

# Highlights

First Presbyterian Church San Leandro

September 2025  
Volume 26 Issue 9

## The Prophets Speak Today New Worship Series

“Learn the lesson that, if you are to do the work of a prophet, what you need is not a scepter but a hoe.” – Bernard of Clairvaux

On Sunday, September 7th, we will be beginning a new worship series on the Hebrew prophets from the Old Testament and how their messages resonate with today’s world.

The Hebrew prophets as a group were mediators between different realms and institutions. As prophets they mediated between the ordinary world and that of the Spirit. They claimed their power from the Spirit and not any person. Later, Jesus would claim this same power as he is baptized in water and the spirit.

The Hebrew prophets’ power was also a check on the royal power of the kings. Long before journalists became “the third estate” in modern democracies, these prophets spoke truth to power, often at a cost to themselves.

This was unique in the ancient world. No other religion has encouraged as much internal criticism as Judaism. Diversity has kept Judaism vibrant. The holiness code had been needed to lift the Jews to a purity that made them in effect a chosen people, but the social and economic divisions had compromised God’s impartial, all-encompassing love for everyone. The prophets were not afraid to speak to these issues.

Comparative religion scholar Huston Smith quipped that the main message of these prophets is “God has high standards.” He then went on to say:

“The thing that comes first to mind is their insistence on justice, and basically the prophetic principle comes down to the thesis that no society ridden by injustice is going to last. In other words, this is a yardstick for society, and, to the extent to which it is lived up to, exemplified, put into practice, that society has a future. But to the extent that we deviate from it, then no hope-no hope.”

The prophets can, therefore, speak into our own time. Whether it is hearing the prophet Jonah preaching to a people that he despises, or Jeremiah offering words of hope and consolation to a people of his day of living in exile, there is also a message of hope for us today.

Blessings and light, Renée

## Honoring 100 Years of Ministry at 180 Estudillo

This year’s National Night Out marked an extra special moment for us. In the midst of the laughter, music, and conversation, First Presbyterian Church was presented with a special Commendation from the City of San Leandro in celebration of our Building Centennial.

For a century, this building has been home to a caring and faithful congregation—people who show love in countless ways, support one another through life’s seasons, and share a deep commitment to the vitality of our church. We are grateful to mark this milestone together with those who continue to call this place home.

Our centennial year isn’t over yet. We look forward to more opportunities to gather, reflect, and celebrate all that God has done in this place. Stay tuned for the special events still to come!





# CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

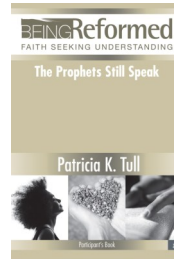
Growing & deepening your faith

## The Prophets Still Speak (Adult Education Class)

Sundays at 11 am beginning September 7

Wednesdays at 6:30 pm beginning September 10

What did it mean to prophesy in the Old Testament? Why do the prophets seem to speak doom and gloom? This early fall Adult Education class (offered at two different times) focuses on the Hebrew Prophets – those remarkable men in the Old Testament who spoke truth to power in their own day. These five-session classes will provide an overview of the prophets, and examine some of their key messages that Jesus often brought up to the powers in his own day. Our worship will coordinate with this series.



Pastor Renée will co-teach the class, on Sundays with Georgie Hickey, and on Wednesdays with Don Atkinson-Adams.

Sign-up for the class and reserve a participant booklet (\$8 each) in the Fellowship Hall.

## Heart to Heart to Return in Late Fall

Last year First Presbyterian Church launched an all-new Women's Ministry called Heart to Heart. In the first year a total of 35 women participated in this monthly ministry creating a Christian community of women connecting with one another and together seeking the Heart of God.

Due to Lou's unexpected medical leave, the return of Heart to Heart will be delayed slightly. The exact date will be determined once Lou has been through surgery and has received all results and knows what, if any, further treatments are needed. Once Heart to Heart returns, gatherings will once again be held on the second Thursday of the month in the Fireside room.



## Update regarding Director of Christian Nurture and Education, Lou Pennebaker

Lou began a 6-8 week medical leave on Sunday, August 10 in order to undergo major preventive surgery and possible follow-up treatment for endometrial (uterine) cancer. The surgery performed on August 13 took less time than expected and was successful.

Lou is now home recovering. The need for further treatment will be determined after Lou receives the full surgery and biopsy reports, the first week of September.

In the meantime, Lou is grateful for the many cards, prayers, meals and well wishes from the First Presbyterian Family. For further updates or to provide a meal for Lou and her family during her recovery please go to: <https://mealtrain.com/43no28>



## Let's Read This Book Returns in 2026

Those who enjoyed the series Let's Read this Book: Run with the Horses will be pleased to know that another book reading series will be planned for 2026. Stay tuned!



