



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

# 2020 ANNUAL REPORT



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# NEW WINE

In 2017, Brooke Ligertwood, a worship leader from Hillsong Church in Australia wrote a song called, “New Wine.” The opening lines go like this: **“In the crushing, in the pressing, You are making new wine. In the soil, I now surrender. You are making new wine.”** In my mind, it’s a very appropriate song for 2020.

This was a year that did not turn out as we expected it would. There was a crushing. There was a pressing. There was tremendous loss, isolation, tension, and unrest. And in the midst of that, there was a shaking or a sifting from the Lord. There was a revealing of our idols. There was a disruption to our assumptions. There was an uncovering of our souls. But out of that, I believe the Lord is bringing new wine.

When the pandemic hit, we adjusted our ministries to reach an online audience. In the midst of that, the Lord expanded our vision to see our digital presence as more than just a holdover until we could be together again, but as a way to reach new people with the transforming power of the Gospel message. The Lord also increased our recognition of His call for us to love one another. As the isolation of the pandemic persisted, the Lord grew our congregation’s intentionality to encourage one another and care for one another with Christ’s love.

In the summer we launched the Summer Prayer Project which brought well over 300 of us into weekly prayer groups. We had no idea how important those prayer groups would become when we planned for them early in the year. Amid all the pain of 2020, the Lord drew us more deeply into prayer together.

After the horrific death of George Floyd and the cultural upheaval that followed, we launched into hard but necessary conversations about racism. From that, the Lord has strengthened our resolve to love all our neighbors as ourselves, eradicate any form of racism in our hearts, and live as an example of His multi-ethnic Kingdom in our city.

And in the midst of a heated and contested election season that seems to be increasing the political divides in our country, the Lord has clarified our heavenly call to be peacemakers. We're not just peacekeepers. We reject political simplicity, complacency, and primacy. And we seek first His Kingdom above any earthly kingdom.

Yes, it has been a very hard year. Certainly, it was one of the most difficult in my ministry as we worked through all the intensity of 2020 together as a congregation. And yet, Jesus is bringing new wine.

In the pages that follow you'll see a snapshot of that new wine. I pray you are encouraged. In the bridge of her song mentioned above, Brooke Ligertwood declares, **“Where there is new wine, there is new power. There is new freedom. And the Kingdom is here. [So] I lay down my old flames to carry Your new fire today.”** Beloved, there is new wine among us by the Holy Spirit. It is wine that has come from the pressing and the crushing of 2020. May we now lay down our old flames to carry His new fire today for His Kingdom to come in Fresno as it is in heaven.

**DR. JEREMY VACCARO**  
SENIOR PASTOR



## ...TECHNOLOGY DIRECTOR

Josh Gillispie joined our staff as the Technology Director in September of 2020. He was born and raised in Clovis and attended Clovis High where he met his wife Tessa. Josh and Tessa were married in June of 2015 and became first-time parents to their son Jameson (Jamie) in October 2020. Tessa works as a therapist at Link Care Counseling Center.



Even though Josh was raised in Clovis, growing up he spent much of his free time in Tower frequenting Teazer, playing music at Starline, and eating at Piemonte's. Shortly after high school, he decided to step into the mission field and served on a 6-month outreach to share the gospel. Three months of his time was spent in Denver and three months were in the heart of Mexico City. During this short time, he discovered a passion for ministry, the local church, and to see his hometown of Fresno transformed through the power of the gospel. Returning to Fresno, Josh leaned heavily into worship ministry as well as youth ministry at his former church. While serving in ministry the last ten years he has worked for Starbucks, in banking, as a business owner, and most recently as a pastor.

Now on staff at FPC, his passions have not changed. He has a heart for ministry, the local church, and wants to see his city transformed; but, now his role is to help these things take place through the means of technology. We are excited for all of the changes that will be coming about in 2021, and can't wait to see what God does through the use of technology.

**JOSH GILLISPIE**  
TECHNOLOGY DIRECTOR



# SUMMER PRAYER PROJECT

One of our primary initiatives of 2020 was our Summer Prayer Project. We invited the entire congregation to join a weekly prayer group for the summer. Plus, we had several different preachers lead us in our summer sermon series on prayer called, "Be With Me." The goals were;

1. To increase the congregation's intimacy with the Lord through prayer;
2. To improve the congregation's confidence and belief in prayer, and;
3. To deepen our community with one another through the prayer groups.

It was a wonderful success. Of course, we didn't get the entire congregation to join a weekly prayer group, but we did register over 325 people into groups. The sermon series was excellent. And the testimonies of growth in Christ were powerful. When the Lord first put this idea on Pastor Jeremy's heart, we had no idea what would be going on in the world during the summer of 2020. We're so glad the Lord called our church into a season of prayer. And, as we lean into 2021, many of those prayer groups are continuing to gather in the Lord's presence to seek His face together.

