



First Presbyterian Church of San Bernardino

# First Press

March 2022



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## Lent 2022: A season of Earth and Soul

*According to the Celtic Christian tradition, there are two books of divine revelation: the book of scripture and the book of nature. Creation itself is a sacred text through which the presence of God is revealed to us.*

*Jesus himself exemplifies our connection to creation. He expressed many of his teachings through parables, profound stories that reveal the nature of God and God's reign. Much of the language Jesus used is earth-based, rooted in metaphors of seed, fruit, and harvest. These are images with which his listeners would have identified.*

*--Christine Valters Painter*

On Ash Wednesday, March 2, we enter the season of Lent, the Church's time of preparation for Easter. It is traditionally a time of making space for God by means of fasting, giving, and prayer. Our focus this season in worship and preaching will be Sacred Earth. We will be seeking God's presence and guidance found in the natural world, as a way of focusing our prayer, our giving, and our fasting (or letting go).

We will be using themes, prayers, and images from several writers including J. Philip Newell who gave a presentation on his book *Sacred Earth, Sacred Soul* last Wednesday night. If you were unable to make the presentation or would like to view it again, it will be available on the church YouTube channel for one week.

Through the season, We will be using the four elements to invoke images of nature in the Sanctuary. We will offer a prayer practice for each of the elements in the Order of Worship if you would like to consider making an added discipline your Lenten Practice.

## Sacred Earth Sacred Soul Event



How delighted we were to be able to gather with John Philip Newell and Cami Twilling! Fellowship Hall has been still and empty for too long- I imagine that the room has been longing for the sound of voices and laughter and conversation just as I have. What a joy to be nourished together, body and soul. Whether you've been a member here forever or have never been here before, or somewhere in between- we are grateful for your presence.



Our supper was both simple and brief, an opportunity to break bread together- with an eye to mitigating risk. Interns (masked) helped serve soup (black bean, veggie-veggie, red lentil curry, mushroom rice, vegetarian split pea) and we visited at tables (with some distance), telling each other what had drawn us to the evening.

With the help of James and Merry Beth & David folks were able to join by the miracle of livestream, including Nora O'Toole's friends from Sugar Creek Pres in Ohio ("this is worth staying up late for!")

In Newell's most recent book *Sacred Earth, Sacred Soul: Celtic wisdom for reawakening to what our souls know and healing the world*, there are threads and themes that readers of his work will be familiar with, but it feels like a summary and a culmination.

We spoke about the yearning in our time for a spirituality of intimacy with the earth instead of disconnection, about a response to poverty that is grounded the belief that every life is sacred. We spoke of the Light that dwells in each person, and the way that matter matters.

We spoke about the way that the Celtic tradition and most of the prophetic people he names in his book were not appreciated by the Church and did not align with official teaching. We wondered about how to recover and reconstruct other traditions- particularly Native wisdom. What would it be like if we came to encounters with other human beings or other traditions expecting to find Light? We spoke of the difference between doctrine and story. We wondered about how we find permission to trust the Voice within us, and the Light we have been given.

We were invited to some moments of quiet to notice what was stirring in us, what wisdom might arise in us in response, and what compassionate action might be called for. I found myself longing to make space for more opportunities for members of this community and students from SBHS to go outside and listen for the Holy. Stay tuned, I hope to add at least two forest walks for members and at least one more outdoor adventure for students. (see article on Joshua Tree)

We are, he suggested, in a moment of Grace, on the verge of something new. Together we can dream it into being: a new relationship with the earth and with each other. We don't have to do it by ourselves.

Thanks to all who made this possible, especially Marion Wiens, Christa Wallis, Amy Smith, Mary Bolaños, Melodee Kistner, and Laurie Stafford.





# Notes



## Leaky Roof in Fellowship Hall

As some of you may know, our Fellowship Hall roof is leaking in several places. Over the years it has been repaired several times costing the church a pretty penny each time. It has sprouted several new leaks over the last few months and it is now time to get the roofing replaced. It will be a great undertaking as the roof has some of our solar panels that will need to be taken off and reinstalled once the new roof has been completed.

