



First Presbyterian Church of San Bernardino

# First Press

February 2024



Clockwise from left: John-Paul and Stephanie with their family, Ryan with his sister and cousin, Jeanne and Robin, and Christa each spoke about what this congregation means to them and what it means to be "in the heart of the city for good" at the 150th Anniversary Celebration for First Pres San Bernardino.



## In this issue

### Mission Assessment

Team.....2-3

Notes.....4

Session Reflection.....5

Mesquite Trees.....5

Food Distribution.....6

Celebrations.....6

150th Reflection.....7-8

Celebrations.....7

Retreat Flyer.....8

Officer Bios.....9-10

## 150th Anniversary

As we continue to move forward, the 150th Anniversary Celebration gave us a sense of past, present, and future. It was a day of celebration to mark the end of one year and the beginning of the next. The congregation has been in the heart of the city for good for 150 years and remains faithfully planted now. You can read Christa's reflection on page 7.

## Ash Valentine's Wednesday

January was busy with ordination and installation. Lent begins soon, on February 14\* to be exact. We are offering Services of Ashes with Communion at 12:30 p.m. and 5:30 p.m. The 12:30 service will be a simple spoken service of prayer and scripture, word and sacrament. The 5:30 service will include music.

## Lenten Retreat and Lent

Join us for our Lenten Retreat on February 17, The Art of Apology: Contemplative Justice (see teeny tiny flyer on p. 8 or pick up a full size flyer at the church) and for worship during Lent as we look at ideas of repentance, apology, reparation, and reconciliation.

Watch for word of possible quiet nights during Lent. I hope to see you during this season of reflection.

~Wendy

\*Fun Fact: the quirks of Easter dating mean that Ash Wednesday was on Valentine's Day in 2018, is this year, will be in 2029, and then not again this century.



# Mission Assessment Team

## First Presbyterian Church of San Bernardino Reflections on “Our Church Values”



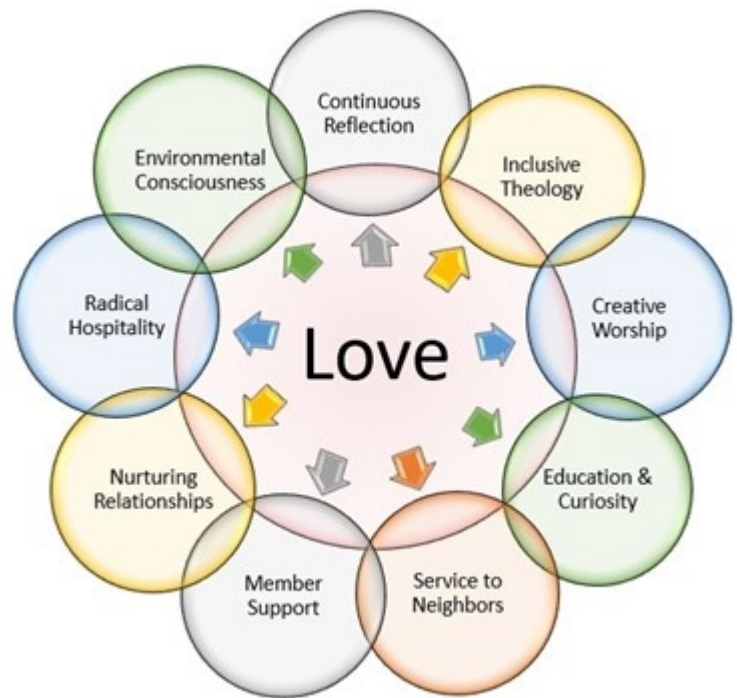
Over the past four months, the Mission Assessment Team (MAT) identified nine core values of our church. These core values describe who we strive to be, what we strive to do, and how we strive to do it. The MAT discerned that our values flow from a central principle of love... in other words, love is our why.

During our recent 150th Anniversary Celebration, the congregation was invited to identify how we live, experience and act upon our core values, both collectively as a church community and individually as members of the community. The word cloud above distills the essence of our collective written input. The bigger and bolder a word, the more times it was used. But look carefully at the more than 320 words captured in the cloud. You will find they weave a beautiful and rich tapestry.

See the final values document on the next page.

## Central Principle: Love

While there is much we do not know, we know God's love is all-encompassing and we move forward in each moment with a purpose to grow and share that love. We come to this time and place with a history we honor, cherish, study, and critique. From our purpose and history springs forth spiritual and intellectual curiosity, an open heart to welcome and embrace all God's people, an understanding of our need for forgiveness and grace, and a desire to be active participants in sharing God's love with our members, our neighbors, our community, and our world.



