



# FIRST PRES PRESS



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF PALO ALTO

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**Inside This Issue:**

Pastor's Letter	1
Sunday Schedule	2
Other October Activities	3
Also Note...	4
Looking Back	4
Looking Ahead	6
Council High-lights	7
Key Financial High-lights	8
Presbytery Report	9
Deacons' Diary	10
Updates from Ministries, Small Groups, Committees and Task Forces	11
And Finally...	14
Calendar	15

Dear Ones,

The Sabbath reminds us that life—both the heart and head, the spirit and the soul, must be renewed from time to time. From the beginning of creation God established times for us to cease our striving and set aside our work in order to renew and re-center our lives. These times, whether simple nights of rest, or a day of worship each week, or a fallow time every few years, are called sabbaticals—literally meaning “ceasings.” The concept of sabbatical has its source in the Hebrew practice of *shmita* described in several places in the Bible as a commandment to desist from working the fields in the seventh year.

It is this *shmita*, this “ceasing time,” which you have granted me over the past four months—and I am deeply grateful to God and to all of you for such a gift. Through conversations with old friends and colleagues, through conferences exploring the future direction of the Church, through connectional time with my beloved bride and children, and through contemplative moments exploring my own call to ministry, I return to you renewed, refreshed, and reinvigorated. I come back with aspirations for us as a faith community—for I want us to not merely *survive* in this place and time but rather to *thrive*—growing and prospering in new and exciting ways while being ever-linked to our core values of doing justice, loving kindness, and walking a humble path with the Divine.

But most importantly, during this time of “ceasing,” I was able to identify (and hopefully rectify) many missteps I have made in my own ministry over the years—things that have held me back in leadership roles or have hurt others in my pastoral relationships. So too, I hope that your sabbatical “listening” time as a congregation with Bob helped identify some constraints that have held us back as a faith community while also raising and recognizing perceptions and concerns with which people have been grappling over the years.

So thank you! Thank you for your support, your encouragement, and for your welcome back into a community for which I care deeply and passionately. And I am looking forward (both literally and figuratively) to seeing what the Spirit wants to do both *in* us and *through* us--for God’s glory and our joy—in the days ahead.

Much peace and love,

Rob

Shalom,

What an interesting word which in Hebrew means *peace, a sense of completeness*. But it also means *hello and goodbye*.

This is my last chance to chat with you as your sabbatical coach. Words are inadequate to express my gratitude to you for the welcoming, collaborative spirit which made this experience a great success. So thank you. Together we place the results in God’s hands (or as some say, the universe) to be used to bring this congregation to a sense of *shalom* (completeness) as you move towards *shalom* (peace) in this place, sending ripples of *shalom* (harmony) throughout the world. Who knows how many congregations will choose this new model when their pastor goes on sabbatical.

The prophet Isaiah (9:6) envisioned the Messiah (Yeshua) as *Sar shalom* (Prince of Peace).

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## Pastor's Letter—continued

In Proverbs (18:21) we are told that there is life and death in the power of the tongue. Therefore, whenever you employ the word *shalom* you are speaking into someone's life all the wonderful things that *shalom* means. In worship we pass the peace *shalom* to one another. In doing so, you literally act in the name of Yahweh in this blessing.

Now is the time for reflection. I am convinced that your process of hearing one another in truth over the past 5 months will continue as you plan the next chapter in the life of First Presbyterian Church of Palo Alto. Marianne and I will keep you our prayers, and we look forward down the road to sharing worship in your faith community. *May Yahweh bless you and keep you. May the face of Yahweh shine upon you and be gracious to you and give you SHALOM through the Sar Shalom.*

Bob

## Sunday Schedule for October 2011

Sunday, October 9 <sup>th</sup>	<b>17th Sunday after Pentecost—More Light Sunday</b>
8:30 A.M.	Early Church in the Chapel
9:15 A.M.	Adult Study
10:30 A.M.	Community Worship Service in the Sanctuary
10:45 A.M.	Children's Classes
11:30 A.M.	Reception to Celebrate Publication of <i>Operation Marriage</i>
5:30 P.M.	Youth Group in Classroom 2
Sunday, October 16 <sup>th</sup>	<b>18th Sunday after Pentecost</b>
8:30 A.M.	Early Church in the Chapel
9:15 A.M.	Adult Study
10:30 A.M.	Worship Service in the Sanctuary—Rus Kosits Preaching
10:45 A.M.	Children's Classes
11:30 A.M.	Coffee/Fellowship on the Patio
5:30 P.M.	Youth Group in Classroom 2
Sunday, October 23 <sup>rd</sup>	<b>19th Sunday after Pentecost</b>
8:30 A.M.	Early Church in the Chapel
9:15 A.M.	Adult Study
10:30 A.M.	Community Worship Service in the Sanctuary
10:45 A.M.	Children's Classes
11:30 A.M.	Coffee/Fellowship on the Patio
5:30 P.M.	Youth Group in Classroom 2
Sunday, October 30 <sup>th</sup>	<b>All Saints' Day Observance</b>
8:30 A.M.	Early Church in the Chapel
9:15 A.M.	Adult Study—An Introduction to the Work of Larry Rasmussen
10:30 A.M.	Community Worship Service in the Sanctuary/Memorial Garden
10:45 A.M.	Children's Classes
11:30 A.M.	Coffee/Fellowship on the Patio
5:30 P.M.	Youth Group in Classroom 2
Sunday, November 6 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Lectureship Sunday</b>
8:30 A.M.	Early Church in the Chapel
9:15 A.M.	Adult Study with Larry Rasmussen
10:30 A.M.	Community Worship Service in the Sanctuary—Larry Rasmussen preaching
10:45 A.M.	Children's Classes
11:30 A.M.	Coffee/Fellowship on the Patio
5:30 P.M.	Youth Group in Classroom 2

## Other October Activities

### ADULT STUDY

**9:15-10:15 A.M., September 18<sup>th</sup>-October 23<sup>rd</sup>**

Vicky Greenbaum continues to lead a series on “**Jesus, Mercy, and Justice (The Meaning of Salvation)**” in the Church Lounge. The class focuses on the life of Jesus and examines peoples’ reaction to the Jesus story, considering such questions as the following: Why do we need rescue? What’s the nature of salvation? What is that thing we call sin? What has it to do with justice and mercy? How do we live lives of mercy and justice? What’s the effect on our human hearts? What’s the role of faith in the invisible world of salvation, mercy, and justice? What’s visible here? How can we fill our lives with love?

