

October 2020, Volume 3, Issue 10

Accompaniment Team Update

Formal accompaniment of our Guatemalan father and son ended on August 31st, when Kelly, our liaison from Interfaith Movement for Human Integrity (IM4HI), led a final Zoom team meeting, which Tereso was able to attend. We also we got a glimpse of his son, who is now 12 and has grown a lot! NOTE: Tereso is in the top right of the photo below and Maria Marroquin of the Day Worker Center is in the lower right.

On that day, Oscar Rosenbloom delivered a final \$300 payment from the congregation, and Holly Brady arranged for a \$500 VISA debit card to be mailed to Tereso, courtesy of a local nonprofit. Since Tereso recently moved from his shared apartment into a trailer, Melissa Kirven and others donated some household goods for him. Because the trailer has no electricity, IM4HI contributed another \$500 so that he can buy a generator, and Carol Beaumont donated a carbon-monoxide detector, translating the directions pamphlet into Spanish.



We explained to Tereso how to keep working directly with his legal team as they prepare his asylum appeal (which has been fully paid for by FPCPA donations), and Pat Kinney and Gail Thompson offered occasional help, such as if he needs help getting to San Francisco for a court date. Tereso has found some work, but nothing like the number of hours he was working last winter.

Tereso continues to express profound thanks for our team, as he did in a video that was shared at the September 6th worship service. For those of us on the Accompaniment Team, the experience has been intense, and we are not currently thinking of taking on another family. We may introduce other IM4HI projects to the congregation, such as the Friends Afuera program, which involves writing to people in ICE Detention Centers. Stay tuned.

Social Justice Ministry

Get-Out-the-Vote Campaign Produces 3,500 Letters

Led by Melissa Kirven and Pat Kinney, our congregation has written 3,500 letters to get out the vote this November. They have ended this formal campaign, but you can still print out your own letters. Here are instructions: www.sites.google.com/view/swingleftpeninsula/write-letters-at-home. If you are interested in texting or phone banking, that is still needed. For more information, contact Melissa or Pat.

Coming Up: October 18th Crop Walk

Crop Walk is a national program to raise funds to fight hunger—something particularly important in this economy-ravaged time. This year's Crop Walk will be either a "virtual" walk or a socially-distanced walk (details to come). Of the funds raised, 25 percent will go to local nonprofits, including the Ecumenical Hunger Project of East Palo Alto; and the remainder to national hunger projects. To sign up to walk, to support a walker, or to donate to the team, go to https://bit.ly/1PresPA20CROP. Here's last year's team:



FPCPA Begins Year-Long Antiracism Effort

At its September meeting, the Social Justice Ministry (SJM) presented to Session a proposal that the church spend significant time this year focusing on antiracism—and to use Crossroads Antiracism Organizing and Training, a nonprofit identified by our Presbytery, to guide us. Crossroads' mission is to "dismantle racism, and to build racial justice in institutions."

An exploratory Task Force has been formed to flesh out details. Current members include Dave Thornton, Leif Erickson, Gail Thompson and Holly Brady. We hope to expand the Task Force to include non-SJM members. If you are interested in joining, please contact pastor Bruce.

The rationale for this project has been set forth as follows:

Over our history, First Pres has claimed the mantle of being an anti-war, More Light, sanctuary, EarthCare, and Peace church, despite the fact that congregational buy-in and understanding of these concepts varies from person to person.

With the current state of racial awareness in our society, we see an opportunity for First Pres to take the lead once again. Much like becoming open and affirming to LGBTQIA+ people, becoming antiracist will force us to change the ways in which we engage in life together, and challenge us to explore the ways in which white supremacy thinking has informed the culture, structures, and practices in our church.

The importance of taking this on now is crucial to the future of our community. Our intent is not to become antiracist as a tactic for growth and survival, but to create a space where people from diverse backgrounds will find a community that is antiracist at all levels of its congregational life.

Holly Brady and Pat Kinney

Cool Planet Report

Cool Planet has decided to focus on Environmental Racism in our educational efforts, our calls to act, and our donations. Here are some ways to learn more about what that means.

