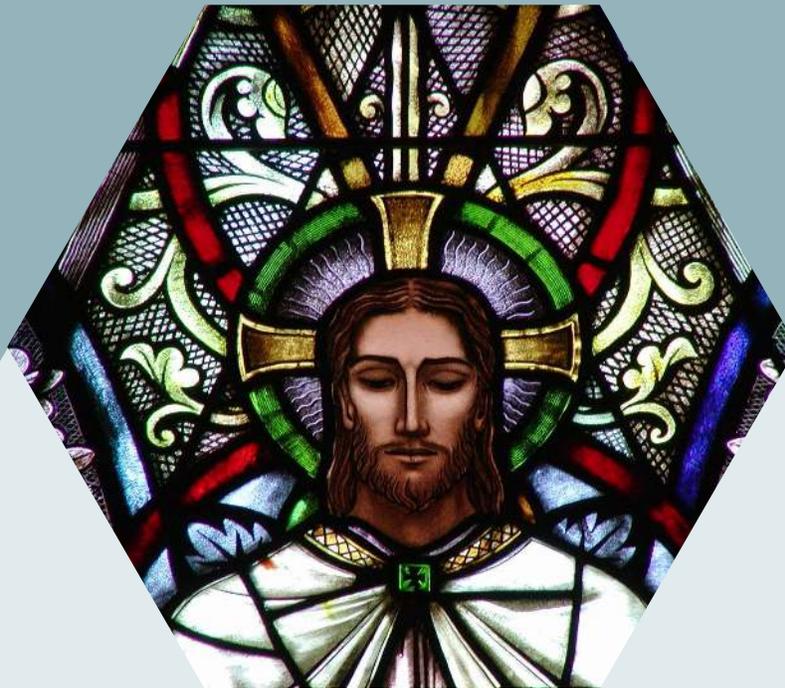


# 2018 ANNUAL REPORT

## FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH



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*Engaging together in Christ's work of making disciples  
for the redeeming transformation of our city and world.*

# PASTORS' MESSAGE

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REV. JEREMY VACCARO

Senior Pastor

REV. LANA ROBERTS

Associate Pastor

REV. CHRIS POPADICH

Assistant Pastor

Welcome to the 2018 FPC Annual Report. Thanks for opening these pages to see the testimony of God's work among and through our congregation. God has called us to engage together in Christ's work of making disciples for the redeeming transformation of our city and world. It's both our purpose (why we exist) and our hope (what we long to see happen). The pages of this report give evidence of our efforts together toward that purpose. But, as we remember from Psalm 127:1, *"unless the Lord builds the house, the builders labor in vain."* In other words, we are totally dependent on the Lord to make anything we do worthwhile for the Kingdom. So, the spiritual fruit that is made evident in this report exists only because of the gracious work of our God. Praise be to Him!

It's been exciting to see people grow in Christ this year. As we preached through Haggai and 1 Peter and Psalm 119 in the first half of the year, we certainly experienced testimony of the Lord at work through His Word. Then, during our long sermon series on biblical rest, we were encouraged to see the congregation grow in faith and experience more of the rest that God has for us in Christ. Finally, many of us were touched by the Spirit as we celebrated that the Healer has come during Advent and Christmas. One of the great joys in our work is to listen in as congregants give testimony of the way they are stepping out in faith, or practicing a new spiritual discipline, or repenting of unbelief, or loving their neighbors, or taking on a ministry mindset, or growing in spiritual leadership. 2 Corinthians 3:18 says, *"And we all .. beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another."* We believe that the Lord moved across our congregation in 2018 to bring new degrees of glory and for that we thankful to God.

We are also thankful for you. As your pastors, it is our privilege to experience the Lord at work in and through you. We love being a part of what God is doing through the life, ministry, and mission of FPC Fresno. Thank you for allowing us to be your pastors. Some of our own FPC highlights from 2018 include a powerful trip to Israel, a restorative sabbatical, and our very first Go Team Sunday. We pray that as you read through this report you will be encouraged by what the Lord has done in 2018 and inspired to engage together in Christ's work for 2019.



Our Pastors - Jeremy, Chris & Lana



# COMMUNITY GROWTH

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REV. CHRIS POPADICH

Assistant Pastor

## ADULT EDUCATION HOUR

The year started off with an exegetical study of the Book of Haggai and came to a greater understanding that truly “*Man does not live by bread alone.*” We also again kicked off and grew deeper in the knowledge and love of Jesus by the cadre of retired pastors teaching through the book of Matthew and proceeded to the Book of John in the fall. Families gathered to remember Easter and FPC Mission Partners stirred our hearts in prayer as we heard of the work God is doing in our neighborhood, city, and world. Children also found their worlds turned upside down as grace-filled parents clearly articulated expectations and consequences to their actions.

In the fall various teachers answered difficult questions the world is asking, and we engaged the headlines of the day with the effective facilitation of Jamie Franklin. Professor Steve Varvis got us ready for Christmas by showing us the way Jesus fulfilled prophecies found in the Old Testament. God also used three simple questions about who he is, what he has done, and who we are to give a group of men and group of women conviction about how the Spirit was calling them to repent and believe the truths of God’s word.

