

FIRST PRESS

First Presbyterian Church of San Bernardino

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92405

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The Rev. Dr. Sandy Tice
Pastor

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Commissioned Local Pastor

The Rev. Dr. Steve Smith
Pastoral Support

Melinda Rueda
Lynette DuClos Adelson
Laurie Stafford
Ministry of Visitation

The Rev. Jim Huffstutler
Pastor Emeritus

Office Hours:

Monday-Thursday
9am to 4:30 pm



Advent Worship

Dr. Marcia McFee describes our Advent and Christmas worship series:

"Raise your voice... raise it; don't be afraid!" - Isaiah 40:9

The history of humanity is fraught with pain—especially the pain that comes accompanied by fear and leads to oppression and violence of one people against another. This is the world into which Jesus was born and through which his teachings would challenge and call for transformation. The opening words of an anonymous Jewish poet, "I believe in the sun, even when the sun is not shining," were scrawled on a wall during the Holocaust. This theme song for our season calls us to examine our penchant for annihilating fear by annihilating each other. The power of narrative and music will call us to a different response—transformation and reconciliation through hope, love, joy, and peace. This Advent and Christmas, let us fill the night with music and light and affirm and act on the reasons why we can still "believe, even when" we are discouraged.

As we continue to care for our community by not gathering together, we will be offering recorded worship services through Advent and Christmas and various opportunities to meet together via Zoom.

Thursday, December 10: Longest Night Service with Communion on Zoom.

See page 5 for details about our Advent Film Festival.

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 Page

Am sitting at a desk I've missed in an office I've missed on this glorious So. Cal morning, struggling for words. Sometimes, when something has deeply affected you- a birth, a death, an experience of beauty- it is difficult to find words that are sufficient to express what's inside.

T.S. Eliot says that the truth of a poem is hard to wrap words around:

*"...so each venture
Is a new beginning, a raid on the inarticulate
With shabby equipment always deteriorating
In the general mess of imprecision of feeling..."*



(I have always felt that this is a good description of the challenges of sermon writing!)
It is also apt as I try to convey my gratitude for the Grace of this season of sabbath and discovery.
I have deep feelings and powerful images from this fall under trees and wide skies,
and all the words I have to describe them seem flat on the page- shabby equipment.
There is so much I have longed to say to you:
What it is like to stand under countless stars like Abraham,
to try to see through thick smoke like Moses,
to notice God in a stillness so deep it is "sheer silence" like Elijah.

What is the word for the sound of air moved by hawk wings- when you are the only one who hears it?
How to convey so many sunrises, each as beautiful and promising as an Easter morning,
Or the benediction of each sunset that ends a long day with beauty and the promise of rest.

How to say "Ah!" at a discovery, (knowing it is short for Alleluia!)
to gasp at a meteor shower, or a living thing 4,000 years old
or a blossom of beauty on a tree planted in grief? Words are insufficient!

Still, our experiences become more deeply part of us when we tell them and are heard.
And you, my community, partnered with God to give me this gift.
I long to tell you what it has meant, as a way of giving thanks.

The heavens are, indeed, telling of the glory of God.
And God's messengers include light glinting on water,
Sleep at the end of a long day, and
Solitude that is the cure for loneliness.
And smaller messengers: roadrunner and rabbit, redbellied and coyote,
Leaping fish and waning moon,
And every towering tree that is rooted and reaching heavenward.

I have known deep healing and restoration. I am grateful. And I am home.
My intention in the days ahead is to follow the advice of Mary Oliver:
"Pay attention. Be astonished. Tell about it."

Gratefully,

Sandy



Pledging Update

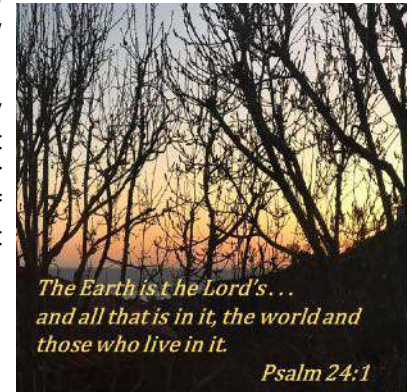
By Margaret Doane, Stewardship

As of November 25, the Church has received 54 pledges totaling \$304,496 for 2021. We also have fourteen people who did not pledge in 2020 but who have given regularly; three of these people have pledged for 2021. If you have pledged, THANK YOU!

We also have 32 people who pledged last year but who have not pledged this year. A few have died or moved away, and several people have told the Church they are unable to pledge because of financial hardship. But we still have twenty-something households who pledged in 2020 who thus far have not pledged for 2021. If you are one of these people, we hope you will pledge soon! You can send in your card (to our new address: Box 2729, SB 92406) or call the Church office (882-3308).