**DR. JEREMY VACCARO**  
SENIOR PASTOR



# FPC TAKES ON THE CHALLENGE



In a year when our world was evaluating what should we hold onto and what should we let go of, FPC decided to add leadership of the Pink House program to the plate. The Pink House Program started over 25 years ago. Participants live in the 4-plex apartment building in FPC's parking lot, exploring Biblical Community, Urban Ministry, and Leadership Development. Launched by Randy White, the Pink House has been an InterVarsity ministry until 2020. Mission Director Terry Jaurena & Director of College Ministry Geraud Brumfield eagerly partnered together to navigate these new waters, co-directing FPC's first year of actually running the Pink House Program.

We want to celebrate that in the midst of the crazy, FPC still did the hard work of taking on a challenge of engaging hard topics with young adults in our community. Volunteers stepped up to do some serious cleaning and refreshing of the building when it was HOT!

Wonderfully, 4 young adults said yes to participating in this adventure. Emily Bernal, Rhonda Payne, Sarah Raspberry, and Matthew Scott stepped into the unknown of navigating through this new community.



In collaboration with Fresno's other Ministry House (Micah Project @ North Fresno Church) we have attended the virtual Christian Community Development Association annual conference; held weekly classes around topics of Justice, Church, and the Gospel; and shared meals around the table to learn more about each other and the world. In the midst of chaos, we celebrate the beauty of how this Old Pink House is still doing work!



**GERAUD BRUMFIELD**

DIRECTOR OF COLLEGE MINISTRIES



# GROWING OUR KINGDOM PERSPECTIVE

The May 25th murder of George Floyd while in police custody in Minneapolis sent painful shock waves across our country. Our staff leadership team gathered via zoom for our regular meeting the next morning. We were a heavy-hearted bunch. Gerre Brenneman was with us as Staff Director during Jeremy's vacation. Gerre's years of experience leading a multi-cultural staff at Evangel Home were a gift from God to us as we processed the shock waves that morning.

We knew we had a responsibility to help the congregation process as well. And we knew, as Sarah Shin writes in her book *Beyond Color Blind*, that "When you have a room full of people who have varying levels of language, experience, and awareness, a conversation about ethnicity and race is difficult. It's like trying to run a marathon with a group of marathon veterans alongside sprinters, casual joggers, and couch potatoes. It makes for chaos, misunderstanding, and a good measure of frustration and heartache."

We were grateful that H Spees, well versed in these difficult conversations, was already slated to preach that next Sunday, May 31. He helped us understand the racial tensions as a crisis within the COVID crisis. We took time to lament that Sunday.

We also committed to find ways to continue to expand our congregation's understanding of the issues through the light & lens of scripture.



When we pray, "Your kingdom come, Your will be done, on earth, as it is in heaven," we are praying for the just and righteous rule and reign of God to be manifest everywhere to everyone. Expanding our understanding of what God's coming kingdom is like keeps us from hindering it and compels us to pray it in and live it in.

Geraud Brumfield had already planned a Shifting Ground movie and conversation series for the college group focused on racial injustice. He opened it up to the whole congregation. Three Wednesdays in June many of us watched 3 movies and via Zoom discussed it in groups. The movies were: *Frozen 2*, *Selma*, and *Just Mercy*.

In July & August, Meagan Bergem and other youth leaders facilitated a book study with HS & JH students participating and did an extensive Bible study series on Biblical Justice. Later in the year, Joanie Martin and Sarah Ellis facilitated a book study & conversation group for adults using the *Beyond Color Blind* book mentioned earlier.

These were good and important steps. A good number of you took many others. We are trusting the Lord to continue to lead and guide us as we seek to keep expanding our understanding of and desire for God's kingdom to come and his will to be done in and through us.

**TERRY JAURENA**

MISSION, OUTREACH  
COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR



# [ ] ADVENT CONSPIRACY

I had no idea when I asked Jeremy if we could dive a bit deeper as a church into the Advent Conspiracy this year what that would look like. I just wanted the invitation to Worship Fully, Spend Less, Give More, and Love All to be front and center somehow.

He made those themes the Advent sermon series and assembled a little team to explore the Advent Conspiracy resources and come up with some things we could do as a congregation. So the team of Bekah Hanson, Whitney Aguilar, Geraud Brumfield, Steve Skibbie, Mindy Franklin, and I went to work and brought to you what we hoped would be fun and meaningful ways to Worship Fully, Spend Less, Give More and Love All.

We sent you daily devotionals with scripture.



We sent you an Advent Conspiracy Calendar with daily, family-friendly activities for each of the 4 tenets. It included a whole church family kind of activity each Sunday.