Geoff Browning leads a study of the **Israel-Palestine Conflict** in Fellowship Hall. The class uses the Steadfast Hope curriculum prepared by the Israel-Palestine Mission Network of the PCUSA. Study materials will be provided to supplement class discussions. Attendance is still open.

Need a good book to read? Each week the **book cart in the narthex** offers the latest in stimulating books for you to check out and enjoy. Just sign the book out when you take it--and sign it back in when you return it.

### CHILDREN, YOUTH, AND FAMILY MINISTRY

Youth group meets every Sunday night at 5:30 to 7:00 pm. This is a change from previous schedules, but one that it looks like we will be sustaining throughout the fall and winter. Games and lessons are part of the fun, and all middle school and high school students are welcome. Many of the youth are looking forward to participating in a variety of service project opportunities, so please keep your suggestions coming.

Sunday morning ministry for children happens during the worship service. Children and youth are invited to begin their worship time in the sanctuary at 10:30. Some children’s activities are available in the narthex every Sunday that relate to that morning’s lesson. After the children’s message (this normally happens at about 15 minutes into the worship) children and youth are excused to go to their classes.

Children’s Worship – for elementary age students – happens in Room 3, and the Youth Round Table in Room 2. Middle school and high school age youth may want to have conversations with their parents and responsible adults about whether the round table or remaining in worship best suits their individual needs. Both the Children’s Worship and Youth Round Table are designed to offer opportunities to explore the dimensions and elements of worship, and increase the appreciation and understanding of worship at FPres PA as well as in the greater church.

Next month I’ll share some observations the youth have been making about the complex relationship between God and humanity, and how they see their own lives and the modern world relating to the Bible story.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions, ideas, or your enthusiastic willingness to volunteer - adult presence in youth and children's ministry is crucial, and your participation is welcome!

Rus Kosits – Children, Youth and Family Ministry Intern

### **PRIME TIMERS: “Sabbatical Reflections with Rob Martin—Purpose and Possibility”**

**Tuesday, October 11<sup>th</sup>, 12-2 P.M., in Fellowship Hall**

The October gathering will be our opportunity to say “welcome back” to Rob and hear him talk about his sabbatical experiences. To prepare us for the occasion, Rob has sent us the following quotes from *The Practice of Adaptive Leadership* by Ronald Heifetz:

## Other October Activities—continued

*“These are extraordinary times in which we are living! The turn of the millennium brought the pressing realization that every human being, as a member of a globalizing set of nations, cultures, religions, and economics, must find better ways to co-exist and collaborate. To build sustainable communities in an era of profound economic and environmental inter-dependence, each person, each country, each organization is challenged to sift through the wisdom and know-how of their heritage, to take the best from their histories, leave behind lessons and practices that no longer serve them, and innovate, not for change’s sake, but for the sake of revitalizing the values and competencies they find most essential and precious!”*

What does this mean to us at First Pres? Come and hear Rob and join a discussion to follow. Please bring your lunch and a treat to share. It would be great if you could come early to help set up and stay a few minutes to help clean up. Looking forward to seeing you,

Minako Sano

Put a hold on your calendars for our meetings on November 8<sup>th</sup> (Michael Donohue, new Executive Director at Kara) and December 13<sup>th</sup> (Holiday Concert with the Gunn Chamber Singers).

## Also Note

### SENIOR CHATS

One purpose of Senior Chat is to stimulate our creative selves and help with our self-consciousness around the issue of creativity. We have created a good support group through the senior chat sessions, and we always welcome others to join us. We meet in the Fireside Room of Covenant Presbyterian Church, 670 East Meadow Drive, Palo Alto. Starting at 10:00 A.M. on the second and fourth Friday mornings, we share refreshments, conversation, and a mentally stimulating presentation. For more information, call Rev. Dona Smith-Powers (650-494-3093).

**October 14:** "The Psychology Behind Creativity." David Grady has done many workshops and activities in our area—at the Sunnyvale Art Institute and as an SFMOMA docent, to name a few. Virtually any creative activity can serve to be an antidote for depression and can also serve as a spiritual connection. To get at the source of your creativity, ask, "What is a non-negotiable activity in my life?"

**October 28:** "Gospel Music." Ever wonder where much of your church and jazz music comes from? What are your personal memories of gospel music, and which examples have come to be your favorites? John Lehman and Dona Smith-Powers will take us on a foot-tapping historical journey with the people and groups that have moved gospel music into our hearts and souls.

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### SOUTH BAY SANCTUARY COVENANT

Invites you to celebrate our 28<sup>th</sup> anniversary with Voices on the Border Staff at 4 P.M. on **Sunday, October 23<sup>rd</sup>**, at **First Baptist Church Fellowship Hall**. There’s a suggested donation of \$20 for adults and \$5-15 for students, including a delicious enchilada and pupusa dinner, but no one will be turned away for lack of funds. For reservations, call 650-494-8340 or email [steering@southbaysanctuary.org](mailto:steering@southbaysanctuary.org). Checks for tax-deductible gifts may be made to U. Lutheran Church/SBSC and mailed to SBSC, c/o St. Thomas Aquinas Parish, 3290 Middlefield Road, Palo Alto, CA 94306.

