

FIRST PRESS EXPRESS

The newsletter of First Presbyterian Church of Concord, California

April 2023



Why is Easter the most important day in the Church year? The significance of Easter is Jesus Christ's triumph over death. His resurrection means eternal life is granted to all who truly believe in Him. They, too, will be resurrected. The purpose of Easter also confirms all that Jesus taught and preached during His three-year ministry.

The apostle Paul said that if Jesus had not risen from the dead, or if He had simply died without being resurrected, He would have been thought just another teacher or prophet, and the hope of all Christians would be dead. **Truly, this is a reason to celebrate.**

This is a wonderful opportunity to bring family members, friends and neighbors to hear a message that can change their lives forever.

Enjoy special Easter music that will include our choir, outstanding guest vocalists and a brass quintet. Following the service, everyone will be able to enjoy special Easter refreshments.

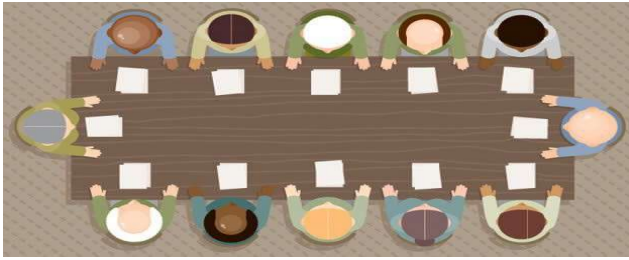
This is also a great opportunity to introduce children to the meaning of our faith. A special effort is being made to reach out to the children on Easter Sunday. They can attend the Godly Play, following which they can participate in an Easter egg hunt.

Please Join Us for These Easter Week Events



Palm Sunday Service & Pancake Breakfast	April 2	Sunday	10:00 AM
Maundy Service:		Sunday	8:30 AM
Soup Dinner Service	April 6	Thursday	5:30 PM
Good Friday Prayer-Chapel	April 7	Thursday	7:00 PM
Holy Saturday Prayer Walk	April 8	Friday	12:00 Noon
Easter Sunday Service	April 9	Saturday	10:00 AM
Children's Easter Egg Hunt	April 9	Sunday	10:00 AM
		Sunday	11:00 AM

Highlights of March Session Meeting



Highlights of March Session Meeting; moderated by Transition Ministry Partner, CLP Rebecca Chase

Approval of Agenda & Consent Docket

Consent Motions approved:

1. Reaffirm Session's February 20, 2023 e-Vote approving changes in FPCC's Bylaws and distribution to the congregation.
2. Reaffirm Session's February 23, 2023 e-Vote approving designating FPCC's Easter Offering to support the Maji Development Coalition project, through our missionary contact, Caroline Kurtz, to help fund the needs of women in their Ethiopia villages, including projects to provide solar electricity and clean water.
3. Reaffirm Session's March 12, 2023 e-Vote approving the Mission Team's Easter Basket Project: to assemble Easter baskets for two needy families with children, using items donated specifically for this project.

Clerk's Report:

Approvals

Session approved the Session Minutes for February 15, 2023, the Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Congregation, held February 26, 2023, and the February 28, 2023, Clerk's Report.

Correspondence

From Preschool Director Robin Stearns, a request from the Beginnings & Beyond Preschool Board to seek Session approval for the Preschool to conduct fundraising for its scholarship fund to help families who are in need of assistance to send children to the Preschool.

The following motion was approved: Session moved to authorize the Preschool to conduct fundraising to FPCC and the supporting community for the purpose of a family scholarship fund to be considered on an annual basis, particularly between Easter and Thanksgiving.

Annual Statistical Report

Receipt of FPCC's 2022 Annual Statistical Report was acknowledged by PC(USA).

Moderator's Report - CLP Rebecca Chase

Review: February 26 Annual Congregational Meeting

The feedback was very good.

Nominating Committee for 2023

Members of the 2023 Nominating Committee are: Elders Jon Myers and Jim Whitfield (Session appointee); Deacon Anna Belle Horgan, representing the Board of Deacons; and Margaret Bachman, Vern Hance, and CLP Darryl McCollum, who are Members-at-Large elected by the congregation at the February 26, 2023 Annual Congregational Meeting.

Responsibilities for New Elders

Elder Maren Stanczak will serve as Chair of the Great Commission (Missions) Team, and Elder Joey Rosete will serve on the Worship and Music Team as an assistant to W&M Chair, Elder Ron Potts.

Mission Study Team

In the absence of CLP Darryl McCollum, Elder David Stearns reported that the Team is now focusing on the goals section of the Mission Study Report.

