

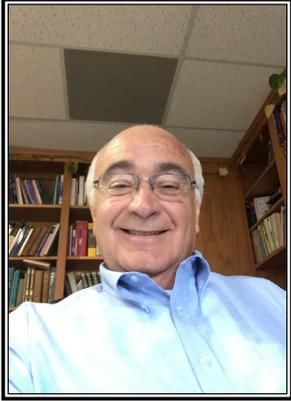
FIRST  
PRESBYTERIAN  
CHURCH

*San Luis Obispo*

# *The Kirk*

November 2018

## SAVING GRACE



“It’s by grace that you are saved”.....I thank God for that statement! Pastors have always been placed on a pedestal for praise as well as ridicule, which is a very scary place to be because performance expectation report cards can arrive by special delivery any day of the week. For instance on one such occasion, a few weeks ago I received a call from Presbytery telling me that I should deal with a colleague who was about to fail.

Over these past few years it has been interesting for me to watch how this colleague has been treated by other colleagues. In summary, not very well. They have been expansive in the adjectives they used to describe how I should have handled this colleague and what they would have done if they were in charge. As I listened, I recognized some truth in what was being said. But they wanted more than my agreement, they wanted his resignation. Their logic was simple: “*If you are not who*

*we want you to be, you shouldn’t be a pastor.*” **By grace, I realized there was another logic worth considering. It says, “You are not who you should be, and God wants to forgive you as you confess your shortcomings and continue using you in spite of yourself.”** I believe God’s mysterious strategy is to use fallen people to witness to a gospel of hope and there by cause transformation. That means underperformance is built into the paradigm. It means those who do not live up to expectations are the very people God uses to call others who don’t measure up either. This approach is completely counterintuitive, but then so is grace.

Don’t get me wrong....grace is not an excuse to hide our deficiencies or deny our failures, and it’s not a heat shield to protect us from getting burned. But grace does mean our failures do not have to paint us into a corner where the only way out is to be forced to abandon our call. Scripture tells us that grace sets our lives in what the psalmist calls “**the broad place,**” off the knife-edge of judgment, and nowhere near the winner-takes-all option some colleagues seem to be offering as our fragile Presbytery experiences signs of its new life.

I tried to respond gently to the outspoken critics who have offered their emotional opinion as to their interpretation of our polity. “**You are more right than you know,**” I told them. “*I don’t have many of the qualities you possess in your interpretation. But you have the wrong list of deficiencies. The real list is far worse. God knows the real list, and God, by his grace, has still called this person to be a pastor.*”

I believe what I said was said without winning their favor. But I also know that living in perfection is far more difficult for some but which must come to them with ease. The temptation in ministry, from my perspective, is always to focus on expectations rather than grace.

It has been a very difficult season for our Presbytery, as we make a transition from the past few years into our future, I decided on one particular occasion, to drive to a meeting in an old car that I have been wanting to restore. It had lots of problems, including a broken steering wheel, turn signals that didn’t work, a radio that crackled, and an alternator that was failing through the tell tail signs of the “idiot lite”. While on my trip to this meeting I could have sworn that the car began to speak to me. It said, “*Failure..... Why can’t I get my life together? You built me in 2003 as a classic 1942 Mercedes Roadster and when I function I find it easy to turn heads ....now that I’m getting older people don’t seem to have that same respect for me. I can tell because when people pass me they honk a nasty honk.*” This car was humiliated, and I know it felt like a failure.

This continued for months until the day I polished the car inside and out having replaced and repaired some of the things which were faulty. I fixed the broken steering wheel, the alternator indicator light quit warning me of possible failure, the horn is now willing to sing any time I requested a song. I can tell you that I was so thrilled to hear the tone of the car speaking the message of feeling like a new car and believed that it could possibly still turn heads.

All of this to say that I believe our lives swing between voices calling “failure” and “potential.”