There’s also an orientation on Saturday, October 22<sup>nd</sup>, from 3-5:15 P.M. for our March 24-April 1, 2012 El Salvador Delegation. Please contact Arlene at 650-494-8340 or [Schaupp@aol.com](mailto:Schaupp@aol.com) for information and to RSVP.



## Also Note—continued

### PENINSULA ECUMENICAL COMMUNITY CONFERENCE ON ISRAEL/PALESTINE

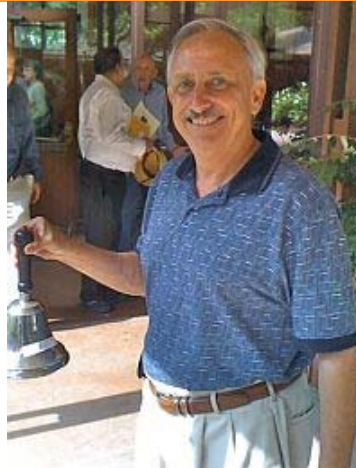
On Saturday, October 29<sup>th</sup>, from 8:30 a.m. till 4:00 p.m., a conference designed to help church members in our area become more informed about Israel/Palestine will be held right here at First Pres. Despite the connections between the three Abrahamic faith traditions, Christians in America are often uninformed about the nature of the conflict in the Holy Land and what can be done about it. This lack of information causes difficulty in discussing Israel/Palestine with our Jewish and Muslim friends and neighbors. It also stands in the way of allowing the change that is needed for the cause of justice and peace.



The Peninsula Ecumenical Community Conference on Israel/Palestine will seek to inform and encourage dialogue and conversation with our Jewish and Muslim sisters and brothers. The conference will include plenary sessions and workshops with a variety of knowledgeable people, including Professors Joel Beinin, George Bisarat, and Hatem Bazian, plus Anna Baltzer, Sydney Levy, Alison Weir, and Chuck Rawlings. Leaders from many churches, including our own Geoff Browning and Linda Busek, have developed this conference.

REGISTER by sending your name & email address to [PenEcumenicalConference@gmail.com](mailto:PenEcumenicalConference@gmail.com). Suggested donation: \$5 - \$20 (a light lunch is also included). For more information, go to <http://www.fprespa.org/pen-ecumen-conf>.

## Looking Back



**Ingathering Sunday  
September 11th, 2001**



## Looking Ahead

### ROBERT MCAFEE BROWN LECTURESHIP SERIES, NOVEMBER 4-6, 2011



Our speaker this year is Dr. Larry Rasmussen, who will share his work and ideas on the relevance of our faith to our world's current environmental problems. He is a Reinhold Niebuhr Professor Emeritus of Social Ethics at Union Theological Seminary in New York City, where he spearheaded the "greening" of the seminary as an institution and rooted his courses and scholarship in the practice of environmental justice. He and his wife Nyla live in Santa Fe, New Mexico, and are very active with the Ghost Ranch Retreat and Conference Center.

Please mark your calendars and invite friends outside the First Pres community to join us for all or part of the lectureship. The schedule for the lectureship is:

#### **Sunday, October 30th**

9:15-10:15 A.M. Adult Study: An Introduction to the Work of Larry Rasmussen

#### **Friday, November 4th**

7:30-8:45 P.M. Lecture: *Gimme Some New Time Religion*

8:45-9:45 P.M. Reception

#### **Saturday, November 5th**

8:30-9:00A.M. Coffee, snacks, sign-in

9:00-noon Presentation: *Soil and Soul*  
 Movie: *Journey of the Universe*  
 Discussion

12:00-12:45 P.M. Salad luncheon

12:45-2:00 P.M. Presentation: *Water: Sacrament or Commodity*

#### **Sunday, November 6th**

9:15-10:15 A.M. Adult Study: *Earth Honoring Faith: The Ghost Ranch Project*

10:30-11:30 A.M. Prompting: *New Wineskins* Luke 5: 35-39

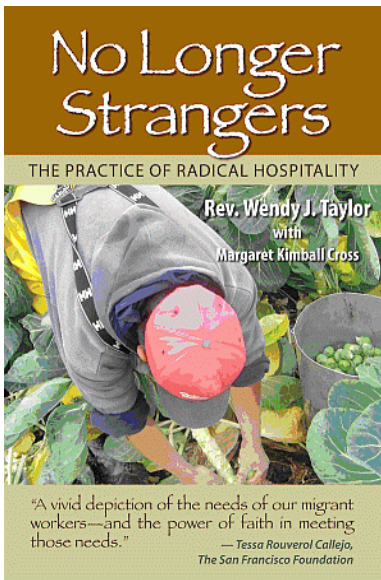
Suggested background reading for this year's lectureship is Dr. Rasmussen's *Earth Community, Earth Ethics*, which will be on sale at church beginning on Ingathering Sunday. His upcoming book, *Earth Honoring Faith: Religious Ethics in a New Key*, will be published in 2012.

Judy Zlatnik will be asking for baked goods or other snacks for the Friday reception and salads for the Saturday luncheon. Pat Kinney and Shirley Eglington are working on publicity, so be sure and contact them if you would like flyers to distribute to other groups or have suggestions of new places to inform of the lectureship this year. Flyers will be available in the church office and in the narthex of the church during October.

Judy Zlatnik, Shirley Eglington, and Pat Kinney

## Looking Ahead—continued

### F.L.O.W. SUNDAY AT PUENTE FOLLOW-UP



The book about the migrant workers served by **Puente de la Costa Sur** — written by Pastor Wendy Taylor who started Puente—will launch next month. A launch party is planned for **November 6** in Pescadero.

The book has roots at FirstPres: Lorraine Hancock showed the manuscript to Holly Brady at a JustFaith meeting last year, and Holly helped Wendy and her co author Margaret Cross design and publish the book. Rob Martin is hoping to get Wendy to FPres to talk about the book in January.

