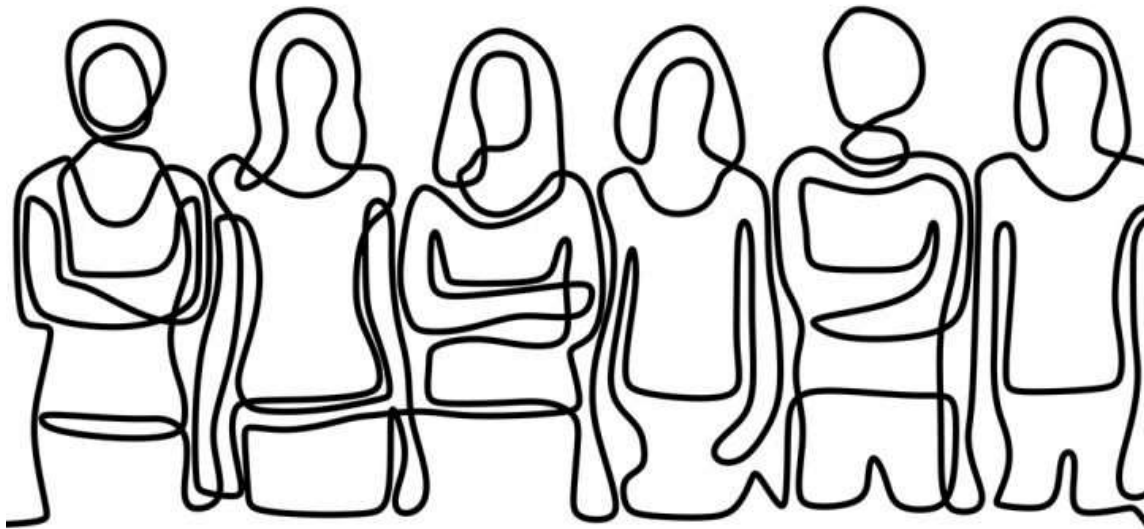


Notable Women of Old First



Throughout our history, Old First Presbyterian Church has been blessed by women who made significant contributions to the church, the surrounding neighborhood, the city of San Francisco, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and the world. We would like to call out a few of those women and their contributions. Of course, there are now and have been many more, often unrecognized women important in the church. These are only a few from more recent years.



LORNA LOGAN

A fierce crusader for the rights and personhood of immigrants in Chinatown, in San Francisco, and around the world

When Lorna Logan came to Chinatown in San Francisco, she found a community facing many challenges including young Chinese girls being sold as slaves. She rescued many of them and went on to share Christ's love with Asian immigrants, San Francisco, and the world.

Lorna Logan was born and raised in Seattle, where she received her Bachelor of Arts degree from the University of Washington. Raised by devoutly Christian parents, both she and her older sister, Florence, became Presbyterian missionaries. Florence went to work in China, and in 1931, Lorna was assigned to work in San Francisco's Chinatown. There she worked alongside pioneering missionary Donaldina Cameron in rescuing Chinese women and girls who had been smuggled into the United States and sold into slavery as prostitutes and servants.

Buddy Tate Choy who succeeded Lorna as director of Cameron House said "Sometimes, the men came into the building and tried to get the girls back, but Miss Cameron and Miss Logan would hide the girls down in the dark basement tunnels. It may have been the first safe house in San Francisco for women who were abused." After high-profile prosecutions put an end to the slave trade in the 1930s and looser immigration laws brought more Chinese immigrants in the 1950s and 1960s, Cameron House evolved, under Lorna's leadership, from a haven for mistreated women into a professional social service agency serving the needs of Chinatown's poor families and new immigrants.

Although colleagues described her as humble, gentle and soft-spoken, Lorna was a crusader, lobbying at city hall and in Washington, D.C., against discriminatory laws and for services for Asian immigrants. After her retirement from Cameron House in 1981, Lorna served on the boards of many nonprofit organizations working in Chinatown. She was also proud to become the first woman elected moderator of the Presbytery of San Francisco. "All the social service agencies that exist today – Chinese Newcomers Service Center, On Lok Senior Health Services – Lorna had a hand in all of them," said Buddy Tate Choy.

Lorna joined Old First Presbyterian Church in 1987 and served in various capacities, including in the Pastor Nominating Committee in the late 1980s. Reminiscing at age 82 at the Sequoias where she lived, Lorna said, "I got so much more than I gave. The Chinese heritage is so rich." She died in San Francisco at the age of 94.



