

FIRST PRESS

THE NEWSLETTER OF FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF UPLAND



GETTING BEYOND IT ALL

Life is not a vicarious experience; we all must take on the adventure of our own lives. But just when we feel we've got the ship on a steady course, the waves knock us sideways and we have to readjust all the sails and ballast to right ourselves. And when all is steady again, we find ourselves hit by waves from the other side and scramble to restore tranquility. In Matthew 16:24, Jesus says to his disciples, "If any of you wants to be my follower, you must give up your own way, take up your cross, and follow me." Sometimes, that cross is light and barely noticeable; other times, it feels like we're shouldering an 18-wheeler. But that's our walk with Jesus—making our way together through thick and thin, ever correcting our course as we grow in Christ and make him known.

In 2023, the Investigative Committee of Riverside Presbytery thoroughly examined allegations made against me by members and non-members of First Pres. Although multiple allegations were made, I firmly believe that they are all defensible and open to dispute. However, going through a trial would have consumed our entire 2024 with the

(continued on page 2)

PASTOR NOEL ANDERSON



stress of legal justifications and formal defenses. This would have burdened the entire First Pres congregation and hindered my ministry due to extensive preparations and presentations. A trial would have also prolonged the ugliness for another year. None of us would have benefited from that.

Instead, the presbytery and I have come to a positive agreement called the “Settlement Agreement” to avoid a trial and ensure the best outcome for everyone involved. First Pres Upland’s Session has graciously agreed to provide me with the equivalent of my paid sabbatical during this period. This financial support matches what I would have received if I had continued my ministry for those 15 weeks. The Session has used funds initially allocated for my sabbatical and Study Leave to prevent any financial burden on the congregation. Consequently, the Session is relieved of the obligation to grant me a sabbatical and two weeks of Study Leave from my accrued time.

My last Sunday before temporarily stepping away will be Pentecost on May 19. I will return to the office on September 3 with the blessing of the presbytery, who will then conclude the temporary exclusion.

I have also agreed to take a seminary course on “Foundations of Trauma Ministry” at Fuller Theological Seminary and avail myself of counseling over the summer. I am genuinely looking forward to both.

The way this situation has been resolved is a testament to the leadership of our newly

installed Presbytery Executive, Frances Lin. Thanks to her guidance, I believe we have been spared further conflict to endure.

During my absence, Frances Lin will act as the Moderator of the summer Session meetings. Pastoral care responsibilities will be handled by the Session and the Deacons, providing them with a true taste of ministry. The Session will manage pulpit supply, which will include Matt Shool and outside pulpit supply pastors on certain Sundays, especially Communion Sundays.

Please take time to read the letter from Riverside Presbytery elsewhere in this issue. And if you have any questions before May 19, I will do my best to answer them. For all other questions, please reach out to the Staff or Session.

Our life together is God’s provision for our growth as disciples. We bear crosses, but we never bear them alone. Their heaviness only builds our muscle and determination at every step. Our trust is in our loving Lord, who means to make us—day by day—a tiny bit more like Christ. In the end, we will find that the pains and struggles all contributed to fulfilling God’s will for us, as individuals and as a congregation. Let us be agreed from here on to advance our mission in the best form, trusting in God to continually shape us after Christ, and may we collectively seek to help one another in arriving at God’s salvation—His holy Shalom—albeit one small step at a time. †



Presbytery of Riverside

Healthy Pastors and Congregations
Committee



PO Box 1165, Redlands, CA 92373

April 5, 2024

TO: The Session of First Presbyterian Church of Upland

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

We are reaching out on behalf of the Healthy Pastor and Congregation Committee. It is with great sincerity that we express our deep regret over the unsuccessful attempts to facilitate mutual understanding between both parties in response to the conflict at First Presbyterian Church Upland, which was first brought to the attention of the Presbytery in June 2022. Unfortunately, the outcome has been less than favorable for both the Church and the Presbytery. Our understanding at HPCC is that there were missed opportunities to prioritize and foster improved communication with the entire Session.

