

FIRST PRESS

First Presbyterian Church of San Bernardino

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Commissioned Local Pastor

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Laurie Stafford
Ministry of Visitation

The Rev. Jim Huffstutler
Pastor Emeritus

Office Hours:

Monday 9am to 2 pm
Tues-Thurs 9am to 4:30 pm

If you need to contact the office at other times, you may leave a message (it is checked regularly) or Call Mimi Lange at home during regular office hours (9-4:30 on weekdays).

House of Welcome

Matthew 25:37-40

"Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? When did we see you, a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you? When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?' 'The King will reply, 'Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.'"

First Presbyterian Church, San Bernardino has been given the opportunity to participate in caring for the stranger. After trying for almost two

years to sell the property at 1875 D Street that was previously rented by the Riverside Presbytery we were approached by the SoCal Presbyterian Immigrant Accompaniment Ministry asking if the property might be available for the mission work they do. Because of our relative proximity to the Adelanto Detention Facility it seemed to them a good location for housing immigrants newly released from detention as they await unification with their sponsors. The building at 1875 has bathrooms, living spaces, bedrooms, an area for a kitchenette, plumbing for a washer and dryer, some outdoor space and a parking area.

It has been a challenge for FPCSB to keep this empty building maintained, secure, insured, with paid utilities and squatter-free since it has been empty. The SoCal Presbyterian Immigrant Accompaniment Ministry has agreed to lease this building and two of our classrooms (the 1875 building is not zoned for overnight stays so our guests would sleep in the designated classrooms) for \$1 per month for six months. They will assume the utility costs, insurance, security, and maintenance and will be a living presence in a previously abandoned building. Your Session feels God's Spirit moving through this new mission. Here's how you can help! **(Please see donation list on the last page.)**

If you have items in good condition to donate please contact Lynette DuClos Adelson. Of course, monetary gifts for this ministry are always welcome. Send those to the church with House of Welcome in the memo line. Most importantly, please pray for those who will use this space, those who will provide supervision, transportation and loving care, our neighborhood and all of us who sometimes feel dispossessed, alone and frightened. May God watch over us all.

Lynette DuClos Adelson
for the House of Welcome ministry



Photo from Lynette from a trip to the Adelanto Immigration Detention Center

It is the Mission of First Presbyterian Church of San Bernardino, inspired by the Holy Spirit, to proclaim the good news of the Gospel of Jesus Christ through worship and celebration, and teaching and learning, so that lives are transformed and members are encouraged to use their special gifts to care for and value, as God's Beloved, each other and the community in which we live.

Pastor's Note...

A Season among the Trees--Finally!

The heavens are telling of the glory of God! Scripture says that the invisible nature of God can be clearly perceived in Creation; that created things in the natural world tell of the Great Love in which we are held without a single word being spoken. (Rom 1:21, Ps 19:3-4) Celtic Christians have called Creation 'the Big Book' to be read alongside the Bible as a gift.

The more-than-human world can be a refuge and sanctuary where we may go for restoration when we are weary; it is a resource for knowing God more deeply and experiencing the Spirit's presence with immediacy; it is holy ground and home. When we slow down and connect with the beauty of the natural world, we are able to remember who God is. We find ourselves reminded of who we are called to be.



These are the opening words of our grant proposal, written in March of 2019, proposing that we seek God together by spending time in nature. The Lilly foundation awarded us a Clergy Renewal Grant, it was funded, and plans were put in place for a sabbath-season beginning in Eastertide of 2020. And then... the world changed with the pandemic.

My renewal leave was postponed as we tried to consider what would be wise, what would be feasible, what would bring joy and hope. Last week session approved an alternate plan, and these dates were sent to the office that administers the grants. They've given our new plan their blessing and so I am delighted to say this is really going to happen!

Here are **three reasons I am excited**:

- **All of us are weary.** We have been in Pandemic Mode for months, and there is no end in sight. It is discouraging and frightening and full of grief. We are all in need of some restoration & refreshment.
- This gives us **a joyful way to seek God** that is different from our 'regular worship'. My longing to experience our community face-to-face is so deep, as is my grief that we can't gather. But God is not bound by buildings made by human hands. We can seek God outside even when we can't meet in the sanctuary- this option is accessible!
- Experiencing the Sacred in nature is not just about theological musing or big thoughts- it is **an embodied experience** where light and breeze and shade can ground and refresh us. It is the praise of bird song, the sound of a stream, the beauty of a tiny leaf or a full moon. These sounds and sights help to calm our jangled nervous system, help us breathe deeply and relax. In these stressful times this holds so much promise.

