

FIRST PRES PRESS



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF PALO ALTO

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From My See Level:

What happens when people take their faith seriously? For Peter Wong, it meant taking Micah 6:8 seriously in the same way that Jesus did! As a long time member of First Presbyterian Church of Palo Alto, he, Craig, and Derrick created and sustained micahscall.org, a network of local online communities dedicated to social action and volunteering, discussion, and prayer.

Shortly before Peter's death, we had a serious conversation about his concern for continued leadership of this outreach, which was on his list of unfinished business. When he invited me to join the board, I was honored and anticipated further conversation on my return from being the Presbyterian Chaplain at Chautauqua Institute in New York. Unfortunately, Peter died while I was flying home, but his spirit lives on in that famous challenge from Micah: "What does God require of you but to do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with God?"

This summer we have focused on the middle challenge—loving kindness—through sitting down to listen closely to the hearts of one another. While we compile the thoughts expressed in those conversations to assist in the leadership of our congregation, I realize that loving kindness seems to have at least three qualities: taking action rather than reaction, walking in the shoes of another, and acting on opportunities.

The Dalai Lama said: "If you want others to be happy, practice compassion. If you want to be happy, practice compassion." It is so true that the action of love as kindness (compassion) becomes the action of the spirit of God transforming you and the world. One great joy this summer has been the opportunity of listening to so many of you in the sacred space of shared concerns and joys. I have been the recipient of your loving kindness so often that I have sometimes felt overwhelmed. How different this is to the problem of reacting rather than acting! When I am reacting I am judging and often have strong feelings of resentment.

In that listening experience, I find myself seeking to walk in the shoes of the other rather than sifting it through my own thoughts. I no longer have to convince another of my thoughts but only to truly understand what is going on in the life of another. Doing so not only educates me but allows me to share an experience that is always different because we never have identical thoughts and experiences. Therefore, I would be most remiss to say that I understand what another is thinking or feeling if I have not experienced the gift of the other. As we take one another seriously, I am hoping that there will be many footprints on the path of renewal in preparation for another five year strategic plan.

Finally, it occurs to me that I miss many opportunities each day to act out of loving kindness. It happens when I am too busy to notice or when I am so full of myself that there is no room to respond to another. William Penn, the great Quaker educator who advocated religious toleration and political freedom, is quoted as saying: "I expect to pass through life but once. If therefore, there be any kindness I can show, or any good thing I can do to any fellow being, let me do it now, and not defer or neglect it, as I shall not pass this way again."

With extreme gratitude for a lively summer sharing the sabbatical experience of the faith community of First Presbyterian Church of Palo Alto, I remain your fellow traveler.

Pastor Bob



Sunday Schedule for September 2011

Sunday, September 4 th	Labor Day Weekend
8:30 A.M.	Early Church in the Chapel
10:30 A.M.	Community Worship Service with Communion in the Sanctuary
11:30 A.M.	Coffee/Fellowship on the Patio
Sunday, September 11 th	In-gathering Sunday
9:00 A.M.	Breakfast in Fellowship Hall (No Early Church Service)
10:30 A.M.	Worship Service in the Sanctuary
11:30 A.M.	Coffee/Fellowship on the Patio
5:30 P.M.	Youth Group in Classroom 2
Sunday, September 18 th	Thanksgiving for Bob Butziger's Ministry and Rob Martin's Return
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, September 25 th	26th Sunday in Ordinary Time
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 2 nd	27th Sunday in Ordinary Time
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

Other September Activities

ADULT STUDY

9:30-10:30 A.M.

We will start the fall Adult Study program with a choice between two topics.

a. Vicky Greenbaum will lead a series on **“Jesus, Mercy, and Justice (The Meaning of Salvation)”**:

Join us for an exploration of scripture around the issues of salvation—the perfect juxtaposition of mercy and justice! Close analysis of scripture, focusing on the life of Jesus, drives this study. Examine Jesus' story and people's reaction to it; see how changing hearts minds and lives alters the meaning of power in the life of faith.

Questions we'll consider:

- 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? Mercy?
- How do we live lives of mercy and justice? What's the effect on our human hearts?

