

FIRST PRESS

THE NEWSLETTER OF FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF UPLAND



THE PRESBYTERIAN WAY

There are three possible forms of church government: Congregational, Episcopal, and Presbyterian. Government simply describes how a body of people organized into a particular church or denomination function together. Congregational government represented in our community by Baptist churches asserts that each individual congregation is autonomous and in no way subject to another congregation. In small congregational churches the congregation rules directly as in a pure democracy. In the larger churches some delegation is required, so the board of deacons will take on more of a representative role for the congregation.

Episcopal government represented in our community by the Methodist, Episcopal, Orthodox, and Roman Catholic churches asserts that rule of the church is from the top down. Bishops and overseers rule over assigned churches. The churches are connected under the authority of the bishops.

Presbyterian government asserts that the authority of Christ is administered through the congregation by the elected representatives of the congregation called Elders, or presbyters from the greek word in the new testament. The connectionalism of the Presbyterian government is from the congregation up, rather than from the top down as in the Episcopal form of government. The congregations are joined together in Presbyteries through the Elder representatives of the church. And the whole church joined together in the General Assembly.

We find this Presbyterianism in the model church in the book of Acts. When the Apostle Paul established a church, elders were elected. "Paul and Barnabas ordained elders (or had elders elected)

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PASTOR NOEL ANDERSON



for them in each church and with prayer and fasting, committed them to the Lord, in whom they had put their trust.”—Acts 14:23

The board of elders is called The Session, and the elders are called, ordained, and installed to lead the congregation in its mission. They are known as Ruling Elders, while the pastor is a Teaching Elder (Minister of Word and Sacrament).

The Session governs a particular congregation. It is made up of elders elected by the congregation, plus the pastor who serves as Moderator. The session is responsible for all decisions regarding the program and policies of its congregation, except for the two powers reserved for the congregation: the election of officers, including the pastors, and the buying, selling, and/or mortgaging of church property.

The session is composed of elders elected for specific terms of service—a three-year term with the opportunity (if called), to serve a second consecutive term. After two terms (6 years max), elders must be off for a year before reconsideration (Deacon terms are identical). The session elects its own clerk, who is called "Clerk of the Session" (presently Robert Whitmore). The clerk of the session has many duties regarding the records of the church, and also serves as secretary of meetings of the congregation. The clerk of the session must be an elder, but not necessarily one serving currently on the session.

We refer to those officers currently serving as "installed" elders or deacons, and those who have finished their terms as "uninstalled." The ordination of an elder or deacon is for life, whether installed or uninstalled, unless an action of Session should remove that ordination for disciplinary reasons.

QUESTIONS

Q: Are Session minutes available to members of the congregation?

A: Absolutely. A .pdf copy of the minutes can be emailed to you at your request. One caveat: we can only provide minutes that have been approved by the Session, which they do near the beginning of each meeting. This means you can access the minutes of a past month's meeting, but have to wait until the

present month's minutes are approved at the upcoming meeting.

Q: Isn't there an easier way to get minutes?

A: We hope to make minutes available online in coming months as we update our website and provide security code clearance for members. In the meantime, you can request minutes at minutes@fpc-upland.com

Q: When does Session meet?

A: Session usually meets the fourth Tuesday of each month at 6:30pm in the Garden Room. The Book of Order of the PCUSA requires at least quarterly meetings, so there may be some months (August? December?) when the Session elects not to meet.

Q: Are Session meetings open to congregational visitors?

A: Yes—Session meetings are in that sense public, but the elders reserve the right to vote themselves into "executive session" wherein no visitors are allowed. This is required when confidential topics (i.e., personnel or pastoral care issues) are being deliberated.

Q: Is there an "open forum" time at Session meetings?

A: Presently, no. Session meetings tend to run a full 90 minutes without a forum.

Q: Is it possible for members to address Session or present concerns?

A: Absolutely yes. There are two ways to do this:

1. Requesting a place on the agenda. Pastor Anderson, as Moderator, builds the agenda for each meeting. Requesting time on the agenda (3-5 minutes, usually) should be done at least 48 hours prior to the scheduled meeting.
2. Corresponding via email. By emailing either the Stated Clerk, Robert Whitmore (RWhit25146@aol.com), or the Moderator, Pastor Anderson (pastornoel@fpc-upland.com), your correspondence will be shared at the upcoming Session meeting. Please submit correspondence at least 48 hours prior to the scheduled meeting as well, so that copies can be made for Session members and/or printed as needed.