Therefore, we propose to enter into a season where we will seek to abide in Christ's love by dwelling more deeply in Creation. We aim, as pastor and congregation, to enter a time of lying down in green pastures and sitting beside still waters and restoring our souls; we want to breathe forest air, delight in beauty, and listen to the wisdom of trees. We propose to enter this season of renewal together so that we can be rejuvenated for the work we share and re-energized for our partnership in ministry.

This is my prayerful hope for us all. May it be so.

Sandy

Roots, a burned-out tree, the view from inside the burned-out tree.



We will have some form of entering the threshold moment before Sandy leaves. Watch for details.

Clergy Renewal FAQs

What happens to the ministry? *the ministry of this congregation belongs to us all- not just the pastor! So one of us will be away, but the rest of us will continue to try to show in our lives the love and justice of Jesus Christ. We will continue food ministry, online worship, adult ed, and various bible studies. Session committees will continue to move forward projects connected to our buildings, education and nurture, worship, and stewardship. Deacons will continue to help show love in service. We will continue to love one another and love our neighbors and so the light of Christ will continue to shine in this place!*

Who will take care of us? *Pastor Wendy Lamb and Pastor Steve Smith will continue their ministry among us. The pastoral care team and prayer team will continue their work of love and supportive contact. The staff will continue their work and are available to answer questions and assist.*

Who will preach? *We are re-assembling a list of pulpit supply guests who will help us hear the Word each week in worship by means of sermon and reflection. Some will be familiar voices and faces. Others will be new friends. Additionally, Pastor Wendy will continue to preach occasionally throughout the season.*

Can we contact Sandy? *The folks who administer these grants have learned a lot by supervising hundreds of them. One of the things they are clear on is that it is the **sustained** and **uninterrupted** rest that makes it work. The pastor will not be reachable during the renewal leave. This will be difficult, but doable.*

Yes, but what if...? *Unexpected things will surely come up. We will figure them out one at a time, with God's help.*

What's in it for us? *An invitation to seek God in the natural world this fall, and experience afresh our belovedness. An opportunity to remember who we are when the pastor is not around. A chance to hear other preaching voices, and so hear God's voice in a new way. Funding for the pastor's refreshment and renewal. Funding for the congregation's needs during the leave. The possibility of Sabbath Joy.*

*"Clergy Renewal Programs provide an opportunity for pastors to step away briefly from the persistent obligations of daily parish life and to engage in a period of renewal and reflection. **Renewal periods are not vacations but times for intentional exploration and reflection**, for drinking again from God's life-giving waters, for regaining enthusiasm and creativity for ministry."*

Taking A Day Off (what day is it again?)

Most of you know that I take one day off each week- Friday. Tom and I have taken Fridays off since we were married. Many pastors struggle to take even one full day off, since people contact them with a wide variety of things. Its complicated, because while all of us would agree (I think) that everyone deserves some sabbath time, We have a relationship that is more than financial, more than professional- our lives are knit together in love By the One who has made us Family. And we do not stop loving or being connected to each other just because someone needs a day off!

This congregation has always been very respectful of Fridays, and I am deeply grateful. I have noticed, however, that it is hard in these days of quarantine and adjustment, to remember what day it is. Lord knows I struggle all afternoon on Tuesdays- since it feels like Sunday all day long because we record worship in the morning! I have received more messages/calls/emails on Fridays these last few months than in the last few years!

Cell phones and email make it tempting to answer 'just one quick text', or to 'just open the email to see what it says'... but when I do, My mind and heart are no longer resting- they are problem-solving, brainstorming, caring, wondering, worrying.

So here is my new commitment to my wellness and yours: I will be putting my phone on my charger on my day off, and not looking at it. Feel free to email or text or leave voice mail messages- they will not bother me, since my phone will not be in my pocket! There is never a time when I do not want to be connected to you. I just want to be able to rest when it is time to do that. I will get to all communications eventually, and will be glad to reply when I am able.

