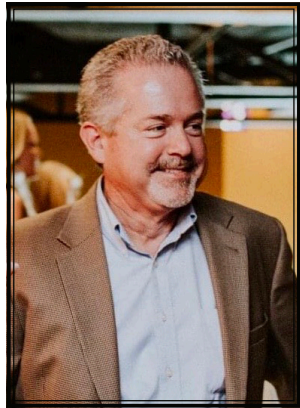


**FIRST  
PRESBYTERIAN  
CHURCH**  
*San Luis Obispo*

# *The Kirk*

## November 2021



As you read this our stewardship season is well underway. You may get tired of me talking about how much I enjoy this time of year, and I can live with that!

There are a handful of indicators of a church's health—a welcoming spirit, encouragement of diversity, a willingness to invite newer members into leadership roles—all of these let people know that a church they visit might become a church home.

Generous giving is another.

Over these Sundays you're seeing people talk about how First Pres SLO has cared for them, or given them opportunities to live into God's calling, and simply been a friendly place to sink some roots and make friends. As someone who still feels new to First Pres, I can attest to the gracious spirit of this place, and I know that the other newcomers feel much the same.

Giving is a part of what makes a local church go. In all of our ministries of fellowship, worship, discipleship and mission, gifts of money and time provide opportunities for people to grow into God's calling on their lives, and help us to serve and bless people in need in our community. Stewardship isn't some stale process of filling holes with money, it's a spiritual partnership between you and God, and between all of us and our community.

Stewardship season is a time of celebrating our partnership of sharing and ministry together. I hope you can set aside some moments for reflection and prayer as you consider your giving for the coming year. I'm going to increase my own pledge, something that makes me very happy to do, and I invite you to do the same.

Blessings to you,  
Pastor John

### Pilgrimage to the Lands of the Bible



I'm hoping to lead a trip to Israel-Palestine next year. Our tentative dates are in the window between April 26th and May 5th. We'll have 7 days of touring, including Galilee, Nazareth, Bethlehem, and Jerusalem. If you're interested, please contact me at the church office or at [jdellia@fpc slo.org](mailto:jdellia@fpc slo.org).

# CHILDREN'S ED

We just finished our Creation Series at Wednesdays at the Rock. We had so much fun learning about each day of creation and what that means for us. At the end, we had a creation party and celebrated all we had learned and did during the seven weeks. Next, we are on to Stewardship and then Advent. Thank you for your continued support as we figure out how to do things safely.

Watch for details for special events as we figure out how and what we get to do in the future.

## The Children's Ed Crew



# YOUTH

We had a great lesson about Stewardship and what that means for us. We created Stewardship Jars and will fill them through the end of the year. We will then discuss and decide how to distribute the funds—one for Youth, one for the Church, and one for the community.

We took a trip to the Pumpkin Patch and Corn Maze and returned to decorate our Pumpkins. It was a fun fall activity.

We have enjoyed getting to know Sarah Jane. She is an amazing addition to the group.

We are still looking for our volleyball net and portable goals. Let us know if you see them.

If you would like to spend time with the Youth or donate a meal, let Jen know. Thank you for your continued support of our Youth Program. Watch for details for upcoming happenings!

## The Youth Crew





## ALTERNATIVE GIFT FAIR FRONT PORCH FUNDRAISING DINNER

The Alternative Gift Fair (AGF) will be virtual again this year, so get ready to go shopping. As in past years you, may buy intangible gifts of donations to local, national, and international charities in honor of family and friends.

The AGF is a wonderful way to give and to model the joy of giving to friends and family members--young and old. When we shop at the AGF, we experience a "Bethlehem Christmas," a metaphor for God's greatest gift to us. We participate in the real Christmas story as we bring our gifts to Christ as Matthew 25 calls us to actively engage with people and the world around us. "Whatever you did for the least of these...you did unto me," Matthew 25:40.

You will receive your packet of materials in the mail in late November with the list of charities and directions on how to shop—either online or by returning the order form to church by US mail. If you do not receive a packet, please call the church office to have one mailed to you, or go to the FPC website, [www.fpcslo.org](http://www.fpcslo.org), and follow the instructions for shopping. You may shop anytime from the 1st to the 15th of December.