How great is our God that the lives of our adults during the Adult Education Hour grew in knowledge, love, and obedience to Jesus.



## MEN'S MINISTRY

This year the men of our church grew in relationship with each other, celebrated God’s goodness, praised his name, and were built up and encouraged by his preached Word through the seven events orchestrated out of Men’s Ministry. Highlights included the bold word taught by Paul Mavrogeorge on fleeing pornography, Christ-centered testimony from Ben Wiele, Brad Stevens, Koby Johns, Jeff Rooney, Dick Lee, and John Martin during the Men’s Conference and Christ-centered testimony from John Ellenberger in the October Men’s Breakfast. Even behind the scenes, the men of the church stepped up to serve and build relationships along the way.

Going into the fall, new ownership, vision, and leadership emerged out of the creation of the Men’s Leadership Board (MLB). It became their work to champion FPC men’s events and activities. These men envisioned, planned and executed three men-specific events and one churchwide FSU tailgate event. These six men, Peter Cooper, Paul Braswell, Jim Dice, Bert Aguilar, Dave Peltola, and Keith Walsh, with oversight provided by Skip Lynn and Pastor Chris Popadich, are passionate about men connecting with other men so that we all grow in Christ together as disciples.



# Women's Ministry

REV. LANA ROBERTS  
Associate Pastor

Women were challenged and changed by regular study of and obedience to God's "alive and active" word. Through much of the year, there are women gathering on three weekdays, and a number of women in each of the Bible studies have followed God for a long time. They bear the fruit of faithfulness to the Lord and each other, perseverance in difficult times, deep relationships rooted in shared stories and many prayers, a readiness to grow, and hands that help meet the needs of others.

The variety in our Spring Six books reaps a variety of fruit. One leader encouraged her group saying, "It seems like God's giving us the opportunity to embrace someone 'different' from us - an unchurched woman who's in the early-ish stages of seeking God. Would you please pray . . . that, in her, we would have a new sister in Christ, and that she would see Christ in all of us?" That woman was included among our women in April and found the courage to attend WoCo in October.

Deeper is exactly where God took the women at WoCo. The leadership stretched to trust God's provision. Like the boy with loaves and fishes, they used what they had and God blessed it. There was fresh fruit in outreach, and fruit that ripened into a deeper commitment to Christ and the church. One woman said, "This experience has shown me how much I need to be involved with the people of the church." Praise God!



Linda Guzman Speaking @WoCo 2018



WoCo 2018 Worship Team



Beyond Color Blind Book Group

# COLLEGE MINISTRY

**GERAUD BRUMFIELD**

Director of College Ministry

I am a dreamer! I like to dream about what God can do and see what my role is in it all. However, building a college ministry here at FPC has been beyond my wildest dreams. God has been laying down a foundation to the dreams. The guiding principle of CCO ministry right now is EVERY STUDENT needs the Gospel, the Church, and a Vision for their life. Together, we have been moving to make this a reality.

Last year at this time, relationship with FPU's Men's basketball team was a just beginning. Now, we are actively praying to put together GO TEAMS to care for 3 different teams at FPU. We are creatively thinking about ways to build a sustainable relationship with students and this takes time. I have watched a student-athlete go from telling me, "[The Bible] can't tell me how to live my life" to attending our Christmas Eve service with his family from Scotland without a formal invitation from me. God is actively pursuing every student.

This year, we have engaged more students on Sunday mornings and have seen the Greek Life Go Team build deeper relationships with students at Fresno State. Students have been asking to be discipled and want ways to connect. We also took an impressive 14 students to Jubilee 2018. This is still just the beginning.

I still am a dreamer, I don't think that will ever change about me. However, I could never have imagined this being where we are after only 16 months. Praise be to God! Can't wait to see where we are going next!



transforming college students  
to transform the world



Delta Sigma Brothers @The Franklin's House

# DEACONS

REV. LANA ROBERTS

Associate Pastor

The core of the Deacons' calling is deepening relationship in Christ with those they serve. Every task is an opportunity to know someone better, to learn how to pray for and with them, to "be with" them. In the same way that Jesus came to be with us as Emmanuel, the Deacons represent Jesus as they are with people in need. The fruit for Deacons is when people give God the credit. When people say, "Thank God for providing for us...thank God for all the people who have shown concern and genuine compassion...thank the Lord for sending helpers...thank God for providing shelter...", we know that they have seen Jesus.

Deacons are celebrating the fruit of FPC's donations to our Benevolence fund. In 2018, we distributed nearly \$9,000. We helped families keep roofs over their heads; provided first-time, new beds for some neighbor's children; gave gifts of compassion; helped keep folks healthy, and repaired a thermostat so a family could be warm in December. Caring for those in need is one way we live out Jesus' commands to love one another and love the world.

The Deacons and many others who serve alongside them at Memorial Receptions minister to our members and regular attendees, their extended families, and people from just about everywhere. We regularly hear "thank you" not just for the food and gathering space, but for the gracious and hospitable service. Before and during every reception we aim to have a continuous attitude of prayer so that everything we say and do points others to Jesus. We may not always see how God answers our prayers, but we trust that sowing the seeds of the gospel through kindness will produce fruit.



