

FIRST  
PRESBYTERIAN  
CHURCH

*San Luis Obispo*

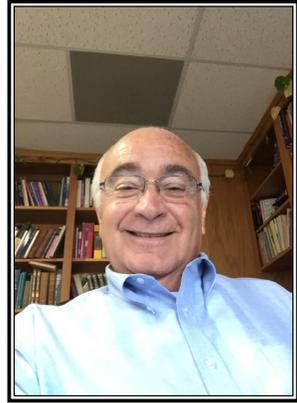
# *The Kirk*

## July & August 2018

### WELCOME TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

First, it's important to know the General Assembly is not a place. It consists of commissioners elected by presbyteries. There are 172 presbyteries in the US. Half of the commissioners will be ruling elders, half will be teaching elders. There are three governing bodies for our denomination: the session, which provides care and oversight of a local congregation; the presbytery, which provides care and oversight of a group of congregations; and the synod, which provides care and oversight of several presbyteries.

The responsibilities of the GA are to review the work of synods, resolve controversies in the church, be responsible for matters of common concern for the whole church, and serves as a symbol of unity for the church. I was elected as one of the commissioners from Santa Barbara's



Presbytery to this year's assembly which is taking place in St. Louis, MO.

"Welcome to the General Assembly! Congratulations on being elected as a commissioner from Santa Barbara, CA. This is a time when folks from all over the country and around the world get together to discuss, recommend and encourage our denomination to consider God's will through process and polity."

So, you may be wondering, as a commissioner, how does all this "stuff" work? It could be a bit overwhelming at times. Too much mail, too much reading to digest for such a monumental task of recommending to the 172 presbyteries to vote on changing things in the Book of Order over the next year. So I thought I would try to help you understand my perspective on some aspects of the time spent at the Assembly so you will know what you've allowed me to participate in.

#### How does it work?

**Look at its work as an hourglass:** at the top of the glass any of the 172 presbyteries in our denomination can send an overture or bill to the next GA. These are all collected and then sent to all commissioners like an avalanche of material before you ever leave home for the Assembly. This avalanche contains reports, dialogue papers, data, and a bunch of propaganda from infinity groups who want you to read their view point. A manual of the assembly serves as a "bible" for proper procedures. Various reports to the assembly, a worship book, a program book for seating charts, locations of meeting rooms, detailed docket, and a list of commissioners and advisory delegates.

#### **From the top of the hourglass you now come down to the neck:**

When it gets down to the assembly time the first thing that is done is a random selection. Every commissioner is randomly selected through a computer process. It's at this point a commissioner begins receiving reports and materials which are assigned to that committee. It's also important that the commissioner realizes that all sorts of other mailings and literature will arrive involving all the GA work. It is important not to exclude those materials as we will eventually vote on all the matters that come to the Assembly floor.

So who is the General Assembly that fits in the neck of the glass? The cast of characters for the GA consists of:

**Commissioners and advisory delegates:** Commissioners (1 minister, 1 ruling elder) are the only ones who have the power to speak and vote, both on the floor and in the committees. Along with the commissioners are Young Adult Advisory Delegates (YAADS) elected from the presbyteries, and Theological Seminary Advisory Delegates (TSAD) elected to represent their institution. In committees, advisory delegates have the right to speak and vote but not on the floor of the assembly. Advisory delegates only have the right to speak and when a vote is taken (straw vote) first it is seen only as "advisory" to the Commissioners.

## PASTOR'S NOTE, CONTINUED:

**Staff and elected members of the Presbyterian Mission Agency:** These folks are the ones who implement the policies of the GA, year in and year out. They are paid staff who work for the national divisions and special committees of our denomination.

**“Camp followers”:** These folks are “just visiting” or observing. They are the kind of people who love this meeting stuff and come to it where ever its held. They fall into three general types: (a) pastors and church staff, who are trying to understand the church better, (b) people who have attended GA in the past and are hooked on it, and (c) spouses and friends of commissioners

**Affinity groups:** These are “special interest organizations” who try to influence the decision-making process according to their various purposes. They are the lobbyists of church politics.

**Here’s how the hourglass works:** The sand starts flowing on the Saturday evening of arrival with candidates who want to be GA Moderator give their speeches; commissioners get a chance to question them and then vote. Sunday morning the newly elected Moderator leads the Assembly in prayer and takes office immediately following the election and appoints a Vice-Moderator.

