



First Presbyterian Church of Hanford

Worship Center: 340 N. Irwin St.

Church Office: 415 N. Redington St.

Hanford, CA 93230 (559) 582-0283

Website: www.fpchanford.org

Email: office@fpchanford.org

A fellowship brought together through God's prevenient grace to grow closer to God

FIRST PRESS

December 2022

I've been looking for something special to inspire us this December. I ran across a piece I think can help us slow down and contemplate the power of our Christian faith as we begin this Advent Season and the start of a new Christian Calendar year. December 4, our second Sunday in Advent, we will celebrate communion. See if this piece by Eric Metaxas helps change your perspective on communion. [I have done some editing.]



Communion on the Moon: July 20, 1969

Forty years ago [Now 53] two human beings changed history by walking on the surface of the moon. But what happened before Buzz Aldrin and Neil Armstrong exited the Lunar Module is perhaps even more amazing, if only because so few people know about it. I'm talking about the fact that Buzz Aldrin took communion on the surface of the moon.

Aldrin was an elder at his Presbyterian Church in Texas during this period in his life. He felt he should mark the occasion somehow, and he asked his minister to help him. So, the minister consecrated a communion wafer and a small vial of communion wine. Buzz Aldrin took them with him, out of the Earth's orbit, and on to the surface of the moon.

He and Armstrong had only been on the lunar surface for a few minutes when Aldrin made the following public statement: "This is the L(lunar) M(module) pilot I'd like to take this opportunity to ask every person listening in, whoever and wherever they may be, to pause for a moment and contemplate the events of the past few hours and to give thanks in his or her own way." He then ended radio communication and there, on the silent surface of the moon, 250,000 miles from home, he took communion.

Here is his own account of what happened: "In the radio blackout, I opened the little plastic packages which contained the bread and the wine. I poured the wine into the chalice our church had given me. In the one-sixth gravity of the moon, the wine slowly curled and gracefully came up the side of the cup. Then I read the Scripture, 'I am the vine, you are the branches. Whosoever abides in me will bring forth much fruit. Apart from me you can do nothing.' I ate the tiny Host and swallowed the wine. I gave thanks for the intelligence and spirit that had brought two young pilots to the Sea of Tranquility. It was interesting for me to think: the very first liquid ever poured on the moon, and the very first food eaten there, were the communion elements."

cont. on page 2



Communion on the Moon cont.

"I had intended to read my communion passage back to earth, but at the last minute [they] had requested that I not do this. NASA was already embroiled in a legal battle with Madelyn Murray O'Hare, the celebrated opponent of religion, over the Apollo 8 crew reading from Genesis while orbiting the moon at Christmas. I agreed, reluctantly."

It is interesting to think that some of the first words spoken on the moon [at the Sea of Tranquility] were the words of Jesus Christ, who made the Earth and the moon - and Who, in the immortal words of Dante, is Himself, the "Love that moves the Sun and other stars." My Christmas wish, for all who read this, is, that the Tranquility only Christ can bring in Communion with him be your greatest gift this Christmas Season.

With Love in Christ our Lord,

Rev. Louis R. Paradise
Interim Pastor

A Note From:

Children's and Youth Director



Your Christian Education Team here at FPC has had a great time teaching the 13 lessons contained in this Greatest Journey (GJ) book which tells the simple story of God creating us and seeking a relationship with us.

I personally enjoyed teaching this helpful information to our children and sharing the Bible verses that came along with each lesson. We have sent home each student's book which is theirs to keep. **I appeal to you to make some time to read through the book along with your child and discuss the lessons, activities and Bible verses.** These verses are excellent ones to commit to memory and I encourage you to work on learning these or reviewing these as a family.

God promises us in Scripture that His Word never returns void (Isaiah 55:11), which means that **any time we spend learning and memorizing the Bible plants important seeds in our hearts that can grow into a beautiful tree of faith.**

Cont. on page 7



December is upon us – a time to rejoice in the birth of our savior, Jesus Christ and, if you are like me, a time to count our many blessings as the year comes to an end. As I count the Deacons' blessings, there are many.

It's a blessing that we have 9 active and involved Deacons working together unselfishly, each doing their part, faithfully meeting monthly in fellowship and friendship to use their gifts, talents, and time to support the needs of the members of the church as well as doing community outreach.

It's a blessing we were able to give small monthly monetary donations to local, mainly faith-based non-profit organizations to support their ministries to our community thanks to your monetary giving.

It's a blessing we were able to give multiple bags of food, clothing, and hygiene items monthly to local shelters and ministries to help those in need in our community, thanks to your material giving.