Which movie did you watch on Movie Night? Did you participate in the Photo Scavenger Hunt? Did you make your own Advent Conspiracy banner or other decoration? Maybe you Followed the Star, our culminating event on a very foggy night! Clues lead you to the searchlight in the Sterling family's field where FPC college students were serving hot chocolate and cookies.

It was fun and it was meaningful. We hope it inspired you to keep conspiring to Worship Fully, Spend Less, Give More, and Love All.

**TERRY JAURENA**  
MISSION, OUTREACH  
COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR

# WOMEN'S MINISTRY

Perhaps some of the most amazing fruit comes forth in the middle of adversity. This year, more than any other in recent history, we have had to double our efforts to gather together in fellowship, study and worship. Unable to meet "on the fly" or on the lawn after service, we've had to carefully plan. Yet God has met us right where we are!

Women's ministry @ FPC celebrates some great wins this year. The re-imagined WoCo was well-attended as Audrey Arce taught us how to share our story wherever we go. Others shared their wonderful gifts: Courtney Dull Bounkhoun led us in a beautiful worship signing; Trianne Harabedian helped us to dance to the Lord; Kaylan Roberts showed us how to creatively use art interwoven with scripture; and, Amelia Sanders Souder capably led us through joyful fellowship together. We rejoiced in being physically together, and we look forward to the possibility of being together for WoCo @ Wonder Valley this October.

Led by Elizabeth Rooney, Women on Wednesdays met online for evening Bible study, encouraging women and reminding us of God's promises in a difficult time of adjustment. Marilyn Minassian and several Thursday morning Bible study women met in person to share in God's word, while Daphne Saul led another online group of women through Jen Wilkin's God of Covenant study of Genesis. Even with the struggles of COVID restrictions, Women @ FPC continue to actively prioritize scripture, study, and fellowship with one another. Thanks be to God!

**ATALOA WOODIN**  
ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT  
TO PASTORAL STAFF





# MEN'S MINISTRY

Despite this year's difficulties and disappointments, the Lord's guiding hand was evident in the Men's Ministry. Whether it was our online COVID-19 seminar led by FPC members in the local healthcare industry or helping some of our seniors that were sheltering in place, the Men of FPC were able to glorify Him through events and fellowship.



Early in the year before the pandemic hit, we were able to meet for breakfast and attend an FSU Basketball game. Once things "changed" we continued to lift each other with prayer and encouraging guys to meet online via Zoom. It was a blessing that tools like video conferencing were so readily available. Once things opened up briefly, it was awesome to gather again with the men for breakfast and the "well-executed" demo of the Pink House stairs!

Looking forward to next year, we will continue to plan for events including our Men's Conference. Originally, it was scheduled for April 2020 with Pastor Greg Ehlert working with the theme "The Race" modeled on Paul's words in 1 Cor. 9:25. We hope that we can pull it off this year once vaccinations have taken place on a wide scale. Blessings and hope for 2021 from the MLB (Men's Leadership Board).

**DAVE PELTOA**  
MINISTRY LEADER





# GO TEAMS

## EAT • PRAY • SERVE • DISCIPLE = GO TEAMS

Go Teams are a group of people who **GATHER REGULARLY** to care about each other, **GROW** in our **FAITH**, and **REACH OUT** to a **SPECIFIC GROUP** of people outside our church body.

Go Teams are still active at FPC. Currently, there are two teams that are meeting regularly: Greek Row and Imagio Dei. Along with many other ministries, Go Teams have faced new challenges during this season of COVID. However, we have experienced this time as a moment to focus on intercessory prayer for the people that God has placed on our hearts. It has been a season to listen to the Holy Spirit guiding us in new ways to care.

The members of the Imagio Dei Go Team meet as a worship pod Sundays and spend time praying for families whose children have disabilities. The team has grown deeper in relationship with each other as they have weathered this time together. They look forward to next steps in outreach once safety protocols ease up.

The Greek Row Go Team has continued to meet twice a month via Zoom and pray for the students in the fraternities and sororities at Fresno State. Several times over the year, The president of one of the fraternities has joined in our Zoom gathering.

Although we have not been able to give out hot dogs on football nights, we have maintained a relationship with one fraternity through letters, care packages, and an occasional conversation outside the fraternity house.

This is a great time to launch Go Teams. Why? Because we yearn for a sense of belonging and purpose. Starting a Go Team now would be an opportunity for connection and prayer. Gather now and pray for God to direct your team to a specific group of people. The outreach may not happen until COVID is under control; however, the community building can happen now. There are so many lonely, hurting, overwhelmed people who need a personal connection. Go Teams are a great way to make this happen.