## PEACEMAKING AND SOCIAL JUSTICE

Church Family,

THANK YOU for your generosity. Your response to the needs locally and around the world by giving to the Peace and Global Witness Offering was fantastic. This year's donations of \$2,800 are \$1,000 more than last year's giving. Seven hundred dollars will stay at FPC to be used for the Green Pastures ministry to the vulnerable in our community, and the remainder will go to Presbytery and PCUSA for work fighting injustice on the Central Coast and around the world.

"PEACE AT ALL TIMES IN ALL WAYS." 2  
Thessalonians 3:16

It is always exciting to see what new ideas and programs will be added at Front Porch each year with the addition of new staff. In addition to the regular Porch Night, Wednesday night dinners (now served outside in pre-assembled containers) with trivia, and Sunday morning worship have resumed. Added is a weekly "Field Trip with an Intern" where local places--such as the SLO Art Museum--are explored. The first ever Craft Fair was held, which was a joint effort of Front Porch and the After School Art Club. Live music by three bands kept the afternoon lively and students filled the coffee house with dancing. Open Mic night was held early in the quarter to help bring students back into a space that has felt empty for too long.

The Annual Fund Raising Dinner was held on October 30 and was a great success. (As this is being written in the middle of the month, I am making that statement based on faith!) More about this event next month.

Thank you to all the First Pres members who have continued to support Front Porch through the years. You have been critical to its success.

Susan Updegrove,  
Front Porch Board

## ENDOWMENT FUND A LIFE INCOME AS WELL AS A LASTING LEGACY

A gift to the First Presbyterian Church Endowment Fund can also be part of your retirement income, for life. This could be a way to give and to receive.

Secure, fixed rate retirement income for yourself or a loved one you select.

A portion of the gift annuity will also provide future support for the FPCSLO Endowment.

It is a practical solution for those who would like to make a gift but need income during retirement.

The Presbyterian Church USA Foundation welcomes gift annuities of \$10,000 or more. You may invest cash or securities. Donating securities may provide capital gains tax reduction. Minimum age is only 55, for deferred income, or 65 for immediate income.

The Church Treasurer can provide written guidelines to assist your making a donation to the church .

Third quarter earning note: Our Endowment largely held its own during the rocky third quarter. The fund ebbed slightly by only 0.18%.

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 the Endowment Committee: Peggy Estes, Don Green, Jerry Kaml, Ray McKelvey, Diane Shervem, Bert Townsend, or Virginia Walter (Chair). If you haven't already done so, please consider inserting one simple statement in our wills: After all of my bills are paid, 10% of my estate will go to First Presbyterian Church of San Luis Obispo.

Even a modest gift will make a difference.

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## HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

To the following seniors (over 85) who have birthdays in November:

Barbara Gillson – November 5

Patti Hempenius – November 5 – 85 in 2021

Jim Nielsen – November 7

Lionel Beyer – November 10

Lou Pippin – November 10

Jo McRee – November 29

And to everyone else who celebrates a November 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 members of our various church committees as they help us find new ways to worship and interact in the coming months,

For the Deacons as they care for our church family,

For Jen Rabenaldt and others as they work with our children and youth,

For Scott Glysson, Sarah Jane Scott, and the other wonderful musicians of our church,

Families who are undergoing treatments for various health issues,

For our church's seniors, especially those who are alone in their homes or care centers, and for their 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 [gdekline@calpoly.edu](mailto:gdekline@calpoly.edu).

God bless us all.

Gloria DeKleine

# THANK YOU...

Dear Church Family,

I had an eventful year due to significant health issues and I was unable to keep up with "The Kirk." I was informed that an endowment gift was given in my name for the Green Pastures Ministry. I am overwhelmed with the generosity and the kind words on my behalf. I'm more than humbled and very grateful. God is Good!

Much love and many prayers to the giver and congregation,

Dorie Larson

## BOOK BROWSERS

Book Browsers will continue to meet on the first Tuesday of each month at 7:00 via ZOOM.

Nov. 2 American Dirt by Jeanine Cummins

Dec. 7 Born a Crime by Trevor Noah

Jan. 4 Why Fish Don't Exist by Lulu Miller

Feb. 1 When We Were Young and Brave by Hazel Gaynor

Mar. 1 Brigid of Kildare by Heather Terrell

Apr. 5 Last Boat out of Shanghai by Helen Zia

May 3 The Nature of Fragile Things by Susan Meisner

## BUDGET AND FINANCE COMMITTEE

Our financial situation as of September indicates a weakening financial health that gives us some concern. In the month of September, total income was \$28,531 and total expenses were \$55,574. This decreased Total Reserves (our savings account) by \$27,043 in one month, giving us a Total Reserves balance of \$61,132 as of September 30.

