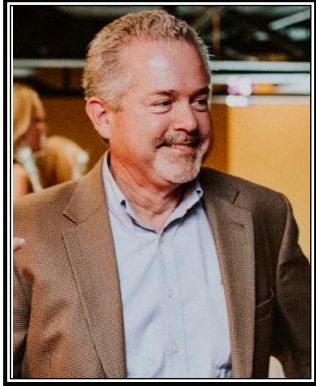


**FIRST
PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH**
San Luis Obispo

The Kirk

September 2022



This is a month of new beginnings. Kids are back in school, Cal Poly starts a new quarter in a few weeks, and churches traditionally start new programs and classes. So what's new around here? You'll see some of that in articles in this issue of the Kirk, and I want to highlight some of what we're going to be doing this season.

We'll be starting a new year of Wednesdays at the Rock, and our youth group continues to meet for fun and fellowship and learning about who Jesus really is. The choir will be starting up again and helping lead us in worship—the bell choir is back, too, and you'll hear from them soon. The Designated Pastor Nominating Committee will begin its work this month, and there are other opportunities to serve in church leadership if God

is calling you to do that.

Later this month I'll be starting a message series called 20 Questions with Jesus, where each message focuses on a question Jesus asks...or that someone asks him. I'll also be kicking off a new Thursday Night Study on Zoom called Crawl Through the Bible. We'll look at the origins of the books that make up our Old and New Testaments: how they were written and compiled, how they were edited and translated, with some attention to the people who made it all happen. We'll spend some time in the various kinds of writings in the Bible, so each of us can read them and reflect on them more effectively.

In the very last book of the Bible, God says "Behold, I make all things new." It's one of the promises of faith that no matter what we do or say or even believe—no matter what happens, God is in the renewal business. God loves, God heals, God restores, and God sends us out again. We are the people of a God who takes us in with all our dents and stains and cracks, and makes us new again.

I think about that at the beginning of every new church year. It's a time to try new things to see if they work, and also to try things that didn't work in a new way to see if we can do it better. I'm excited about the coming season at First Pres. Keep us in your prayers as we work to serve God and all of you faithfully and effectively.

Special Invitation: Fall brings with it a new chance to start or join a Bible in Community group. These are groups of eight or so people who meet to read and reflect on the passage I'll be preaching on an upcoming Sunday. If you'd like to participate, email me or the Church Office for more information.

CHILDREN'S ED

We just completed an AMAZING week of VBS. What a joy it was to be able to gather in person. The kids were awesome, the leaders were awesome, and the volunteers were awesome. Thank you to everyone who participated in any way. Your continued support is very much appreciated.

We look forward to Wednesdays at the Rock starting September 7. Wednesdays at the Rock is a wonderful opportunity for all kids—three years old through the 6th grade. All kids are welcome. At Wednesdays at the Rock, we enjoy Bible lessons, music, crafts, snacks, gym time, and fellowship. We meet each Wednesday from 4:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. We will have two groups—one for the younger kids and one for the older kids. The two groups will meet together for some activities and separately for others. We are extremely excited to be back.

If you are interested in volunteering, please let Jen know. There are many opportunities available.

Thanks again for your continued support of our programs and ministries. We couldn't do it without you!

The Children's Ed Team



YOUTH

It has been a busy summer for our families. We gathered when we could and enjoyed time together as it was possible. We had an end-of-the-school-year BBQ, a pool party, and time to hang out.

