



FPC Press



SINCE 1909

THE NEWSLETTER OF FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Turlock, California

September 2020

Published Monthly



Rev. Dr. Craig J. Wright

A Message From Our Pastor's Heart

1 Thessalonians 5:11

*"Therefore encourage one another and build each other up,
just as in fact you are doing."*

September Greetings Church Family,

I did it again, I let the most hallowed day in August just zip right past me without even a second thought. Even though for most of you August 15th is no big deal, we should certainly make it so. Did you know August 15th is on the global church calendar and it is called "Assumption Day?" Catch that – a day set aside for

making assumptions. That is much better than national pink frosted donut day, right Charlie? We all make a lot of assumptions about tons of different things, and we cannot help it. But to have a day set aside for such practice, well that is just wonderful. Okay, enough word play. 'Assumption day' is actually that day in the Roman Catholic church calendar when Mary the mother of Jesus ascended up into the heavens just like her son did. So, it is not the day to make assumptions about anything, rather it is a day set aside in some churches to consider how the Virgin Mary traveled to heaven. As a protestant I have not spent much time considering how Mary made it to heaven. My *assumption* was that she made it there the way everyone else has – through death. This doctrine is just one of many classic divides in the Catholic/Protestant conversation since the Reformation. That being said, I am taking the idea of assumption day a different direction. There are at least two ways we use the word assume. First, we use it as a definition for things we take for granted. Second, we use it to mean taking hold of something and 'assuming' the responsibility for it. In the life of the church both definitions can be in play at any given time. Often the way a congregation does a certain thing is "assumed" to be the right way, or the way it is supposed to be done, the way Jesus did it. Certainly, things that are handed down from generation to generation are often *assumed* to be so. Many of you have heard the illustration of a young woman who cut the ends off the ham and set them aside before she baked it. Why did she do it? Because her mother did it. Why did her mother do it? Because her mother did it. And why did the grandmother cut the ends off of the ham, because her pan was too short to accommodate the length of the ham. It is important in life to occasionally revisit the assumptions about things we practice.



This time away from worship together during the corona-virus pandemic has certainly given us all a chance to revisit the things we assume to be necessary and right. So many of the things we have taken for granted have been by necessity suspended for a season. I pray when we gather again, we will take with us the lessons learned and the things held most dear back with us and let the "assumed" stuff fizzle away. I suspect the biggest lesson we will have learned is that we simply NEED to be with people. Perhaps that is why the author of the epistle to the Hebrews said, "do not forsake gathering together." Oh, how I hope old assumptions give way to new and vibrant realizations about our need to be with each other in person, in worship when this pandemic has run out of steam.

The second definition of assume is about picking up the responsibility for something. I have been impressed over the years by those of you who do not "assume" someone else will do what needs to be done. Rather so many of you have assumed responsibility for the tasks of the church. What a blessing that is to our community and our community of faith. Everything we do as a church is truly a function of your volunteering to serve Christ by serving others. And in this time of separation, I want to applaud those of you who pick up the phone, send a text, an email, or a card to a brother or sister in Christ. Of all the things assumed about church life in the past, we now know first-hand that staying in personal contact with one another is the most important thing. I want to applaud the spirit of "assumption" in this church, not the one where Mary is brought up to heaven, rather the one where heaven comes to us because you rise to the task of the moment and use your spiritual gifts in the life of this church. Thanks for all you do, you know who you are. Stay connected! You may rightly assume that you are appreciated!

