



FPC Press

SINCE 1909

THE NEWSLETTER OF FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH



Turlock, California

July 2021

Published Monthly



A Message From Our Pastor's Heart Rev. Dr. Craig J. Wright

July Greetings Church Family,

I am tardy getting my newsletter article to Polet this month (Confession is supposed to be good for the soul, we will see). In the past I prepared July's article while in Guatemala, in the evenings when we as a team paused to reflect on the work of the day. Our evening reflections are always the same and always different. The same because the work we do from year to year is predictable, and different because the people we meet and so quickly fall in love with are as different as the beautiful dresses of the Mayan women, the *traje tipico* (traditional indigenous clothing).

This year we worked on the edge of the rainforest in a land I can only describe as breathtaking. Lush vegetation blanketing mountains and valleys, wild white orchids dotting the already spectacular landscape, and oh the people. They are sweet, humble, proud, hard-working, resilient, hopeful, and kind. That is why we fall in love so quickly with each family we meet.

This year we built homes for three families with present fathers still working hard to lift their families from subsistence living. It is typical for us to build homes for single mothers and grandmothers who find themselves in dire situations because the father has left.

That is emotionally hard for us every year. But this year in each of the homes we built, dads jumped in with joy to mix cement, carry supplies, direct the kids, and even pray when we dedicated the new houses. Even though Bethel Ministries triangulates ministry teams with local churches, we were all so happy to find the local churches also reaching out to assist the families we came to serve. As a pastor that makes me so optimistic.

This year I learned that the local mayors often send a municipal worker to help with the house builds. These young women and men show up and grab a shovel and

become part of the team without being asked. I thought it strange when people called them Mooneys – which is Ben and Emily's last name. I quickly learned that they were saying "munis" short for municipal employee, and the joke works the other way too – often when Ben and Emily introduce themselves people think they are municipal workers – language can be fun.

Today my heart is filled with deep gratitude for the privilege of serving in Guatemala but that is just the tip of the iceberg. This morning in worship was my first time seeing you all mask-free since early 2020. Our single service this morning was well attended, filled with smiles, songs, handshakes, and hugs. These were to my soul like a refreshing rain on dry parched land. Truly my heart is filled with gratitude for the privilege of being your pastor. Your generosity, kindness, and care for your church family, your community, and people around the world are remarkable!

We are back! Stronger than ever! Back to worship and back to serve! And while I am wrapping this tardy article up, just one more thing – Gentlemen --- we need you in the choir!

Have a wonderful week and I will see you, your whole face, in worship!

Blessings

Pastor Craig



Announcements

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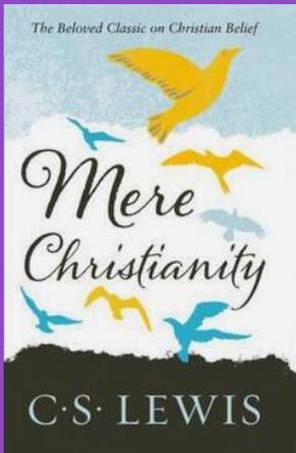
**JOIN US FOR OUR
ALL CHURCH
ANNUAL POTLUCK
4TH OF JULY
DINNER @ 6:00 PM
BINGO & GAMES @ 7:30 PM
FIREWORKS @ 9:00 PM**



Please bring a dish to share:

Feel free to bring Games & Fireworks to share!
And don't forget your lawn chairs or a blanket!

We also gladly accept any donations to help with the purchase of our fireworks. Kindly mark your donation "fireworks" and place them in the offering plate or drop it off by the church office.



C.S. Lewis and *Mere Christianity*

A Study for all adults. Led by Pastor Craig every other Sunday in July, including July 11th & 25th.

We meet in person at church and on Zoom.

Join us if you can!



RICHARD ROHR

MEDITATION UPDATE

**Please STAY TUNED in
our next newsletter for
upcoming discussion
dates and times!**



JULY 7TH - JULY 28TH

Our Summer Reading Program is going strong.
Keep up the good work and KEEP READING!



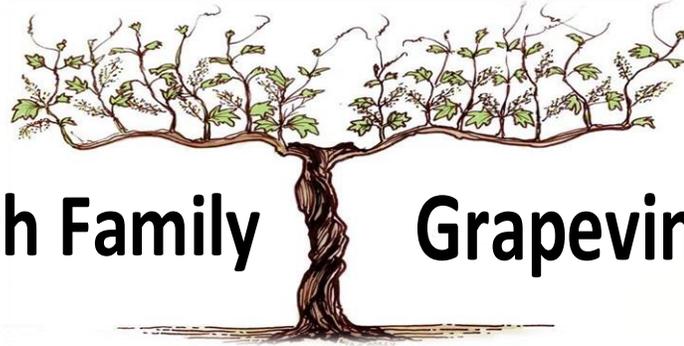
STUDENT MINISTRY

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

How does God use Gideon and Samson to help the Israelites.
Come to Voight Hall Sunday morning to see. Masks are required.