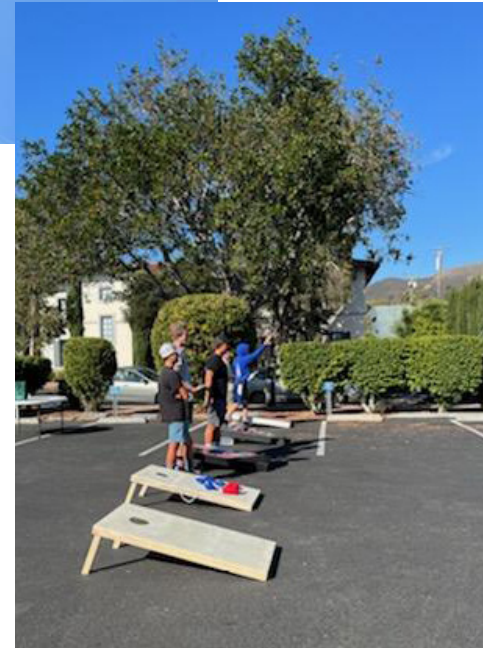
The Youth have been a huge help this summer. They volunteered and made possible “The National Night-Out-Block-Party” and “VBS.” They not only showed up--BUT THEY ALSO SHOWED UP! We are so very proud of their dedication and willingness to do what needs to be done.

Youth Group will fully resume on September 11. All Youth--7th through 12th grade--are welcome. We meet each Sunday from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. Bible lessons, dinner, games, and special activities are all part of our schedule.

If you are interested in bringing a meal, let Jen know. We would not only appreciate the meal, but we would also love for you to join us.

We look forward to a fun and meaningful program year. Thank you for keeping us in your prayers as we navigate this life as Youth!

The Youth Team



FPCSLO MUSIC

It is almost time to start our fall season after a great summer of music in worship with the help of Craig Updegrave, Dale Wolff, and others.

The schedule is as follows:

Bell Choir—Wednesdays, time: TBD,

First rehearsal: September 7

Choir—Wednesdays, time: 6:30 p.m.,

First rehearsal: September 21

Everyone is welcome, so mark your calendars and tell your friends!

THANK YOU!

Thanks to all of you who sent cards and flowers to help us celebrate our Wedding Anniversary. It has been a wonderful 70 years, and this church has been a part for 68 of them.

With Appreciation,

Mary Ruth and George Mach

HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

Happy Birthday! to the following seniors (over 85) who celebrate birthdays in September:

September 6	-	Jerry Hempenius
September 11	-	Richard Andrews
September 17	-	Judy Barnett
September 21	-	Glenn Carlson
September 26	-	Jerry Kaml
September 29	-	Lou Fogo

And to everyone else who has a September birthday.

Our church records may be incomplete. If we have overlooked someone, please contact the church office.

CONGREGATIONAL CARE CORNER

Please pray for our church family, especially:

For **Pastor John D'Elia** as he leads our congregation;

For our **Elders** as they guide our congregation in making decisions about the life of our church;

For the **Deacons** as they care for our church family;

For **Jen Rabenaldt** and those who work with our children and youth;

For **Scott Glysson** and the wonderful musicians in our church;

For our church members, friends, and family who are undergoing treatments for various health issues;

For our church's seniors, their families, and care givers;

For those who support our worship services with their technical help to make it possible for live streaming and recording of the services;

For members, family, and support personnel serving in the military;

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 or write me at gdekley@calpoly.edu.

ENDOWMENT FUND

CREATE A LASTING LEGACY

This issue of *Create A Lasting Legacy* features diverse types of testamentary gifts that you can make to the First Presbyterian Church of San Luis Obispo while still meeting your financial responsibilities to your family.

Maybe you are considering making a gift in your will or trust but have questions about how to direct such planned giving. We would be pleased to talk with you and provide sample language to help with your planning.

Maybe you are considering a significant gift to FPCSLO but find it prudent to preserve most of your assets for your and your family's security. The answer can be to defer your gift until the end of your life and include a bequest in your will.

Bequests have become an integral part of stewardship. You could join the multitude of PCUSA supporters by including FPCSLO when determining the final distribution of your estate. A bequest is the simplest and most popular future gift: it costs you nothing now and is revocable or can be modified.

A **BEQUEST** can be the following:

General; specify a dollar amount to leave to FPCSLO, the most popular

Specific; another popular type, you leave a named asset to FPCSLO, such as securities

Residuary; you leave FPCSLO a portion or all of your estate after all debts, taxes, expenses, and other bequests have been paid

Percentage; you could gift a percentage of your gross estate. Using this strategy, the size of the bequest varies as the estate varies.

