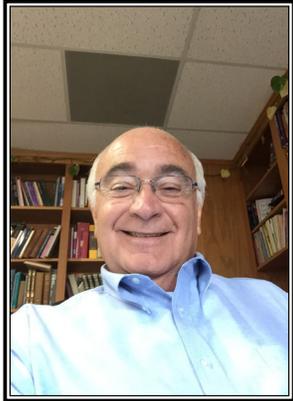


FIRST
PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH
San Luis Obispo

The Kirk

December 2018



NOW YOU ARE THE BODY OF CHRIST

2 Cor. 4:16-17

"Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day. [17] For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all."

This has been a horrendous season for those on the West Coast who have been involved in a mass shooting and catastrophic wild fires. Lives have been needlessly lost and families destroyed. Families have been torn apart. Whole towns have been burned down. We watch with aching hearts and open arms willing to do what we can to ease the pain of suffering. What can we do?

What can be said? I recently read about one of those WWW wrestlers who keeps a poster on the wall of the basement where he works out with weights. It shows a man straining to lift a weight, sweat fairly bursting from a grimacing face, veins bulging on his neck. And below it read: *"There are two kinds of pain. The pain of discipline. And the pain of regrets."* That thought, according to this wrestler, keeps him going when he descends into the depths of that basement to do the painful things he knows will make him a champion. It also reminds him that reality is not a matter of agony or ecstasy: it is always agony and ecstasy. A friend of mine, Ben Patterson once said: *"Hope is the truest grit, the toughest realism."* The Apostle Paul would agree. He says the work of the ministry is a spiritual struggle with the realms of reality, but no less lethal for being spiritual. The times we live in require that we put on a kind of armor and therefore assume a certain realism about life. We will be attacked. Things, out of our control, happen that destroy life needlessly. When we are attacked we need armor. If not, then what is armor for?

Changing the metaphor, Paul says he is in the pangs of childbirth until Christ be formed in his people (Gal. 4:19). Mothers may not like the pangs of childbirth, but I've yet to meet a new mother whose self-esteem was wounded because of it. This perspective helps me understand and appreciate your faithfulness to the ministry through this church and for our Christ. Thank you for ministering with me. And thank you for allowing me to minister through you! What better gift could one have for Christmas? Jesus working in us and through us as the Apostle Paul says in 1 Cor. 12:27 *"Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it."* God bless you as you have been such a wonderful blessing to this community, our Presbytery and to me.

If you look at the incarnation, which we will do during this Advent season, you will see that God became incarnate in humanity. And when he came "unto us" (to visit us), he didn't come when it was calm or pleasant. He came at the right time. He didn't come at an ideal time of peace and tranquility, but at a time when people were oppressed and needlessly being killed by those who were in charge of things.

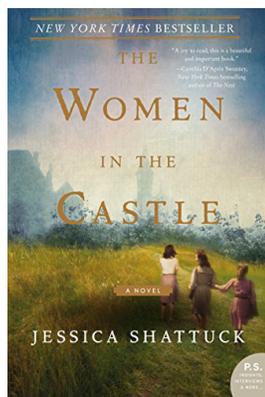
Now what does that tell us about God?

Garrison Keillor, in one of his reports on life in Lake Wobegon, was describing all the activity that occurs in town about this time of the year. Keillor admits that many of the pageants and special services are a bit silly, some of them ridiculous. He is asked, *"Why would these ordinary people, who have no acting training, not much acting or musical ability, join in these Yuletide theatricals?"* "Because," says Keillor, *"it's a great story and we just want to be part of it."*

Take this as a statement of purpose for all Christmas preaching and all listening to Christmas preaching it's a great story and we want to be part of it, we want what Jesus has to offer.

BOOK BROWSERS

Book Browsers will meet on Tuesday, Dec. 4 at 7:00pm in the library to discuss *Women in the Castle* by Jessica Shattuck. Our book for January is *Same Kind of Different As Me* by Ron Hall and Denver Moore. Questions: contact Diane Shervem at dshervem@charter.net or 805-543-1473.



COMING UP BROWN BAG CONCERT

Join Brown Bag Concert at SLO First Presbyterian Church at noon, December 7, for a special Christmas Concert with the In Time Trio!

