

FOCUS

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

Alive!
In Christ...in the World

Easter

SUNDAY  APRIL 21

6:30 a.m. • 8:00 a.m. • 9:30 a.m. • 11:00 a.m.

More on Page 2

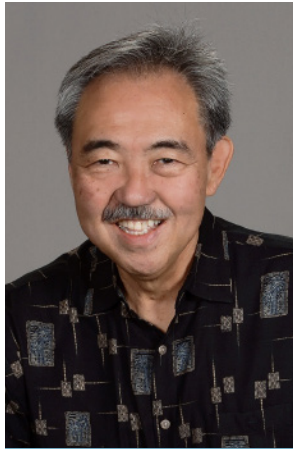
April 2019

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Sunday is Comin'!

By Gerald Chinen, Pastor Congregational Care



Shadrach Meschach Lockridge was an African-American pastor, and in a Good Friday sermon, he captured in a simple way, the darkness of the day of Jesus' crucifixion and the light and hope of the day of Christ's resurrection. The title of his sermon was, "It's Friday, but Sunday is Coming!" I want to share some of the text with you:

It's Friday. Jesus is praying. Peter's a sleeping. Judas is betraying. But Sunday's comin'.

It's Friday. Pilate's struggling. The council is conspiring. The crowd is vilifying. They don't even know that Sunday's comin'.

It's Friday. The disciples are running like sheep without a shepherd. Mary's crying. Peter is denying. But they don't know, that Sunday's a comin'.

It's Friday. See Jesus walking to Calvary. His body stumbling. And his spirit's burdened. But you see, it's only Friday. Sunday's comin'.

It's Friday. The world is winning. People are sinning. And evil is grinning.

It's Friday. He's hanging on the cross. Feeling forsaken by his Father. Left alone and dying. Can nobody save him? Ooooh, it's Friday. But Sunday's comin'.

It's Friday. Jesus is buried. A soldier stands guard and a rock is rolled into place. But it's Friday. It is only Friday.

SUNDAY IS COMIN'!

Darkness shrouds our days sometimes. Our struggles, whatever they may be, can often be so painful, so distressing, that it is hard to imagine anything good coming on the horizon. The reason we observe Good Friday is to acknowledge that there are challenges in this life, but our suffering isn't just ours to bear, but that God in his son Jesus also bore our suffering on the cross. We celebrate Easter because we know that not even death can impose its way on the power of God to bring new life and hope, even in the most hopeless of situations.

We began the season of Lent on Ash Wednesday, and come Holy Week, please join us for our Maundy Thursday service, Good Friday service, and of course our Easter Sunday services. Hope and new life are on the horizon!





Easter

at LOPC

Holy Week

April 14

Palm Sunday Services
9:00 a.m. & 11:00 a.m.
All ages in worship

Egg Hunt & Potluck Brunch
12:15 p.m.

April 18

Maundy Thursday Service
Communion served, childcare provided
7:00 p.m.

April 19

Good Friday Service
Featuring a new musical work
by Lauren Gully & Brett Strader,
Childcare provided
7:00 p.m.

Easter Sunday

April 21

**Early Morning Outdoor
Communion Service**
6:30 a.m.

Easter Services

8:00 a.m.

9:30 a.m.

11:00 a.m.

Children's Program

Pre-K through 4th Grade 9:30 a.m. & 11:00 a.m.

Childcare for children four and under
provided at 8:00 a.m., 9:30 a.m.,
and 11:00 a.m. services

easter



Special Easter Offering for Monument Crisis Center April 21

Monument Crisis Center is celebrating its 15-year anniversary of serving Central and East Contra Costa County. Typically, when people think of the Monument Crisis Center they immediately think of food distribution. Though this is an extremely vital portion of its mission, this is only a part of what Monument Crisis Center does.

Monument Crisis Center

Helps the community by:

- Serving 10,000 unique clients annually in Contra Costa County.
- Ensuring 4000 people don't go hungry each month.
- Empowering individuals to volunteer over 30,000 hours of service per year.

Helps children by:

- Keeping children safe with after-school programs and summer camps.
- Providing STEM education and robotics camps in their afterschool programs to prepare youth for the future.
- Equipping 1,500 low-income students in the community with backpacks filled with supplies to help them start the school year.
- Eliminating gang activity through collaboration with the city of Concord's 180 program.

Helps adults by:

- Supporting seniors by offering healthy meals and screenings, legal assistance and a community of peers.
- Offering computer classes, resume building, and career counseling.
- Hosting yoga, Tai Chi, and other wellness classes.
- Empowering clients with ESL classes.



Ways to Donate:

- Write a check payable to LOPC with "MCC" in the memo line.
- Go to lopc.org >GIVE BACK>ONLINE GIVING and click "MCC" in the dropdown menu.
- Use the LOPC app > Press "Give" button > Click "MCC".

Easter Flowers

This Easter we will continue our well-loved tradition of adorning the sanctuary with beautiful flowers. For some, the strong scent of lilies causes an allergic reaction or other respiratory problems. We welcome everyone to our worship services, so we will instead use odorless white azaleas. You may sponsor an azalea for \$18 at the booth on the plaza after worship services on March 31, April 7, and April 14. Order forms will be available in the Ministry Center office after March 31. Mailed requests must be received by Friday, April 12. A list of flower dedications will be published in the Easter Sunday bulletin. Those who have donated azaleas may take them home following the 11 a.m. service. They may also be picked up in the Narthex Monday, April 22 through Wednesday, April 24.