## Our Church Values:

- **Continuous discernment, experimentation, and reflection** as ways to hear the Spirit of God and to practice our faith, with an invitation to all to be in Christ, be loved, and be of use.
- **Inclusive theology** that is informed by, and cognizant of: our diversity; the ambiguities and complexities of current social, cultural, and scientific realities; and the importance of both being (our state of existence and presence in the moment) and becoming (our state of transformation and possibility for the future).
- **Creative worship** with respect and openness for liturgical traditions and willingness to adapt or include new ones; with strong roots and commitment to quality music and artistic expression in worship and gatherings.
- **Education and curiosity** with Church as a learning environment/community, underpinned by a hopeful expectation that God speaks to us through scripture, story, art, shared experience, and collective wisdom.
- **Service to neighbors**, especially in areas of basic needs (food, water, shelter, and education), understanding we engage the divine in the hungry, the stranger, and the sick; and committing ourselves to work for social justice, equity, and wellness in our community and the world.
- **Support of congregational members** who sustain us and enable us to serve others, including our church staff and leadership.
- **Warm and nurturing relationships** with all whom we encounter, including a strong commitment to interfaith dialogue, understanding, and experiences; guided by healthy and skilled leadership that is intentional, respected, and consensus driven.
- **Openness and radical hospitality** understanding the Church belongs to many: our congregation, our neighborhood, those we serve, those who use our facilities, and the many community partners and friends without whom we could not fulfill our mission.
- **Environmental consciousness** grounded in gratitude for the life-giving natural world, responsibility to ensure its sustainability and flourishing, and understanding that it provides fruitful ground for spiritual practice, growth, and sabbath.





# Notes

## Food Ministry News

Marilyn received a donation of \$11.00 from a food recipient. Fred always picks up food for his friend Joe. Even as Fred is now living in his car, he still picks up for his friend. Fred has been a food participant as long as Marilyn has been here.

## Financial Notes

Financial Report as of December 31, 2023.

### General Fund

	Actual	Budgeted	Over/(Under)
Pledges	\$364,330.71	357,644.00	6,686.71
Other Income*	\$152,062.85	132,400.92	19,661.93
Expense	\$542,820.42	555,300.30	(12,479.48)
Net Income	\$(26,427.26)	(65,255.38)	38,828.12

### Division Consolidation

	December	Year to date
General Fund Net Income (Expense)	13,546.15	(26,427.26)
Deacons Net Income (Expense)	1,416.72	12,449.35
Net Operating Income (Expense)	14,962.87	(13,977.91)

Deacon Brad Smith received this note from Claire, volunteer coordinator at Central City Lutheran Mission.

Good Afternoon:

Well, the children's Kinder tree event was a huge success. It was crazy here as most of the families came pretty much at the same time. We were Distributing the gifts, and it was wonderful.

Thank you to all of you for your generosity and support. These kids' smiles were bigger than life. The bad news is I did not take photos. The rush came as we were just getting everything outside and set up and we ran like crazy to keep up with it all.

The joy you gave to our children is not something that can be measured. It is larger than what they or we could imagine. I promise that next year photos will be taken throughout the event, and you will be able to see just how great the love you shared was enjoyed by all.

May God Bless you and all of your members who participated. Wishing you Happy Holidays and a Wonderful New Year. THANK YOU



P.S. Don't forget to pick up some goodies at the **P.W. Super Bowl Bake Sale** on Feb. 11. following Worship.



*Volunteers receive the gifts at CCLM.*

## In Memoriam

**January 2024**

**Jennifer Skoglund Shenton**

**September 15, 1965-January 21, 2024**

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

## Youth Group Lunch

**Sunday, February 4, at 12 in room 11.**

6-12 grade youth. Let's eat together, catch up with one another, and try to count to 20\*

\*If you're confused, come to youth group and find out what it means (or ask a youth later).

## December/January Session Highlights

by Amy Smith, Clerk of Session

Your Session met in December and January and welcomed new Session members Sue Alexander, Norm Wallis, Kathy Showman and returning member, Jeanne Clark. We enjoyed fellowshiping over lovingly prepared (or purchased!) appetizers, pasta and desserts!

We discussed chapters 4 and 5 of the book – *Following God into a Hopeful Future-Leading Faithful Innovation*. There have been so many thoughts, ideas and stories prompted by this book which the Mission Assessment Team (MAT) is also reading. Mary shared the status of the MAT which is working to consolidate all the information and feedback they have gathered. They hope to have a draft Mission Assessment Plan (MAP) by the end of February. Please keep the Mission Assessment Team (MAT) and Session in your prayers in the coming months as they discern the will of God and the Holy Spirit.

Buildings and Grounds always has much on their plate – one current priority is making the Chapel usable again. Norm Wallis has spent hours providing free labor to begin this process and B&G will be looking at costs to complete the process. We are blessed to have funds from the Andrews endowment which allocated a large amount for worship purposes to work with. B&G is also in the process of renegotiating the leases with Oak Tree Learning Center and Key Essentials to cover our costs.