Contingent; name FPCSLO as a secondary estate or life insurance beneficiary, for example:

We extend a special thank you to all the present and past members and friends of First Pres who have included the church in their wills or trusts and to those who have contributed to the creation of our endowment.

If you are currently doing tax or estate planning and/or feel led to include a gift to the First Presbyterian Church of San Luis Obispo in your financial or estate planning, please contact any member of Endowment Committee: Peggy Estes, Don Green, Jerry Kaml, Ray McKelvey, Diane Shervem, Bert Townsend, or Virginia Walter (Chair.) We can help guide you through this important process or steer you to the right people and resources.

Even a modest gift will “make a difference.”

PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN

All women of the church are invited to attend a Presbyterian Women Fall Kick-off coffee hour on Thursday, September 8, at 9:30 a.m. in the Wilson Fellowship Hall. Coffee, tea, and muffins will be served. The Presbyterian Women's Bible study for the year will be introduced. The theme this year is “Celebrating Sabbath: Accepting God's Gift of Rest and Delight.” The devotional for the program was written by Carol M. Bechtel.

We currently have several Bible study groups that meet on different days with varying frequency. New members are welcome. If you are interested in finding out more about the groups, please call Nellie Beecher, (805)544-1627.

BOOK BROWSERS

Book Browsers will be meeting the first Tuesday of each month at 7 p.m. via zoom. Please join us for discussions of the following books.

Sept. 6 The Exiles by C. B. Kline

Oct. 4 Going There by K. Couric

Nov. 1 This Tender Land by W. K. Krueger

Dec. 6 Florence Adler Swims Forever by R. Beanland

Jan. 3 The Twelve Tribes of Hattie by A. Mathis

Feb. 7 The Last Year of the War by S. Meissner

Mar. 7 The Lincoln Highway by A. Towles

Apr. 4 The Madness of Crowds by L. Penny

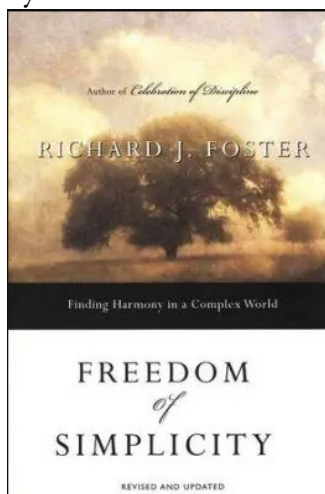
May 2 Tied to the Tracks by S. Donati

If you have any questions, please contact Diane Shervem at 805-459-9844 or dshervem@charter.net.

LIBRARY REVIEW

Freedom of Simplicity: Revised Edition: Finding Harmony in a Complex World, by Richard Foster, has been added to the library and is available for borrowing. It is located on the book cart.

Written in the same warm, accessible style as Richard Foster's best-selling Celebration of Discipline, Freedom of Simplicity articulates a creative, more human style of living, and points the way for Christians to make their lives "models of simplicity." Foster provides a way to rethink our priorities and to "seek first God's kingdom and his righteousness." He shows us how to live in harmony with the rich complexity of life while stressing the relation of simplicity to prayer, solitude, and all the Christian Disciplines. (Review Adapted From Amazon)



The library also has Celebration of Discipline (Revised) and Celebrating the Disciplines Workbook, both by Richard Foster. They are also on the book cart.

MISSIONS

HAITI EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATION

Recognizing five years of FPC's support of a school in Haiti.

THANK YOU for your continued support in bringing HOPE to the children in the mountains of southern Haiti.

God has blessed the Haiti Educational Foundation abundantly! HEF is putting your funding to work as teachers attended Teacher Training in August, five schools will receive additional funding for 7th – 9th grade programs, school supplies will be purchased for students to begin the 2022-2023 school year, and three more students will

begin college programs in the fall. HEF is moving forward in this great mission of education. Education brings HOPE! Together, we are making a difference. Thank you!