Adult Activity Center

The Adult Activity group, that had suspended its Tuesday gatherings during Covid has asked to start meeting again in Fellowship Hall on April 18, 2023. The Property Committee will consider any changes that needs to be made in the arrangements.

Telephone and Internet Connectivity

CLP DeVonn Powers is working with Internet providers regarding installing wired Internet connections for the Fireside Room and the Fellowship Hall to improve Internet capabilities. She asked for guidance on the issues that needed to be addressed.

Reports

Deacons – Transition Ministry Partner, CLP Rebecca Chase updated Session on the progress being made with regards to the changes with the reorganization of the Deacons and the new parish assignments.

Finance – Elder David Stearns reported that giving continues to be less than the amount budgeted.

Property Management – Elder David Stearns reported on a broken window in the church basement that is now boarded up and will be repaired.

Connections Team – Elder Jim Whitfield reported on the Easter-related activities that are planned, including the pancake breakfast planned for Palm Sunday.

Communications – Elder David Dowell expressed concerns that we are not getting visitor/prayer cards turned in for the many visitors that the FaceBook/Church Candy social media programs are bringing in. He suggested that announcements be made regularly at the Sunday Service to remind them to please fill out and turn in the cards. A discussion ensued as to other suggestions for getting the cards back from both members and visitors.

By David Dowell

Featured Biography – Ron and Pam Potts



Ron was born in Ross, California but lived in Southern California from 1953 to 1966, where he met Pam in a Spanish summer school class at Morningside High School, Inglewood, CA. They graduated in 1966. He moved north to Lafayette and attended Diablo Valley College before receiving his BA degree at San Francisco State in 1970 with a double major in social science and US history. Twenty years later he earned his MS degree at Hayward State in Educational Counseling. Pam also went back to school and earned her AA degree from DVC in 1993.

Love brought Pam north, and they were married in Carmel in 1970 with Ron's father, a pastor, officiating. The couple settled in the East Bay and have been in Concord since 1971. Their children, Ryan and Kara, are nearby so Ron and Pam can enjoy their two granddaughters, Tulsi and Camille.

Ron was a professional musician for two years before moving into retail, working for Consumers' Distributing Catalog Showroom. In 1984 he was hired by Pacific Telephone (SBC Communications) and worked there for 20 years. After retirement in 2008, he worked as a courier for John Muir Labs for five years.

Pam has done administrative work for insurance companies and was an elementary school secretary for Mt. Diablo School Unified District at Meadow Homes and El Monte schools. She also substituted for MDUSD until 2019. During the summers in the 90s, she worked backstage security for the Concord Pavilion!!!!

Ron was a member of Bible Study Fellowship for 14 years before he joined FPCC in 2014. He has been an elder most of the time since. He has been on the Worship and Music Committee, chairing and writing the minutes of the newly named Program Committee since August 2021. He has also served on the Nominating Committee and, of course, is the drummer for the Grateful Heart band.

Pam has retained her membership in the St. Demetrios Greek Orthodox Church but is warmly welcomed when she worships with us. She is active in community service and prayer groups at her church and she and Ron attend a Bible study with Father Michael. At our church, she is a member of Circle 4 and they both participate in the Friday Prayer Circle with David Dowell and other prayer warriors. Ron and Pam were also in charge of one session of the Marriage Alpha Class.

Ron and Pam have enjoyed traveling in Europe, but they also love camping in their motor home in the states. Ron's passion is playing the drums and he seems to be always playing with some group in addition to our praise band. Pam loves gardening and crossword puzzles and is currently in a class learning the Greek language.

Ron serves on the 2-1-1 Contra Costa Crisis/Suicide phone line on Thursdays, as did his father before him. In 2019 Ron was given the Rosemary Caldwell Award by the Contra Costa Crisis Center for "Volunteer of the Year". The award honors an outstanding individual whose unselfish work for the well-being of others embodies the highest standards of volunteerism. (Thank you, Ron!)

This impressive, loveable pair is now focused on Ron's health as he has begun Radiation/Chemo treatments for cancer. He has asked for prayers for God's strength and comfort and total remission from the disease. As they have been faithful to us for many years, let us be faithful in prayer for them during this difficult time.

By Beth Byrne

FPCC Staff

Rebecca Chase, CLP	Ministry Partner
Lisa Justice, Student Pastor	Ministry Partner
Darryl McCollum, CLP	Ministry Partner
DeVonn Powers, CLP	Ministry Partner
Andrew Cardiasmenos	Director, Music & Worship
Robin Stearns	Preschool Director
Linde Weber	Financial and Human Resources Specialist
Harold Lund	Custodian & Night Watchman
David Dowell	Editor, First Press and <i>Express</i>



Editor's Note:

First Press *Express* is a publication of the First Presbyterian Church of Concord, California, printed several times each year.