

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF PALO ALTO

WHAT'S UP

July 2020, Volume 3, Issue 7

Celebrating our Graduates

For our June 14th worship, Cyndi Chin-Lee created a slide show of our 2020 graduates, most of whom are pictured below:

Akane Irish (elementary school, daughter of Jeff Irish, granddaughter of Patty Irish)
Michael Cooley (middle school, grandson of Evan Hughes)
Angela Beaumont (high school, daughter of Carol Beaumont)
Joshua Ching (high school, son of Cynthia Chin-Lee and Peter Ching)
Suuley Hachard (high school, grandson of Evelyn Wong)
Elias Dalton Thornton (high school, grandson of Cathy Dalton)
Laila Thompson Wainer and Thompson Holifield (high school, grandchildren of Ed and Gail Thompson)
April Healy (college, daughter of Ellen Hartog)
Matthew Keller (college, son of Beth and Rick Keller)
Alex Merkle-Raymond (college, daughter of Kathy and Lee Merkle-Raymond)
Anita Silver (college, daughter of Jim and Susan Phinney Silver)
Alyson Melzer (doctorate)





Virtual Choir Anthem

The choir had continued to meet after the shelter in place came into effect. We had tried many different things at our zoom rehearsals: we sang easy songs with individual members muted, we had a month long "music school" with each week having a different topic - sight-singing, theory etc. Then it became clear that the choir, and myself included, was getting a little frustrated with not being able to sing a regular piece of choral music!

We had all seen and commented on virtual choir recordings - how amazing many were and how a few choir members had sung in a virtual choir. I made the decision that we would make it happen. I spent a day trying to find appropriate choral anthems that would work. A choir rehearsal was spent reading through these anthems and we all decided to start with an easier anthem that we had sung in church.

The very next day I received an email from Emily Brewer of the Presbyterian Peace Fellowship. She asked if First Pres would like to present a virtual choral anthem for the Peace Fellowship Breakfast at General Assembly on June 24. The anthem would be a specially written 5-verse text about peace, sung to the tune of *Joyful, Joyful!* I presented this idea to the choir and everyone agreed to the project. We had a deadline of June 17 so we had to get busy - we had a little over two weeks to finish!

Andy Chislett

Here is some info about the technical process. First, Andy created electronic base tracks that played each part (soprano, alto, tenor, bass) separately for us to listen to. We had the choir members listen to the tracks using headphones while they took videos of themselves singing their part of the song in sync with Andy's tracks so we would all end up together. Some members submitted multiple videos of themselves singing different parts (e.g. soprano and alto or tenor and bass) so that we would have more voices for the finished project. That was one fun advantage of recording separately and editing the videos together and also why you see some "twins" in the video.

I edited the videos together into the final product with DaVinci Resolve. First I looked at how many I received and planned how to fit everyone into the screen. Then I took one video at a time, shrunk it down so it would fit with the others, and manually lined up the singing so it matched with the other videos. I used an audio waveform that showed up on the video to help me line it up, but also did it by what sounded right. I also adjusted the volume on the tracks so that each person would be about the same volume. I wanted to make sure all of the parts sounded balanced at the end. At the end, I applied some audio effects (reverb and compression) to make the sound quality a little nicer since what you hear from a microphone is different than what you hear in a real space when you're listening to a performance. This was my first time doing this so I had to figure out quite a few things along the way, but it was really cool to hear how it evolved as I added all the voices.

Here is a link to the version that includes Andy playing the organ:

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1twCZm5-hdZHewS818IHM1_0u-nRplbT-/view?usp=sharing

Karen Huddleston



Virtual Farewell to Geoff Browning



After twenty-five years at FPCPA Geoff Browning has moved to Lacey, WA, to begin the next chapter of his life with his fiancée Janice. He gave the prompting at our June 21 Zoom service, and after that we celebrated his years with us. We were delighted that his children, a few relatives and a couple of former FPCPA pastors were able to join us. Here are some of the many ways in which Geoff has touched our lives:

He counseled several “generations” of young people on conscientious objection – Jay Henderson and Jeremy Mineau, Alex and Chris Iyer, and Joshua Chin-Lee. The young people and their parents are very grateful for that experience. He taught both pre-school and high school Sunday school. The former used a dinosaur-based curriculum and the latter used pop culture as a springboard for talking about following Jesus. He also co-led several confirmation classes.