The week consists of several days of committee meetings. Each committee has a moderator and vice-moderator as well as an assistant from the office of the Stated Clerk to help in the process. The committees receive proposals in the form of overtures from presbyteries as well as from current commissioners. There is a deadline for all this stuff which is usually the day before the meetings start. Some committees hold “open hearings” on particular overtures, reports, and resolutions. If you want to speak about some certain topic that interests you, you need to sign up ahead of time, which may mean you will have to leave your own committee for a short time to speak about your issue at its committee.

The sand begins to drain to the bottom as the assembly moves into plenary session (when all the commissioners finish their committee work, meet together, hear the various recommendations, and then vote) on Wednesday afternoon. This is where all commissioners will have to understand all recommendations from all the other committees and learn the arguments pro and con as they cast their vote. This all ends by Friday night, which can be a long session.

The last bit of sand comes down by noon on Saturday. All the work must be completed or referred by that time as we go back to one of our 172 presbyteries to share the results and recommendations and, as a Presbytery, finally vote on

changes to our denomination.

I hope this helps to some degree your understand of how the GA meeting works every other year, and why it is important for our Presbytery to select its delegates to attend.

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## COMING UP

### BROWN BAG CONCERT



Brown Bag Concerts at FPCSLO welcome a program on Friday, July 6 at 12 pm by Francesca Nemko and Mike Swan. Francesca is a writer, poet, lyricist, singer and performance artist. Mike is a versatile instrumentalist and singer, with a vocal repertoire in many styles and languages, including Italian and Yiddish. Back here in Atascadero, he plays many local spots and provides music therapy for Hospice patients.

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## SLO BOAT EVENT



Save the date for Friday, September 7, 5:30 pm in Wilson Hall for a potluck dinner and a great program featuring The Bald Spots. The Bald Spots, which started in 1993 at a Vocal Arts Ensemble Pops Concert, has become one of San Luis Obispo’s favorite performing groups. Singing many of the doo wop songs made popular in the 50’s and 60’s and mixing humor and gyrating antics, The Bald Spots include our own Dale Wolff, Mike Suddarth, and Craig Updegrove. Plan to sit up front or near some open space because you very well may want to dance and sing along!

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## THANK YOU

Dear Church Family,

We would like to thank you for all the prayer, calls, cards, and loving support we have felt from you since the passing of our dear mother, Hulda Nickel.

We are most grateful to our pastoral staff and the entire board of deacons who ministered to her spiritual needs, and especially Glenda and Bob Morgan, who visited her so faithfully.

With deep gratitude,  
Kathy & John Eichler and the family of Hulda Nickel

# PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN

Presbyterian Women is a part of "Presbyterian Women, Incorporated", through our church, presbytery, and synod. All women of each church are considered Presbyterian Women and are also affiliated with this system of this exciting organization. Each church organizes in similar ways. We form Bible Study groups and gather with one another a couple times a year and join the Presbytery Women of Santa Barbara who sponsors a Spring Gathering and bi-monthly meetings. We would be able to offer retreats and other events if more women would volunteer for leadership roles. In our church we have basically four groups in Bible study/social groups. Dorcas meets once a month on the first Thursday in the library. Friendship meets every Thursday morning in the Library. The Virginia Terry group meets once a month in the evening on Wednesday. The WOW (Women of the Word) group meets twice a month on Wednesday afternoons. We are willing to help new groups form if any of our women would like to select alternate times to meet, such as on a Friday day or evening, Saturday morning, or Sunday afternoon. The young moms used to meet while the children were in pre- school. Young mothers in the past have also had a babysitter and would meet at church. These are some ideas that may help you if interested in forming a group.

## ALL WOMEN ARE INVITED!

A brunch will be held in Wilson Hall on September 6 at 9:30 am for the introduction of the 2018-2019 Bible Study Book and for fellowship. We will be looking at "God's Promise - I AM WITH YOU".

"The central promise in the Bible is not 'I will forgive you.' The most frequent promise is 'I will be with you.' God gave Israel the tabernacle and the ark of the covenant and manna and the temple and a pillar of cloud and another one of fire, like so many Post-it notes saying, "Don't forget- I am with you." - John Ortberg. Join us- no cost. Donations accepted but not required.