Session approved a draft budget in December and a revised one in January which still shows a deficit (but not as large!). They continue to look for ways to cut costs and increase revenue.

Finally, want to highlight the upcoming Lenten Retreat on Saturday, February 17th. Nancy Wiens (daughter of our beloved Marion Wiens) will be presenting *The Art of Apology - Contemplative Justice: Exploring our church's next steps in dismantling the Doctrine of Discover through film, contemplative silence, discussion and personal healing*. It will be from 10:00 – 4:00 and includes lunch at no cost. Hoping many in the congregation will attend. Please RSVP to Mimi at [pres.first@gmail.com](mailto:pres.first@gmail.com) or 909-882-3308.

## Session 2024

**Stephen W. Smith, Moderator; Amy Smith, Clerk of Session**

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

**Class of 2025:** Lily Bolaños, Margaret Doane, Jonathan Horstmann, Phyllis Hough

**Class of 2026:** Sue Alexander, Jeanne Clarke, Kathy Showman, Norm Wallis

## Mesquite Trees: A Dangerous Situation by Dave Thomas, Security Captain

Last month the Building and Grounds Committee decided to remove four mesquite trees in the parking lot outside of the



childcare center. Although these trees provided a tremendous amount of shade, they unfortunately were a very weak tree prone to breaking. Over about the last year one tree completely toppled over in a wind storm and three others had significant branches break weighing several hundred pounds. The last tree that broke occurred on a weekend while the parking lot was vacant. If it had broken during a weekday while our childcare center was occupied it would have seriously damaged a vehicle and possibly injured someone if they were inside their car. A secondary problem was observed with the tree roots lifting the planter box out of the ground damaging our parking lot. Although removing these trees was a difficult decision, our committee is committed to the safety of not only our congregation but that of our tenants and their families. At this time there is no plan on replacing these trees however we are exploring alternatives in landscaping.

## January's Saturday Food Distribution

by Rick Rodriguez, Food Ministry

Due to a great turnout of volunteers, the January Saturday Food Distribution and its preparation was more efficient than previous months, both logistically and financially.

- 15 people, both members of our congregation and friends, came to help make the bags for food distribution on Friday, January 19th. Last month that was only 5 people and only 3 could stay until the work was done. It's a lot more fun, and a lot less exhausting, and we do a better job, when we have plenty of help. Thanks to everyone who came to help on "bagging day".
- On Saturday Distribution days in 2023 we typically paid 8-10 interns to help, whether we had a current team or not. On January 20th we had just 5 paid interns. Everyone else was volunteers, either church members or friends of the church. This is a better balance and more sustainable use of paid interns.
- On Saturday Distribution days we have two stations for picking up food, one for people who come in vehicles and the other for people who walk or bicycle. On January 20th more people came to our walk-up line than we have seen since we started the drive-through station. Many thanks to those who worked the walk-up station and to those who kept the walk-up station stocked with bags of food.

We are now limiting the number of households served during our Saturday Food Distribution so that number will stay at about 230. (229 households were served on January 20th). To control costs, and manage limited inventory, we will continue to limit Feeding America food distributed on Saturdays to 40 bags given out after the 192 sets of food from Community Action Partnership are gone.

Thank you to all the volunteers who worked on our January Saturday Food Distribution. We were as young as 10-year old Sarah Fletcher and older than 70. We were regulars and newcomers, and we were members & friends. It was truly a joy to work together with such a wide variety of people.

Our next Friday bagging is February 16th for the Feb 17th Saturday distribution. Contact Rick to be matched to volunteer food opportunities.

### Board of Deacons 2024

**Steve Smith, Pastoral Support**

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

**Class of 2025:** Rebecca Allen, Brad Smith, Dave Thomas, Chris Wright-Thomas

**Class of 2026:** Kristine French, Joyce Lyons, Joanna Nord, Mindy Rueda

### February Birthdays and Anniversaries

Feb 2	Brian & Amy Gano	Feb 13	Nita Zwolinski
Feb 4	Steve Smith	Feb 14	Eva Diane Olsen
Feb 6	Kiera Everly French	Feb 15	Randy Mantei
Feb 7	Stephanie Fletcher		Joanna Nord
	Clara Gresham	Feb 16	Kendra Lamb
	Frank Thomas		Doris Schiavone
Feb 8	Hannah Huffstutler Bodner	Feb 19	Amy Smith
	Roy Nix	Feb 22	Janet McKinster
Feb 11	Carol Cooper	Feb 23	Martha Pinckney
	Tim Garcia	Feb 26	Christa Wallis
Feb 12	Sue Alexander		



## Reflections on First Pres in the Heart of the City for Good

*Christa offered a wrap-up for the remarks offered on our 150th Anniversary Celebration. This is what she said:*

Hello, my name is Christa Wallis and my husband, Norm and I have been members of First Presbyterian Church for forty-one years. We joined as members here in 1982 when our youngest daughter, Trish, was two and our oldest daughter, Sharon, was three and a half years old. This has been one of the best decisions we have ever made! This Church was, and continues to be, the heart of our family life and formative in our own faith, our daughters' lives, and occasionally our granddaughters' lives. Since I am a lover of words, I am going to organize my reflections around seven words I have chosen that represent this Church for me.

