



The Window

First Presbyterian Church of Stockton's Monthly Newsletter

August 2026

Dear Congregation,

We are currently reading our way through *My Body is Not a Prayer Request*, by Amy Kenny. Please enjoy these two excerpts from the first chapter. We still have books available if you would like to jump in! We are meeting on Mondays at 7 pm on zoom.

With love,
Pastor Ashley

"God told me to pray for you," she says. Her words linger like cloying perfume in a claustrophobic space. "God wants to heal you!" She is undoubtedly thrilled with this opportunity.

I've been here before. It never ends well. This woman does not know me. She doesn't have the intimacy that prayer or accountability or sarcasm require. She simply interprets my cane as something that requires "fixing" and ropes God into her ableism, the belief that disabled people are less valuable or less human than our nondisabled counterparts. Internally, I make a swift calculation: endure the prayer to avoid squabble, or call her out on her benevolent eugenics and be branded a heretic again.

I used to play the game. Eavesdropping as they prayed for my broken body, trying to conceal my spasms lest they be confused for demonic convulsions. I thought if I could just assume a veneer of piety, it would inoculate me against their patronizing prayers and invasive interrogations. I believed that I could perfect my way out of people demeaning disability, that somehow my patience would endow me with enough worth in their minds to be considered fully human. All it did was put me on a carousel of dehumanization that made me feel complicit in their toxic theology.

So I choose door B. "I don't need prayer for healing. My body has already been sanctified and redeemed," I choke out. I know it won't be enough, but my dignity is not up for debate, particularly here, in God's house. Only a second has passed, but there is a lifetime between us.

Bewildered, she blocks my path, grabbing my forearm so I can't leave until I suffer her pontification. "You need to hear that God wants to heal you. If you stopped resisting, you would be free already." Free. All I want to be free from is her. All I need to be liberated from is the notion that disability is inherently deviant and in need of eradication. (pgs 1-2)

"Many churches limit our imaginations for how abundant life should function, as if prosperity and happiness are confined to a party in a music video. They create ministries to disabled people, casting us as a group of second-class citizens who must be segregated from the general population, never considering that disabled people have something to teach the broader community about living an embodied faith, never realizing that we are not objects of pity or charity but image-bearers with our own gifts to share with the beloved community. Many churches blame eschatology for dehumanizing "worship" songs that claim to praise the living God while mocking the beautiful diversity of God's creation. They avoid the discomfort of a messy lived experience by constantly promising a completeness yet to come. "You'll be whole one day" or "you'll be running in heaven," they promise through pursed lips, as though I am not already a new creation with the mind of Christ. As if the Holy Spirit doesn't already dwell in my disabled body." (pg. 27)

SEPTEMBER WINDOW

The deadline for submission of articles for the September 2026 Window is **August 23**.

Hospitality after Worship Setup/Cleanup

August 2: Sylvia/Marilyn
August 9: Carol/Marilyn
August 16: Jane/Marilyn
August 23: Sylvia/Marilyn
August 30: Jane

Worship Assistants

August 2 – Gail Herron
August 9 – Craig Holmes
August 16 – Doug and Cheryl Hunt
August 23 – Gretchen Loudon
August 30 – Kimberlee Roider

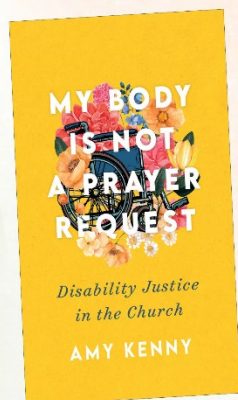
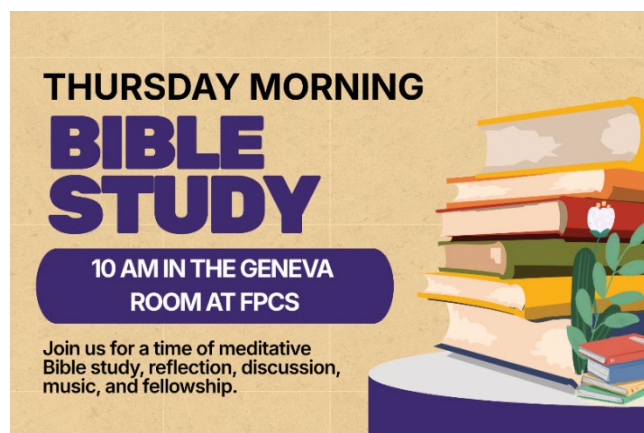
Sunday School Volunteers

August 2 – Tola Eley
August 9 – Kimberlee Roider
August 16 – Autumn Alessio
August 23 – Sylvia Cavanaugh
August 30 --

If you are interested in serving with Hospitality, as a Worship Assistant, or as a Sunday School Volunteer, please contact the Office.

AUGUST BIRTHDAYS

Doug Hunt -- August 17



BOOK STUDY
MONDAY
EVENINGS AT 7PM
ON ZOOM

ALL ARE
WELCOME!

CHECK EMAIL FOR
THE ZOOM LINK

Meetings This Month:

August 3 Family Promise Ports Game 5 pm
August 12 Food Pantry Distribution at 2 pm
August 9 Church Potluck "Salad Spectacular"
August 17 Spiritual Growth Committee 4 pm on Zoom
August 18 Hospitality Committee at 10 am
August 20 UOP Service Day 8:30 am to 12 pm
August 24 Session Meeting 10:30 am
August 26 Food Pantry Distribution at 2 pm
August 29 Native Core Overdose Awareness Event 11 am to 4 pm

Weekly:

Book Study at 7 pm on Zoom
Bible Study at 10 am Thursdays



We have been invited again this year by the wonderful folks at Carmichael Presbyterian to join in their annual women's retreat at Zephyr Point on the shore of beautiful Lake Tahoe! Registrations forms will be available in the blue room starting mid June. The cost for the retreat is \$225 and scholarships are available. As we get closer, we will arrange carpools to drive up together.

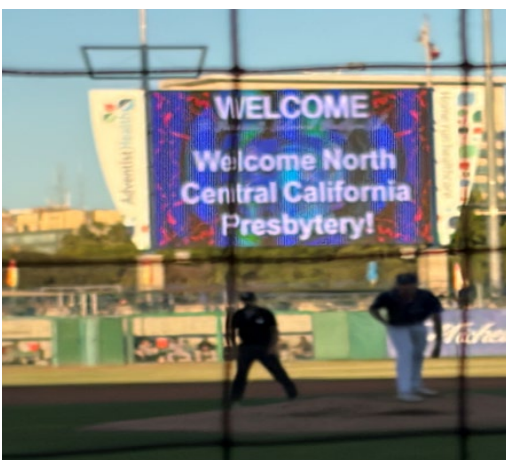


Thank you again to Helen Mar for another generous donation of children's books for our little free library!

We are in need of adult books so we can keep our library stocked up. If you have any to donate please bring them in to the office or bring them to church on Sunday.

Thank you!

Pictures from the Presbytery Port's Game on July 10th





Thank you to everyone who helped with our first Kids Summer Splash! Much fun was had while we cooled off with water games and sprinklers!



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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*