After reflecting on some recent issues, HPCC commits to handling similar situations differently in the future.

1. For any conflict in a church involving a congregation member who is not a member of the session, the recommendation will be to refer the person back to the session of the church. HPCC will notify the session and all HPCC members about the potential conflict. The committee will decide together on a strategy to assist the church. While HPCC may appoint a sub-group to work with the church, the sub-group will report in detail on the actions taken at each HPCC meeting until the issues are resolved.
2. HPCC will prioritize reaching a consensus with the session before taking any action for the life of the church which involves HPCC taking an active leadership role in the action with the congregation. If an action is deemed necessary, there will be a thorough and specific plan developed. Once a plan is developed, the action would be scheduled and communicated through the Pastor and Session Clerk to the congregation. HPCC should expect that without such consensus, any action, regardless of its format, is likely to be contentious, requiring other options to be explored.
3. HPCC recognizes the pressing need to proactively nurture ongoing relationships between the Presbytery, congregations, and pastors through liaisons and the Presbytery Leader. This will go a long way in building trust and facilitating better working relationships to address future problems together.
4. HPCC is in the process of developing a handbook that will outline specific processes to follow in various circumstances. This handbook will establish a general guideline for everyone to follow the same process. The final version of the handbook is scheduled to be ready for adoption at the Presbytery Assembly Meeting in June.

Brothers and sisters, we are called by God to be the Church of Jesus Christ, a sign in the world today of the new life that God intends for all. In our life together, we are to display the new reality that sin is forgiven, reconciliation accomplished, and the dividing wall of hostility torn down. It is our sincere hope that First Presbyterian Church Upland will be willing to work on furthering the peace, unity, and purity of the church together with Riverside Presbytery.

In Christ,
Ann Laudermilk and Cheryl Raine
Co-Chairs HPCC, on behalf of HPCC
Presbytery of Riverside

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY WITH ERIKA



How to Build Empathy in My Elementary Schooler

Written by Stephanie Thomas, full article can be found at www.parentcue.com

Sit through one dinner with your in-laws and a kid who declares, while displaying the evidence, “This is gross!” and you’ll find yourself desperate to teach a little empathy. Of course, this is about so much more than table manners.

While our kids likely mean no harm, people of all ages have feelings. And we want our kids to respect and honor those feelings. After all, empathy informs how our kids interact with the world at large—especially as they grow.

Thankfully, we can begin to plant the seeds of empathy now that will serve our kids and others for a lifetime.

Realistic Expectations for Empathetic Elementary-Schoolers

You live with the kid, so yeah, you know what they’re like. Still, it might be helpful to set a few realistic expectations about this age group.

As a child moves from kindergarten to fifth grade, they also moves through a transition of sorts when it comes to how they relate to themselves and others. It might look something like this:

- In kindergarten and first grade, they crave undivided attention and all eyes on them
- In second and third grade, they care about fairness (primarily for themselves)
- In fourth and fifth grade, they loves competing with others to win at any game

With these developmental truths in mind, take comfort the next time your eight-year-old sneaks a cookie off their little brother’s plate, responding to his cries with, “But I’m older and I need more food!”

This behavior is to be expected. Of course, it doesn’t have to be accepted.

When It Comes to Empathy, There’s Hope for Your Kids and Mine

While our elementary-aged kids are mostly focused on themselves, they’re also growing in ways that make them willing and able to begin understanding the emotions of others.

Observe your kids in the 5-10 year-old range and see if you notice any of the following:

- A readiness to learn and grow
- A desire to help and please others
- A recognition of the fact that people, and circumstances, are unique
- A yearning for independence
- A discerning mind that asks challenging questions
- A heart that longs for relationship with others

Seeds You Can Plant to Grow Empathy in Your Kids

Grab a shovel and a watering can, if you will, and let's get to work.