FRONT PORCH

While classes don't start until September 19, we all know that September is the time to welcome students back to SLO. It is also the time that the staff at Front Porch prepare to welcome many of those students to their coffee house/ministry center, offering free coffee along with a friendly smile and acceptance.

According to one student, "Front Porch is the family for the college community of SLO that everyone didn't know they needed but came to find it was crucial to their experience here." Ready to welcome students, along with Joel Drenckpohl, Director, and Dom Floyd, Associate Director, is returning intern Emma Cantos and new interns Malia Cooke and Hannah Cathers. Let me introduce them to you. Emma is from Gig Harbor, Washington, and has a BS in Psychology. She hopes to pursue occupational therapy after this year. Malia was raised in San Clemente, California, and has a BS in Parks and Tourism. She hopes to pursue Marriage and Family therapy in the future. Hannah hails from Van Nuys, California, and graduated with a BS in Experience Industry Management, Hospitality, and Tourism. She is excited to venture into the Front Porch sector of the experience industry and learn more about herself in both work and spiritual aspects. We look forward to meeting them and supporting them in their roles as vital parts of this college ministry.

If you would like to be more involved in the ministry of Front Porch, consider helping cook or serve a Wednesday night meal or contact Dom at dominique@frontporchslo.org.

PEACEMAKING AND SOCIAL JUSTICE

For you shall go out with JOY,
and be led forth with PEACE.
Isaiah 55:12

October 2 is World Communion Sunday. Our church, along with Presbyterian Churches nationwide, will be receiving the “Peace and Global Witness Special Offering.” our donation to this important ministry of the PCUSA will be used in three ways.

1. One portion will support the work by Presbyterians for peace and reconciliation across the globe.
2. The second portion will go towards the work of our local Presbytery.
3. The third portion will stay here at First Presbyterian for local mission work in our community.

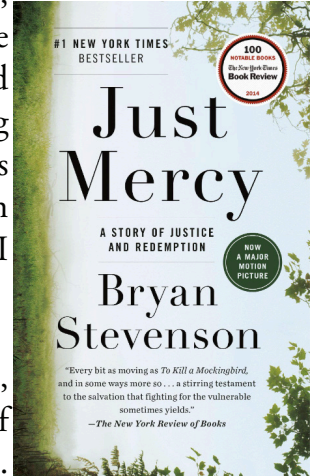
In these challenging times, we are all aware of the great need for peace and reconciliation worldwide as well as locally. Please prayerfully consider giving to this once-a-year Peace and Global Witness Special Offering.

Get On the Bus is back. On **October 15**, a bus sponsored by FPC will be bringing children to CMC to visit with their fathers who are incarcerated. Check the October “Kirk” and the “Weekly Peak” for ways you can participate in this joyful event.



JUST MERCY, A STORY OF JUSTICE AND REDEMPTION

This summer many of us read the book *Just Mercy, a Story of Justice and Redemption*, by Bryan Stevenson. Then we discussed what we had read during six Thursday evening zoom sessions. Reading this book took me to places in the criminal justice system I knew nothing about.



Here in the United States, we have the highest rate of incarceration in the world.

In the last 50 years, prison population has increased 7.5 times from 300,000 to 2.3 million people. Private prisons are a big business. People of color and the poor make up a disproportionate part of our prison population. The author of the book, Bryan Stevenson, has dedicated his life to defending the poor, the wrongly condemned and those unjustly trapped in our criminal justice system.

Here are three quotes from the book:

“We have to reform a system of criminal justice that continues to treat people better if they are rich and guilty, than if they are poor and innocent.”

“The opposite of poverty is not wealth: the opposite of poverty is justice.”

“The true measure of our character is how we treat the poor, the disfavored, the accused, the incarcerated, and the condemned.”