Palo Alto City Council Candidate Forum

On **Tuesday, October 6, at 7 pm**, tune into a virtual Palo Alto City Council candidate forum focused on environmental and sustainability policies. Reverend Kaloma A. Smith, Pastor of University AME Zion Church and Chair of the Palo Alto Human Resources Commission, will moderate the forum. Reserve a space at: https://www.eventbrite.com/e/palo-alto-city-council-candidate-climate-forum-tickets-115592810207.

Environmental Racism: Three Case Studies

On three **Monday evenings in October, from 6:30-8pm**, Cool Planet will offer an Adult Education Series. The presentations are independent of each other, so you can attend any or all of them. There is one link for all three, with no pre-registration needed: https://bit.ly/FPCPAEnvironmentalRacism.

October 12: Fouling Indigenous Sacred Land in Santa Clara County, led by Pat Kinney

October 19: Plastics Pollution in "Cancer Alley," Louisiana, led by Shirley Eglington

October 26: Flint: The Poisoning of an American City, led by filmmaker David Barnhart of Presbyterian Disaster Assistance

To get the most out of these sessions, please do some homework ahead of time! For fuller descriptions and links to the homework, which includes readings, watching Bruce's October 14 webinar and watching the *Flint* film, see www.fprespa.org/events/environmental-racism-three-case-studies.

Electric Vehicle Chargers Coming to First Pres

At its September meeting, Session authorized filing of initial permit applications for installation of up to 23 Electric Vehicle (EV) chargers in the Lincoln and Kingsley parking lots. In taking this action, Session accepted a preliminary recommendation of the EV Chargers/Solar Working Group, who have undertaken this project at Session's direction. The Working Group includes Margaret Rosenbloom, Paul Jones, Trish Hallenbeck, and Janet Cox.

Should Session approve a final installation contract, we hope to have 13 chargers installed in the Lincoln Avenue parking lot by late spring 2021, and 10 chargers in the Kingsley Avenue parking lot by early 2022, at no cost to our community.

The Working Group has selected PowerFlex (www.powerflex.com) as the vendor for the proposed work. PowerFlex is a Los Altos-based company that provides turnkey charger deployment services, covering planning, permitting, installing, and maintaining the chargers. PowerFlex's proprietary technology and software enhances the chargers' energy efficiency, while monitoring overall electric demand on our campus and reducing power to the EV chargers when our demand for heating or air conditioning warrants.

PowerFlex has installed larger arrays of chargers at several school district sites, including Palo Alto and Los Altos, Temple Kol Emeth, and has just signed an agreement to install chargers in the City of Palo Alto garages.

How is it possible for PowerFlex to provide 23 chargers to the church at no cost to us? At the Session meeting, George Lee, PowerFlex CEO, explained that by using (1) the generous rebates from the Palo Alto City Utilities Department (subsidized by the state Air Resources Board through the Bay Area Air Quality Management District) and (2) carbon credits through California's Low Carbon Fuel Standards program, PowerFlex can install and maintain the chargers for the duration of a 10-year contract at no cost to the church.

George Lee's presentation to Session, including questions and answers, is available at www.youtube.com/watch?v=WSgr4cY-wmQ&feature=youtu.be. The EV Charger Working Group will host a conversation to discuss this project in late October. Stay tuned for details.

The next step for the Working Group is to negotiate and present to Session the final contract with PowerFlex. Issues to be clarified include the operational impact of the PowerFlex charger system on overall electric needs and establishing guidelines for user access.

Margaret Rosenbloom

Musical Notes from Andy

On Homecoming Sunday, September 13, the choir, along with six non-choir members, presented the virtual anthem *We Are Not Alone* by Pepper Choplin. This was our second attempt at a virtual anthem and was a great success! These choir videos really are a group effort – I'd like to thank all the participants for making their individual recordings, Martha Losch and Tom Ellison for the solos, and extra thanks to Karen Huddleston for editing and producing the final video. You can hear it at www.youtube.com/watch?v=esqM-IEjF-U.

As we look ahead to Christmas, the choir and I are planning two virtual anthems that will be presented at the Christmas Eve Service. The two anthems will be *Still, Still, Still,* and another fun one, still to be decided. Christmas is my favorite time of year for music. I invite you all to consider singing for one or both of the Christmas anthems. As of now three new singers have signed up to sing, so let's see if we can make it ten or more! To make it less intimidating for new singers, you have the option to be assigned a "choir buddy" to help you with every step of the recording process – from learning the music, to recording the song, and then to submitting your video. Please contact me at achislett@fprespa.org if you are interested in participating.