Blessings,

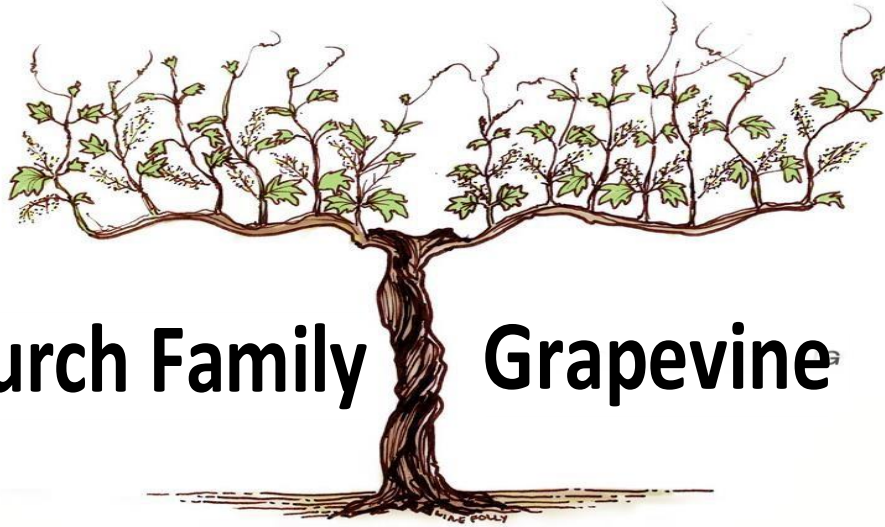
Pastor Craig

PRESBYTERIAN DISASTER ASSISTANCE; California Wildfires

PDA is working with Santa Barbara Presbytery, Sacramento Presbytery and the Presbytery of the Pacific to respond to the recent wildfires in California. PDA has deployed National Response Team members to the Presbytery of the Pacific to be embedded into the American Red Cross shelters in Pacific Palisades and San Fernando Valley, at the ARC's request, as Disaster Spiritual Care Providers. Grants are being disbursed and more deployments are forthcoming.

There are three different ways to give. The best response is **Prayer!** Pray that through the response of the faith community those offering assistance will be reminded of the hope that is found in Christ. The second is **Share!** Prayerfully share your financial blessings to help the disaster survivors as well as all the heroes at the front line. You may make your donations payable to **Disaster Relief-U.S. Wildfires (DR000165)** and mail it to: Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), P.O. Box 643700 Pittsburgh, PA 15264-3700. The Third way to give is to **ACT!** Even though we cannot physically be present to help, we can like the **FACEBOOK** page and share the updates and news with others to support this great ministry.





Church Family Grapevine

Ongoing Prayer Needs Key Code:

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

Beck, Veronika (H)
Brugger, Betty (H)
Bob Brunton (H)
Castillo, Aislyn (P)
Drescher, Helen (H)
Haug, Delores (H)
Lansing, Del (H)
Lipe, Ron (H)
Peterson, Mark (H)
Purdy Family (P)
Reeves, Jean (H)

Rubalcava & Martinez Family (P)
Runsten, Tricia (Darlene's Daughter) (H)
Sargis, Mabel (H)
Smith, Betty (H)
Solhkhah, Arbella (H)

**Residents & Employees of Covenant
Living & Turlock Nursing Rehab**



Birthdays

Sept 1	Maggie Hennes
Sept 3	Saralee Ulrich
Sept 5	Bob Kisling
Sept 17	Gail Ballas
Sept 19	Marcy Wright
Sept 20	Lauren Reid
Sept 22	Brandon Purdy
Sept 25	Dwight Hooper
Sept 26	Nancy Seaver
Sept 26	Daniel Gordon
Sept 27	Lynn Posluch
Sept 28	Jayne Smith
Sept 30	Candace Peterson

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



Anniversaries

Sept 4	Ken & Pat Weisel
Sept 21	Dale & Elaine Neely

Announcements

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We Look Forward to Welcoming Back Our Tutors and Students!

Our program will resume in an online format as we work to support our students while they are engaged in distance learning.

SAVE THE DATE!

Annual Vito's Drive Through Dinner Fundraiser will be on Tuesday, Oct 6th.

Tickets will be available for sale beginning September 14th.

**VIRTUAL
FELLOWSHIP**
SUNDAYS
AFTER WORSHIP

JOIN US ON ZOOM!

See You @ 11:00 am by Clicking on the
Zoom Link Provided on our website:
fpturlock.com

Presbyterian Women Bible Study

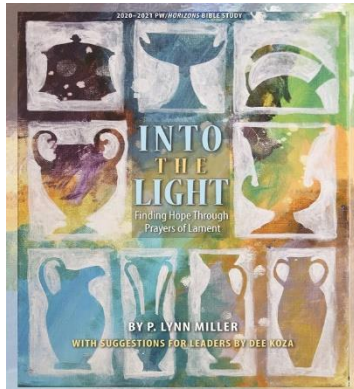
YES! WE ARE BACK!

Our Bible Study group session will resume on **Wednesday, September 16th at 3:00 pm** through Zoom and will continue every third Wednesday of each month.