James Welte and the Building and Grounds Committee have been getting bids for the repair work. Session will be looking for funds for this expensive and necessary undertaking.

## New Year Reminders

Remember, the post office won't deliver mail to us at the church since we changed our address. Send mail to

**First Presbyterian Church**

**P.O. Box 2729**

**San Bernardino, CA 92406**

If you send your pledge in by an auto-debit from your bank, remember to check your settings, and make sure the bank has our mailing address and the correct amount to send each time.

If you want to know more about electronic giving, contact the church office.

## Financial Notes

### Financial Report as of December 31, 2021

#### General Fund

	Actual	Budgeted	Over/(Under)
Pledges	\$415,916.96	380,000.00	35,916.96
Other Income	\$155,638.02	58,183.56	97,454.46
Expense	\$507,616.97	520,809.23	(13,192.26)
Net Income	\$ 63,938.01	(82,625.67)	146,563.68

The General Fund income reflects the forgiveness of our \$85,000 Payroll Protection Plan loan. We receive that forgiveness as income, but we did not receive that \$85,000 in cash IN 2021. Without that amount our Net Income(Expense) for the year would be (21,061.99).

### Division Consolidation

	<u>December</u>	<u>Year to date</u>
General Fund Net Income (Expense)	1,192.67	63,938.01
Child Care Center Net Income (Expense)	0.00	(3,559.32)
Deacons Net Income (Expense)	(8,911.67)	0
NET OPERATING INCOME (EXPENSE)	(7,719.00)	60,378.69

## Keep Military Members in Your Prayers

**LCpl Jacob Allen,**  
US Marines, Cherry Point,  
North Carolina

**PFC Jeremy Allen,**  
US Marines, 29 Palms, CA

**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

**Cadet Grace Wilson**  
Air Force Academy, Colorado Springs,  
Colorado

## In Memoriam

**January 2022**

**Betty Sabine**

**August 14, 1926 - January 28, 2022**

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



## ***Life Skillz kids outdoors on Presidents' Day Weekend!***

13 of us piled in to 3 cars early on Saturday morning and journeyed to Joshua Tree (which feels like another world!). With equipment and certified guides from Joshua Tree Uprising, we explored rock climbing where fear and trust and courage come together. Students climbed a huge rock face with the help of pastor Wayne Morrow of the Desert Hills Presbyterian Church, (who is a certified climbing instructor) under a bright sun and glorious sky. Kids faced their fears, tested their strength, and cheered each other on.



We made dinner and ate at Desert Hills church, then built a campfire in their firepit in the cold winter air. We made S'mores as the moon rose over the horizon. After seeing several surprised expressions as marshmallows burst into flame, Sandy asked how many of them had ever made S'mores before: fewer than half! Ernesto invited us to reflect on the day with the metric of rose/thorn/bud- in other words, what was a bright or beautiful moment (rose), what was difficult or painful or dangerous (thorn), and what new possibility might be emerging? Students

spoke of bravery and perseverance, fear and safety, trust and confidence. They offered gratitude for growing confidence and sense of self, for friendship and for support. It was truly lovely.

We bedded down on the floor in sleeping bags the congregation loaned or donated, and slept soundly after such a full day. In the morning, we packed up and cleared out before the congregation arrived (it is hard to roll a sleeping bag well if you've never slept in one before!), then spent the day in the park hiking. We stopped for some souvenirs, and then arrived home just before the sun was setting.

The trip was led by Ernesto Ocegueda, a member of our original LifeSkillz circle, who recently graduated from Cal State Monterey Bay. We were able to hire him to coordinate the trip with a grant from our presbytery's Partners in Ministry Committee (so kids paid only \$20 to attend and there was no cost to First Pres). He was supported by elder John-Paul Fletcher, deacon Carmen Avila (who was also in the class of 2016 at SBHS), and pastor Sandy. He did a tremendous job of planning, preparing, cooking (who knew he could do that?!), and guiding. He is a gifted leader who finds joy sharing what he has discovered about the power of the natural world to steady us in stressful times and to help us reflect on our lives. He was mindful of the details and schedules, but also open to unexpected joy (see cooking photo). I was deeply moved by his leadership and effectiveness.