For the record, Presbyterian Women gives generously to community, national and international non-profit organizations that serve the underserved and needy. Our budget funds are available from invested funds provided by generous women past and present. The Presbyterian Women's Board members plan and determine what we might be able to contribute, which is based on earned income and donations. This is a brief projection of PW's contributions for 2018:

PW, Inc, PW Presbytery & Synod: \$1,150 (mission extension for women around the world)

Local community services \$3,700 plus scholarships for high school graduating girls when applicable

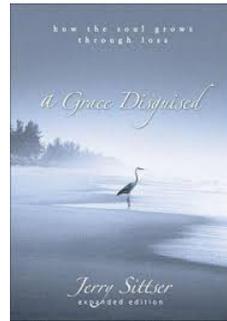
National organizations: \$1,195  
International organizations: \$2,900  
Plus the Thank and Birthday Offerings by the congregation

We are deeply grateful for the ability to give such large amounts of money to support God's people in their needs. We thank each and everyone who supports Presbyterian Women's work.

-Dorothy Truesdale, Moderator



## LIBRARY REVIEW



A Grace Disguised, written by Jerry Sittser, is a book that has been added to the library.

This is an expanded edition of this classic book on grief and loss- with a new preface and epilogue. Loss came suddenly for Jerry Sittser. In an instant, a tragic car accident claimed three generations of his family: his mother, his wife, and his young daughter. While most of us will not experience such a catastrophic loss in our lifetime, all of us will taste it. And we can, if we choose, know as well the grace that transforms it. A Grace Disguised plumbs the depths of sorrow, whether due to illness, divorce, or the loss of someone we love. The circumstances are not important; what we do with those circumstances is. In coming to the end of ourselves, we can come to the beginning of a new life- one marked by spiritual depth, joy, compassion, and a deeper appreciation of simple blessings. (Review by Amazon)

# CHILDREN'S ED NEWS

## VBS/SUMMER CAMP

VBS Summer Camp week 1 was really fun! We loved getting to know "S'more About Jesus." We learned about serving our Friends, Family, Neighbors, Community and Jesus. We loved all the help and volunteering from all ages. A big shout out to the Youth for being a huge part of our success. We can't wait for Week 2!

Speaking of week 2 - here's how you can help:

- Volunteer to spend some time with us during the week of July 9 - July 13. Registrations are still coming in and we could use some extra helpers.
- Watch for our wish list on Sunday to see how you can help with supplies, etc.
- Prayers are always welcome.

Contact Jen and let her know how you would like to help (jen@fpcslo.org or 805-543-5451 ext. 205).

## VBS WORKDAYS

Please join us in getting ready for Week 2, "Christmas In July", of VBS. We will have a couple of work days to prep and decorate.

- July 1 - 12:00 - Workday (Snacks will be provided)
- July 8 - 12:00 - Training and Workday (Snacks will be provided)

The third week of VBS Summer Camp will be August 6 - 10: "Where's Jesus". Watch for a wish list and if you are interested in volunteering let Jen know. Work days will be July 29 and August 5.

## MID-STATE FAIR

The Night of Faith is July 23 and we will head up for an All-Church Event. The Band this year is For King and Country and the concert is FREE. Join us for this fun adventure to the Fair. We will meet in the Church parking lot and carpool. The concert is at 8:00. Watch for details.

We hope your summer is going great and thank you for your continued support!

*Your Children's Ed Committee*

Jen Rabenaldt, Teri Cueto, MaryEl Hansen, Bonnie Kraemer, Diane Shervem, and Anne Walling

# YOUTH CALENDAR

## JULY EVENTS

- 6: Pool Party at the Elks' from 5-7 pm
- 9-13: VBS from 9 am-12 pm
- 13-15: Tentative dates for Lake Trip
- 20: Park BBQ
- 23: Mid State Fair
- 28: The Ravine Water Park in Paso Robles

## AUGUST EVENTS

- 3: Bonfire
- 5: Pool Party at the Elks' from 5-7 pm
- 6-10: VBS from 9 am-12 pm
- 10: Girls/Guys Nights
- 12-18: Hume Lake Trip

