



First Presbyterian Church of San Bernardino

First Press

Volume 58, Issue 8

September 2021

I've been
meaning
to ask...

a series for curiosity,
courage, & connection

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In worship the last two weeks we have asked "where are you from?" and "Where does it hurt?" We looked at the stories of creation, the calling of the disciples, and Hannah the mother of Samuel. In the next two weeks, we will ask "what do you need?" and "where do we go from here?"

From A Sanctified Art, "Our leading question, "I've been meaning to ask..." conveys intentionality, warmth, curiosity, and consideration. In essence, this question also implies the following statements: "I've been thinking about you and I've been wanting to check in... You've been on my mind... I haven't known how to have this conversation, but I'm getting started with a question."

Come or watch and share with us as we explore these questions, as we share communion, as we listen to the Sanctuary Choir and the Threshold Choir.

Office Hours-

When I was in college and seminary, professors always had 'office hours'. Everyone understood that this was not the only thing they did, and probably not the most valuable thing that they did- but we knew where and when we could find them.

Similarly, pastors have Office Hours. Tom and I knew a pastor early in our ministries who refused to have his space at church called an "office"-he insisted that it was a *study*- a place where a pastor could do *pastoral* work, which he understood to be study and writing, learning and preparing to preach and teach. He wanted to convey that he was not a clerk nor a CEO (who work in offices). He was about another kind of business. When he was on the church campus, he could usually be found in his Study.

I've been thinking about my effectiveness, and about my temperament. I am very much an extrovert, which is to say I mostly *gain* energy from being with people (introverts, by contrast, often feel like being with people *takes* a lot of energy. Doesn't mean they don't love people, just means they find groups tiring.). One of the gifts of my sabbatical was to think about the value of solitude and silence in the life of a pastor- in MY life. A surprise was noticing how good it is for me to be outdoors when I am trying to hear what God is saying to me, or trying to discern what is the next right step to take.

I approached the Personnel Committee saying I think I spend too much time in the office. Don't get me wrong: those of you who've seen me there know what fun it is to greet you, know the synergy of people working together, the joy of watching things take shape. I value time in the office and am committed to being there regularly. Among other things, it is important for you and for staff and interns to know how to find me! But I also need to have 'study' time, and the office is not great for that. At least not for me.

I have a hard time writing in the office- when I hear conversations in the open space I chime in! If I hear someone's voice (or their laugh) I hop up to greet them. When I notice what others are doing (like copying things or sending letters) I ask about it... and not much gets written. Sermons, or letters, newsletter articles, answers to questions from confirmands, reports to Session- these take focused time and quiet and ***I cannot resist the people in the office!***

So with the blessing of Personnel, I've been experimenting with leaving at 3. On some Mondays (about one per month), I plan to take study days/outdoor days to clear my head and to hear that Still Small Voice I most need to hear.



Messages may be left 24/7 on the office answering machine. You can speak to staff from 8:30-4:30 M-Th (Mimi does not come on Fridays since Covid). I respond fairly quickly to email. You may always text my cell phone, (but for 24 hours each week I put it in a drawer: Thursday evening through Friday evening, so as to take a sabbath day and be still.)

The work of loving God, of seeking justice, of being knit into each other's lives never ends- it is fascinating and precious and gives me great joy and courage. But God commands us to rest even when the work of healing the world is not yet done. That is our privilege and our calling. And I am working at it, with the Spirit's help.

~Sandy

Photo: Baking bread is one of Sandy's Out-of-Office Sabbath Practices.

Confirmation Class

We're halfway through our 6-week confirmation class which includes 7 students: Breanna Nord, Kendra Lamb, Owen Morris, Ethan Gano, Asher Gano, Maddie Ramirez and Joseph Ramirez. Pray for them as they ask God what is next for them, and as they explore their faith and consider whether they are ready to unite with our community as adults. Seminary intern Caden Eckert is taking the lead in this class, and is supported by Wendy, Sandy, and Nick Eckert.





