



First Presbyterian Church of San Bernardino

First Press

Volume 58, Issue 4

May 2021



May Worship

Are we livestreaming or zooming or pre-recording or meeting in person? Yes. As we have worked our way through this year of learning to worship via technology, we have used all of these methods, and we continue to use the one that seems right for each moment. When we celebrate communion, we Zoom so that people can be gathered together in the moment. On regular Sundays, we are livestreaming which allows us more flexibility with those leading worship than Zoom does, but also allows people to watch in "real time" at the same time. (During livestream, feel free to comment in the YouTube chat. The day we had technical difficulties, those comments alerted us.) Pre-recording and posting will allow our youth to all participate in Youth Sunday without gathering closely. Last month we began carefully gathering in-person outdoors occasionally while livestreaming at the same time. All of this can be confusing. Know that whatever method we use in a particular week, the service will be available on our YouTube channel (go to YouTube and search for First Presbyterian Church of San Bernardino) by early afternoon on Sunday. Watch for YouTube links or Zoom Invitations in your email and for announcements of when we plan to meet in person.

Here is a preliminary schedule for May. Look for an announcement of when we might gather in person along with the Livestream.

May 2: Zoom with Communion (Meeting ID: 993 6380 1225 Password: Worship)

May 9: Livestream on YouTube at 10:30 a.m.

May 16: Livestream on YouTube at 10:30 a.m.

May 23: Youth Sunday Pre-recorded and available on YouTube Sunday Morning with a Zoom watch party.

May 30: Livestream on YouTube at 10:30 a.m.

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Pastor's Page

Are We There Yet?

Did you ask this of your parents on car trips?

Or, maybe, did your kids say this to you?

It is the question that is in my mind and heart every single day these days: are we there yet?

By 'there' I mean, safe to gather in the sanctuary.

Some churches have been gathering for a long time, as you well know.

And phone calls to the office express dismay that we are not yet gathering indoors,

OR they express dismay saying they would not consider joining us in person! Even with the protocols.

Which is to say, all of us are disgruntled and weary and tired of this pandemic.

We are being cautious and careful as a congregation.

There are parents who are uneasy as their kids under 16 are not eligible to be vaccinated.

There are adults being careful as their immune systems are suppressed by medications for diabetes, eczema, rheumatoid arthritis and cancer. And there are those whose immune systems are less than sturdy for other reasons. We are being cautious and careful because life is precious, and preserving life is more important even than our hearts' longings. We carry one another's burdens as Jesus has taught us to. (Gal 6:2)

We are hopeful- it won't be long now! But there are several factors that prompt caution-

Numbers- County infections have steadily declined for months, but have recently trended upward a bit.

Variants- There are 4 new very contagious forms in circulation - we are hopeful data will confirm that vaccinations protect from the variants as well as the original virus.

Air- We are learning about air circulation, which is key to safety indoors. We are learning the strengths and weaknesses of the HVAC system in our sanctuary, and also exploring other ways of ventilating the space. (unfortunately, stained glass don't open!) We are aiming to increase the air changes per hour, and are close.

Inflexible seating- it will be tricky in the sanctuary to keep distance- the pews limit our choices for seating arrangements. We are working on this.

Friends, we are not 'there' yet, and I am at least as cranky about it as I was on those car trips- but the good news is that we will keep driving on until we get there! A glad and safe return awaits us, if we can be patient and hopeful.

Courage friends. Onward!

~Sandy



Claire Sekafetz, Volunteer Coordinator for Central City Lutheran Mission, presents Pastor Sandy with a certificate for the church, thanking us for our contributions to the mission.





Notes

Photos and Videos

Photos are often taken at church events and may be used in the newsletter, on the website, or in videos. Livestream videos include footage of the congregation and are streamed and available on YouTube for up to one year. If you object to having your child's image in a photo or video, please notify the church office in writing.

Join the Tech Team!

The new technology booth is polished and ready to be used. Can you help with our Audio Visual ministry as we continue to LiveStream worship each week? Raymond will teach you what you need to do. Check out this video (<https://youtu.be/eiSPMo94-JA>) and sign up on the google sign-up sheet if you might be able to help.