1. Offer opportunities to work and give. It's easy for kids to assume that toys and clothes magically appear at just the right moment and that a clean home stays that way all by itself. Chores allow kids to see that hard work produces these outcomes—a perspective that matters as they grow.

And earning their own money through hard work enables kids to give generously, which helps them to see and understand the needs of others. Also, consider allowing your child to speak into who and where your family gives.

2. Help your child name and vocalize feelings. Before kids can recognize and understand the emotions of others, they first need to name and vocalize their own.

3. Ask questions to inspire curiosity about others. Because we're humans, we can tend to be a little too focused on ourselves—and first-graders all the more so. Asking questions about others helps our kids lift their gaze up and out.

You might ask questions that inspire curiosity about others in the following settings:

- When spotting other kids and adults in various forms of work, rest, and play, ask, "I wonder what she feels like right now?" Or, "Can you imagine what it might be like to do that?"
- When a friend, sibling, or loved one shows obvious signs of sadness or pain, ask, "What do you think we could do that might make them feel better?"

4. Take advantage of teachable moments. These are the times we help our kids to take what they're learning and apply those lessons in a real-world setting. Once you start looking, you'll spot teachable moments all around!

In our home, taking advantage of teachable moments looks like helping my seven-year-old to see that just like it can sometimes be hard to be the oldest child in a family, it's also challenging at times to be the youngest. When these moments present themselves, I point them out with grace and love.

In our world, taking advantage of teachable moments looks like helping my kids to see that we possess a certain level of privilege that others do not. So I work to not only teach them about the plight of others, but also to discuss together what we can do with our privilege to help those in need.

My hope is that as our kids grow—both yours and mine—we'll raise a generation of men and women dedicated toward understanding one another and taking actions that reflect empathy.

GATHER WITH SUE FRAZEE

The Annual FPCU Chili Cookoff took place on Saturday, April 13th. We were entertained by a live country rock band and a Patsy Cline style singer. The chili contestants all outdid themselves. We stuffed ourselves with scrumptious chili, side dishes and desserts. Judging the Chilis was the hardest, but most fun, part of it.

The winners were:

1st Place - ME Fuzzard

2nd Place - Judy Carpenter

3rd Place - Margaret and Pat Pilcher



Party-of-8 continues to meet. This is a busy time of the year, but come summer won't it be nice to spend some leisurely time getting to know 8 church friends better? Put your name on the list!

L.I.F.T. Met on April 12th. To be engaged by storyteller, Adrien Lowery. Once again she entertained us with tales from faraway places. What a lovely way to spend an afternoon!


On Sunday May 5th we will have a Cinco de Mayo potluck in Hart Hall after service. If you like to cook and have a favorite Mexican dish you would like to share sign up to bring it to the Fiesta!



Pomona Valley
 **Habitat for Humanity**[®]
 Faith into Action Committee

NATIONAL DAY OF PRAYER
 Thursday, May 2, 2024



National Day of Prayer
 Prayers over Easy
 Breakfast 

Join us to pray for our Nation,
 leaders, Habitat's mission and
 for each other.

Thursday, May 2, 2024

7:30 am to 9:00 am
 at

First Presbyterian Church of Upland
 869 North Euclid Avenue
 Upland, CA 91786

RSVP by Calling **909-596-7098**
 or by emailing info@habitatpv.org

Donations for Breakfast Accepted.

April Giving	
Needed	\$ 40,000
Pledged Income.....	\$ 22,519
Unpledged Income.....	\$ 3,314
Total.....	\$ 25,833
Deficit.....	\$ 14,167

TRUSTEES WITH ROY AMES

Service to God

In our last Trustees meeting, two gentlemen came representing a company that specializes in insuring churches. They made us aware of additional coverages that we may want to consider. Gary, who leads our meetings as the President of the Trustees, said that he would pass the information to Herb Jointer. Herb was unable to be there that night because of family concerns. However, on the present team of Trustees he has been the one who has been working most closely with our insurers over the past few years.

