

**FIRST
PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH**
San Luis Obispo

The Kirk

September 2023



Don't miss this article!

As we start a new church year, my first as your called pastor, I'm making plans for how we can work together to grow our ministry for the next generation. We have so much good work to do!

I want to develop my role as an equipping pastor—someone who helps identify gifts and calling, and works to grow both for service to Jesus. I love this part of my job.

In my relationship to the whole congregation, it's my responsibility to communicate the wide range of opportunities for growing in spiritual maturity and effective service. That's the focus of my teaching and preaching, my conversations and counseling, and (maybe most importantly) my listening. My role is to invite each person who makes First Pres their church home to hear God's call, and then to help them live into that call in a meaningful way.

Here's how I plan to do that.

My goal is to be in a cycle of relationship that follows this pattern:

- To inspire,
- To equip,
- To resource,
- To celebrate.

Preaching and teaching are my primary means of inspiration. That's more than just getting excited about something—it's helping people find the place where God is stirring in their hearts.

Equipping is helping people walk through the process of praying about their calling, and growing spiritually in a way that allows them to step into a new role in ministry or service.

Resourcing is helping to organize the space and/or funding that is needed in order for this new area of service can be most effective.

Finally, it's good for us to celebrate when some new effort or ministry bears fruit in the congregation or community. We don't do this part enough!

If you've read this far, here's my invitation. In addition to the way I will be doing this work with the whole congregation, I would like to enter into a more focused process of personal growth with ten people in the congregation. We'll use the four steps to give us direction, and see where God might be calling you to deeper service. This will be a serious commitment—it will take time and effort and training. If this is something you're interested in, please contact me at the church office.

First Pres SLO has a future of service and impact in this community. Who wants to take the next steps toward leading that Kingdom work?

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION CHILDREN'S ED

We just completed an amazing week of VBS. Thank you so much for all your support - before, during, and continuing!

We learned how to Love God, Love People, Love Ourselves and Do Things. The kids were curious and full of energy. They kept the leaders on their toes. An incredibly special thank you to all the volunteers. We could not have had such a great and fun week without you.

Wednesdays at the Rock - Starting September 6, 2023 - 4:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m.

Ages 3 years through the sixth grade are welcome. We enjoy Bible Lesson's, Music, Crafts, Games, and Snacks.

Spread the news! See you on September 6!

We are shaking things up a bit and the following information is the plan.

On Sundays for Worship - We are asking all kids 5 years and older to begin in Worship. They will go to Sunday school after Time with Children. We will have the Wines Chapel set up for any kids who want to hang out in there before

Sunday School.

On Communion Sundays-We will invite the kids who are 5 years and older to join us for Communion. Communion Education will occur before we start this new time of families participating in Communion together. It will be up to each family if they would like the kids to participate. Details are still being worked out, but we wanted you to know about the change coming. We will start the new schedule on September 3. "Communion with family" will start October 1 for those families who wish to participate.

The nursery will continue to be open and available for all kids through 4 years old.

If you have any questions, reach out to Jen Rabenaldt at 805-543-5451, ext. 105 or jen@fpcslo.org.

If anyone has any comfortable chairs they would like to donate to Children's Ed for Wines Chapel, please let us know.





YOUTH

The Youth program is in a bit of a transition. We will continue to meet on Sunday evenings from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. with the help from all of you. "Did that get your attention?"

While we search for a Youth Leader, Scott Machado has volunteered to coordinate the Youth Group. We are asking parents or others from the Church to sponsor a night. What does that mean, you ask? It means you would host the Youth Group - at the Church - on one of the Sundays. Hosting includes providing a meal and leading conversation. Jen and Scott can help with a lesson and Bella and Ash will help with games. It is an effortless way to spend time with some amazing kids and get to know them. Plus, the youth will get to know you and feel even more connected to First Pres.

We are having a parent meeting on August 22 at 7 p.m. in the Geneva Room to discuss this further. We wanted you to be in the loop, so you have a chance to sign up for Sunday. You will be thankful for what you did.

Please pray that God sends us just the right person to lead our Youth into the future



ADULT EDUCATION

We are excited to announce an in person adult education class that will start Sunday, Sept. 24th, at 8:45 a.m.