***“The harvest is great, but the workers are few. So pray to the Lord who is in charge of the harvest; ask him to send more workers into his fields.***

***Now go...” - Luke 10:2-3a***

**MINDY FRANKLIN**  
MINISTRY LEADER



# CARE & PRAYER MINISTRY

Our **Deacons** had to reimagine how to serve the congregation. After some brainstorming, it was encouraging and beautiful to see Deacons step up. Meal support has continued; the Benevolence Fund has been utilized in many ways; Chester Goodale and Paula Harabedian have been so faithful in gathering others to pray; and the new birthday card ministry was a fun surprise, reminding the congregation that they're remembered and loved.

**Stephen Ministries** trains and equips people to offer Christ-centered care in difficult times to those in need. A highlight in this area is that Cliff and Jessie Klein, Scott Norvell, Michelle DeSimone, John Sunderson, Richard and Sandy Pelesari made the commitment to go through the training and will be commissioned as Stephen Ministers in the spring.

**Circle of Care** is a ministry where 3-4 people listen to someone who may be going through a crisis, a point of decision, or a life transition. The hopeful results are a clearer vision to move forward, the sharing of emotions, and feeling heard. We managed to provide 3 Circles of Care with COVID safety guidelines in place. Those involved felt honored to hear the individuals tell their stories, and the individuals sharing felt a clearer sense of next steps.

**Chaplains** Rosemary Avery and Susan Glover have connected with many in the congregation and have seen the heart and spirit of people who truly love Jesus and trust that He will care for them when the world can only see disaster. The physical and visual separation has created a deeper longing that seems to grow in wanting to cherish what we had in fellowship together.

**LORI MEADORS**  
DEACON

# COLLEGE MINISTRY

There's a song by Elevation Worship that says, **"You turn graves into gardens // You turn bones into armies // You turn seas into highways // You're the only One who can"**. In 2020, in the midst of the hard, broken, and challenging, God still orchestrated beauty, wonder, and depth. Although this year we have a lot to grieve, in college ministry, there's a lot to celebrate.

At the beginning of the year, 21 Fresno folks flew across the country to attend the CCO's annual conference, Jubilee. One student who begrudgingly signed up for the conference later confessed that the conference softened her heart as she began to navigate her faith.

After COVID-19 halted in-person meetings, Geraud Brumfield and Donald Norman led a handful of athletes from Fresno Pacific University through the book, Between the World and Me by Ta-Nehisi Coates. Young men from different ethnic backgrounds were able to honestly discuss race, white supremacy, and their role in changing it together.

In May, college students celebrated a great successful year with Austin Kilduff, the CCO Fellow. Later in August, the group welcomed the CCO Fellow, Rhonda Payne, a graduate from Christian Brothers University in Memphis, TN.

During the summer, we were able to host Encounter Fresno 2020. Six residents lived in 2 apartments in the Pink House and grew together through one of the hardest years ever.

**GERAUD BRUMFIELD**  
DIRECTOR OF COLLEGE MINISTRIES





*ROOTED is where High School students experience loving community and grow deeply rooted in a relationship with Jesus, in order to bear Gospel fruitfulness for a lifetime (Col. 2:6-7).*

ROOTED

## Highlight Reels

- 16 Weeks of Cafe Bonfire, implementing a safe space for students to relationally connect, study, enjoy Frappuccinos and hone their ping-pong skills.
- 14 Youth Leaders investing their gifts and time to love students and each other well!
- 10 Student Leaders planning events, leading worship, and serving their peers!
- 5 Youth group-wide deliveries, Easter “egging” gift bags, Graduation flamingos, “AP” survival kits, “New School Year” care packages, and “Christmas” care packages.
- 1 Awesome Summer Staffer: Sophia Steele!
- 1 Lovely Ministry Assistant: J.R. Hancock!

As we continued the important work of High School Ministry, God remained faithful and present to us amidst the storm of 2020. We learned how to encourage students in new ways and partner with families in the discipleship of youth. This meant hearing the tangible heartache and sense of loss while praying with people and continually switching things up.



We even launched a brand new idea this year to meet a felt need: **Café Bonfire!** Using the Rooted Underground room as a homework space helped bridge the gap between students and continues to be a place for students to bring their non-believing friends to experience Christian community.



We are grateful for the truth of Jesus’ gospel and how our relationship with God remains a constant in a season where things are always changing. Our faith remains deeply Rooted in the truth of Jesus’ grace that provides life-giving refreshment.