## Council Highlights

### Meeting of September 28, 2011

As Rob mentioned during worship earlier in the month, the group formerly known as "Session" is now referred to as "Council" in the Presbyterian Church USA. It will take a little getting used to, but from now on we will use that term to refer to the congregation's ruling body.

We welcomed Trish Hallenbeck as the Deacon rep to Council this month. She updated us on the recent work of the Deacons. They recently debriefed Ingathering; the consensus was that sitting in neighborhoods was well received, with about 100 participants at breakfast. She also gave us some information about members of the congregation who are ill or housebound.

Clerk Helene Butler reported that she attended a review of the Council minutes for 2010 with the Polity and Governance Committee of Presbytery on 9/10/11. Our minutes and register were found to be in order with the exception of a few minor issues.

Karen Wentzel, Staff Relations Chair, brought a request for approval of the process for completion of the Staffing Configuration Plan. The plan was initially created by the Staff Relations Ministry, and then edited by a sub-committee of Council composed of Karen Wentzel, Karen Petersen-Iyer, David Thornton, Kathy Merkle-Raymond, Vicky Greenbaum, Rob Martin, Helene Butler, and Bob Butziger. The process was approved, and the sub-committee will continue to meet with the goal of bringing a plan to the congregation for input by January.

Kathy Merkle-Raymond, Finance Chair, informed us about a bequest from Barbara Gray to the Legacy Fund. It is currently being managed conservatively in securities, which will be transferred into the First Pres account managed by Boston Common, the manager of the Legacy Fund. The bequest will be put into the undesignated portion of the Fund.

With gratitude and great optimism, Gordon Craig was officially appointed the 2011 Stewardship Chair. We give thanks to David Thornton for recruiting Gordon!

The rental agreement with The Hope of the Lord Church, who worship in the chapel on Sunday afternoons, will expire on October 31, 2011. This was a 6 month trial lease which has gone very well; they are very conscientious in their use of the facility. Council elected to extend their lease for 12 months.

David Thornton reported that the Legacy Circle event held on 9/22/11 was very successful. 31 people who have included the church in their estate planning attended a gathering at the home of Craig and Sally Nordlund. Freya

## Council Highlights—continued

Owen arranged flowers from her garden for all of the tables and Joan Roy did her usual excellent work in coordinating the logistics for the evening.

Rob Martin and Bob Butziger spent some time reviewing both what happened at First Pres during Rob's sabbatical and what Rob did on his sabbatical. Rob expressed great thanks to both Council and the congregation for allowing him this time to reflect and grow. He will continue to share his experiences with us in the coming months.

Helene Butler, Council Clerk

## Key Financial Highlights (Through August 31st)

Major Categories	Status <i>(Rounded actual compared to prorated budget)</i>
<b>Pledge Income</b>	☹️ \$4,200 under budget
<b>Total Congregational Giving</b>	☹️ \$14,800 under budget
<b>Staff Compensation</b>	☹️ \$1,600 over budget
<b>Administrative</b>	☺️ \$3,300 under budget
<b>Facilities</b>	☹️ \$8,600 under budget
<b>Presbyterian &amp; Ecumenical Giving</b>	☺️ On budget
<b>Social Justice</b>	☹️ \$4,900 under budget
<b>Total Income</b>	☹️ \$30,200 under budget
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	☺️ \$29,100 under budget
<b>Income – Expenditures</b>	☹️ <b>\$616 deficit</b>

### Financial Report Commentary

#### Income from Congregational Giving

Our typical summer slowdown in pledge donations has caught up with us. We have fallen behind in pledge income and donor-identified contributions for the eight months ended August 31<sup>st</sup>. We encourage you to please keep your pledge donations current, and we thank you for your generous giving to the work and ministries of First Presbyterian Church of Palo Alto!

#### Total Income

Total Income was \$30,200 under budget, which partially reflects the Congregational Giving concern mentioned above. We plan to take a second budgeted draw from the Legacy Circle Fund in September to help close the gap between our total income and total expenses. Year-to-date, we have taken only the first quarter's draw of \$12,000.

#### Expense Categories

Staff and Professional Expenses were \$1,600 over budget, less than 1% of the total budget.

Facilities Expenses were \$8,600 under budget, reflecting continued deferred spending on repairs and maintenance projects.

## Key Financial Highlights (Through August 31st)—continued

Administrative Expenses were \$3,300 under budget, with savings noted across all budget line items for Office Administration. This continues to be good news, and we thank Sarah Clementson for her efficient management of the office, equipment maintenance, and ordering of supplies.

Social Justice Ministry has spent \$4,900 less than budgeted funds year-to-date, but expects to spend the full budget of \$28,000 by the end of the year.

### Year-to-Date Deficit

We ended August with a deficit of \$616 and hope to catch up to the 2011 budgeted surplus of around \$600 by the end of the year. Thank you for keeping your pledges and donations current, and for your faithful commitment to supporting the health and vibrancy of First Pres.

Kathy Merkle-Raymond

### SEPTEMBER WORSHIP ATTENDANCE

Date	Early Service	10:30 Service	TOTAL
9/4 Labor Day	10	66	76
9/11 Ingathering	n/a	110	110
9/18	7	106	113
9/25	8	102	110
<b>Total for Month of September:</b>			<b>409</b>

## Presbytery Report

### Presbytery Meeting, September 24, 2011

The Presbytery meeting, hosted by West Valley Church in Cupertino, opened with a worship service led by a praise choir.

The formal meeting opened with Jane Odell stressing the importance of completing a Safe Church Program in each church. The next training session will be held on October 22 at Gilroy Church. Jane also noted that Federal law requires the elimination of all drop-side cribs from nurseries by the end of 2012.

Ed Lee had a great deal to report to Presbytery as a result of the New Form of Government. All proposed changes were submitted in first reading, with discussion and voting at the November Presbytery meeting. The changes include:

A reduction in the number of commissioners sent by presbyteries to Synod;

A policy for dismissal of churches to other reformed denominations; and

A change in the balance between teaching elders and ruling elders who serve as commissioners to Presbytery meetings.