Adult Education resumes – in person, after a 3-year hiatus! Kate Murray is preparing a new 6-week series called Families in the Gospel of Mark. Mark narrates Jesus' ministry by introducing many characters who are defined by family relationships. There are fathers, mothers, sons, daughters, sisters, and brothers. There are loving families, a toxic family, and family

relationships redefined by Jesus himself. Please join Kate as we explore the storytelling of the very first Gospel writer – Mark – and how he chose to introduce Jesus to his readers through encounters with distinct types of families. No matter what your own family experience is like, you will find something to take away from Jesus’ encounters in Mark’s Gospel. The class starts September 24.

Pastor John will continue his Thursday Night Bible Study - Date and topic to be determined. Watch for details.

Christian Ed feels like we have gotten our Mojo back and look forward to all the upcoming opportunities for all ages.

Blessings from your CE Committee;
Jen Rabenaldt CRE, Brooke Palmerston,
Bonnie Kraemer, Audrey Tandon, and Kate Murray

FROM THE CRE

Crossing Currents 2023

Thank you for supporting me as I traveled to Minneapolis for the Crossing Currents event. It was a powerful and inspiring day and a half sponsored by the Office of the General Assembly (OGA) I was honored to represent the Presbytery of Santa Barbara and First Pres SLO. It was an honor to be asked to be a part of this discernment process. We were asked to be there because the leadership was told they needed to hear from us and to listen to us. Not because we even pretend to have the answers but because we have the energy and passion to be a part of the Church moving forward.

We were called to discern what God has in store for us and is inviting us into as an expression of Christ’s body in the PC(USA). We were asked to discuss things like; What does it mean to be a Church today and in the next few years? What

does leadership in the Church mean or look like? How do we form leaders in the Church? What does a specifically Reformed ecclesiology look like and mean as the Church is “being reformed” at this time? What are the ecclesial formation needs in the PC(USA)? What would be some initial steps we can take now to move us further into this future even as it continues to unfold before us?

We were reminded that questions are the answers (Hal Gregerson).

We talked a lot about boundaries/containers and what are the boundaries between form and freedom. It is not about the container itself; it is about the content. How can we be a part of where God is already working in the world. How can we walk alongside the Spirit that is already here? The “sparks” - where are they and how can we inflame them. It was said that we do not need a revival - we need a renewal. A revival is bringing back the past, a renewal is moving forward and doing better. The best analogy I heard was that we should not be considered the frozen chosen any longer - it is time to become the thawed awed.

We talked a lot about energy. Potential energy -vs- kinetic energy. How can we tap into the potential energy all around us? Structures, boundaries, polity should these things be reformed and made current. What is holding us back? What will enable us to move forward and change as needed to become successful and productive?

We talked a lot about liminality. Is it time to take a giant leap over the threshold or do we stand there for a while. I am all for taking the giant leap. And, most definitely not stepping back. Energy is powerful and can and should be used in positive and powerful ways. We recognized we cannot do this alone. It is about having conversations and asking questions. It is about

partnering with others even if they do things differently. We really are better together.

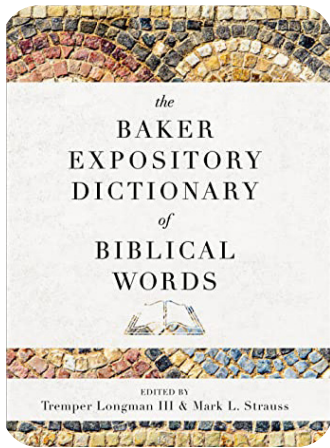
We heard stories from leaders that were inspiring and gut wrenching. The perseverance demonstrated was fueled by the Holy Spirit and it was obvious. When God calls, we need to listen. We need to not only listen but not be afraid to follow that call. Even if moving forward means removing structures and breaking down barriers. We need to be creative in our ministries. Especially those ministries that are calling and searching for something new. Ministries that do not look like they did 50 years ago. The Church needs to model and become the Church of 2023. To move forward boldly. To break down what needs to be broken down and use those pieces to build something new.

With all of that - thank you for allowing me to be part of this experience and process!