Other September Activities—continued

- 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?

b. Rev. Geoff Browning, Peacemaking Advocate for the Presbytery of San Jose and Parish Associate of First Pres, will lead a series on the **Israel- Palestine conflict** using the “**Steadfast Hope**” curriculum prepared by the Israel-Palestine Mission Network of the PCUSA and noted for offering a clear and balanced approach to understanding this complex issue. Our denomination has been a leader on this issue but not without controversy. This will be an excellent opportunity to learn, ask questions, and develop understanding. This class includes a booklet and DVD for each person; therefore the class size will be limited to 20. The class will also include one session on the “**Kairos Palestine**” document. You will receive study materials to read and follow outside of the sessions. To learn more visit this website: http://www.israelpalestinemissionnetwork.org/main/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=3

CHILDREN, YOUTH, AND FAMILY MINISTRY

Farewell from Marissa

Thank you for a great three years. Working with this congregation has been huge in terms of personal reward and a centering experience in my life. It's been so much more than a job to me. Serving the kids, youth, and families has meant so much to me. On Sunday, August 21, I loved hearing the youth reflect on how I'd impacted them, and I laughed at the parents' skit about me. I appreciate your generous sendoff gift. The greatest gift you've given me is the opportunity to serve.

When this job opportunity at First Pres opportunity came along three years ago, I had dropped out of seminary and didn't see a future for me in ministry. That's when Rob Martin approached me about working here - just short term, three months. Those three months turned into three years. And in that time, you all gave me a home, a place to contribute, and good work to do. I cannot express how much that has meant to me. Through Rob, and then many of you, God reached out to me, picked me up, and gave me a way out of no way. That has been one of the greatest gifts of my life. Thank you.

Marissa Myers

Welcome to Rus

Please take a moment to welcome Rus Kosits, who joined us on August 1st to help lead our Family Ministry programs. He arrived in time to accompany our youth on the Mission Trip, and he'll be working with us full-time through May 2012. His prior work experience includes serving as the Director of Children and Youth Ministry at Pacific Beach Presbyterian Church in San Diego, where he led Sunday morning children and youth worship programs, recruited and coordinated volunteers, and conducted hands-on ministry with children and youth on a weekly and daily basis. He's a certified teacher for Godly Play. From San Diego, he left for the San Francisco Theological Seminary, from which he expects to graduate as part of the class of 2012.

In a former life, Rus worked as a consultant at an information security firm and a manager in a company grading standardized tests. He received his BA in Urban Studies and Planning from UCSD, and a Masters of Urban and Regional Planning from the UCI School of Social Ecology.

You'll get a better sense of who he is and why we are very fortunate to have him with us by reading his description of himself:

My name is Rus Kosits, and I will be serving my seminary internship at FPresPA in the area of Children, Youth, and Family Ministries. I am a student at San Francisco Theological Seminary and am “Under Care” (that's the Presbyterian jargon for looking to become a pastor and going through various formal and informal steps in the ordination processes) with the Presbytery of the Redwoods as a member of the First Presbyterian Church of San Rafael.

Other September Activities—continued



I have been a life-long Presbyterian, and somewhere along the way I became a Christian. My experience in the church as a child and as an adult has made a wonderful and profound impression on me; opportunities to serve, to learn, to grow, to experience God and face the challenges of the world as part of a faith community are all part of who I am, and are why I am enthusiastic about becoming a pastor. Growing up I was faced with the challenges of being “religious, but not spiritual” in the face of a world that was increasingly identifying as “spiritual, but not religious.” While some of the instruction I received

in my science and computer intensive secondary education was designed to impress on me the values of structure, process, and tradition (as well as such anachronisms as 300bps acoustic coupler modems and the defeat of the Soviet Union), I am glad that it did not get in the way of my seeking to ask the more important questions that can shape our world for the better.

My philosophy of ministry is simple: I believe it is important to have a credible, loving presence within the community of those I am serving, and to hold fast to a commitment to love God, to love those I am serving, and to speak the truth (with concern for not simply repeating things because it’s too hard to change). I have enjoyed my seminary education over the past 3 years, and love learning the old stories in new ways, and how to let these stories not only edify our minds but also expand our hearts. Matthew 13:52 says, “Therefore every ‘teacher of the law/tradition’ who has become a disciple in the reign of heaven is like the owner of a house who brings out of their storeroom new treasures as well as old.”