These lovely ladies are great friends of BB and are bringing along some new arrangements of holiday favorites. Let Judy, Becky, and Kit help us welcome the season! Wilson Hall, FPCSLO, corner of Marsh & Morro. 805-543-5451.



ADVENT NIGHT

An evening of fellowship, fun, caroling, and crafts to prepare for the Advent Season. Please bring a finger food to share. Starts at 5 pm in Wilson Hall. All are welcome!

ALTERNATIVE GIFT FAIR

Save the date. December 2nd. Time: 9:30 am-1 pm. Come and join us. 12 charity representatives provide opportunity to give a donation to a local, national, or international organization in-honor of family and friends. Fair Trade handicrafts and coffee may also be purchased.

FEAST OF LIGHTS

"O Magnum Mysterium"
Holiday Choir with Guest Artists directed by Scott Glysson. Concert at 5 pm, Dinner at 6 pm.

SLO BOAT EVENTS

Our final activity for 2018 will be making lunch at church, then serving it at the new Prado center. This will be on the 2nd Wednesday, Dec. 12. I will be asking for volunteers to help with this service.

Please put the following on your calendar! On Friday, January 11th at 6:00, SLO Boats will have their Epiphany Dinner in Wilson Hall. We will meet for fun and fellowship and vote on which events we will have in 2019. Dinner is being planned by Evelyn and Dave. Cost for the dinner will be \$5.00. Please RSVP to Pam Rodewald at psrmony@mac.com or (805) 215-2396. We look forward to seeing you!!

JAZZ VESPERS

Christmas Jazz Vespers
Sunday December 16 7 p.m.
George Garcia Quartet with special guest Inga Swearingen
\$15 recommended donation

A return engagement of the George Garcia Quartet with Inga Swearingen. The quartet consists of George Garcia on piano, Gary Drysdale on guitars, Ken Hustad on bass and Darrell Voss on drums. Internationally acclaimed vocalist Inga Swearingen will bring her unique vocal prowess and melodic energy to the stage.

The group will showcase original arrangements of classic Christmas carols and reinterpreted seasonal music to celebrate the beauty and diversity of the holiday season.



PROCEEDS will benefit LifeWater International. The concert will consist of one long set with refreshments to follow. Doors will open at 6:30 p.m.

WINTER GRACE

Saturday, March 2nd 9:00 AM to 1:30 PM A series of different kinds of workshops and a yummy luncheon! If you have ideas, would like to present or know of great presenters please call Kay Emmons 805-704-8315

PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN

“God’s Promise” Bible study has answered many questions about the process God uses to provide us with His presence. Lesson Four will take another approach through these scriptures; 1 Chronicles 28: 1-21 and Kings 11-1-13, and 29-39. The lesson focus is”... ‘God summon God’s people, and especially God’s leaders, to walk in God’s ways and to seek God.’ And, so God is with us when we seek God. The women in this lesson are Ruth and Naomi.

Join any one of the groups available to learn more or study on your own or with neighbors and or friends. Call Dorothy for the Horizon Bible study books at 805-541-6779.

The Navajo family Presbyterian Women have been supporting the Navajo Nation that lives in Kayenta Arizona for about 15 years. Pastor McCabe counts on our support to spread the message of the love and salvation of Christ and with her ministries to 10 churches. She reaches hundreds through the churches which cover in the Northeast corner of Arizona. We will continue that support with a collection of gifts in early December. She has indicated the needs of school materials; warm gloves, mittens, and jackets; toiletries such as tooth brushes, tooth paste, soaps, lotions, shampoos; soap, wash cloths and small towels (“not the expensive ones”she said.) I am adding maybe a few small toys for the younger children and warm wraps for the elderly.

REMINDER you can still support the Thank Offering so we can celebrate another prospective local mission.....like our wonderful ‘Shower the People!’ A mobil 3 unit shower facility for the local homeless in south county.