It's a blessing we were able to minister to both those involved with the church and those in the community in time of need through the loving support of meals, rides, grocery shopping, visits, cards, plants, gifts, care packages, and prayer.

It's a blessing we were able to help family members in time of their grieving for loved ones through the support of providing, or helping with receptions.

I am honored and proud to be a part of the Deacons' board as we made decisions and provided help and support to our congregation and to the local community this past year. And, of course, we would not have been able to do so many of our ministries and outreaches without your support whether it be monetary, material things or prayers. Thank you and God Bless you all!

Faithfully,
Marj Froberg



Merry Christmas From Your Mission Ministry Team

Your Mission Ministry Team would like to wish you all a happy and blessed Christmas Season. God has been good to us this year and after COVID our church is becoming more and more back to what we call "Normal" and the Mission Ministry Team has had a fabulous year of speakers and events and as 2022 is coming to an end, we would like to recap a little with you:

Our Monthly Speakers:

February	<i>Living Water World Missions</i> by Mark Vanciel CEO
March	<i>Cameroon</i> by Paul Elansa
April	<i>Crossroads Pregnancy Center</i> by Kathryn Enloe, Director
May	<i>Kings Gospel Mission</i> by KGM landscape maintenance team
June	<i>Refuge House</i> by VBS Coordinator Deborah Pelton
July	<i>Missionary Update</i> on Ryan & Amy Corrigan by Sue Kinney
July	<i>Operation Christmas Child "Purchase Program"</i> by Janet Harader
August	<i>Operation Christmas Child</i> by Regional Coordinator Sally Smith
September	<i>Compassion International</i> by Sheri Winterowd
November	<i>Operation Christmas Child Shoebox Dedication</i> by Janet Harader
December	<i>Refuge House</i> by CEO Aaron Hailey

Our Events We Participated In and With:

January	A zoom meeting with Missionaries Barry & Ronah Francolino
February	"Souper Bowl Sunday" with proceeds of \$517 going to the First United Methodist Church "Family Bucket Program"
May	Serve Day providing oil changes & car washes for widows in Kings County
May	Crossroads Pregnancy Center "Changing Babies" Fundraiser
July	Operation Christmas Child – Our Youth began "The Greatest Journey" Program
July / August	Operation Christmas Child – "Purchase Program"
September	Compassion International Congregational Sponsor Sharing Event
November	Operation Christmas Child Packing Party
November	Operation Christmas Child Shoebox Dedication Sunday

It is with full hearts that our Mission Ministry Team says "Thank You" for your faithful and generous donations and participation in supporting missionaries both International and local to spread the Word of God to those who do not yet know HIM. Our Mission Ministry Team appreciates your support and prayers for missionaries everywhere as we continue as a "family of God" to reach out to all people worldwide so that they have the opportunity to know and accept Jesus as Lord and Savior. May God richly Bless You and Your Family during this Christmas Season!

"The generous will themselves be blessed, for they share their food with the poor!"

Proverbs 22:9 NIV



Summary of Nov. 15, 2022 Session Meeting

Deacons

- Reported 64 and 5 homebound took communion in Nov.
- Reported donations of \$75 each were given to KGM, Soup Kitchen, Crossroads Pregnancy Center, Meals-On-Wheels and Salvation Army

Clerk's Report

- Elder Rajskup elected as commissioner to Presbytery Jan 2023 and to attend Session Clerk Training
- Congregational meeting set for Dec. 4th

Pastor's Report

- Approved baptism of Dominic Caparuolo

Buildings & Grounds

- Approved request of \$3500 to fix/replace non-working lights in Fellowship Hall
- Approved Facility use by Kings Symphony on Feb. 7th

Church Growth

- Approved Pizza & Caroling Dec. 8th with charge of \$5 per person for food.

Christian Education

- Approved charge of \$5 per person for food during "Parent's Morning Out" Dec 3rd

Finance

- Budget changes must be submitted by Dec. 4th

Missions

- Guest speaker Aaron from Armona Refuge Dec. 18th

Other Business

- Bookkeeper Gwen has submitted her resignation and will assist until the end of the year
- Bookkeeper position being posted on Indeed
- Annual Reports Due Jan. 6, 2023