## PASTOR'S NOTE, CONTINUED:

The key is not listening to either. I'm not as bad as my critics accuse me of being, but I'm not as good as I've led myself to believe. And right there, the truth somewhere in between, is where we need to hear the voice of God. I hope He still says to you what I still hear him saying to me, and for that matter everyone else called to follow our Lord Jesus. I hear Him saying something like: "I want you and will never leave you nor forsake you....peace I give you, not as the world gives, give I unto you. Please accept that you are made in my image and be humble enough to share it with those who may have forgotten it."

As a minister I know performance matters, to be sure, but grace matters more.

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## BOOK BROWSERS

Book Browsers will meet on Tuesday, November 13. We will meet in the library at 7 p.m. to discuss *The Unlikely Pilgrimage of Harold Fry* by Rachel Joyce. Our book for December is *The Women in the Castle* by Jessica Shattuck.

**PLEASE NOTE THE CHANGE IN OUR SCHEDULE. WE WILL MEET THE 2ND TUESDAY INSTEAD OF THE FIRST.**

If you have any questions, please contact Diane Shervem at 805-543-1473 or [dshervem@charter.net](mailto:dshervem@charter.net).

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## COMING UP

### BROWN BAG CONCERT

Friday, November 2 at Noon, Brown Bag Concert is pleased to present Sonnie and Craig in a concert of both kinds of music, Country AND Western. Join Craig Kincaid, Sonnie Brown and others in song at FPCSLO's Wilson Hall, Marsh & Morro, San Luis Obispo.

### NOVEMBER 11TH

Dr. Jack Springer will be preaching on the topic, "Answering the Christian Identity Question."

### 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.

## SLO BOAT EVENTS

SLO Boats will have their Epiphany Dinner and meeting to decide 2019 events in Wilson Hall. Details to follow!

## 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

## JAZZ VESPERS

December 16th at 7pm. More details to follow.

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## 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](mailto: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](mailto:peggy.estes@outlook.com))

# PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN

## BIBLE STUDY

The next lesson for the Bible study is lesson three. "God With Us in Our Discouragement," based on Deuteronomy 31: 1-8; Joshua 1:1-9 and Haggai 1:1-15 and 2:1-9.

God's Promise of presence gives us courage, strength, boldness, and hope, when on our own we would lose heart. We need to remember God's words, "I Am With You."

The stories in our scriptures speak to our discouragement and help us in our weakness or frustration. Join one of our study groups to learn more. Watch the church bulletin for times and dates.

## THANK OFFERING

The 2018 Thank Offering is going to be accepted on the last Sunday of November which is the 25th. This Offering, based on Romans 12:4-6b reminds us, "For as in one body we have many members, and not all members have the same functions, so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually we are members one of another."

We have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us.... So in our Diverse yet one in Christ do not think of yourself more highly than you ought to think. This year's Mission Offering is your opportunity to provide for others to grow in hope, freedom, and economic stability by helping the displaced, establish gardens to eliminate hunger, transport food to food banks, and to remind you of the support for our local project, "Shower the People", in South County. These funds will accomplish God's work on earth through one body through Jesus Christ.

Thank you, each one for your gifts of giving to fund these programs and for the justice and peace it brings.

## CHRISTMAS LUNCH

Looking ahead mark your calendar for our Christmas lunch and program on December 4 , in Wilson Hall at 10:00 am. It will be a POTLUCK and we always have a lot of food so we WELCOME ALL women.

Lesson three will be presented in detail by a group of dynamic women...come prepared for fun and music. We will again collect Christmas gifts of clothes for the Navajo children and school supplies and toiletries for the people in Kayenta Arizona.