Like Session meetings, Trustees meetings also have an agenda that is written out before the meeting. However, we always see new items added as the spirit has moved those present. So although it was not on the agenda, Sue Frazee felt moved to share some of the beautiful examples of service she had seen by members of our church. Others chimed in as well, and to me this was the most inspiring part of our meeting, I wanted to share a few of these with you:

Georgia Decker - cooking for the kids programs

Jeff Jelinek - painting the steps outside sanctuary

Doug Hunt - changing air filters

Matt Shool - singing and solving computer problems

Kim Righetti - helping in the kitchen (even with a broken foot!)

Orlando Antolin - cleaning and sprucing up our garden and waterfall area.

We know this list is small compared to the full list that God has. He has not made every act of service that he sees known to everyone, but reserves many things for his eyes only. In fact, many members prefer to remain on that hidden list only. But when we see the things we do, we know a little of how our God feels in seeing the hearts of our members who support his church in so many ways.

Get a lift from LIFT

(Ladies in Fellowship Together)



*Living Life with
Resilience
Now a Fine Arts
Photographer, Sue Champe
Shares Her Story about
Overcoming
Life's Challenges*

*Friday, May 10,
11am -1 pm, Hart Hall*

Doors open 10:45 – Program starts promptly at 11:00

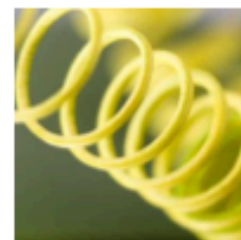
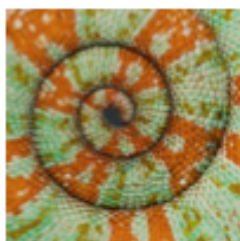
The helix shape (or spiral) is a symbol of resilience. It is found throughout nature. When a plant root comes across a barrier during its growth, it summons even more energy, flexibility, and work to create a helix. When faced with a challenge, the root finds a way by twisting and turning into a tightly woven formation of the helix, thereby conquering its former challenge and creating beauty and stability.

In the same way, resilience helps us overcome life's challenges and often brings new blessings and opportunities, according to Sue Champe, who has faced her own challenges and prospered through adversity. Resilience is needed to move forward in life and is something we can develop and learn, she says. She joins us Friday, May 10, at our next LIFT to share her story and the lessons she has learned.

Following a short time of worship and a devotion, Sue not only will encourage us but treat us to a showing of her latest endeavors in fine arts photography. Afterward we will fellowship over our brown bag lunches.

**For more information, contact Carol Diess,
626-482-8862, or sbbmom@aol.com**

**Thank you for your
generous donations
to support LIFT
programming!**



MAY PRAYER CALENDAR

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
			1-Geiger	2-Griffin	3-Grist	4-Haas
5	6-Hallihan	7- Halsey	8-Hansen	9-Harkins	10-Hebert	11-Hernandez
12	13- Hester	14-Hesterman	15-Holtrust	16-Honeter	17-Howie	18-Hunt
19	20-Jelinek	21-John	22- Joiner	23- Karros	24-Kathol	25- Kaufman
26	27- Kemngang	28-Kiertzner	29-Kimes	30-King	31-Kler	

Please pray for healing and restoration for:

Jean Vanvieldt, Felicia Foreman, Bill Howie, Lynn McClelland,
Joni Stallings, David Brinkley, Kay Hester, Iris Joiner, Marie and Jerry Swenson, Bob Summers.