These words are: Celebration, Devotion, Tenacity, Legacy, Faithfulness, Spirit and Community.

**Celebration:** First Pres knows how to celebrate! From weddings to baptisms to memorial services to anniversaries to graduations to church year celebrations and liturgical seasons, we know how to honor these timeless events and life milestones and to worship God in the most festive ways imaginable. I think of the anticipation time of Advent, the Christmas joy of carols and candlelight, the somber days of Lent, the hallelujahs and abundant flowers of Easter, the freedom of Pentecost: I cherish all of them. The creativity of our worship leaders throughout the years knows no bounds: PW women expressing liturgy through dancing down the aisles of the sanctuary, the youth production of Godspell, plays and theatrical productions, the Hubcaps concerts, Lenten Retreats, renowned guest speakers and theologians, Kazoo Sunday, church dances, quiet nights, myriad artistic installations of light and visual displays of colorful banners and heavenly music has filled this place and reverberated through the very foundations of these buildings. I am here for all of it and cherish the experiences in the past, present and for what is to come.

**Devotion:** First Pres demonstrates devotion to God through its many opportunities to worship and fellowship together. Bible study, PW Circles, men's fellowship, adult education classes, Sunday School, Children's programs, retreats, guest scholars and preachers and more, provide experience and education about our Creator's Word and opportunities to reflect on theology and scripture and incorporate it into our very essence. I believe that devotion also manifests itself in fellowship and especially when food is involved! I have fond memories of Mariners breakfasts and barbecues and of countless Coffee Hours and shortbread and butterfly cookies and of shared

dinners and luncheons and potlucks. Devotion looks like donuts (cut horizontally or vertically or in what ever shapes you want) and coffee cakes and lenten soup gatherings, like Circle of Faith shared meals and like taco salad bars and PW Souper Bowl bake sales. I think of Companions on the Inner Way and this church's devotion to spiritual practice that continues to this day.

**Tenacity:** This congregation, established now for 150 years, is tenacious. We have weathered numerous challenging times together: fires and floods, earthquakes and human-caused disasters. We have survived cancer diagnoses, chronic illnesses, heart attacks and strokes, mental health issues, financial difficulties, accidents and terrorist attacks. The Old Fire in 2003 which devastated so many lives in this city--we had 10 families at First Pres who lost everything in those wind-swept fires. The 2015 terrorist attack at Regional Center affected so many in our community, and let's not forget the harm inflicted on beloved members of our congregation, and still we persist, and we rise up, and we comfort each other and we offer prayer and heal together. We have always been, and continue to be, a resilient body of people.

**Legacy:** The heritage of First Pres is one of note. Through the history of the Presbyterian Church there is a rich legacy of faith, love and respect. Respect for the foundational principles on which we were formed as a denomination and as a local church. Our Scottish heritage still shines through and is kept alive on Reformation Sundays with plaid and pipers and Gaelic blessings. We have a special connection to the Isle of Iona, thanks to Tommy Jane Roberts. Such is the legacy of those who worshipped in this place before all of us found our way here. Flexibility is also a quality of First Pres as we have had to pivot on numerous occasions. Along the way, we have had to make course corrections to adjust to changing times, changing traditions and a changing world. One recent example of this was during the COVID lockdowns. This church was able to adjust and change the ways of conducting Church business and worship. The addition of first video-recording, then eventually live-streaming services and meetings on Zoom so that the Church could continue its mission speaks to the commitment we have to one another and to God in this community. Legacy is also manifested through generous memorials and gifts that sustain us now and into the future. The Dodds Trust, the Leonard Scholarship, the Wiens Endowment monies and countless other memorial contributions continue the giving for us now and for future generations.

*continued on the following page*

*continued from the previous page*

**Faithfulness:** This church represents deep faithfulness to Christ throughout its years. Mission work and community service are at the heart of all that we do. The hungry are fed, those less fortunate are provided with what they need. Deacons, work projects and church congregants and committees work tirelessly to reach all of the corners of this globe including our city to carry out Christ's love and missions in the world. Service is at the heart of our faithfulness. Presbyterian Disaster Assistance, the blue shirts, stand at the ready anytime help is needed. Many in our congregation have done this important work.