It was such a wonderful time that we found ourselves asking "how can we do this more often?" Stay tuned, as we will try to do at least one more such trip this year! Turns out that taking kids to the wilderness helps them discover who they are at home, helps them see the beauty of the earth and the glory of the skies and the Love which from our birth over and around us lies. Thanks be to God for days like these!



## **March Birthdays and Anniversaries**

Mar 2	Kristine French Lynda Savage Kurt Star
Mar 3	Teofila Rosemarie Fletcher Asher Gano
Mar 5	Joyce Lyons
Mar 7	Kathy Showman
Mar 9	Sherman Ballard Brent & Joanna Nord
Mar 12	Richard Rodriguez
Mar 13	Adam Kistner Dotti Garcia
Mar 14	Kevin Coyne Breanna Nord Norma Woodward
Mar 18	Rebecca Nelligan Todd & Elizabeth Wright
Mar 20	Jerry Martin
Mar 22	Laura Munz
Mar 23	Ann Aguilera Grant Garcia
Mar 24	Randy French Linda Saenz
Mar 26	Marianna Fowles
Mar 27	Noah Alarcon Noé Falconi
Mar 29	Reyna Jones Stephanie Ross
Mar 30	Debora & Ron Holk Emma Kern

## The Work of your Session

by Amy Smith, Clerk of Session

Session met in December and January for our monthly meetings. Highlights in December included plans for a rock-climbing trip to Joshua Tree with LifeSkillz kids organized by a LifeSkillz graduate who specializes in leading such events (made possible by a Presbytery grant to underwrite the costs); a visit from John Philip Newell (see page 2); delighting in a new tenant, Oak Tree Learning Center, in our church school rooms in January; and a transition from Raymond Olivarez leading the livestreaming tech team, handing off those duties to James Welte. Buildings and Grounds (B&G) issues continue to be addressed with financing for new flooring, window inserts for existing doors, and new doors for several of the classrooms being approved. We were moved by a report from Nancy Wiens as she continues her work as a Spiritual Director with those involved in dismantling systemic racism and building just communities and her work with Indigenous Revitalization in the Redwoods Presbytery, both ministries made possible from a grant administered through our church.

The January meeting welcomed two new Elders, Martha Pinckney and Pat Morris, joining newly re-elected Brooke Dvorak and Mary Bolaños. The first meeting of the year is always filled with many administrative actions such as electing officers of the corporation, clerk, and treasurer and forming committees for the coming year. B&G shared that the roof on Fellowship Hall urgently needs to be replaced which spurred discussion on where the funds would come from. Fortunately, the building at 1875 N. D Street, gifted to us years ago and used to house the Riverside Presbytery offices for many years, has sold and closed escrow February 1st. We hope to use a portion of those funds to offset some of the cost of a new roof.

This church is blessed to have a thoughtful and innovative Session that cares deeply for this congregation. I encourage you to read the Annual Report for deeper insight into the many works of First Presbyterian, San Bernardino. You will be proud to be part of such a wonderful community!

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Our annual meeting to discuss the annual report and elect nominating committee members will take place during worship on Sunday, February 27. We will also be ordaining and installing our new officers. It will be a joyous day as we re-enter the Sanctuary once again.

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### The Next Steps as We Gather

Beginning February 27, we will meet in our sanctuary for worship on Sundays at 10:30. Though the state of CA is scheduled to end the mask mandate for vaccinated persons, we respectfully ask that attendees continue to mask, as indoor spaces pose more risk than the outdoors and many of our members are at high risk for one reason or another.