I am married to Nancy Corran, who serves as associate pastor of a progressive Catholic community in San Diego. My parents still live in San Diego, in the house in which I grew up and from which I went to school through college. I have a sister, brother in law, and niece who live in Oakland. I enjoy hiking, photography, playing guitar and piano, strategy and card games, movies, gala apples, the color green, and music by U2.

I look forward to an educational and productive time in youth and family ministry over the next year, as well as the opportunity to get to know this community, its people, vision, and heart.

Karen Wentzel and Rus Kosits

JUSTFAITH'S *ENGAGING SPIRITUALITY* COVENANT GROUP BEGINS THIS COMING SEPTEMBER 16th

People interested in the JustFaith class *Engaging Spirituality, In Pursuit of an Undivided Life* might be interested to know that we will begin a group on September 16. It will meet on Friday mornings, run for 21 weeks, and include an opening and closing retreat, readings, journal-keeping, immersion experiences, and the wisdom of 24 contemporary spiritual pathfinders who are doing the work of justice in the world and grounding their work in a deep and abiding faith.

The material asserts that "spirituality is an expression of our desire to be whole, at one with God, connected to life. This longing for integrity and communion motivates us to dedicate our lives to restoration, justice, and peace."



We invite anyone who is interested to email Nan Swanson at rev1nan@yahoo.com. We extend to you a warm invitation to join us on this faith journey.



PRIME TIMERS: “Marvels, Mysteries, and Realities in Lemur Land” Tuesday, September 13th, 12-2 PM, in Fellowship Hall

Come to Prime Timers on September 13th for a journey to Madagascar, the world’s fourth largest island. Drew Durham, a young active member of First Pres, will give a lively presentation based on his experiences on an eco-tourism cruise just this past January, when he saw firsthand both the beauty and the agony of life on the Red Island.

Other September Activities—continued

Drew will share discoveries about lemurs, baobab trees, and national parks and reserves. He will cover tourism's role on the island as well as poaching, logging, pirates, the current political situation, globalization's impact on the island, and, briefly, Malagasy culture. During a surprising conclusion we will discover what we can all do to save the lemurs, flora, fauna, and people of Madagascar. There might even be free samples of Malagasy chocolate!



Remember to bring your lunch, a treat to share, a friend if you can, your yen for adventure, and a readiness to enjoy some of the natural wonders of creation.

Anne Irons

FILM GROUP'S NEW SEASON TO BEGIN

The Faith Issues in Films covenant group will begin its 2011-12 season on **Tuesday, September 20th**. You are welcome to join us! This is the year's line-up of films:

- Sept. "Get Low"
- Oct. "Lemon Tree"
- Nov. "Fair Game"
- Jan. "Vision: From the Life of Hildegarde von Bingen"
- Feb. "Temple Grandin"
- Mar. "Win Win"
- Apr. A Single Man
- May Winter's Bone

We gather in a member's home on the third Tuesday of each month from September through May, except for December. We watch the movie on our own before coming together to exchange views about the ethics and values the story portrays, what the film says about life today or in its era, the filmmakers, etc. Meetings begin at 7:15 pm with refreshments, and we end at 9:15. Ask anyone in the group: it's a great place for fellowship and energetic shared learning! Contact Shirley Eglington, Jeff Grinnell, or Ellen Forbes for more information.

Also Note

SENIOR CHATS

In September we again will have the privilege of hearing some great presenters and dealing with some stimulating subjects. Invite your friends to join our ecumenical gathering on the second and fourth Fridays of the month at Covenant Presbyterian Church. We meet at 10:00 in the Fireside Room, 670 East Meadow Drive, Palo Alto. If you want more information, call Rev. Dona Smith-Powers, 650-494-3093.

September 9: We will meet with Jinny Newberry, who will lead us in a discussion of memories and memoir writing. It is satisfying to pass on our lives in this way, even if we just write occasionally. Bring some memories of your childhood or teen years to share—if you are willing.

September 23: We will have with us people with knowledge of the history of our U.S. economy and its ups and downs. Two guest speakers will help us to get

some perspective on what is happening right now and give us some ideas on how to manage our finances in this volatile market: Suzy Fisk, of Raymond James Financial, and Dr. Hugh Satterlee, an engineer with a special interest in economics. This should be a helpful and hopeful session.



