

# FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF PALO ALTO

# WHAT'S UP

December 2020, Volume 3, Issue 12

## Advent and Christmas at FPCPA



While Advent and Christmas will be different this year, the season can still be a time of reflection, deepening and discovery – perhaps in new and interesting ways.

To enter into the season and allow time for more reflection, beginning the week of November 23, Breathe, Beverages with Bruce, Bible studies, and webinars will not be held. Film Group also will not meet in December.

Here are the opportunities your Worship and Music Ministry Team along with Staff are planning:

**Advent Jazz Services: Wednesdays, December 2, 9, 16, and 23, from 12:00 noon to 12:30.**

Register at <http://bit.ly/FPCPAJazz>

Join us for a time to stop and reflect on the coming of Christ through music, prayer and jazz with Andy, Bruce and Jonathan Bautista

**Advent Sunday Worship Services: November 29, December 6, 13 and 20 at 10:00 a.m.**

These services will follow traditional themes in music and worship with a different family or individual lighting the Advent candles in their homes.

**Christmas Eve: Thursday, December 24 – two services:**

Register for both at <https://bit.ly/FPCPAChrismasEve>

**5:00 p.m. Traditional service** with lots of carols and two virtual choir anthems (*African Noel* and *Still, Still, Still*). Candle-lighting while singing *Silent Night*.

**11:30 p.m. Late Service** featuring music and readings led by Bruce and Andy. The lighting of the Christ Candle at midnight will take us into Christmas Day.

*Martha Maris*



## ***Belonging Class and New Members***

Thanks to Bruce's initiation and design (and with much help from staff and elders), we just completed the first "Belonging" membership class comprising two sessions held on Sunday after church earlier this month. 7-10 people attended one or both sessions, with several members and Elders joining as well. This marks the resumption of membership classes, which have not been held at FPCPA for several years. It was jam-packed with theology, polity, community information, and various ways for those interested to commit and plug into our congregation. The larger plan is to rotate between "Belonging" (i.e., church membership) class and "Believing" (i.e., faith and belief) classes such that we will have two of each type of class over the course of a year. Stay tuned for the first "Believing" class to be announced in the new year.

Session has approved two new members:



**Ev Pugh** will join via a transfer of membership from Seventh Avenue Presbyterian Church of San Francisco. They are currently studying at United Theological Seminary of the Twin Cities, in St. Paul, Minnesota. Ev plans to become the third generation of the Pugh-Reyes-Chow family to become a Minister of the Word and Sacrament in the PC(USA).



**Karen Huddleston** will join via a transfer of membership from Southminster Presbyterian Church of Beaverton, Oregon. She has attended FPCPA for about four years and has been active in the Choir, the Audio/Visual/Tech team, the Film Group, and the Young Adults Group. Karen has also agreed to become a Session Member.

They will be officially welcomed into our congregation during worship on Sunday, December 6. There will also be a brief congregational meeting following worship that Sunday to approve Karen's Nomination to Session.

*Mohan Iyer and Pat Kinney*



## ***Social Justice Ministry and Cool Planet***

Both Social Justice and Cool Planet have been working on plans to distribute the remainder of their 2020 budgets. We will support our usual partners, but have also added a few others that are working in the fields of environmental and racial justice.

**Heart and Home Women's Winter Shelter.** We have received a request from this group to host 15 women for six weeks from January 10 to February 21. Peninsula Bible Church will host them for the first six weeks, starting soon, and the Unitarian Universalist Church will host mid- February to early April. For several years we

have supported this group with donations of cash and coffee cards; you may remember making Valentines in the Narthex for the women.

Normally University Lutheran hosts in January-February, but they do not have a big enough space for the currently required social distancing. University Lutheran and Heart and Home will provide meals and supervision during this time period, so our main contribution is the use of Fellowship Hall. We will meet with Chyrise and the Pandemic Task Force to see if we can say yes to this request.

**Holiday Donation Drives.** Several of our partner organizations have had extraordinary requests for their resources this year and have responded quickly to new ways of operating.

Below is information on how you can contribute to holiday drives from four of them. Social Justice will contribute \$250 to each drive. See also:

<https://www.fprespa.org/holiday-donations-2020/>

### **The Day Worker Center of Mountain View**

<https://www.dayworkercentermv.org/donate>

113 Escuela Avenue, Mountain View, California, 94040

For the holidays, the DWC will give out gift cards to La Plaza (grocery store) and Target, and will do a very limited, socially-distanced distribution of toys to children. You can donate online at their website, but they prefer checks. Please specify "Gift Cards" in the memo line of the checks.

### **LifeMoves Opportunity Center**, <https://www.lifemoves.org>

P.O. Box 213, Palo Alto, CA 94301 Write "Attn: Philip Dah" on the envelope.

Write checks to LiveMoves and put "OC Holiday Drive" in the memo line.

This year the OC will be holding a holiday shopping event for their homeless clients. You can donate money for them to buy winter items or gift cards. They ask for donations by Friday, December 11.

### **Ecumenical Hunger Project** <https://www.ehpcares.org>

2411 Pulgas Ave, East Palo Alto, CA 94303

This holiday season EHP will give out gift cards at their drive-through food closet. They prefer donations by December 4. Put "Christmas" in the memo line of a check. Electronic gift cards can be sent to

[lakesha@ehpcares.org](mailto:lakesha@ehpcares.org)

### **Puente de la Costa Sur** <https://www.mypuente.org/>

P.O. Box 554, Pescadero, CA, 94060

Puente is conducting their annual drives for warm clothing for farm workers and gift cards for families.