**MEAGAN BERGEM**

DIRECTOR OF YOUTH MINISTRIES

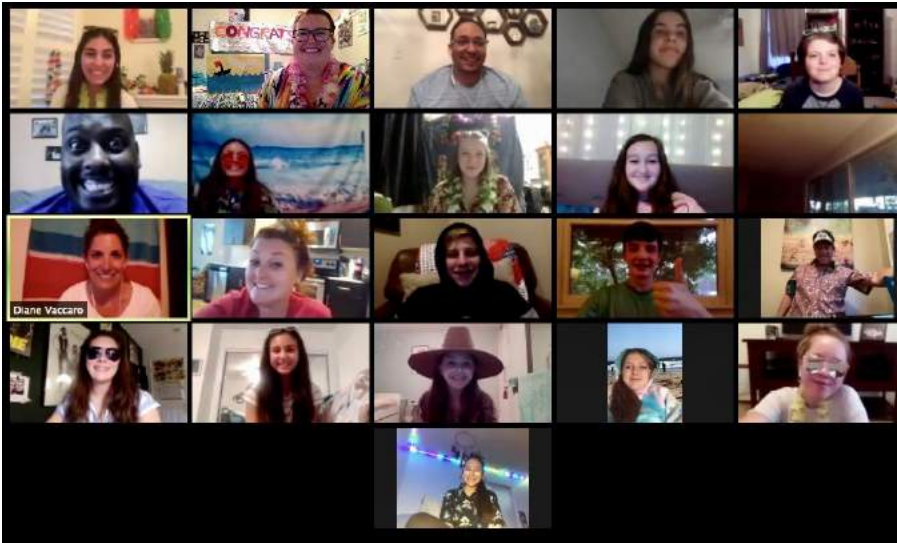




# IGNITE

*IGNITE is where Jr. High students become disciples of Jesus who are ignited in their faith to pursue a deeper relationship with God and fully surrender their lives to worship the Lord (Heb. 12:28-29).*

We experienced a bit of a rollercoaster this year as we coped with restrictions due to a global pandemic and wrestled with our faith in the face of injustice, political divisions, and cultural angst.



Students connected through their D-Groups consistently all year. Youth Leaders showed them God's love tangibly and helped them process their loss, pain, confusion, and frustration. We adapted and tried several new things in hopes of connecting with students in their present-day realities. Although the ground shifted, we continued to give Jesus the praise, honor, and glory, because He is our great healer, provider, and reconciler. We continued to experience our hearts **Ignite(d)** by God's big love and forgiveness for us.



**MEAGAN BERGEM**  
DIRECTOR OF YOUTH MINISTRIES

## Highlight Reel

- 42+ Applicable Bible Studies, exploring Acts & Isaiah, and topics such as Identity, Healthy Relationships, Sexual Integrity, Rhythms of Renewal, Anti-racism, and Biblical Justice.
- 10 Outreach events, with lots of creative online engagement & several in-person gatherings.
- 6 Youth Leaders investing their gifts and time to love students and each other well!
- 4 Camps/Retreats, we learned how to grow as a community online & in-person!
- 1 Awesome Summer Staffer: Matthew Wilfong!
- 1 Lovely Ministry Assistant: Ani Abajian!



*“Let us not become weary in doing good,  
for at the proper time we will reap a harvest  
if we do not give up.” Galatians 6:9*

# KINGDOM KIDS

2020 became a year of allowing God to build character, resilience, and faithfulness in us as we advanced through new times. While FPC waded through the pandemic, Kingdom Kids' purpose remained the same - to help children find faith in Jesus. It meant finding innovative ways to continue ministry with families.

## God blessed the church by:

- Increasing Sunday School attendance in the beginning months of the year.
- Sending 18 children to Winter Camp where they grew in faith.
- Blessing us with six new babies!



## Kingdom Kids Easter Fun!



## The ways God - our Light- illuminated new paths:

- Weekly Bible lesson and music videos by staff and beloved volunteers
- Zoom gatherings for all aged children
- Bible activity/goodie packets delivered to families' doorsteps to reach out and resource parents in spiritually nurturing their children
- 54 homes visited (PreK-2nd graders) to hide Easter eggs in front yards & provide Bible activity packs
- Weekly emails to families to encourage engagement in God's Word, to share activities, and provide ways to dialogue and pray with their children
- Wednesday 4th-6th grade program, distancing while learning God's truths
- 96 virtual backyard VBS kits were distributed to our families and neighborhood partners
- 25 Camp Kits replaced Summer Camp.
- 10 FPC volunteers partnered w/ On Ramps Covenant Church for online learning with elementary students this fall

Nothing stops God from accomplishing His good work among us. **Hallelujah!**

**MARGIE NUNEZ**

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY DIRECTOR



# MISSION

These beautiful words describe what the Lord did in & through our mission efforts this year: **Creativity, Commitment, Service, and Relationship.**

For some time, we've wanted to invite mission partners to send us short video greetings as a more interesting way to highlight them in our services. Somehow streamed services were the tipping point to do it. Reaching out to them allowed us to connect personally. Weren't they fun?

Monthly Food Distributions at Lowell Elementary created a well-used pathway to serve our community for all ages. This collaborative effort by FUSD, Food Bank & Every Neighborhood Partnership gave so many at FPC the chance to show up and be a blessing. We are so glad they are going to continue in 2021!