Women make a difference!
Nationally PW makes a powerful impact in many ways. For over 230 years women have supported hundreds of mission projects. These come to mine.... the LEAST COIN collection which can transform poor living conditions for countries all over the world; PEACE and RECONCILIATION are programs that

work in ways that we may never know the full effects that they have on nations by improving nutrition, educational opportunities and living conditions; NURTURING FAITH through Bible study while developing leadership abilities of women; and by supporting the BIRTHDAY and THANK in the spring and fall which provides thousands of dollars on a varieties of missions. The worldwide PW GATHERING every two years, brings women from all over the world to Join in fellowship, building relationships, making business decisions together, worshipping and learning new ways about how we can help to solve needs of the people worldwide. PW also has a MISSION Budget here at FPC of over \$6,000.00 annually for local, national, and international programs.

Dorothy Truesdale, Moderator

LIBRARY REVIEW

Awaiting the Already written by Magrey deVega is a small Advent book that has been added to the



library and is on the book cart. Each Gospel, in its own way, leads us on the Advent journey of preparation for Christ’s coming. This small book takes a tour through the four Gospel narratives that announce Christ’s birth or make way for his ministry. Readers will discover what parts of the Christmas story come from which Gospel, recognizing an invitation from each Gospel writer to prepare for a fresh experience of Christ in the past and the future.

This thematic Bible study is designed to be used by individuals (or small groups) during Advent. In addition to the main content, each chapter offers questions for reflection and discussion, a brief prayer, and a focus for the week..... It is intended to nurture and encourage faith development and spiritual growth during the season of Advent. (Review by Amazon)

There is also new fiction book, Mr. Dickens and His Carol written by Samantha Silva which is a new take on a cherished Christmas classic and can also be found on the book cart.

DEACONS

CHRISTMAS POINSETTIA DEDICATIONS

SIGNUPS BEGIN DEC 2ND ~ \$10 DONATION

Once again, beautiful Christmas poinsettias will grace the sanctuary. When you make a donation for a poinsettia plant, your gift is used in four ways. You add to the beauty of the sanctuary; honor or remember your loved one; bring joy to the homebound, ill, bereaved or new members who receive the plant; and contribute to the Deacons' ongoing flower ministry.

Deacons will be taking poinsettia dedication sign-ups before and after services on December 2, 9 and 16.

For questions or additional sign-ups, please contact Peggy Estes (voice/text 805-305-8747 or peggy.estes@outlook.com) or Joan Green (541-9421).

Poinsettia Deliveries —Anyone willing to help the Deacons deliver Poinsettia plants on Wednesday, December 26th, please contact Peggy Estes (596-0210 or peggy.estes@outlook.com)

HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

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

Don Luenser – December 1
Barbara Rehborg – December 3
Dottie Jean Stechman – December 4
Richard Wiens – December 5
Ben McRee – December 11
Kathy Coull – December 20
Rod Keif – December 22
Lois Morgan – December 24
Frank Martinez – December 28

And to everyone else with a December birthday!
If we have overlooked anyone, please contact the Church Office at 543-5451.

MISSIONS

PEACE AND GLOBAL WITNESS OFFERING

Thank you for your generous donations of \$1,221.00 to the special Peace and Global Witness offering on October 7, World Communion Sunday. Half of this amount will go to Presbyterian peacemaking efforts around the globe, 25% will be used for peacemaking and reconciliation missions within our Presbytery, and 25% will stay here at First Presbyterian Church for projects of our Peacemaking and Social Justice Committee.
Karen Wiles

AN OPPORTUNITY FOR YOU TO SERVE – LITERALLY!

Missions Committee is seeking an additional person to help coordinate the once a month Homeless Dinner that our church sponsors at the new Prado Homeless Services Center on the fourth Saturday of the month. There are typically three to four coordinators that work together to cover hosting of the twelve meals a year we provide. As a coordinator you will:

- On the third Sunday of the month between services solicit sign-ups of volunteers to make or bring casserole, vegetable, salad, dessert and milk as well as a total of four servers.
- On the Friday before the fourth Saturday you will send a reminder (email or phone) to the volunteers to help them recall their contribution to the meal.
- On or before the afternoon of the fourth Saturday you will collect the four aprons, table cloths, serving utensils, salad “bowl”, plates, cups, napkins and forks from the church.
- On the fourth Saturday you will arrive at the 40 Prado Homeless Services Center by 4:30 pm to serve as a host along with your other servers and receive the contributions of your volunteers of the meal components for a dinner service that begins at 5 pm.
- After the meal (before 7pm) you will collect the aprons, table cloths, serving utensils, salad “bowl” and empty pans for washing and reuse the next month.

