



First Presbyterian Church of San Bernardino

First Press

March 2024



Handprint Communion Tablecloth created by Jeanne Clark and Robin Edwards with handprints from members and friends of First Presbyterian Church, San Bernardino.

The hands in the center, all different sizes and colors, represent our unity. The hands on the edges are reaching out into the community.

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The Mission Assessment Team brought a draft of the Mission Action Plan to Session. This team (Mary Bolaños, John-Paul Fletcher, Nancy Horstmann, Marilyn Kraft, Jim Morris, Brent Nord, Irene Sandoval Suverkrup) has worked hard over these last months gathering information, reflecting on our congregation, and writing it all out. You'll be hearing more about it in the coming weeks. Meanwhile, we reflect on this quote from St. Teresa that they included in their report and that goes nicely with the handprint communion tablecloth above:

Christ has no body but yours,

No hands, no feet on earth but yours,

Yours are the eyes with which he looks compassion on this world,

Yours are the feet with which he walks to do good,

Yours are the hands, with which he blesses all the world.

- St. Teresa de Avila

(15th century Carmelite nun, Spanish mystic, and religious reformer)

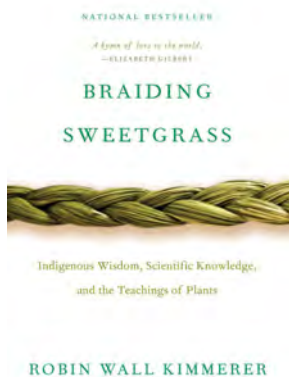
Making our Way toward Easter



As we move through this Lent in which we have been examining ourselves and our world, we begin to prepare for Easter. We prepare ourselves through prayer and fasting and through worship services throughout Lent and during Holy Week. We not only prepare ourselves, but we also prepare our space, readying the sanctuary visually for the great festival of Easter. Here are some ways we prepare, and some ways everyone can join in and prepare together.

Quiet Nights continue in the Fireside Room at 5:30 on Thursdays, March 7, 14, and 21. You are invited to this space of for a time of listening and quiet as we share readings

from *Braiding Sweetgrass* by Robin Wall Kimmerer and then enjoy soup and bread together. (From Milkweed Editions website: "Robin Wall Kimmerer is a mother, scientist, decorated professor, and enrolled member of the Citizen Potawatomi Nation." In the book, she looks at the world through all these lenses.)



Palm Saturday: Help us begin Holy Week as we prepare for Jesus' entry into Jerusalem. On Saturday, March 23rd, we would love your help making palm crosses for our Palm Sunday service. We'll gather in Fireside Lounge at 9 a.m. for a morning of fellowship and creation. Everyone of all ages is invited and experience is not required, but please bring your own scissors! At 10:00, we plan to prepare the sanctuary for Palm Sunday by building "Palm Trees" and hanging palm fronds. We look forward to creating with you!



Palm Sunday: March 24, We will gather outside and process in together singing "Hosanna." We also will be collecting our "Fat Fish" and One

Great Hour of Sharing Offering on that day.

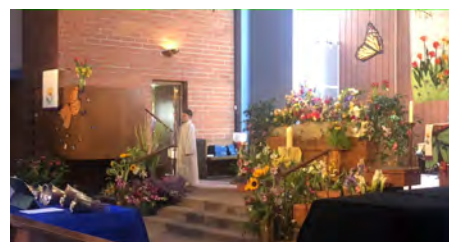


Maundy Thursday pays solemn remembrance to the last hours of Jesus, especially the last time our savior shares a meal with his disciples. Please join us Thursday, March 28th, at 5:30 p.m. in the Sanctuary for this deeply moving and profoundly spiritual service. Maundy Thursday brings us closer to God through a deeper understanding of and participation in the last hours of our Lord. It also reminds us that we cannot arrive at Easter without first traveling through Maundy Thursday and Good Friday.