Notes

Let there be no grumbling

The author of the letter to the church at Philippi asks us to do all things without grumbling or disputing. This is far easier said than done. Truth be told, your pastor does a fair amount of grumbling. It is a good season to be mindful of this- as we are struggling with gathering, the safety of coffee hour and singing, while integrating the moving target of information about viral surges. Let us be patient with one another. Let us work at believing the best about each other. Let us be kind and resilient and flexible. None of us likes this- but we will make it through together. Currently our county numbers are in the 'purple' zone. There is a tiny downturn, which we hope will continue. Once we are in a safer zone (orange or yellow) we can return to some of the things that we miss in a safer way.

Choir

Our choir has been singing for all of us these days. We are so grateful to have music in our worship services (though we long for congregational singing). For now, the choir rehearses at 9:30 Sunday mornings to sing in the 10:30 worship service. If you are fully vaccinated and would like to join the song, speak with music director Curtiss Allen.



The First Press

During this time when people remain scattered and our in-worship announcements are retooled for public broadcast, it is ever more important to communicate with one another. The First Press is a crucial means of communication. If you are a ministry leader, a committee chair, an elder or deacon, please let us know what is going on. Send articles to Wendy at newsletter@fpcsb.net.

Ideally, the newsletter is a place for longer form announcements than the Friday emails. It is a place to note the *why* and *how* of what we are doing along with *when* and *where*.

Email is the preferred way to receive content. It is also great to receive one or two photos to go along with an article. Please send your article text without special formatting and attach the photos to your email. I will format articles and photos as needed for the newsletter space.

Deadline for the October issue of the

First Press:

Wednesday, September 15

In Memoriam

August 2021

Lila Elaine Cook

October 6, 1936 - August 18, 2021

"In life and in death we belong to God."



Ken Tuttle

Memorial Service

On Saturday, August 14, we hosted a memorial service for former music director Ken Tuttle. Ken directed our choir from 1999-2001 and has been a regular substitute for Curtiss in the years since then.

The combination of his having no surviving family with Covid restrictions and then a planned power outage by SCE made planning absolutely crazy, but at the end of the day we honored God's presence in the life of this man who was once our music director, and we offered a service to our community. The sanctuary was packed, and mostly with young people who had been his students over 35 years. There was a lot of love and affection in the room, and it was a joyful and wonderful day. For those who like miracles, I want to note that we were told SCE actually changed their planned outage for this service! We spent HOURS on the phone with them.... and against all odds they heard us!

We offer a heartfelt thank you for everyone who worked together to make this happen in the midst of the challenges. Our team is amazing!

Safety and Delta by the Safe Re-opening Committee

As I write, 1 in 5 of the patients at St B's are Covid-19 patients. The Delta variant that has emerged in recent weeks is far more contagious than what existed before. Your Safe Regathering committee is grappling this, trying to make sense of data as it arrives, and then trying to make policy choices that are safe and prudent. Good news? We are getting better at keeping patients alive once they contract Covid, so the percentage of deaths is decreasing. Also, there is a tiny downturn in this week's data on the county dashboard, which we are hoping might indicate the beginning of a downward trend.

We have a vaccination rate in our city that is below 50%, and so our infection rate is about twice the current rate in the state of California. Knowing that vaccines are tremendously effective in preventing hospitalization and death, we held a vaccine clinic here in Fellowship Hall alongside our food distribution day on Aug 21, and 11 of our neighbors received free vaccinations.

Wendell Berry has said that the smallest unit of health is the community--there is no such thing as 'individual health' because our lives are and will always be interconnected. You may not be in a high-risk group for Covid and may be unafraid of catching the virus. Some of us who are not high-risk have chosen to be vaccinated because of our commitment to a healthy community. We know vaccinations help slow the spread and thereby protect the most vulnerable among us. Others of us are mindful that getting vaccinated assists those who provide health care and are overwhelmed by the cases in our hospitals. This is consistent with what Jesus asked us to do: to protect 'the least of these'. Getting vaccinated is a way to show love for our neighbors.