Total giving this year has averaged \$38,750 a month, compared with the needed \$41,250 to fully fund our program. This \$30,000 shortfall concerns the Budget and Finance Committee. Total expenses as of September 30 are \$2,580 less than expected. However now that we have resumed in-person worship and education programs, we anticipate

expense increases, including staffing increases. Session, particularly committee chairs, will monitor spending in order to assure that critical elements of our mission will be fully funded. Your continued faithful giving will enable FPCSLO to continue and enhance our service to the congregation and the community.

## STEWARDSHIP SEASON

Pledges maybe made to Diane Shervim via email at churchtreasure@fpcslo.org Please be sure to include your name, the amount of your pledge, and the frequency of your pledge

## FROM JEN

Some have asked me to publish my answers from my application to become a delegate to General Assembly 2022. I will be a Ruling Elder Delegate for the Santa Barbara Presbytery. Thank you for all of your support!

PRESBYTERY OF SANTA BARBARA

225th General Assembly 2022

Questions and Answers from Nominees

September 18, 2021 Presbytery Meeting

### 1. Please include a short bio introducing yourself.

My name is Jenifer Gordon Rabenaldt. I am the Director of Christian Education/Office Manager at First Presbyterian Church San Luis Obispo. I am fortunate enough to have grown up in this Church and became a member when I was 12 years old. I have served in many capacities. I am an ordained Ruling Elder at First Presbyterian Church San Luis Obispo and have served two terms two different times. I am very proud of my current position as Director of Christian Education/Office Manager and take it very seriously.

Christian Education is a passion of mine and I enjoy sharing that passion with all ages. I am currently in the process of becoming a Certified Christian Educator. I have completed all my course work and the next step is to complete my final project. I pride myself on being a detail person and being able to see the big picture all at the same time. This has proven to be an asset in all that God allows me to do while I serve God's Church here in San Luis Obispo.

## **2. Describe your relationship with Jesus Christ and its effect on your life.**

My relationship with Jesus Christ is solid and has been my whole life. I have been a life long Christian and Presbyterian. You might say I was born that way as my Mom went into labor with me at a Church potluck.

I start and end everyday in conversation with Jesus. I am humbled by the grace and mercy we are so freely given. There has been a lot of loss and disappointment for me the past few years and Jesus has given me the strength I needed, just when I needed it, to not only survive but get to the other side. Get to the other side even stronger than I was before. I credit Jesus with everything life has thrown my way. Good and not so good. Jesus has been with me through it all. I accept my shortcomings and try to acknowledge my gifts to pursue what Jesus has planned for my life today, tomorrow and forever. People have seen me struggle but they have never seen me give up. I try to lead by example. I believe leadership is not about me being the best, it's about helping everyone be better. Jesus has a plan for all of us and I love to help others see and acknowledge that. Jesus has gifted me with a good gut and listening ears. Everyday I love God and then love people. I accept what Jesus has given me and never try to be fancier than I am.

I rely on the Father, Son and Holy Spirit everyday and look forward to sharing what gives me strength.

## **3. How do the Bible and the Confessions guide and influence your views?**

For me, the Bible has been a fluid document that has helped me and will continue to help me at every stage of my life. The bible and confessions have helped and confused me. While reading and studying the Bible and Confessions I have felt loved and validated. I have lots of questions all the time and have been blessed to have mentors around me to discuss all of that with. I remember learning the Bible stories from my Grandma at a young age. I remember questioning those stories while in my teens and early adulthood and now I am amazed daily at the lessons we learn from them. I will never stop wondering and learning about the Bible and understanding the confessions. Applying the teachings from both to my daily life is a priority. And when I can share that with others - it's a good day.

