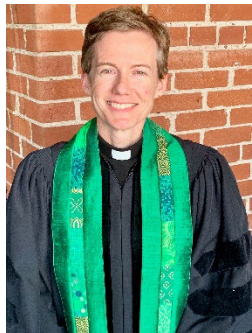




FIRST PRESS *EXPRESS*

The newsletter of First Presbyterian Church of Concord, California

January 2022



Holidays can get lonely for Michael and me as our families are, for the most part, in Minnesota, Michigan, Indiana, and the Washington, D.C. area. Holidays can also feel like “much ado about nothing,”

insofar as we both love big holiday meals, but find cooking these just for ourselves anticlimactic. (The ratio of kitchen time to the actual meal is pretty skewed in our two-person household!)

So it was with delight that we decided to host both a Thanksgiving and Christmas dinner on campus this year for people from the Heritage and Towers, who, like ourselves, might have found spending their holidays on their own a little depressing.

Some things we learned in the course of these endeavors:

- Don't do all the cooking in one day! (We did this Thanksgiving and our feet were killing us.)
- It takes a long time for 40 pounds of frozen turkey breasts to thaw.

- Talk to Ann Johnson first before setting the menu – so she can suggest short cuts.
- It is possible to buy too much premade cranberry sauce.
- It is also possible to buy way too much canned gravy.
- Costco's sour dough stuffing mix really is great.
- Beware the knife drawer in FPCC's commercial kitchen: there are some sharp objects in there!
- Make sure you have great volunteers like Matt Chapman helping you out.

Some people we want to express our gratitude to:

- Matt Chapman. He made it possible for us to serve roughly 80 to 90 people between two meals.
- Our Christmas servers. They made sure everyone got fed before they took their turn.
- Harold and Jerry – for setting up and especially, taking the garbage out for us both nights.
- Ann Johnson and the Selbs – for ensuring that both meals ended on a sweet note.

Interested in getting involved or being included in the next round of meals? Michael and I had such a good time at Thanksgiving and Christmas we are looking forward to inviting folks from the Heritage, Towers and FPCC to join us this Easter for ham with all the fixings.



Oceans, by Hillsong United

*You call me out
upon the waters
The great unknown
where feet may fail
And there I find
You in the mystery
In oceans deep
My faith will stand*

Chorus

*And I will call upon Your name
And keep my eyes above the waves
When oceans rise, my soul will rest in
Your embrace
For I am Yours and You are mine*

*Your grace abounds in deepest waters
Your sovereign hand will be my guide
Where feet may fail and fear surrounds Me
You've never failed and You won't start
now*

Chorus

*Spirit lead me where my trust is without
borders
Let me walk upon the waters
Wherever You would call me
Take me deeper than my feet could ever
wander
And my faith will be made stronger
In the presence of my Savior*

Oceans, by Hillsong United begins by telling the story of Jesus calling Peter to walk on water. Peter succeeds at first, but loses faith for a moment and has to signal to Jesus to help him back up again.

The song then makes the powerful connection between the Biblical story and our calling to do ministry as Christians, implying how our position today is similar to Peter in the gospel. Jesus entrusts us to do remarkable things in his name, even miraculous things, as long as we put our faith in him to guide us. Even when we do feel empowered by Jesus's love, "our feet may fail" from time to time as we lose faith. Thankfully, Jesus expects this in our humanity and lifts us back up again every time we fall. The most important thing is that we "keep our eyes above the waves" so we can keep striving for a deeper relationship with Jesus.

Grateful Heart has featured this song in worship several times in the past couple years, as we have navigated the unknown mysteries of the pandemic and needed reassurance that everything will work out with strong faith. As we reflect on the lyrics and melody of *Oceans*, and listen to DeVonn Powers' compelling voice, let us be reminded once again that anything is possible in the name of Jesus Christ.

Amen

News from the FPCC Session



These are the volunteers who comprise our Session and Board of Deacons for 2022. There remain vacancies in each body. Those who may be interested in serving our church in these very important areas are encouraged to contact Pastor Johanna.

ELDERS

Jon Myers*
David Stearns*
Jim Whitfield*
Carlos Flores
David Dowell
Ron Potts
Josh Maitland
Nanci Powers
* Newly elected

DEACONS

Judith Snider (Moderator)
Anna Belle Horgan
Bill and Emily Selb
Terry Jones
Josie Mauck
Matt Chapman
Trudy Meigs
Carolyn Thornton
Harold Lund
Wayne Matzen
Carrie Smith
Charmaine Ferrera

Notes from the January Session Meeting

Session – One Elder position and one Deacon position remain to be filled. The Nominating Committee is still searching for candidates

Deacons – The Deacon meeting of January 9 was cancelled due the areawide Covid increase.

Moderator's Report Pastor Johanna announced the following Elder assignments:

Jim Whitfield – Connections
David Stearns – Finance
David Dowell – Outreach
Josh Maitland – Property
Jon Myers – Personnel

The recruitment of the new Director of Outreach position approved last month has been postponed because of the Covid impact on the availability of job applicants.

Two initiatives were proposed for consideration by Session and approved:

Church Marketing Project – An intensive analysis and implementation of a strategic marketing program for reaching our community using targeting approaches that utilize modern methods including social media and other proven approaches.

“LiveControl” Remote Video Production approach - Continual support, training and implementation of a new approach of producing our televised church productions to significantly improve capabilities, quality, and efficiency in producing the Sunday service and other presentations.

It was suggested that the Annual Meeting not be an in-person meeting due to the recent increase in Covid cases. It was suggested that it be held via Zoom on February 20. Details will follow.

Consent Motions

A motion was passed to approve the 2022 Fundraising projects for Missions (Great Commission) Team.

A motion was passed addressing various issues of the Finance Committee, including approval of check signers and the appointment of Vern Hance as Treasurer.

Other Information – Covid Issues

Choir practice and the Sunday coffee service have been suspended due to the increased risk of Covid. In addition, the Church office has been closed for periods of time, in which case the staff is able to work at home and handle telephone calls effectively with the new telephone system.

FPCC Staff

Rev. Dr. Johanna McCune Wagner	Senior Pastor
Rebecca Chase, CLP	Director, Children and Family Ministries
DeVonn Powers, CLP	Director, Outreach
Andrew Cardiasmenos	Director, Music & Worship
Darryl McCollum, CLP	Director, Special Musical Services
Robin Stearns	Preschool Director
Lisa Justice, Student Pastor	Director, Adult Education & Church Administrator
Lisa Gonzalez	Financial and Human Resources Specialist
Harold Lund	Custodian & Night Watchman



Editor’s Note: *First Press Express* is a publication of the First Presbyterian Church of Concord, California, printing several times each year. Comments or questions may be directed to Allen Nickerson at allen_nickerson@comcast.net.