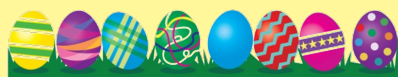


MARCH 2023
volume 24 • issue 3

HIGHLIGHTS

First Presbyterian Church San Leandro



WOW Holy Week EGG-perience – Wednesday, March 29

Families, Friends and the Congregation are all invited to join the children and youth of WOW on Wednesday, March 29 for a special Holy Week EGG-perience. We will learn about the events that took place during the week of Christ's crucifixion on the cross, from His Triumphant Entry into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday to His Resurrection on Easter Sunday. All participants will make reminders of each event so that they can share the Holy Week EGG-perience with others.

Please let us know if you plan to join us for the WOW Holy Week EGG-perience, by signing up at church on a Sunday morning, calling the church office (510-483-2772) or emailing Lou@firstpresbyterianchurchsl.org

SAVE THE DATE

- **April 2**– Palm Sunday Breakfast 8:00 am
- **April 9** – Easter Sunday
- **April 15** – Retirement celebration for Anne Swanson 2:00 to 4:00

Season of Lent

Amazing Grace *how sweet the sound*



This year, in honor of the 250th anniversary of the writing of the well-known hymn “Amazing Grace,” our Lenten devotions focus on the powerful words of this beloved song as well as the history surrounding it. It connects the words with our lives today, as well as to the lives of those in the Bible who experienced the amazing grace of God, revealed most profoundly in the salvation of Jesus.

The season of Lent began February 22nd, so it's not too late to commit to a daily time of devotion and prayer as we embark on our journey to a closer relationship with Christ. For all who long for God's promise in the midst of grief, despair, guilt and shame, “Amazing Grace” is one of the world's most hopeful hymns. At times it is sung in the most secular of situations, but still the saving grace and love of our Lord Jesus Christ rings out clearly for all those who may hear it.

Written by English poet and Anglican clergyman John Newton, the lyrics tell the story of his own spiritual journey, which led him from his scandalous past to his saving conversion and trust in the grace of Christ. He wrote the lyrics to this hymn for a sermon on New Year's Day in 1773, seeing himself as being the “prodigal son” – the self-confessed “wretch” (a word he borrowed from Romans 7:24). Over time, Newton discovered that God, in Christ's deep and abiding love, does not give up on anyone. Like the prodigal, he “once was lost, but now is found” – and like the blind man who received his sight, “was blind but now can see.”



If you have not yet picked up a copy of a devotional for yourself, they will be available in the Narthex during Sunday worship. You may also call the church at (510) 483-2772 to ask for one to be mailed to your home.

REMEMBERING THE PAST, AND LIVING INTO THE FUTURE

As my retirement is only a couple of months away, I want to share some of my journey with you as I conclude my ministry here at First Presbyterian. It's hard to believe that over 30 years ago (in November 1991) I came to this church to serve as an Associate Pastor, half-time. George and I were delighted that God was calling us to serve together, in one church. We had three young children at the time, and it was a joy to no longer have kids going to either "Mommy's church" or "Daddy's church" – but instead to our family church. We have been so blessed, to raise our family in this church and to be part of this growing, vibrant Christian community! What a loving, supportive family of faith you are, and we are so grateful to have been a part of it!

The time has come when God is calling George and me to the next chapter of our life, when we will find new places and new ways to serve God, both in our family life and in the community in which we live. For the time being, we will be spending some time here in the Bay Area, and some time in Oregon, to help Michelle and her husband upon the arrival of their first child. We are praying for God's guidance, as we continue in our spiritual journey in the years ahead.



This church community is also at a crossroads – remembering the past and living into the future. You are a healthy system, a system that communicates well with one another and chooses to work together to be the family of faith. George and I are confident that God has a plan, a good plan, in store for the future of this congregation. Even now, the Interim Pastor Search Committee is hard at work, seeking just the leader who is needed to serve as Interim Pastor during the next year or two. It will be a season of growth and transition, as together you discern where God is leading this faith community in the years to come. As you live into the future, please know that we will be praying for you, asking God's Spirit to move in your midst and do great things in San Leandro. May the power of Jesus Christ be at work, as together you move ahead in your ministry to the neighborhood and the world.

With love in Christ,
Anne Swanson

WOW - WONDERS ON WEDNESDAYS

Our midweek ministry, WOW, for children and youth takes place on Wednesdays from 4:00 to 7:00 pm at the church. Each week includes fun, fellowship, dinner, and a Biblical truth about who we are as Children of God. This month our theme will include the letters O, P, Q and R as well as a special Holy Week EGG-perience.

YOUTH LUNCH DATE

Middle and High School students are invited to walk downtown together and enjoy lunch at Chipotle on **Sunday, March 5**. There will be NO cost to those students who attend, as the church will buy lunch for everyone in attendance this month! We will leave the church after worship (at approximately 11:00 am) and we will return to the church by 12:30 pm to be picked up by parents.

WOW MARCH 2023 SCHEDULE

March 1 brought to you by the letter O
We will learn... *I am an Overcomer – 1 John 4:4 and about Onesimus*

March 8 brought to you by the letter P
We will learn... *I am Protected – 2 Thessalonians 3:3 and about Paul*

March 15 brought to you by the letter Q
We will learn... *I am Qualified – Colossians 1:12 and about Queen Esther*

March 22 brought to you by the letter R
We will learn... *I am Rescued – Colossians 1:13 -14 and about Rahab*



March 29 WOW Holy Week EGG-perience with families, friends and the congregation

Note: WOW will not meet during Holy Week on Wednesday, April 5.