Our study this year is on the book, Into the Light: Finding Hope Through Prayers of Lament by P. Lynn Miller. The first lesson's message which is entitled, "The Heart of Lament" wraps the idea that the perceived absence of God is at the heart of lament.

All women of the church are invited to attend!

Please contact Vivien Huntley for more information.



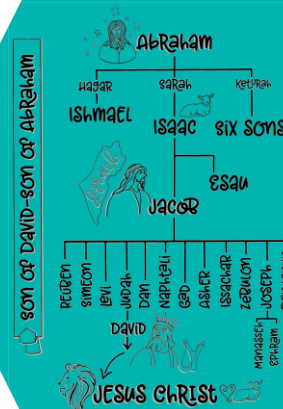
In recent months, Adult Ministries has focused on issues of structural racism in our society. Our work is far from done, but as we move into Fall's election cycle, we're planning a slight shift to a more general topic using a book to form the basis for group discussions—something like we did a year ago with Ben Sass's *Them*. We're on the verge of identifying what we hope will be a suitable book, but it doesn't look like we're going to be ready in time to meet the newsletter deadline. So please stay tuned...and we hope to inform you of our selection shortly.



CHILDREN MINISTRY



We will see what it is like to create, be in charge of, and involved with our movie about the life of Abraham and his descendants, as we learn the importance of God's Sovereignty (creator/ruler) and Providence (involved).



Sundays & Wednesdays

We Are Continuing With Abraham's Descendants.

Meet Jacob's Sons and See How God is Involved in Their Lives.



A **HUGE** Congratulations to **Ryan & Steve Njock** and **Caleb Staley** for completing all the work for 2020!

Now it is time to start Hide It In Your Heart for 2021!
You have an entire year to memorize twelve passages of Scripture.

YOUTH MINISTRY

Parking Lot Paint Night

(Socially Distanced)

Sunday, September 13th

6:30-7:30pm.

Contact Stephanie Anderson for details

PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN MINISTRY

Presbyterian Women's Annual Fund, the Mission Pledge, is the financial lifeblood for PW. Gifts make possible nearly every program and ministry of Presbyterian Women at all levels of the organization – guest speakers at PW Presbytery and Synod-level gatherings, publishing Horizons magazine and our Bible Study booklet, the Triennial Gatherings (Churchwide Gathering of PW), the Churchwide Coordinating Team, staff, the Global Exchange, the U.S.A. Mission Experience, PC(USA) World Mission, and the Presbyterian Ministry at the United Nations.

With Zoom meetings we are no longer able to pass the recipe box to collect money designated for this fund, for memorials, for per capita to continue our connection to the Presbytery and Synod, for Women's Retreat scholarships, for disasters, or for local church projects. Please consider sending your donations to our PW Treasurer, Elaine Neely. Checks should be made out to "Presbyterian Women" with the purpose of the gift noted on the Memo line. Thanks to those who have continued their financial support through the unexpected COVID19 experience. *Contact person – Vivien Huntley*



Notes from the Music Room



In these difficult times I look to the Psalms for comfort, reassurance, and for a kick-start to my prayer times. Today was not an easy day and so I looked to an old familiar one – Psalm 121, and I will share it with you from The Message, a contemporary translation by Eugene Peterson.

*I look up to the mountains, does my strength come
from the mountains?*

*No, my strength comes from God, who made heaven,
and earth, and mountains.*

*God won't let you stumble; your Guardian God
won't fall asleep.*

*Not on your life! Israel's Guardian will never doze
or sleep.*

*God's your Guardian, right at your side to
protect you ...*

*Shielding you from sunstroke, sheltering you from
moon stroke.*

*God guards you from every evil, God guards
your very life.*

*God guards you when you leave and when you return,
guards you now and always.*

One of the advantages of having spent my life in church choirs is that I have learned much of scripture from singing beautiful anthems!

These verses have been set to music by several great composers, so I have learned them well! And I am thankful for the comfort they bring me on days like this when the radiance of the sun is blocked by the

smoke-filled air which surrounds us from wildfires which plague our state! This in addition to a pandemic which keeps us isolated from friends and family and the heat of the summer which makes us weary.

But in the face of all that, God will not let us stumble!!! God is not asleep – keeping a watchful eye on each one of us! Protecting us! Guarding us now and FOREVER!!! WOW!

That does not mean that God can keep every mishap from coming our way – but it DOES mean that God will be with us and walk with us through ALL THINGS.