Changes made out of necessity may have forever altered two favorite end of the year activities: The Alternative Gift Fair & the Pantry Food Box Give-Away.

It didn't increase participation, but the Virtual Gift Fair video was infinitely more dynamic and shareable than the photo displays of the past. We are incredibly grateful to Cindy Sterling for putting it all together. 53 participants (about our average) made Kingdom investments totaling \$10,358.



We thought we had a problem when we couldn't order in the quantities needed for 170 food boxes from WinCo. We invited you to shop for 5 or 10 boxes and you did! And because nothing else was going on in the Fellowship Hall, it was no problem to store that food until we were ready to assemble and distribute it. Many hands lightened the load!



**TERRY JAURENA**  
MISSION, OUTREACH  
COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR



# OUTREACH

We hosted 3 great ArtHops at the beginning of the year before they came to a screeching halt. Curating the Gibson student art with Mindy Franklin and interacting with students & their families on March 5 is almost a distant memory, yet a sweet one! It was such a lovely evening that gave Mindy the chance to connect her art teaching ministry at Gibson Elementary with her church family.



SUNDAYS AT 10:00AM  
**LIVE STREAM**

Let's keep worshipping together



In addition to those already mentioned, the willingness of Jill Freeman, Dan Kimball, Richard Kunz, and David Norman to lend their expertise and commitment to FPC as we assessed our digital strategies was and remains extremely helpful.

Adding the capacity for guests to text to connect was one motivation to add Flocknote to our communication tools. Enabling us to send all church or specific group text has also been a welcomed capacity.

It's also been our joy to keep the Stories@FPC coming to your inbox, sharing the ways that God is at work in and through our congregation. We look forward to all the creative ways the Lord leads us to engage with our community and to share the good news of the gospel as we do so.

Outreach during COVID has focused lots on our digital presence and striving to make our website, YouTube Channel, Instagram and Facebook presence engaging, attractive and informative, Bekah Hanson offered her creative talents on lots of images throughout the year. Devon Samuelian added elements to our Instagram page. Terry learned lots about customizing a YouTube channel.



**TERRY JAURENA**

MISSION, OUTREACH  
COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR



# WORSHIP

In the midst of all the crazy, one beautiful thing is that we **WORSHIPPED!** We also learned to be very flexible in offering ways to worship amid stay-at-home orders.

We learned how to better live-stream our services. We did more work in pre-recording videos, used fewer instruments and singers, remained socially distanced, and we developed/trained a larger tech crew. We learned that we can worship God separately in our own homes, yet together as we live-stream. We may have felt constrained in how we presented worship services, but COVID did not limit God. In fact, He transcends all the challenges and meets us personally wherever we are!



We also learned to worship outside on the patio and the lawn. Some services were a wee bit chilly or damp but we persevered! We held a Praise/Worship night on the patio, a live-streamed hymn-sing, and a live-streamed Christmas carol sing-along. Then on Christmas Eve, in addition to our pre-recorded streamed service, we held an awesome, creative worship service in the parking lot!



FPC worshipers continued to meet the Lord, praise and honor Him in worship, pray, and sing praises to His holy name!

**DR. JULIE CARTER**  
MUSIC & WORSHIP DIRECTOR



# FACILITIES

It felt good for the facilities team to go into 2020 knowing that "this would be the year" when the long-awaited solar project would finally get started. The permitting process turned out to be a little longer than expected, but we knew the first construction activity in the parking lot was within reach.



However, by that time the pandemic had already set in and we were thankful to have the time to focus our efforts elsewhere. With the first stay-at-home order came the need to make drastic technology changes in the sanctuary to produce Livestream worship services. Under the leadership of Allan Knepper, a viable system was put together within a short period.

Meanwhile, the shift of FPC ministries to operate through online activities allowed the facilities team to undertake several updating projects on campus.

The kitchen was shut down for several weeks and updated with a new coat of paint throughout, new light fixtures, and several work-flow related improvements. Room 206 (one of our upstairs kids' classrooms) was repainted, upgraded with a counter and cabinet, and received some new decorations.

Several on-campus lighting upgrades carried over from the previous year. The patio has been upgraded with party-lights and the downstairs play and classroom area is now well lit. The most recent lighting improvements include fixture replacements in the staircase and alley areas.

At the end of 2020, we were able to celebrate our outdoor Christmas Eve service under the protection and with the illumination of our solar structures. The system is not quite connected yet, but we are hopeful to resolve the last few issues very soon.



**TORSTEN GRUNBERG**  
DIRECTOR OF FINANCE & FACILITIES



Something unforeseen at the beginning of last year was the need to Livestream our services weekly. FPC was only partially set up for this new demand. We are forever thankful for long-time member Allan Knepper who stepped into action on the church's behalf. Allan lives with the burning desire that everyone in our world should have the opportunity to have an encounter with Jesus.