In Matthew 25, we are encouraged to visit the prisoners. We may not have an opportunity to actually visit a prisoner, but by reading this book we visited the issues that need our attention and need reform. We all were changed by the prisoner’s stories, some of which were heartbreaking.

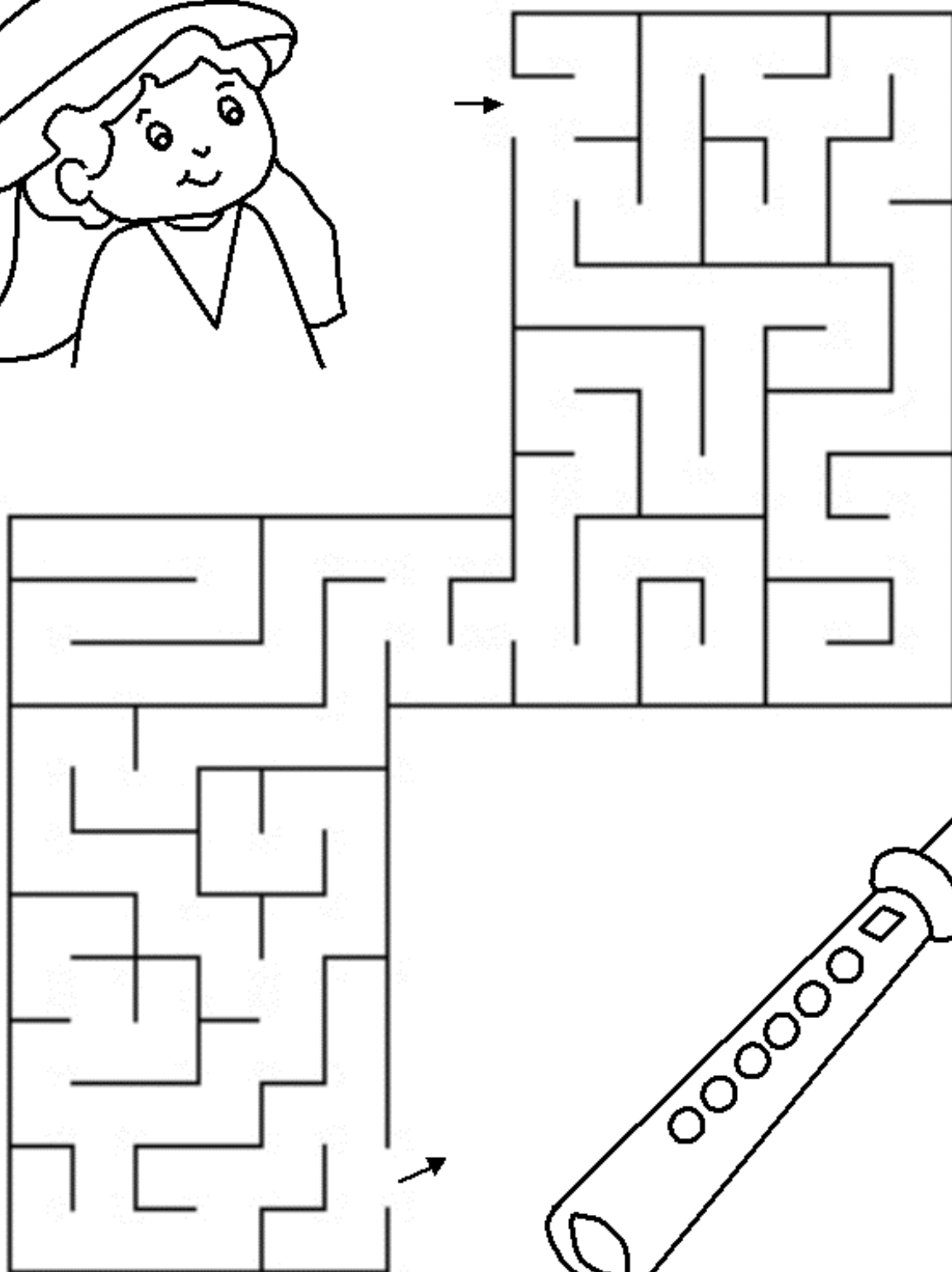
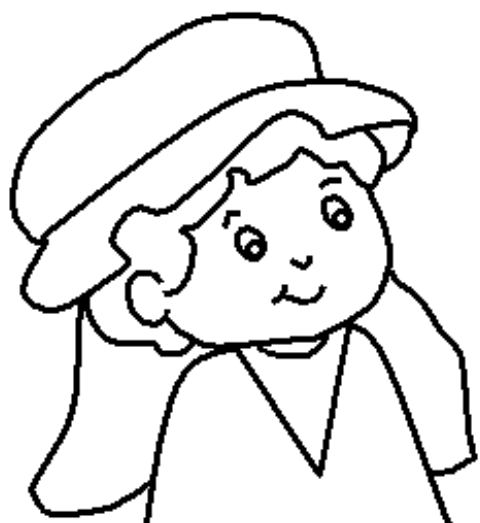
One person in the group commented during

