



First Presbyterian Church of San Bernardino

First Press

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October 2021



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Confirmation Celebration

by Pastor Sandy Tice

On Sunday September 26, 2021, we received 7 students from our confirmation class into membership:

Asher Gano and his sponsor, Raymond Olivarez

Ethan Gano and his sponsor, Nick Eckert

Breanna Nord and her sponsor, Stephanie Ross

Owen Morris and his sponsor, Reyna Jones

Maddie Ramirez and her sponsor, Rena Nolin

Kendra Lamb and her sponsor, Amy Smith

Joseph Ramirez and his sponsor, Donna Feit

(Also pictured: Caden Eckert, Sandy Tice, Wendy Lamb)

Caden and Wendy and Nick and I have delighted in listening to their questions, and reading their statements of faith. Friends, I invite you to read these slowly- not in a hurry to 'get through' them, but in order to *listen* to what they are telling you they have learned and heard and seen among us. This is what our kids are saying back to us:

continued on next page

continued from front page

About God:

I believe in a God that is loving, forgiving, giving, not judgmental, and kind.

I believe in God who wants justice and is the creator of the universe.

I believe in a loving God who throughout my life has taught me to love all people.

I believe that our forgiving and caring God lives within every being on this great green earth.

I believe in a loving God who came to the earth as Jesus and died for our sins on the cross.

I believe in a God who is loving and caring. Along with Jesus, he gives me a safe, loving place to be both physically and mentally.

About the Church:

He welcomes me into the church with open, loving arms.

To me, the church is a place to learn about God where everyone is welcome regardless of difference.

The purpose of the church is to create a community using God's word and take care of the children of God-all humans-around them.

Through the teachings of Jesus Christ, I have learned that God loves everyone no matter what, as should we.

What I hope for:

I would like to join the church to worship and continue to learn about God. Along with the congregation, I will help the community.

I hope to become an active member of the church by attending and being involved.

I will set aside time daily to be more connected to God, through prayer.

I will continue to pray and be an active member in youth group to deepen my relationship with God.

I pledge to prioritize my assistance to those in need.

May the Lord guide me to greener pastures and new beginnings starting with being a faithful member of this church here in San Bernardino.

Behold what manner of love our God has given to us, that we should be called 'children of God'- and so we are!



Dreaming and Wondering and Working

You may remember that we have been pursuing partnership possibilities in order to again have our education wing used to bless and nurture God's children. For the moment the hoped-for partnership with the school district has stalled, so we are exploring other avenues. One option might be to work with Head Start, the county pre-school option. Another possibility might be to rent space to a pre-school that we ourselves do not have to operate or oversee. If the pre-school is incorporated as a non-profit, arranging this could be simple. If they are not a non-profit, there are issues that will come into play. I have been exploring these questions with an attorney this week and talking with other church professionals and Early Childhood Educators to determine what might be possible.



We are sure that these rooms are a form of 'holy currency' that God has entrusted to us in order that we might use them to bless the world. For more than a generation (about 29 years) the way to do that has been obvious: to offer life-changing pre-K education to children as the First Pres Child Care Center. We should be proud of the young adults we know who were once students here and are doing such beautiful work in the world. We should be even prouder, I think, of those whose adult lives we do not know- we have been part of investing in children and we can trust that the brain development and creativity and social skills are still bearing fruit for our former students and all their families. Our mandatory closing for Covid forced us to face the fact that our model was no longer workable. We could no longer continue with our very low enrollment (less than 1/3 of our capacity) and the massive financial burden that represented. We still believe in the vision that we named decades ago: to use these classrooms and the gorgeous playground to help educate small children, support families, and invest in the miracle of education. We do not want the space to stand empty.

I have been spending time in the rooms praying this month, asking the Spirit what this space wants to be, and how we can be faithful to a new vision. I invite you to dream and pray with me- for the Source of creativity never runs out of ideas.