Jen Rabenaldt CRE

LIBRARY REVIEW

The Baker Expository Dictionary of Biblical Words edited by Tremper Longman and Mark Strauss has been added to the Reference section of the library and is available for reading in the library. This newly published (2023) resource



is designed for anyone interested in researching (or just reading about) the original Hebrew and Greek words from which our Bible is translated into English. For example, the very first entry in this dictionary is the English word “abandon.” You will read that two Hebrew words (natas, azab) are translated as abandon in the Old Testament. In the New Testament, there are three Greek words so translated (aphistemi,

enkataleipo, exodos). Does that last one sound familiar? Each Hebrew and Greek word has a short article explaining how and where it is used in Scripture and what its distinguishing nuance might be. Each English entry cross references other English words used to translate the same Hebrew or Greek word, since all words have a semantic range and nuance related to context. For this first entry, you would also want to look up the entries on “leave,” “neglect,” “refuse,” and “reject.” Full disclosure: FPSLO member Kate Murray wrote that first article and contributed the Greek articles for 80 English entries in this resource – some much more theologically interesting than “abandon.” For example, check out the articles on “servant,” “slave,” and “sin.” Also, check out the excellent introduction by the editors that more fully explains this book’s purpose and use. Kate is pleased to donate this resource to our library and hopes it will be useful. (Reviewed by Kate Murray)

CONGREGATIONAL LIFE HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

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

Jerry Hempenius – September 6
Jeanette Wolff – September 10
Richard Andrews – September 11
Judy Barnett – September 17
Glenn Carlson – September 21
Jerry Kaml – September 26
Lou Fogo – September 29

And to everyone else with a July or August 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 the following:

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 many wonderful musicians in our church;

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

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

For all our church's senior citizens, for their families, and for their care givers;

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

For all of us as we serve God wherever He calls us;

Because we care about you, if you are hospitalized or ill, please call the church office (805) 543-5451 to leave a message for Pastor John or the Deacons.

If you have a prayer concern, please call the Church Office at (805) 543-5451 or write me at gdeklein@calpoly.edu.

God bless us all,
Gloria DeKleine

BOOK BROWSERS

Book Browsers will again meet the first Tuesday of each month via zoom. Our discussions will begin at 7 p.m.

The following is our schedule for the year:

- Sept. 5 All My Rage,
by Sabaa Tahir
- Oct. 3 Klara and the Sun,
by Kazuo Ishiguro
- Nov. 7 The Paper Daughters of Chinatown
by Heather B. Moore
- Dec. 5 The Book of Lost Names,
by Kristin Harmel
- Jan. 2 You'll Never Believe What Happened to Lucy,
by Amber Ruffin
- Feb. 6 West with Giraffes,
by Lynda Rutledge
- Mar. 5 Bloomsbury Girls,
by Natalie Jenner
- Apr. 2 Secrets of Charmed Life,
by Susan Meisner
- May 7 The Undocumented Americans,
by Karla Cornejo Villavicencio

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

UPCOMING EVENTS:

Sunday, September 10 at 11:30 am

Presbyterian Women Fall Meeting

After the worship service in Wilson Hall. Lunch will be served followed by an introduction to the PW Bible Study for 2023-2024, "Sacred Encounters – The Power and Presence of Jesus Christ in Luke-Acts" by Olive Mahabir. Study books will be available. This is a time to gather as women interested in studying together in evening and daytime circles, to start new circles, to begin your own self-study or just to join in.

Friday, September 22 at 7 pm

Zoom Bingo

Our final Bingo will be a WILD and CRAZY one. Please get your markers ready and come with some wild and crazy jokes and stories! Join us for some fun and fellowship! The link will be sent in the Weekly Peak! For more information, contact Pam Rodewald and Ray McKelvey

Saturday, September 23 from 9am to 1pm

Presbyterian Women of the Presbytery Fall Gathering at Nipomo Presbyterian Church

Pastor Garrett Andrew of the Nipomo Presbyterian Church and his co-author, Linda Abbott Trapp, Ph.D., will present their recently published book, Peace Be with You. Luanne Griguoli will lead the worship service and a representative from this summer's IMPACT (International Mission and Cross Cultural Training) team to Turkey will share their experiences. Carpools will be formed to travel to this event.