CHOIR SEASON BEGINS! The new church music season is nearly here, and we are gearing up for wonderful experiences in choral music ministry! If you have not sung with us before, please consider joining our choir. We need at least 2 new people on every voice (soprano, alto, tenor and bass). We meet on Thursdays at 7:30 p.m. in Fellowship Hall. Our first scheduled rehearsal is September 8th. If you are interested in singing and can commit for at least a season (September through December), please contact Lara Garner in person, by email, laragarner@comcast.net, or by phone (650) 359-0903.

Looking Back

MISSION TRIP REFLECTION

The youth had a great time leading the congregation in worship on August 21st and telling us what they experienced on the mission trip. I also want to share with you what I learned and experienced on that trip, which was for me not only an urban ministry mission adventure, but lots of time spent with the youth of this congregation.

Toward the end of the week, I was faced with an interesting decision: minimize an issue that was of concern to me, assuming that the youth would not notice it at all, or address it, and risk wasting time on an impromptu lesson of my choosing that was not at all of interest to the 4 children that were gathered around me. We had been given the challenge, the opportunity, to explore the Mission District of San Francisco, to look, listen, and even taste the diversity of people, cultures, languages, religions, and foods, but before I could get down to the challenge that we were supposed to be dealing with, I was facing one of my own: It was one of language, specifically, the word “flood.” In attempting to convey the dynamic nature of city life, and the role the Mission District has served in welcoming immigrants and refugees from around the globe, our curriculum referred to “them” as a “flood” – an inundation, a crisis, a force of nature that, unless prepared for, diverted, or channeled, would surely cause damage, if not devastation to the status quo.



Words have meaning. How we teach is as important as what we teach. Taking time to stop and be a little more critical than one would normally be of some words on a sheet of paper while the city buzzed around us opened up the mind, I hoped, to question what we were about to experience. Our world, its values, and intentions are often crafted by subtle forces, some old, some new, and most reliant on meeting little resistance in order to have their way. Just a few minutes spent thinking “How might I better think about this” can create the expectation that there is a better way. Our choice of words helps shape our own perceptions; it also communicates our vision of love and community in the world.

So the Mission District waited for a few minutes, and there were some confused looks and several urgent pleas as eager teens were slowed for a moment on their urban immersion adventure. We saw less of the city than I wanted to that day, but it is my hope that some of us saw it better.



Rus Kosit

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 weekend is:

Looking Ahead—continued

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, Shirley Eglington, and Pat Kinney

Session Highlights

Session Meeting of July 27, 2011

While it was uncertain for a while, we did end up with enough Session members to constitute a quorum for our July meeting.

The Worship Ministry brought a request for Byron Bland to lead us in worship on August 7th, as Bob Butziger will not be in town. The request was unanimously approved.

First Baptist brought us a funding request for something between \$400 and \$1000, as their Senior Chat is sometimes attended by members of First Pres and they are low on funding. If they do not receive further funding, they fear that they will have to terminate this event before the end of the year. A motion was made to make a \$400 one-time donation as a gesture of support for the program. If there is an expectation of future funding from First Pres, there will have to be further discussions. The motion was amended to move taking the \$400 from the Session budget, rather than the Teaching Ministry budget as was first suggested. The motion passed as amended.

A new short-term rental rate structure was brought to Session by the Facilities Ministry. The rate structure was developed with a great deal of input from Sarah Clementson, Church Administrator. The purpose of this is to have a standardized, simple fee structure for those who wish to rent the church facilities for short-term events or meetings. Our current fee structure has 6 categories with multiple subcategories and is very confusing. The new structure has only 3 categories and is much more streamlined. Exceptions can be made at the discretion of the Senior Pastor or Session. The new rate structure was passed with one abstention. We encourage this to be tried and brought back to us if it is not working.

During worship in early July, the Pacifica Institute extended an invitation to our church community to attend one of the dinners that they hold to break their fast on a Saturday during Ramadan. The Teaching Ministry (John Zlatnik) will coordinate with Bob Butziger to try to get a date and encourage members of our congregation to attend. The motion passed unanimously.

The Palo Alto Faith Community, via Geoff Browning, requests First Pres to co-sponsor and host a Conference on Israel/Palestine that is to be held October 29th. The planning meetings for this event have taken place at First Congregational Church, but they would like us to host the conference because their facility is not available on

Session Highlights—continued

October 29th .