This was reflected in the way that Allan served for several months, working tirelessly to provide the church with a worship experience at home. He didn't serve countless hours this summer for recognition, but as a church, we certainly owe him our gratitude. With the help of an emerging team, he was able to provide the church an amazing gift over this past year and we are beyond thankful.

In addition to a high level of understanding, pulling off a weekly Livestream requires a lot of time. Technology is constantly changing and improving and it seems impossible at times to keep up. That and the growing realization that we were now talking about months, not just weeks of being limited to streamed services, we decided to hire a Technology Director to lead this effort and coordinate the volunteers.



Josh Gillispie was hired in September of 2020 in this new role. We started out of sheer necessity, but now recognize the opportunity that an enhanced online presence gives us to share the gospel. So, we have decided to make even more advancements in the area of technology.

God can change someone's life through a grainy live stream shot on a cell phone. If He chooses, God can move someone's heart through listening to a sermon on low-quality computer speakers. But, if God can use our worst, how much more can He do with our best? We are going to continue to strive to improve our Livestream and make technological advancements. We desire to give our best in all that we do and want to partner with God to make more disciples in the city of Fresno. In this ever-changing world, we see technology as an incredible tool to help us do that.



**JOSH GILLISPIE**  
TECHNOLOGY DIRECTOR

Much of the spending in 2020 shifted from in-person activities to technology upgrades. New sound and video equipment was purchased at the end of the year to help improve livestream quality.

The new equipment also made it possible to hold the first ever outdoor Christmas Eve service! Also in 2020, a donation of \$25,000 was made from the Extra Opportunity Fund (EOF) to the A Place for You Foundation for needed improvements to the Pink House.

Budget planning following an unprecedented year like 2020 was a difficult task. The 2021 budget approaches the year as though all in-person activities were to resume, and the church operates as usual. It is impossible to predict when exactly that will happen, so pray for God's wisdom and creativity to reach His people in new ways until it does.

Although the 2021 budget is actually lower than 2020, it includes the addition of the Technology Director and budget money for the yet-to-be-filled Assistant Pastor/Director position. One factor in the lower budget is the anticipated energy cost savings due to the installation of solar for the campus. The project will be completed in 2021.

When it became available, the church applied for the Payroll Protection Program. In January 2021, the full loan amount was forgiven. This money, combined with reduced spending in 2020, helped end the year in a very healthy cash position. The church is looking forward to seeing how the Lord will direct the use of those funds in the years ahead to advance His Kingdom.

**TAHIEA FORTMEYER**  
OPERATIONS COMMITTEE

## Budget Comparison 2020 to 2021

Ministry	2020 Spending	2020 Budget	2021 Budget	2020-2021 Change
Administration	74,497	78,942	81,010	2,068
Christian Education	17,119	53,700	52,045	-1,655
Community Growth	39,108	27,300	26,300	-1,000
Deacons	1,272	3,230	3,230	0
Facility & Grounds	152,023	152,200	119,608	-32,592
Mission	4,483	147,600	143,600	-4,000
Outreach	146,283	8,290	7,955	-355
Personnel	794,726	955,082	992,982	37,900
Worship	11,798	22,095	19,955	-2,140
<b>Totals</b>	<b>1,241,309</b>	<b>1,448,439</b>	<b>1,446,685</b>	<b>-1,754</b>





### **MARILYN CONRAD, DEACON**

Marilyn is married to Stuart. They have three adult children who were loved & mentored by many wonderful people in our congregation. All are married and they now have six darling grandchildren. The Conrad family has been blessed by this congregation. She sees the opportunity to serve as a Deacon and to care for others as a way to give back.



### **JULIE GOODALE, DEACON**

Julie & Chester raised their 3 adult children, Stephen (now married to Claire), Caleb and Sarah, at FPC. She has served as a Sunday School teacher, AWANA leader and Nursery Coordinator. She hopes to get more connected with serving and praying for the families in our church.



### **CRAIG HARTSELL, DEACON**

Craig is married to Kathie. They met at FPC's College group, Seekers. They have four children: Emily (18), Allison (17), Isabelle (14), and Gus (12). After many years of serving as a Sunday School teacher as well as some other ministries, Craig is looking to serve in a new way. He is looking forward to building new relationships with people in our church family.



### **KATHIE HARTSELL, DEACON**

Kathie and Craig were married 23 years ago. (See details regarding their 4 children above), She has always enjoyed serving her church family, focusing most of those years in children's ministry. At this time in her life, she feels called to serve in a new capacity.



### **JESSIE KLEIN, DEACON**

Jessie and her husband Cliff began attending FPC in 2014. They immediately felt right at home with the warm welcome, excellent preaching, and glorious music. They have seven grown children and 12 grandchildren and feel blessed that most are local. Her motivation to serve stems from Jesus' command in John 15:12 to love one another just as He loves us. By serving, she hopes to build deeper relationships within the congregation.