In addition, Presbytery approved:

A request to transmit an overture from Mayflower Church that would amend the Form of Government;

The addition of a Presbytery covenant that reflects the new language of Amendment 10A;

The Ecclesiastical Budget for 2012;

Selection of Rev. David Rodriguez and Elder Jane Odell to serve on the Presbytery Nominating Committee.

## Presbytery Report—continued

Claudia Hamm described the Women's Program and announced a retreat to be held on Saturday, October 15.

Geoff Browning presented the Peace and Justice report and described the Israel/Palestine meeting to be held at FirstPres on October 29. Geoff also stressed the importance of the Peacemaking offering to be taken on October 2.

Joey Lee talked about the many reconciliation efforts underway to heal the anger over Amendment 10A. He also noted that there are no first person singulars in the Lord's Prayer.

Representing the Nominating Committee, David Rodriguez invited applications for the Stated Clerk's position beginning in January 2012.

For the Preparation for Ministry Committee, Bob Butziger presented Dongho Choi, an Inquirer ready for advancement to Candidate for Ministry. Presbytery examined Dongho and voted to advance him as requested. Because Valerie Weirauch was not able to be present, her examination was postponed until the November Presbytery Meeting. Bob stressed the importance of finding intern positions for Candidates for Ministry.

Financial Affairs Chair, Ruth McCreath, presented eight leases for approval. She complimented the churches for their attention to the need for formal leases to protect the churches and their session members from damaging litigation. She also advised of pending insurance rate increases and the importance of mission support.

Committee on Ministry Chair, David McCreath, noted that several churches have sought permission to add associate pastors to their staffs. Rev. Mike Hogg was examined by Presbytery and approved for installation at Hollister Church. Rev. Craig Roberts was examined and approved for installation at El Estero Church. Rev. Lai, Hsien-Chang was examined and received into the Presbytery for service at Taiwanese American Church.

Paul Jones

## Deacons' Diary

The Deacons wish to thank the **115** who attended the Ingathering Breakfast this year. We received many positive comments about this year's annual event.

The Board of Deacons oversees the operation of the **Home Health Aids Loan Closet**, which was approved by Council in October of 2004. The closet contains equipment such as walkers, crutches, bedside commodes, shower chairs, canes, and other items that can be helpful during an illness, surgery, or after an accident.

We have two wheelchairs available, one in the closet in Fellowship Hall and one in the Narthex of the Sanctuary. Items may be checked out using the form in the Loan Closet in Fellowship Hall. Items are available for the church community and others in the community.

Each year one deacon is the primary contact for checking out or contributing equipment. In 2011-12, that deacon is Jim Hewlett (328-6434).



Mary Alice Thornton



**The New 2011-2012 Church Directories Are Here!** If you haven't already done so, you may pick up your new directory in the narthex on Sunday morning. During the week, the directories are available for pick-up in the office.



## Updates from Ministries, Small Groups, Committees, and Task Forces

### CLUSTER GROUP SUCCESS!

One of the many things for which we are grateful to Bob Butziger is his leadership in helping us put together the series of “cluster group” dialogs during our congregation’s self-reflective “sabbatical” while Rob Martin was on sabbatical. The concept of a congregational sabbatical during the pastor’s sabbatical is a new one and was so successfully implemented here at First Pres that Bob and Rob are going to present the idea to the San Jose Presbytery’s Committee on Ministry.

The cluster groups were conceived as “listening” groups. The idea was to deepen our understanding of each other through active listening so that even if we might disagree with “the facts” the other person was presenting, we could honor the person’s perception about the situation without entering into a debate about those facts. Although the total number of people who participated was relatively small (about 30 members and friends), we felt the concept was accomplished.

In addition, after the first session, many of the participants said, “This is valuable information. How can we capture it and use it?” So the leaders of the groups started taking notes, and the process of using the information is already taking place. Just since the process concluded in August, the feedback and insights of the groups have been used both in the work of several relevant committees (e.g. Staff Relations, Worship, and Teaching Ministries) and also by Rob in the short time he’s been back. Council as a whole will also be reviewing the information and incorporating it into its discussions going forward.

Perhaps the biggest learning from the process was the importance of the process itself. Council is committed to moving forward with open communication and similar listening groups as we explore and embrace new directions for our church this fall, well-rooted in our core value of doing justice, loving kindness, and walking a humble path with God. We thank everyone who participated for their input and willingness to take part in this important process.

Karen Wentzel

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### NEW PLANS AFOOT

“Behold, I am doing a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it?” Isaiah 43:19

Despite all rumors to the contrary, Council was not asleep during the time Rob has been gone on sabbatical. Last spring, we heard the recommendations of the Music Task Force, which after surveying the congregation, looking at the history of our music program, and going through their own process of discernment, recommended that Council consider hiring a full-time Director of Music. The information they presented to Council was invaluable, but in the face of the concurrent resignation of Marissa Myers, our Family Ministry Coordinator, to pursue her other passion in the high tech world, Council was suddenly faced with the fact that it couldn’t just say “yes” to the Music Task Force without considering the bigger picture of our overall staffing plan.

Council asked Staff Relations to come up with such a plan, and at the August Council meeting it presented an aggressive timeline to articulate a plan this fall to be implemented by the end of January 2012. That proposal was voted on and approved by Council at its meeting on September 25. A subgroup of Council (consisting of elders in charge of Staff Relations, Worship, Youth & Families, Finance, our clerk, and a member of the Music Task Force) had already begun meeting to talk about what such a plan might look like.

First and foremost, Council has affirmed that whatever proposal is made, it must embody our core mission and values from Micah’s call as articulated in the mission statement that was set out in our last strategic plan completed in June 2005. We are not staffing for ourselves in a vacuum. We are staffing in order to better carry out our core values in a new day and time. In short, our core values and mission have not changed, but we may need a new operating plan.