Questions? Contact Lexi at lexi@lopc.org



Easter Flowers \$18

I / We would like to donate a white azalea
to adorn the sanctuary on Easter Sunday

In Memory of: _____

Or

In Honor of: _____

Given By: _____

Phone: _____ Amount: _____

Please make checks payable to LOPC. Thank You.

Please fill out and return this form to the Ministry Center office at LOPC
by April 12.



mission love does

love protects, love hopes, love never fails



2019 Accomplishments

Bay Area Rescue Mission - Packaged over 350 toiletry kits for the homeless.

Operation Dignity -

- Assembled 65 polar fleece blankets to be distributed to Oakland homeless.
- Prepared 50 bag lunches and toiletry kits that were distributed to homeless people in Oakland.

Contra Costa Food Bank - sorted and boxed 4200 lbs. of oranges.

Creek Kids - created over 100 paintings to be sold as stationery.

Foster A Dream - Sewed 51 pillowcases for foster children.

Las Trampas - Demolished and reinstalled lower kitchen cabinets and started the demo of an exterior deck in a client home.

Loved Twice - created 161 boxes of baby clothing: 81 girls and 80 boys.

Monument Crisis Center -

- Assembled 45 shopping carts.
- Packed 1,250 pounds of beans and rice.
- Assembled 75 senior bingo gift bags.

Shelter Inc. - Deep cleaned their kitchen and dining room, served clients lunch, and removed and replaced old bark in playground.

STAND - Deep cleaned a community kitchen, and organized pantry and donation closet.

Contra Costa Interfaith Housing - Painted two offices and reorganized kid's play area. Made and installed two benches, four planter boxes, and added new bark to garden area.

Loaves and Fishes - Deep cleaned central kitchen used to prepare food for Contra Costa County locations.

Primera Iglesia - Repurposed the storage rooms to make them user-friendly. Went through 98 storage boxes sorting and discarding documents that were no longer needed. Installed racks and created a room to hang choir robes and costumes.

"Thank you also very much for the amazing donation of the carts of gold: beans, rice, and senior gift bags - beautiful! The carts are so precious to the clients that receive them - you just can't imagine what a difference they can make."

Sandra Scherer, Executive Director of Monument Crisis Center

"It was indeed a great day! You guys did a marvelous job. Larger projects like this are always such a benefit to our residents; with only a two-person maintenance team, it can be challenging to complete projects like this in a timely manner and without causing disruptions for our residents."

Michael Slembrouck, Las Trampas Maintenance Department

community

Save the Date

First Presbyterian Church of Burlingame All Church Retreat



LOPC members are invited to attend the All-Church Retreat led by First Presbyterian Church of Burlingame at Mount Hermon on October 18-20, 2019. One of our LOPC pastors will be in attendance as a part of this retreat. The speaker is The Reverend Donald Baird.

Accommodation pricing is per person and determined by the room category that you select:

- Deluxe, \$350/adult, \$150/child
- Standard, \$300/adult, \$150/child
- Economy, \$250/adult, \$150/child

Registration opens in August – more information about the registration process and speaker topic will follow. If you are interested in attending this retreat, please email michelle@lopc.org. We would like to track how many people are planning to attend this retreat in our off year.

BCS is Starting Its Ninth School!



Build Congo Schools (BCS) is one of the key Presbyterian Church (USA) initiatives that LOPC supports with the help of its Congo Mission Team. BCS has built eight schools to date, replacing mud and grass shacks with vibrant learning centers. Over 4,000 students are benefiting from these new schools. BCS, which is supported by numerous churches in the U.S., is now raising funds for a ninth school for the village of Dibaya. This area lost about 100 people over the last couple of years due to pre-election violence, so a new school will provide much needed hope. About half of the \$87,000 needed has been raised.

BCS is also undertaking a study to assess the impact its schools have had on the children and the communities. Please visit the BCS website to learn more.

LOPC has supported BCS through individual donations, the Congo team budget, and, of course, the dedicated efforts of the Necklace Sales Team that has raised over \$48,000 since its inception. Most recently the team provided the funds to purchase a generator for the eighth school. (see picture).

If you have questions about BCS or the efforts of the Congo Team in general, you can contact Herb Long (herblong7@gmail.com) or Bobbie Dodson-Nielsen (bobbiedodson@comcast.net).

Necklaces for Sale!

Just in time for Mother's Day, the Congo Necklace Team will be displaying their products on the plaza after both services on May 5. Many styles are available, decorated with pendants and beads, plus fluffy scarfs. Gift them for all occasions! Help Build Congo Schools as they work on funding a tenth school.

community



Welcoming Our Newest Members!

From our New-Members Class in February.

Jane Balg



Jane grew up as a Christian attending Sunday morning worship services and church activities throughout her life in a non-denominational church setting. She has been attending LOPC for the last couple of years as a regular visitor.

On February 3, the sermon topic was "Religion that works." While enjoying the postlude after the sermon, she said she noticed in the Connections bulletin that a new membership class was taking place in a few days. Jane mentioned she heard in her heart, "It's time to commit," and decided right then and there to join LOPC. What attracted her to LOPC was the thought provoking and spirit-resonating Sunday sermon messages, as well as the music program and presentation.