## **4. What do you believe the role of the church is in today's world, and how have you been involved?**

I'm sure every generation has thought the Churches role in the world in their time was more important than ever. As the world is today, with instant information through technology etc. I believe the role of the Church is more important than ever. We need to seek to be informed, stay informed and really listen to and accept everyone for who they are. Guide them when necessary, realize everyone has something to share no matter what stage of life they are in. I believe the Church has a beautiful opportunity to teach love and show what that looks like on many levels. It means having the conversations, even if those conversations are hard. It means asking questions and listening, really listening to the answers. It means acknowledging that we are not all going to agree on everything and that's ok.

The Church in todays world should be about what God intended it to be about always - God. God is the focus and center and we need to remember that in everything we do. Church isn't about me, it's not about you, it's about God and following Gods direction for the body with God as the head.

I have been involved mostly through education, for all ages. Trying to be a presence that loves and accepts all - even when it's hard. I am blessed to participate with all ages. Nursery through Older Adults. I learn more from them every week than I'm sure they do from me. But, I very much enjoy being the conversation starter, and hopefully knowing enough to answer questions as they come up.

Recently I have been very engaged in finding out how things work and why. Referring to governance locally, regionally and nationally. I believe it's important to have that knowledge and be part of it in order to truthfully share what we, as the PCUSA stand for and hope to accomplish as the Church, Gods Church. And then sharing that knowledge with anyone who will listen.

Sincerely,  
Jen



# CHRISTMAS FLOWERS

## HELP BEAUTIFY OUR SANCTUARY DURING ADVENT :

### DEDICATE CHRISTMAS FLOWERS IN HONOR OR MEMORY OF LOVED ONES

Each Christmas season, for many years, members of our church family have generously supported the Deacons' flower ministry by dedicating Christmas plants in honor or in memory of loved ones. These plants beautify our sanctuary during Advent and then are delivered to homebound, ill, bereaved and new members to let them know we hold them in our hearts. Each loving dedication can be made for a suggested \$10 donation per dedication to the Deacons' Christmas flower fund. Your donations to this fund will help beautify our sanctuary for in-person and taped services, and help the Deacons give flowers to those in need.

This year Deacons will be able to accept in-person donations and dedications after Sunday services November 28, and December 5 and 12. Please bring a check or cash (\$10 per dedication). We prefer the exact amount as we won't have change. We will also be sending a flyer by mail, since not all members are attending in-person services.

To send by check: First Presbyterian Church, P.O. Box 591, San Luis Obispo, CA 93406. Notation on check: Deacon Christmas flower fund. Please include a note about your dedication: "in honor of" (name or organization) or "in memory of" (name.)

To donate on-line: Donation via church website: Go to [www.fpcslo.org](http://www.fpcslo.org) click on Donate, Give Now, e-giving other. Be sure to log in. After you enter payment information in the NOTES section, write: Deacon Christmas Flower fund; "in honor of" (name) or "in memory of" (name).

If you prefer you can call or email Kathy Wolff with your questions and dedication information. Phone: 805 782-9790 or [dkwolff@charter.net](mailto:dkwolff@charter.net).

### **DEADLINE FOR DEDICATIONS IS DECEMBER 17, 2021.**

All dedications are printed in the church bulletin for Christmas Eve.

Whichever donation method you use, please make sure to note that your donation is for Christmas flowers, and indicate whom you are honoring or memorializing. You might even want to consider honoring an organization or group of first responders or others you feel deserve a special thank-you. This is your opportunity to express your love and appreciation for blessings received and witnessed.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT OF THIS IMPORTANT DEACON OUTREACH PROGRAM.