I was happy to hear from Emily Brewer of the Presbyterian Peace Fellowship a few days ago. She wrote to say that the First Pres Choir's first anthem, *You Turn Mourning into Dancing*, will be used at the annual Barstow-Driver Award dinner, which will be held at 4pm PST on October 8, recognizing Rev. Dr. Linda Eastwood for her work in Human Rights Accompaniment in Latin America. The keynote speaker will be Perla del Angel, who is one of the accompaniment partners on the border. They would love for us to join them. Register at www.presbypeacefellowship.org/bd2020/.



FPCPA Webinar Series

On **Wednesdays at noon**, Bruce begins a new FPCPA webinar series. As of now, there are two scheduled:

October 14: Please register for this event: https://bit.ly/FPCPAWebinarDeliaRidgeCreamer

While we are drowning in single use plastics, the fossil fuel industry plans to increase plastic production by 40 percent over the next decade. Delia Ridge Creamer, of the Center for Biological Diversity, is helping develop the campaign against the massive expansion of petrochemical plants which turn fracked gas into plastic. Following her presentation to bring us up to date on the situation, she and Bruce will explore the implications this expansion has for our climate, for environmental justice communities, and why we can't recycle our way out of the problem.

October 28: Please register for this event: https://bit.ly/FPCPAWebinarDeliaRidgeCreamer

In this webinar, Bruce sits down with long-time friend and San Francisco Judge-elect, Michelle Tong. Michele is currently a San Francisco Public defender, and she and Bruce will talk about the nature of policing, mass incarceration, and abolition movements.

Faith Issues in Film Group



The **Faith Issues in Film** group will meet over Zoom on **Tuesday, October 20** at 7pm, to discuss the 2020 film **The Windermere Children**, which is a BBC documentary directed by Simon Bloch and Michael Samuels.

Set in postwar England at Lake Windermere, part of the Lake District near the border between England and Scotland, this film is a poignant survivor story about 350 orphaned children liberated in 1945 from the Nazi concentration camps and brought to participate in a special program designed to help them reassemble their lives.

We are always open to new members, but please watch the film before the meeting. Contact Mary Alice Thornton (4mat@sbcglobal.net) for the Zoom link.

Session Highlights

Session met on September 16 via Zoom with Pastor Bruce Reyes-Chow moderating.

Session took the following actions:

- After a presentation by George Lee, CEO of PowerFlex, and considerable discussion, Session unanimously
 approved authorizing PowerFlex to file plans with the City of Palo Alto so that the Electrical Vehicle
 Charger project(s) will be in the queue to receive funding, with the understanding that we retain the
 right to modify or withdraw from the PowerFlex proposals until a final contract is signed. (For a fuller
 explanation, see the article by Margaret Rosenbloom.)
- Agreed with Alec Henderson's proposal to delay expensive work on the boiler until further review of the church's schedule and with Paul Jones' account of plans for painting and repairing the Youth House.
- Reviewed a proposal from the Social Justice Ministry that there be a church-wide focus on antiracism for the year beginning September 2020.
- Acknowledged the extraordinary work of Margaret Rosenbloom with both the EV Charger Working
 Group and the Director of Operations (DoO) recruitment committee; Karen Huddleston's skillful work
 with the Virtual Choir; and the time-consuming and thoughtful work of the Accompaniment Team
 (Carol Beaumont, Holly Brady, Pat Kinney, Gail Thompson, Oscar and Margaret Rosenbloom, Melissa
 Kirven-Brooks, and Maria Marroquin of the Day Workers Center).

Session heard and discussed the following:

- A report from Evelyn Wong on an agreement with Catherine Clover on the terms for her continuation
 after the discontinuation of the position she holds and on progress made to recruit a Director of
 Operations. A committee consisting of Evelyn, Margaret Rosenbloom, and Bruce has reviewed over
 190 applications and has begun interviewing candidates.
- A report from Mary Alice Thornton regarding the work of the Nominating Committee. It is preparing a slate of Session nominees for consideration at the Congregational Meeting to be scheduled for November or December and welcomes suggestions.
- A report from Martha Maris on the planning being done by the Worship and Music Ministry for services for the rest of the year.
- A report from Susan Phinney Silver on the church's financial situation.