My love to you,

Sandy

Notes from Sanctuary Committee

Several months ago the Session decided and communicated that it would not even consider re-opening the church for Sunday worship until September. In light of the recent upsurge in the number of coronavirus cases, that was a wise decision for the church.

Even with that decision having been made, the Session put two groups to work on how we would do it when we eventually can meet together on Sundays for worship. One group is thinking through the mechanics of how we will gather and what adjustments would be prudent in light of social distancing, movement during worship, and other logistical concerns. The second group is thinking about how we might make adjustments to the physical layout of the sanctuary. It has been long recognized that it is difficult to maintain a close, inviting atmosphere with the congregation scattered a few to a pew throughout the sanctuary.

This second group is considering the question of possible seating arrangements that would respect the appropriate social distancing needs and also promote the sense that we are one community of faith worshipping together. It is also considering the location of the choir. There are members of our community who would love to sing with the choir, but are uncomfortable with having to climb stairs to get to the choir loft. These are just a couple of the issues being considered while some of our members are thinking through how it is that we want to be together when we can once again worship together in one place.

Have you noticed the chair that Sandy and Wendy and Steve have used when recording the 'Time With the Children' portion of our weekly worship videos. It is not a folding chair or a plastic stacking chair or a child's chair. It is a comfortable, nice looking chair that might provide the flexible seating arrangement with a dignified look that would help us achieve the feeling of being one community of faith at worship. The back is padded as well as the seat. Of course, if we went with this idea we would have to face the difficult question of what fabric color to choose.

These chairs can be linked. They can have book racks and holes for empty communion cups. They can even be equipped with pockets for special offering envelopes and scratch pads. See the sample picture below so you can imagine what it might be like in our sanctuary.

More thoughts will be shared as ideas emerge about our hoped for return to meeting together.

--The Sanctuary Reconfiguration Committee

A Note about the Re-gathering Committee

The committee that is working on when and how we will gather on the church campus is working hard. They have developed a safe practices manual for various ministries that continue to happen on the church grounds. They are monitoring conditions and planning how we will gather for worship when it is safe for us to do so. Meanwhile, we continue to worship online and hold one another in prayer.



This is a version of the chair the committee is considering. The fabric and finish will be different.

In Memoriam

July 2020

Elizabeth "Anne" Pleiss

d. July 16, 2020

JoAnne Wolf

d. July 23, 2020

"In life and in death we belong to God"

2020 Deacon Board by Committee:

Judy Steppins, Moderator; Steve Smith, Pastoral Support

Congregational Care: Carol Valentine (chair), Robin Edwards, Martha Pinckney, Judy Steppins, Sue Zeitler

Community Ministry: Brad Smith (Chair), Carmen Avila, Mario Bolaños, Stephani Congdon

Food Ministry: Dan Direen (Chair), Mark Adelson, Marianna Fowles, Janet McKinster, Charlotte Pringle, Jim Siegmund

Session Synopsis

By Elder Lynette DuClos Adelson

As Session opened July 22, Wendy read encouraging words from Ephesians reminding us all whose we are and whose work we are doing. That reading colored the work we did with a Spirit of energy, cooperation, gentleness and an intentional listening for God's will.

We were delighted that Sandy, who was away on study leave, has received her Forest Therapy Guide certification! This course has deepened her love of Creation. We are excited for the ways our congregation will be opened by her training. Session voted that Sandy's (planned before the pandemic) postponed sabbatical be rescheduled for twelve weeks September through November.

The Building and Grounds Committee, with the help of James and interns, have been hard at work while our campus has

been closed. The classroom wing has a new roof coating to prevent the leaking that has haunted us forever. Delayed projects have been completed and lists of new projects and possibilities have been generated.

As we have been exploring opening the former Presbytery office building at 1875 D Street to the **House of Welcome** for the SoCal Presbyterian Immigrant Accompaniment Ministry we ran into a zoning issue that doesn't allow overnight stays in that building. Session has decided that FPCSB classrooms 11 and 12 would work for sleeping the 1-5 immigrant guests who are waiting for transportation to their sponsors after being released from the Adelanto Detention Center. On the last page of the newsletter is a list of items needed to make this ministry of hospitality safe and comfortable for those on the journey to

become citizens of our country.

Seeing each other's faces (on Zoom), catching up, praying together, sharing laughter, concerns and hopes, once again, reminded us that the Church is the people and we are grateful to be partners with these people!