Jeff & Jenny Budke



Jeff and Jenny have lived in Lafayette for 10 years, and they have three children: Elyse (12), Brad (8), and Pierce (4). Jeff

swam competitively through college and met Jenny while both were coaching the Sun Valley Swim Team in Lafayette as teenagers. They have been married for 18 years. Jeff works for a construction company in San Francisco where he plans and manages building construction throughout the Bay Area. Jenny works in San Francisco for a private accounting and investment office while also doing academic coaching and advising part-time. The family keeps busy with sports and activities. In the summer, Jeff and Jenny co-direct the Walnut Creek All-City Meet and are often found by the pool or hosting friends at their home. What attracted

them to LOPC was a connection to the community they live in and a place where they can raise their children. They have deep roots at LOPC as Jeff's mom was raised here, his grandmother was actively involved and is now interred in the Kurth Memorial Garden.

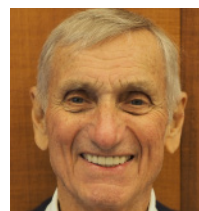
Jeff & Bridget Davies



Jeff and Bridget have been married eight years and have a 5-year old daughter, Jillian.

They love spending time together with family and especially watching Jillian grow and experience new things. Jeff is a project manager for Shea Homes. Motorcycling is a new hobby for Jeff, and Bridget has recently started quilting. They heard about LOPC by recommendation from a family friend. They enjoy the music in worship, service opportunities, and Children's Ministry.

Don Drennan



Don was raised in Berkeley, and after graduating from Cal he became a Navy pilot. Following his service in the Navy, he flew for Pan Am Airlines until retiring. Last year, he married LOPC member and deacon, Joan Bellows Drennan. They live in Rossmoor and enjoy traveling, music, spending time at their Lake Tahoe cabin, and being with their combined family of five children, seven grandchildren, and nine great-grandchildren. What attracted Don to LOPC was his wife, Joan. He also enjoys the sermons and music.

Tom & Cathy Eberhardt



The Eberhardts have been actively serving in the Youth Ministry for more than five years and felt it was time to formalize their membership! They look forward to being even more engaged at LOPC as active members. What attracted them to LOPC were the robust programs, Youth Ministry, and vitality of the church culture.

Sue Handy



Sue Handy has lived in Concord for 40 years, raising three children with her late husband while teaching at Diablo Valley College (DVC). She came to LOPC for Bev Fellows' Grief Support Group and soon started attending worship services, finding peace and solace, along with soul-provoking teaching, beautiful music in an amazing setting, and clearly principled leadership. After being a regular visitor, she looks forward to being a member of this community. Three grandchildren, fulfilling work, and bucket-list travel keep her busy.

Bob Hayes



Bob Hayes is a trained Stephen Minister and leader. He has a passion for small groups and has received training at Willow Creek in small-group leadership. Bob feels called to discipleship and evangelism ministries. He was attracted to LOPC by the Stephen Ministry program.

Christina & Eric Meinberg



The Meinbergs have midwestern roots (Michigan, Ohio, and North Carolina) and have lived in Lafayette since 2011 where they are raising their family. They are the proud parents of Evan (6) and Maren (3) who inspire them to help make the world a better place. Christina's part-time vocation is coaching emerging leaders who are seeking to find meaningful work, mostly through her

work at UC Berkeley. She is also an avid student of human development. Eric is a professor and orthopedic surgeon at UCSF. They enjoy the outdoors, traveling, and spending family time together. They were attracted to LOPC by its welcoming atmosphere and the humility of the staff. They also appreciate LOPC's focus on social justice, local and global outreach, along with the children and youth programs.

Clarice Ramos



Clarice is originally from Brazil and has lived in Lafayette for seven years. She boasts traveling throughout Europe, Asia, and her home of Brazil. She enjoys baking, cooking, dogs, family activities, walking, yoga, and languages (she speaks Portuguese, Spanish, and English). Clarice is a babysitter, housekeeper, nanny, pet-sitter, and property manager. What attracted her to LOPC was her faith in Jesus Christ.

Alistair & Jeanette Shearer



Alistair was born in Scotland and brought up in the Church of Scotland. He moved to the U.S. for graduate work in architecture at Cal Poly San Luis Obispo where he met his wife, Jeanette, at the First Presbyterian Church San Luis Obispo. They moved to Lafayette after grad school. Jeanette was born and raised in California and was raised in the Dutch Reformed Church. She's a 5th-grade elementary school teacher. They have two grown daughters who are both in medical school. The Shearers previously worshipped at Lafayette United Methodist Church. Both are actively involved in the community of LOPC as Alistair sings tenor in the choir and Jeanette teaches 2nd grade on Sunday mornings and Vacation Bible Camp in the Children's Ministry. What attracted them to LOPC were the opportunities to serve, the amazing music program, and a desire to return to a larger church with Presbyterian roots.



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community

Dave & Anita Shrigley



Anita is a retired teacher and has taught around the world: Texas, Turkey, Germany, Okinawa, and California.

Due to Dave's work assignments, the Shrigleys have been blessed to international living: Hong Kong, Edinburgh, Scotland, and California! They boast being the parents of three daughters, son in-laws, and seven grandchildren. They are celebrating 44 years of marriage! When asked what has attracted them to LOPC they responded, "Everything!" They enjoy the pastors, sanctuary, prayer labyrinth, music ministry, and worship services.

Terry & Debbie Turner



The Turners have been married for 46 years. They enjoy family time, traveling, the Beatles, baseball, boating, and motorcycle riding. Debbie is an avid cookie baker in between picking up grandchildren from school, monitoring snacks, and helping with homework. LOPC member, Ginny Gifford, invited them to attend the church when she found out they were transitioning from their church of 23 years. They are thankful for the invitation and are very happy to be at LOPC.