MARCH 2022

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
26 9:30 am Worship Service 10:30 am Coffee Fellowship	27 4:00 pm Adult Bible Class (Zoom) 6:17 pm Chancel Bells	28	1 4:00 pm WOW Program	2 7:00 pm Chancel Choir	3	4 7:30 am Men's Breakfast & Bible Study 7:30 am Women's Fellowship Breakfast
5 9:30 am Worship Service 10:30 am Coffee Fellowship/Donuts 11:00 am Youth Lunch Date	6 4:00 pm Adult Bible Class (Zoom) 6:17 pm Chancel Bells	7 7:00 pm Christian Ed, Church in the World, Group Life & Pastoral Care Committees	8 4:00 pm WOW Program	9 7:00 pm Chancel Choir	10	11
12 Daylight Savings Begins 9:30 am Worship Service 10:30 am Coffee Fellowship 11:00 am Prayer Shawl Ministry 	13 4:00 pm Adult Bible Class (Zoom) 6:17 pm Chancel Bells	14	15  4:00 pm WOW Program	16 11:30 am Young at Heart Luncheon/Program 7:00 pm Chancel Choir	17 	18
19 9:30 am Worship Service 10:30 am Coffee Fellowship/Donuts 	20 4:00 pm Adult Bible Class (Zoom) 6:17 pm Chancel Bells	21 7:00 pm Session	22 4:00 pm WOW Program	3 7:00 pm Chancel Choir	24	25
26 9:30 am Worship Service 10:30 am Coffee Fellowship	27 4:00 pm Adult Bible Class (Zoom) 6:17 pm Chancel Bells	28 10:00 am Book Club 7:00 pm Deacons Meeting	29 4:00 pm WOW Holy Week EGG-perience 	30 7:00 pm Chancel Choir	31	1 7:30 am Men's Breakfast & Bible Study 7:30 am Women's Fellowship Breakfast

Monday Zoom Bible Class

During Lent the adult education class, which meets on Monday afternoons from 4:00-5:00 pm by Zoom, will do a six-week study starting February 27 on "Seven Words – Listening to Christ from the Cross." The class will consider the seven last words of Jesus on the cross through a lens that finds life and hope in his final sayings, while exploring each from a biblical and historical perspective. The class is led by Sue Goodnow and Jane Kraut. If you would like to attend these Zoom classes, please see Sue or Jane, or call the church office (510-483-2772). Newcomers are welcome!



Souper Bowl of Caring

Thank you to everyone who contributed to our special Souper Bowl giving last month. Your generous contributions totaled \$176, all of which was sent to the Davis Street Help Center to help feed residents of our own community. How far does \$176 go? One example would be that, even with the price of eggs at record highs, \$176 would still buy a dozen eggs for each of more than 35 families.

Men's & Women's Breakfast Groups, March 4

On Saturday, **March 4** our Men's Bible Study and Breakfast group will be meeting at 7:30 am in the Fireside Room. They will continue their study on "Words of Wisdom" from the book of Proverbs. At the same time our Women's Fellowship Group will be gathering in Fellowship Hall for conversation and breakfast. Please sign up ahead of time and bring \$10 to cover the cost of the food.

Young at Heart - Thursday, March 16

Come join our St. Patrick's Day-themed Young at Heart luncheon. Wear green and enjoy a special holiday-themed meal. Angel Simmons, a flautist and harpist, will entertain us with her harp. If you would like to enjoy soothing music by Angel and her husband Dave beforehand, you can visit her website at <https://www.angeltheharpist.com/angel-music>.



Click on the Music link.

Sign up for the luncheon in Fellowship Hall on Sunday mornings.

Safe, Secure and Saving:

If you or your group are the last one to leave the church, please make sure that our church home is safe and secure and that we are not spending money unnecessarily on utility bills. Take the extra moment to check to assure that all the doors have closed completely and that the lights are turned off. Thank you!



SUNDAY, MARCH 12:
Daylight Savings Time Begins. Turn your clocks ahead one hour.

Worship and Fellowship Activities

We are blessed to be able to gather on Sunday mornings for worship in our sanctuary at 9:30 am. We continue to require that masks be worn throughout the worship service. We want to protect ourselves and others and to allow even those in our church family who are most vulnerable to feel safe while worshipping with us in person.

If you are unable to worship in person, you can listen to the weekly worship service by going online to www.firstpresbyterianchurchsl.org. Click on the "Worship" link and choose "Worship Recordings." There are more than 100 worship services available, dating back more than two years.



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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Highlights

March 2023

Women's Book Club

Our next title will be **The Maid: A Novel by Nita Prose**. It is available in paperback at Target and Used books stores. It's also available in multiple formats at the library, but you may have to reserve a copy so sign up now. (Make sure you get the right author - Prose)

We will meet on Tuesday, March 28 at 10:00, location to be announced later. If you are not on our email list, please contact the office.

Future Highlights

Do you have something you would like included in the Church calendar? Please call or email Administrative Manager Tessa in the church office. If you would like information included in the monthly Highlights, please email Gigi MacLeod at ggmacleod@aol.com.

Westminster Woods Upcoming Retreats



Women's Retreat

Dates: 4/21-4/23

Who Can Register: Women aged 18 and over

Price: \$250

Lenten Prayer Retreat

Dates: 3/31-4/2

Who Can Register: Adults aged 18 and older

Price: \$175

For more information, check out their website at:
<https://www.westminsterwoods.org/>