Deadline for Submissions to the December Issue of <i>Shared Life</i>
January 18	Saturday	Presbyterian Women, 12:00 noon, off-site
January 20	Monday	MLK, Jr Day March and Commemoration: Meet at CalTrain Station at 4th and King Streets in San Francisco, 10:30 am
January 21	Tuesday	Worship Committee, 7:00 pm
January 25	Saturday	Saturday Community Dinner, Fellowship Hall, 5:30 pm
January 28	Tuesday	Session, 7:00 pm

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### 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