The big surprise will be the presentation of The Honorary Life Award to the unknowing recipient. This is always an exciting and fun presentation as we learn more about the women we work side by side with everyday

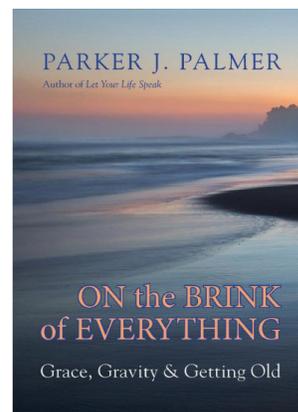
*-Dorothy Truesdale, Moderator*

***\*\*Please note that Friendship Circle will now meet on the 1st and 3rd Thursdays of the month instead of every Thursday. The time and place will stay the same - 10 AM in the Church Library.***

## LIBRARY REVIEW

The book, **On the Brink of Everything: Grace, Gravity, and Growing Old** written by Parker J. Palmer has been added to the library and can be found on the book cart.

From bestselling author Parker J. Palmer comes a brave and beautiful book for all who want to age reflectively, seeking new insights and life-giving ways to engage in the world. "Age itself" he says, "is no excuse to wade in the shallows. It's a reason to dive deep and take creative risks."



Looking back on eight decades of life - and on his work as a writer, teacher, and activist - Palmer explores what he's learning about self and world, inviting readers to explore their own experience. In prose and poetry...he meditates on the meanings of life, past, present, and future. "The laws of nature that dictate sunset dictate our demise. But how we travel the arc toward the sunset of our lives is ours to choose: will it be denial, defiance, or collaboration?"

With compassion and chutzpah, gravitas, and levity Palmer writes about cultivating a vital inner and outer life, finding meaning in suffering and joy, and forming friendships across the generations that bring new life to young and old alike.

The library also has four other books by this author - *A Hidden Wholeness, To Know As We Are Known, The Courage to Teach, and The Active Life: The Spirituality of Work, Creativity, & Caring* which can also be found on the book cart.

# HAPPY BIRTHDAY! MISSIONS

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

Lou Pippin – November 10  
Lou Shevlin – November 14 : Celebrating her 90th Year!  
Carol West – November 22  
Jo McRee – November 29

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

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## FRONT PORCH TEA FOR TWO, TEN, OR TWENTY

Front Porch is known as a coffee house for Cal Poly and Cuesta students. Yes, the coffee does draw students in to a place where they begin to experience the welcoming embrace of the staff and volunteers. It is a place to become known, to share and study with others, and to feel God's love in the welcoming smiles and laughter of others.

It is also a place to share a cup of tea; a place to pause and reflect on life; and a place to go deeper in exploring oneself, one's relationships with others, and one's spiritual life. Many students come to Front Porch with no church background or with past painful church experiences. Others may be struggling to reconcile their faith with their student life. Sharing a cup of tea with a staff member may be just what is needed to ponder or solve some of life's questions.

Being a tea drinker, I might be biased to the power of tea. But whether you are a coffee drinker or a tea drinker, you may--like me--have some partially used boxes of tea around cluttering up your cupboard or a drawer. Think about donating them to Front Porch. New boxes also welcomed!

For any questions or more information, please contact Joel Drenckpohl at [director@frontporchso.org](mailto:director@frontporchso.org) or any of the Council members: Mary Blythe, Tad Miller, and Susan Updegrove

*-Susan Updegrove, Front Porch Council Member*

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## 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](mailto:pleebrady@gmail.com) or 7832520) if you have an interest in serving in this way!

# YOUTH

Hello First Presbyterian SLO Family! The beginning of Fall tends to be a busy season for all of us, especially our youth group students starting school again. Here is a brief recap of what we have been up to the last couple of months. During August, we took the high school youth students to Hume Summer Camp! It was an incredible week of growing in faith and our understanding of God, building community, and making new friends.