Further questions? Call or email me, or Bob Whitmore, or *any of your elders* serving on Session! †

TRUSTEES WITH HERB JOINER

Ah, as I write this, it is the first day of Spring! It has arrived after a winter blessed with lots of rain and snow, replenishing our water resources after too many years of dryness. It's another blessing, but you'll never know it by just watching or listening to "the news" because a lack of flooding, fires, or mudslides doesn't increase ratings or boost sales. You'll have to realize this and dozens of other blessings all on your own through a grateful heart.

So, now it's time to plant and sow. Just as a farmer sows seed, we each sow the seeds of our own deeds, words, and intentions in life. The Bible emphasizes the principle of sowing; "Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows." (Galatians 6:7) Our actions do have consequences, whether positive or negative.

What seeds are sown here on these grounds at First Pres? Here are just a few. Each year, hundreds of children are given a Christian foundation for life, morals, and ethics at our Preschool. Dozens of kids and teenagers are ministered to by our talented staff and volunteers each Wednesday evening. Tuesday evenings bustle with AA meetings and Bible studies and lives are changed! Three additional congregations are based here and meet every week, ministering to a couple of hundred other folks that we could otherwise never reach.

Your giving for Milk and Medicine to children far away has helped thousands in need, while the monthly ladies LIFT programs have begun to move many into providing service to others both here and overseas. Our deacons actively help members of our own congregation who are in difficult situations. Small groups have built closer bonds between our people and brought new friendships and ideas. More seeds.

Strong sermons and meaningful music plant seeds deep into hearts that move people to do incredibly special, wondrous things. Someone gives a completely unforeseen and most generous contribution which will enable us to carry out more missions and projects while meeting our pressing current obligations. Someone else is moved to take 75 Bibles to a very excited Upland High School Christian Club and some more to another grateful group of local middle school students.

Which seeds brought about such results? Only He knows. After all, the Holy Spirit sows many seeds. Your Session and trustees will prayerfully sift through the opportunities, developments, and needs to establish the best priorities. What seed can you sow? Please think about it. It's time to sow and grow!

Herb Joiner
Trustee

ELEVATE WITH MATT SHOOL



What Does The Bible Say About Politics? (Gen Z's View)

Source: Axis <https://axis.org/blog/what-does-the-bible-say-about-politics-gen-zs-view/>

In today's world, few topics ignite as much debate and division as politics. This holds especially true in intergenerational conversations. While it's commonly assumed that Gen Z leans heavily towards liberalism, the reality is more nuanced.

Is Gen Z more Conservative or Liberal?

A survey conducted by Monitoring the Future reveals intriguing insights. For instance, 12th-grade boys in Gen Z are nearly twice as likely to identify as conservative compared to liberal, while 12th-grade girls are three times more likely to identify as liberal.

Dr. Jean Twenge aptly summarizes this trend: "Among liberals, the future is female. And among conservatives, the future is male."

This disparity may

stem from a desire for personal agency and value alignment with their chosen political party. Liberal politicians are more likely to emphasize the importance of the role that women play in society, and conservative politicians are more likely to emphasize the importance of the role that men play in society. Delano Squires, a research fellow at the Heritage Foundation, argues that "traditional notions of masculinity are much more accepted within conservatism," while feminist values "are clearly one of the driving forces of liberalism." He goes on to say, "I could see male and female students saying, 'I'm choosing sides.' Do you want matriarchy, or do you want patriarchy?"

However, the biggest percentage of 12th graders in this study either identified as "moderate," said "I don't know," or said "none of the above." And the truth is, for a lot of teens, there's not much to be impressed about with our current political system.

Another big source of political frustration is what Dr. James Mumford refers to as "package-deal ethics." This is the idea that people often feel like they have to fully embrace everything a political party stands for and fully reject everything the other party stands for, even if in reality both sides have some good ideas and some bad ideas. The current US political system trains us to primarily categorize and politicize issues as either being "liberal" or "conservative," which might be "good" or "bad" depending on which side someone is on.

What does the Bible say about politics?

The problem for Christians is that sometimes what God cares about in scripture sounds like what we have been trained to think of as liberal, and other times what God cares about in scripture sounds like what we have been trained to think of as conservative. As the late Dr. Tim Keller put it, "For example, following both the Bible and the early church, Christians should be committed to racial justice and the poor, but also to the understanding that sex is only for marriage and for nurturing family. One of those views seems liberal and the other looks oppressively conservative. The historical Christian positions on social issues do not fit into contemporary political alignments."



