



February 2023

*I will call to mind the deeds of the LORD;  
I will remember your wonders of old.  
I will meditate on all your work  
and muse on your mighty deeds.  
Your way, O God, is holy.  
What god is so great as our God?  
You are the God who works wonders;  
you have displayed your might among the peoples.  
With your strong arm you redeemed your people,  
the descendants of Jacob and Joseph. Selah  
Psalm 77:11-15*

How do we honor our history? As we prepare to celebrate the 100 Year Anniversary of our building and also celebrate Black History Month, my mind has been drawn to consider how we remember the people and stories which make up our history. The past can inspire a wide range of emotions in us. We might feel pride and encouragement as we think about ancestors who found ways to thrive in difficult times, or who showed us how to live in faith, hope, and love. We might feel lament about injustice or harm that is part of our family or country's story, and even deep anger that something awful happened. We might feel a sense of responsibility to keep the stories of the past alive and to learn from them. We might feel curiosity as we consider how people just like us adapted in circumstances were so different than our own. Thinking about different time in history might make us feel a sense of longing for the simplicity or culture of a past era, or it might cause us to give deep thanks for how things have changed.

So often our minds try to oversimplify our history, making heroes and villains, golden ages and dark times. But the truth is that most of our history is speckled with that variety of emotions, and to truly understand what happened we need to take in the whole picture. A thorough look at history, especially when we include the voices of people whose perspective has traditionally been left out of the history books, rarely allows us to tell a simple story. The more complex picture requires more of us, but it is more truthful and more helpful when we endeavor to understand how we got to where we are today.

As people of faith, we reflect on history knowing that our anchor is always Jesus Christ whose love, grace, and justice stay the same from age to age. One way of looking at history is to keep an eye out for how our faithful God has moved in and through people just like you and me as they faced the challenges and joys of their time. Psalm 77 (above) declares that God works wonders and has displayed God's might among the peoples. I wonder, as you consider our church's history as well as Black/African American history during this special month of remembrance, where do you see God working wonders and showing strength? Where do you see God working still? I'd love to hear what came to mind for you!

As we consider our history, may we be brought into worship and gratitude for the ways that God has been at work. May we approach our history with eyes of both compassion and honesty, as we do our best to follow Christ in the joys and challenges of our time. As always, I am so very thankful to be on the road with you all.

With gratitude,  
Pastor Ashley

## FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS

Charlie Briggs	February 2
Barbara Beasley	February 16
Joel Franklin	February 17
John Vaughn	February 21
Maurice McElhinny	February 25
Jane Knoop	February 27



### SAVE THE DATE!



In order to put our best foot forward for our 100th Building Anniversary on March 25th, we have scheduled a clean up day for Saturday, March 11th, from 8am-Noon. Coffee and donuts will be provided! We hope you can join us.



## 100TH BUILDING ANNIVERSARY

### FUNDRAISER

It's not too late to donate to our fundraiser to help offset the costs for the 100th Building Anniversary celebration on March 25th! We have lots of fun things planned for the whole family.



You can drop your donation into the collection plate on Sunday, mail it or drop it off at the Church Office, or give online. Be sure your checks say "100th Birthday" in the memo line.

### ADDRESS LIST

We continue to be in need of addresses to send invitations. We want to be sure to include as many people as possible who were involved in this church in the past. Please send names and addresses to the Church Office via email: office@fpcstockton.org. Cast a wide net! Friends, family, neighbors, organizations . . . We want any and all addresses you can think of!



## SESSION UPDATE

The Session met via Zoom on January 22, 2023. During the meeting, the following items were approved.

- \* Session approved the transfer of Tom and Karen Keene's membership from Manteca Presbyterian to First Presbyterian.
- \* Planning for the 100 Year Celebration is going well. There is now a Details Committee meeting weekly on Mondays at 11 AM.
- \* Session approved a church clean up day for Saturday, March 11. All are welcome to join in!

If you have any questions, please ask any member of Session or Pastor Ashley.



The Midtown Food Pantry is jumping! We now average between 70-80 people per week, feeding over 200!

We always are in need of plastic/fabric bags with handles. Each patron of the food pantry uses at least 2 bags, so we distribute around 150 bags each week. If you have any kind of non-paper handle bags at home that are just taking up space, please bring them to the Church Office during Suzi's work hours or drop them in the Blue Room on Sundays.

