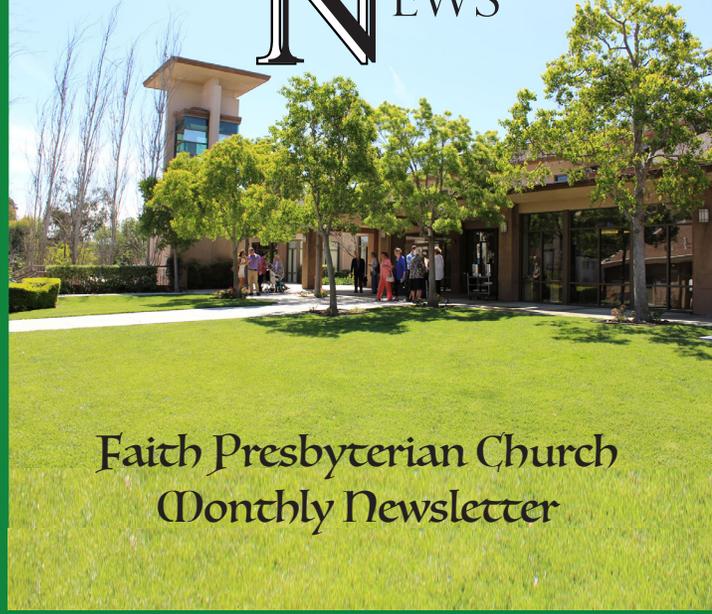


FAITH FAMILY NEWS



Faith Presbyterian Church Monthly Newsletter

From Pastor Sam

Earth Care, Mental Health

Each year at Faith, we focus our worship, education, and service around two themes. Last year we focused our attention around the themes of homelessness and asylum. We read books together, shaped worship liturgies, and financially supported local agencies in attending to homelessness and asylum.

Addressing homelessness and supporting people seeking asylum will continue to be priorities to Faith, but this year, we are shifting focus.

This year we are giving our attention to earth care and mental health. These themes will guide our worship, education, and service throughout the year.

In January, on Tuesdays at 7pm on Zoom, we are starting a new book study with Robin Wall Kimmerer's book, *Braiding Sweetgrass*. She writes as a botanist and member of the Citizen Potawatomi Nation, embracing western science and indigenous wisdom.

I hope her perspective and insight will offer an invitation for us to reflect on our relationship with the ground we are standing on, especially as we are called to be stewards of the earth.

Also in January, we are entering into a new sermon series entitled, "Searching for Wholeness," a series in the Gospel of Mark. Illness and healing are often not individual but communal. When one person in a family system is hurting, the whole family and community often bear the pain in manifold ways but in ways not always visible. As the Great physician, Jesus addresses entire communities with healing, even as he himself bears the pain of the community.

When asked, "Why does he eat with tax collectors and sinners?", Jesus said to them, "Those who are well have no need of a physician but those who are sick." (Mark 2:16-17). While the surrounding community may have stigmatized people, Jesus did not shy away from people who had been stigmatized by the surrounding community. Rather, he leaned in and created healing friendships. Today, mental health is sometimes stigmatized, but the church can and should be a safe place to find support and friendship.

I suspect that as we follow the themes of earth care and mental health, we will find that these two themes overlap. Tending to the ground we are standing on can be deeply healing. In her book, *Belonging: A Culture of Place*, bell hooks writes, "When we love the earth, we are able to love ourselves more fully."

I hope that as we move through the year together, we will take full advantage of the learning and growing opportunities before us in worship, education, and service. Now is not a time to lean back but to lean in.

Grace and peace,
Sam



MEETINGS of OUR FELLOWSHIP GROUPS

Book Study
Every Tuesday of the Month
Resumes January 10th 2023

Wednesday Bible Study
FPC, Room #2 at noon - 1:00pm

Tuesday Eves
Second Saturday of the Month
January 14th
FPC, Library at 2:00pm

Women's Circle
Thursday, January 12th
FPC, Room #3 at 10:00am

Women's Group Bible Study
Third Saturday of the Month
January 21st
FPC, Library at 3:00pm

THIS IS US

Faith Presbyterian Church gathers in the College Area from all across San Diego. We desire to embody beloved community. We are diverse. We are people of color, white, gay, straight, married, single, parents, old, young, and with various abilities. We share a common life characterized by concern for justice, delight in education, and excellence in music through all stages of life. We carry living traditions with us as we grow in faith, with the triune God as our best expression.