**Spirit:** For me, First Pres embodies the holy spirit in this place, at this time, in this city. Those precious souls who formed this Church knew something of spirit as do those who now inhabit its campus. For me, voices raised in song, piano and organ notes, brass trumpets and tubas, the strains of flute, violin and guitar and gifts from talented musicians capture this. Soul cards, artistic bulletin covers, creative church banners, light streaming through stained glass windows grace us with this spirit. Echoes of words shared in sermons and youth Sunday offerings, choir anthems and the steady voices of thousands of lectors are this spirit. Hymn sings, Pentecost crepe paper streams, soaring puppet doves, and childrens' Christmas pageant tableaux capture this spirit to this day.



### **The Art of Apology - Contemplative Justice:**

Exploring our church's next steps in dismantling the Doctrine of Discovery through film, contemplative silence, discussion and personal healing.

You are invited to attend a one-day retreat led by Nancy S. Wiens, M.Div., Ph.D. on Saturday, February 17<sup>th</sup> from 10:00 – 4:00 (lunch included) at First Presbyterian Church, San Bernardino. We will learn from Diné Navajo and boarding school survivors.

There is no charge for this event, but we ask that you respond with your intention to attend so we can plan accordingly for lunch by Tuesday, February 13<sup>th</sup>.

Nancy's passion lies in helping others discover what it means to come alive. She is inspired by working with those committed to the growth of themselves, their families, their organizations, and the planet's regenerativity. She thrives on supporting others' sense of belonging and empowerment: to know themselves as Beloved, as interconnected with nature, and as uniquely able to contribute to the well-being of the world.

First Presbyterian Church, San Bernardino  
1900 N. D Street  
San Bernardino, CA 92405

RSVP to [pres.first@gmail.com](mailto:pres.first@gmail.com) or to 909-882-3308 by February 13<sup>th</sup>.

**Community:** Finally, First Pres San Bernardino formed in God's love by the vision of our founders, is a community of God's beloveds. Community is about relationships. Our strength is in our diversity. We are all not the same, we do not all think alike or vote alike and that, I believe, is what makes us who we are today. We continue to gather on Sundays and be in relationship with one another and to give thanks to the One who created us. The connections and threads of love, faith, care, and friendship through the shared commitment of being the heart and hands of Christ in our City extends far beyond its walls. The deep human connections that have been forged in shared work, in casual conversations, in Sunday worship, in Sunday school classrooms, in Family Camp singalongs, in heartfelt Session committee discussions and in parking lot greetings form the backbone of First Pres. Those connections are sustenance for the soul whether near or far and they draw all of us together in God's embrace.

Celebration, Devotion, Tenacity, Legacy, Faithfulness, Spirit and Community: these seven words all capture what this Church means to me.

I, for one, am forever grateful and truly blessed to be a member of First Presbyterian Church San Bernardino. Thank you.

*Christa Wallis and Sherman Ballard  
place pieces in the Mosaic Dove*



## **Keep Military Members in Your Prayers**

**Sgt Jacob Allen,**

US Marines, MFR Band, New Orleans, Louisiana

**Cpl Jeremy Allen,**

US Marines, Okinawa, Japan

**FPC Ethan Gano,**

US Marines, Pensacola, Florida

**Seaman Mark Munz,**

US Navy, San Diego, California

**Petty Officer First Class 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, Washington

**Cadet Grace Wilson**

Air Force Academy, Colorado Springs, Colorado



## Meet our Deacons and new Session Members

compiled by Margaret Doane, Stewardship

Our website states that Deacons "share and teach care and compassion for those both in and outside our community of faith." Deacons are organized into "three essential ministries": Congregational Care, Community Ministry, and the Food Program. The bios below include current Deacons as well as Deacons who completed terms at the end of 2023. In addition to the people whose bios appear below, Deacons include or have included Sharon Landeros (term ended last month), Rick Rodriguez (Food, Co-chair), and Dave Thomas (Food, Co-chair). Steve Smith provides pastoral support for this group.

**Rebecca Allen** (Community Ministry): The Past: I was born in Riverside, CA. I didn't live in Southern California, however, until I was 10 years old. I spent my early years in Texas with my mother. When my father remarried, my mother sent four of us to live with the newlyweds and our stepsiblings in Garden Grove. We became the real-life Brady Bunch! This was a short-lived situation. One year later, my mother relocated to the Coachella Valley. We went with her and settled with her and her new husband. It was the Desert that I truly called home. This is where I set down roots and dug in. I graduated from Palm Springs High School in 1984.

My faith: I have always had a strong belief in God, even as a very young child. It was strengthened by my involvement with a group called Campus Life. I felt a strong sense of understanding and belonging. When I was 13, I was baptized at Desert Chapel in Palm Springs.