Graduates!

If you are a graduate or have a family member graduating from high school, college, or graduate school this spring, please send her/his name, relationship to congregation members, school and degree (if appropriate), and graduation date to Newsletter@fpcsb.net by Friday, May 14, for recognition in the June newsletter.

The Church Mice Chronicles

The church's new sound booth now has a tunnel between the two sections. The special tunnel is now complete with its own walnut scalloped escutcheons. The little church mice squealed with joy as they ran their little paws over the shimmering surface of the new escutcheon. Somebody had made a mice tunnel just for them.

On Sundays, James will probably use the tunnel for sound system wires. Meanwhile the Church Mice will be hiding under the floorboards listening and dancing to the symphonic organ music.



Their favorite hymn is "Jesus Loves Me" but Presbyterian Mice tend to change their favorite hymn every week.

As I turned off the sound booth lights before leaving, I heard an echo from the little tunnel. "God bless everyone as you gather today."



Financial Notes

Financial report as of March 31, 2021

	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Budgeted</u>	<u>Over/(Under)</u>
Pledges	\$102,687.21	94,999.97	7,687.24
Other Income	\$ 29,645.57	16,270.83	13,374.74
Expense	\$138,451.06	131,672.27	6,778.79
Net Income	\$ (6,118.28)	(20,401.47)	14,283.19

Division Consolidation

	<u>March</u>	<u>Year to date</u>
General Fund Net Income (Expense)	(10,791.77)	(7,502.21)
Child Care Center Net Income (Expense)	(733.43)	(978.72)
Deacons Net Income (Expense)	1,647.60	6,235.37
NET OPERATING INCOME (EXPENSE)	(9,877.60)	(2,245.56)

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 June issue of the
First Press:
Saturday, May 15**

Leonard Scholars 2021-2022

The Leonard Scholarship Committee is happy to announce this year's scholarship recipients.

Caden Eckert is a student at Fuller Theological Seminary. She will graduate with a Master of Divinity in June 2022. Caden is starting an internship at First Pres and will lead a confirmation class this year.

Nick Eckert is a student at Loma Linda University. He will graduate the MO program in May 2022. He plans to enroll in a family medicine residency. He is a director of the Street Medicine Club.

Abby Willis attends Gustavus Adolphus College. She is exploring her options. She loves art and hopes to work with individuals with disabilities. She continues with her gymnastics.

Dawn Morris is attending Cal State San Bernardino. She is working to earn a Master of Science in Counseling and Guidance. She hopes to finish in Spring of 2022.

Lily Bolaños is a student at Azusa Pacific University. She has a double major in Screenwriting and Honors Humanities. She hopes to graduate in 2022.

Matt Garcia is attending University of Puget Sound and plans to graduate in 2022 with Chemistry and Math degrees.

Christian Usher is attending St. Georges University. He plans to finish medical school and be placed into a clinical rotation close to San Bernardino.

This year has been hard on our students; all have been online. We hope for the best that they can complete their goals as planned.

The Leonard Scholarship Committee

Scholars Updates by Sandy Tice

Two things came across my radar screen this week that gave me joy- and both have to do with former Leonard Scholars. It is always fun to consider what is going on in the lives of the young adults in whom we have invested, and to see those investments bear fruit.

Alexia Aguilar is a LifeSkillz student who has been an intern, then a paid staff person for child care on Sundays, and finally a member of First Pres. She became a Leonard scholar 2 years ago, after her freshman year at UCR. She is graduating this June with a degree in writing, the first in her family to earn a college degree. She had so many AP-type classes through high school that she was able to complete the requirements for a BA in 3 years! We are deeply proud and will continue to encourage her as she figures out what is next.

Shannon Nolin grew up in this congregation, and has discerned that God's call to her is to work with animals. With that in mind she has done the work necessary to qualify her as a Veterinary Technician and she is now working in her chosen field. She is delighted that what she loves and what she gets paid for are converging!