RECYCLING REPORT

Nancy Flynn took the last load of cans & bottles to the recycling center earlier in the week, so here is our total for 2022: 268.5 lbs. of plastics, 229.5 lbs. of cans, and 176.7 lbs. of glass, for a total of \$756.45 in donations. Our first full year of tracking the recycling donations was 2017, when we collected \$301.48. In the past 5 years, the recycling has more than doubled!



The Deacons are continuing to collect recycling. Please contact Nancy Flynn at (619) 813-7063 or email at esch46@hotmail.com to make arrangements for her to meet you in the church parking lot.

The money goes directly to the Deacons' fund.

Aluminum cans - Plastic bottles - Glass bottles (CRV) - Water jugs

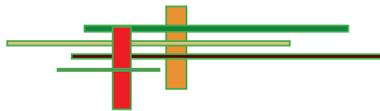
Faith Family Life

JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

Kathy Hays - 10th
Dora McCann - 10th
Susan Gonzales - 24th
Esther Codington - 26th
Flower Harvey - 27st

If you would like to see your birthday listed in the newsletter with just the day, not the year, please email that information to Joe Rodriguez (jcr14@att.net).

Do you have a new address or telephone number? Please send any changes to the office before February 12th. Our 2023 Telephone Directory will be published at the end of February, 2023.



Sanctuary Flowers for 2023
The 2023 Flower Chart is posted on the bulletin board in the Narthex and is ready for sign-ups for 2023.



Big blue recycling bin is for recyclable materials only. Please do not put any trash in this one. Thank you for your cooperation.

DATES TO REMEMBER

January 2nd - New Year Office Closure
January 7th - Womens's Retreat
January 8th - Deacons Meeting - 11am, Room #2
January 15th - Session Meeting - 11am, Room #2
January 16th - Martin Luther King, Jr. Day - Office is Closed
January 19th - Newsletter Deadline
January 21st - Work Party - 9am -12noon
January 29th - San Diego Harmony Ringers Concert

Church Office Hours
Monday - Thursday
9:00am - 12:00noon, 1:00pm - 4:00pm
Please note that office is closed on Fridays

COME, TRY OUR
WEDNESDAY BIBLE STUDY
12:00pm in Room #2
LED BY PASTOR SAM

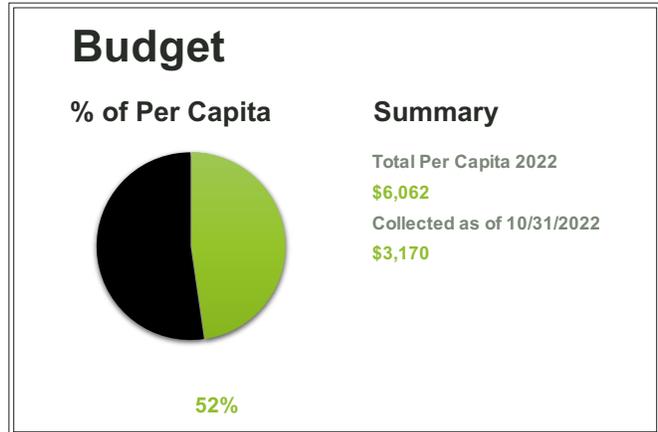
Financial Report

November 30, 2022

Envelope Offering for November 2022 was \$26,219.00
 Envelope Offering monthly budget 2022 is \$21,658.67 per month

Per Capita as of 10/31/2022

Per Capita of \$40.00 was collected in the month of November.
 Please pay your Per Capita, it is \$40.00 per member.