Meanwhile, little by little the rooms themselves are becoming ready to hold new gladness. Dave Thomas continues to peel wallpaper, remove adhesive, repair water damage, and empty decades worth of old magazines, broken crayons, and dried glue into the trash. Interns have boxed up and labeled books and cleaned dusty shelves. Very small furniture has been cleaned of the evidence of hundreds of very small hands hanging on to it. Broken objects have been repaired or let go. This week, painting has begun, and I saw it today. The effect is startling. It fills me with hope.

We love a God who is in the business of transformation. And so we are preparing: making space so that we may be surprised by a new beginning. Stay tuned.

~Sandy

Keep Military Members in Your Prayers

LCpl Jacob Allen,
US Marine Corps, Cherry Point, North Carolina

Seaman Robert Sandoval,
US Navy, Virginia

PFC Jeremy Allen,
US Marine Corps, San Diego, CA

Petty Officer Noah L. Wierenga,
U.S. Coast Guard Sector Upper Mississippi River

Seaman Mark Munz,
US Navy, San Diego

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

Private Javier Rocha,
US Army, Fort Benning, Georgia

Cadet Grace Wilson
Air Force Academy, Colorado Springs, Colorado



Notes

Why Tech? This is from a recent email to me (Wendy) from Larry Marona who finds himself worshipping from home in this season:

"I don't know if you and Sandy are fully aware of how your/our "virtual" worship affirms and confirms our spiritual lives; It is SOO important to Jeannie and me, and I'm sure, others. Thank you!"

Financial Notes

Financial Report as of August 31, 2021
General Fund

	Actual	Budgeted	Over/(Under)
Pledges	\$265,788.10	253,333.32	12,454.78
Other Income	\$141,311.08	39,555.68	101,755.40
Expense	\$340,798.98	347,859.47	(7,060.49)
Net Income	\$ 88,077.77	(54,970.47)	121,270.67

NOTE: The General Fund income in August includes the forgiveness of our \$85,000 Payroll Protection Plan loan. So, while we receive that forgiveness as income, we did not received that \$85,000 in cash this year.

Division Consolidation

	<u>August</u>	<u>Year to date</u>
General Fund Net Income (Expense)	88,077.77	66,300.20
Child Care Center Net Income (Expense)	1,311.54	(3,559.32)
Deacons Net Income (Expense)	(7,444.02)	8,369.12
NET OPERATING INCOME (EXPENSE)	81,945.29	71,110.00

Tech Training

Raymond Olivarez is offering **tech training at 9:00 a.m., Sunday, October 10.**

If you might be willing to help out in the tech booth about once a month, please come to the training.

Each week we need 1 person to run sound, 1 person to run the LiveStream box (ATEM Mini), and 1 or 2 people to run video. To do this well, we could use a pool of 12-15 people who can cover at least one of these positions.

If you do help out, you will be part of a ministry team offering worship to folks who cannot make it to the sanctuary for various reasons. You will be part of a wonderful group of volunteers. Bonus: you will learn tech and photography/videography skills.

Come and help. We need you.

Your Biggest Fan!

We have new fans in Fellowship Hall, and they are terrific. After an audit of our buildings by an expert whose work is designing and monitoring ventilation systems in hospitals, we have taken steps to make First Pres healthier and more comfortable. You know already about the major cleaning of ductwork in our sanctuary, and our use of additional ventilation there.

Having tackled that, we turned our attention to Fellowship Hall.

Using memorial funds, we removed our 30 year old fans and replaced them with fans that are 1/3 larger in diameter. The new fans have 5 blades compared to the 4 blades on our previous fans. The result is more air circulation and better ventilation- which is good for everyone.

The new fans are neutral in color like the paint on the walls and are streamlined. They blend in nicely and do not draw attention to themselves. Each of the 8 fans has lighting which helps brighten the room in the evenings. They are suspended on drop rods so that they stir the air just overhead, not up at the level of our (very high!) ceilings. It is an improvement from a health standpoint and also an aesthetic update.

Thanks are due to James Welte who ordered the fans and drop rods and to Dave Thomas who arranged for and supervised installation.

In this season of disruption and difficulty, we are not standing still! We are continuing to do all we can to make this place safe, healthy, and well-cared for.

October: A Chance to Return

"We live in times when it often feels like everything is coming undone. This season reminds us that the journey of relinquishing all we hold dear is also a journey of harvesting. Somehow these two come together year after year."