YOUTH MINISTRY

July through August Months
6:30 – 8:00 pm
Every Sunday Evenings
{contact Stephanie Anderson for Details}



Church Family Grapevine

Ongoing Prayer Needs Key Code:

P-Personal, F-Family, G-Grief, H-Health, S-Surgery, PG- Pregnancy, E-Employment, ST-Safe Travel, A-Adoption, SA-Salvation, M-Military



Brugger, Betty (H)
Brunton, Bob (H)
Joanne Craft & Family (S,G)
Drescher Family (G)
Gaffney, Rick (S,H)
Josh, Sheila (H)
Lansing, Del (H)
McClellan, Barbara (H)
Murdoff, Charlotte (H)
Peterson, Mark (H)
Reeves, Jean (H)
Runsten, Tricia (Darlene's Daughter) (H)
Sargis, Mabel (H)
Smith, Betty (H)
Springer, Susan (G,H)
Wiegman, Joyce (H)

Residents & Employees of Covenant Living &
Turlock Nursing Rehab
And Victims & Families of Miami



Birthdays

July 1 Wendy Warner
July 5 Polly Peterson
Kidwell
July 6 David Arakelian
July 7 Bob Phillips
July 13 Helen Drescher
July 14 Gabriel Njock
July 20 Ron Lipe
July 23 Glenda Jameson
July 24 Paul Anderson
July 24 Isaac Wright
July 30 Bran Stigile-Wright
July 31 Eleanor Huskins
July 31 Elaine Neely
July 31 Wilma Wright

Anniversaries

July 10 Craig & Marcy Wright
July 25 Wayne & Elizabeth



*If we have missed your birthday or anniversary,
please contact the church office.*



Need prayer?

First Presbyterian Church is a praying family.
Please let the church office know of your prayer
needs so we can pray for you.

God's work was done. Flight delays, muddy conditions, a small team, even Nicholas in a cast, did not stop God's love being shown.

We started our work week with a wheelchair distribution. Not having been in the area for two years, the need was great. There were twelve specialty chairs for young children with cerebral palsy, spina bifida, and one 9-year-old girl with brittle bone disease. Many of our regular chairs went to amputees. The most enthusiastic recipient was a 4 ½ year old Christian. He was raring to go. He could hardly contain his excitement to wheel his chair all by himself! He beamed with delight as everyone cheered him on.

Our houses were in San Cristobal, which is on the edge of the rain forest. It was gorgeous! It did, however, present some difficult working conditions. We have experienced muddy, slick, steep terrain before, but nothing like this. On our last build, we formed a human chain with our neighborhood helpers and passed the house materials down the hill piece by piece. The sky opened on us just as Ben finished painting the house and we finished the bathroom soaking wet, covered in mud, but oh so happy!

Zoila broke down weeping as we dedicated her house. Her family of seven was living in a 6' X 6' house. Their situation was so desperate, that a neighbor went to the larger neighboring community looking for aide. Over and over Zoila expressed her inability to pay and that she knew the house was a blessing from God. Zoila has to go down to the river to get water. We can provide her water access for \$140.

The love of Angel and Thelma's family was inspiring. We watched them interact with each other all day as Angel worked alongside us. Early afternoon Angel, beaming with pride, brought his son over to share a sweet treat he had made at school. We finished the house dedication with Angel singing a song of praise to God. Prior to selling everything they had to cover Thelma's cancer treatment, they had been saving money to open a tortilla business in the city square. We would like to provide the startup cost of \$300 to help them in supporting their family.

A common thread with all three houses was the families' prayer that God would continue to give us strength and good health, so we could bless additional families in need.

We met Clara during a home visit (food distribution). She lost her home and belongings in the hurricane. Her church family stepped in and built her a new house! We would like to bless her further with a bed (\$220) and stove (\$300). She is a motivated single mom with a dream to support her family by renting tables and chairs. We can get her started by providing the tables and chairs for \$360.

Another home visit introduced us to Carmen and Vilma, two young sisters who dream of becoming nurses. Due to additional school costs upon entering seventh grade, this will be Carmen's last year. A year younger, Vilma has one year left. We can make their dreams a reality with monthly school sponsorships (\$50/month for Carmen and \$25/month for Vilma).

One thing is clear, education is the tool to helping these beautiful children break through the cycle of poverty. Many years ago, Bethel Ministries International began opening sponsorships for schooling. It was not long before they realized it was not enough. While the schooling was paid for, the children had no one at home to assist them with their homework. Bethel opened their first tutoring center free of charge for all the neighborhood children eleven years ago. They now have five centers ranging from 15 to 60 children. The centers have been supported through a grant. Sadly, the grant is no longer available. We can provide a tutoring center for \$250 per month.