Easter Saturday Morning, March 30, you're invited to assist the Worship Committee with preparing our sanctuary for Easter morning. You are invited to bring your garden's most beautiful flowers, blooming branches, and greenery. If you bring them in buckets of water, they will stay fresh until arranged! You're also invited to bring pruning shears and garden gloves if you would like to help make arrangements. We will gather at 9 a.m. and welcome everyone's participation, whether you have flowers to bring or not, in this tradition of beauty, creativity, and joyous preparation for Easter!

Easter Worship! Sunday, March 31, our sanctuary will be filled with friends and with color. We will gather in the dim light recalling Easter dawn. We will sing with the joy that only hope reborn can bring, and we will raise up our voices with "the A word" from which we have been fasting for so many weeks. Choir and organ will help us lift our hearts, and we will once again proclaim the ancient Easter greeting: Christ is Risen! He is risen indeed!





Notes

The *First Press*, the newsletter of the First Presbyterian Church of San Bernardino, is edited by Wendy Lamb.

Please submit content to Wendy at newsletter@fpcsb.net.

The deadline for the April newsletter March 20.

Financial Notes

Financial Report as of January 31, 2023.

General Fund

	Actual	Budgeted	Over/(Under)
Pledges	\$18,150.34	29,768.20	(11,617.86)
Other Income*	\$18,560.29	15,033.61	3,526.68
Expense	\$48,027.97	49,632.26	(1,604.29)
Net Income	\$(11,317.34)	(4,830.45)	(6,486.89)

Division Consolidation

	January	Year to date
General Fund Net Income (Expense)	(11,317.34)	(11,317.34)
Deacons Net Income (Expense)	3,848.77	3,848.77
Net Operating Income (Expense)	(7,468.57)	(7,468.57)

Session 2023

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

Board of Deacons 2023

Rebecca Allen, Moderator; 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 2023: Kristine French, Joyce Lyons, Joanna Nord, Mindy Rueda

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
Mar 18	Rebecca Nelligan Todd & Elizabeth Wright
Mar 22	Laura Munz
Mar 23	Ann Aguilera Grant Garcia
Mar 24	Randy French Linda Saenz
Mar 26	Marianna Fowles
Mar 27	Noé Falconi
Mar 29	Reyna Jones Stephanie Ross

In Memoriam

February 2024

Wendi Bielinski

November 3, 1966-February 15, 2024

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

Our Winter/Spring 2024 Intern Team

by Rick Rodriguez, Intern Supervisor

Eleven members of the LifeSkillz Circle applied for our 23rd Internship Program term. On Monday, February 12th, the President's Day holiday, our Interviewing/Hiring Team of Steve Smith, Robin Edwards and Marlene Olivas came to the church to interview each of the applicants. Then they had the very difficult task of deciding who to hire, and even harder, who we would not hire. Many thanks to the hiring team for coming in on the holiday and spending several hours at the church conducting the interviews and making the tough decisions.

Ana Quevedo and Vincent Morales are our two Intern Team Leaders this term. Three interns are new to the program, Maria Socop, Lizzet Sotelo and Oscar Hernandez. The final member of the team is Lily Aceves, who has been an intern in the past. This mix of experience and new members will make this a productive team and one that can learn from each other. We always encourage everyone to share ideas about the tasks we are performing.

Our new team's first day of work was our February Food Distribution day. This made for a very busy first part of the day since we could only show our new team members what needed to get done for distribution. When we finished food distribution, we put everything away to prepare Fellowship Hall for Symphonie Jeunesse. Then the three new members filled out their employee forms, with some help since this was new to them. In addition to the new intern team, that day we had 4 other former interns volunteer with Food Distribution without getting paid, to get community service hours. We bought food and ended the day having lunch in the library.

February 24th was our team's second day, and the team spent the day mowing the church lawns, trimming some hedges, cleaning out some rain gutters, making bags for our Tuesday food giveaway, sweeping and mopping the floor in Room 12, among other tasks. All three of our new team members learned how to do things they had never done before, and our team leaders learned the correct way to teach someone how to do a task they had never done before with direction from their supervisors (Marlene and me). We're off to a good start!