Flash forward: Curtiss and I just started dating when he brought me to the Maundy Thursday service in 2009, so I guess you could say I came to FPCSB because of a man (LOL). But honestly, I was so moved in the darkness that I felt encouraged to explore my intimate relationship with Jesus. It refreshed my Faith and reminded me that Hope still lived within me. I knew I could always go home to God. I just needed a guide. We were married in October of that year and had our formal blessing of marriage at First Pres in December of the same. I support First Presbyterian SB by singing in the choir and by moderating the Board of Deacons. It's hard to imagine life without this amazing institution and her members. They are essentially a great-big extended family!

Which brings us here: Curtiss and I have been married for 14 years! I am the biological mother to the three oldest of our children: Kaitlynn, Sarah, and Raymond. Jacob and Jeremy are my amazing stepsons (whom I love fiercely). We are additionally blessed with three grandchildren: Koraline, Siena, and Tucker (what treasures!) As "empty-nesters," our home isn't really "empty," but filled with three cats and three dogs...yes, I know. Crazy.

**Dan Direen** (Community Ministry, Co-chair): Born in Charlotte, NC, my family moved to El Paso, TX where I attended 1st and 2nd grade. We then moved to San Diego where I grew up. I moved to San Bernardino in 1978 and graduated from Pacific High School in 1979 -- I started work in the construction field that year.

Cheryl and I were married soon after and were proud parents of twins in 1981. Our third child was born in 1986.

After years of night school, I finished my Bachelors degree at the University of Redlands in 2000, the same year I started working in computer programming.

Our family joined First Pres in 1992, which has been a great blessing for me and our family. We have many cherished memories of family camp, youth group, and Mariners gatherings. I have served a few times each as an Elder and Deacon. I keep busy with family, remodeling work, mountain biking, camping, and being outdoors.

**Robin Edwards** (Deacon secretary; Congregational Care): I have lived and worked in many states as well as overseas. In 1969 I graduated from Highland High School located in Albuquerque, New Mexico. Dad retired from the USAF and we moved to San Diego, California where I went to UCSD. Later I married, moved around and eventually my family moved to San Bernardino in 1991, so I could take a teaching position with SBCUSD. I taught here for 22 or my more than 30 years in Education and couldn't quite let it go when I retired, so substituted for several years afterwards. When we first moved to San Bernardino, we went looking for a church and chose First Presbyterian Church because we liked the Sunday School for Jessica, who was six, the friendliness and warmth of this congregation, and there was a great Choir, which I immediately joined! LOL. A short time later I joined the Worship Committee and have never left. Among other groups, I have been a part of Mariners, and on Nurture and Deacons for many years.

**Marianna Fowles** (completed her term at the end of 2023): I was born at St. Bernadine's Hospital. Went to Fairfax Elementary School with Claudia, Highland Jr High and graduated from Pacific in 1961 with Claudia, Janet, and Phyllis. Attended SBVC for 1 1/2 years with Janet. Married, had two children Cathy and Billy. Began working at the Blood Bank

of San Bernardino and Riverside Counties--now LifeStream--for more than 38 years. Retired and Janet and I joined the church. We began working the Saturday food. Sally Morris asked me to be a Deacon and I said yes. Didn't know what I was supposed to be doing. Pat Morris was our moderator and asked me to schedule a blood drive. I loved being a Deacon and working with everyone. I hope everyone else enjoyed it. I think if you are able, everyone should help with the church and community. I loved it.

**Kristine French** (Congregational Care): I was born in Manila Philippines and my family moved to the US in 1987. I am the eldest of four children. I received my nursing degree from CSUSB and work for Loma Linda Univ. Med Ctr's Nutrition Support Team and Intestinal Care Services. The latter is also where I met Mr. French. We have two daughters Kiera, 11 yrs, Rhyland 7 yrs and two dogs -- Tumbleweed our 14 yrs Pom and Chewie -- the new pup on the block -- golden doodle. I enjoy music (especially live performances); the great outdoors (can't wait until I'm 62 to get my lifetime NP parks pass), movie nights with the fam (unless I fall asleep before the end of a movie) and convincing Mr. French into doing various DIY projects with me around our home (which have turned out beautifully so far). I have been attending First Presbyterian since 2005 when I married Mr. French and finally became a member in 2019. This is my first time serving as a Deacon for First Pres.

**Joyce Lyons** (Congregational Care; Chair): I was born in San Bernardino, and I have lived in this area all of my life. I was baptized in the First Presbyterian Church when it was on Church and E in San Bernardino. I graduated from Pacific High School, and I received my AA from Valley College. I worked for the San Bernardino School District for 19 years. I have enjoyed being in Friendship Circle, being a Deacon, attending Bible Study, and working with the Food Ministry. Dinner in the Driveway is also something I look forward to. I take Tai Chi classes and I love to work in the garden. I also enjoy walking. I have two sons and one daughter. One son lives in Loveland, CO, the other lives in Loma Linda and my daughter lives in Yucaipa. I have one stepson that lives in Oregon. I have nine grandchildren that are such a blessing along with being a member of this church.