He was a faithful member of the Social Justice Ministry and pushed us to deepen our views about Palestinian issues and becoming a Peace Church. He went on the BorderLinks trip in 2019 and attended various events in support of immigrant families. He’s been a friend of Cool Planet and especially helpful with our GA overtures for Divestment from Fossil Fuels.

Geoff served as the Peacemaking Advocate for San José Presbytery and is the last person in the PC(USA) in that position. He also served for many years at Stanford as Campus Minister for UCCM, teaching classes in Liberation Theology, leading trips to Central America, hosting potlucks, and even dressing up as Darth Vader at a John Yoo protest.



Most recently he has served as a Parish Associate at FPCPA, helping Bruce during his first year with us. We’ll miss Geoff a lot, but in this new world we live in, we hope that he’ll continue to join us for worship services, small group and committee meetings, so that we hardly know that he’s moved.

Social Justice Ministry

Hotel de Zink begins July 1st

Joan Roy has been managing signups and almost all of the slots are filled. Thanks to all who have signed up. To get in on the fun, go to <https://signup.com/client/invitation2/secure/336987608653600083/false-/invitation>. We have once again asked Covenant to join us in providing some of the meals. We have figured out the logistics for setting up Fellowship Hall for individual living spaces and no access to the kitchen, and Joy Sleizer has been following what has worked well at the other churches who have recently hosted Hotel de Zink.

Accompaniment Team Update

We have had a couple of team meetings, talked with our liaison to IM4HI and have decided to end our formal accompaniment as of the end of August. Tereso is still out of his restaurant jobs, but he has recently had a few days of work with a construction crew. In March, April and May the team collected ~\$300 each month for him to support his family here and in Guatemala. The team and a few individuals who contacted the team contributed. We have committed to continue to give him \$300 a month for June, July and August and have asked the larger congregation to contribute to that. If we receive more than \$900, we will give the excess to Interfaith Movement for Human Integrity (IM4HI.) Checks can be made out to and sent to Oscar Rosenbloom or you can use PayPal to send money to Margaret's account (margaret_rosenbloom@hotmail.com.) If you need a tax deduction, then you should send money directly to IM4HI. Contact Pat Kinney for details.

Poor People's Campaign Mass Gathering and FPCPA Watch Party

On Saturday, June 20 at 7am, about a dozen people from FPCPA watched the virtual Poor People's Campaign Event. We had some discussion during and after during a Zoom Watch Party, and we want to continue that conversation with the congregation soon. Stay tuned for details.

Letter Writing with VOTE Forward

Melissa Kirven and Pat Kinney have agreed to be co-Team Captains for a Vote Forward GOTV (Get Out the Vote) campaign. We both feel that voting is a very important way to stand up for Social Justice, and that letter-writing from home is something we can do right now. We have committed to receiving and distributing 1000 letters for people to write at home by August 15, providing their own postage and envelopes. Stamps are available online from www.usps.com.



This sounds daunting, but it is only 25 people writing 40 letters each; we each used to write 20 letters at the parties that we held in Fellowship Hall. We may host some virtual letter writing parties to help motivate people. Please contact Melissa (mkirvenbrooks@gmail.com) or Pat (pkkinney@ix.netcom.com) if you are interested, and we will arrange delivery or pickup.

This info is also available at www.fprespa.org/get-out-the-vote/. Feel free to enlist friends and neighbors!