2020 Session by Committee:

Sandy Tice, Moderator; Wendy Lamb, CLP; Amy Smith, Clerk of Session

Building and Grounds: Neal Williams (Chair), Ed Congdon, Mark Freeman, David Grindahl

Financial Stewardship: Brooke Dvorak (Chair), Margaret Doane, Alex Smith

Nurture: Nancy Horstmann (Chair), Stephanie Fletcher, Lynda Savage

Worship: Lynette DuClos Adelson, Carol Cooper, (Acting Chair, Amy Smith)

With Gratitude...

Dear Friends,

Many of you are aware that Sandy's husband Tom Rennard had prostate cancer surgery on May 19-not unusual for someone his age, and his dad had the surgery 30 years ago- he is now 96! On June 2, at a follow-up appointment with the surgeon, we were surprised to find out that cancer cells had been discovered in lymph nodes taken during the surgery. The following weeks were a flurry: visit to an oncologist, online research, reading, conversations with people who have professional or personal knowledge of this path, etc. One doctor in particular spoke in ways we found very frightening. We decided to 'press pause' and go on our planned visit to the cabin for two weeks and rest, in order to meet this challenge well. Upon our return we kept several appointments, and these have been encouraging. Tom's PSA numbers are excellent, and we have found a doctor and a way forward- Sandy is profoundly relieved. We have felt God's presence in the midst of the uncertainty and overwhelm. We are grateful for your care and will keep you posted. Tom wants to express this:

"Thank you for your cards, emails and prayers. I have begun a course of androgen deprivation therapy (ADT) to address my metastatic prostate cancer. I am receiving care from a team at City of Hope and am feeling very hopeful that this will kill cancer cells and give us good news to share in the months to come. You truly are a loving congregation."

I agree wholeheartedly with his assessment- you never cease to amaze me with your capacity to love and care for your pastors.

Thank you! Sandy & Tom

Clean Water Team Work Continues

by Mark Adelson for the FPC Clean Water Committee Team

Last December, when the Clean Water Team from First Presbyterian Church, San Bernardino, and Claremont Presbyterian Church brought the water treatment system “kit” they had obtained to Tijuana’s Iglesia Bautista Monte Horeb, and Centro Didaque, the special needs school there, we had high hopes of building the system and testing and dedicating it by June 2020. Then, COVID-19 happened.

In March 2020, the border was closed to Mexican nationals crossing into the US. Schools in Mexico were closed. The dedicated staff of Centro Didaque lost their income. Work on the nearly completed building addition to house the water treatment system came to a halt.

David Grindahl checking out the construction of the water treatment building, October 2019



Octavio, with CPC’s Clean Water Team, stayed in contact with Francisco, the Centro Didaque administrator. In April, Octavio asked what the Clean Water Team could do to help Centro Didaque’s 13 teachers and staff weather the coronavirus shutdown and Francisco said that they have not been paid for some time. Following a Clean Water Team meeting, we agreed to assist our Mexican partners by donating 2 weeks of salary to each of the school’s staff. To fund this, CPC’s Clean Water Team asked for, and received, a pledge from their Mission Commission, and FPCSB’s Clean Water Team contributed some of its generously donated project funds.

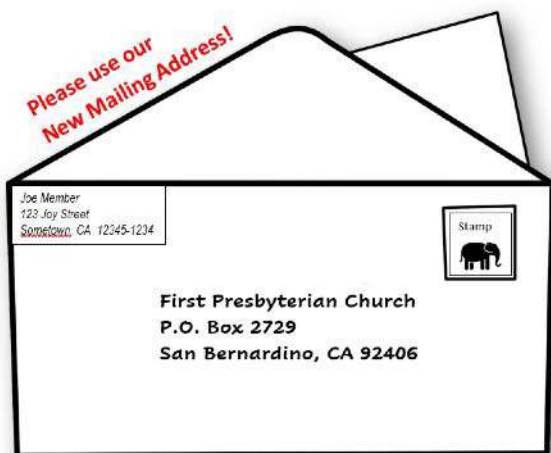
Getting the money to our Mexican partners, with accountability, was challenging and frustrating. Bank transfers were ruled out because most of the school’s staff do not have a bank account. CPC tried using Xoom, a Paypal partner that provides no-cost money transfers, but

CPC’s 13 transactions were flagged and cancelled by Xoom’s security department for violating its business rules. Transferring funds through Western Union or a Walmart service was an option but there were complications with that, too.