Youth Sunday, May 23rd, 2021

May 23, Pentecost, our youth will lead us in a joyful worship service. We will remember the moment the Spirit came to the disciples. We will hear Jeremy Allen speak to us as he prepares to graduate high school. We will hear students make music and lead prayers. The youth have been working hard on this service, reading scripture, finding a theme, choosing music, and choosing and writing liturgy. We will continue to meet, prepare, and rehearse on May 2 and 16 as we worshipfully prepare to lead with joy.

This service will be pre-recorded and premiere on YouTube on the 23rd. We will offer a Zoom watch party if people would like to worship together.

Keep Military Members in Your Prayers

LCpl Jacob Allen,
Cherry Point, North Carolina

Segeant 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, San Diego

CW3 James Bentley Wilson,
US Army, Joint Base Lewis-McChord, WA

Session Synopsis

Amy Smith, Clerk of Session

The March 24th Session meeting was opened with prayer, lighting the Christ candle and a reflection. We heard updates on the House of Welcome which should start to host guests for showers very shortly; possibilities of a different use for our childcare facilities and the property across the street, and recognizing Dave Thomas for his endless hours of commitment to our church and facility. We also approve Sandy taking a week of Study Leave following Easter.

We were updated on the Sanctuary technology booth and requests for people to join the team to assist in virtual worship in the future. The security doors have been installed and still need to be painted but are wonderful!

We discussed the sadness of the need to close the First Presbyterian Child Care Center (FPCCC) and the logistics around that decision. It's been very difficult on the staff and we acknowledge that. A proposed gathering of the staff didn't work out and instead a note, flowers, and gift card were delivered to each staff member. Personnel Committee, Session, and many others are saddened that FPCCC could not continue, but financially, it just wasn't viable.

We closed with reflections on the meeting - primarily recognizing that in spite of the pandemic, the church has accomplished and continues to accomplish so many things!



May and June Adult Education Class

Faith and Doubt

As we look at the resurrection story from the perspective of Thomas, the disciple, we think about faith and doubt. Join the adult education group for a video series on Faith and Doubt.

The videos will be posted ahead of time for you to view on your own time, and we will discuss them in the Zoom Meeting.

This group will meet at 11:30 a.m. via Zoom beginning on Sunday, May 2nd. We will meet each week except when we have in-person outdoor worship.

Session One: *Father of the Faith*, poet and theologian Malcom Guite's thoughts on "Doubting Thomas" and ***The Risen Christ Will Meet You***, Episcopal priest and improv comedian Les Carpenter on the Good News about Thomas' doubt.

Session Two: *A Struggle with Doubt*, Kallistos Ware's thoughts on faith and doubt and ***Faith to Doubt***, it takes a lot of faith to doubt. Dave Tomlinson on the faith journey.

Session Three: *Creative Scripture Engagement*, Peter Enns on the paradoxes and mysteries of the Christian faith - Sometimes the Christian faith makes sense, sometimes it doesn't and ***Keeping Faith Awake***, Rachel Held Evans on why she's grateful for doubt in the life of her faith journey.

Session Four: *The Idolatry of Certainty*, They call faith "faith" for a reason. Greg Boyd on magical and legal faith vs covenantal faith and embracing the doubt and uncertainty in that relationship that nurtures with growth. Oh, and we talk about praying for parking spots.

Session Five: *Born Again All Over Again*, Sarah Bessey on moving out of your first nativete and into a crucial existence of faith. A faith that doesn't run away from hard questions and doubt, but one that embraces the struggle head on. A journey where you are born again, all over again and ***Trauma*** Are we avoiding the trauma of doubt? Are we missing out on life by not experiencing the trauma of the cross? Writer Peter Rollins reflects.