## MUSIC AT FPCSLO

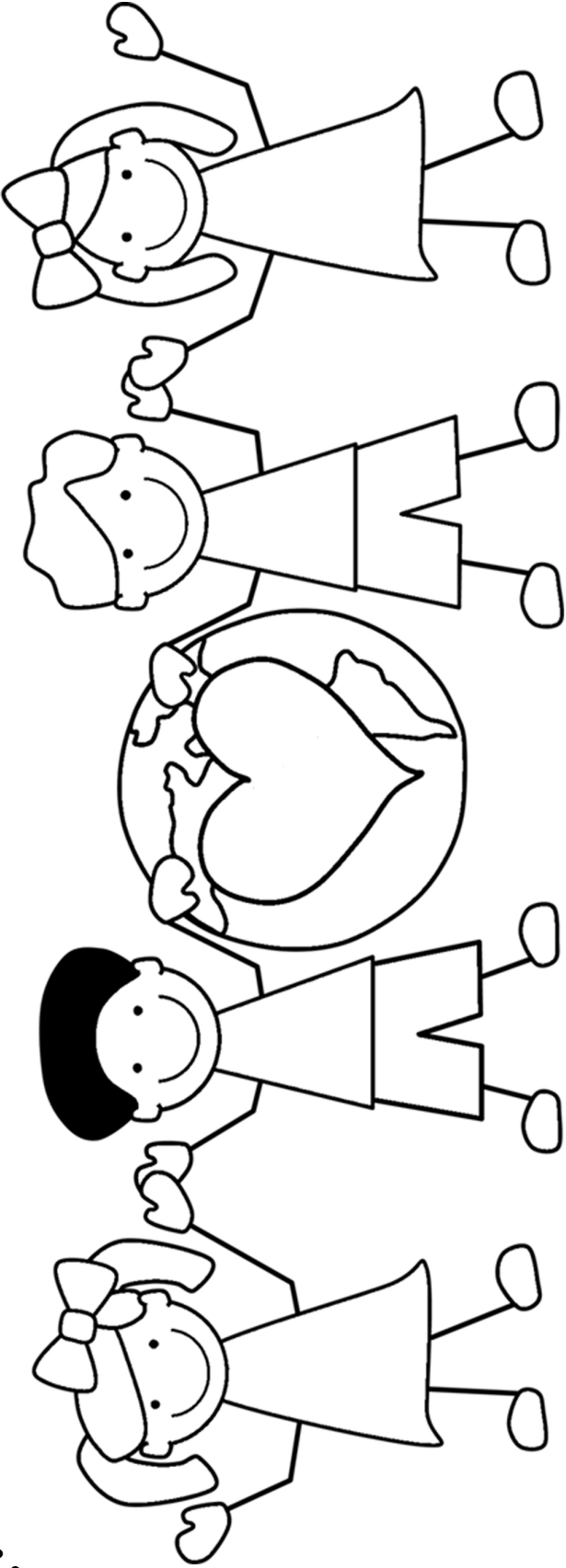
We are planning to resume rehearsals on Wednesday Nov. 3, with the hopes of beginning to sing an anthem in services throughout Advent.

For the time being, our rehearsals will be from 6:15-7:00PM. I know this is a little shorter than usual, but this is necessary to be in compliance for safety in indoor singing. We will hold these rehearsals in Wilson Hall, and the chairs will be spread out for safety.

Requirements: Anyone choosing to participate must be fully vaccinated, and we will require masks to be worn at all times. There are a variety of "singer masks" on the market (you can find them easily on Amazon). Although singing with a mask isn't quite as much fun as without, take it from someone who has been doing it for over a year now, its better than no singing!

See you soon!