Sounds a little abstract and it’s a little frustrating given how long the discussion about the new music position has been going on, right? We understand that and ask for a little more patience beyond what you’ve already given. Here’s the plan:

## Updates...

- The subgroup of Council will meet during October and present a recommendation for a staffing plan to Council at the October Council meeting;
- Council will consider that recommendation at the October meeting and, if they agree with it, will approve it for presentation to the congregation;
- During November, December, and January, Council will hold a series of meetings with the congregation to explore the proposal, realizing and fully expecting that with congregational input, it might morph into something entirely different;
- Council will make a final decision on a plan going forward at its January meeting, and immediately proceed to implement it.

Given the intervening holidays, we know that this is an ambitious plan. But it is an important next step in the life of our church. We want you all to be a part of it. We will try our best to keep you informed at each step along the way, and welcome your ideas and suggestions. The members of the Council subgroup are Helene Butler, Vicki Greenbaum, Kathy Merkle-Raymond, Karen Peterson-Iyer, Dave Thornton, Karen Wentzel, and Rob Martin. Please ask us what's happening in this exciting time!

Karen Wentzel

### ANITA PHINNEY-SILVER DELIVERS CARE KITS FOR WOMEN COMING OUT OF PRISON

After weeks of work, Anita has delivered 26 Care Kits to Bread of Life Ministry. These kits will be handed out to women coming out of prison under the prison ministry of Reverend Mary Frazier.



The kits contained toiletries, feminine hygiene products, bus tokens, and a brochure that Anita created explaining the various social services available in the area. Because the state is releasing non-violent prisoners from local jails at an increasing rate due to the budget crisis, the kits will be much needed.

Anita was interviewed about the project by Reverend Mary Frazier of Bread of Life Ministry for her TV show "God's Woman." The half-hour show will be aired on Channel 30 on October 9 at 4pm.

Among other things, Reverend Frazier mentions First Presbyterian Church of Palo Alto and its FLOW Sunday work with Bread of Life. Anita will also be interviewed by the local East Palo Alto newspaper.



Holly Brady

### FACILITIES PROJECTS

Facilities reports that the kitchen stoves and ovens have been rehabilitated. Operation has not been changed. Matches are still needed to light ovens and burners. Facilities is undertaking two long overdue projects—redecorating the Chapel and upgrading the Fellowship Hall bathrooms. Much planning remains to be done so results will not be apparent for a while.

Paul Jones

## Updates...



## COVENANT GROUPS

First Presbyterian Church of Palo Alto

Autumn 2011

Group Name	Description	Leader(s)	Meeting Time	Location
Base Christian Community	Early morning book discussions	Jim Hewlett, 328-6434 <a href="mailto:jamessterry@earthlink.net">jamessterry@earthlink.net</a>	Wednesdays 8-10 am	A member's home (contact leader)
Faith Issues in Film	Watch chosen film on DVD at your home, then meet with the group to discuss issues it raises about faith, ethics or social justice	Ellen Forbes, 494-6152 <a href="mailto:eforbes@ix.netcom.com">eforbes@ix.netcom.com</a> Shirley Eglington <a href="mailto:shirleyeglington@hotmail.com">shirleyeglington@hotmail.com</a> Jeff Grinnell <a href="mailto:dylanmiles04@yahoo.com">dylanmiles04@yahoo.com</a>	Monthly, Sep-Nov & Jan-May 3 <sup>rd</sup> Tues, 7:15-9:15 pm	A member's home (contact leader)
Exploring Spirituality	A spiritual deepening process that invites us to explore the intersection between contemplative presence and social action (see <a href="http://www.justfaith.org/programs/engagingspirituality.html">www.justfaith.org/programs/engagingspirituality.html</a> )	Nan Swanson, 408-296-6303 <a href="mailto:rev1nan@yahoo.com">rev1nan@yahoo.com</a> Ann Teegardin <a href="mailto:anntee@sbcbglobal.net">anntee@sbcbglobal.net</a>	Fridays, 9:30am-noon, starting Sept. 16	A member's home (contact leader)
Parenting Youth in our Faith Community	Families exploring how to raise youth in healthy, expanding and spiritual ways	Susan Phinney-Silver 856-0585 <a href="mailto:phinneysilver@sbcbglobal.net">phinneysilver@sbcbglobal.net</a>	1 <sup>st</sup> and 3 <sup>rd</sup> Sundays 5-7 pm	Church Lounge
Parents, Friends and Children	Picnic, sharing, support for families "It takes a community to raise a child"	Arlene Schaupp, 494-8340 <a href="mailto:schaupp@aol.com">schaupp@aol.com</a>	One Sunday per month, after worship	Varies, contact leader

NOTE: Covenant groups include elements of mission, study, prayer and life-sharing, and also expect committed attendance for a covenanted time period. Groups vary as to when they accept new members; please contact leaders as to when is a good time to "check out" the group. The reverse side of this page lists fellowship groups that are more appropriate for "drop-in" attendance and other opportunities for community and service at First Pres. For general information on the Small Groups Ministry or to suggest a new group, contact the elder for Community Building (currently Joy Sleizer). For more information on First Pres, see [www.fprespa.org](http://www.fprespa.org) or call the church office at 325-5659. NOTE: All phone numbers are area code 650 unless otherwise specified.