We feel comfortable sharing modified coffee hour (what fun it was to speak to many of you last week!) While the weather is mild, we will offer outdoor coffee hour with individually wrapped nibbles for you to enjoy.

We will also return to in-person and hybrid meetings in March. Check with the church office for best practices and to schedule events.

This is a confusing time, since there is no consensus about what is safe and practical. Restaurants, shops, and other public spaces utilize different standards from one county (or one proprietor) to the next. We are committed to returning to a full and joyful life together, one step at a time.

If you feel uneasy in any way, please know that we will continue to livestream worship and offer some hybrid meetings so you can join from home.

We continue to be grateful to the Safe Re-opening Committee for their thoughtful work during these challenging times.

## Session 2022

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

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

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

**Class of 2024:** Mary Bolaños, Brooke Dvorak, Patrick Morris, Martha Pinckney

## Food Ministry Family and Friends

by Rick Rodriguez

Getting food to our neighbors involves not only congregational members, but their family and friends. How might you and yours become more involved?

- 5 people from Crestline unload trucks, bag food, and help with Saturday distribution, just because Neal Williams told them about what we do.
- Frank Thomas, Dave Thomas' Dad, comes and helps on most Tuesdays and Thursdays. Frank just turned 93-years-old and almost never stops working.
- Sam Lange (Mimi's son) comes most Tuesdays to make sure our wagons are full of food and ready to go out the door of Room 12.
- Margaret Doane updates our resource list and prepares part of the monthly report to CAP, even off her feet.
- Helen Babcock, David Snyder, Dan Direen, Brent Nord, and Steve Smith regularly load, drive, and unload Community Action Partnership (CAP) food.
- Kendra Lamb works alongside her parents, Wendy & Kevin, and Mary Bolaños, on the Saturday distribution, passing out food to walk up guests.
- Charlotte and Cindi Pringle are regulars on the rotation of 14 Feeding America shoppers. In February, they took on some new Saturday tasks.
- Some San Bernardino High students so frequently bag & distribute that they had to be convinced to miss distribution to go rock climbing. They still helped raise the EZ-ups before they left for Joshua Tree.

Over 50 people have volunteered in food ministry so far in 2022. We are always happy for new people to become involved, or for experienced volunteers to get involved in new ways. Beyond bagging & distribution, we also sort, assemble handouts, make various kits, communicate with participants and partners, and complete administrative tasks.

You can also donate plastic grocery bags, backyard produce, or funds (through Deacons), pray for our food recipients, and let neighbors who need food know about us. (More info at: <https://www.fpcsb.net/resources>)

If you would like to help with the food ministry, please call or text Rick Rodriguez at (909) 567-6421 or email at [rrodriguez31260@gmail.com](mailto:rrodriguez31260@gmail.com). And yes, bring along a friend, family member, or neighbor!



*Kendra and Kevin Lamb bring food over to the walk-up distribution.*

## Board of Deacons 2022

**Rebecca Allen, Moderator; Steve Smith, Pastoral Support**

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

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

**Class of 2024:** Dan Direen, Robin Edwards, Richard Rodriguez, Katie Smith



New 'PYT Beyond' will now be before rather than after the 2025 Triennium, with time to dig deep into the Mathew 25 theme

*by Paul Seebeck | Presbyterian News Service*

**LOUISVILLE** — Because of the ongoing pandemic, the 2022 Presbyterian Youth Triennium, which had been scheduled for July 24-27 in Indianapolis, Indiana, has been canceled.

According to PYT director Gina Yeager-Buckley, this decision came out of a deep desire to prioritize the safety and health of all Triennium participants, including those working the event.

"This decision involved a great deal of difficult, thoughtful and prayerful discernment with our multiple planning teams and we are confident it is the right call," she said. "Dealing with the ramifications of COVID and the necessary safety protocols that we would need to build were overshadowing every element of Triennium. The most important goal of PYT is to provide a place where Presbyterian youth can safely and creatively explore God's word and Jesus' path."