Now obviously there are conservatives who care about the poor, liberals who care about the unborn, and so on. Our main point is just that for Christians, if an issue is stereotyped as being "liberal" or "conservative," our current political system discourages people on the other side from considering it, even if it's something the Bible clearly talks about.

Furthermore, it encourages us to see the other side not just as misguided, but as diabolically evil. A major problem with this is that good and evil can't be divided into separate groups, because they're actually separate parts of every single individual.

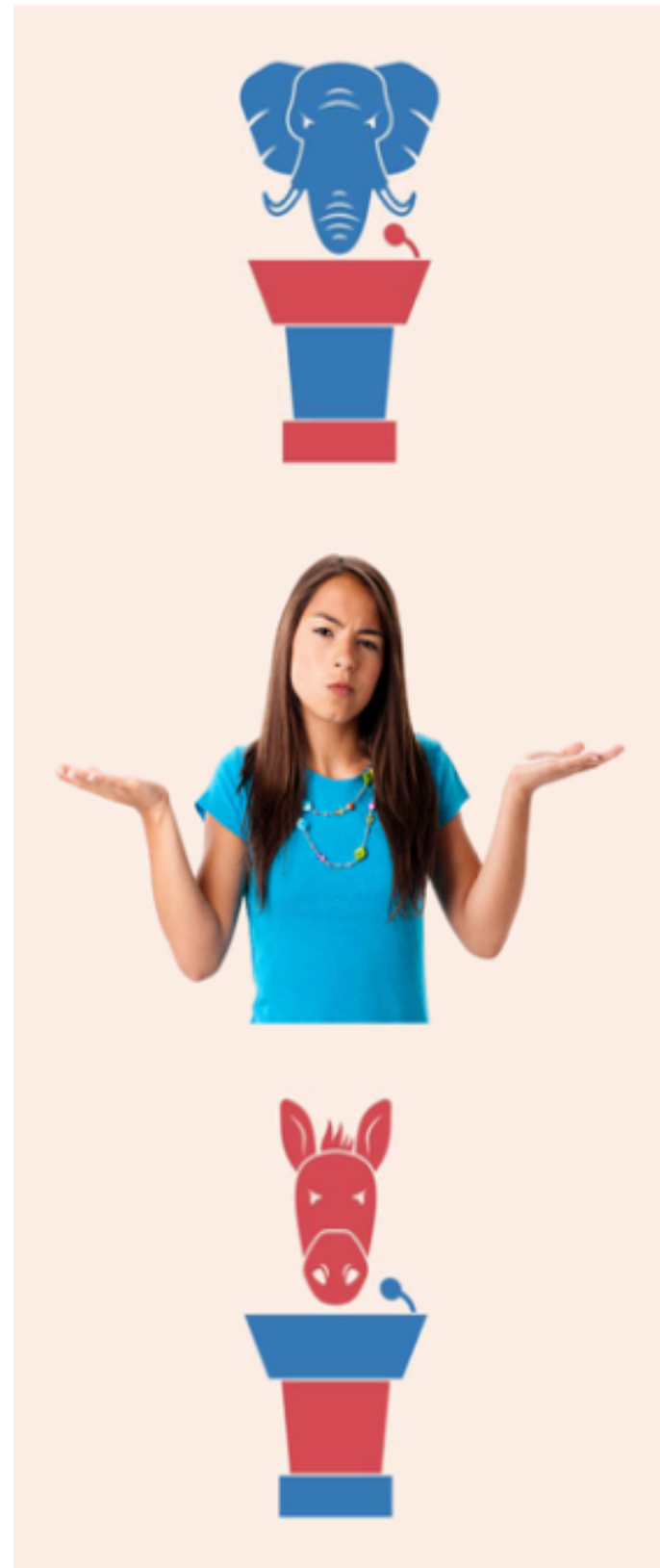
As Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn put it in his book *The Gulag Archipelago*, "If only there were evil people somewhere insidiously committing evil deeds, and it were necessary only to separate them from the rest of us and destroy them... But the line dividing good and evil cuts through the heart of every human being." Or, as Romans 3:23 puts it, "all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God."