FRANCES GRAY

A pioneering woman of Christ in the Presbyterian Church and around the world

In the days before society recognized women as important leaders, especially so in the church, Frances Gray excelled in scholarship and service to Christ through her leadership in the Middle East and in the Presbyterian Church.

Frances Gray was born in Little Rock, Arkansas in 1910, and graduated from Rhodes College in Memphis in 1930. She earned master's degrees from New York Theological Seminary, the Divinity School of the University of Chicago, and Columbia University's School of Social Work. After a career in social work, Frances began serving with the Presbyterian Church in 1946. In 1950, she became one of the church's leaders in foreign missions where she oversaw missions in Africa and the Middle East. A member and friend of Old First Presbyterian Church said, "She had a wonderful grasp of Middle Eastern culture." In 1956, Frances was appointed to the Beirut College for Women, where she taught biblical literature and later became president of the college, helping it make a transition to full Lebanese leadership.

Frances moved to Iran in 1965 to a post at the Iran Bethel School for Girls in Tehran, and helped upgrade it to Damavand College. In 1974, she received the Order of the Taj (Crown) from the shah of Iran for her work there. Rosemary Bledsoe tells this story about that ceremony: Although she had been told that protocol dictated she not speak to the shah when he presented her award, the quietly determined Frances was concerned that nearby residents still had no fresh water. So she asked him about it. "Everybody gasped," said Bledsoe, "but he was nice about it, and they got their water."

Frances retired in 1975 and moved to San Francisco where she joined Old First. At Old First, she led adult education classes for decades, focusing on Biblical studies, until her death in 2001. Her deep knowledge and gentle spirit attracted many to her classes through the years setting a high standard for Christian education at Old First. Rosemary Bledsoe said, "There was not one page of her Bible that wasn't marked, in pencil, red ink, or blue ink." Frances was also instrumental in the design group which painted the ceiling of the exonarthex with Larry Boyce's beautiful art work.



DORIS KRAUSS

A life dedicated to helping seniors, teaching about faith, and sharing the love of Jesus Christ

Not far outside the doors of Old First Presbyterian Church, its Director of Parish Life, Doris Krauss saw a city full of hungry, hurting, and lonely senior citizens without many resources for help. She did something about it!

Doris Krauss was born in Nebraska but called San Francisco her home for forty years. In 1963, Mayor George Christopher asked the San Francisco Council of Churches to offer a lunch program to seniors. With Doris's help, Old First said yes to the challenge.

That first lunch program led to Old First faithfully serving senior adults with weekly programs and lunches for the next fifty-five years. Doris became the director of the new program for seniors when it began in 1963 and continued in that role for twenty-two years. During her tenure, the center was fully staffed by volunteers trained and supervised by Doris. After her retirement, the program was renamed the Doris Krauss Senior Center.

But over the years the city changed, and in 2018, after much reflection, Old First's session voted to close the senior center. Elder John Kramar said, "In some ways this is a triumph. Fifty-five years ago this church met a need in the city. Doris and others were pioneers in caring for seniors and now a half a century later the city and civic organizations have risen to meet the needs of seniors in San Francisco. In 1963, Old First was ahead of the curve and now others have stepped into care in ways we could have never imagined!" Doris was not worried about being "ahead of the curve," but she wanted to help those in need.

As Director of Parish Life, Doris also started the small group movement at Old First. She met with a small number of Old First members in her apartment to study the Bible and other Christian books. That program expanded to include many new groups in which most members of the church have participated. Cindy and Chris Burt, members of Doris's second small group, remember studying Dietrich Bonhoeffer's *The Cost of Discipleship* at Doris's apartment for an entire year. She welcomed visitors and was instrumental in bringing new members into the church and getting them involved in committees and small groups. After retiring, Doris lived at the Sequoias. She died in 2006 at age 92.

Notable Women of Old First in Ministry

Right: Frances Gray leads one of her popular Bible study classes at Old First Presbyterian Church.



Left: Glenda Hope at her ordination to ministry Old First Presbyterian Church, May 17, 1970.



Above: Doris Krauss at one of the many retreats, like this one at Westminster Woods, that she helped plan and lead.



Above: Jean Richardson prepares to lead worship at Old First Presbyterian Church.

Sharing Christ's Love in the Church and World

Below: Glenda Hope shares her love with a resident in low-income housing on Ellis Street.