## FELLOWSHIP GROUPS, OTHER SUPPORT GROUPS

Prime Timers	Informal conversations over bag lunches plus a program with a speaker	Don Fidler, 494-2965 <a href="mailto:don@fidler.name">don@fidler.name</a>	Second Tuesdays, Noon – 2pm	Church Lounge or Fellowship Hall
Men's Support Group	Supports members in their personal, family and professional lives. Self-led.	David Mineau, 322-6991 <a href="mailto:dmineau@aol.com">dmineau@aol.com</a>	Sundays, 8-10am	Westminster House
Prayer Support Group	Potluck, sharing, support, discussion of Christian faith, prayer	Arlene Schaupp, 494-8340 <a href="mailto:schaupp@aol.com">schaupp@aol.com</a>	One Sunday/month 6-8:30 pm	Schaupp home
First Pres Hikers	Moderate (3-4 hour) hikes in Bay Area parks known for their wildflower displays	Julie Barney, 494-2020 Don Hildenbrand, 968-4227	Several dates in spring, watch Press and bulletins	Varies, Contact leaders

## OTHER OPPORTUNITIES FOR COMMUNITY AND SERVICE

Adult Choir	Sing in Sunday Worship Services Ages High School on up are welcome	Lara Garner, 359-0903 <a href="mailto:laragarner@comcast.net">laragarner@comcast.net</a>	Rehearsals: Thursdays, 7:30 pm	Fellowship Hall
Greeters and Ushers	Assist at worship services by greeting people, handling out bulletins, receiving the collection, etc.	Dave Thornton, 494-6715 <a href="mailto:dgthor@sbcbglobal.net">dgthor@sbcbglobal.net</a> Ellen Forbes, 494-6152 <a href="mailto:eforbes@ix.netcom.com">eforbes@ix.netcom.com</a>	Sunday mornings	Sanctuary and Narthex
Food Closet Donations	Donate nutritious food to be given to needy families through the Urban Ministry Food Closet in downtown Palo Alto	Holly Brady, 858-6981 <a href="mailto:hbrady67@gmail.com">hbrady67@gmail.com</a> Ellen Forbes, 494-6152 <a href="mailto:eforbes@ix.netcom.com">eforbes@ix.netcom.com</a>	Bring food to Worship Service any Sunday	Place food in baskets under the tables in the narthex
Christmas for Others	Arrange to fulfill a wish for a needy child or family to be delivered through the East Palo Alto Ecumenical Hunger Project	Holly Brady, 858-6981 <a href="mailto:hbrady67@gmail.com">hbrady67@gmail.com</a> Sally Nordlund, 326-6510 <a href="mailto:sally_nordlund@msn.com">sally_nordlund@msn.com</a>	Between Thanksgiving and Christmas	Signups in the Narthex Wrapping Party in Fellowship Hall
InnVision Meals	Help prepare and/or serve a meal for ~75 people who might otherwise go hungry. Each team works once every 5 weeks.	Derrick Kikuchi (415)586-1713 <a href="mailto:derrick@ReachAndTeach.com">derrick@ReachAndTeach.com</a> Joy Sleizer, 493-4868 <a href="mailto:joysleizer@sbcbglobal.net">joysleizer@sbcbglobal.net</a>	Wednesday afternoons Cook, Setup: 3pm-5pm Serve, Cleanup: 5-6:45pm	Kitchen Fellowship Hall
Cool Planet Working Group	Work on projects to promote sustainable living and political action to address climate change	Susan Chamberlain, 321-9874 <a href="mailto:suschamberlain@gmail.com">suschamberlain@gmail.com</a>	1st Sundays, after worship	Church Lounge
MicahsCall	Support this online community Occasional forums on lively discussion topics	Craig Wiesner (415)586-1713 <a href="mailto:craig@reachandteach.com">craig@reachandteach.com</a>	Watch bulletin for announcements	Contact Leader
More Light Team	Plan local projects to support full equality for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people within the PCUSA and society	Derrick Kikuchi (415)586-1713 <a href="mailto:derrick@ReachAndTeach.com">derrick@ReachAndTeach.com</a>	Watch bulletin for notices	Church Lounge or Classroom

## And Finally...

**From The Rev. Joey Lee, Executive Presbyter**

**Dear Friends,**

We continue to live in a time of discontinuous change. Continuous change is constant and predictable, like the seasons, or aging. Discontinuous change is neither constant nor predictable, like a hurricane or job loss. The challenges from continuous change are technical in nature and problems and solutions are usually clear. (For example, a change in the seasons means winterizing your home and getting the sweaters and coats out.) Challenges from discontinuous change are adaptive in nature and problems and solutions are not clear and require some learning. (A job loss requires the whole family to adapt to the situation, and may require learning new skills or exploring options not considered before.) Aging would be an example of both continuous and discontinuous change, because it is constant and predictable, but also requires needing to adapt and learn new things.

We live in a time of discontinuous change. The changes and challenges we face in the PCUSA have led to different responses, individually, congregationally and denominationally. Anxiety is high in some areas, not in others, as I have listened to teaching and ruling elders in our presbytery and my mid-council colleagues in other presbyteries. Many of you have heard, read about or, like me, even attended the recent gathering in Minneapolis of the "Fellowship of Presbyterians."

For those who have not, more information and reporting:

PCUSA News: <http://www.pcusa.org/news/2011/8/25/no-more-stinky-talk/>

<http://www.pcusa.org/news/2011/8/26/new-presbyterian-order/>

<http://www.pcusa.org/news/2011/8/26/filling-empty-warehouse/>

<http://www.pcusa.org/news/2011/8/29/tiery-eyed/>

**Presbyterian Outlook:** <http://www.pres-outlook.org>

**The Fellowship of Presbyterians:** [www.fellowship-pres.org/](http://www.fellowship-pres.org/)

Our Presbytery Council, as well as other gatherings and groupings, have been engaged in dialogue around the issues of how we move forward as a presbytery. The Council will be proposing both a policy and a covenant to the presbytery at the next meeting. I think it wise to begin to expand the circle for the dialogue. In a technical problem, the locus of work is who is authorized to do the work. In adaptive challenges, the learning required must be with the stakeholders, which is all of you. We have formed a task force to begin planning the expanding learning circle.

The questions I have previously posed remain important: "Do we belong together?" and "Can you imagine a shared future together?" I still believe the answer to both is "yes!"