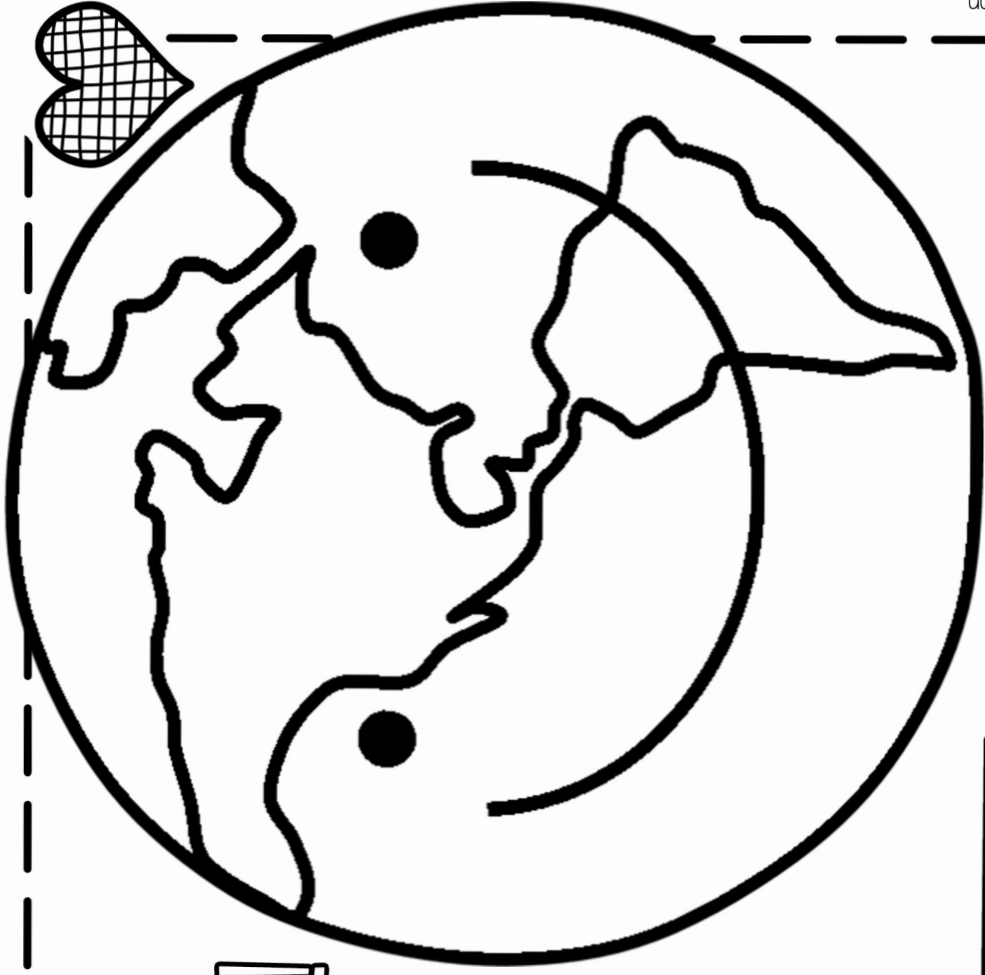
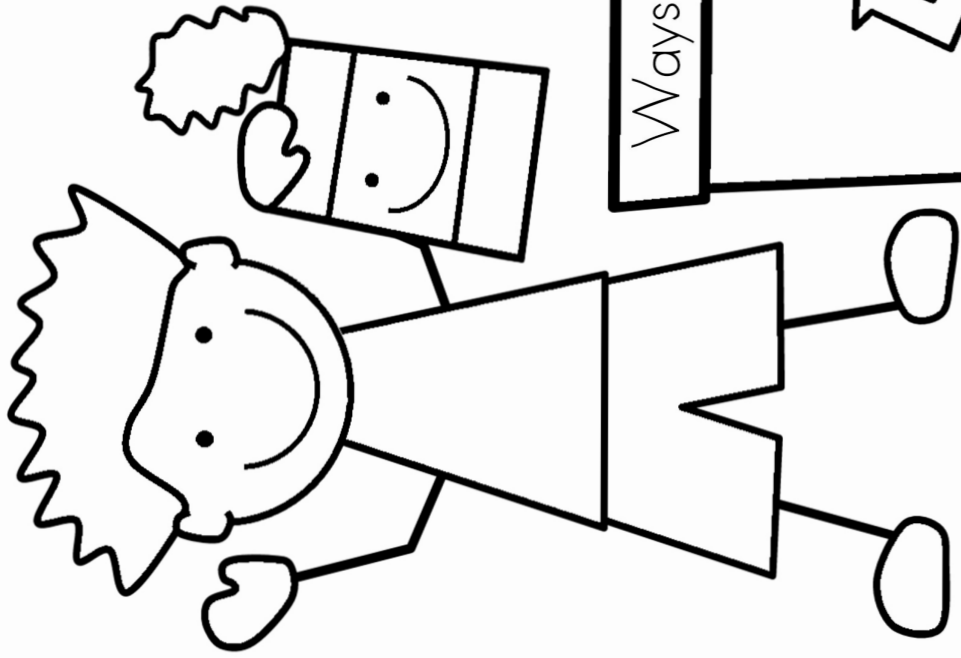
Scott



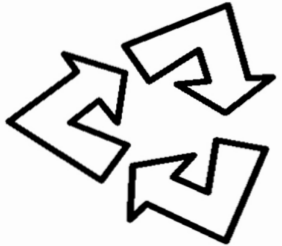
We Care for  
God's Creation!



God wants me to be a  
Good Steward!



Ways I can help:



Vertical lines for writing.



# Give Thanks







**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](mailto:churchoffice@fpcslo.org)

*web:* [fpcslo.org](http://fpcslo.org)