The students started school the next week and so we re-started one of our bi-weekly programs coffee talks where we get the chance to hang out with the students Friday from 5-7 at Kreuzberg for coffee, fries, and board games. Some other events that have happened this fall include a beach day at Morro Bay where we played in the sand and painted, a movie night at the church where we watched Kung Fu Panda, and a day at Avila Valley Barn. We also always have youth group on Sundays with Junior High from 3-5pm and High School from 6-8pm. Coming up we have events such as pumpkin carving, a Halloween themed Lock-in where the staff stays up all night in the youth room with the kids and have events going on from dusk to dawn, students helping out with Kirkin of the Tartans, Fall Frolic at Dave Bauers house, "reclaim the room" where the students and staff will improve the room by cleaning up and reorganizing as well as decorate it with their own personal style! These are just a few of the events we have for the rest of the year!

We would like to thank all who have supported us and provided for us as a group to learn, laugh, and love this summer. We are extremely thankful and we cannot say it enough. If you have any questions regarding the Youth Program or want 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,  
Kelsie Krueger*

# 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 Karlyn Tremaine, Stephanie Vigil, Grace Power Smith, Ashley Carder & 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, 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, 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 the many things we have to be THANKFUL for this Thanksgiving,

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

Drew Descary (stationed in San Diego)

Laura Kraemer (in Maryland)

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

### OUR CHURCH'S ENDOWMENT HAS TWO NEW DONATIONS

During the past few months two new parts to the First Presbyterian Church-San Luis Obispo Endowment have seen created.

The first arose from a bequest from the estate of church member Ernie Triebel. The second was initiated by Jerry Kaml who created the Sharon L. Kaml Hand Bell Endowment. This article will feature the former while we hope to include the latter in a future article.

If you didn't know Ernie Triebel, you are not alone. While Ernie had been a ruling Elder, participated in worship and other church activities, in a wheel chair due to polio contracted as a child, he spent his last decade or so living at Mission View Health Center, in San Luis Obispo. He was an easy going fellow, accepting his situation with a smile and always enjoyed his visits with our Deacons and Pastors Springer and Falasco. He was an avid Bingo Aficionado at Mission View. Before his retirement he had been employed by the County of San Luis Obispo in the General Services Department.

Ernie included the Church in his will. His final gift was designated as the Ernest H. Triebel Domestic and International Mission Fund, by the Session, to be managed along with the other Endowment Funds to provide a regular additional cash stream for our Church's missions work.

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

# ADULT EDUCATION

## MEN AND WOMEN IN THE GOSPEL OF JOHN: STUDIES IN CHARACTERIZATION

Adult Education Series continues with classes 2-5 each Sunday through November during the Education Hour beginning at 10:00 a.m. Attend one or all four

remaining classes, as you are able. We are looking at the unique way John chose to present his characters and their interactions with Jesus. John's female characters are particularly interesting; they are all portrayed positively. How is



each an example of discipleship? How do they contrast with male characters (who are both positive and negative)? What do these men and women mean to us today?

This course will encourage people of faith who "believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God" (John 20:31). It will also interest those who wish to better understand the history, literature, and culture of the Bible and early Christianity. All are welcome.

Questions? Contact facilitator Kate Murray at [katym2@gmail.com](mailto:katym2@gmail.com)

# CHILDREN'S ED

Happy Fall! We are so excited to be heading into this Season. We have great events coming up and would love you all to join us. Some new, some traditions, all a great way to spend your time.

If you are interested in volunteering for any part of our program please let Jen know. Because we are growing we would welcome any time you could give. Our kids are amazing and I guarantee your heart will be filled with joy from spending time with them.

All kids and families are Welcome - Always! If you know of kids in your family, neighborhood etc. please invite them to join us. We have a great staff who have a heart for God, are well trained and love what they do.

Sundays ...

Worship 8:45 & 11:00

Sunday School 9:00 (Children are excused for Sunday School after the Passing of the Peace)

Children's Church 10:00 & 11:00

Middle School Confirmation Class 10:00

Nursery Care 8:30 to 12:15

Wednesdays ...

“Wednesday’s at the Rock” 4:30 to 7:00. All kids, Nursery through 5th grade are Welcome!