As infections continue, there is a lot of confusing messaging out there, along with increasing anxiety and anger. This is scary and difficult for us all. Many, for example, have been reluctant to receive the vaccine when it was under "emergency approval" (Pfizer has now been approved by the FDA). People are beginning to ask if receiving a booster shot 6-8 months after being vaccinated may be useful. Others are alarmed that vaccinated persons may actually be able to be asymptomatic carriers of the Delta variant. It's complicated! If it is making you frustrated and uncertain, you are not alone. We would like to help you wade through complex information and conflicting news reports. If you have questions or concerns about Covid, please call the church office. We have medical professionals who can help you make sense of what you've been hearing.

Why We Gather...

Even as we consider how we are gathering these days, we remember why. We gather on Sunday for 3 reasons:

- **To seek God**-- whom we find in sacred text and sacrament, in music and in song, in prayer, in the beauty of this space, in the stillness where we can hear our hearts. We offer God our thanks and praise, our lament and longing, and our resources. We let go of burdens and receive grace and forgiveness. We see the One our hearts love.
- **To practice Community**-- rejoice w/those who rejoice, weep w/those who weep. To break bread with those whom we love and those whom we need to love more fully. We practice things our culture does not emphasize: resting, forgiving, sharing. Jesus asked us to love one another as he loved us, and we cannot do so without practice.
- **To listen for our Call**-- often an invitation to go out and be or do or remember. God is speaking all the time: through conscience, nature, friends, and certainly scripture. We gather to listen for that Call and to recommit ourselves to discipleship.

September Birthdays and Anniversaries

Sep 3	Dan Schiavone
Sep 4	Ed Congdon
Sep 6	Norm & Christa Wallis Tom & Donna Garza
Sep 7	Sally Inglis
Sep 8	Deon Garcia
Sep 9	Harry Babcock Jeanne Clark Larry & Melodee Kistner Rosalind & Ken Mantei Shelby Obershaw Ramon & Penny Ramirez
Sep 10	Judy Steppins Christian Usher
Sep 11	Jane Snyder
Sep 12	Laurie Stafford Kelsey Smith
Sep 13	Jeannie Marona
Sep 15	Jennifer Shenton
Sep 16	Robert Godby
Sep 17	Bonnie Ainsworth
Sep 18	Mindy Rueda
Sep 19	Kimberly Ballard Hansen
Sep 22	Al Rueda
Sep 23	Michael Cummings
Sep 24	Kyle Smith
Sep 26	Jim Siegmund Kelli Vasquez
Sep 27	Eli Morales
Sep 30	Carmen Paredes

I Am From

On Sunday, August 15, we began our series, "I've Been Meaning to Ask," with the question: Where are you from? We had the opportunity to write an "I am from..." poem using a template provided (it can be found at fpcsb.net). Some members have shared their poems with us.

I am from an olive-green sofa,

From sidewalk handprints and
an attic bedroom.

I am from the feel of running
thru sprinklers,

And the smell of sun on
asphalt,

And the sound of Simon &
Garfunkel on 33 rpm!

I am from that eucalyptus tree
Whose long-gone limbs I
remember as if they were my
own.

I am from reading and being on
time,

From the safety of Grandma
Peachy and the unpredictable
Theodore Vernley,

And from youth group prayer
circles & singing around a
campfire.

I'm from trying to fix things &
loving good books.

I am from God, who reminds
me: You are beloved, you
belong.

I am from a really big book case (and several smaller ones),

From roast beef and Yorkshire
pudding and sitting reading on the
trunk of Dad's parked car.

I am from the feel of dry heat,

And the smell of water in the
evening,

And the sound of the TV down the
hall from my room as I fell asleep.

I am from that overgrown rosebush
by the window

Whose long-gone limbs I remember
as if they were my own.

I am from British reserve and hugs
and kisses,

From Evadean, who loved to perform
and Helen, who loved fiercely,

And from "all faiths lead to Home."