Pray for those who are homebound or in convalescent care:

Dolores Karros, John Dooley, Beth Brinkley, Louis Kimes

May Birthdays

- | | |
|--------------------|-------------------|
| 02 David Borger | 16 Tony Webner |
| 02 Sylvia Honeter | 18 Leslie Borger |
| 05 Arlando Mba | 18 Phyllis Frei |
| 06 Marilyn Howie | 21 Jean Vanvieldt |
| 06 Florence Lutz | 22 Beth Brinkley |
| 07 Lynn McClelland | 22 Chester Olson |
| 07 Lynn Olson | 25 Sue Frazee |
| 08 M.E. Fuzzard | 27 Sandy Forney |
| 09 Donna Rumisek | 27 Lisa Grist |
| 09 Larry Smith | 30 Lynne Barker |
| 09 Linda Wilson | 30 Pam Polchow |
| 10 Cheryl Thomson | 30 Jerry Swenson |
| 12 Diane Hallihan | |
| 13 Glenn Wilson | |
| 16 Jerry Cook | |



We would also like to extend birthday greetings to any other **May** babies not on our list. If you know of a member's birthday that needs to be added, please call Gael in the church office @ 982-8811. Thank you, and **HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO ALL OF YOU!**

MAY

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 9am Bible study at Coco's 3pm B&G 5pm Young Disciples & Elevate 5:30pm Bible Study w/Pastor	2 7:30-9am Habitat for Humanity Prayer Breakfast 5:30pm Deacons HH	3	4 8:30am-12:30 pm Rivers Edge in HH
5 10 am Worship w/ Communion 11am Cinco de Mayo Potluck	6 5:30pm Bells 6pm Personnel	7 9:30am Knitting and Quilting 7pm Gather AA Groups- HH & upstairs Radiant Church GR	8 9am Bible Study with Van Romine at Coco's No Elevate or Young Disciples 7:10 pm Choir	9 12:30pm Preschool Board 6-7:30 AA Workshop GR	10 11am LIFT	11
12 10am Worship Pastor's Forum Mother's Day	13 4:15pm Grow 5:30pm Bells	14 9:30am Knitting and Quilting 6pm Trustees AA Groups- HH & upstairs Radiant Church GR	15 9am Bible Study 5pm Young Disciples & Elevate 5:30pm Bible Study w/Pastor 7:10 pm Choir	16 6-7:30 AA Workshop GR	17	18 11:30 Darlene Nichols Memorial
19 10 am Worship Congregational Meeting	20 5:30pm Bells	21 9:30 am (3) Knitters and Quilting AA Groups- HH & upstairs Radiant Church GR	22 9am Bible Study 5pm Young Disciples & Elevate 5:30pm Bible Study w/Pastor 7:10 pm Choir	23 6-7:30 AA Workshop GR	24	25
26 10 am Worship	27 5:30pm Bells Office Closed Memorial Day	28 9:30 am (4) Knitters and Quilting 6:30 pm Session AA Groups- HH & upstairs Radiant Church GR	29 9am Bible Study 5pm Elevate & Last Young Disciples for the school year 5:30pm Bible Study w/Pastor 7:10 pm Choir	30	31	



**GROWING IN CHRIST,
MAKING HIM KNOWN**

Deacons

- Becky Custer
- Heather Decauwer
- Carol Diess
- Charlene Finley
- Sue Fredendall
- Gloria Geiger
- Martha Hebert
- Florence Lutz
- Lisa Murdy
- Margaret Pilcher
- Pat Pilcher
- Mark Polchow
- Kim Righetti
- Darlene Russell
- Sue Sindelar
- Kim Williamson
- Michelle Wilson

Trustees

- Roy Ames, Assistant Treasurer
- Gary Custer, President
- Sue Frazee, Secretary
- Herb Joiner, Vice President
- Musa Mba, Treasurer

Staff

- Noel Anderson, Pastor
- Matt Shool, Youth Ministries
- Erika Schlegel, Children's Ministries
- Gael Lecce, Receptionist
- Gustavo Gonzalez, Custodian

Elders

- Moderator:*
- Noel Anderson
- Roy Ames
- William Anguka
- Gary Custer
- Georgia Decker
- Sue Frazee
- Nina Jelinek
- Herb Joiner
- Musa Mba
- Trevor McMullen
- Pam Polchow
- Randy Righetti
- Van Romine
- Jim Smirl
- Donna Strowger
- Glenn Wilson

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