Session also received written reports from the Care and Compassion and the Children and Youth Ministries.

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

Finance Ministry Report

We continue to closely monitor our financial situation resulting from the current COVID-19 changes and uncertainties, including ongoing closure of our campus and the current economic downturn. Our giving levels are down a bit, and rental income is down significantly, but these have been compensated for through the federal PPP relief, for which the timeframe has been extended so that we will be able to use the full amount. In October, we will begin the budgeting process to assess the expected financial impacts and situation for 2021. Below is a summary financial report as of 8/31/20.

NOTE: Our pledge income often dips at the end of summer. You could help by bringing yours up-to-date with an online donation at https://www.fprespa.org/donate/ or by sending a check to the Church Office.

Susan Phinney Silver

Summary Financial Report, end-August 2020 (8 months)

| | Actual | Budget | Difference | Notes |
|------------------------------|-----------|------------|------------|---|
| INCOME | | | | |
| Pledges and Donations | \$287,903 | \$299,667 | \$(11,764) | Slightly below budget |
| Facility usage | \$225,671 | \$229,577 | \$(3,906) | Short-term usage fees down. Kara is discontinuing use of classrooms for rest of year. |
| Other | \$1,582 | \$1,333 | \$249 | |
| TOTAL INCOME | \$515,156 | \$530,577 | \$(15,421) | Excludes Legacy Fund draw |
| EXPENSES | | | | |
| Staffing | \$305,881 | \$328,852 | \$(22,971) | Due to end of Associate Pastor position |
| Facilities (incl WH & manse) | \$120,565 | \$148,036 | \$(27,471) | Projects delayed and utility costs down |
| Church Giving & SJM | \$41,664 | \$27,133 | \$14,531 | Session gave \$15K for COVID-19 aid |
| All Other Ministries | \$15,295 | \$29,973 | \$(14,678) | |
| Admin and Other | \$33,212 | \$28,460 | \$4,752 | |
| TOTAL EXPENSES | \$516,617 | \$562,454 | \$(45,837) | |
| TOTAL NET INCOME | \$(1,461) | \$(31,877) | \$30,416 | |
| LEGACY DRAW YTD | \$- | \$44,339 | \$(44,339) | |

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

| | Early Church | Main Service | NOTES |
|------|--------------|--------------|---------------------------|
| 8/30 | 18 | 250 | Sunnyvale Pres joined us. |
| 9/6 | 17 | 105 | |
| 9/13 | 15 | 130 | Homecoming |
| 9/20 | 16 | 110 | |
| 9/27 | 18 | 106 | Byron Bland preached. |

Presbytery Report

The September 19th Zoom meeting was opened at 9am with a prayer by Moderator Frank Bernstein. Worship was led by Rev. Sammie Evans, Rev. Annanda Barclay, and Rev. Libby Boatwright and included a Litany of Departure for Rev. Paula Kelso, who is relocating to Missouri.

Significant actions included the following:

- Rev. Joey Lee gave a brief update on fires. The CZU fire is finally 97% contained after creating extensive damage. Rev. Edd Breeden described damage in Bonny Doon, which has been particularly hard hit, with over 100 homes lost, including 5 of church members. The Bonny Doon Church lost its water tower and barely escaped further damage. The Presbytery has received a GA grant of \$7,500 to assist churches in the Presbytery.
- Candidate Kaytheryn McGinnis, a recent graduate from Princeton Seminary who also served as a Young Adult Volunteer in the northern Philippines, was approved for ordination and will be installed as Pastor of Trinity Church in Santa Cruz.
- Presbytery also approved the 2021 Mission and Ecclesiastical Budgets presented by Elder Sharon Rowser, Chair of the Financial Affairs Committee, and Treasurer Edd Breeden, and the recognition of iChurch of Silicon Valley as a new worshiping community.
- The three commissioners to this year's General Assembly reported on their experience, which they found meaningful despite its "virtual" nature.
- For the Peace and Justice Work Group, Rev. Nan Swanson provided lists of resources on antiracism activities in the Presbytery. For the Mission and Outreach Work Group, Rev. Margaret Boles reported on the planned trip to Peru in December and on a group in Indonesia that offers virtual speakers. For the Committee on Representation and Empowerment (CORE), Rev. Annanda Barclay discussed the book "My Grandmother's Handbook" and announced meetings of the Cultural Semantics Institute and Crossroads antiracism training.