Ana mowing our lawn

Lizett Trimming



We have added two names to our list of Military members for whom we pray. Jon Preciado sent us information for his son Wade and stepson Alejandro. If you have a family member in the military whom you would like to include, please send us their information. When their information changes, please keep us updated.

Keep Military Members in Your Prayers

Sgt Jacob Allen,

US Marines, MFR Band, New Orleans, Louisiana

Cpl Jeremy Allen,

US Marines, Okinawa, Japan

Lt. Alejandro J. Balandran,

US Navy, Yokosuka, Japan

FPC Ethan Gano,

US Marines, Pensacola, Florida

Seaman Mark Munz,

US Navy, San Diego, California

Lt. Junior Grade Wade Phillip Preciado,

US Navy, Groton, Connecticut

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

Companions on the Inner Way Retreat Opportunity, Spring 2024

First Pres San Bernardino has a long history of supporting and attending Companions on the Inner Way Retreats. This spring, Companions once again resumes its offerings in Southern California. The last time some of our members traveled to Serra Retreat Center in Malibu California was March 2020. Soon after that the world shut down for the pandemic and although the retreats in Northern California resumed in 2022, this will be the first time we've been able to meet in person in our nearby area.

Companions on the Inner Way offers a safe communal place to explore deep longings for the Holy. Grounded in the Christian tradition, the guided retreats incorporate body, mind, and soul through presentations, dialogue, spiritual practices, art, music, movement, and worship with Eucharist. We strive to create an environment that is theologically curious, radically welcoming, and liturgically vibrant.

This year's retreat will take place from Sunday, April 14 - Friday, April 19, 2024. Its theme is 'Canticle of Creation, Mirror of God.' The retreat's brochure states that, "During the time together we'll be exploring. In the legacy of Celtic Christianity, we're reminded that the teachings of the Bible are a wee book, set beside the big book that is Creation. Yet in much of contemporary spiritual and religious practice, we've lost our connection with the earth, the living water, the voice of God in all her creatures. How do we learn to see again the face of God in all of Creation? What does it mean to touch the earth with reverence, in the midst of so much ecological distress? Can we remain open to divine wisdom as we respond to this moment in the unfolding cycle of Creation?" The presenters for this week will be Reverend Simon Ruth de Voil and Dr. Jeanette Banashak. Their bios are available on the website below.

Registration information can be accessed at www.cotiway.org

Please contact Christa Wallis at chriwallis@aol.com if you'd like to receive a scholarship to help defray the cost of attending.



Both Mimi and Laurie from the office plan to participate in the Companions on the Inner Way retreat. If you are not planning to go to the retreat, we could use volunteer help in the office (mainly answering phones) that week (April 15-19). Please let Laurie know if you would be willing to take a 4-hour shift that week.

Food Ministry Adjustments for Peak Demands

by Rick Rodriguez, Food Ministry

The Food Ministry continues to experience peak demands, both on the Tuesday/Thursday giveaway and on the third Saturday distribution. In January of 2023 we were averaging 33 encounters per Tuesday/Thursday; in January of 2024, that average was 88. For Saturdays, from our 2022 average of 158 participants, 2023's average grew to 217, and in January of 2024, we served 229. This is even though we have now set weekday and Saturday limits.

Increasing costs of groceries, rent, and utilities, decreases in assistance, and increased homelessness seem to be factors increasing the demand for food.

Our partnership with Community Action Partnership of San Bernardino County (CAPSBC) provides food (at no cost) for 192 families on Saturday. The remaining bags (now a maximum of 40) are provided from Feeding America of Riverside/San Bernardino (FARSB), which is also our primary source of food for Tuesday and Thursday. Food available from FARSB has been more limited than last year and requires a maintenance fee (usually 19 cents per pound.) Your contributions enabled us to pay these fees to acquire over 100,000 lbs food from FARSB in 2023.

Daily limits help us manage costs, limited food inventories, storage spaces, and volunteer/intern resources. With our weekday limit of 70 cooking bags plus 30 non-cooking bags, we often give out all available food prior to our announced closure time. Similarly, Saturday's distribution has ended as early as 10:15 a.m.