**Joanna Nord** (Community Ministry): Joanna grew up in Rialto and graduated from Eisenhower High School, where she played Volleyball and Softball. She then graduated from Cal State San Bernardino with a BA in Marketing and University of Redlands with an MA in Management. Joanna works for the San Bernardino school district in the Nutrition department as an Administrative Analyst.

Joanna has been married to Brent for almost 22 years and together they have three children -- Ryan, Breanna and Adam -- who keep them busy with multiple activities.

Joanna started attending the church in 2002. She has been a member of the Circle of Kindness, served as PWC treasurer, on the Nominating Committee and currently is in her second term as a Deacon. She has helped with Kid Space, FOC and picking up food for food distribution.

Joanna enjoys watching her kids play sports, going to the beach and being around family.

**Mindy Rueda** (Congregational Care); I was born and raised right here in San Bernardino.

-- Graduated in 1981 from San Geronio High School

-- Attended San Bernardino Valley College (where I met my husband) and then Cal State San Bernardino where I got my degree in Human Development

-- I have been a lifelong member of First Presbyterian Church. Have served as a youth advisor. Ordained as an Elder and Deacon and also served on the Pastoral Care Committee.

-- Married to Al for 35 years and have three grown children: Alex, Aaron and Amy

-- Have 4 grandchildren and one on the way due February 28.

-- I have one cat and two chickens.

**Brad Smith** (Food; Co-chair): Brad Smith grew up in Southern California graduating from Arcadia High School in 1967 and USC in 1971. I was brought up in the Episcopal Church, serving as an Altar Boy for several years. I left California for Kentucky where I received my Master's Degree in Social work. Shortly afterwards I moved to Ohio where I met Amy. In 1977 I returned to California and took a job at Patton State Hospital. In 1989 Amy and I joined the church. Kelsey and Alex were in the Children's Choir and I loved assisting Steve Earp in trying to shepherd a group of 12-15 kids. I have previously served on the Nurture Committee. I assisted for several years in our Food Program, what a joy! I have been called on two occasions to be a Deacon and have served as Moderator.

**Katie Smith** (Congregational Care): I was born and raised in San Bernardino and grew up attending Del Rosa United Methodist Church. After graduation from PHS, I completed my degree in Econ at UCLA and MBA at CSUSB. I worked in the mortgage banking industry for a dozen years before "retiring" to stay home with our two kids. Once Alyson and Kyle were in school, I lectured part-time at SBVC before going back to CSUSB to earn my Education Specialist credential. I then taught Special Education for 18 years (primarily spectrum kiddos in grades K/1) in both the San Bernardino and Redlands School Districts, before retiring this past June. I started attending First Pres about 15 years ago when our son Kyle became involved in FOC. Every once in a while my husband David will attend with me.

In my spare time I enjoy reading, traveling, cooking, walking our dog, and volunteering. I'm a member of the Circle of Kindness, PEO Sisterhood, and NCL Sustainers. Deacons is a great fit for me because I truly value the work we do, both for the church and in our community.

**Chris Wright-Thomas** (Food): I was born at St. Bernardine's to Chris and Bonnie Hansen and have one younger sister -- Terri, my best friend. My mom and dad bought and moved into the house Dave Thomas and I now live in, three months before I was born. I graduated from Pacific High School, went to United Health Careers and was an RDA for 48 years, during which time I worked for Janet McKinster's husband, Dr. McKinster for 18 years and Dr. Patrick Garcia for 18 1/2 years and ended my career working for Janet McKinster's granddaughter, Dr. Heather Houston. I have been at First Pres my whole life -- been a Sunday school teacher, on Session, and a Deacon. Best of all I have my awesome son Cassidy and three amazing grandkids Harlan, Sanai, and Waverly, and my beautiful niece Becca. Yay!

***And our new Session members (last month's newsletter featured bios of "old" Session members).***

**Sue Alexander** (Worship): Graduated Oregon State University with a BS in Education -- taught at a science camp for two years in Oregon. Became Director of Camping for the Camp Fire Girls and ran a summer camp in Barton Flats for five years; joined the IRS with Amy Smith for five years, and then had my sons. Became an RN for 23 years after I took time to spend four years raising the boys. Joined First Pres in April 1982, the Sunday after my wedding. Served on Deacons and Session over the years.