Session 2021

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

Building and Grounds: Alex Smith (chair), Mark Freeman, Tim Usher

Nurture: Stephanie Fletcher (chair), Jeanne Clark, Lynda Savage

Stewardship: Brooke Dvorak (chair), Margaret Doane, Susan Skoglund,

Worship: Mary Bolaños (chair), Carol Cooper, Melodee Kistner

Child Care Center

In March of 2020, in response to the governor's order, we closed the First Presbyterian Child Care Center which has been in operation for 30 years. We applied for a Paycheck Protection Program loan in order to continue salaries for our 5 staff for several months. When those funds were exhausted, we had a difficult decision to make.

Factors that influenced this decision included:

- It was not safe for our staff members to reopen the Center – all were in at high risk for Covid 19. Even as legal restrictions were eased and protocols were put in place to permit the re-opening of some schools and child care centers, we could not ask staff to do the same.

- The Center has struggled with declining enrollment in the last 15 years. In 2006, there were 58 children enrolled and an average of 37 children each day. Fifteen years later there were fewer than 24 students enrolled, and some days we had fewer than a dozen present.

- The declining enrollment meant ongoing financial challenges. FPCCC lost an average of \$14,000 a year each year for the last decade despite vigorous financial and in-kind support from the Session.

- Our congregational financial situation is particularly precarious at present. Our 2021 budget projected an \$80,000 deficit, which forced us to make painful decisions. None of us wanted to close the Center, but neither could we see a way to continue this work sustainably with its present structure.

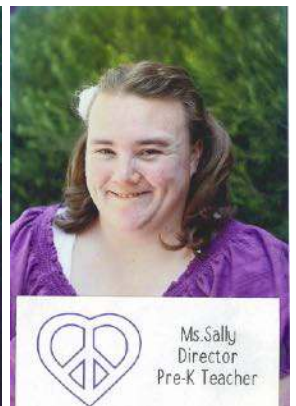
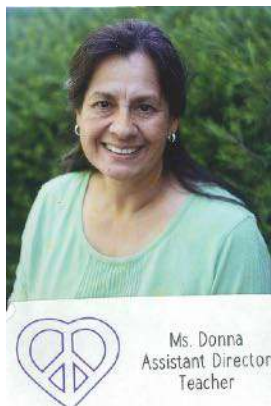
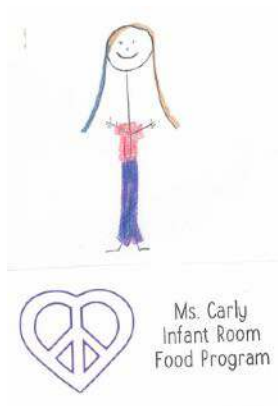
We notified teachers of the heartbreaking news at the end of January, and they have recently come to clear out their personal belongings and say farewell to a place which they have loved and in which they have done the work of nurturing children and improving lives.

All of the staff worked here for between 14 and 27 years (a retention rate that is unheard of in this field). They represented us with love, commitment, and kindness. They raised many kids who are now flourishing, and the impact of that can never be erased. Lolita Santiago, Chris Balog, Donna Bacon, Carly Earp and Sally Earp all helped hundreds of children fulfill their true potential, and surely this gladdens the heart of God. We are thankful to each of them. We will miss them.

We have grieved this for some months; now the Session is asking, "what's next?"

The needs the Center was designed to meet remain critically important! Education and socialization during early years of brain development provide children with lifelong advantages. In our neighborhood the need is arguably even greater than when we began this work 30 years ago.

The classrooms and their play yards are ideally suited for the purpose of early childhood education. Is there a way to use this resource as a blessing without incurring large losses? We have begun conversations with the San Bernardino Unified School District and others in hopes that we can discover a hopeful answer about how First Pres can be involved in the education of young children. We will keep you informed.



but Jesus said, "Let the little children come to me, and do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of heaven belongs."