UP COMING



- Dec 3** Parent's Morning Out 9am—noon
Dec 4 Congregational Meeting
Dec 5 Mission mtg @ 10am, Church Growth mtg @ 1pm
Dec 6 Deacons mtg @ 6:30pm
Dec 7 CE mtg @ 9:30am, Praise team practice @ 4:30pm, Chimes Practice @ 5:30pm, Choir Practice @ 6:30pm
Dec 8 Pizza & Caroling @ 5:30pm
Dec 11 Buildings & Grounds mtg @ 11:10am, worship mtg @ 11:15am, Youth Group @ 5pm, NSSG @ 6:30pm
Dec 13 *Finance mtg 7pm
Dec 14 Praise team practice @ 4:30pm, Chimes Practice @ 5:30pm, Choir Practice @ 6:30pm
Dec 15 *Session Reports Due*
Dec 6 *1st Press articles Due*
Dec 20 *Session mtg @ 6pm
Dec 21 Praise team practice @ 4:30pm, Chimes Practice @ 5:30pm, Choir Practice @ 6:30pm
Dec 24 Christmas Eve service @ 6pm
Dec 25 *Christmas Day*
Jan 1 *New Year's Day communion service*
Jan 2 Church Growth @ 1pm, *Missions mtg @ 7pm
Jan 3 Deacons mtg @ 6:30pm
Jan 5 *Bible Study @ 7pm
Jan 8 Buildings & Grounds mtg @ 11:10am, worship mtg @ 11:15am, Youth Group @ 5pm, NSSG @ 6:30pm
Jan 10 *Finance mtg @ 7pm
Jan 12 *Bible Study @ 7pm
Jan 13 Elder/Deacons Training
Jan 14 Training cont.
Jan 15 *Ordination of New Elders & Deacons*
Jan 16 *Martin Luther King Jr. Day (office closed)*
Jan 17 Session mtg @ 6pm
Jan 19 *Bible Study @ 7pm
Jan 22 Youth Group @ 5pm, NSSG @ 6:30pm
Jan 27—28 Presbytery of the Pacific Southwest
Jan 29 *5th Sunday & Annual Meeting of the Corporation*

* Zoom Meeting

Thank You



Thank you! Thank you! Thank you! Thank you!

The Dessert fundraiser was a huge success on October 30th raising \$530.00 toward "Askings." Thank you to all who made the wonderful desserts, as well as to those who purchased these delicious desserts!

EPC "Askings" supports EPC missions and services as well as providing resources and making connections to encourage EPC leaders, churches, and presbyteries. Our church received funds and support after Pastor Tony's heart attack and after Pastor Tim's passing. Your Session believes these financial resources are well directed, especially in light of our denomination's commitment to uphold biblical authority and commitment to mission efforts around the world.

We thank all of those who have paid their "Askings" & encourage our membership to please consider contributing to this important ministry, above and beyond tithes and offerings, so that we do not have to take from our budget to pay the balance.

If you have any questions, please contact one of our Finance Team members (Debra Revious, Gwendolyn Smith, Julie Baker, Bill Baker, & Nick Kinney).

Thank you for your continued support!

The Finance Ministry Team



A Note From:

Children's and Youth Director cont.

Every time your child attends Worship, Sunday School, Children's Events or Youth Group, we seek to help water and tend that seed to help it grow. We are delighted to partner with you as you faithfully bring your child to Sunday School, Church, Powerhouse and Youth Group, as well as teach them about Jesus and his wonderful message of life at home.

In our going and coming, being and becoming, God is near. He is near to us all the time; at Christmas we perhaps feel and sense him more, and less. More because we see more images of Christ than we normally do; less since we are rushing around to make the most of this 'most wonderful time of the year'.

As we close this year, let us take a special opportunity to enjoy the gifts of grace, love and hope that are available to us through Christ each and every day.

We have some fun events coming up and we would LOVE it if you would join us and create some warm holiday memories with your church family.

Dec. 4 – Parents' Morning Out – Pajamas and Pancakes! at church 9 am to noon

Dec. 8 – Pizza and Caroling 5:30 pm. Meet at church to enjoy pizza together, then go caroling to the senior members of our congregation, and return back to church to enjoy some dessert and fellowship. ****Wear Christmas clothes and Santa hats if possible, bring dessert to share****

Dec. 11 – during Worship Service – Our children will sing and share Scripture verses and we have SPECIAL CHRISTMAS ACTIVITIES planned for Powerhouse!!

Dec. 11 – Youth Christmas Party at 5:00 pm at church – each person brings a wrapped gift that cost between \$10 -15

Dec 18 – SPECIAL CHRISTMAS ACTIVITIES planned for Powerhouse!

Dec 24 – Christmas Eve service – 6:00 pm

Dec 25 – Christmas Day – Worship service at 10 am SPECIAL CHRISTMAS ACTIVITIES planned for Powerhouse!