We are grateful for all our volunteers. We always need help before and after the food pantry—to set up and break down—as well as help keeping the upstairs clothing closet in order. If you're interested in helping, you can just show up or talk to Tola Eley or Suzi Treganza.

The Office food pantry ("the little food pantry") serves between 15-20 of our homeless friends per day! We always need pop-top proteins, fruit cups, small bottled waters, small packages of crackers, and any other snack item you might pack in a lunchbox.



By affirming the below **Covenant Network Mission Statement**, at their December 202 meeting our church Session made the decision to affiliate with Covenant Network’s inclusive network of congregations.

If you have questions about Covenant Network or Session’s decision, please feel free to contact Pastor Ashley.

“Confident in God’s hopeful future and grateful for the ever-widening welcome of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), the Covenant Network of Presbyterians seeks an equity still not fully realized for LGBTQIA+ people in church and society, by

- **Engaging** the church to invite all of God’s children into safe and welcoming congregational spaces of affirmation, healing, dignity and purpose;
- **Educating** the church to expand our welcome of LGBTQIA+ people, to affirm their gifts for ordained office, and to uphold marriage equality for all; and
- **Equipping** the church to bear witness to justice through advocacy and activism at the international, national and local church levels; speaking a prophetic word in anxious and divided times; and standing with others in fighting hate and oppression against any of God’s children.

The Covenant Network of Presbyterians calls the church to bear a unified witness to generous hospitality and faithful justice.”



Our Little Free Library is a busy place! Currently we need adult paperback novels and children’s books (baby through teenage). We appreciate your support.



## CONGREGATIONAL CARE

There is a song the goes “I can see clearly now, the rain has gone, it’s gonna be a bright sun shining day!”

That is our feeling now that our rain storms have stopped for a while. Prayers that you all have come through the storms with minimal damage and good spirits. Praise God the sun is shining!

There were some dark moments for some of our friends. Mary Lou Hover was in much pain after oral surgery but is now feeling better. Charlie Briggs has been undergoing medical tests and reports there is good news, but that they uncovered other findings that will need more testing. Prayers for God’s healing and strength as Charlie faces more tests.

Ruth Strombom was saddened by the news that her younger brother, Donald Roek passed away. Prayers for God’s peace and comfort for the family.

Frances McPherson was getting settled into her new place in Modesto when she was taken to Doctors’ Hospital with circulation and blood clot problems. At this writing she is still in the hospital, but the medical procedures have been reported successful so far. All our friends would appreciate your prayers and cards.

Gloria Balis announced that she will be moving to be near friends in Berkeley. Prayers for Gloria for a safe and easy move and God’s strength as she settles into her new environment. We will miss her.

We pray that God’s love shines on us all and He will help us weather any storms ahead.

Peace

Sylvia Cavanaugh, Chair



## ACCESS FPC WORSHIP VIDEOS

To access our worship services online, go to our website: [fpcstockton.org](http://fpcstockton.org), click on Ministries, then Worship, and click on the YouTube logo. You'll automatically be directed to FPC's YouTube channel.

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### VIRTUAL COFFEE HOUR

Please join us for Coffee Hour via Zoom at 1:00pm on Sundays. The meeting ID number is 879 5305 9034 or you can call in using the number 669-900-9128 and put in the meeting ID number just like a conference call. This information is also emailed every week.

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### MARCH WINDOW

The deadline for submission of articles for the March 2023 Window is **February 20th.**

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### WORSHIP ASSISTANTS

|             |                |
|-------------|----------------|
| February 5  | Charlie Briggs |
| February 12 | Janet Sepiol   |
| February 19 | Bill Alessio   |
| February 26 | Gail Herron    |

*If you are interested in serving as a Worship Assistant, please contact Suzi.*

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## READERS R US

Our book club will be reading *The Christie Affair* by Nina De Gramont for February. If you are interested in joining this group, please contact Janet Sepiol.

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### JOB OPPORTUNITY

We are currently hiring:

**Part-Time Children's Ministry Coordinator:** This position is for someone to develop, implement, and promote Sunday School and children's ministry programs. It would require 6 hours a week, including 2-3 hours on Sunday mornings at the church. Hourly wage is \$20.

If you know someone who might be interested in this position, please have them contact Suzi for more information.

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*First Presbyterian Church is committed to loving and serving all people, including those from diverse generations, cultural and socioeconomic backgrounds, gender identities, sexual orientations, and life experiences. Whatever your story, you are welcomed by Jesus Christ And by his church family.*