All felt that this is an important issue and would like to support it, but we felt that we needed more information before making a decision. It was moved that Bob Butziger would ask Geoff to get more specific information about the conference, like a list of speakers, a tentative agenda, and the expected number of attendees. That information would then be passed on to the Social Justice Ministry for their consideration. Session would like Social Justice to make a recommendation regarding this issue. This motion was approved.

Update – The Social Justice Ministry voted to approve and sponsor the event. Session followed their recommendation, so the conference will be held at First Pres.

Session Meeting of August 24, 2011

We were very happy to welcome back our farthest-flung Elder, Kathy Merkle-Raymond, from her 18 month sojourn to Australia. Kathy is resuming her duties as a member of Session, as she was mid-term when she left for Sydney. In order to keep the number of Session members at the same number, Helene Butler will remain as Clerk of Session but will no longer be a voting member.

Staff Relations Chair Karen Wentzel brought us a motion from committee to extend Bob Butziger's time with us to Sept. 25 (currently Sept. 15) as we had not factored in any overlap with Rob Martin when he gets back (currently Sept. 16). The motion passed unanimously.

Tenants Ministry Chair Craig Nordlund asked for Session's approval to move forward with the plans to add a handicapped accessible ramp at the front of Westminster House. Six bids were requested, and three were received. The Tenant's Ministry reviewed these bids at their meeting in August. Of the three bidders, Property Pros was the low bid at \$42,600, and, as they have done good work for us in the past, the committee is recommending that we hire them. Craig brought drawings to the meeting. The ramp will be brick with a wrought iron railing to blend in visually with the front of the building. While we are not legally required to add the ramp, the Tenants Ministry feels it is needed to make Westminster House more easily accessible, as the ramp in the back is quite steep. The proposed ramp has been provisionally approved by the city's historic review board. The hope is to have the project completed before rainy season this year. The funding is coming from the accumulated funds from tenants' rents that have been set aside for building improvements. The motion passed unanimously.

Karen Wentzel, Chair of Staff Relations, gave us an outline of the process her committee is proposing we follow in order to determine the staffing configuration for the church over the next 3 to 5 years. Key points are that they feel that congregational input is critical, as is financial analysis of the various options. Session will probably need to meet multiple times to discuss this issue, but the hope is that we will have a plan of action in motion by January 2012.

Bob Butziger reported that the Cluster Groups concluded successfully after 5 Sundays with about 30 people involved each Sunday. Notes are being compiled for the group leaders, Rob, and Session to review and discuss. Karen Petersen-Iyer, Family Ministry Chair asked that we all become informed about the children's schedule on Sundays, so if we are asked by visitors we will be able to be helpful.

Helene Butler, Clerk of Session



Key Financial Highlights (Through July 31st)

Major Categories		Status <i>(Rounded actual compared to prorated budget)</i>
Pledge Income	☺	\$9,800 over budget
Total Congregational Giving	☺	\$1,500 over budget
Staff Compensation	☹	\$1,400 over budget
Administrative	☺	\$2,800 under budget
Facilities	☹	\$9,800 under budget
Presbyterian & Ecumenical Giving	☺	On budget
Social Justice	☹	\$2,500 under budget
Total Income	☹	\$13,700 under budget (w/o \$12k Legacy Fund draw)
Total Expenditures	☺	\$25,400 under budget
Income – Expenditures	☺	\$12,129 surplus

Financial Report Commentary

Through July, the church financials ran slightly ahead of budget. The \$12,129 surplus primarily reflects deferred spending across all Ministry and program areas, especially Facilities Ministry (detailed below). In addition, several fairly substantial expense items have not yet been realized, but are budgeted on a prorated basis throughout the calendar year. Examples of these “budget timing differences” include the August Youth Mission Trip, printing of the Church Directory, the fall Planned Giving program and the Robert McAfee Brown Lectureship in November.

Income from Congregational Giving

Thank you for keeping your church pledge donations current! Pledges were \$9,800 over budget through July, and we are thankful! However, we know that August is typically a slow month for pledge receipts. All areas of Congregational Giving were slightly over budget with the exception of Donor-Identified Donations, which were \$11,000 under budget. These are donations made by check so the church can identify the donor, but the donations are not part of a pledge commitment to the church. Donor-Identified Donations are budgeted each year based on prior years’ experience and input from the Pastor.