**Joey**

*"For as in one body we have many members, and not all the members have the same function, so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually we are members one of another." ~ Romans 12:4-5*



**Wed Oct 5, 2011****2pm - 6:30pm UMPA meal-Team 2, Vineyard Christian Fellowship, Fellowship Hall**

Volunteer team that cooks, serves and cleans up after dinner for local folks in need, organized through First Presbyterian Church of Palo Alto and InnVision's Urban Ministry of Palo Alto. Each team commits to serving in a five-week rotation. Coordinator: Rajesh Philipos. Dinner at 5pm.

**Sun Oct 9, 2011****8:30am - 9:30am Early Church, Chapel**

Worship service of reflection and sharing.

**9:15am - 10:15am Adult Study, Fellowship Hall and Lounge****10:30am - 11:30am Community Worship Service, Sanctuary**

Child care is provided. Children participate in the first 15 minutes of worship, leaving at 10:45 for educational classes. Communion is celebrated on the first Sunday of the month. Please bring food to donate to the Palo Alto food closet.

**11:30am - 12:30pm Operation Marriage Cake & Book Signing at Coffee Fellowship, Courtyard**

Celebration of the upcoming book launch with signing by author Cynthia Chin-Lee and illustrator Lea Lyon. Books will be available for purchase.

**5:30pm - 7pm Youth Group, Classroom 2**

All youth invited to join! Contact Youth and Family Ministry Intern Rus Kosits for more information.

**Tue Oct 11, 2011****12pm - 2pm Prime Timers, Fellowship Hall**

"Sabbatical Reflections -- Purpose and Possibility," with Pastor Rob Martin. Bring a bag lunch and cookies or other dessert treats to share.

**7pm - 9:00pm Facilities Committee Meeting, Fellowship Hall**

Ministry and Committee meetings start at 7pm in various rooms on the church campus. Come participate in the leadership and planning for our teaching ministry and facilities ministry.

**Wed Oct 12, 2011****2pm - 6:30pm UMPA meal-Team 3,****Etz Chayim, Fellowship Hall**

Coordinator: David. Dinner at 5pm.

**Sun Oct 16, 2011****8:30am - 9:30am Early Church, Chapel****9:15am - 10:15am Adult Study, Fellowship Hall and Lounge****10:30am - 11:30am Community Worship Service, Sanctuary-Rus Kosits Preaching**

Child care is provided. Please bring food to donate to the Palo Alto food closet.

**5:30pm - 7pm Youth Group, Classroom 2****Wed Oct 19, 2011****2pm - 6:30pm UMPA meal-Team 4, First Pres, Fellowship Hall**

Coordinators: Joy, Derrick and Craig. Dinner at 5pm.

**Thu Oct 20, 2011****7pm - 8:30pm Deacons Meeting, Classroom 1**

Monthly meeting of the Deacons, on the 3rd Thursday of the month. The Board of Deacons is the primary caregiving leadership group for our church community.

**Sun Oct 23, 2011****8:30am - 9:30am Early Church, Chapel****9:15am - 10:15am Adult Study, Fellowship Hall and Lounge****10:30am - 11:30am Community Worship Service, Sanctuary**

Child care is provided. Please bring food to donate to the Palo Alto food closet.

**5:30pm - 7pm Youth Group, Classroom 2****Wed Oct 26, 2011****2pm - 6:30pm UMPA meal-Team 5, LDS Church, Palo Alto 1st Ward**

Coordinator: Heidi. Dinner at 5pm.

**4:30pm First Pres Press Deadline**

Please send Press articles and news items to Lela Noble

(lnoble@sbcglobal.net) and Sarah Clementson (sclementson@fprensa.org).

**7pm - 9:30pm Council Meeting, Classroom 1**

Monthly meeting of Council on the 4th Wednesday of the month. Council is the operational leadership board for our

church congregation.

**Sat Oct 29, 2011****8:30am - 4pm Peninsula Ecumenical Conference on Israel and Palestine, Fellowship Hall**

This conference will seek to inform and encourage dialogue and conversation with our Jewish and Muslim sisters and brothers. The conference will include plenary sessions and workshops with a variety of knowledgeable people, including Professors Joel Beinin, George Bisharat, and Hatem Bazian, plus Anna Baltzer, Sydney Levy, Alison Weir, and Chuck Rawlings. Leaders from many churches, including our own Geoff Browning and Linda Busek, have developed this conference. REGISTER by sending your name & email address to PenEcumenicalConference@gmail.com. Suggested donation: \$5 - \$20 (a light lunch is also included).

**Sun Oct 30, 2011****8:30am - 9:30am Early Church, Chapel****9:15am - 10:15am Adult Study, Fellowship Hall and Lounge****10:30am - 11:30am All Saints Service of Remembrance, Sanctuary & Memorial Garden**

Child care is provided. Please bring food to donate to the Palo Alto food closet.

**5:30pm - 7pm Youth Group, Classroom 2**

**SAVE THE DATE!  
SUNDAY, OCTOBER 30th: ALL  
SAINTS SERVICE OF  
REMEMBRANCE AND  
CELEBRATION**

A service of Remembrance and Celebration ending in the Memorial Garden, will take place at 10:30 A.M. on Sunday, October 30th. This will be a time to share our grief over those whom we have loved and lost and to affirm life in all its fullness.

You are invited to bring remembrances (pictures, special objects, art) to place on the communion table in honor of loved ones so that we may be united in the memory of lives lived fully and faithfully.

## First Presbyterian Church of Palo Alto



1140 Cowper Street  
Palo Alto California  
94301

We're on the Web!  
[www.fprespa.org](http://www.fprespa.org)



### **Our Mission Statement**

*The mission of First Presbyterian Church of Palo Alto is to make our personal witness and public work consistent with the prophet Micah's challenge to do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with God. As a community of faith, we center our communal life in worship and are challenged to live out the good news of the Gospel. Following Jesus the Christ, we pursue God's nonviolent vision of justice and human dignity for all people and share this understanding with our children, our members, our community, and the World.*