As of November 1, 2022 the mortgage balance is \$768,274.86

Information on Pledges

If you need an update on the status of your 2022 pledge, please contact Beverly Martyn at 619-582-2186 or email 64beam@gmail.com.

Pledge envelopes for 2023 will be available in the narthex on January 1.
 Contribution statements will be available in the middle of January.

SERMONS JANUARY

SEARCHING FOR WHOLENESS

A Series in the Gospel of Mark

In the Gospel of Mark, Jesus announces the good news that the reign of God has arrived (1:14-15). Is this announcement still good and timely news for us today? The reign of God means liberation, healing, and wholeness for individuals and communities. Jesus invites anyone who will listen to join him in witnessing the reign of God. Ched Myers has observed, “Mark’s Gospel...is a story by, about, and for those committed to God’s work of justice, compassion, and liberation in the world.” The Gospel of Mark is the oldest and shortest of the four gospels in the New Testament. In this sermon series, we will explore Jesus as the physician and the church as a field hospital.

January 1st	Pastor Sam	Seeking Good News (Epiphany)	Mark 1:1-8
January 8th	Pastor Sam	Embracing Belovedness (Baptism of the Lord)	Mark 1:9-13
January 15th	Pastor Sam	Breaking with Business as Usual	Mark 1:14-20
January 22nd	Pastor Sam	Searching for Wholeness	Mark 1:21-39
January 29th	Pastor Sam	Removing Every Barrier	Mark 1:40-2:12

ALL CHURCH
Christmas Dinner



We enjoyed our first Christmas dinner in several years on Friday, December 2nd at our Faith Family Center. A delicious dinner was prepared by Joe Huffaker and beautifully presented by church helpers. After dinner, some piano music by Joe Rodriguez along with carol singing by those in attendance was held in our sanctuary. A good time was had by all.



Resuming in January

The book study will resume in
January with a new book!

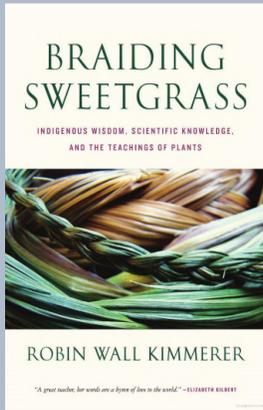
*Braiding Sweetgrass: Indigenous Wisdom,
Scientific Knowledge, and the Teaching of Plants*
By Robin Wall Kimmerer

You're invited!

On January 10th, weekly book study resumes on Tuesday at 7pm on Zoom.

From the back cover: “Drawing on her life as an indigenous scientist, and as a woman, Kimmerer shows how other living beings—asters and goldenrod, strawberries and squash, salamanders, algae, and sweetgrass—offer us gifts and lessons, even if we’ve forgotten how to hear their voices. In reflections that range from the creation of Turtle Island to the forces that threaten its flourishing today, she circles toward a central argument: that the awakening of ecological consciousness requires the acknowledgment and celebration of our reciprocal relationship with the rest of the living world. For only when we can hear the languages of other beings will we be capable of understanding the generosity of the earth, and learn to give our own gifts in return.”

Robin Wall Kimmerer is a mother, scientist, decorated professor, and enrolled member of the Citizen Potawatomi Nation. She is the author of *Braiding Sweetgrass: Indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge and the Teaching of Plants* and *Gathering Moss: A Natural and Cultural History of Mosses*. She lives in Syracuse, New York, where she is a SUNY Distinguished Teaching Professor of Environmental Biology, and the founder and director of the Center for Native Peoples and the Environment.



Work Party

JANUARY 21ST

The Property, Facilities & Information Technology Committee has scheduled a Church Work Party for Saturday, January 21st, from 9 am to 12 noon. We're going to work mainly on updating our church signage so that people walking or driving by can see what our name is! There will be projects for all skill levels. Everyone is invited to come and help make our church look better! Contact Mike or Sharon Gehl if you have questions or suggestions. 619-299-9606

From the Deacons & the Interfaith Shelter



Emergency Shelter
DV Transitional Housing
Housing & Prevention Services
Helping San Diego's homeless



The Interfaith Shelter Network – assists homeless people who need shelter while searching for work, undergoing training, or receiving social services. It recruits host churches throughout San Diego County to provide food and lodging for two weeks while the guests participate in these programs. College Avenue Baptist church participates in the ISN host church program.