The isolation of the pandemic has brought so many problems for so many, but you may be someone for whom it has brought one bounty -- lots of extra cash! With few restaurant dining experiences, no need for new clothes, no possibilities for travel, no concerts or movies, you may have boatloads of money, and nothing to spend it on! If you are one of these financially lucky people, Stewardship hopes you will consider an extra one-time gift to the Church or an increase in your pledge.

Thank you, everyone, for your financial faithfulness to the Church.



Send Your Mail to our New Address-- Please!

As many of you have noticed, First Pres got a new mailing address a few months ago. We are still using up the envelopes and checks with our physical address on them, but we really want to make the mail go to our new Post Office box. Why?

1. It is safer. The Post Office was holding our mail for us at the beginning of the pandemic, and since our gates are locked most of the time, they still are. But if you address mail to 1900 North D Street, a carrier may *attempt* to deliver it several times over several days before they realize that we have a change of address notice filed, and put it in our P.O. Box. *(There are a number of new carriers on our route.)* Also, after a year, the change of address expires, and the post office will just send it back to you.
2. It is faster. It avoids all that attempted delivery noted above.

Most of you have already begun to send mail to our new address, but some of you have not yet. And it's important that you notify your bank of our new address, if you pay your pledge through bill pay.

We don't want to miss out on any of your letters, checks, or care packages *(Yeah, we really don't get those. I'm just remembering when my mom would send me Nutter Butters while I was at college)*, so please send all mail to:

First Presbyterian Church

P.O. Box 2729

San Bernardino, CA 92406-2729

Thank you. --Mimi Lange, Office Administrator

Leonard Scholarship Application

Leonard Scholarship applications for fall 2021-2022 are available in the church office and on the church website. All applications must be in the church office no later than 4:30 p.m. on February 28, 2021. Any questions can be emailed to Lynda Savage (LKSavage3@gmail.com).

If you plan to bring it to the church office, you should drop it off by Thursday, February 25. You may mail it to our PO Box before February 28.

In Memoriam

November 2020

Marge Bentley

d. November 29, 2020

"In life and in death we belong to God"

Success with Summer/Fall 2020 Intern Team

By Rick Rodriguez

The Internship Program was put together back in 2015 as a way to give our LifeSkillz students a way to have a safe place to be introduced to the employment world. As the program progressed and improved, we also started teaching the interns how to fill out applications, write resumes, and do other things that are necessary when looking for work. The Internship program has become the first tier on the climb to find employment beyond First Presbyterian Church.

Our Summer/Fall 2020 team took full advantage of this. One of our leaders, Victoria Rodriguez, started looking for work and found a job working at McDonalds. Our other interns saw that this was possible, and they started looking too. Victoria got some help from us when filling out her application and then she helped some of the other interns fill out their applications. Out of our Summer/Fall team of 6 interns, currently 5 of them are working at other jobs. Two are working at McDonalds, two are working at Pizza Hut, and one is working at a large thrift store.

This is what the Internship Program is designed for and both sides, the church and especially the interns, are benefiting from this program.



Light in the Dark: Longest Night Service

By Sandy Tice

As the holidays arrive and the days grow shorter, the nights grow long and seem especially dark. For some of us, the darkness within also seems to grow: family drama, worldwide war, our city's suffering, and other sorrows sometimes threaten to overwhelm us, and the songs of the season sound false. This year has brought lament to all of us with missing milestone events and people and gathering and singing.

How does God come to us in times like these?

One tradition that is precious to me is our Longest Night service, this year it takes place on **Thursday, December 10 at 7:00 p.m.** on Zoom. Though it will be different this year, each year it is one of my favorite parts of Advent/Christmastide.

This candlelight service is a gentle and peaceful service of hope, for experiencing the Light of Christ in the lonely and unfinished places where there is no tinsel or sparkle. We gather before the God who loves us and seek healing for ourselves, and also for the world's pain and sorrow. We listen to words of comfort and promise in scripture. We pour out our prayers in spoken word and healing music. We light candles of remembrance, and we encourage each other by our presence and prayers.

Most of all, we recall that Jesus is the One who came into the darkness, and continues to come into our present darkness offering a light that no shadow or dread can overcome. It is a holy time: beautiful and wondrous and surprisingly filled with light. It would be wonderful to have you join us.

This year we will meet via Zoom and we will include communion in the service. You might wish to create a sacred space to participate in the service. Along with mementoes and photos, find a candle you can light and prepare communion elements: a slice or roll of bread, a corn tortilla, Naan, or rice cake and a cup of juice — perhaps grape or cranberry — or wine, with or without alcohol.



Film Festival!