Total Income

Total Income was \$13,700 under budget, primarily because we did not take a Second Quarter draw from the Legacy Circle Fund as originally planned. We did take the \$12,000 budgeted draw from the Fund in the First Quarter. Total Income also includes Facility Usage Fees, which were right on budget.

Expense Categories

Staff and Professional Expenses were \$1,400 over budget, which is less than 1% of Total Staff Expenses.

Facilities Expenses were \$9,800 under budget, reflecting deferred spending on repairs and maintenance projects. However, continuing to postpone investments to care for our church campus is not sustainable or advisable in the long run, as it may result in higher future maintenance costs.

Administrative Expenses were \$2,800 under budget, with savings noted across all budget line items for Office Administration. While this is good news, we recognize that we will need to spend some money over the next few years to replace and upgrade our aging office network and telephone system.

Social Justice Ministry spent \$2,500 less than budget due to timing of meetings during the summer months. These funds will be spent in the coming months.

Key Financial Highlights (Through July 31st)—continued

Year-to-Date Surplus – This is Good News!

While we ended July with a surplus of \$12,129, we expect to finish the calendar year on budget as we pay for the programs mentioned above. The 2011 budget estimated a year-end surplus more in the range of \$600. Again, thank you for keeping your pledges current and for your faithful commitment to supporting the health and vibrancy of our church programs.

On a personal note, it is a blessing to be back with the First Pres community! Our family thoroughly enjoyed our 18-month adventure in Sydney, but we are also thankful to be home. I look forward to working with Session and Staff as Treasurer and Elder for Finance Ministry. Special thanks to Susan Phinney Silver for serving as Interim Treasurer over the past several months, and to Alec Henderson for his many years of leadership in the church Finance role.

Kathy Merkle-Raymond

JULY WORSHIP ATTENDANCE

Date	Early Service	10:30 Service	TOTAL
7/3	10	74	84
7/10	9	64	73
7/17	9	51	60
7/24	10	66	76
7/28	8	82	90
Total for Month of July: 383			

AUGUST WORSHIP ATTENDANCE

Date	Early Service	10:30 Service	TOTAL
8/7	9	91	100
8/14 Union Svc.	7	@ Covenant Pres.	
8/21 Youth Svc.	12	127	139
8/28 Union Svc.	12	@ First Baptist	
Total for Month of August: 258			

Deacons' Diary

Hotel de Zink kept the Deacons quite busy during the month of July. We thank Paul Jones, Evan Hughes, and Gail Thompson, who came every morning to make coffee, bring delicious cinnamon raisin bread and juice, and shared of themselves with a great group of clients to begin their day.

Our best estimate of the number of First Pres folks who participated this year is more than 50. This shows what our faith community can accomplish: serving 12-15 people as overnight guests for 31 dinners, 31 breakfasts and many lunches. The guests were quick to tell us that FPC goes the extra mile with yummy food and graciousness. The deacons thank each and every one of you who signed up for something great or small.

Ingathering Sunday is September 11th. Your Neighborhood Deacon will be contacting you with an email or phone call or letter so please mark your calendar now. We will gather for breakfast beginning at 9 a.m. and serve until 10 a.m. The deacons will provide a variety of cereals, juices, and fruit platters. Please bring something to share on the communal food table such as tasty breakfast bread, coffee cake, or jam. We will sit by Neighborhood Groups so we can visit with our new groups that began in February. We are planning on a lively time with music and activities for the kids and youth. The Worship Service will follow at 10:30 a.m.

Mary Alice Thornton

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

ANOTHER GRADUATE

Vanessa Pan (daughter of Cynthia Chin-Lee) spent last year in the land of baguettes (Paris), finishing up her studies and teaching English at a French high school. She spent the summer in the Irish countryside by the sea, teaching 15 Spanish students English. After that she explored Europe and returned home in late August to pick up her diploma, a B.A. in Communications, from SFSU and say hello again to all the loved ones that she missed on her year abroad. Next she will be confronted with the grand decisions that many graduates face: What will I do with my life? Where will I live? What's for dinner? All questions will be answered in time. She has tentative plans to return to Europe for another year, to move to South America, or to teach English in China. Who knows where the wind blows for this girl, but world exploration is high on the priority list.