# ADULT ED

## "YOU ARE WHAT YOU LOVE"

### BY JAMES K.A. SMITH

This class runs from June 24th through August 5th. We meet in Wilson Hall at 11:15 am. Get some coffee and munchies and join us after church! It's fine if you missed sessions - join us anytime! The presenters for this series:

- July 1 - Kate Murray
- July 8 - Cliff Elliott
- July 15 - Jim Seeber
- July 22 - Luanne Griguoli
- July 29 - Jen Rabenaldt
- August 5 - Bob Gordon

# HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

*To the following seniors (over 85) who have birthdays in July and August:*

- Joy Reed – July 12
- George Mach – July 23 (turning 90 this year)
- Doris Bryan – July 29
- Lorna Hudson – July 31
- Jean Starkey – July 31
- Beverly Jamgs – August 11
- Ruth Bostrom – August 24
- Idabelle Shields – August 24 (107 this year)
- Barbara Frank – August 25
- Gordon Withers – August 26

To everyone else with a July or August birthday! If we have overlooked anyone, please contact the Church Office at 543-5451.

# CONGREGATIONAL CARE CORNER

*Please pray for our church family, especially:*

For the Rev. Dennis Falasco as he guides our congregation,  
For our elders and deacons as they lead us,

For Jen Rabenaldt and all who help with our Children's Ministry,

For all those involved in our Youth Ministry, especially leaders Sarah Dirk and Jake Wolfe,

For Joel Drenckpohl and the Front Porch Ministry,

For those who are undergoing treatments for various health issues,

For our church's elderly, especially those confined to their homes or care centers, like Cathy Anderson, Charles Blair, Gladys Brannum, George Daniel, Jean Honeyman, Lorna Hudson, Starr Jenkins, Marie Kammenzind, Ralph Nunley, Joy Reed, Idabelle Shields, Dottie Jean & John Stechman, Carol West, and Richard Wiens,

For the women and men who do so much to support the countless ministries, missions, and activities of our church,

For the local and global missions our church supports,

For members, friends, and family serving in the military:

Drew Descary (stationed in San Diego)

Laura Kraemer (in Maryland)

Jim Shelton (deployed on an aircraft carrier)

Michael Poe (stationed in Florida)

Joseph Sall (stationed in Pennsylvania)

Travis Hatakeyama (stationed in Germany)

Brendan Humphrey (on the USS Carl Vinson)

R. Brooks Anderson (on the USS North Dakota)

Sean Gillson (stationed on Whidbey Island)

Chris King (serving in the Middle East)

*For all of us as we serve God wherever He calls us.*

If you have a prayer concern, please call the Church Office at 805-543-5451.

# ENDOWMENT

## CREATE A LASTING LEGACY

**Include the church in your will!**

How do we support our church? The usual answer is by giving time, talent and treasure. Then there is the future, when we're no longer here to offer that time and talent. Church members and friends can continue to support the life of our church by including the church in their wills. We can endow a portion of lifetime giving.

Bert and Elaine Townsend are two of several members who have created a gift that keeps on giving by including the church in their wills. Bert and Elaine have done this as a symbol of the importance of the church in their lives and wish to help the church prosper well into the future by endowing a portion of their current stewardship.

The Townsends have and are serving the church in multiple ways. Elaine has served as an elder and chaired the Missions Committee. Currently she participates in WOW and is a member of the Peace and Social Justice Committee. Bert enjoys the fellowship and friends made as a member of First Pres and keeping Christ in focus. He has served on various committees including the Endowment Committee. He is Assistant Church Treasurer at present.

Gifts to our church's Endowment Fund can be used to fund worship, missions, education, youth, stewardship, or property maintenance, or other needs, for examples. What is your favorite part of church life? If you have included the church in your will you are invited to let the church know. You may wish to proclaim it through an article like this.

If you'd like to consider the gift of any type, please talk with a member of our church's Endowment Committee: John Eichler, Jane Maxwell, Diane Shervem, Bert Townsend, Dorothy Truesdale, Roger Verity, & Virginia Walter.

*Even a modest gift will make a difference.*



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## **SUMMER WORSHIP SCHEDULE**

**ONE SERVICE at 10 am | EDUCATION HOUR at 11 am**

## **TWO SERVICE SCHEDULE**

### **RESUMES AUGUST 26**

**8:45 AM SERVICE**

**EDUCATION HOUR at 11 am**

**11:00 AM SERVICE**