Below: Pam Byers celebrates with LGBT clergy at Old First Presbyterian Church in 2015 after the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) finally votes to welcome them as ministers in the denomination.



Above: Pam Byers leads worship at one of the many Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) church-wide meetings she attended.



Left: Maggi Henderson leads a Palm Sunday street procession with donkey and palms, like many of the creative worship events she planned.



Left: Maggi Henderson at the dedication of Old First Presbyterian Church's Little Free Library, which she organized, had installed, and keeps filled with books for the neighborhood.



GLEND A HOPE

“an unsung hero of compassion” –the Dalai Lama

The Reverend Glenda Hope was ordained at Old First Presbyterian Church in 1970 as a minister of word and sacrament, the first woman ordained in our synod and one of the very first ordained women in the entire Presbyterian denomination. She has worked

passionately with people in need and advocated for God’s justice in the world.

Glenda Hope was born in 1936 in Atlanta, Georgia, and grew up there in a Southern Baptist family. She received a Bachelor of Arts degree in English Literature from Florida State University in 1958. In 1960, she completed a Master of Arts degree in English Bible at the Presbyterian School of Christian Education. In 1969, after she completed a Master of Divinity degree at San Francisco Theological Seminary, she was ordained in 1970 as an assistant pastor at Old First Presbyterian Church where she served until 1972. She attracted many young people to the church through a ministry which included “contemporary” worship services, and a popular production of Andrew Lloyd Webber’s *Jesus Christ, Superstar*, the first production of that musical in the San Francisco Bay Area. After leaving Old First, she served as pastor at Seventh Avenue Presbyterian Church helping bring them back from the brink of closure.

For more than four decades, Glenda has worked in San Francisco’s troubled Tenderloin district, ministering to the poor, the homeless, and prostitutes trying to get off the streets. In 1972 with her husband, Scott Hope, she founded San Francisco Network Ministries and Safe House. For twenty-five years, Glenda’s San Francisco Safe House has provided housing and supportive services for sexually exploited homeless women and drop-in support services for women through The Hope Center. Hundreds of desperate and abused women have found hope and a new life through Glenda’s work, and many of them view her as representative of Christ’s love in the streets of San Francisco.

When she retired at age 78, she founded an aging in place network in her neighborhood, which has been adopted by the San Francisco Department of Aging and Adult Services as “a model for reaching the isolated elderly and building a mutually caring community.” Glenda now worships regularly at Old First where she feels at home. A documentary movie of her life and work is in progress.





JEAN RICHARDSON

A life of passionately caring and advocating for youth, those living with disability, and LGBTQ+ people

So many homeless and run-away youth populated Polk Street outside Old First Presbyterian Church when the Reverend Jean Richardson began her ministry there, she had to do something about it. As a closeted lesbian in seminary herself, she felt left out of and hidden in so much of church life. This led Jean to giving her life sharing God's love with those outcast and unheard in our society, and ultimately to make the Presbyterian Church more open to everyone.

Jean Richardson was born in 1955 in western Pennsylvania. She attended Case Western Reserve University, where she studied social work, graduating magna cum laude in 1977. She enrolled at San Francisco Theological Seminary in the fall of 1978, and she was ordained through her home church in Beaver, Pennsylvania, and returned to pastoral leadership at Old First. Jean served Old First as seminary intern and then as assistant/associate pastor from 1982 to 1989.

Perhaps because she herself felt a bit "homeless," Jean found a passion for working with the homeless and runaway youth in the city. She was instrumental in focusing Old First's mission to its immediate neighborhood by forming Polk Street Town Hall, which started the Larkin Street Youth Center (now Larkin Street Youth Services), a nonprofit organization providing services and guidance to young people, particularly those youth in the neighborhood who were experiencing homelessness, substance abuse or prostitution. Larkin Street has grown over its 40-year history to serve thousands of young adults by providing a continuum of healthcare, housing, employment, and education services.

After leaving Old First, Jean was called as pastor at Seventh Avenue Presbyterian Church and while there served as moderator of the Presbytery of San Francisco. Later, she worked as a director of Ghost Ranch in New Mexico and of the Kirkridge Retreat and Study Center in Pennsylvania – both national Presbyterian conference and retreat centers.

Jean adopted two sons. The older, born with disabilities, taught her of the many challenges children and persons living with disabilities face in our society. With her partner Pat, they parented four children in a blended family, and now have four grandchildren. Jean, along with her partner, began Circles of Courageous Commons, an online platform holding "conversations of the heart for the common good of our world."





