



# FIRST PRESS *EXPRESS*

The newsletter of First Presbyterian Church of Concord, California

February 2023

## Calendar of Major Congregational Events



Feb 5	10:00 AM	Christy Reiners (Missionary) visits Sunday Service/Sunday School
Feb 18	5:00 PM	Pancake Supper (Mardi Gras theme)
Feb 26	11:00 AM	Annual Congregational Meeting

## Highlights of January 17, 2023 Session Meeting



**Opening Prayer** – CLP Darryl McCollum, Moderator

### **Consent Approvals**

Finance Committee – David Stearns

Various issues, including:

- Acceptance of 2021 Financial Review by David Dowell (completed earlier in 2022)
- Appointment of Vern Hance as Treasurer
- Authorization of check signers for 2023 and other authorizations

Action on the Mission's submission of approval of proposed activities for 2023 were tabled until next month, and the Mission Team was asked to separate the list into the categories of activities involving 1) fund raising, 2) volunteers 3) Other (budgeted) activities

**Clerk's Report** – Jon Myers

- The Session Minutes for December meeting and Clerk's Report for December were approved
- The 2022 Annual Statistical Report for the PC(USA) Office of General Assembly is in process and is scheduled to be presented to Session at its February meeting for approval and then submitted to the Office of General Assembly by the deadline of February 16
- Commissioners and representatives for the February 21 Presbytery meeting were approved: Jon Myers, Darryl McCollum, Jim Whitfield, and David Stearns

### **Moderator's Report** – Darryl McCollum

- Mission Study update. Work on FPCC's Mission Study continues. A status report will be presented to Session at its February meeting and then to the congregation at the Annual Meeting on February 26.
- Nominating Committee update
- Staff strategic planning update
- In view of the fact that the February Session meeting schedule conflicts with the February 14 Presbytery meeting, a motion was made and approved to reschedule the FPCC Session meeting to Wednesday, February 15

### **Deacon Report** – CLP Rebecca Chase

A study is underway relative to possibly restructure the Deacon body to accommodate our smaller congregation. Under consideration is, perhaps, moving away from the parish concept and handling contacts with members under by rotating responsibilities.

### **Finance Team** – Elder David Stearns

Presented a slightly revised budget for 2023, which was approved.

### **Connections Team** - Jim Whitfield

Attention was directed to the schedule of activities for 2023 that was presented in the minutes.

### **Property Management Team**– David Stearns (Acting)

Presented issues under consideration relating to the PCC and other leases.

### **Personnel** – Jon Myers

The Annual Statistical Report for 2022 is due to the PC(USA) Office of General Assembly by February 16.

**Next Session Meeting:** 7 pm on February 15, 2023 in the Fireside Room.

**By David Dowell**

### **Featured Biography – Judith Snider**

In view of Judith's commitment to organizing and hosting church social events, she deserves the title of “Social Secretary” of FPCC. She lies awake at night planning ways for church members to meet and enjoy each other. She loves to sit on the bench in front of the church on a Sunday morning (when the weather is a little warmer) and greets all by name with a warm smile and, perhaps, a humorous quip; or you will find her behind the table just inside Fellowship Hall following the church service, hoping lots of people will sign up for an activity or social event.

Judith was born in Walnut Creek and has lived at various locations in the East Bay most of her life. She credits her parents with her love of nature and for the gift of sharing their lives with foreign students (Afghanistan, Denmark, Nairobi, India, Asia.) This, no doubt, helped to create her love of interacting with people.

She traveled south to San Diego State University for her college experience, majoring in speech pathology and audiology. Afterwards, she worked for Shell Oil Company at the Martinez Refinery for 39 years at various jobs and at different sites.

Judith joined the church in 1990 and has never been a “pew potato.” In past years she worked with the youth, accompanying them on mission trips. She was an Elder three years and a Deacon three years. When Ann Keirns was ill, she volunteered to slip into her seat in the front office and, and she ended up staying there for months. Judith has worked on memorial services, washed dishes for various events, and has helped cook at congregational meals. She continues volunteering to help with children's special events. At the last big church-wide BBQ she was sitting at a table with the children and supervising their art activities. She also sang in the choir at one time. Judith was on the Mission Committee for 20 years and currently serves on the Connections Committee, the Spiritual Growth Committee, and she participates in the prayer ministry. She just finished a term serving as Deacon Moderator.

Back to the “Social Secretary” role: After the isolation created by COVID in the summer of 2022, Judith wanted to get people back into the church fellowship and arranged the much appreciated family movie nights, game gatherings, ice cream socials, and light suppers. During COVID she called many people who lived alone to make sure they were okay.