BUDGET AND FINANCE ENDOWMENT

Create A Lasting Legacy

CHARITABLE GIFT ANNUITIES (CGA) were described in the July-August edition of this column. As a review, a CHARITABLE GIFT ANNUITY provides you, or someone you love, with lifetime income at a fixed rate. A portion of the gift annuity will also provide future support for First Presbyterian Church, San Luis Obispo, or another selected ministry. It is a practical solution for those who would like to make a gift but may need income during retirement.

Here is an idea worth considering. Do you have an old, or not so old, annuity contract which you are not using? That is an annuity which has not been turned into regular income? What are you going to do with that dusty, neglected part of your financial portfolio?

A recent inquiry at FPC, SLO has resulted in our learning that such a forgotten annuity can be exchanged for a new contract, a Charitable Gift Annuity, at the PCUSA Foundation.

Following the first request for such an exchange the Treasurer related to a Foundation attorney who has further brought in the CGA consultant. We fully expect the exchange to be accomplished before the next column is written.

Who will be next to exchange an old annuity for a CGA? Please contact any member of the Endowment Committee. Or simply invest in a new CGA at the Foundation.

- *A charitable gift annuity is an excellent way to provide income for yourself or another and leave a lasting legacy to the church.*

If you 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.

MISSIONS GETTING TO KNOW SMART SHARE HOUSING SOLUTIONS

As a Mathew 25 church, we are tasked with eradicating systemic poverty. One way is to find creative ways to provide affordable housing for our low wage-earning neighbors.

The Mission Committee would like to introduce you to a little-known organization in SLO County that helps provide low-income housing for people. It is called Smart Share Housing Solutions. They offer three programs with one goal--to create more energy efficient, safe, affordable housing, and to empower our community. The first program--HomeShare

SLO-- matches a person with an extra bedroom with someone seeking housing. Applicants are vetted by HomeShare and rent ranges from \$750 - \$800 month and both participants sign a contract about the arrangements. Support is given throughout the shared arrangement.

Another program is ADU SLO, created to assist property owners on the coordination of adding housing units using backyards, garages, infill lot and existing buildings. They also support Tiny House on Wheels in backyards.

Finally, SmartShare has joined in a partnership with the City of SLO on the Waterman Village Project. This is a micro village in development in downtown SLO (on Dana Street) to create a car-free community of tiny houses.

Check out their webpage for more information.

smartsharehousingsolutions.org

FRONT PORCH

September means back to school, and though Cal Poly starts later than either the public school or Cuesta, it does start late September. Preparations are being made for the new year.

Let me introduce the three interns for this year: Malia Cooke, Alana Krull and Kallie Kidder. They will bring boundless energy and enthusiasm to the operations of Front Porch plus experience, as Malia returns for a second year. The staff will start the year with a retreat for connecting and planning at the Mullen's cabin at Bass Lake. A huge thank you to Laura and Pat Mullen for making the cabin available.

Save the Date for this year's fundraiser dinner, to be held on November 4 at the new JUSTIN and J. LOHR Center for Wine and Viticulture on the Cal Poly campus.