May Birthdays and Anniversaries

May 1	Lily Bolaños Aidan Morris
May 4	Erika Mantei
May 6	Kaiyah Dubois Katie Willis
May 7	Brian Gano Maggie Willis
May 9	Rosalind Mantei Phil Savage III
May 10	Marissa Congdon Susan Skoglund
May 11	Tinka Ponder
May 12	Blaine Kern Wendy Lamb
May 14	Carol Coyne
May 15	Lynn Usher
May 16	Jim Babcock
May 17	Sharon Louise Landeros Wanda Skipper Tim & Lynn Usher
May 21	Rena Nolin
May 23	Jim Morris
May 24	Trinity Conley Penny Ramirez
May 27	Jenna Garza Schneider
May 28	Mark Adelson Jon Preciado Maria Saenz Al & Mindy Rueda Dale & Kathy Showman
May 31	Larry & Jeannie Marona

Summer Comfort Kits with help from Thrivent & You!

Fully ten percent (10%) of our First Pres food recipients indicate to us that they have no residence. Some live out of a vehicle, a few get a night or two in a motel or couch surfing, and most live "on the street" most of the time. COVID restrictions & closures - business, school, church, and agency - have presented new challenges unique to these neighbors.



As spring starts feeling like summer, those of us who are housed may be attending to our A/C, and switching out sweats for shorts. Our homeless comfort kits make a slight seasonal shift also. Ball caps & sunscreen replace knit hats & gloves. The kits also include socks, poncho, lip balm, sanitizer, mask, nail clippers, bandanas, emergency blankets. (Toiletries are in separate hygiene kits).

These are all donated items - purchased new or found at home not used. This winter First Pres members donated beautifully hand-crafted knit hats & just recently a big bag of rarely worn ball caps.

Some bulk purchases are courtesy of Thrivent, a faith-based financial services company, which provides a \$250 gift card to its members if they will lead a project that invites others to "Live Generously".

So, consider yourself invited!

If you would like to donate clean gently used laundered socks, caps, or bandanas, or throw an extra item into a literal or virtual cart, the kits will be completed with the help of the Thrivent money. A printed list and a link to an Amazon wish list are kept at <https://www.fpcsb.net/deacons>. You can deliver your donation to reception or give it to Marilyn or Rick.

If this is not your time to give to this project, please know that you are still helping to make this generosity happen by being part of this community. Being here, being trusted, being able to collect donations & distribute kits, having a food ministry, having leadership, staff, volunteers & interns - all of that allows us to connect with partner organizations and neighbors in need. Together we can be the caring and resourceful neighbor that our community needs.

Homeless Comfort Kits:

- ☐ socks *
- ☐ bandana *
- ☐ rain poncho
- ☐ nail clipper
- ☐ lip balm
- ☐ washcloth*/compressed towels
- ☐ knit hat (winter)/ball cap (summer) *
- ☐ knit (winter) or work gloves
- ☐ sunscreen
- ☐ sanitizer bottle or wipes
- ☐ cloth or paper mask
- ☐ Emergency mylar blanket
- ☐ Compact throw/blanket*

*new or gently used & laundered

Board of Deacons 2021

Martha Pinckney, Moderator; Steve Smith, Pastoral Support

Congregational Care: Carol Valentine (chair), Robin Edwards, Sharon Landeros, Joyce Lyons, Martha Pinckney, Sue Zeitler

Community Ministry: Marianna Fowles (chair), Rebecca Allen, Carmen Avila, Janet McKinster, Joanna Nord

Food Ministry: Dan Direen (chair), Mark Adelson, Jim Siegmund, Chris Thomas

Our Winter/Spring 2021 Intern Team

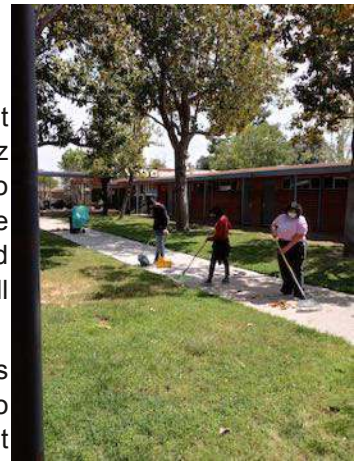
by Rick Rodriguez, Intern Supervisor

We have been blessed to be able to keep the Internship Program running throughout most of the pandemic. Our current team of interns are team leaders Ariana Aceves & Shelly Ortiz and interns Isely Castañeda, Jacqueline Diaz, Adrian Macias & Marlene Olivas. We also have two former interns who are always willing to help whenever they are needed; they are Elvira Aceves and Isabel Arroyo. This team has worked on our food ministries, helped maintain the church grounds, but they also helped prepare for our Easter service and will continue to assist anytime we have a service in Magnolia Court.