PAM BYERS

A church leader who embraced God's call on her life and lived it fully, moving the church to be more universally loving

Anyone meeting Pam Byers would always feel loved by her infectious smile and warm embrace. But Pam could also be fierce in her fight for the rights of the outcast, especially LGBTQ+ Christians in the church. Her tireless work resulted in the

Presbyterian Church fully welcoming all in the ministry and life of the church.

Pamela McLucas Byers was born in 1947. She graduated from Wellesley College, and received a Doctor of Philosophy degree from Rutgers University in 1975. She had a very distinguished executive career in publishing and marketing. She joined Old First Presbyterian Church in 1990 and was a ruling elder for many years. She was a member of the choir and participated actively in all aspects of church life. She was a tireless evangelist. From her position in the choir, she noted visitors to the church, immediately reaching out and welcoming them after the service.

But Pam also saw the pain caused by the church to LGBT Christians. Pam wrote, "I have become concerned about the meaning of ordination and call and the potential roles of lesbian and gay people in our church. I feel deeply blessed to have been able to help develop strategies to move the church forward."

Pam and then Pastor Tim Hart-Anderson helped found the Covenant Network in 1997, a group that advocated for a fully inclusive Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), and Pam became its first executive director. Pam energized this national group of Presbyterians to work together through many failed attempts to pass an amendment to the Book of Order to welcome openly lesbian and gay clergy as ordained leaders of the church. Pam had a gift for listening and discussing these issues with people of all sides, and her love and passion were instrumental in moving the church to greater acceptance. The amendment was finally passed and adopted by a majority of the presbyteries in 2011. She retired from Covenant Network in June 2011, the same month as G-6.0106b was removed from the Book of Order, opening the door to lesbian or gay Presbyterians as deacons, ruling elders and teaching elders and making the church a more welcoming place.

The Reverend Tricia Koenig, national organizer for the Covenant Network said, "Pam brought out others' gifts and downplayed her own when it came to recognition. But what gifts she had! Her utter generosity in sharing those gifts blessed her family, her friends, her beloved Old First, the Presbytery of San Francisco and the whole Presbyterian Church. We are a more faithful and loving church because of Pam."

Pam left us too soon – after a battle with cancer – in 2014.



MAGGI HENDERSON

A love of God, love of books, love of children, love of theology, and a commitment to sharing God's love with all God's people

The Reverend Maggi Henderson came to Old First Presbyterian Church after the church had been through a long and difficult period of interim leadership. She brought new energy, hope and love to reunite the community, becoming the first woman senior pastor and having one of the longest tenures of any pastor in the church's 175 years.

Margret Henderson was born in Oakland, California. She graduated from the University of Oregon and received a Master of Divinity degree from Union Theological Seminary and a Master of Christian Education from the Presbyterian School of Christian Education, both in Richmond, Virginia. Maggi has served churches in Austin, Texas, Winston Salem, North Carolina, and Conyers, Georgia, and she was Dean of Students and Vice President of Student Services at Columbia Theological Seminary in Atlanta. She was called to Old First in 2007.

Maggi has done much work to connect the congregation to the wider church and community. Over the years, she has supervised five seminary interns, sending them off with good urban church experience. She has built the church's service to the community with the Interfaith Food Pantry and the monthly 4th Saturday Community Dinners which serve hundreds of families and individuals in San Francisco. Under her leadership, Old First has connected with Christians living in Syria, Scotland, South Sudan, and elsewhere, expanding the church's awareness and support of them.

Maggi has been active in many church and community boards and committees representing our congregation to others across the region. She has been a member and board chair of the San Francisco Interfaith Council working with religious leaders of all faiths, and she served on the board of TransHeartLine providing services to the transgender community through housing, education and advocacy. In the Presbytery of San Francisco, she has served on many essential working groups and committees. Maggi has also worked with a presbytery committee working to develop affordable housing in San Francisco. Nationally, she has worked with the Presbyterian Youth Triennium, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)'s national event for youth, served on various planning teams, and been director and preacher at Montreat Youth Conferences. Maggi has also been a volunteer roadie for the San Francisco AIDS Foundation's AIDS/Lifecycle fundraising bicycle ride from San Francisco to Los Angeles.

Maggi has been very engaged in shepherding Old First into becoming a community of all God's people who strive to grow in faith and action and are committed to being a witness to Christ's love and justice in San Francisco.

GOD

*IS STILL WRITING
OUR STORY...*



**Celebrating
175 years**

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