the last discussion session that reading the book expands our lens and changes how we hear stories about our criminal justice system. Another person said to me, “The book and study has given me so much to think about, and the ideas presented have already come up in various conversations.” This person added, “The book is definitely having an influence on my life.”

If you haven't read *Just Mercy*, I encourage you to do so. I think visiting the prisoners in this book will expand your lens and influence your life also. There is a copy of *Just Mercy* in the Church library.

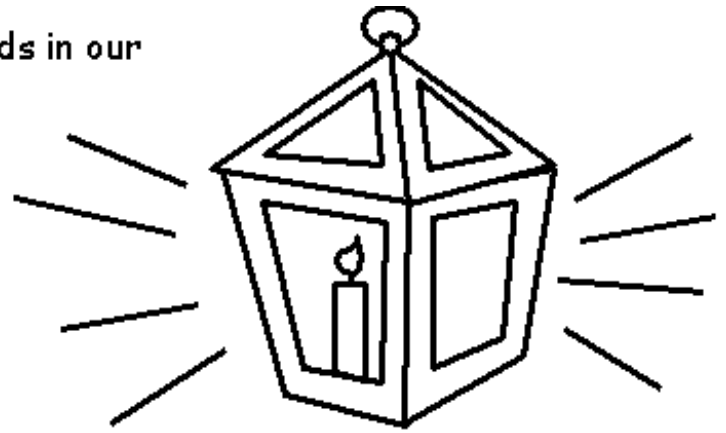
Child of God Maze

Help David find his instrument so he can sing and praise God.



Unscramble the letters to find the words in our

Child of God Anagram



adeilt _____

adelnnp _____

aalswy _____

acehrs _____

adeknr~~ss~~ _____

almps _____

beggi~~nn~~ _____

deegk~~now~~ _____

agiin~~prs~~ _____



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

San Luis Obispo

PO Box 591
981 Marsh Street
San Luis Obispo, CA
93406
tel: 805.543.5451
email: churchoffice@fpcslo.org
web: fpcslo.org

SAVE THE DATE:

SEPTEMBER 4

Special Congregational meeting In accordance with our presbytery guidelines, the congregation reviews and can comment on the completed Mission Study.

SEPTEMBER 8

The Presbyterian Women Fall Kick-Off is at 9:30 a.m. in Wilson Fellowship Hall There will be a coffee hour and introduction to this year's Bible Study: Celebrating Sabbath.

The Thursday Evening Study resumes with "CRAWL THROUGH THE BIBLE" at 7 p.m. via Zoom

SEPTEMBER 11

All-Church BBQ following the service. Please bring a side, salad, or dessert to share!

SEPTEMBER 21

Bell Choir—Wednesdays, time: TBD, First rehearsal: September 7
Choir—Wednesdays, time: 6:30 p.m., First rehearsal: September 21