On February 4, 2023, their two-week interval begins. They will host up to 15 guests at that time. FPC, through the Board of Deacons, has agreed to prepare and deliver bag lunches from the 4th to the 18th. To accomplish this mission, the Deacons are asking for volunteers who would shop for supplies, prepare the lunches, or deliver them during those two weeks. If you would like to help, please call David or Marilyn Helkenn, 858: 565-4327. Thank you.



CONCERT OF CHRISTMAS MUSIC



Christmas Sunday

SERMON ON THE STEPS

Party Hats ?????

TO CELEBRATE THE BIRTH OF CHRIST



PICTURES From Around Campus



Rory reading to Ezra and Elizabeth



Sam and Bob working at the Pizza stand



Ben taking a stroll with Ezra

WE ARE A 
MATTHEW 25 Church

‘TRULY I TELL YOU, JUST AS YOU DID IT TO ONE OF THE LEAST OF THESE WHO ARE MEMBERS OF MY FAMILY, YOU DID IT TO ME.’

FROM MATTHEW 25:40 (NRSV)

WOMEN OF FAITH **RETREAT ADVANCE !!!**
January 7th, 2023 from 9:30am-3:00pm
Faith Presbyterian Fellowship Hall
Reflections on Life & Faith
(for ‘things’ longed for and hope that invites)
listening for God’s direction in our lives and community
Registration has begun!!! (see Mary-Margaret after worship)

Study: Religion and spirituality can aid youth mental health crisis

Religion and spirituality could help remedy the youth mental health crisis, Springtide Research finds.

October 19, 2022
Kathryn Post

Born into a tech-saturated world shaken by domestic terrorism, ecological devastation and economic instability, Gen-Zers are more likely to report mental health concerns like anxiety and depression than older generations. In many ways, the pandemic has forced mental health discourse into the limelight, prompting the U.S. surgeon general to issue an advisory last December on COVID-19's "devastating" impact on youth mental health.

A new study of 13–25-year-olds, from Springtide Research Institute, suggests spirituality could be part of the remedy — though for some young people, it also contributes to the problem.

"I think religion ... is a place to find belonging. It's a place to connect with a higher purpose, which is a calling from God in my understanding," said Mark, 22, an interviewee cited in the report. "I think it's also, for many people, a restriction of freedom and sort of obligation, which creates a lot of shame in people's lives."

In general, the report — which is based on qualitative interviews as well as fielded surveys — finds that having religious/spiritual beliefs, identities, practices and communities are all correlated with better mental wellness among youth.

A majority of all young people (57%) and nearly three-quarters of religious young people (73%) surveyed agree their religious or spiritual practices positively impact their mental health. Many participants cite prayer as playing a role in their spiritual practice — 51% said they started praying regularly during the pandemic — and 74% of participants who pray daily say they are flourishing, compared to 57% who never pray.

"How often do you engage in the following as religious or spiritual practices?" Spiritual beliefs and community identity also correlate with positive mental health. Seventy-four percent of young people who identify as "very religious" say they agree or strongly agree that they are "in good physical and emotional condition," compared to 42% of non-religious young people. Seven in 10 young people (70%) currently connected to a spiritual or religious community report having "discovered a satisfying life purpose," as compared to 55% of those who used to be connected to such a community.

Forty-two percent of those who feel highly connected to a higher power report they are "flourishing a lot" in their emotional and mental health, compared to 16% of those who say they do not feel at all connected to a higher power.

Still, findings are complex — 27% of religiously affiliated youth say they are "flourishing a lot," but 28% also say they are "not flourishing," a finding that suggests simply being affiliated with a religion is not a mental health cure-all.