- Work with Lois Elliott, Steve Walker and Pamalee Brady to select three to four months when you would like to host as well as identify when serving supplies have run low and need replacing.

- Experience the sincere thankfulness of the clients receiving dinner and know the joy of serving!

Please contact Pamalee Brady (pleebrady@gmail.com or 7832520) if you have an interest in serving in this way!

MEMO FROM THE CHURCH OFFICE

Please see the information below as to when the office will be closed:

December 24- The Office will close at 12:00 pm
Christmas- Office Closed

December 31- The Office will close at 12:00 pm
New Years- Office Closed

Christmas Eve Candle Light Services:

5:30pm - Family Friendly Candlelight Worship Program in Wilson Hall

7:30pm & 11:00pm - Candlelight Worship Service in Sanctuary

All Bulletin Information for **December 23rd, Christmas Eve, & December 30th.** Needs to be submitted to the office by the 12th of December

MERRY CHRISTMAS FROM
THE ENTIRE STAFF
OF FPCSLO

ENDOWMENT A LASTING LEGACY FOR SHERRY KAML

Much loved, long time member Sherry Kaml departed from our congregation in mid 2017. Devoted husband Jerry Kaml has created a brand new element of our Endowment Fund, the *SHARON L. KAML HANDBELL ENDOWMENT*.

Sherry arrived in SLO County in 1959 to fill a music teaching job in Arroyo Grande. Desiring to join a church choir Sherry followed the advice of a co-worker (and a church member) to consider First Presbyterian. She not only joined the Chancel Choir but met then senior college student Jerry Kaml, who was attending First Pres with his Aunt, Mae McQuaid (See Kirk, Lasting Legacy article, June 2016.) Sherry and Jerry were married in our church in 1962.

A few generous church members donated the funds, approximately 1969, to purchase our church's first hand bell set. Sherry was elevated to Hand Bell Choir Director in 1979 and held that role for decades, as long as her health allowed.

Jerry created and donated the initial funds for this nascent endowment to honor Sherry, her commitment to music and especially to hand bells. Jerry knows there is a regular need for hand bell maintenance, repair and replacement.

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

Even a modest gift will make a difference

CONGREGATIONAL FRONT PORCH 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 Karlyn Tremaine, Stephanie Vigil, Grace Power Smith, & Ian Rabenaldt, who help with our Children's Ministry,

For all those involved in our Youth Ministry, especially leaders Sarah Dirk, Jake Wolfe, Brecken DeOilers, Hailey Firstman and Kelsie Krueger,

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, Gladys Brannum, George Daniel, Jean Honeyman, Lorna Hudson, Starr Jenkins, Marie Kammenzind, Ralph Nunley, Joy Reed, Idabelle Shields, Dottie Jean & John Stechman, Carol West, 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, especially at the Alternative Gift Fair on Dec. 2. For members, friends, and family serving in the military:

Drew Descary – stationed in San Diego

Laura Kraemer – Navy Medical School in MD

Michael Poe - stationed in Meridian, MS

Joseph Sall– stationed in Carlisle, PA.

Travis Hatakeyama – returning to USA

Brandan Humphrey –on Navy Aircraft Carrier

Sean Gillson – stationed on Whidbey Island

R. Brooks Anderson – stationed in Groton, CT

Chris King – stationed in Colorado

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.

The holidays are upon us and I want to take this opportunity to give a shout out to the wonderful cooks in our congregation who help feed the students at Front Porch on Wednesday nights. While it can seem overwhelming to consider feeding 250 - 300 students, our cooks have stepped up to the task.

A special thank you to Evelyn Ruehr and the WOW Bible study group who served Thanksgiving dinner the week before Thanksgiving. Some students are not able to join their families for this holiday, so it is special to share it with their Front Porch family. In addition to the WOW group, the Dorcus and Friendship Bible Study groups do a meal, as do Jackie and Ben Parker. Garrett Parker coordinates/cooks a meal on his own! Thank you all. Your gift of a meal is appreciated by the students and the staff of Front Porch. I'm sure that the parents of students also appreciate their getting a good home cooked meal!