## Pastor Nominating Committee (PNC) Update

The PNC continues to prayerfully connect with candidates and discern each step in the search for our next pastor. We are filled with gratitude for your prayers, encouragement, and trust in this process. Together, we look forward with hope and faith, believing that God is preparing the right person to join us in ministry.



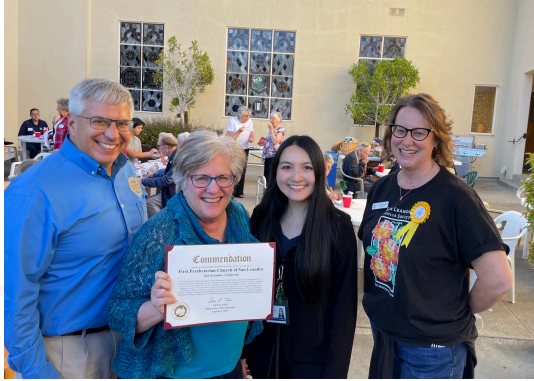
## Called Congregational Meeting– September 28

All members are invited to attend a meeting of the congregation immediately following worship.

At this meeting, we will elect Elders and Deacons whose terms of service will begin on January 1, 2026.



# NATIONAL NIGHT OUT



On **Tuesday, August 5**, First Presbyterian Church hosted a **National Night Out** event from 5:30 to 7:30 pm on the church patio. We welcomed countless **neighbors, children, families, parents, and grandparents** from our **community**, along with **special guests** and **community leaders**. Everyone enjoyed grilled hot dogs, homemade cookies and brownies, specialty San Leandro **Root Beer floats**, games like NNO Bingo, and the joy of **connecting** with one another. It truly was a fantastic evening!

## Special Guests

- San Leandro Mayor Juan Gonzalez
- City Manager Janelle Cameron
- Alameda County Supervisor Lena Tam's District Director, Silin Huang
- SLPD Lt. John Robertson
- SLPD Public Safety Dispatcher Christina Maldonado
- SLPD Crime Prevention Officer Jenny Crosby
- San Leandro Sustainability Analyst Kimberly Anderson
- San Leandro 2050 Advocate Sky Woo



## Thank You Volunteers!

Gary Calame, Maria Carter, Elaine Eakin, Bill Gile, Linda Gizzi, Sue Goodnow, Georgie Hickey, Lee Holm, Bob & Jane Kraut, Julie Larson, Gigi MacLeod, Tina Maier, Linda Morine, Michele Owyang, Chad & Jean Pennebaker, Shari Plunkett, Donald & Linda Pollard, Pastor Renée Rico, Sue Robertson, Val & Jim Watts, and Mary Woolesy.

## Special Thanks

To Janine Kline for grilling, Former SLPD Chief Ian Willis for brewing the Root Beer, San Leandro-based Loard's Ice Cream for donating ice cream, and to Emely Wendell and Rich Meadowcroft for their work in support of the event.



# 2025 September

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>31</b> <i>"Questions Jesus Asked" Series</i> Sundae Fun Day 9:30 am Worship Service	<b>1</b> <b>6:17 pm</b> Chancel Bells Rehearsal	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b> <b>7:00 pm</b> Chancel Choir Rehearsal	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b> <b>4:00 pm - 6:00 pm</b> San Leandro Historical Society- 1868 Earthquake Presentation
<b>7</b> <b>8:30 am</b> Chancel Choir Rehearsal <b>9:30 am</b> Worship Service <b>10:30 am</b> Coffee Fellowship & Donuts  <b>11:00 am</b> The Prophets Still Speak	<b>8</b> <b>6:17 pm</b> Chancel Bells Rehearsal 	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b> <b>6:30 pm</b> The Prophets Still Speak	<b>11</b> <b>7:00 pm</b> Chancel Choir Rehearsal	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>14</b> <b>8:30 am</b> Chancel Choir Rehearsal <b>9:30 am</b> Worship Service <b>10:30 am</b> Coffee Fellowship/ Manna Bags & Chocolate Sales <b>11:00 am</b> The Prophets Still Speak	<b>15</b> <b>6:17 pm</b> Chancel Bells Rehearsal	<b>16</b> <b>6:00 pm</b> Session Meeting 	<b>17</b> <b>1:00 pm</b> Christian Education Team Meeting <b>6:30 pm</b> The Prophets Still Speak	<b>18</b> <b>11:30 am</b> Young at Heart Luncheon/Program 	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>21</b> <b>8:30 am</b> Chancel Choir Rehearsal <b>9:30 am</b> Worship Service <b>10:30 am</b> Coffee Fellowship & Donuts <b>11:00 am</b> The Prophets Still Speak <b>2:00 pm</b> Sing for Unity	<b>22</b> <b>6:17 pm</b> Chancel Bells Rehearsal 	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b> <b>6:30 pm</b> The Prophets Still Speak	<b>25</b> <b>7:00 pm</b> Chancel Choir Rehearsal 	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b> <b>2:00 pm</b> Musical Movie Matinee 
<b>28</b> <b>8:30 am</b> Chancel Choir Rehearsal <b>9:30 am</b> Worship Service <b>10:30 am</b> Coffee Fellowship <b>11:00 am</b> The Prophets Still Speak	<b>29</b> <b>6:17 pm</b> Chancel Bells Rehearsal	<b>30</b>	<b>1</b> 1:00 pm Christian Education Team Meeting 6:30 pm The Prophets Still Speak	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b> <b>Blessing of the Animals</b>