In an article called "5 Things That Frustrate Gen Z Christians," Gen Zer Jacob Murrie wrote this about "when partisan politics reshape faith": "In the past few years, we have grown increasingly weary of the meshing of politics and the evangelical faith we often see among older believers. This is not because we don't value many of the same causes; it's that often our parents and grandparents will question our Christian orthodoxy if we don't align fully with their political affiliations. When we shift slightly to the right or the left, our faith is often assumed to be endangered... many in my generation do not wish to be identified as conservative or liberal, as much as they want to be identified as Christlike."

The Bottom Line

What Gen Z is tapping into is the reality that Jesus did not come to help Republicans beat Democrats or Democrats beat Republicans. Jesus came to inaugurate The Kingdom of God—a Kingdom marked by loving God and loving others—by meekness, mercy, peacemaking, forgiveness, loving our enemies, and pursuing Jesus's definition of righteousness. And in the end, this is the only political affiliation that matters.

Scan this QR code for a YouTube video on the same topic



CHILDREN'S MINISTRY WITH ERIKA



Parenting and Discipleship: They Are One and the Same

Written by Andy Blanks, full article can be found at www.lifeway.com

For the parent, there is no shortage of books, blog posts, podcasts, and conferences to help remind us that we should be discipling our children. This is a good thing. Shaping our children's faith is one of the most critical tasks God has given us. But over the years, I've noticed that many authors, speakers, and preachers will almost unintentionally imply a difference between parenting and discipleship. We're left with the impression that parenting is the non-God stuff and discipleship is the God stuff. Unfortunately, this distinction isn't accurate.

I've got news for all of us parents: There is no difference between parenting and discipleship.

Parenting and discipleship aren't two different categories. There is no line between the secular and the sacred. As Christ-followers who have come to a saving relationship with Jesus, we live every day tasked with interjecting the sacred into the secular. That's what it means to see God's kingdom come. We're in the world but not of the world. Yet, our lives are lived as an infusion of God's light into the darkness. This is a primary theme in Scripture.

We're disciple-makers. We're parents. There is no distinction.

As Christians, we can't turn on and turn off the "God" part of our lives. We see our world and lives through the lens of our identity in Christ. Parenting is the same way.

Think about it: Your every interaction teaches your children how individuals who have surrendered their life to God conduct themselves. You're modeling what it looks like to live as someone transformed by God in everything you do. You're showing your children what a disciple looks like, and you're doing so in every single interaction and conversation.

Consider the time you spend associated with your child's extracurricular activities. Think about your interactions at the field or the court. Think about the conversations you have surrounding your child's performance. Recall things you've said about coaches or players. In every interaction, in every conversation, you're not just parenting, you're discipling.





In those beautiful moments when you talk with your child about spiritual issues or lead them in a Bible study, we'd all agree that this is discipleship. This is what it looks like for parents to fulfill their calling as the primary spiritual shapers of their children's faith. But it's also parenting. At its essence, parenting is providing for the well-being of our children. Is there anything more important than their spiritual well-being?

When you and your spouse discipline your children because of a poor decision they made, you're not just parenting them, you're disciplining them.

How can we say this? What justification is there to erase the

lines of distinction between the secular and the sacred? The rationale is pretty simple: Every interaction with our children is a chance for us to model what it means to live as someone being shaped by God and attempting to live out His character. When we grasp this truth, it becomes clear. We're disciple-makers. We're parents. There is no distinction.

Every parenting interaction we have is discipleship. Every disciple-making interaction we have is parenting.

Let's be parents who don't fall into the trap of compartmentalizing the faith aspects of parenthood from real life. When we do this, not only are we acting in a way that is unbiblical, we shrink our influence. The sooner we can learn to approach every interaction with our children as discipleship, we will find that the spiritual impact we have on their lives is far more significant than we might imagine.



WHAT'S COMING UP?

- April 3rd - Spring Break NO Young Disciples
- May 10th - Parent's Night Out
- May 31st - Last Young Disciples
- June 24th-28th - VBS
- August 4th-7th - YD Summer Camp

GATHER WITH SUE FRAZEE

On Sunday, March 17th Gather hosted our annual St. Patrick's Day Corned Beef and cabbage luncheon. Our thanks to all those who helped, especially those who cooked the corned beef and the Pilchers for their delicious Irish Stew!

Party of 8 continues to meet. If you would like to join us go to the church website and let Shawn Kathol know.



L.I.E.T. met on March 8th to hear a fascinating talk from Karen Alford about her work in Togo, West Africa.