Yeager-Buckley said PYT is in the process of renegotiating contracts with the Indianapolis Convention Center and area hotels.

"We're excited to share that we've just been offered dates in July 2025 in Indianapolis for the next PYT," she said.

The decision to cancel the 2022 Triennium came after a recent meeting with the COVID Medical Advisory Team, which includes physicians and immunologists. Senior leaders from PYT, the Presbyterian Mission Agency and the Office of the General Assembly heard from the medical team that even with vaccine and mask requirements, there would be COVID clusters — not just individual cases.

Because PYT participants travel and attend as delegations, a five- day pre-event quarantine would also have been required, because young people typically travel to PYT with a whole new group of peers.

"You don't often attend PYT with your youth group, but with a group of strangers," Yeager-Buckley said. "The burden of adding an additional five days of programming, shelter, meals, etc., on to registrars with already full plates caused us a lot of concern."






Even with the pre-event, PYT was told to expect clusters of participants with positive test results. Yeager-Buckley said she began to see something taking shape that is not what Triennium should be — or something the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) should encourage.

Leaders also began to understand that if PYT moved forward with the event, organizers would have to create an onsite COVID testing clinic and COVID care facility to care for those who would be in quarantine after testing positive.

This provided clarity that the largest gathering of Presbyterian youth every three years — Triennium attracts up to 5,000 people — would have to be postponed.

"As we spent more and more of our time trying to figure out a COVID mitigation strategy, it became clear that this wasn't the right time to bring young people together for this wonderful event," said the Rev. Dr. Ray Jones III, director of Theology, Formation and Evangelism.



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
27 10:30 AM Worship Service (Ordination & Installation of New Officers and Annual Congregational Meeting)	28	1 7:00 PM Circle of Faith 7:00 PM Mensch Group	2  6:00 PM Ash Wednesday Service	3	4 9:30 AM Kerygma	5 8:30 AM SJO rehearsal 10:00 AM Straight Up AA
6  10:30 AM Worship Service with Communion	7	8 10:30 AM Retired Public Employees Assn. 6:30 PM Deacon Committees 7:30 PM Deacon Board	9 Companions on the Inner Way 6:30 PM Worship Committee	10 Companions on the Inner Way 2:00 PM Ann Anderson Memorial Service 4:30 PM Nurture Committee	11 Companions on the Inner Way 9:30 AM Kerygma	12 Companions on the Inner Way 8:30 AM SJO rehearsal 10:00 AM Straight Up AA
13  10:30 AM Worship Service	14	15 Deadline for First Press articles 1:00 PM Circle of Grace and Hope 7:00 PM Mensch Group	16 5:30 PM Stewardship Committee	17 9:00 AM Friendship Circle 5:30 PM Buildings & Grounds Committee	18 Winter Camp @ Big Bear Presbyterian Conference Center 8:30 AM Food Bagging 9:30 AM Kerygma	19 Winter Camp @ Big Bear Presbyterian Conference Center 9:00 AM Deacon Food Distribution 10:00 AM Straight Up AA 1:00 PM SJO rehearsal
20  Winter Camp @ Big Bear Presbyterian Conference Center 10:30 AM Worship Service	21	22 7:00 PM Circle of Kindness	23 5:30 PM SESSION	24	25 9:30 AM Kerygma	26 8:30 AM SJO rehearsal 10:00 AM Straight Up AA
27  10:30 AM Worship Service	28	29	30	31	1 9:30 AM Kerygma	2 8:30 AM SJO rehearsal 10:00 AM Straight Up AA

## First Presbyterian Church of San Bernardino

1900 North D Street  
San Bernardino, CA 92405

### Mailing Address:

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Office: 882-3308  
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[www.fpcsb.net](http://www.fpcsb.net)

### Office Hours:

Monday-Friday  
9 am to 4:30 pm

The Rev. Dr. Sandy Tice  
Pastor

Dr. Wendy Long Lamb  
Commissioned Local Pastor

The Rev. Dr. Steve Smith  
Pastoral Support

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.*