Membership Class

May 17 - 19

The LOPC Membership Class is an opportunity to meet the pastoral staff, have your questions answered, learn about the programs and ministries of the church, and make new friends. It also serves to clarify what LOPC believes God has called this church to be, so visitors can make an informed decision about formalizing their commitment to this faith community. Ask questions and find out more about LOPC. All are welcome!

For more information, contact Chris Baldwin at chris@lopc.org or 925-283-8722 x110.

RSVP for childcare to susan@lopc.org.

Orinda Honors LOPC Members



Long-time LOPC members Carol and Andy Amstutz have been named Orinda Citizens of the Year. The honor is bestowed annually by the Orinda Community Foundation to recognize community volunteer service.

The Amstutz were celebrated recently at a dinner attended by nearly 200 friends.

Carol and Andy have lived in Orinda and have been LOPC members since 1968. Carole, a former teacher in the Orinda School system, teaches piano privately and is active in the Orinda Garden Club. Andy has served on Session and also been Clerk of Session, president of the LOPC Foundation and active in the LOPC Interfaith Ministry. He is one of the founding members of the Lamorinda Village nonprofit organization that supports those over age 55 to help them remain in their own homes as they grow older.

15th Annual JF Kapnek Fun Run

Supports Education and Wellness for Zimbabwe Children

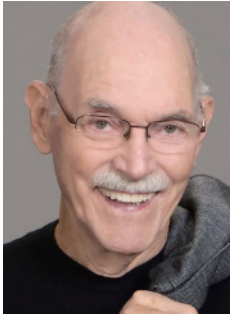
The 15th annual JF Kapnek Trust Family Fun run will take place at 9:00 a.m. on Sunday, May 5, 2019 at Miramonte High School (750 Moraga Way).

The event supports preschool, nutrition and AIDS treatment and prevention programs for children and families in Zimbabwe.

Along with a 5K run and a 1K children's run or walk, event participants will enjoy music, arts and crafts, food, and prizes for the top finishers including certificates from Dick's Sporting Goods, Sports Basement, and A Runner's World. And all participants will receive a commemorative T-shirt.

Journey of Faith

by Bobbie Dodson-Nielsen, LOPC Member



Bob Finertie

Bob Finertie has had some close encounters with God which have made God seem very real for him. When Bob was 22, he had listened to a powerful sermon on Isaiah 6:9. "Afterward, I heard the voice of the Lord saying, 'Whom shall I send and who will go for us?'" he recalls. I said, "Here I am! Send me." I told God, "I don't know how this is going to happen, Lord, but if it's what You want I'll trust that You can make it happen." And, He did.

Four years later, Bob graduated from Maryville College, Tennessee, with honors, and in 1960, from Princeton Theological Seminary. His first assignment took him to Yoder, Wyoming, as pastor of the Community Presbyterian Church; a few years later, he served in Pittsburgh, PA, as interim director for a preschool, and a family and children's center.

"Now, fast forward to 1976," he says, "and see me lying on a gurney at the MD Anderson Hospital in Texas, alone, scared, and cold. A year earlier a dark spot on my leg tested positive for melanoma, and I had surgery to remove that lesion. But, the cancer had metastasized to my lymph nodes. I lay alone for four hours as the medical team considered what to do next. One option was to amputate my right leg.

"While there, I had a lot of time to think and pray. 'Lord, I can't do this anymore. Please help me.' After a few moments, these words came to me, 'Thou dost keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on thee' (Isaiah 26:3). I felt a wave of peace, and then a second verse followed, 'The eternal God is your dwelling place and, underneath, are the everlasting arms' (Deuteronomy 33:27). I felt myself being carried by those 'everlasting arms' as when my dad would scoop me up and carry me upstairs to tuck me into bed. The

medical team decided on a surgical removal of the lymph nodes, followed by a year of chemotherapy. At the end of treatment, the doctor declared me free of cancer. The melanoma has never returned."

Bob faced another cancer threat 17 years later -- a grapefruit-sized tumor that required surgery and a year of chemotherapy. The prognosis was discouraging. "I asked my wife, Leslie, to drive us to Wyoming, which I believe is my healing place" he says. Later, during the drive back home to Texas, He awoke from a nap to a vision of his mother telling him he was going to be okay. Subsequent medical tests proved that to be correct. "I said thank you, Lord," Bob says. "More years of grace -- and now it's been 43."

He says he believes God has called him to extend a helping hand to those hurting from broken relationships. He facilitates support groups, making a covenant with God to walk with, and listen to those in need. He has been leading such groups for 20 years, finding joy -- using Bob's words -- "in tending His sheep. In the paradoxical economy of God, it is in giving we receive," he states.

When Bob arrived at LOPC three years ago he joined with a spiritual director to deepen his faith, and draw closer to God. "A large chunk of my healing has come about during times of spiritual direction over the past few years at LOPC," he says. "God's grace has continued to work in me. Recently I accepted an invitation to join the Spiritual Formation Team. I find happiness in preparing and leading presentations for the 10:10 classes."

"God has propelled my journey to self-love through people. And God caring for me through others has continued for the last 30 years with my sweet wife, Leslie, who shares her loving spirit with me."



community

First Friday Forum: April 4, 1:30 p.m.

Father and Son: Exclusion, Inclusion from China to Chinatown to America

Refreshments, Fellowship Hall at 1 p.m. • Speaker, in the Sanctuary at 1:30 p.m.