Susan Updegrove

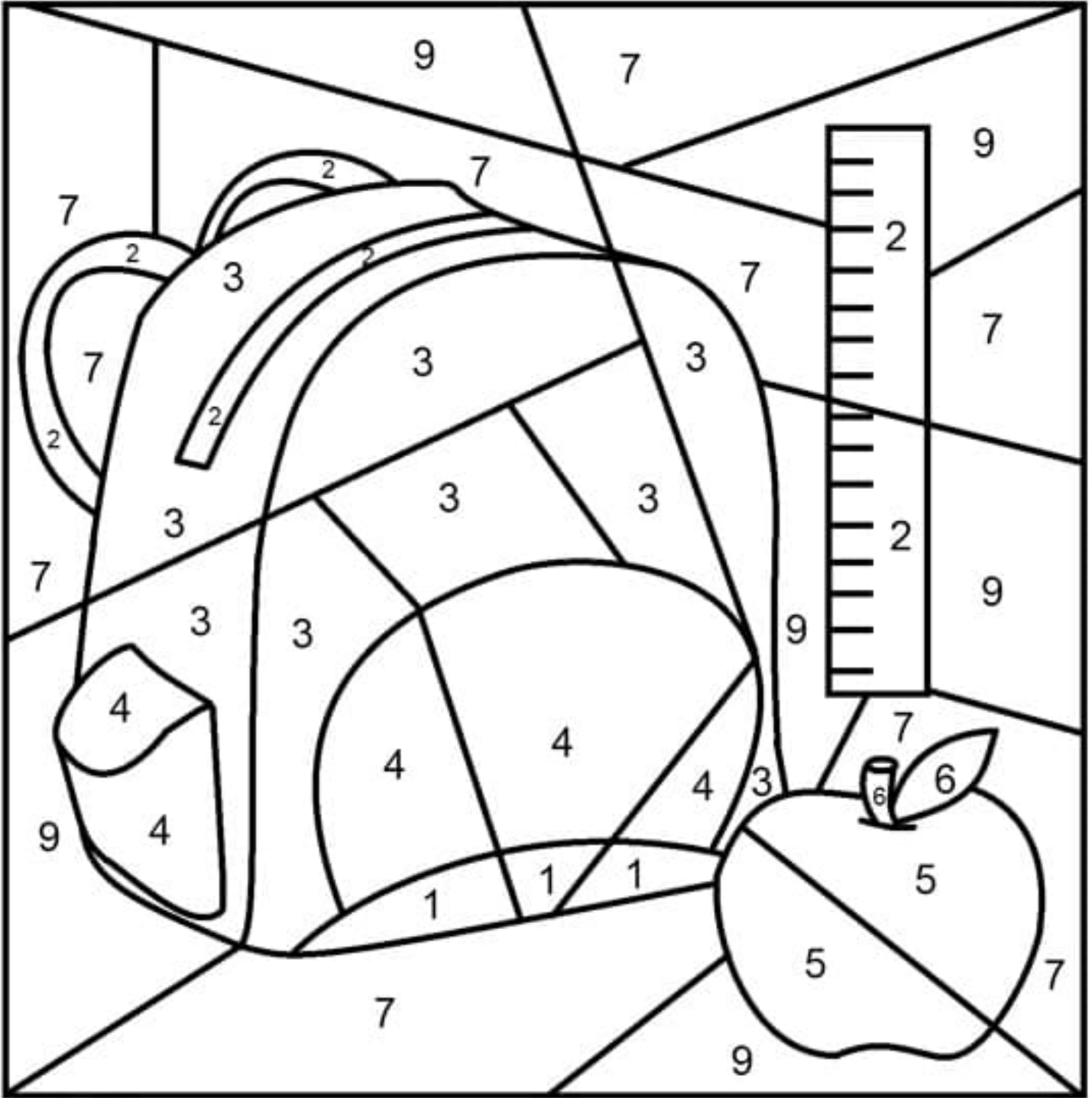
GREEN PASTURES

Green Pastures has been a part of First Presbyterian Church's ministry to the community since the 1990's. Begun by Richard Wardlaw and Dorie Larson and others, Green Pastures provided financial aid or supplies to meet such needs as transportation, utility payments, clothing or eyeglasses. They also provided counseling and directions for use of other community services, such as CAPSLO, encouragement and a prayer.

November 1st is the target date for re-establishing this mission, with the plan to be open the first and third Wednesdays of the month. The new model of Green Pastures will be to focus on helping individuals stay in their housing. We will provide "Micro Grants" for financial needs such as rent, utility, medical and other bills.

We need your help. We currently have a staff of six, which will allow us to operate every other week. We would like to expand that to every week. If you are interested in becoming part of the team, please contact Ben Parker, Steve Brown, or Susan Updegrove.

BACK TO SCHOOL



Color Key

- | | | | |
|-----------|------------|-------------|-------------|
| 1
BLUE | 2
GREY | 3
YELLOW | 4
ORANGE |
| 5
RED | 6
GREEN | 7
PINK | 9
PURPLE |



Back to School

a c a t e a c h e r
v b p l a y o p q z
c o s q e a i d m s
d o d w b z u v a f
p k f c a q y z t v
e b g l g w t x h b
n n h a r e r n k q
c f j s s c h o o l
i u k s t y u i o p
l n l f r i e n d s

The MumEducates

pencil
bag

math
play

teacher
friends

fun
class

school
book



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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