I'm from Broadway dreams and the
Honor Roll.

I am from God, who reminds me: You
are stardust, and you are mine!

I am from the lead lined water cistern,

From milk bottles and buckwheats.

I am from the feel of velvet portieres and
carved grape leaves,

And the smell of gasoline being poured into the
lawnmower,

And the sound of baseballs hit off bats, cylinder
phonographs, the engine of the Garlic being
started.

I am from that coracea especiosa

Whose long-gone limbs I remember as if they
were my own.

I am from waiting Christmas morning and
family mealtime,

From Amy and Briana,

And from Bethany Reformed.

I'm from a desire to be taller & wanting to drive.

I am from God, who reminds me: I do have
something to offer.

--Curtiss Allen, Jr.

(NOTE: The Garlic was a riding lawnmower
that our grandfather transformed into a gocart
of sorts)

I am from quilts,

From homemade dresses and shredded dreams,
I am from the feel of cool sheets on a hot summer night,
and warm tears of sadness.

From the smell of bacon frying at Grandma's house,
and crop dusters spraying the fields.

From the sound of the whirr of a sewing machine,
and the growl of an angry voice.

I am from a garden filled with an exuberance of color,
and vines that tangle and trap.

I am from family reunions where the old ones spoke
German,

and Christmases of frustration and dissolution.

From "Hands to Work and Hearts to God,"
and "You're going to hell."

From Mennonites who escaped Russia to practice their
beliefs,

and Christianity used to shame and damage.

I am from drugs and divorce,
and music and new memories.

I am from Acceptance and Forgiveness and Love.

I am all the pieces of a colorful quilt – not yet completed,

For I am "remarkably and wonderfully made..."

And I am thankful.

Family Finances

The last couple of years have been hard financially on most of us (excepting, of course, businesses that do home delivery!). I thought I would write to you about how our church is doing financially in these days when we have not passed an offering plate for 18 months. The short answer is "not too badly".

For the first time in some time, we ended a month in the black, however this invites closer inspection. The general fund is in the red- our 2021 income is lower than we budgeted, and we continue to rein in expenses, but it is not enough to bring the budget into balance.

This month our bottom line has been saved by the monies in the Deacons fund. This total is much higher than usual due to the many contributions to the food ministry sent in memory of Sally Morris. Even in her departing she blesses us. Her passion that we might serve in the manner of Jesus continues to shape our sense of identity and mission. In my time here, we have never received so many memorial gifts for one life.

We've been actively working toward a day when a new partnership makes it possible for pre-school children to again occupy our classrooms, but it is a long and complex process. The rooms are a great resource and I am sure God wants us to use them for good- but it is going to take some time. Meanwhile, I am grateful for a couple of things. First, I am glad we swiftly put together a Paycheck Protection Program loan application for \$85,000 at the beginning of the shutdown. Although we had to close our doors, the loan allowed us to continue salaries and benefits for our Child Care Center Staff from March 2020 through January of 2021 (and we continued health benefits for 6 months beyond that). We received news last week that the PPP loan has been forgiven, which is terrific financial news for us. Second, although it was heartbreaking to decide not to re-open FPCCC, I am grateful for the diminished financial risk. The Center had very low enrollment for a number of years (about 2 dozen children, though we were licensed for 6 dozen), and in the last year for which we have data (2019) the Center ran a deficit averaging \$3,400 per month (-\$40,750 for the year) in spite of robust financial and in-kind subsidies from the church. For 30 years this has been a mission in which we've taken great pride: we are proud of the children and families whose lives were touched by excellent teaching and steadfast love. It is a mission needed in our neighborhood, and one we want to continue. We will find a way to write the next chapter of this mission as soon as we figure out a financially sustainable way to do so.

So, family of faith, things are not too bad. We are navigating disruption and grief and confusion and loss, and we are staying afloat with the Spirit's help. Your prayers and your financial support are so deeply significant. Thanks be to God for you.