April's First Friday Forum speaker, is journalist and author William Gee Wong, who will bring a special perspective to the issue of immigration among other issues, as he presents "Father and Son: Exclusion, Inclusion from China to Chinatown to America." The Forum will take place April 4, 1:30 p.m., with refreshments served at 1:00 p.m. in Fellowship Hall.

Wong says his talk, with photos, will primarily be about his father, who first came from China to Oakland, California in 1912 as a teenager. It was during the Chinese Exclusion era (1882 to 1946). "He lived transitionally until he brought his wife and three daughters to settle in Oakland. He had four other children and ran the Great China restaurant in the heart of Chinatown from 1943 until his death in 1961," Wong says. "His story is an example of Chinese men surviving during the exclusion era and leaving a legacy of four generations of productive Americans."

Born in Oakland, the youngest and only son, Wong had six sisters. He attended Oakland public schools and graduated from UC Berkeley and Columbia University's Graduate School of Journalism. He worked in both mainstream and ethnic journalism for



more than 40 years. As a pioneering Asian-American journalist, he has written for the Wall Street Journal, Oakland Tribune, San Francisco Examiner and Chronicle and Asian Week.

Wong's book, *Yellow Journalist: Dispatches from Asian America*, is a collection of columns, essays, commentaries, and stories that chronicle his experiences growing up in Oakland's Chinatown; Asian-American history; social and racial justice; anti-Asian racism; immigration; media portrayals; and politics; among other topics. It is the result of Wong's work as an inside observer of Asian-America's dynamic role in a changing America.

Wong also wrote *Oakland's Chinatown*, which contains many historic photos of the area. He calls his hometown, and the larger Bay Area, the capital of Asian-America.

He has been a regional commentator on *The PBS News Hour*. In the interview Wong stated, "At a time when immigration is a political hot potato, this father-son story exemplifies a positive outcome for the ever-evolving American Experiment."



Science and Religion April 15, 7:15 p.m. - Oak Room

You may be aware of changes in our lives resulting from the increasing use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in our many interactions with other people, businesses (think Amazon), government agencies, and almost any other encounter with automated machines. AI promises an exciting world where onerous everyday tasks can be accomplished by smart machines (robots) more efficiently than we can do them ourselves.

Some observers see a number of pitfalls associated with this expanding use of technology. One area of

concern only recently raised by a few people is that AI might become a threat to Christianity or even theology in general. The concern is that if we can build AI with human or near-human intelligence, it may take over and quickly surpass human intelligence.

On the evening of April 15, Chuck Smith will make a presentation including history and status reports on some current AI projects. Also, we will discuss several positions advanced by a number of theologians and other observers.

All are invited. The meeting will begin at 7:15 p.m. in the Oak room. Questions, contact Chuck Smith at (925) 433-5133.

thursday Fellowship

A program of Senior Care Ministries.

Every Thursday

11:00 a.m. – 1:30 p.m. - Fellowship Hall

April will be a busy month as we continue to plan and prepare to celebrate the 40th anniversary of Thursday Fellowship. We will be celebrating on Thursday, May 23, 2019. Look for more information in the May FOCUS. We are excited to have some spectacular entertainment lined up this month and look forward to hearing the musical talents of local flute instructor Martha Uhey, who will perform along with some of her adult students. We anticipate learning a lot from local author, historian, and accredited genealogist, Susan Skelton.

In March, we enjoyed a classical harpist who played a varied repertoire including some Celtic tunes for St. Patrick's Day. A vocal quartet known for their beautiful harmonies singing classics and jazz standards of the 1930's was a big hit. We treasure the musical talents of our first and third Thursdays performed by Jim Pearson, Gillian Roebuck, and Michael Kistner. A Seedlings class joined us to work on a mission project. It was such fun, and watching the children create alongside the seniors was a precious sight. We created original artwork that will be used by Creek Kids Care to

"Let's Meet Our Neighbors" Presbyterian Women's May Luncheon

Presbyterian Women will observe its annual potluck salad luncheon and birthday offering dedication on May 15, 12 p.m. - 2 p.m. Our emphasis will be on our neighbors: who they are, how we can meet them, and how we can help them. Our speaker will be Dr. Karen Ferguson, Executive Director of the Northern Branch of the International Rescue Committee. She will describe her work and take questions from the audience.



Bring a salad, a neighbor, and a friend as we lunch and learn together. Contact Catherine Coleman at awaitingword@gmail.com for more information.

Questions? Contact Coordinators:
Julie Peterson - julie@lopc.org
Clarita Wooldridge - clarita@lopc.org
925-283-8722 x281

make greeting cards. The proceeds from the sale of the cards support The Trinity Center in Walnut Creek and two local projects that sponsor students in need.

April 4: Jim Pearson and Gillian Roebuck will entertain us with piano and song.

April 11: Local flute instructor, Martha Uhey, will feature her adult students and professional flutists in an afternoon flute and piano concert.

April 18: Michael Kistner will perform golden oldies as we sing along.

April 25: Author, historian, and accredited genealogist, Susan Skelton, will take us on a journey to the past with historical photos of Moraga and information on local history. Susan works for a division of Ancestry.com and will also speak on genealogy research.

Typical Thursday schedule:

11:00 a.m. - Meet-and-Greet with snacks and beverages

11:15 a.m. - Craft activities and/or light exercise

Noon - Lunch please bring a half sandwich. We will provide salad, beverage, and dessert.

12:45 p.m. - Entertainment

LOPC Breakfast Group

(formerly Men's Breakfast)

Wednesday, April 17 - 7:00 a.m.