The Power of Music in the Midst of Difficult Times

Over the next weeks we invite you to watch a documentary film about the power of music sometime during the week and join us on Sunday morning to discuss the film. These are powerful films, and I look forward to talking about them together. On December 6, 20, and 27, we will meet at 9:45 to catch up and chat and begin the discussion at 10:00. The week of 3rd Advent, we will invite people to watch and discuss the film together on Saturday evening, December 12. We will not have the Sunday morning class that week.

If you would like to join an online discussion of these films (whether or not you come to the Zoom), we are offering a Film Festival Facebook group for the season. Go to our First Presbyterian Church of San Bernardino Facebook Page and join the Film Festival Group or find the group at www.facebook.com/groups/fpcsbfilmfestival/

If you would like to use the films for personal reflection, let us know and we will email you the personal reflection study guide.

Advent One has passed, but if you would like to view the film, it is called *Defiant Requiem* and is available via Amazon Prime.

Advent Two: *Girls on the Wall*. Sunday, December 6: 9:45 am check-in; 10:00 film discussion. This is the story of teenage girls in Warrenville Prison who create a musical based on their lives. There is strong language. It is available to rent via Amazon.

Advent Three: *Following the Ninth*. Filmed on four continents, this documentary film looks at the global impact of Beethoven's hymn to humanity, his battle cry of freedom, his Ninth Symphony. **We will view it together on Saturday, December 12 at 7:00 p.m. and discuss it beginning at 8:30. You may join us at 7:00 to view the video or at 8:30 to discuss it.** This video is available free on YouTube.

Advent Four: *Sweet Honey in the Rock: Raise Your Voice!* Sunday, December 20 9:45 am check-in; 10:00 film discussion Emerging from the strong tradition of Freedom Singers, Sweet Honey in the Rock is a group that's as soulfully rich as it is provocative. Using song to stand in unison, five African American women sing solely a cappella, along with a sign language translator. Their music evokes stories from the past, encourages introspection in the present, and inspires progress for the future. This film is available for rent on Amazon for \$1.99.

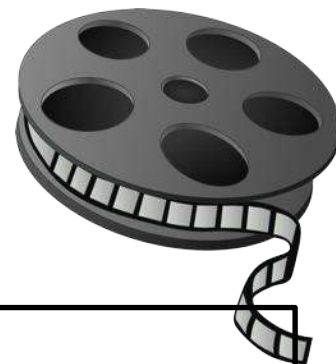
First Sunday after Christmas: *The Singing Revolution* Sunday, December 27 9:45 am check-in; 10:00 film discussion Most people don't think about singing when they think about revolutions. But in Estonia song was the weapon of choice when, between 1987 and 1991, Estonians sought to free themselves from decades of Soviet occupation. This film is available to rent on Vimeo or Amazon for \$3.99.

If you are on the church email list, you will receive a Zoom invitation each week. We are using a recurring Zoom meeting for meetings through Advent and Christmas.

Meeting ID: 952 1829 9774

Password: Believe

Numeric Passcode: 9109203



2020 Session:

Sandy Tice, Moderator; Amy Smith, Clerk of Session

Class of 2020: David Grindahl, Nancy Horstmann, Alex Smith, Neal Williams

Class of 2021: Lynette DuClos Adelson, Brooke Dvorak, Mark Freeman, Lynda Savage

Class of 2022: Ed Congdon, Carol Cooper, Margaret Doane, Stephanie Fletcher

2020 Deacons:

Steve Smith, ***Pastoral Support***

Class of 2020: Mario Bolaños, Stephani Congdon, Charlotte Pringle, Brad Smith, Judy Steppins

Class of 2021: Dan Direen, Robin Edwards, Marianna Fowles, Martha Pinckney, Jim Siegmund

Class of 2022: Mark Adelson, Carmen Avila, Janet McKinster, Carol Valentine, Sue Zeitler

Keep Military Members in Your Prayers

LCpl Jacob Allen

Cherry Point, North Carolina

PFC Ronaldo Fregoso

US Marine Corps, 29 Palms

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

Financial Notes

Financial Report as of October 31, 2020

	Actual	Budgeted	Over/(Under)
Pledges	\$ 326,902.58	340,726.66	(13,824.02)
Other Income	\$ 21,736.36	40,113.34	(18,376.98)
Expense	\$ 410,036.52	472,734.52	(62,698.00)
Net Income	\$ (25,397.58)	(91,894.52)	66,496.94

Division Consolidation

General Fund Net Income/(Expense)	(667.21)
Child Care Center Net Income/(Expense)	(81,641.91)
Deacons Net Income/(Expense)	<u>4,594.97</u>
Net Operating Income/(Expense)	(77,714.15)

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.