Everyone we met thanks God for you and prays for His continued blessing on you. Thank you for being His hands and feet!

Guatemala 2021 Needs



Sisters, Carmen (12 yrs) and Vilma (11 yrs), want to become nurses. However, the cost is too great.

Need: Monthly sponsors for school.
Carmen \$50/mo.
Vilma \$25/mo.



Thelma and Angel sold everything they had to pay for her cancer treatment. They give praise to God, that she is now well. They had been in the process of saving money to open a tortilla business in the center square and used that money as well.

Need: Start up business cost is \$300.



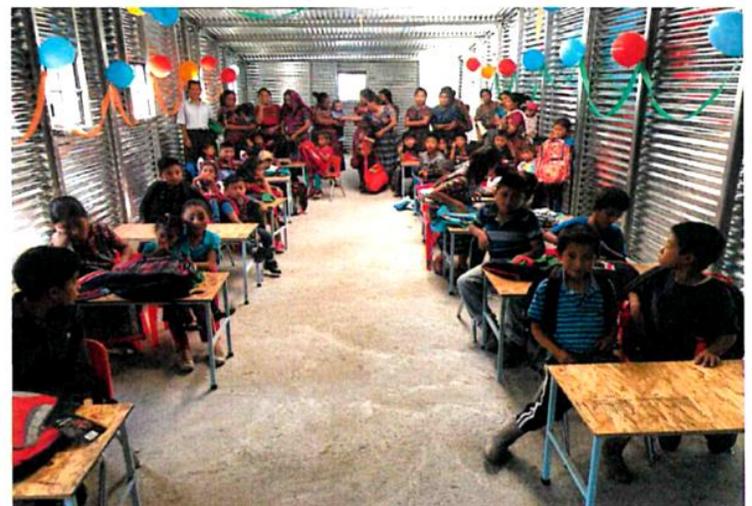
Clara lost her home and possessions in the hurricanes. Her church family stepped in and built her a new home! Clara wants to open a business renting tables and chairs.

Need: stove \$300, bed \$220, business start up \$360



Zoila broke down weeping as we dedicated her house. She recognizes it as a blessing from God, as she would never have been able to provide a home for her family. She asks for God to give us strength and good health so we can continue blessing others.

Need: Water Rights \$140



Years ago, Bethel Ministries International realized that children were failing school, because their illiterate parents were unable to help them. Knowing that breaking the cycle of poverty depends on education, they opened five tutoring centers ranging in 15 to 60 students. Due to unforeseen circumstances the sponsor for the centers is no longer able to support them.

Need: tutoring center sponsor \$250/month

PRESBTERIAN WOMEN MINISTRY

In past summers PW has not met together, but this summer it feels important to reconnect. We will meet the third Tuesday of July and August, at 9:30 a.m. in Voight Hall, with a Zoom option for those who cannot make it in person. The July meeting will likely look at what we want to prioritize for the coming year in terms of mission, monthly birthday parties at Main West, and connecting with other PW groups in our new expanded presbytery, as well as our monthly Bible study. August will be an introduction to the new Bible study, which most of us should have received by then. Both meetings will give us an opportunity to find out where we've all been and how we've come out the other side of the COVID-19 challenge. Please come, and encourage others who might be interested to join us and check out the new book. It's about the women in Jesus' genealogy and it looks very interesting.

Those of you, who have not already ordered the P.W./*Horizons* Bible Study combination need to order your own copy of the 2021-2022 Bible Study, What My Grandmother Taught Me Learning from the Women in Matthew's Genealogy of Jesus by Merryl Blair. This Bible study provides a unique glimpse into the lives of the women intimately connected with Jesus and his life and ministry. We will study Tamar, Rahab, Ruth, Bathsheba, and Mary. You may order the Bible study online at www.presbyterianwomen.org/shop or call (800) 533-4371, Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. EST. The Bible study will be mailed directly to your home. You will need to order the Bible study in July, and expect to receive your copy of the study in August. The study will begin in September. Cost of the Bible study is \$10.00 plus shipping. *For any questions or more information, please contact Candace Peterson.*

♪♪ Notes From the Music Room ♪♪

Rejoice! Give thanks! And Sing!

And YES! At last we can SING! And we can GATHER!
And greet one another and even HUG!
REJOICE!

And from the Music Room rehearsals are HAPPENING!
Though we are missing a few of our folk....
And we would be DELIGHTED to have you back!

The Choir has been rehearsing for 2 months and now we are singing in worship! Several of our Bell ringers have been playing solos and duets on Bell Trees or with other instruments (violins and pianos). But now we are planning for our Bell Choir to join us once again SOON in worship!