All are welcome to join on April 17 for a breakfast at 7:00 a.m. where we will be hosting Kristen Connelly, President & CEO of East Bay Leadership Council. She will be presenting on "Economic Vitality & Quality of Life in the East Bay." A \$5 donation at the door is suggested. We hope you can attend!



lopc foundation

The Time Is Now

By Jen Crocker, Foundation Trustee



The LOPC Foundation is an avenue where one has an opportunity to make a lasting difference in our church. The gifts to the Foundation are invested and a percentage of the investment return is withdrawn each year to help support LOPC. This support includes mission, facilities, new ministries, and a variety of ministry programs.

Having been a long-time member of LOPC, I have known about the Foundation since its inception. I always believed that one day my husband and I would designate a portion of our estate to the Foundation. And it was always one of those things we would do when we got "older." Now that I am a trustee of the Foundation I have realized that now is a good time to become a Friend of the Foundation. A gift can be made at any time to the Foundation or a gift can be made through your estate. I've realized that "older" comes sooner than you think and one is never too young to think about making a lasting gift to our church.

If you are interested in finding out more information about the Foundation, please contact any of the trustees: Dick James, Kristi Haigh, Phil Placier, Dara Youngdale, Staci Johnston, Jim Beckemeyer, Jerry Ducey, Mike Ross, or Jennifer Crocker.

session

February Session Highlights

By Lois Boyd, Clerk of Session

It is a joy to be serving on Session at a time when LOPC's ministries are active and thriving and well supported by the church's members. Our individual ministries are often the gateway to members of our community to become involved and connected, many times leading to their decision to join the church.

In February, Session heard a report about how two ministry programs -- Mission and Spiritual Formation -- are working together to grow a broader and deeper involvement for all who participate. Pastor Lauren Gully described how these two ministries are evolving to become more integrated. Using the simile of breathing, she described the synergy between the two ministries. Spiritual Formation - deepening our relationship with God and growing in our faith through spiritual practices - is like "breathing in." Mission - charity, relational volunteerism, advocacy and prayer - is like "breathing out." Each area benefits from and enhances the other.

Currently all of the LOPC ministries are undertaking the annual planning process of articulating vision, values, methods, obstacles, and measures with a particular focus on the four areas identified as priorities: 1) How to share the good news and make disciples; 2) How to provide ministry that is onsite, offsite, and online; 3) Mission; 4) Expand ministry connections with younger members of the community. Also under consideration is the possibility of adding worship as a further priority to work toward attracting even greater and more diverse participation.

Seeking New Church Leaders! Officer Nominations Needed by May 5

One of the cornerstones of our Presbyterian heritage is election by the congregation of church officers to provide leadership for the church, as well as loving support for those in the church community. Each year we elect officers to serve for the following year, drawn from nominations from the congregation.

We are now in the process of selecting new officers and leaders for LOPC for terms beginning January 2020. It is a great privilege and responsibility to nominate members who will serve LOPC as elected lay leaders. It is also necessary for us to participate in the essential process that will influence our church in the near future.

The primary qualifications for nominees are:

- **Strong commitment to Jesus Christ and the church's Mission Statement.**
- **Active participation in worship and in other ministries at LOPC.**
- **Stewardship commitment of time, talent, and financial resources.**
- **Leadership ability and organizational skills.**
- **Compassion in human relationships.**
- **An open-minded approach to ideas and problems.**
- **Spiritual depth and maturity.**
- **Ability to equip people for ministry and work in a team-based leadership role.**

Elders, together with the pastors, lead and direct the ministry of the church.

They are persons of faith, dedication, and good judgment. Elders serve on Session, the governing body of the church. They also chair various church teams through which all ministries are conducted. Eight elders are ordained to serve three-year terms.

Deacons, as set forth in Scripture, are leaders who serve as the caring, compassionate arm of the church.

They provide loving support to all those in need within the church community. The primary area of Deacon service is care of members. Ten deacons are ordained to serve a three-year term and two deacons of high school-age serve a one-year term.

The Congregation Nominating Committee (CNC) members receive and renew nominations for church officers.

They select candidates to present to the congregation. They are elected for a one-year term.

Foundation Trustees serve on the LOPC Foundation. This nine-member foundation receives gifts in various forms and designations, manages investments, and provides funding for LOPC needs that cannot be accommodated in the church's annual operating budget. Trustees serve an initial term of four years and are eligible to be re-elected for one three-year term. Members who have served in the past can be nominated for a two-year term.

Nomination forms will be available until May 5 in the Ministry Center, and Sanctuary pew racks, or send an email nomination to cnc@lopc.org. We need your nominations, so please fill out and submit at least one nomination form.

For more information, contact a CNC member: David MacKenzie (Chair), Lois Boyd (Clerk of Session), Jeff Patton, Ann Loar, Richard Courtney, Marsha McDonagh, Linda Kinrade (Deacon Representative), Peter Whitelock and Gerald Chinen.

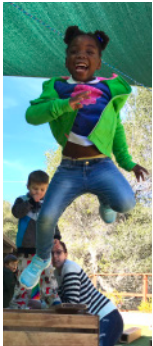
Thank you for your prayerful consideration. We are looking forward to hearing from each of you.

seedlings

Seedlings Outside Classroom

By Tina Clendenin

Seedlings Board Communications Chair



Did you know Seedlings students are lucky enough to get TWO classrooms? In addition to their regular classroom, each student also gets to experience the Outdoor Classroom daily! The Outdoor Classroom is much more than your average recess: it is another learning experience for students run by teacher, Max Cordes. Mr. Max develops creative games, organizes interactive teamwork activities, and teaches lessons about nature all through play and exploration. He is a bundle of energy and fun and engages students to think about the world around them while also positively expanding their social interactions.