Paul Jones

Monthly Calendar

See also www.fprespa.org/calendar-of-events/

Sunday Worship using Zoom

8:30am Early Church: https://bit.ly/FPCPAEarlyChurch

10:00am Community Worship: https://bit.ly/ZoomWorshipFPCPA

Pastor-led Zoom series

Tuesdays @8:30pm Breathe: Time for Centering and Prayer https://bit.ly/FPCPABreathe

Thursdays 10/15-29 @5:30pm Tri-Church Bible Study – link TBA

Thursdays @ 8pm Beverages with Bruce https://bit.ly/FPCPABeverageswithBruce

Zoom Webinars

Tuesday October 6 @ 7pm Palo Alto City Council Candidate Climate Forum (see Cool Planet article)

Wednesday October 14 @ Noon Register at https://bit.ly/FPCPAWebinarDeliaRidgeCreamer Wednesday October 28 @ Noon. Register at https://bit.ly/FPCPAWebinarMichelleTong

Adult Study Series on Environmental Racism led by Cool Planet over Zoom

Mondays October 12, 19, 26 @ 6:30pm Join the meetings at https://bit.ly/FPCPAEnvironmentalRacism

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

Saturday, October 3, 9:30am

Sunday, October 4, 11:45am

Wednesday, October 7, 2pm

Wednesday, October 7, 3pm

Wednesday, October 7, 7pm

Communications: Cyndi Chin-Lee

Cool Planet: Shirley Eglington

Adult Education: Evan Hughes

Worship and Music: Martha Maris

Personnel Committee: Evelyn Wong

Saturday, October 17, 11:00am Social Justice: Pat Kinney Wednesday, October 21, 7pm Session: Lela Noble

Small Group Meetings

Thursdays, 3:00pm Thursday Book Study Group: Dave Thornton

Sunday, October 11, 7:00pm Peaceful Presence Service: www.multifaithpeace.org

Tuesday, October 20, 7:00pm Film Group: Mary Alice Thornton; *The Windermere Children*

Virtual Office Hours

Though the physical church office is currently closed, staff are available online and over the phone to help. Please contact staff members by using the contact info listed on the church website:

www.fprespa.org/contact-us/

In Memoriam: Ella Kikuchi



Born and raised in Hawaii, Ella Y. Kikuchi studied and taught in Colorado, Hawaii, Illinois, and Santa Barbara. She and her husband, Tom, had one son, Derrick. In 2011, Ella made the last big move of her life, moving to the senior community of Channing House in Palo Alto. As Ella did with any change in her life, she poured herself into her new community, and also became part of the life of First Presbyterian Church. Her greatest gifts were her warmth, her inquisitive nature, and nearly photographic memory.

After a series of falls, Ella passed away on August 12, 2020, at the age of 90. Her full obituary can be viewed at:

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1azHf81j3g0vEKrRzOUTyNzc8IkzxYE2-XW6jTSA7yMM/edit?usp=sharing.

A celebration of her life was held over Zoom on September 14, and can be viewed at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zV9XDC3RGzQ&feature=youtu.be.

In Memoriam: Charles Drekmeier



Charles Drekmeier was born in Beloit, Wisconsin, and earned degrees at the University of Wisconsin, Columbia University and Harvard University. He and his wife, Margot, moved to Palo Alto in 1958 to join the faculty at Stanford.

Charles was known for his creativity, intellectual curiosity, and liberal politics. For 23 years, Charles and Margot co-led an honors seminar (meeting at their home) called Social Thought and Institutions, and they were beloved by their students. They raised their three children, Nadja, Peter and Kai, in Palo Alto and at First Presbyterian Church. A lifelong lover of classical music and opera, Charles also played flute with the Palo Alto Symphonic Band.

Charles died at home on August 25, 2020, just shy of his 93rd birthday. An online memorial was held on September 19.

His family has created a website, <u>www.drekmeier.org</u>, that includes a full obituary, his memoir and an oral history.



1140 Cowper Street Palo Alto, CA 94301 650.325.5659

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