Session Committees



fpc Making Disciples of Jesus
Hanford, California

zoom **Worship**
Committee Meeting

2nd Sunday of each month @ 11:15am

Church
DEACONS

1st Tuesday of each month @ 6:30pm

Christian
Education
Committee Meeting

Wednesday, Dec. 7th @ 9:30am



zoom **MISSIONS**
Ministry

1st Monday of each month @ 7pm



Buildings &
Grounds
Committee Meeting

2nd Sunday of each month @ 11:10 am



zoom **Finance**
Committee Meeting

2nd Tuesday of each month @ 7pm



Church
Growth
Committee Meeting

1st Monday of each month @ 1pm



Session


3rd Tuesday of each month @ 6:00pm



Faith & Fellowship

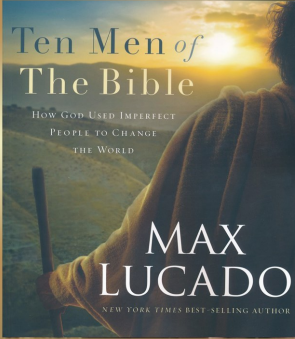


Jolly 1's & 2's will be going to "Christmas at the Fox" on December 18 to hear the Kings Symphony. The concert begins at 4:00. If anyone needs a ride, contact Janet at either 583-8817 or 367-5658. Also, if anyone wants to eat together afterward, let me know and state your preference of restaurants. The Christmas program is usually excellent and can be a highlight of the Christmas season.





**2nd and 4th Sunday
of each month @ 6:30pm**

Adult Bible Study



**Thursday Nights
@ 7:00pm**




During this season we are reminded that our giving to the Lord's work demonstrates that we recognize God's sovereignty and that we put our needs second out of obedience to Him. The power of your gift of kindness is that you give others hope.

Please consider the following in determining your faith commitment for 2023: Begin with prayer. If you are already tithing, consider if God is calling you to give joyfully beyond that level; EPC Askings are \$38 per member; If last year's giving is

not a tithe, consider a budget plan to move to a tithe over time; perhaps an increase of just 2% of your income. Traveling the road of discipline and obedience in this area is a very important step in maturing in our faith.

Please turn in your Faith Commitment Form as soon as possible so your Session Elders can get an idea how to plan their ministries next year. Feel free to drop your form in the offering plate, email it to gail@fpchanford.org, or mail it to the First Presbyterian Church, PO Box 1185, Hanford, CA 93232.

You can help FPC prosper for God's glory by participating in what God is doing in our church, community and world wide ministries.

This is what the Lord says:

"Let not the wise boast of their wisdom or the strong boast of their strength or the rich boast of their riches, but let the one who boasts boast about this: that they have the understanding to know me, that I am the Lord, who exercises kindness, justice and righteousness on earth, for in these I delight," declares the Lord. Jeremiah 9:23-24

DECEMBER

Birthdays & *Anniversaries

- 1 Louise Collins, David Wrigley Jr.
- 3 Janice Mills
- 4 Steve Essepian, Shirley Ramm. *Chuck & Mary Kinney
- 9 Owen Montoya
- 10 Stone Torrez
- 11 Taylor Rives
- 12 Laurie Essepian, Stacey Jones
- 13 Paul Dixon
- 14 *Ken & Laurie Tazelaar
- 15 Corey Loewen
- 17 *Steve & Marjorie Froberg, *Lou & Christi Paradise
- 18 Adelyn King
- 20 Ethan LeFils
- 21 Samuel Wrigley
- 22 Greg Connelly, Robert Torrez
- 26 Georgina Snyder
- 27 *Duane & Heidi Koppenhaver
- 29 Vicki Torrez, *Joel & Amy Bialkowski
- 31 *David & Brittany Gately



Please contact the office with any updates, additions or corrections. We don't want to miss anyone or list your special date incorrectly.

P O Box 1185
Hanford, CA 93232

Place
Stamp
Here

Label Here

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(559) 582-0283—FAX (559) 582-0336
www.fpchanford.org

STAFF:

Lou Paradise pastor@fpchanford.org	Interim Pastor
Sheri Winterowd fpchanford.youth@gmail.com	Director of Youth & Children's Ministries
Annette Rajskup office@fpchanford.org	Office Administrator
Gwendolyn Smith bookkeeper@fpchanford.org	Bookkeeper
Nancy Roller nancyroller8@yahoo.com	Custodian

Church Office Hours: 9:00am—1:00pm (Mon—Fri)

Send prayer requests to hanfordfpcprayer@gmail.com
other information to office@fpchanford.org