Financial Notes

Financial Report as of July 31, 2021

General Fund

	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Budgeted</u>	<u>Over/(Under)</u>
Pledges	\$227,384.77	221,666.65	5,718.12
Other Income	\$ 50,850.84	34,898.71	15,952.13
Expense	\$299,977.19	304,622.03	(4,644.84)
Net Income	\$ (21,741.58)	(48,056.67)	26,315.09

Division Consolidation

	<u>July</u>	<u>Year to date</u>
General Fund Net Income (Expense)	(2,398.87)	(21,741.58)
Child Care Center Net Income (Expense)	(1,260.36)	(4,870.86)
Deacons Net Income (Expense)	5,950.49	15,878.48
NET OPERATING INCOME (EXPENSE)	2,291.26	(10,733.96)

Keep Military Members in Your Prayers

LCpl Jacob Allen,

Cherry Point, North Carolina

RCT Jeremy Allen,

San Diego, California

PFC Ronaldo Fregoso,

US Marine Corps, 29 Palms

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

Our Amazing Laurie!

by Margaret Doane, Stewardship

Laurie Stafford wears many hats at First Pres, and wears them very well. Friendly, caring, versatile, and hardworking, Laurie is our secretary, bookkeeper, and vital member of the Pastoral Care team. She both calls and receives calls from members and friends of the Church about their health and well-being, and is upset if someone has a major concern and doesn't call the Church. She manages pledges, counts money, keeps our books. She is the face of the Church as our receptionist and secretary -- receiving calls, answering questions, and mailing Newsletters. She is our funeral coordinator. In her many roles, she keeps our Church running smoothly.

Laurie was born in Honolulu and grew up in San Bernardino with mom and dad Bill and Doris Reese and brother Ray. She is a 1973 graduate of Pacific High and a 1975 graduate of Skadron Business College. Laurie has attended First Pres since she was five, with the exception of a few years when she lived in Orange County. She says one of the highlights of her high school years was participating in the Revues Jim Huffstutler wrote. Laurie's mom Doris Reese was Church secretary in the 1970s and 1980s, and Laurie followed in her footsteps when she joined the staff in 2008.

Laurie is very active in the Church. She was the Moderator of Presbyterian Women for four years, from 2009-2011 and 2019-2021. She is a member of the Circle of Faith and has been its Moderator, has been PW Treasurer, and has been both a Deacon and an Elder.

Laurie's family includes husband Dennis and her three children Alicia and husband Nik and their daughter Isla; son Erick and his wife Margot and their daughters Soliana and Paloma; and son Ryan and his girlfriend Kelsey and children Madison and Emory; as well as Dennis's children Juliet and Terrell. Laurie is a devoted mother and grandmother, extremely interested -- despite the pandemic -- in the activities and welfare of her family.

Laurie is a voracious reader, someone never without a book. Within the last year, she has read most of the novels of Maggie O'Farrell (of Hamnet fame), Ann Patchett, Willa Cather, and Nevil Shute; and she also enjoys historical and political books. She is an avid walker has been a long-time yoga enthusiast. She also enjoys cooking and gardening.

Laurie loves people and loves her job and First Pres. She is such an asset to the Church!



Photo: Laurie with three of her grandchildren

Churchwide Christian Formation begins again October 10. Save the Date!

The last few months have been made difficult by the intricacies of returning to in-person worship (Will we have kids? Should they go out of the sanctuary? Can adult ed meet in person? Hybrid? Oh, but choir is meeting at 9:30, etc.) The Nurture committee is hoping that by the second week in October (10/10) we will be on steady enough ground that we will be able to convene churchwide Christian formation. If all goes well, Nancy Horstmann and Jeanne Clark will begin KidSpace, Wendy will call a meeting of Youth types, and we will hope to work out a time and way for adult ed to meet. Watch for more information in the October newsletter.