– Christine Valters Paintner in *Sacred Seasons*

Every year as the light changes and the relentless heat of summer in the IE recedes, we turn our attention as a community to abundance and harvest and home. We spend a few weeks reflecting on ideas of stewardship and dreaming together about the year ahead.

Our theme this year is "Return Again," and the threefold invitation is drawn from a sung refrain we will use:

Return to Who you are, Return to What you are

Return to Where you are born and reborn again...

As things grow gradually safer and more ways of gathering become possible, how will we Return? We cannot return to the past. Lord knows we are changed. Life regularly requires us to let go of what was in order to welcome what God is doing now.

But as we relinquish what we must, we find our arms full of the abundance of God's love.

We can Return by recalling **who we are**; by re-membering **what we are**; we can Return to the waters **where we are** named and blessed in order to be born again.

So come and join us online or in person as we Return Again to the One who calls us by name. Let's harvest the gifts of this difficult year, and be surprised again by how God provides.

Mark your calendar for October 31- we will celebrate a very special Reformation Sunday and you won't want to miss it! (details coming to you soon)

So grateful to be journeying with you,

~Sandy

Nominating Committee at Work

"There are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit. There are varieties of service, but it is the same Lord, there are varieties of working but is the same God who inspires them all in every one. To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good..." 1 Corinthians 12:4-8

Our nominating committee, chaired by Ruling Elder Carol Cooper, has begun work in earnest. This is what we believe about the nomination process:

- That all the leadership resources we need are already in this community.
- That God is already at work in some hearts and lives, preparing people to receive a call from us and respond in faith.
- That God is eager to help us to discover and invite those people.
- That if we call the right people, it will be a gift to them, and not a burden. If they are called by God, they will be stretched and blessed in serving in these roles- they will grow in connection to God and to this family of faith, and the gifts that God has given them will be used to bless and heal and build!

Over the next weeks, the committee will be prayerfully discerning who might be ready to serve. They will look at the needs of the congregation, the gifts of the people already on Session, and the gifts people might bring to serve. They will discern where and how God might be working. And they will ask people to serve.

What can you do? ***If you can think of someone whose leadership skills, thoughtfulness, and spiritual maturity you admire, let the committee know by calling the church office or emailing Carol. Sometimes the way the Spirit finds us is through the voice of another.*** You can also pray for the committee as they look for gifted ministers within the congregation, and, if you are asked, prayerfully consider whether this is the right time to offer your gifts to this congregation in this way.

Session Reflection: August and September

by Amy Smith, Clerk of Session

The September Session meeting included experimenting with Elders in person in Fellowship Hall as well as Elders at home joining virtually on Zoom. The purpose was to meet with the members of the confirmation class in person while including those who feel more comfortable meeting virtually. Overall, the process went well with a few hiccups! It gives us hope for possible hybrid meetings in the future for many church committees.

The time with the seven youth exploring joining the church was precious. They are thoughtful and loving and give us hope for the future of our church and our world. This community should be proud of the way they have loved these kids for years and how that love has been perceived by them and is so special. They shared their statements of faith which were inspirational. *(See page 2 to read parts of these statements.)*

In August, Sandy asked Session to read a Diana Butler Bass article about the increase in membership in mainline churches as opposed to evangelicals. This is a new trend, and the session shared its thoughts on how we tell our “story” to someone visiting the church. Some of the comments included how we care for our children and take our responsibilities seriously, our love and caring for the community, caring about our ecumenical interfaith siblings, and how our church provides a safe place to question and learn.

Two other things of interest:

- Since the House of Welcome no longer needs our building at 1875 N. D Street, we are again exploring the possibility of selling the property.
- We continue to explore how the child-care center rooms might be used. *(See page 3 to read more about this.)*

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

It's Wonderful to See

We have our Food Giveaway on Tuesday and Thursday every week. We normally have the same people working on those days, but because of one reason or another some people haven't been able to make it. I have been relying on former interns who graduated from San Bernardino High School in June. I should not call them former interns, because we have something we tell all of our interns, “Once an intern, always an intern.”