Wednesday Schedule

4:30 - 5:15 Music

5:15 - 5:45 Hands on Bible Lessons - We are learning about the Great Commission

5:45 - 6:15 Dinner

6:15 - 6:30 Gym Time

6:30 - 7:00 Craft, Special Guests, Story time

## SAVE THE DATE...

**December 2 - Advent Night - 5:00 - Wilson Hall - All are Welcome - come and prepare for the Advent Season. Fellowship, Food, Crafts and Carols.**

**December 9 - Children’s Musical and Bake Sale - 10:00 - Wilson Hall. Join us for this annual event and fund raiser. You will not want to miss this! All proceeds go toward supporting our Wednesday’s at the Rock program and the Children’s Benefit Fund.**

**December 24 - Family Candlelight Christmas Eve Program - 5:30 - Wilson Hall. All are welcome to this special program put on by the children and youth involved our programs. This will be the best thing you do all year. Hot Chocolate Bar afterwards. We will be collecting a special offering for our friends in Haiti.**

Any questions and to sign up to volunteer contact Jen [jen@fpcslo.org](mailto:jen@fpcslo.org) - or - 805.543.5451 ext. 205

Blessings to you all - Children’s Ed. Committee  
Bonnie Kraemer, Diane Shervem, Teri Cueto,  
MaryEl Hansen, Anne Walling

## NEW MEMBERS PLEASE WELCOME TO THE FAMILY:

**Marjorie Friesen-** Spent her childhood years in Ulysses, Kansas. After marriage they lived in the Denver Colorado area, (Littleton). After 33 years they transferred to Brea, CA. Marjorie was an elementary school teacher in Colorado and California. After retirement they moved into a senior housing community in Menifee, CA. In June, 2017 after a brief hospital stay she moved into assisted living at the Manse on Marsh which is her present home. Her daughter, Gwenn Krossa lives

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in Cayucos, CA together with her husband and children. Marjorie's older daughter, Lisa Collins and her family live in Mooresville, North Carolina. Her husband transferred to his heavenly home in early 2016 after a 2 year illness. They had been married 62 years at that time.

**Judi Davies-** Recently returned to SLO after residing in Napa for 4 years. She is a lifelong Presbyterian and started attending First Presbyterian SLO in 1962 when her family moved here from Pennsylvania. Judi is married to Brendan Gilbride and between them have 5 children and 4 grandchildren. She is a retired social worker for Child Welfare Services and fills her time with running, hiking, gardening, reading and spending time with family and friends.

**Gerald & Nora Desmond-** Have come to us from the Bay Area. They have a daughter attending Azusa Pacific University. Their son is living and working in San Francisco. They enjoy hiking, bocce, and cycling.

**Gene W. & H. Jan Rantanen-** Married on 11-1-2014 (All Saints Day) Gene serenaded Jan at the wedding. They met because both sang in different Presbyterian choirs. They both love singing in Chancel Choir! Both Gene and Jan are retired. Gene was a security engineer and traveled the globe making sure our U.S. Naval Ships secure. Jan was a Christian and public school teacher. Gene has 5 daughters and Jan has 2 daughters. And love visiting their 4 Great Grandchildren! Hobbies for Gene include 3 Model Railroad Clubs and a restored 1954 FORD Ranch Wagon. Jan spends mega hours in their flower gardens, and both enjoy traveling, their Siamese cat, sitting near the beach, and working puzzles.

**Lillian Bareither-** Born in 1934, Lillian lived on a farm in South Dakota with five siblings, and attended Eureka high school where she met and later married her high school sweetheart, Karl Bareither. They have been married for 65 years and have two sons, Anthony who is 60 and lives with

his family in St. George Utah and Timothy who lives in San Luis Obispo. She had a small child care agency before she retired. Lillian love singing and has done it all her life and especially enjoys the Chancel Choir.





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## **TWO SERVICE SCHEDULE**

**8:45 AM SERVICE**

**EDUCATION HOUR at 10 am**

**11:00 AM SERVICE**