**Deadline for the February issue of the
First Press:
Wednesday, January 20**

Presbyterian Women in the Congregation

PW Alternative Christmas Market

PW's Alternative Christmas Market necessarily needs to take a new form this year because of COVID-19 restrictions. Rather than looking at colorful posters and mingling with friends in the Fellowship Hall while you select your charities, you can . . . send a check to the Church!

Also, some charities remain the same but there has been a switch-out with another. Our Water Team cannot enter Mexico to work, so Living Waters is not a possible recipient this year. It has been replaced by our local Red Cross, which has been extraordinarily generous to our homeless program. The Red Cross is able to give to other charitable groups donations of goods they have received but can't use. The Church has been the recipient of great generosity from the Red Cross: they have given us 160 light blankets, many toiletry kits, cartons of paper cups, and thousands of packages of towelettes. Alternative Christmas donations made to the Red Cross will be given exclusively to the San Bernardino office, which has been so generous to us and which promises to be generous in the future.

The Childcare Center is another possible recipient. Although the Childcare Center is closed now and its future is uncertain, PW decided to include it as an Alternative Christmas choice. Lynette Adelson noted that it "a hopeful thing" to give to the Center. If the Center reopens, funds will be used for current needs; if the Center remains closed, Alternative Christmas funds will be used to retire debt or help other programs for children.

And our LifeSkillz program is also an Alternative Christmas choice. This is a popular program at San Bernardino High School; students can choose to attend meetings that help develop skills for effectively dealing with life and school situations. It is social as well, and students receive meals or snacks from various PW Circles. Alternative Christmas funds are used for things such as graduating senior gifts, occasional outing, intern expenses, and supplies.

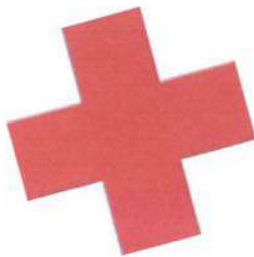
If you would like to make a contribution to one of these three Alternative Christmas choices, mail your check to Laurie at the Church, and she will send back a card you can send to someone on your Christmas list announcing your gift. The cards, always gorgeous, will be made again this year by Carol Valentine.





Presents:
Alternative Christmas Market

When: December 1-20, 2020



*Donations that will help the Local
Red Cross continue to help those in
need.*



*Child Care Center
and their hopes of
reopening.*



**LifeSkills: To help
students reach their
college goals.**

*Make checks payable to Presbyterian Women and
send or bring to the church. Put the charity you
want in the memo.*

December and January Celebrations

Dec 1 Elaine Saenz
 Dec 2 Sarah Godby
 Dec 3 Cindi Pringle
 Dec 5 Bobbie Terrell
 Curtiss & Rebecca Allen
 Dec 6 Bill McIntosh
 Dec 7 Zienna Long
 Dec 9 Maddie Ramirez
 Dec 11 Christi Showman Farrar
 Deagan Belle
 Dec 14 George, Robert &
 Tiffany Biddlecombe
 Dec 16 Jon Horstmann
 Dec 18 Patrick Garcia
 Dec 19 Jim & Carol Coyne
 Kristin Arellano
 Dec 20 Melodee Kistner
 Dec 21 Danielle Garza
 Dec 22 John Garten-Shuman
 Dec 23 Ray Nelligan
 Dec 25 Renee Kern
 Dec 26 Howard & Nancy Le Roy
 Dec 28 Lillian Franklin
 Blaine & Renee Kern
 Erica Thomas
 Dec 29 DJ Thomas
 Irene Sandoval
 & David Suverkrup
 Dec 30 Thelma Knea
 Charlotte Pringle

Jan 1 George Biddlecombe III
 Jeremy Allen
 Jan 2 Carol Wright
 George Biddlecombe IV
 Jan 3 Marilyn Patterson
 Alex Smith
 Jan 4 Alex Rueda
 Jan 5 Sheila Cimino
 Jan 6 Rachel Garvin
 Jan 10 Dwight Murray
 Jan 11 Jean-Luc Nicks
 Dawn Morris
 Jan 13 Zane Preciado
 Stephani Congdon
 Jan 14 Patrick Morris
 Jan 16 Esther Olsen
 Deon & Patrick Garcia
 Jan 17 Lynette DuClos-Adelson
 Mark Munz
 Jan 18 Sonia Martin
 Jan 20 Beverly Kristoffersen
 Jan 23 Dan & Cheryl Direen
 Jan 24 Amanda Mancha
 Jan 25 First Presbyterian Church
 Jan 26 Toni Callicott
 Jan 27 Tabitha Enriquez
 Jan 28 Linda McCarl
 Jan 29 Brenda Frederick



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First Presbyterian Child Care Center



**Where Children
Learn to Love
& Love to Learn**

Infant Care - Preschool - Child Care Lic# 360910854,
36912055