Mr. Max takes the lead from the students to ensure their outdoor experience is just right. In January, the Poppies and Petunias classes (2 and 3-year-olds) spent time learning about sharing materials and taking turns. If a certain truck in the sandbox was in high demand, they practiced making another truck suit their needs.

They also discussed the value of being friendly and how to cater to the needs of not only themselves but also those around them. The Snapdragons and Daisies classes (3 to 4-year-olds) were excited about investigative adventures. In February, they spent time catching insects and observing, inferring, and asking questions about them. Mr. Max also set up ropes throughout the play structure with bells attached. Students explored the ropes, testing them out to see how they worked. In November, the Sunflowers and Dandelions classes (4-5 year olds) enjoyed using a hose in the sandbox to create "rivers." The kids investigated river infrastructure through water pressure of the hose and how and where to build dams. In a collaborative effort, students learned through trial and error.

Every day is a new learning experience in the Outside Classroom. Whether running in obstacle courses, playing pine-cone bowling, tending to the garden, observing insects, or eating at "Café de Outside," you know students are engaged, learning, and having fun!

children

Vacation Bible Camp

At Vacation Bible Camp, we anchor kids in the truth that Jesus carries them through life's storms through songs, stories, games, experiments, and more. Camp is where kids experience the love of God, grow in the virtues of kindness, justice, and mercy, and learn to change the world around them by being the hands, feet, and heart of God.



We would love to open camp to as many families as possible, but we are dependent on our volunteer capacity. Not only are volunteers essential to our program, the relationships that are built during this week last a lifetime. Please consider volunteering your time this year at Vacation Bible Camp!

Who: Kids 4 years old (by Sept. 1, 2019) to completed 4th Graders (June 2019).

Dates: Monday, June 10 – Friday, June 14, 2019.

Times: Monday – Thursday 1:00-4:00 p.m., and Friday 2:00-5:00 p.m..

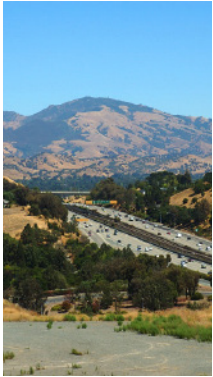
Cost: April 1 – May 1, \$60 per child; after May 1, \$75 per child.

Registration for participants and volunteers starts on April 1 at lopc.org.

youth

Summer Youth Service Opportunities

Register online today!

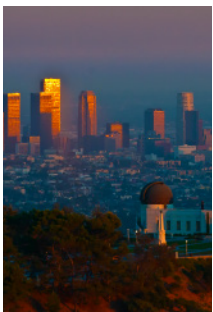


Service Squad (5th & 6th Grade)

June 10 – 14, East Bay

Youth who have completed 5th or 6th grade in June will serve for a couple hours each day with a local (East Bay) mission partner, then return to debrief and reflect on their experience. Youth will become acquainted with the many ways in which we can share God's love even within our own community! Our dream is that this week will inspire youth for a life of serving and loving others. Service may include sorting and packing food, yard-work, visiting the elderly and home-bound, running programs for children living in a shelter, and more!

Contact Allison at allison@lopc.org with questions.

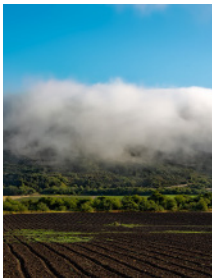


Middle School (7th & 8th Grade)

June 23 – 28, Los Angeles

Youth who have completed 7th or 8th grade in June will spend a week serving the people of Los Angeles. Service may include participating in food-justice programs, spending time with the elderly and infirm, serving food to homeless people, providing care for children in need, and more!

Contact Allison at allison@lopc.org with questions.



High School (9th – 12th Grade)

July 14 – 20, Salinas

Youth who have completed 9th-12th grade in June will serve the people of Salinas. We will discover God at work as we assist with food-distribution programs for people experiencing homelessness and work among the migrant farm worker community.

Contact Keris at keris@lopc.org with questions.



5th – 8th Grade Youth

Sundays during 9 a.m. worship services

Engage in a weekly Bible story with activities that help reveal how the story is relevant to our modern lives. Get to know your peers and leaders as we grow in faith together! Youth who attend the 11 a.m. worship service are encouraged to enjoy the worship service with family and friends.

Contact Allison at allison@lopc.org with questions.

spiritual formation

Getting to Know The Bible

Did Zach Flanagin's Mt. Hermon talk pique your interest in getting to know the Bible better? Do you still feel a little lost on how to do that? Kathy Timpte, LOPC's theologian in residence, has put together a set of resources on getting to know the Bible. Found under the "Spiritual Formation" page on the LOPC website, the multi-part resource is framed by a series of basic questions about the Bible, starting with, "If I've never read the Bible, where should I start?" This online resource both guides interested readers through Bible passages themselves, as well as suggests a variety of books about the Bible written by top-notch scholars in an accessible and engaging style. There's even an app suggestion for those of you who are tech savvy. Check it out, and start getting to know your Bible better today!

lopc.org/ministry/spiritual-formation/getting-to-know-the-bible



April 10:10

Join us for 10:10 in April! Here are the topics being discussing this month:

10:10
grow empowered to live in faith

April 7 & 14: Lenten Study

This year the Lenten study is on Adam Hamilton's book *Creed*. Join Kara Yu for the final two weeks in her six-week study leading up to Easter. She will guide us through Hamilton's book, which dives into the Apostle's Creed and what the Creed teaches about Christian belief. This study will complement the sermon series, as well as the Lenten small groups.