Updates...

CARE KITS FOR WOMEN COMING OUT OF JAIL

Thank you all so much for your generosity! It's been such an overwhelming response. I have collected enough supplies for around 25 care kits. I'll be distributing them through the Bread of Life Ministry in East Palo Alto very soon. I can't thank you all enough. A big part of the project's success is thanks to this church community.

Many people ask if I still am accepting donations. Yes, donations are still welcome. Right now I especially need hotel-sized bottles (particularly if they are empty or half full), brushes and combs, new razors, and individual-sized Kleenex packages. The box will remain in the narthex.

I am very much looking forward to delivering the first care kits.

Anita Silver

And Finally...

THE PIANO IN THE SANCTUARY

As a professional musician and concert pianist I am most fortunate to have been given permission to use the piano in the sanctuary of First Presbyterian Church Palo Alto to practice on and to "keep in shape" while I am in Palo Alto for six or seven weeks this summer. I am most grateful to Sarah Clementson and Rev. Butziger for this opportunity.

The word "sanctuary" has been redefined for me recently. And I have also learned something about pianos and piano manufacturers as well. As is well known, a sanctuary is a quiet, protected place for reflection, meditation, and worship, a place where it is possible to focus one's thoughts and energies. This has been proven to be most true for me this summer. For a musician working on technique and repertoire, the most ideal situation is to have a grand piano in a large room and to be able to work mostly undisturbed, to be able to focus and concentrate on the matter at hand. This is what I have enjoyed this summer.

And then there is the piano itself. On the fall board right above the keys are the words "Grotrian, Steinweg." In all my years as a student, teacher, and performing musician, I had never heard of Grotrian. I, of course, knew that Steinweg was the original Steinway piano in Germany before the company moved to Long Island, New York, and became Steinway & Sons. I was immediately curious. Who was, or is, the Grotrian piano company? Was there a collaboration between the Steinweg company in Germany and the Grotrian company? If so, why? I was even curious about the comma between the names of the two piano companies. I thought at the time maybe a hyphen would be better, or no comma at all. Perhaps an ampersand would be good. The comma seemed a little amateurish. And so I did a little research. Here is what I found out.



The Grotrian-Steinweg piano factory still exists today. It remains today in the Grotrian family as one of the oldest piano factories in the world. Since 1974 the pianos have been manufactured in a modern piano factory in Brunswick.

In the beginning . . .



Friedrich Grotrian was born in 1803 in Helmstedt, Germany, near Braunschweig, and was the founder of the Grotrian family piano tradition. He became wealthy after opening a piano business in Moscow in 1830. After returning to Germany, he met Theodor Steinweg and Heinrich Engelhard Steinweg. It was Heinrich who later moved to New York where he became known as Henry E. Steinway and founded Steinway & Sons. Friedrich Grotrian and Theodor Steinweg started their own company as partners.

Friedrich Grotrian died in 1860. Theodor Steinweg sold his shares in 1865. When Heinrich immigrated to New York, the business was sold to Friedrich Grotrian's son Wilhelm, with the permission to use the name "Steinweg." After many difficult legal disputes, the company

And Finally...

took the name Grotrian-Steinweg.

Today the Grotrian family managing the company in Brunswick is in its sixth generation. The company has a 170-year piano heritage of building fine pianos. It has 55 employees, manufactures about 520 instruments a year, and exports to over 70 countries around the world.



According to the serial number, the piano in the sanctuary was built sometime between 1910 and 1920. In my opinion it still has a heart and soul. Typical of fine grand pianos, it has a booming bass and a brilliant upper register, and the sound has a long duration. I find the action to be surprisingly light compared to a modern Steinway piano, and the tone color and sonority, with the passing of time, is generally weak. To become a true concert instrument it will need voicing and regulating. I would imagine that an expert piano technician (which I am not) might recommend replacing the hammers and the strings. It has the potential to be restored to its former days of glory.



A number of famous pianists have been associated with Grotrian pianos. Clara Schumann, the wife of Robert Schumann, made his compositions known all over Europe. She played for Goethe and was a close friend of Brahms. She played her concerts solely on her own Grotrian piano. This very piano today is part of the collection of historic instruments in the municipal museum of Braunschweig.