### **BERT AGUILAR, ELDER**

Bert attends FPC with his wife Whitney and two boys Emery (4) and Amias (1). He hopes to experience the fullness of God through the power of the Holy Spirit solely rooted in love for our church and our community at large.



### **JILLIAN FREEMAN, ELDER**

Jillian is married to Luke and they have a one-year-old son, Micah. Her sister and brother-in-law, Joanie & Trevor Joy, are also FPC members. She hopes that in serving, she can live into her conviction that to be a part of a community is to roll up her sleeves, so to speak, and do the work of the community. She expects serving as an elder will deepen her love for our church body and Jesus' work among and through us. She hopes to faithfully offer her perspective and voice as a longtime member, woman, mother, seminarian, therapist, millennial, and downtown Fresno advocate.



### **SCOTT NORVELL, ELDER**

Scott has been married to Wendi for 35 years. They have three adult children, Luke (married to Valerie), Chris, and Kaylene (married to Doug Durbin). Doug and Kaylene attend FPC. Luke and Valerie are expecting their 2nd child soon. He is honored to serve the church as an Elder. God has given him a heart for His people and, working with the other Elders, will help discern the mind of Christ for His church here in Fresno.



### **MARLENE VAN BROCKLIN, ELDER**

Marlene and her husband Gary have retired to this area after years of ministry in various countries and teaching at Montreat College. Marlene's grandparents worshiped at FPC years ago and her parents met at this church. Their daughter, Annelies, is engaged with International Student Ministry at Fresno State and worships with her husband and daughter at North Fresno Church. The invitation to serve as an elder arrived as an answer to prayer regarding how to use her gifts in retirement. She will use the spiritual gifts of encouragement, faith, discernment, and wisdom (which she continually seeks) to serve the sisters and brothers of FPC.



# SLATE OF NOMINEES FOR 2021

NOMINATING COMMITTEE



**ERIC CRANTZ**

Joined in 1982 & serves as an Elder.



**DOUG DURBIN**

Has attended since birth & volunteers with different ministries @FPC.



**DENISE GUERRERO**

Joined in 2013 & serves as a Deacon.



**ROGER HARABEDIAN**

Joined in 2011 & volunteers with Worship Ministry.



**DEBORAH HUGHES**

Joined in 1997 & serves as an Elder.



**OSCAR RODRIGUEZ**

Joined in 2015 & is the Director of Martin Park.



**ALISA ZIMMERMAN**

Joined in 2012 & serves as a Rooted D-Group Leader.



### **GERRE BRENNEMAN, PRESIDENT**

Through the years most of Gerre's family worshiped at FPC. She was the first to join and they followed! The role of corporate officer gives our church one more level of checks and balances. She believes that such shared responsibility and authority keeps the business side of church transparent and on track. In addition to her present role, she has served in a variety of ways - some requiring much more time and commitment than others, but all done because loving this church and congregation is one of the best ways she knows to serve the Lord.



### **BEN WIELE, VICE PRESIDENT**

Ben has been attending FPC since 2012. He was referred to our church by friends and a random passerby in Starbucks - seriously! He and Ashley have been married since 2010. They have one son, Cooper, and a daughter, Reese. Ben serves because he understands the vital role church leadership plays in the life of the community and is honored to explore what that role means for him and his family.



### **DAVE KIMBALL, TREASURER**

Dave is married to Adrienne. Their son Dan and daughter-in-law Suzanne Kimball and granddaughter Michaela are active in the life and ministry of FPC. The Kimballs have both served as elders and in many other capacities over the years. Dave is motivated to serve by his belief in God and His Son Jesus and his conviction that one should not only attend church but should participate in its mission. For this particular nomination, his secular background and experiences lend themselves to fulfilling this role.



### **KEITH WALSH, SECRETARY**

Keith and his wife Denise are empty nesters, having two adult daughters who also attended FPC. He feels led to work and assist the church in its mission. He has served previously as an elder and is currently on the Men's Leadership Board.



### **SUSAN GLOVER, MEMBER AT LARGE**

Susan has attended FPC since birth and she is a third generation member. She started working at the church after her late husband Jon Glover suggested she apply during a vacancy in the Administration position in July of 1988. She retired from this part of her job at the end of 2014. She now serves as one of our chaplains and it is a joy for her to care for her church family that helped nurture her spiritual growth.



# Saints Gone Home

Lydia Barkman

Paula Darden

John Lamborn

Doris Lautz

Carolyn Repanich

Richard Samuelian

Barbara Wagnon

Maragaret Wilson

Active Members who passed away in 2020

We thank God for these and other loved ones  
of the church who are now with the Lord.



First  
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