When she has time away from church, Judith loves any activity that is near either a beach or the Redwoods. These might be retreats or conferences. She likes to read and enjoys the people she meets on trips or when camping. She even engaged in Hawaiian and Tahitian dancing for a few years. She attends movies and theatre productions. For nine years she has reserved Tuesday nights for Bible Study Fellowship.

Judith is actually much more than just the “Social Secretary” of our church. She has earned our utmost gratitude for her dedication. Thank you, Judith, for sharing your time, thoughtfulness, talents, your creativity, and for your beautiful dream of making us a church family. May God bless you as you have blessed us!!

**By Beth Byrne**

## **Children and Family Corner**

### ***Family Events upcoming – Ministry Opportunities!***

The Children’s Ministry Team (aka Children’s Spiritual Growth) calendar:

- ***Easter Egg Hunt*** – April 9. Plan to open to Concord community. Need help stuffing and hiding eggs
- ***Camp Agape*** – theme TBD. June 6 – June 8. Plan to open to Concord community. \*\*Note: Need help with registration, crafts, games, music, or snacks
- ***Harvest Festival*** – October 21. Coordinate with the Connections Team.
- ***Parents’ Night Out*** – December 2. Mission oriented, giving to local organization. \*\*Notes: Need help with collecting and organizing donations; crafts, games, or food

***\*\* Notes above:*** If you would like to help reach out to the families in our community? Contact Rebecca Chase or Marilyn Wollenweber

### ***Christmas Eve Service***

This year we tried something new for Christmas Eve. We had a Godly Play Family Service at 4:00pm. Children and children at heart brought pieces of the creche to the altar, as we told the story of Jesus’ birth. We loved having help from Alex Zimmerman; Claire Asistin; Beth Byrne’s daughter Katy and her foster baby; the Maitland family including Etta, Josh, and Moira; and Jim Whitfield, Marilyn Wollenweber, and Jerry Hartman. Thank you to the readers Jan Sprague, Trudy Meigs, Charles Stearns, and Josh Maitland. Many were moved as they brought their star up front to offer their light to the scene, and then receive the light from a candle. The finishing touch was standing in a circle, looking at each other’s lights and singing Silent Night.

### ***Godly Play – Winter (December 2022 – February, 2023)***

Advent is an important time to get ready for the mystery of Christmas. We spent our December Sundays lighting a candle and talking about the prophets, Mary and Joseph’s journey, the shepherds and angels, and the Magi. We kicked off January with a lesson on Holy Baptism, which offered the children an opportunity to learn about the waters of creation, the light of Christ, and the mystery of the Holy Spirit. The rest of January through the week before Lent begins, the children will hear a series of Parables: the Good Shepherd, the Good Samaritan, the Great Pearl, the Sower, and the Mustard Seed. Special shout-out

to my amazing doorpersons, who greet and support the children for Godly Play: Ashley McCollum, Josh Maitland, Ruth Stevenson, Ann Johnson, Jan Sprague, and Nanci Powers. Marilyn Wollenweber serves as a Doorperson and sometimes a Storyteller. Robin Stearns has also filled in as Storyteller.

### ***Beginnings & Beyond News***

The biggest news from Beginnings and Beyond Montessori Christian Preschool & Kindergarten is that Cristina Mario, the Assistant Director, and Head of the Toddler Room, has successfully made it to the stage in her Visa application called I140. This is huge! She is well on her way to achieving Green Card status, and we are thrilled. The Toddler Room (Clover) has 10 students, with 4 on the wait list, and the Pre-Primary Room (Orange Blossom) has 32 students, with room for 4 more. Tours continue to be held for next school year. By the way, has anyone noticed that the wall came down next to the garden by the chapel? It makes more light inside and more space for growing outside.

**Rebecca Chase, CLP**  
**Director of Family and Children Ministries**

#### **FPCC Staff**

Rebecca Chase, CLP	Ministry Partner
Lisa Justice, Student Pastor	Ministry Partner
Darryl McCollum, CLP	Ministry Partner
DeVonn Powers, CLP	Ministry Partner
Andrew Cardiasmenos	Director, Music & Worship
Robin Stearns	Preschool Director
Linde Weber	Financial and Human Resources Specialist
Harold Lund	Custodian & Night Watchman
David Dowell	Acting Editor, First Press and <i>Express</i>



**Editor's Note:** First Press *Express* is a publication of the First Presbyterian Church of Concord, California, printed several times each year.