Wilhelm Kempff stated, "I have the impression that the Grotrian arose from the ruins to new shine relating to the richness and delicacy of sound." This was after the Grotrian factory was rebuilt after the Second World War. Wilhelm Kempff's recitals were celebrated all over the world. He mainly received this success by his interpretations of Schumann and Brahms.



Walter Gieseking found the Grotrian instrument to be the most cultivated piano in the world. Gieseking was known for his famous playing of Debussy and Mozart.

Other Sources

Collection of Historic Instruments Grotrian can be ordered from the city museum of Braunschweig.

Lads, Build Good Pianos is a book about the Grotrian Company, published in 1985 for the celebration of the 150th birthday. Out of print.

Grand Obsession (2007), by Perri Knize, tells about the search for a German quality grand which finally leads to a GROTRIAN 192 Cabinet. www.grandobsession.com

http://www.grotrian.de/en/index_menu.html

www.youtube.com

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aMA9PM65n5Q>

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IKknpXVx_2k&feature=related

Dr. Terrence Rust, D.M.A.

Note: We'll have a follow-up article next month from Mary Decker, from whose family the piano came to us.

First Pres September 2011 Calendar

Sun Sep 4, 2011

8:30am - 9:30am Early Church, Chapel

Worship service of reflection and sharing.

10:30am - 11:30am Community Worship Service, Sanctuary

Child care is provided. Communion is celebrated on the first Sunday of the month. Please bring food to donate to the Palo Alto food closet.

Tue Sep 6, 2011

10:45am - 11:45am Worship & Music Ministry, Pastor's Study

Worship & Music Ministry monthly meeting on the 1st Tuesday of the month.

Wed Sep 7, 2011

2pm - 6:30pm UMPA meal-Team 3, Etz Chayim, Fellowship Hall

Volunteer team that cooks, serves and cleans up after dinner for our local homeless, organized through First Presbyterian Church of Palo Alto and the Urban Ministry of Palo Alto. Each team commits to serving in a five-week rotation. Coordinator: David. Dinner at 5pm.

Sun Sep 11, 2011

9am - 10am Ingathering Breakfast, Fellowship Hall

Please come join our annual Ingathering Breakfast. The Deacons will provide cereals, fruit, boiled eggs, juices, coffee and tea. Please bring a breakfast bread, jam or other treats to share at your table.

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. Please bring food to donate to the Palo Alto food closet.

Tue Sep 13, 2011

12pm - 2pm Prime Timers, Fellowship Hall

Take a journey to Madagascar, the world's fourth largest island. Drew Durham, a young active member of First Pres, will give a lively presentation based on his experiences on an eco-tourism cruise just this past January,

when he saw firsthand both the beauty and the agony of life on the Red Island. Please bring a bag lunch and a plate of cookies or other sweet treats to share.

7pm - 9:30pm Super Tuesday, 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, community building activities, finance and facilities ministries.

Wed Sep 14, 2011

2pm - 6:30pm UMPA meal-Team 4, First Pres, Fellowship Hall

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

Thu Sep 15, 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 Sep 18, 2011

8:30am - 9:30am Early Church, Chapel

10:30am - 11:30am Community Worship Service, Sanctuary

Please bring food to donate to the Palo Alto food closet.

Wed Sep 21, 2011

2pm - 6:30pm UMPA meal-Team 5, LDS Church, Palo Alto 1st Ward, Fellowship Hall

Coordinator: Heidi. Dinner at 5pm.

Sun Sep 25, 2011

8:30am - 9:30am Early Church, Chapel

10:30am - 11:30am Community Worship Service, Sanctuary

Please bring food to donate to the Palo Alto food closet.

Wed Sep 28, 2011

2pm - 6:30pm UMPA meal-Team 1, Beth Jacob, Fellowship Hall

Coordinator: Carol. Dinner at 5pm.

4:30pm Press Deadline

Please send articles and news items for

the *First Pres Press* to Lela Noble (lnoble@sbcglobal.net) and Sarah Clementson (sclementson@fprespa.org).

7pm - 9:30pm Session Meeting, Classroom 1

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



First Presbyterian Church of Palo Alto



1140 Cowper Street
Palo Alto,
California

We're on the Web!
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.