April 21 - Easter! - no 10:10

April 28 - "Let it Go!": The Art of Journaling

Join Bob Finertie as he teaches on the practice of journaling. In his January 10:10 series "Learning to Grieve Well," he spoke on how vital it is to EX-PRESS our sadness. Keeping a journal is an excellent practice of expression. Research is showing how writing can help with our healing too. Bob's class will teach on the value of journaling, as well as give you a chance to begin journaling right there in the class!

CREED

WHAT CHRISTIANS BELIEVE AND WHY
A LENTEN SERMON SERIES

APRIL 7: "THE FORGIVENESS OF SINS"

APRIL 14 - PALM SUNDAY

APRIL 21 - EASTER: "THE RESURRECTION OF THE BODY AND THE LIFE EVERLASTING"

staff

Goodbye & Hello!



Sara Warfield, former communications associate, has resigned to serve as rector at a small Episcopal church in Gresham, Oregon, just outside of Portland. "Sara has done a wonderful job of expanding our communications capabilities," Pastor Peter Whitelock said. "We are sorry to see her go, but we are so pleased for this opportunity for her and her new congregation."



Our new communications associate is Jon Corry. Jon comes to us from Northern California where he served as the multimedia coordinator for Redding First United Methodist Church for many years. Originally from the South Bay, Jon moved to Chico to attend college in 2003. In 2006, he married his college sweetheart, Melanie, the two having met in a ballroom-dancing course. Jon relocated back to the Bay Area this past autumn as his wife began a new role as a television producer at KRON-TV in San Francisco. "I am excited and honored to be a part of the staff and serving the LOPC community!"



Also, meet our new Administrative Assistant, Renée Wigginton. "I am originally from Littleton, Colorado and have called the Bay Area home since 2010. My husband and I bought our first home in Walnut Creek early last summer and, having lived in Sunnyvale

for the better part of eight years, we're having fun navigating our way around the East Bay.

"I am so grateful that God led me to LOPC. We found our dream home but were sad to leave Sunnyvale Presbyterian Church where I had worked for five years as the senior pastor's executive administrative assistant. It is also where my husband and I met and later married. However, we quickly found a new home at LOPC!

"I love travel, photography, fine dining, and hosting parties and events, but most of all, I enjoy learning the stories of others. Please stop by to say hello!"

Pastor Jaime's Sabbatical



Pastor Jaime is entering her seventh year of ministry at LOPC and she will begin her sabbatical after Easter services on April 21, 2019 and return to LOPC on June 8, 2019. Jaime will be in Europe for most of her sabbatical with the added blessing that her husband is on his sabbatical from St. Mary's

College. Jaime will be traveling and studying the cathedrals and churches of France, Germany, and Italy with her family joining the trip as well. Here is a little more about Jaime's Sabbatical study plans in Jaime's words:

"During my Sabbatical, I plan to visit France, Italy, and Germany while studying the lives of the men and women who have planned, built, and created cathedrals and the religious art within these beautiful places of worship. A few of the sites I will visit include Chartes, Sainte-Chapelle and Notre Dame, Reims Cathedral, San Giovanni Laterano - Cathedral of Rome (first church built in Rome), and San Pietro in Vaticano and the Cathedral of Cologne.

"My intention is to understand the faith, circumstances, and realities of these men's and women's everyday lives as they created places of worship and pilgrimage that have resonated with people of faith for many, many generations. I will read a collection of books about the lives of masons, architects, spiritual leaders, priests and nuns, townspeople, and others who have contributed to the cathedrals and chapels throughout these countries in Europe. My trip will include studying how churches and the works of art with them can enhance and deepen our faith (sculptures, stained glass, marble busts, wood carvings, etc.)."

We wish them well on their adventure, and we look forward to hearing about her studies and travel at a 10:10 Class when Jaime arrives back home to LOPC.



APRIL 2019

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IMPORTANT

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PASTORAL STAFF

Peter Whitelock, Head of Staff
Gerald Chinen, Congregational Care
Lauren Gully, Mission & Spiritual Formation
Jaime Polson, Families & Executive Leadership

WORSHIP & MUSIC

Brett Strader, Director
Stewart Sarch, Organist

TREASURER

Char Casella

MINISTRY DIRECTORS

Chris Baldwin, Community Engagement
Keris Dahlkamp & Allison Kunz, Youth
Coleen Moulton, Seedlings Preschool
Ryan Timpte, Children

FOCUS NEWSLETTER

Jon Corry, Communications
Dick James & Lexi Morrissey, Editing

Thank you to all who contribute to each issue.

Monthly FOCUS Newsletter Deadline:

April 1 for the May issue.
Email items to communications@lopc.org.

Weekly CONNECTIONS Deadline:

Every Monday by 5 p.m. for the following Sunday's issue.
Submit items at:
www.lopc.org/submission-for-connections

April 14
LOPC Palm Sunday
Brunch Potluck
&
Egg Hunt
12:15 p.m. Fellowship Hall

Connect with us!



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livestream.com/LOPC



To download the LOPC app,
text "LOPC APP" to 77977.



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Sunday Worship Services

9 a.m.

11 a.m.

Invite Friends & Family