It was finally decided that CPC Clean Water Team’s Octavio and Sam would take the donations, in sealed envelopes, one for each of Centro Didaque’s staff, across the border, meet with Francisco, turn the envelopes over to him, and he would sign a receipt for them. Francisco agreed to video each staff person receiving their envelope, and to send the video to Octavio. The transfer took place on June 5.

CPC’s Senior Pastor Karen Sapio made short video to share some of the highlights of this story with the CPC congregation. You can view it here <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-z-Mj2C0PpY>

Another donation of 2 weeks’ salary for the staff of Centro Didaque is planned for early August. Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, installation of the IBMH water treatment system remains on hold.



Food Ministry and other ministries continue. Volunteers gather in a circle to pray as the July Saturday Food Distribution begins.

August Celebrations

Aug 1 Amy Gano
 Carol Valentine
Aug 2 Dotti & Ernie Garcia
Aug 4 Dana Babb
Aug 8 Tim Usher
Aug 9 Jackie McKee
Aug 10 Aaron Saenz
Aug 11 Sophia Drake
 Ryan Michael Mantei
 Brent Nord
 Kurt & Lisa Star
Aug 15 Alexia Aguilar
 Ashley Ballard
 Ramon Ramirez
Aug 17 Joanne Ballard
 Rosemarie Evans
 Ethan Gano
Aug 18 Robert Hurley
Aug 19 Aaron Rueda
 Molly Earp
Aug 20 Elle Carlos
Aug 22 Gary Bobbitt
Aug 23 Megan Dunn
Aug 25 Gill & Jane Snyder
Aug 26 Beatrice Star
 Valentina Valenzuela
Aug 27 Jessica Edwards
Aug 28 Sarah Alyda Fletcher
Aug 29 Jim & Sheila Cimino
Aug 30 Wanda Gernux
 Shannon Nolin

Financial Notes

Financial Report as of June 30, 2020

	Actual	Budgeted	Over/(Under)
Pledges	203,897.35	204,435.98	(538.63)
Other Income	36,227.71	24,508.02	11,719.69
Expense	232,775.22	287,125.40	(54,350.18)
Net Income	7,349.84	(58,181.40)	65,531.24

Division Consolidation

General Fund Net Income/(Expense)	7,349.84
Child Care Center Net Income/(Expense)	(65,304.53)
Deacons Net Income/(Expense)	<u>4,016.43</u>
Net Operating Income/(Expense)	<u>(53,938.26)</u>

As we continue to gather and serve in new and different ways, let's keep telling each other what is going on.

Please let us know what is happening in your ministry or your corner of our community.

The *First Press*, the newsletter of the First Presbyterian Church of San Bernardino, is edited by Wendy Lamb. Please submit content to Wendy at newsletter@fpcsb.net.

The absolute Deadline for the September issue of the *First Press*: Wednesday, August 26

Keep Military Members in Your Prayers

LCpl Jacob Allen

Cherry Point, North Carolina

PFC Ronaldo Fregoso

US Marine Corps, 29 Palms

Petty Officer Jacob Le Roy

US Navy, Guam

Colonel Jeff Le Roy

US Army Reserve

Seaman Mark Munz

US Navy, San Diego

Private Javier Rocha

US Army, Fort Benning, Georgia

Seaman Robert Sandoval

US Navy, Virginia

Petty Officer Noah L. Wierenga

U.S. Coast Guard Sector Upper Mississippi River

CW3 James Bentley Wilson

US Army, Joint Base Lewis-McChord, WA

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House of Welcome

donation needs -

5-6 twin mattresses (4 committed already)

5-6 twin bed frames (5 committed already)

8-10 twin sheet sets (3 committed already)

5-6 bed pillows (4 committed already)

5-6 pillow protectors (3 committed already)

5-6 mattress protectors (3 committed already)

5-6 blankets (MerryBeth Grindahl is making 2 quilts!)

towels (bath, hand, washcloths)

shower mat

small (individual) soaps, shampoos, conditioners, lotions, etc

bedside stands

lamps (both bedside and floor)

power cords for recharging phones

box fans

full size refrigerator for 1875

mini-fridge for sleeping area

microwave (1 committed)