Pat Kinney



Session Highlights

Session met on June 17 via Zoom with Pastor Bruce Reyes-Chow moderating and took the following actions:

- Authorized by unanimous vote the formation of a Pandemic Task Force charged to explore, monitor, and recommend to Session on-going COVID-19 responses concerning Staff Scheduling, Building Use, Safety Procedures, and Congregational Gatherings; and appointed Scott Brenneman (chair, from Facilities), Evelyn Wong (from Personnel), and Holly Tabor (health professional) to serve on the Pandemic Task Force through May 2021.
- Approved by consent the appointment of the EV Charging and Solar Working Group: Margaret Rosenbloom (chair), Janet Cox, Trish Hallenbeck, and Paul Jones.
- Approved (7 for, 4 abstentions) the motion to support the Peace Church definition as the work of the Compassion, Peace & Justice Ministry of the Presbyterian Church (USA) and the Peace Church Working Group of the Presbyterian Peace Fellowship without adopting this definition as a replacement for the Peace Church statement of the First Presbyterian Church of Palo Alto.
- Endorsed the decision of the EV Charging and Solar Working Group to proceed immediately to investigate the installation of charging stations. (In accordance with the Session-approved mandate, a detailed proposal covering all the financial and operational aspects of an EV charging program should come to Session before proceeding to solicit bids, etc.)
- Approved the plan of the Social Justice Ministry to solicit contributions from the congregation to contribute to Tereso's expenses as the accompaniment team ends its formal accompaniment at the end of August. Checks may be sent to Oscar Rosenbloom. If more than \$900 is received, the excess will be given to the Interfaith Movement for Human Integrity.
- Acknowledged with gratitude Cyndi Chin-Lee's work to collect materials for the annual observance of graduates; Sally Nordlund's ongoing work to maintain church school connections with children and parents; Karen Huddleston's coordination of the recording of the choir's "virtual anthem" for the Peace Breakfast at General Assembly on June 24; Harvey Wolfson's lovely piano music for the June 14 service; and Alyson Melzer's contributions to the Staffing Task Force.

Session discussed the following:

- Tentative plans for joint Zoom services with Valley Presbyterian Church, with Valley to host on July 12 and First Pres to host on August 9.
- Facilities' plan for replacing the roof on the Youth House at an estimated cost of \$15,867, plus added costs for any required roof repairs.

Full copies of the approved minutes are available from Lela Noble, Clerk of Session, at lnoble@sbcglobal.net



Facilities Update

Although the HVAC upgrading of our heating plant is the major focus of Alec Henderson and Javier Hernandez, some progress is being made on other facilities projects. Preparations for Hotel de Zink are nearing completion, with careful attention to disinfecting Fellowship Hall each day and keeping the bathrooms clean and functioning. Javier has selected a contractor to replace the leaking roof on the Youth House, and we hope that a contractor will soon be selected to insulate the Administration Building, Class rooms 1-3, Fellowship Hall, and the Music room. The Manse is still experiencing difficulties, with termites the latest villain. It is likely that the Manse will need to be tented to eliminate the problem.

Paul Jones



Finance Ministry Report

We continue to closely monitor our financial situation resulting from the current COVID-19 changes and uncertainties, including Session's decision to close our campus to all worship and other large group meetings through the end of 2020 due to the current pandemic, as well as the evolving impacts of the current economic downturn. Total income for the first 5 months (including congregational giving and facilities usage) is so far on track. The federal Covid19 PPP funding will help counteract ongoing impacts of the pandemic and resulting economic slowdown that continue to evolve. Below is a summary financial report as of 5/31/20.

Susan Phinney Silver

Summary Financial Report, end-May 2020 (5 months)

	Actual	Budget	Difference	Notes
INCOME				
Pledges and Donations	\$205,887	\$187,292	\$18,595	Includes pre-paid pledges
Facility usage	\$142,410	\$143,485	\$(1,075)	Slightly down
Other	\$801	\$833	\$(32)	
TOTAL INCOME	\$349,098	\$331,610	\$17,488	Excludes Legacy Fund draw
EXPENSES				
Staffing	\$196,614	\$198,191	\$(1,577)	
Facilities (incl WH & manse)	\$68,335	\$88,616	\$(20,281)	Expenses will occur later in 2020
Church Giving & SJ	\$28,902	\$16,958	\$11,944	Session gave \$15K for COVID-19 aid
All Other Ministries	\$12,140	\$18,733	\$(6,593)	
Admin and Other	\$27,552	\$17,787	\$9,765	\$5K for technology for Zoom activities
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$333,543	\$340,285	\$(6,742)	
TOTAL NET INCOME	\$15,555	\$(8,675)	\$24,230	
LEGACY DRAW YTD	\$-	\$27,712	\$(27,712)	