On Saturday, April 13th, Gather will host the annual FPCU Chili Cookoff. You may enter the contest with your best Chili recipe or sign up to bring an appetizer, salad, bread or dessert. It will a fun evening. Plan on joining us!



Get a lift from LIFT

(Ladies in Fellowship Together)

Time for Storytelling By Adrien Lowery



**Friday, April 12,
11am -1 pm, Hart Hall**

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

Time to sit back, relax, and let storyteller Adrien Lowery engage our imaginations to take us to different times and places. Last spring she entertained us with stories from the Emerald Isle and she is back by popular demand for our April meeting to again lift our spirits and comfort our souls with tales sure to please us all.

For the past 14 years Adrien has shared her stories with churches and community groups around the San Gabriel Valley and Inland Empire. She tells stories from various genres, including classic folk tales, especially Celtic, as well as those she has written herself. She is a college professor and a long-time member and regular performer with the Inland Valley Storytellers group.

Following a short time of worship and a devotion, Adrien will encourage us with stories that are perfect for springtime. 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!**



APRIL

PRAYER CALENDAR

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	1-Curcija	2-Custer	3-D'Monte	4-Davidson	5-Day	6-Decauwer
7	8-Decker	9- Deiss	10-Diess	11-Dooley	12-Doss	13-Ecker
14	15-Ecklund	16-Edmon	17-Emrich	18-Ferguson	19-Ferley	20-Finley
21	22-Fogle	23- Foreman	24-Forney	25-Francis	26-Frei	27-Fujiwara
28	29-Fuzzard	30-Garcia				

Please pray for healing and restoration for:

Jean Vanvielt, 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

Please call Gael in the office if we need to update any information. Thank you. 909-982-8811.

April Birthdays

- 01 Christine Frei
- 01 Dave Smith
- 03 Jeff Morgan
- 03 Mark Polchow
- 06 Robert Kemngang, Jr.
- 07 Orlando Antolin
- 07 Margaret Williams
- 09 David Francis
- 12 Louis Kimes
- 12 Musa Mba
- 18 Barron McLemore
- 23 Sharon Chaffino
- 24 Julie Emrich
- 24 Jeanie Ruggles
- 25 Diana Deiss

- 28 Kathy Kler
- 29 Loreto D'Monte
- 30 Matt Shool



We would also like to extend birthday greetings to any other **April** 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!**

APRIL

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1 5:45pm Bells Church Office Closed	2 9:30am Knitting and Quilting 7pm Gather 6:30 Serve AA Groups- HH & upstairs Radiant Church GR	3 Bible study at Coco's 3pm B&G 5 pm Elevate	4 11am Luddites Reading Group 5:30pm Deacons HH	5	6
7 10 am Worship w/ Communion	8 4:15pm Grow 5:45pm Bells 6:30pm Personnel	9 9:30am Knitting and Quilting 5pm Worship 6pm Trustees AA Groups- HH & upstairs Radiant Church	10 5pm Young Disciples & Elevate 7:10 pm Choir	11 12:30pm Preschool Board GR 6-7:30 AA Workshop GR	12 11am LIFT	13 5:30 Chili Cook-off
14 10am Worship Pastor's Forum	15 5:45pm Bells	16 9:30am Knitting and Quilting AA Groups- HH & upstairs Radiant Church GR	17 9am Bible Study 5pm Young Disciples & Elevate 5:30pm Bible Study w/Pastor 7:10 pm Choir	18 11am Luddites Reading Group 12:30pm Preschool Board 6-7:30 AA Workshop GR	19	20 11 am Chaffino Memorial
21 10 am Worship	22 5:45pm Bells	23 9:30 am (3) Knitters and Quilting 6:30 pm Session AA Groups- HH & upstairs Radiant Church GR	24 9am Bible Study 5pm Young Disciples & Elevate 5 pm Loaves & Fishes 5:30pm Bible Study w/Pastor 7:10 pm Choir	25 11am Luddites Reading Group 6-7:30 AA Workshop GR	26	27 2 pm Griffin Memorial
28 10 am Worship 11:15 am Tree Planting	29 5:45pm Bells	30 9:30 am (4) Knitters and Quilting AA Groups- HH & upstairs Radiant Church GR				



**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

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

OFFICE: 909.982.8811
PRESCHOOL: 909.982.8616

email: office@fpc-upland.com
website: FPC-UPLAND.COM