# SEPTEMBER

## Men's Bible Study & Women's Fellowship Breakfasts

Saturday, September 6 at 7:30 am at Manor Grill

We're beginning a new season with the theme "Fruits of the Spirit" from Galatians 5:22-23, using Rilla June's book as our guide. Lowell Hickey will open the series with a discussion on Love. Men meet the first Saturday of each month through June, and women gather at a nearby table for breakfast and fellowship. All are welcome to come, share, and grow together in faith and friendship.



## Young at Heart

Thursday, September 18 at 11:30 am; Fellowship Hall

The Young at Heart luncheon and program is back! Enjoy a delicious meal prepared by Bob Kraut and his team, followed by a fascinating program with Sung Lee, "The Bee Charmer." Sung is a master beekeeper who will share about our critical little critters—the bees—and how we can help them survive. Sign up in Fellowship Hall so we can save you a seat. Donations to help cover the meal cost are appreciated.



## Sing for Unity

Sunday, September 21 at 2 pm; Church Patio

Everyone is invited to Sing for Unity, an interfaith community sing-a-long honoring the United Nations International Day of Peace. This event is for ALL who seek peace—people of all ages, orientations, colors, cultures, nationalities, and creeds, and will involve the participation of many different faith groups.

In these times of uncertainty, division and struggle, we may not share the same views or experiences, but we can still choose to come together in the spirit of unity, lifting our voices—side by side—as a symbol of hope and a reminder that what unites us is greater than what divides us.

No singing experience needed. Just come ready to sing familiar songs like "Imagine", "Lean on Me" and "What a Wonderful World" with Perry and Glenda Lightfoot. Words to the songs will be provided.



**San Leandro Sings for Unity**

Sing for Unity is a global movement ([singforunity.com](http://singforunity.com)) that promotes peace and unity through music and community singing.

# OCTOBER

## Rise Against Hunger

Sunday, October 19 after worship; Fellowship Hall

Join us to help package 10,000 meals for children and families facing hunger worldwide. Rise Against Hunger provides meals and other aid to support nutrition, education, and health in vulnerable communities.

To register as a volunteer, sign up online at:  
<http://events.riseagainsthunger.org/>  
**FirstPresbyterianChurchSanLeandro10/19/25**



Questions or other ways to help? See Suzanne Yee or Georgie Hickey

## Women's Book Club

Date TBD

We had a beautiful luncheon at Mollie Wakeman's home, and Kathy Pearson led the discussion of Matt Haig's *The Life Impossible*.

We have selected *One Summer in Savannah* by Terah Shelton Harris for our next read. We will be meeting at Anne Duey's home in October. More details will be announced later. To get on our email list, please contact Jeanette Rauscher or the church office.





# FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

180 Estudillo Avenue  
San Leandro, CA 94577

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# SEPTEMBER

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# BUILDING & GROUNDS

Caring for our church home

We're thrilled to share some recent updates around the church, focused on hospitality and functionality.

The front reception office has been freshly painted, the carpets cleaned, and updated with modern, inviting furniture, making it a brighter, more welcoming space for all who stop by.

Emely's former office is now a Conference Room/Multi-Purpose Room for small group meetings, Bible studies, and gatherings. It includes a TV and the mailboxes have been relocated for easier access. We are deeply grateful to our anonymous donor for covering the cost of these office upgrades.

Additional building work has included cleaning the gutters and repairing a roof crack, which is the first step toward protecting our beautiful stained glass windows. In the next phase, the frames will be painted, followed by the installation of protective plexiglass.

A big thank you to the Building & Grounds committee for their many hours of dedicated work behind the scenes. More improvements are on the way. Let's keep the momentum going!

Building & Grounds Chair,  
Don Pollard