I met both Isabel and Marlene at the beginning of their sophomore year. It has been a joy and a blessing to be able to watch how they have grown in confidence and in how they are able to help other people. I was able to just leave the Food Giveaway in their hands and they took care of the people who came to the church in need of food and a kind word.

When I first met Isabel and Marlene they were a little shy and were not sure what to think of me or our Internship Program. Now they both love working here at the church and are a little sad they cannot apply to be interns any longer. As I think back to when I met them, it is wonderful to see how they have continuously moved forward and become the outstanding young people they are now.

--Rick Rodriguez

Deadline!

The *First Press*, the newsletter of the First Presbyterian Church of San Bernardino, is edited by Wendy Lamb. This is how we communicate with one another about our common life. What is happening in your ministry? We'd love to know. Please submit content to Wendy at newsletter@fpcsb.net.

Deadline for the November issue of the *First Press*: Friday, October 15

KidSpace!

The Nurture Committee of First Presbyterian Church in San Bernardino invites all children between the ages of 4-11 years to join us for KidSpace starting **Sunday, October 10, 2021**. The children will join their parents in Worship at 10:30 a.m., then be escorted to KidSpace following the Pastor's "Time with the Children." The Safe Reopen task force has recommended we meet under a large easy-up in the Children's Courtyard with teachers and children masked. At the end of Worship, please meet your children in the Children's Courtyard.

We are especially excited to begin KidSpace as we are starting a new curriculum titled "A Joyful Path: Spiritual Curriculum for Young Hearts and Minds".

We plan to be flexible in our scheduling of Kid Space this Fall. We will follow the Worship schedule so the children can continue to stay in Worship for Communion and special Sundays. Of course, we will be mindful of and comply with any changes in COVID safety protocols from the County, San Bernardino School District, and our First Pres safety task force.

If you would like to consider being part of the KidSpace teaching team, please contact Jeanne Clark or Nancy Horstmann.

Teach Us to Pray

One of the things several confirmation students mentioned in their statements of faith was a commitment to pray every day. Building off this idea, we will begin this year in youth group with an October series on prayer practices. With Wendy Lamb leading, **we invite all youth in grades 6-12 to meet after church on October 10, 17, and 24**. We will check in with one another and then introduce and practice several ways of praying. Students will be invited to try them out for the week and reflect the next week on their experience.

Meanwhile, the Nurture Committee invites parents and friends of the youth group to consider hosting a youth activity. We are creating a checklist of steps for how to offer a youth group outing or other activity.

Board of Deacons 2021

Martha Pinckney, Moderator

Steve Smith, Pastoral Support

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

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

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

October Birthdays and Anniversaries

Oct 2	Julie Aguilera Jacob Matthew Kern Dave Thomas
Oct 4	Jennifer (Coyne) Scerra Lisa (Coyne) Star
Oct 5	Caleb Christopher Jones
Oct 7	Carmen Avila Edward Munz
Oct 9	Phyllis Hough Jerry Patterson
Oct 11	Zachary Garcia
Oct 12	Mimi Lange Jeoff Molcan Owen Morris
Oct 16	Tino Garza
Oct 17	Jacob Babcock Bobbi Cummings
Oct 20	Robin Edwards
Oct 21	Marilyn Kraft
Oct 22	Adam Nord Neal Williams
Oct 23	Thomas Patrick Dunn Adelaide Shenton
Oct 24	Geri Atkins
Oct 25	Gigi Hanna Nancy Le Roy
Oct 28	Joshua Fletcher
Oct 29	Frank Law
Oct 30	Mario & Mary Bolaños Rebecca Allen

A Voice to Affirm All People: Peace and Global Witness Offering

On October 3, World Communion Sunday, we give to the Peace and Global Witness Offering. This is an article by **Bryce Wiebe, Director, Office of Special Offerings, PC(USA)**, describing how one congregation uses its Offering.

The Washington Corrections Center for Women is both the largest and the only maximum and medium security prison for women in the state. It's surrounded by barbed wire, and you have to go through five locked gates to get to the main population.