So tonight, as with all nights, let us pray for those who need to know God's love and comfort and care the most. And for these days for Firefighters, and workers serving in the heat, and medical personnel tending those battling the Covid-19 virus.

And the choir sings:

The Lord bless you and keep you.

*The Lord lift up His countenance upon you and give
you peace.*

*The Lord make His face to shine upon you and be
gracious unto you!*

Amen!

Rev. Wendy Warner
Director of Music

Session & Finance Ministry

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FPC SESSION



Session last met on August 17, 2020 utilizing the Zoom online meeting platform.

Session approved a Memorial Funds Committee which will be a sub-committee of the Finance Committee. The 2019 Financial Review was completed on August 12, 2020. Final report is being finalized for Session approval at a future meeting.

Please know that you are all in our prayers. We miss face-to-face worship. I encourage you to attend Zoom Fellowship/Worship Part 2 on Sunday mornings at 11 am (Go to www.fpcTurlock.com for the link). You never know who will show up and from where. Tom and Mary Jo Mastin from Ohio, Dick Freeman from Colorado, and Lauren Wallace Reid from Northern Ireland have joined us via Zoom. Covenant Living is also joining us on their in-house TV channel.

In service,

Pat Wallace

Clerk of Session

Deacons are adapting to a new way of communicating with a return to monthly meetings via Zoom.

At our last meeting, it was decided that the Birthday Box project for children at Turlock Gospel Mission will be put on hold during the pandemic until it is deemed safe to proceed.

Our focus at this time will continue to be reaching out to those on our flock lists. We've found that some folks prefer a quick text, an email or a card.

Others enjoy a good chat on the phone. We are exploring a number of ways to keep in touch with you in the coming months. We have some creative ideas that have already been shared at our last meeting.

As always, please don't hesitate to contact us for any needs or concerns you may have and we will continue to reach out to you, dear church family!

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



FOR IT IS IN GIVING THAT WE RECEIVE

Giving to First Presbyterian Church of Turlock has been getting easier and more flexible! Not only can you mail or drop off your cash/check, but you can also give online thru the church website by clicking the "Online Giving" tab and follow the easy instructions. You can also download the **QR Reader App** on your phone and simply by clicking on the image to the right, you can give to the various FPC ministries.

We thank you all for your continued support!



FINANCE UPDATE

Income & Expense Year to Date
Ending July 31, 2020

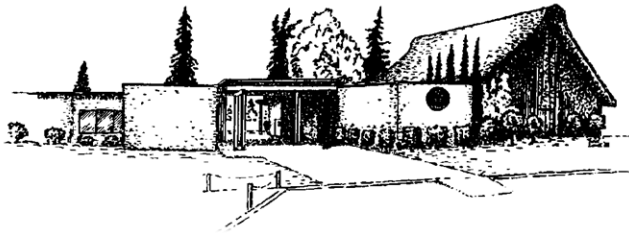
YTD Income:

Contributions	\$160,180.28
Other Income	\$ 28,436.29
Interest	\$ 230.36
Investments Realized Gain	\$ 906.51
Total Income	\$189,753.44

YTD Total Expenses	\$210,183.84
Income / Expense Difference	(\$ 20,430.40)

Cash Assets:

Unrestricted	\$110,558.47
Restricted	\$ 64,725.47
Total Assets	\$175,283.94



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First Presbyterian Church
2619 N. Berkeley Avenue
Turlock, CA 95382

Phone # (209) 632-2324

E-mail: fpcturlock@att.net

Website: www.fpturlock.com

Facebook:

www.facebook.com/firstpresbyterianchurch



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

Elders

Class of 2020

Glenda Jameson
Candace Peterson
John Sims
Martin Purdy

Elders

Class of 2021

Marilyn Hoobyar
Priscilla Peters
Pat Wallace
Michael Yonan

Elders

Class of 2022

Robby Avilla
Dan Hardesty
Joey Reyes
Adria Sanders

Deacons

Class of 2020

Diane Arakelian
Bill Bishop
Vivian Huntley
Kathy Mendonca

Deacons

Class of 2021

Susan England
Valerie Keeseey
Lynn Posluch
Darlene Runsten
Cyndi Sims

Deacons

Class of 2022

Lynnai Badal
Lynette Betts
Sheila Josh
Mary Peterson
Rebecca Staley