Our church is not alone in providing meals. During the quarter meals are prepared by Presbyterian Churches from Orcutt, Morro Bay, Grover Beach (Coastal Community Church) and Templeton. There is also an alumni group that provides a meal. It takes a village to raise a child and a community to feed college students. Just as Jesus asked his disciples to feed the 5,000, we continue to share God's love by feeding Cal Poly and Cuesta students in Jesus' name.

If you would like to participate in preparing or serving a meal, please contact me and I will connect you with one of the cooks.

Thanks again.
Susan Updegrove

Front Porch Council member

YOUTH

Hello First Presbyterian SLO Family!

The past few months have been a wonderfully full time for the youth group of quality time with one another, our usual youth group activities, and other special events. Octobers special events included our annual trip to Avila Valley barn where we explored the pumpkin patch, shopped around, and had some great food and ice cream; pumpkin carving at the church to prepare and decorate for the halloween season; a Halloween themed lock-in where we decorated the room and had a night filled with light-hearted spooky games and lots of food and candy!

So far in the month of November, our special events have included a guys/girls night where the guys went to Jakes house and had dinner and played video games, and the girls had a cookie baking night in beck lounge and watched a movie; and our highly anticipated friendsgiving meal where the youth staff cooks the youth group a turkey and the students bring dishes to share with one another in a celebration of friendship, gratitude, and community. We are givin the students and their families the weekends before and after thanksgiving off from youth group to spend with one another and enjoy their breaks from school.

In addition to our weekly youth groups on sunday nights and coffee talk on the weekends we didn't have a special event, we celebrated with the church for fall frolic at Dave Bauers house, supported and volunteered for Kirkin of the Tartans where the students carried flags and attended worship, and power hour with the high schoolers upstairs with the youth leaders and junior highers downstairs with Jen learning about confirmation.

We would like to continue to thank all of those who have supported us and provided for us as a youth group. We are extremely thankful and can not say it enough. If anyone has any questions regarding the youth program or wants to become more involved, please contact Jen Rabenaldt and she can get you in contact with the youth staff!

Youth Staff,

Sarah Dirk, Jake Wolfe, Brecken DeOilers,

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CHILDREN'S ED

How can it be December already? This has been an amazing year and we look forward to closing it out with a bang! Children's Ed. has been blessed by so many of you and we look forward to many more blessings in the new year.

Here is December in a nutshell

Advent Night

December 2 - 5:00pm - Wilson Hall

All are Welcome. Join us as we prepare for the Advent Season and the Birth of Christ.

Crafts, Food, Fellowship, Carol Singing and Fun.
Please bring a finger food to share if you are able

Children's Musical and Bake Sale

December 9 - 10:00am - Wilson Hall

You will not want to miss this. The musical will start and 10:00 and the Bake sale will start immediately following. All proceed go to the Children's Benefit Fund to support program and special needs.

Please bring items for us to sell to the office during the week before or to the kitchen the morning of. Cookies, cupcakes, peanut brittle, jam/jelly, cakes, candies, bread, etc.

Wednesday's at the Rock

Wednesday's at the Rock will be on break from December 19 through January 2. We will start again on January 9 for our Winter/Spring Session.

We are currently preparing for the Christmas Musical and Bake Sale and really hope you will join us on December 2 for this annual event.

Christmas Eve - Family Candlelight Worship Program

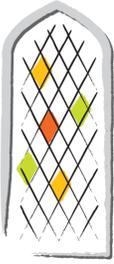
December 24 - 5:30 - Wilson Hall

All are welcome! Please join us as the kids and youth participate in this Worship Program. This is a great time to invite friends, family and neighbors to join us and see what First Pres. is all about.

There will also be Candle Light Worship Services at 7:30 and 11:00.

Childcare will be available at 7:30.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year from Children's Ed.
Teri Cueto, MaryEl Hansen, Bonnie Kraemer, Diane Shervem, Anne Walling and Jen



**FIRST
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San Luis Obispo

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web: fpcslo.org

TWO SERVICE SCHEDULE

8:45 AM SERVICE

EDUCATION HOUR at 10 am

11:00 AM SERVICE

PLEASE NOTE:

**THERE WILL BE ONLY ONE SERVICE ON
DECEMBER 23rd & DECEMBER 30th
AT 10 am**