**Kathy Showman** (Nurture): I was born in Los Angeles and attended Hollywood Presbyterian until I was ten. After moving to Glendale, I was active in the youth group at Grandview Presbyterian every Sunday evening. I graduated from Hoover High in Glendale in 1960, attended Occidental College in Eagle Rock. It was founded by Presbyterians. When I decided to become a teacher, I transferred to San Diego State where I earned my BA and MA in 1965 and 1966. I moved to the inland Empire in 1970. I came to First Pres after going to Colton First Baptist. My neighbors took me there and I met Dale on a blind date at their house. Dale and I were married in 1977 at that church, but we discussed where to go when starting a family. We realized we had both been raised Presbyterian, so we found First Pres. At Dale's death, we were married almost 46 years. We had joined the church in 1984 and our child Christi was baptized here. His other four daughters were teenagers when we met. We have five daughters, 9 grandchildren and 13 great-grandchildren. During the early years of our marriage, I earned a Counseling Credential at UC Riverside.

I have been in church and community choirs since I was two. I now am in the Inland Master Chorale in addition to our church choir. I taught elementary school for 32 years, first in LaMesa/Spring Valley, then in Colton, retiring in 1998. I have been a Circle Moderator, PWC Vice Moderator, Deacon (Congregational Care as Secretary and Chair at the same time), and on Session for one year, finishing a term. I even taught 5/6 Sunday School, bringing the students into church until the choir sang the anthem. They were so good that the children were then invited into church regularly. Ask the Nolin girls and Alex Smith. I have helped with the food ministry, LifeSkillz, and I was a church receptionist. I play the piano and sing, do puzzles and play games online like Words with Friends. I like sports, game shows, and comedies on TV.

**Norm Wallis** (Buildings and Grounds): I was born and raised in Los Angeles in the San Fernando Valley. I went to UC Irvine and graduated with a degree in Chemistry. I worked and retired from the San Bernardino Sheriff's Department in the Scientific Investigations Division. I then worked and retired from Skywest Airlines. I have been a general contractor for 30 years. I recently built and sold a home in the mountains of Colorado. I enjoy traveling with my wife Christa and also enjoy spending time with my family and two gorgeous granddaughters. I sing in the choir and periodically try to make a joyful noise while playing trumpet along with the hymns. I have served on Session in the past and am looking forward to serving again.



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
28 9:30am Adult Bible Study 10:30am Worship Service	29	30	31	1 5:15pm Yoga Class	2 9:30am Kerygma 3:30pm SBHS Sports dinner	3 8:00am Symphonie Jeunesse 10:00am Straight Up AA
4  ANNUAL MEETING 9:30am Adult Bible Study 10:30am Worship Service	5 5:00pm PW Coordinating Team	6 12:00pm Circle of Faith 7:00pm Mensch Group	7 12:30pm Staff Meeting 4:30pm Worship Committee	8 5:15pm Yoga Class 6:00pm Sanctuary Choir	9 9:30am Kerygma	10 8:00am Symphonie Jeunesse 10:00am Straight Up AA 1:00pm Memorial Gathering for Betty Thomas
11 Super Bowl Bake Sale Transfiguration Sunday 9:30am Adult Bible Study 10:30am Worship Service	12 4:30pm Nurture Committee	13 6:30pm Deacons	14  Ash Wednesday 12:30pm Service of Ashes 5:30pm Service of Ashes	15 9:00am Friendship Circle 5:15pm Yoga Class 5:30pm Buildings & Grounds Committee	16 9:00am Food Bagging 9:30am Kerygma	17 9:00am Deacon Food Distribution 10:00am Lenten Retreat: Art of Apology 10:00am Straight Up AA 1:00pm Symphonie Jeunesse
18 9:30am Adult Bible Study 10:30am Worship Service	19 Church Office Closed. Presidents' Day	20 Deadline for First Press articles 1:00pm Circle of Grace and Hope 7:00pm Mensch Group	21 12:30pm Staff Meeting 5:00pm Stewardship Committee	22 5:15pm Yoga Class	23 9:30am Kerygma	24 8:00am Symphonie Jeunesse 10:00am Straight Up AA
25 9:30am Adult Bible Study 10:30am Worship Service	26 7:00pm Circle of Kindness	27	28 5:30pm SESSION	29 5:15pm Yoga Class	1 9:30am Kerygma	2 8:00am Symphonie Jeunesse 10:00am Straight Up AA

## First Presbyterian Church of San Bernardino

1900 North D Street  
San Bernardino, CA 92405

### Mailing Address:

P.O. Box 2729  
San Bernardino, CA 92406  
Office: 882-3308  
email: [pres.first@gmail.com](mailto:pres.first@gmail.com)  
[www.fpcsb.net](http://www.fpcsb.net)

### Office Hours:

Monday-Friday  
9 am to 4:30 pm

**Dr. Wendy Long Lamb**

*Commissioned Pastor*

**The Rev. Dr. Stephen W. 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.*