There is still room for new people to join us in both the choir and the bells! Choir rehearsals are Wednesdays at 4 pm in the sanctuary, and bell rehearsal times will be determined soon.

We welcome those who have never been part of a choir or bell group before,
as well as those who have much experience!

*With all my heart I praise you Lord!
In the presence of angels, I sing of your praises.*

Psalm 138.1

Rev. Wendy Warner
Director of Music



DEACONS TEAM MINISTRY

It was a pleasure for Deacons who are able to greet those attending the June 20th single church service. We look forward to seeing more and more of you back at church when you're able to attend.

This past month has been quite busy for Deacons. We have provided meals for a number of people, some recovering from surgery and others grieving the loss of dear family members. Over the past year, the pandemic did change our method of providing meals for families after memorial services honoring their loved ones. Just this month, we've moved from bringing meals to the family's home after a service to providing a meal in Voight Hall for those attending a service in our sanctuary. As we return to some of our more "normal" tasks, we're evaluating how to improve upon our current way of doing things.



In addition to serving our flock members, we do simply like to get to know you better by communicating in a variety of ways, including sending cards. We are still accepting photos of artwork you've done so that we can produce our own notecards rather than purchase notecards to send. Please encourage the artistic people in our congregation to send in photos of their work to darlenerunsten@sbcglobal.net or posluch@att.net. Deacons will not meet in July. Our next meeting will be on August 16th, and we are considering the possibility of holding a hybrid meeting with some participating via Zoom and others in person.

Blessings, Darlene Runsten and Lynn Posluch, Deacon Co-Moderators

FINANCE UPDATE

Income & Expense Year to Date Ending May 31, 2021

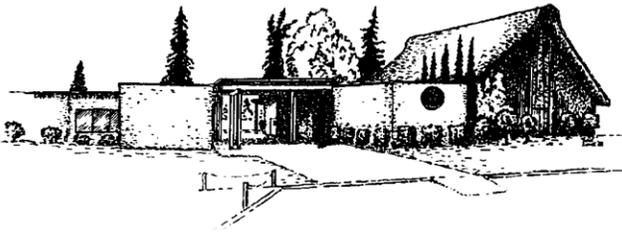
YTD Income:	<u>2021</u>	<u>2020</u>
Contributions	\$102,127*	\$118,204*
Other Income	\$ 18,623	\$ 22,366
Interest	\$ 119	\$ 337
Total Income	\$120,869*	\$140,907
YTD Total Expenses	\$140,689	\$145,594
Income/Expense Difference:		
	(\$19,820)	(\$ 4,786)

Cash Assets:		
Unrestricted	\$136,091**	
Restricted	\$ 94,810	
Total Assets	\$230,901	



* 2021 contributions are approximately **\$16,000 lower** compared to this time last year. Prayerfully consider increasing your pledge, and if you not done so yet make that commitment to support the growth of our ministries at First Presbyterian Church of Turlock.

**Operating reserves of \$100,083 is included in unrestricted assets.



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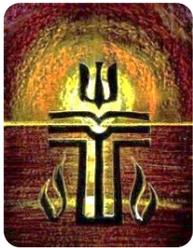
Website: www.fpturlock.com

Facebook:

www.facebook.com/firstpresbyterianchurch



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Big enough to meet your needs...Small enough to know your name.

Church Staff
Pastor: Rev. Dr. Craig Wright
Parish Associate: Rev. Wendy Warner
Children Ministry Director: Marcy Wright
Youth Ministry Director: Stephanie Anderson
Tutoring Ministry Director: Meredith Lawrence
Director of Music: Rev. Wendy Warner
Administrative Assistant: Polet Yonan
Bookkeeper: Russell Limprecht
Accompanist: Dr. Wayne Kidwell
Organist: Barbara Bort
Child Care: Ester Salgado

ELECTED DEACONS AND SESSION OFFICERS		
<u>Elders</u> <u>Class of 2021</u> Marilyn Hoobyar Priscilla Peters Pat Wallace Michael Yonan	<u>Elders</u> <u>Class of 2022</u> Robby Avilla Dan Hardesty Joey Reyes Adria Sanders	<u>Elders</u> <u>Class of 2023</u> Michael Betts Donna Harrison Candace Peterson John Sims
<u>Deacons</u> <u>Class of 2021</u> Susan England Valerie Keesey Lynn Posluch Darlene Runsten Cyndi Sims	<u>Deacons</u> <u>Class of 2022</u> Diane Arakelian Lynette Betts Sheila Josh Mary Peterson	<u>Deacons</u> <u>Class of 2023</u> Alison Aldax Niki Higdon Marlena Mizicko Jana Purdy Arabella Solhkhah