You can send a check or donate online at <https://donatenow.networkforgood.org/puenteholiday2020>

In either case, you can specify "Winter Items" or "Holiday Drive."





## ***Session Highlights***

Session met on November 18 via Zoom with Pastor Bruce Reyes-Chow moderating.

Session took the following actions:

- Approved the requests of Karen Huddleston and Ev Pugh to transfer their memberships to First Pres from Southminster Presbyterian Church in Beaverton, Oregon, and 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue Presbyterian Church, San Francisco, respectively.
- Approved scheduling a congregational meeting on December 6 to receive the Nominating Committee's recommendations for new and continuing Elders to serve on Session and also approved scheduling the Annual Meeting on January 24.
- Approved with one abstention a motion from the Worship and Music Ministry that our church discontinue using music by the composer David Haas, who has been accused of multiple instances of abusing women and children.
- Acknowledged with appreciation the ongoing work of Evelyn Wong and other members of the Personnel Committee; the work of Pat Kinney in producing "What's Up @ First Pres" over the last three years; and the music provided at 10am services by Jonathan Bautista and Bret Frangipane.

Session discussed the following:

- Susan Phinney Silver's reminder of issues affecting this year's budget preparation. She expects that any budget approved at the December meeting will require revision later in the year.
- Martha Maris's report on plans for Advent and Christmas.
- Cyndi Chin-Li's report from the Communications Task Force. Pat Kinney has resigned as editor of "What's Up," effective after the December issue. Chyrise will assume responsibility for producing it using a similar format, though it will not contain a calendar.
- Mohan Iyer's report on the well run and well attended new members' classes. Subsequent classes will be extended to allow for more coverage and participation.
- Mary Alice Thornton's report on the recruitment efforts of the Nominating Committee. Session will identify particular areas where leadership is needed, so that recruitment can be focused on finding people willing to assume those responsibilities. The Committee can then solicit people interested in those roles by asking either for volunteers or for suggestions from others in the congregation.

Full copies of the approved minutes are available from *Lela Noble, Clerk of Session*.



## Finance Ministry Report

Session had an initial discussion of the Budget at our October meeting, including the current reductions in congregational giving, tenant rental income and short-term facilities usage, which are having an increased cumulative effect over time. In fact, if the current income reductions were to continue for full-year 2021, this would result in about \$90K in reduced income in 2021. We are also undergoing staffing transitions. Given all these uncertainties, Finance Ministry is recommending that Session wait for this year's Stewardship results before making decisions on the 2021 Budget. ***We ask that you please prayerfully consider the amount of your pledge and submit your pledge cards soon, so that we can plan for 2021 during this year of pandemic hardship and transitions.***

Susan Phinney Silver

### Summary Financial Report, end October 2020 (10 months)

	Actual	Budget	Difference	Notes
<b>INCOME</b>				
Pledges and Donations	\$343,784	\$374,583	\$(30,799)	Below budget
Facility usage	\$267,435	\$286,971	\$(19,536)	Short-term usage fees down
Other	\$3,430	\$1,667	\$1,763	
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>\$614,649</b>	<b>\$663,221</b>	<b>\$(48,572)</b>	Excludes Legacy Fund draw
<b>EXPENSES</b>				
Staffing	\$401,830	\$421,672	\$(19,842)	Due to end of Associate Pastor position
Facilities (incl WH & manse)	\$141,085	\$189,733	\$(48,648)	Projects delayed and utility costs down
Church Giving & SJM	\$45,539	\$33,917	\$11,622	Session gave unbudgeted \$15K for COVID-19 aid
All Other Ministries	\$18,464	\$37,467	\$(19,003)	Due largely to being online (no events)
Admin and Other	\$40,645	\$35,574	\$5,071	
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$647,563</b>	<b>\$718,363</b>	<b>\$(70,800)</b>	
<b>TOTAL NET INCOME</b>	<b>\$(32,914)</b>	<b>\$(55,142)</b>	<b>\$22,228</b>	
<b>LEGACY DRAW YTD</b>	\$-	\$55,423	\$(55,423)	



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

	Early Church	Main Service	Notes
11/1	14	102	
11/8	17	106	
11/15	16	109	
11/22	15	105	Rev. Ashley DeTar Birt preached.



## *Memories of Advents and Christmas Eves Past*









### ***A Note from the Editor***

This is my final month of editing and producing What's Up. Thanks to all of you who have submitted articles and photos over the last three years. Special thanks to Lela Noble, Holly Brady, and Martha Maris, who have helped with soliciting and editing articles, formatting, and proof-reading.

This edition omits some information that is readily available from either the weekly newsletters or the website. For instance, the monthly calendar is not included, because there is more up-to-date information at <https://www.fprespa.org/calendar-of-events/> or in the weekly newsletters.

The Communications Ministry is aware of the need for a monthly "magazine" which contains reports and longer articles of interest to the congregation. The exact format and delivery mechanism for this is being discussed and you will see the result of these discussions in January 2021.

Meanwhile, Happy Thanksgiving, Merry Christmas, and Happy End-of-2020 to all!

*Pat Kinney*



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