We have been blessed with food from members and friends of the congregation, the Northgate Market (our FARSB retail partner), and through grants from the Rauch Family Foundation (\$10,000 for fresh food) and Stater Bros (\$2500 for maintenance fees and truck rental). The Rauch Family Foundation grant for "Fresh Food", has helped to balance limited FARSB's inventories, but these funds will be expended by May of 2024. The Food Ministry will continue to apply for grants, but since grant funds are unpredictable, we continue to adjust to available resources.

We are pleased to have Kristine French join Dave Thomas, Chris Thomas and me on the Deacon's Food Committee. With the regular help of Marilyn Kraft, Marlene Olivas, Margaret Doane, Frank Thomas, Sam Lange, a host of Saturday volunteers, our great staff, and others, the Food Ministry continues to provide much appreciated food to our neighbors.

First Presbyterian Church

March 2024

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
25 9:30am Adult Bible Study 10:30am Worship Service	26 7:00pm Circle of Kindness	27 1:00pm Circle of Grace and Hope	28 5:15pm SESSION Dinner 6:00pm SESSION Meeting	29 5:15pm Yoga Class 5:30pm Lenten Quiet Night	1 9:30am Kerygma	2 8:00am Symphonie Jeunesse 10:00am Straight Up AA
3 9:30am Adult Bible Study 10:30am Worship Service	4 5:00pm PW Coordinating Team	5 6:00am Election Polling 12:00pm Circle of Faith 7:00pm Mensch Group	6 12:30pm Staff Meeting 4:30pm Worship Committee	7 5:15pm Yoga Class 5:30pm Lenten Quiet Night	8 9:30am Kerygma	9 8:00am Symphonie Jeunesse 10:00am Straight Up AA
10 Daylight-Saving Time Begins 9:30am Adult Bible Study 10:30am Worship Service	11 4:30pm Nurture Committee	12 6:30pm Deacons	13 1:00pm Special Stewardship Meeting	14 5:15pm Yoga Class 5:30pm Lenten Quiet Night 6:30pm Sanctuary Choir	15 March Madness Winter Camp 9:00am Food Bagging 9:30am Kerygma	16 March Madness Winter Camp 9:00am Deacon Food Distribution 10:00am Straight Up AA 1:00pm Symphonie Jeunesse
17 March Madness Winter Camp 9:30am Adult Bible Study 10:30am Worship Service	18	19 1:00pm Circle of Grace and Hope 7:00pm Mensch Group	20 Deadline for First Press articles 12:30pm Staff Meeting 5:00pm Stewardship Committee	21 9:00am Friendship Circle 2:00pm Wendi Bielinski Memorial Service 5:15pm Yoga Class 5:30pm Buildings & Grounds Committee 5:30pm Lenten Quiet Night	22 9:30am Kerygma	23 8:00am Symphonie Jeunesse 9:00am Palm Cross Making 10:00am Straight Up AA
24  Palm Sunday 9:30am Adult Bible Study 10:30am Worship Service	25 7:00pm Circle of Kindness	26	27 5:00pm SESSION Meeting	28  Maundy Thursday 5:15pm Yoga Class 5:30pm Maundy Thursday Service	29  Church Office Closed. Good Friday 9:30am Kerygma	30 8:00am Symphonie Jeunesse 9:00am Sanctuary Preparation for Easter 10:00am Straight Up AA
31  Easter Sunday 9:30am Adult Bible Study 10:30am Worship Service	1 5:00pm PW Coordinating Team	2 12:00pm Circle of Faith 7:00pm Mensch Group	3 12:30pm Staff Meeting 4:30pm Worship Committee	4 5:15pm Yoga Class	5 9:30am Kerygma	6 8:00am Symphonie Jeunesse 10:00am Straight Up AA

Please check the calendar on the website for the most up-to-date information. https://fpcsb.net/events_links/calendar

First Presbyterian Church of San Bernardino

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Monday-Friday
9 am to 4:30 pm

Dr. Wendy Long Lamb

Commissioned Pastor
Acting Head of Staff

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.