



# FIRST PRESS EXPRESS

The newsletter of First Presbyterian Church of Concord, California

July-August 2023

## Welcome, Reverend Carol



On July 30 we welcomed our new interim pastor Rev. Dr. Carol Antablin Miles. Rev. Carol is not new to our church because she has been serving as a coach and mentor to the Transition Ministry Pastors for the past year. Given her familiarity with our church, her acceptance of the call to serve is truly a blessing.

Rev. Carol's background and service to God is extensive. She has served as a church pastor, campus minister, and seminary professor. She spent the last six years as the designated pastor for the English language congregation at Chinese Presbyterian Church in Oakland's Chinatown. Rev. Carol thinks of herself primarily as a teacher and loves helping congregations grow in their faith and understanding of who God is and what it means to live as people of God. She is excited to have joined the pastoral staff at FPCC and looks forward to getting to know

everyone so please introduce yourself. Let's thank God for this new season in the life of our church and welcome Rev. Carol.

## Church Retreat – You Are Invited

A Church Retreat is scheduled for Friday evening of August 25 and Saturday, August 26. The Friday evening session begins at 6:30 PM, and the Saturday session at 8:30. Breakfast and lunch will be served at the Saturday Session.



We will be meeting at the church, and all church members are invited to join the Elders and Deacons in planning our future. This will be a great opportunity to get better acquainted with Rev. Carol and get involved in formulating our vision and plans for the year as well as spend some quality time in worship and fellowship. Please contact the office to let us know you are coming. The agenda appears

in the latest Friday email and the church bulletin.

## 4th of July – A Special Tribute



Three of our faithful ushers appeared in red, white, and blue at the Sunday service on July 6 in recognition of Independence Day a few days prior. From left to right they are Jim Morrison, Terry Jones, and Gary Beck (Head Usher).

Sadly, only a few days later we learned of the passing of Jim Morrison. We deeply mourn the loss of this faithful servant and will miss his smiling face and special greeting on Sunday mornings.

## Summary of Session Meeting on July 25, 2023



### Approval of Agenda and Consent Docket

In the Consent Docket, Session reaffirmed its July 11, 2023 e-Vote approving the Commissioned Lay Pastor recommissioning forms for CLP Rebecca Chase and CLP DeVonn Powers for submission to the Presbytery.

### Clerk's Report:

Session approved the June 20 Session Minutes and June 2023 Clerk's Report.

Member Jim Morrison passed away. The exact date of his passing is not known.

Session appointed Elders David Dowell, Jon Myers, and Maren Stanczak as Commissioners to the August 8 Presbytery meeting and Elders CLP Darryl McCollum, Jon Myers, and Jim Whitfield as Commissioners to the November 14 Presbytery meeting.

### Moderator's Report – Rev. Carol Miles

1. Rev. Carol expressed her delight at the opportunity to serve as pastor of our church. She has been getting more familiar with the church over the past several weeks in anticipation of her arrival and plans to meet as many church members as possible and attend regularly scheduled committee meetings, Bible studies, and other activities at least once over the next few weeks.
2. The Commissioned Lay Pastor recommissioning forms for CLP Ruth Mejia and CLP Carlos Flores were approved by Session.

3. Rev. Carol announced the annual Leadership Retreat is scheduled for Friday evening of August 25 and Saturday, August 26. It will be held at the church and all church members will be welcome to attend. A special effort will be made to invite Elders and Deacons who have served in the past. An agenda will be made available soon.

## Reports

**Deacons** – CLP Rebecca Chase reported that the Deacons have not met since the last Session meeting, so there is no report.

**Connections Team** – Elder Jim Whitfield discussed communications with the other churches meeting on the FPCC campus, especially to improve coordination, access, and cleaning of the church kitchen. Rev. Carol will initiate discussions with the other churches since Jim will be on vacation for the next 3 weeks.

**Finance** – Elder David Stearns reported that June giving was 91% of budget and July is below budget so far, with one Sunday left in the month.

David also reported that the increased expense for marketing by our media consultant, Church Candy, turned out to be less than anticipated.

CLP Darryl reported on the status of applying for a Google grant, through our contract with Church Candy. The grant will provide the equivalent of \$10,000 per month of FPCC advertising on Google. To qualify for the grant, FPCC is updating its website.

**By David Dowell and Jon Myers**



It's August, and for families with children it means the beginning of a new school year ... new teachers, new friends, new books, and new clothes!

In the Atrium, where the children come to find their Godly Play stories, they are in a familiar place that is all theirs. They will have some new craft materials to work with, that will help them reflect on the stories they have heard. Additionally, we will be working on some new (old) stories to supplement the ones we have.

## Godly Play for August and September

**8/27 – The Holy Bible**

**9/3 – The Holy Family (Jesus' Birth)**

**9/10 – Creation**

**9/17 – The Falling Apart (Adam & Eve)\* new**

**9/24 – The Ark and The Flood**

Thank you, Godly Play doorpersons, the ones who help the children get ready (and stay focused) during story time and reflection time. They make sure we have our Feast (crackers and water) ready. And they check children in and out of the Atrium, and so much more. FPCC could not have this wonderful way for children to meet the Bible stories if we didn't have the loving hearts that we do.



Thank you, Jan Sprague, Josh Maitland, Ruth Stevenson, Nanci Powers, Ann Johnson, and Marilyn Wollenweber, who fills in as storyteller when I'm gone. The children will see a couple of new storytellers/doorpersons this year: they are getting braver! I also want to thank Robin Stearns, who also steps in as Storyteller occasionally. Darryl McCollum, with Ashley McCollum, have been fabulous in their role as ongoing project managers when I am preaching. The children start many projects on a Sunday and sometimes need time to finish them.

If you feel moved to spend some time with me and the children, please don't hesitate to contact me. With six to seven door people, we can rotate every month and a half to two months. Training provided. Share the love of the Bible with the littlest ones!  
 God bless you ~

**Rebecca Chase, Director of Children and Family Ministry**



**Fishing at Camp Agape**



**Working with The Ark and the Flood  
(Noah's Ark)**

**FPCC Staff**

Rev. Dr. Carol Antablin Miles  
 Rebecca Chase, CLP  
 Lisa Justice, Student Pastor  
 Darryl McCollum, CLP  
 DeVonn Powers, CLP  
 Andrew Cardiasmenos  
 Robin Stearns  
 Linde Weber  
 Harold Lund

Senior Pastor  
 Director, Children and Family Ministries  
 Director, Adult Education & Church Administrator  
 Director, Special Musical Services  
 Director, Outreach  
 Director, Music & Worship  
 Preschool Director  
 Financial and Human Resources Specialist  
 Custodian & Night Watchman

David Dowell

Acting Editor, *First Press and Express*

**Editor's Note:**

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