Inside this fortress of concrete and steel, thanks to the work of three dynamic Presbyterian leaders, a unique worshipping community has been planted — Hagar's Community Church.

"The women I have the opportunity and the privilege to pastor to are wonderful and deeply knowledgeable about the Bible," said Rev. Lane Brubaker, who leads Hagar's Community Church. "They are learning that they are still indeed loved by God and are not defined by their worst mistake. But, rather, they are defined by their beloved."

Olympia Presbytery worked over several years with Prison Congregations of America to set up the prison ministry. Rev. Christine Long led the effort to plant a church that would provide a safe, open and inclusive place for women to worship inside the prison. It was finally established in January 2019.

Brubaker leads Bible study and worship on Saturday evenings. She handles a more contemporary service with music while her husband, Crawford, leads a quieter, contemplative worship time. The two simultaneous services were developed after talking with the women —some of whom needed time to quietly reflect after living in the general population, while others longed for interaction. But what's perhaps most impactful is providing a place of acceptance.

"For some reason in prisons, groups and programs tend to be more conservative and not accepting of all orientations and gender identities," she said. "We are a different voice that affirms all people, and we give them a place to be honest about who they are. I'm often asked, 'Why are you so much more inclusive than the other groups?' My answer is that it's not just Hagar's Community Church, but it's what my denomination thinks."

As part of her ministry, Brubaker spends several days every week behind bars. She offers six pastoral care groups throughout the week — from guided meditation and breathing practices to healing through music. She sees the first year of the church as just the beginning.

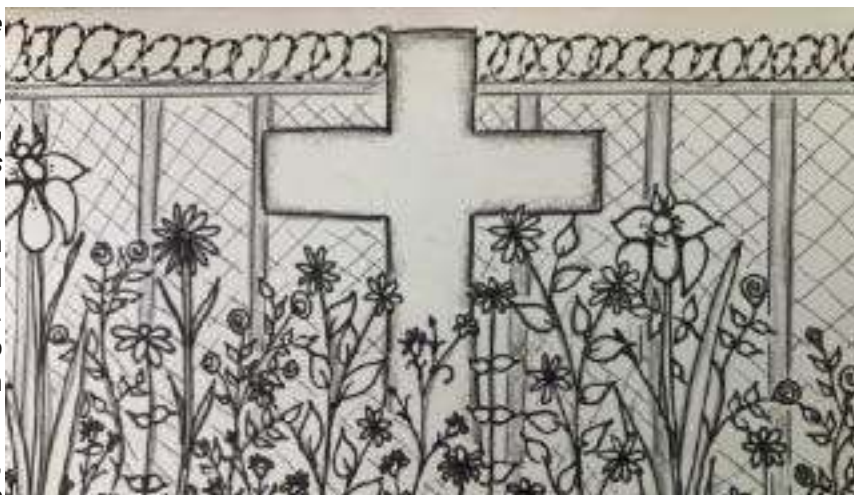
"We are helping women process and handle their incarceration through God's love and guidance, and we want this to be a healthy, sustained ministry," Brubaker explained. "There are some women who are incarcerated for many years, some for their whole lives. The dream of the presbytery when this started was that it would be a ministry that continues long into the future."

The promise of a long-term ministry is there thanks to the support of congregations like Skyline Presbyterian Church in Tacoma and visionary church leaders like Rev. Robyn Hogue. She saw the opportunity to provide for this new ministry that works toward reconciliation and expand the congregation's vision of what God makes possible.

The church used its portion of the Peace & Global Witness Offering to fund Hagar's Community Church and, as a result, has grown its Offering. Brubaker says the prison ministry would not be able to maintain itself without those financial gifts and that every congregation should be looking to expand outreach to places not yet considered.

"I think there's a lot of room for more worshipping communities like this to be established," she said. "That would be an awesome response to this ministry — that others would start doing this work, not just in prisons but in other places too. All of us should be listening to the call and listening to God to find where these worshipping communities are needed in all sorts of different, unique places."

Give to the Peace & Global Witness Offering to continue the valuable ministry of worshipping communities.





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OCTOBER 2021

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

First Presbyterian Church of San Bernardino

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Dr. Wendy Long Lamb
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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.