Recent Worship Attendance (all by Zoom, figures are estimates)

	Early Church	10am Service	NOTES
5/31	17	129	Pentecost
6/7	12	107	
6/14	15	110	Celebrated Graduates
6/21	13	104	Celebrated Geoff Browning



Monthly Calendar

See also <https://www.fprespa.org/calendar-of-events/>

**ON JULY 12 WE WILL PARTICIPATE IN A WORSHIP EXCHANGE WITH VALLEY PRESBYTERIAN.
DETAILS TO COME!**

WE WILL BE HOSTING HOTEL DE ZINK IN FELLOWSHIP HALL FOR THE ENTIRE MONTH OF JULY.

Sunday Worship using Zoom

8:30am Early Church: <https://stanford.zoom.us/j/5711192826>
10:00am Community Worship: (1-time Registration Required)
https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZMld-uurDgr_Ss_LQaamMHTYrWR5mhyYA

Join us for the following Pastor-led Zoom series:

Tuesdays @8:30pm Breathe: Weekly Time for Centering and Prayer
<https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/vpUld-2gqD8ibaadXT3ThQNML8yQnHkXUg>
Thursdays @ 8pm Beverages with Bruce
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/331633446?pwd=b0ZDeG85NGpORTINOGdRMIFETkM4QT09>

Meetings over Zoom – Contact the name listed by each one for the Zoom link

Weekly Meetings

Tuesdays, 10:00am	Staff Meeting: Catherine Clover
Thursdays, 7:00pm	Choir Rehearsal Meet-up: Andy Chislett

Monthly Meetings

Wednesday, July 1, noon	Worship and Music: Martha Maris
Wednesday, July 1, 2pm	Adult Education: Evan Hughes
Sunday, July 5, 11:45am	Cool Planet: Shirley Eglington
Wednesday, July 15, 7pm	Session: Lela Noble
TBD	Social Justice: Pat Kinney
Saturday, July 25, 9:30am	Communications: Cyndi Chin-Lee

Small Group Meetings

Monday, July 13, 7:00pm	Intersectional Book Reads Group: Bruce Reyes-Chow
Thursdays, 3:00pm	Thursday Book Study Group: Dave Thornton
Saturday, July 11, 7:00pm	Peaceful Presence Service: www.multifaithpeace.org
Saturday, July 18, 10:30am	Film Group: Ellen Forbes; <i>Just Mercy</i>

Virtual Office Hours - July

Please note that many of the staff will be taking some time off the week of July 6 – 12. Please contact staff members during this time of campus closure by using the contact info listed on the church website:

<https://www.fprespa.org/contact-us/>



Small Groups

The **Faith Issues in Film** group will meet over Zoom on **Saturday, July 18**, at 10:30 am, to discuss the 2019 film ***Just Mercy***. The movie tells the true story of one of Bryan Stevenson's (Michael B. Jordan) first cases as a young lawyer. In 1989, he traveled to Monroeville, Alabama, in hopes of overturning the wrongful conviction of Walter McMillian (Jamie Foxx), an innocent black man who spent six years on death row.

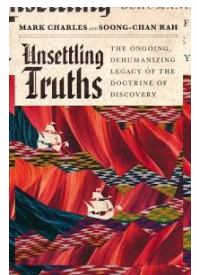


This film is available for free throughout the month of June on various platforms, including YouTube, GooglePlay, Amazon, Vudu, FandangoNOW and Apple TV. For more info, go to <https://www.smithsonianmag.com/smart-news/stream-just-mercy-free-june-180975044/>.

We are always open to new members, but please watch the film before the meeting so that you can participate in the discussion. With the timeliness of this film, we hope that many new people will join us. Contact Ellen Forbes (eforbes820@att.net) for details.

The **Intersectional Reads** monthly book group will take place over Zoom on **Monday, July 13**, at 7pm. Please see www.fprespa.org/events/intersectional-reads-book-group-3/ for more information. We will discuss ***Unsettling Truths: The Ongoing, Dehumanizing Legacy of the Doctrine of Discovery*** by Mark Charles and Soong-Chan Rah.

You can purchase it at: <https://shop.reachandteach.com/book/9780830845255>.



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