Mark Adelson and I are very proud of this team. They are always willing to learn new skills and work with tools they have not used before. We now have a group of young people who had never even been around a lawn mower, who have now helped mow the lawns at First Pres and can do it again if needed.

Everyone on this team had been interns before so they all knew what it meant to work as a team, but they have taken it to another level. They try to be fair with any extra hours I may have during the week to make sure they are spread out as evenly as possible. This is a team.

Four members of the current team, along with Isabel and Elvira, are seniors at San Bernardino High School and will be graduating in a few weeks. All six of these seniors have been longtime members of the LifeSkillz program and have been interns at least twice. I believe what they have learned from these programs will be beneficial in the next part of their lives. We are certainly blessed here at First Pres to have them as interns and as part of our church family.



Security Door Replacement Continues

By Dave Thomas, Safety and Security

Our door replacement project continues to move forward on our campus. So far we have had a total of 10 doors replaced including completion of our much needed Sanctuary doors. We have another 5 doors to be replaced within the next few weeks. All of the doors replaced were the original, some almost 70 years old. Our new doors are all metal, equipped with modern panic and closing hardware. Some doors had small windows added to provide extra security for ushers to observe outside activities. You may have noticed these new doors are a different color, however they will shortly be painted to match our existing doors. This project is costing over \$40,000.00 and the best part is they are paid for 100% out of our Homeland Security Grant written by Marilyn Kraft. A thank you to David Grindahl and Neil Williams who helped provide extra security during the installation process.



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MAY 2021

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
25 10:30 AM Worship Service (YouTube Livestream)	26 7:00 PM Circle of Kindness	27 1:00 PM Circle Of Hope	28 5:30 PM SESSION	29	30 9:30 AM Kerygma	1 10:00 AM Straight Up AA
2 10:30 AM Worship Service (Zoom)	3 5:00 PM PW Coordinating Team	4 7:00 PM Circle of Faith	5 4:30 PM Worship Committee	6	7 9:30 AM Kerygma	8 10:00 AM Straight Up AA
9 10:30 AM Worship Service (YouTube Livestream)	10	11 6:30 PM Deacon Committees 7:30 PM Deacon Board	12	13 4:00 PM Nurture Committee	14 8:30 AM Food Bagging 9:30 AM Kerygma	15 Deadline for First Press articles 9:00 AM Deacon Food Distribution 10:00 AM Straight Up AA
16 10:30 AM Worship Service (YouTube Livestream)	17 10:00 AM Circle of Grace	18 7:00 PM M.A.L.E.s	19 5:30 PM Stewardship Committee	20 9:00 AM Friendship Circle 5:30 PM Buildings & Grounds Committee	21 9:30 AM Kerygma	22 10:00 AM Straight Up AA
23 Pentecost 10:30 AM Youth Sunday Worship Service (YouTube)	24 7:00 PM Circle of Kindness	25 1:00 PM Circle Of Hope	26 5:30 PM SESSION	27	28 9:30 AM Kerygma	29 10:00 AM Straight Up AA
30 10:30 AM Worship Service (YouTube Livestream)	31 Church Office Closed,	1 7:00 PM Circle of Faith	2 4:30 PM Worship Committee	3	4 9:30 AM Kerygma	5 10:00 AM Straight Up AA

First Presbyterian Church of San Bernardino

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9am to 4:30 pm

The Rev. Dr. Sandy Tice
Pastor

Dr. Wendy Long Lamb
Commissioned Local Pastor

The Rev. Dr. Steve Smith
Pastoral Support

Caden Eckert
Seminary Intern

Melinda Rueda
Laurie Stafford
Ministry of Visitation

The Rev. Jim Huffstutler
Pastor Emeritus

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.