In interviews, participants also spoke about how religion can negatively impact their mental health. "Young people make it clear that religion feels toxic when it is primarily presented as a pressure to live up to difficult expectations, rather than a vehicle for helping them navigate their current difficulties," the report says.

In a virtual press conference on Wednesday (Oct. 19), Josh Packard, Springtide's executive director, noted it can be hard to predict which religious environments will harm mental health more than help.

"Anything at the extremes is not very good for you," said Packard, "but I don't think that extremism has to be objectively fixed on a continuum from low to high." He noted how, for a nonbinary person, for example, a mainstream church or synagogue that doesn't welcome their identity may feel extreme.

continued on page 11

FUN FOR THE KIDS

TASTY CREATIONS

Make this yummy treat to remember what happened on each day of Creation.

What you need:

- 6 large pretzel rods
- Candy melts (white, chocolate and blue)
- Green sprinkles
- White or star-shaped sprinkles
- Fish crackers
- Animal crackers
- Adult help



What you do:

1. With help, melt the three colors of candy melts in separate dishes. Microwave for 30 seconds at a time, stirring until soft.

2. Decorate one pretzel for each day of Creation:

- Dip half in white and half in chocolate to show light and darkness.
- Dip half in white and half in blue to show separation of the atmosphere.
- Dip half in chocolate, add green sprinkles and dip half in blue to show land, plants and water.

- Dip in chocolate and add white or star sprinkles to show the stars.
- Dip in blue and add fish crackers to show sea life.
- Dip in chocolate and add animal crackers to show land animals.

3. Share the Creation story – and the snack – with a friend!

Study: Religion and Spirituality continued from page 10

The report's findings come from a survey of nearly 10,000 young people in the U.S. ages 13–25 conducted between November 2021 and March 2022 and contain a margin of error of plus or minus 3%. The report also includes qualitative data from interviews with over 100 young people.

The report proposes three ways for organizations to effectively address youth mental health: foster belonging, provide practical tools to meet expectations and nurture a sense of purpose in young people. It also includes practical advice for faith leaders.

“Leading with that message of unconditional love doesn’t have to be a watering down of other parts of a tradition,” the report says. It also encourages leaders to lean into uncertainty. “(S)eeing answers and leaning into mystery can both be holy activities for young people as they navigate some of life’s biggest questions.”

“Feeling connected to a higher power correlates with greater self-reported flourishing when it comes to mental and emotional health.”

At the same time, the report acknowledges young people aren’t flocking to religious institutions. Instead, many have a more fluid approach to spirituality — 62% of young people agree that “there are parts of many religions/spiritualities that I agree with,” according to the report, and 48% agree they could “fit in with many different religions/spiritualities.”

“One of the things that has shifted in our society over the last 50 years is the level at which people trust institutions of all kinds, not just religious institutions,” Packard said. Given this, religious communities may need to innovate when it comes to the ways they connect with young people, according to Packard.

He referenced OneTable, a nonprofit that encourages young people to host in-person Shabbat dinners, as well as Christian campus ministries that meet in coffee shops, as examples of groups supporting youth “outside of the walls” of traditional religion.

Even as the shape of religion evolves, Packard says faith and spirituality will remain crucial tools for youth going forward.

“Theology matters ... your purpose for being on earth is something only this segment of the population has cornered the market on.”

FAITH PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

5075 Campanile Drive

San Diego CA 92115

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

FAITH PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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Spiritual Director: Mary Elva Smith

Director of Music Ministry: Joe Rodriguez

Media Director: Stephen Dichiera

Preschool Director: Nancy McGeath

Custodian: Agustin Urueta

Sexton: Robin Craig

Office Administrator: Lou Castillo

Newsletter Editor: Joe Rodriguez

GIVE THANKS TO
THE LORD, FOR
HE IS GOOD.
HIS LOVE ENDURES
FOREVER.
PSALM 136:1

Send all submissions to
Joe Rodriguez, editor
jcr14@att.net

DEADLINE FOR
NEXT
MONTH



JAN
19