Session 2021

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

Class of 2021: Mary Bolaños, Brooke Dvorak, Mark Freeman, Lynda Savage

Class of 2022: Carol Cooper, Margaret Doane, Stephanie Fletcher, Melodee Kistner

Class of 2023: Jeanne Clarke, Susan Skoglund, Alex Smith, Tim Usher

Board of Deacons 2021

Martha Pinckney, Moderator; Steve Smith, Pastoral Support

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

Class of 2023: Rebecca Allen, Sharon Landeros, Joyce Lyons, Joanna Nord, Chris Thomas

Back at Cardinal City!



Cardinal City is the other name of San Bernardino High School, and for the first time since March of 2020 we

met in person on campus with our lifeskillz kids. Pat Morris, Rick Rodriguez, Sandy, Brooke, and Stephani met with students for breakfast. Several of the students were kids we had not seen since the shutdown (they did not attend one of the monthly outdoor pizza gatherings here at 1900), and it was delightful to see them as Seniors (they were sophomores last time we were together!) We were welcomed with such gladness by the teachers we know and by Dr Gutierrez, the principal, who stopped by to visit. We are grateful for the relationships that have endured despite disruption, and look forward to a year of accompanying kids as they move through school.

Our summer interns completed their term on Saturday the 21st, they were an especially hard-working group and connected well with one another. We will be posting applications and hiring fall interns soon.

Meanwhile, this week some of our LS Alumni began their courses at college- those who are at Cal State San Bernardino, along with some at UCRiverside, and some in San Diego and Santa Barbara. Pray for our kids on this journey, and for the leaders as we seek to care for them in God's name.

If you (and a friend?) are interested in bringing breakfast for 20 kids one Monday morning this year, let the office know! We would welcome your help!



Have you given the **Gift of Life**? Assist patients and their loved ones at this critical time by giving blood.

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To maintain social distancing, appointments are strongly recommended. Walk-ins are welcome but wait times may be lengthy. Face coverings are required. Please be sure to drink plenty of fluids, bring photo ID with proof of age. Donors under the age of 17 must bring a signed (child's) parent consent form.

Connect With Us! Download our App:

You can schedule an appointment by going to this link:

https://giftoflife.lstream.org/donor/schedules/drive_schedule/93406

If you wish to write Jeremy Allen...

RCT Allen, Jeremy
MIKE CO 3rd RTBN PLT 3269
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San Diego, CA 92410-0002



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SEPTEMBER 2021

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
29 10:30 AM Worship Service (in person/YouTube Livestream)	30	31	1 6:30 PM Worship Committee	2	3 9:30 AM Kerygma	4 10:00 AM Straight Up AA
5 10:30 AM Worship Service	6 Church Office Closed.	7 7:00 PM Circle of Faith	8	9 4:00 PM Nurture Committee	10 9:30 AM Kerygma	11 8:30 AM SJO rehearsal 10:00 AM Straight Up AA
12 Deacons' Blood Drive 10:30 AM Worship Service	13	14 6:30 AM Election Polling 6:30 PM Deacon Committees 7:30 PM Deacon Board	15 Deadline for First Press articles 5:30 PM Stewardship Committee	16 5:30 PM Buildings & Grounds Committee	17 8:30 AM Food Bagging 9:30 AM Kerygma	18 Planned Maintenance Power Outage 8:30 AM Vaccination Clinic 9:00 AM Deacon Food Distribution 10:00 AM Straight Up AA 1:00 PM SJO rehearsal
19 10:30 AM Worship Service	20 10:00 AM Circle of Grace	21 7:00 PM M.A.L.E.s	22 5:30 PM SESSION	23	24 9:30 AM Kerygma	25 8:30 AM SJO rehearsal 10:00 AM Straight Up AA
26 10:30 AM Worship Service	27 7:00 PM Circle of Kindness	28 1:00 PM Circle Of Hope	29	30	1 9:30 AM Kerygma	2 8:30 AM SJO rehearsal 10:00 AM Straight Up AA

First Presbyterian Church of San Bernardino

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Monday-Thursday
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.