Crista Newman & Doris Lautz



Stephen Ministry Team

## SAINTS GONE HOME

Audrey Deal	Gilbert Mitchell
Barbara Scovell	Ivan Ward Lasher
Becky Adams	Leland Erickson
Beverly Gunther	Marilyn Patten
Cal MacPherson	Mark vonBoltensern
Charlene Henry	Robert Yule
David Bradley	Ruth Lawrence
	Wilma Bos





## BETH PAZ

Director of High School Ministries



Rooted is a spiritually vibrant place. We help high-schoolers experience loving community and grow deeply rooted in a relationship with Jesus in order to bear Gospel fruitfulness for a lifetime. We are making wonderful use of The Underground, our renovated space where students feel at home, and where ping pong is always a hit!

This year we celebrate our 1-year partnership with Teen Night (Bethany Inner-City Church) who collaborates with us to make our activities energetic, cross-cultural and Kingdom-oriented. Youth group, outreach events like our Halloween & Christmas parties, Breakaway Spring Break Service project and our Guatemala Trip deepen identity in Christ and move visiting friends to regular attendees! Sunday D-Groups engage students in Scripture as they grapple with relevant questions and application.

The Student Leadership Team has successfully helped students give voice and shape the culture of our ministry while participating in leadership tasks. Georgie reflects, “Student Leadership has definitely made me more observant and grateful for all the adults helping in ministry . . . It’s taught me patience, helped me strengthen my relationship with God and reminded me where my priorities are at and where they should be.” I couldn’t do this without our dedicated team of D-Group ministry leaders: Nate & Bre, Scott & Wendi, Ducky, Hector, Alisa, Bekah, Denise, Elizabeth (Transitioned out: Dee, Doug, Kaylene, Kelsey, Annie!)



Santa Cruz Retreat



High School Ministry Team



**MEAGAN BERGEM**  
Director of Junior High Ministries

Our mission in Junior High ministry is to make disciples of Jesus who IGNITE their faith to pursue a deeper relationship with God and fully surrender their lives to worship the Lord (Heb. 12:28-29).



As a part of a Great Commission Church, IGNITE Jr. High Ministry's desire is to equip students in Basic Bible and Discipleship. Helping students build a solid foundation of understanding the Bible and how to discern what truth is in their daily lives. We value being others focused and challenge the youth towards Outreach and Evangelism. It is our prayer that students will grow in their relationship with Jesus and Surrender their whole life to God. Our hope is Jr. High IGNITE is a safe place to belong, be known and ultimately realize they are fully loved by God.



Relational ministry remains key to developing the faith of young disciples of Jesus. Our team of Youth Leaders has grown to twelve active volunteers who love on youth and live out God's grace in their families, workplaces, and in ministry. We walk alongside students and families in their joys and sorrows. The students this year have stepped out in courage and invited new friends to outreach events and youth group, which has resulted in our community growing to serve fifty youth regularly. Our community has become more diverse which is a beautiful reflection of God's image but comes with challenges as we learn how to love one another well. We are thankful to God for his continual faithfulness to our students and team of leaders as we meet, laugh, cry, study, serve and go to camps together.





Children's Ministry Outing



**MARGIE NUNEZ**  
 Director of Children's Ministries

The purpose of Children's Ministry is to lead kids to love Christ, His church, and the world. Our goals are to come alongside families to help their children know Jesus, belong to the church family, and learn how to love the world and serve others.

This has been a fruitful year! Here are just a few things the Holy Spirit has produced among us:

- We held many fun events, which resulted in friends being invited, connections being made among families, and a few new kids attending on Sundays and Wednesday nights.
- On Sundays, we introduced a time of music with our preschoolers, and I'm told those songs are being carried beyond the classroom doors and into their homes. The Kinder to 4th graders are singing at the top of their lungs during our 15 min worship time. They are requesting their favorite songs each week and enthusiastically praising God. One teacher said, "I wish the whole congregation could see these children worshiping right now!"
- At City Bible Adventure this summer 130 kids learned 5 attributes of God, lifted their voices to Him, and made friends. At least 2 girls gave their hearts to Christ! One FPC granddaughter made fast friends with a girl from Hope Now Church, then invited her to kids summer camp.
- KidsWedsNights (4th-6th graders) has consistently had 25 ethnically diverse kids each week. Some are hearing the Gospel for the first time!

Fruit we hope to see in 2019 is for God to add more families through our invitational and inclusive efforts.



Sunday School



City Bible Adventure 2018



# MISSION

## CHARITY WHITNEY

Mission Elder

In our first meeting last year the Mission Ministry Team asked itself: What do we want to celebrate in the 2019 Annual Report? We had lots of ideas, many of which bore fruit throughout the following months. Here are a few of our favorites.

We held several prayer gatherings this year. We prayed focusing on God's work locally and globally, as well as on the persecuted church. These heartfelt and powerful times have been a sweet and intimate conversation with the Lord.



San Francisco Mission Trip

Our mission partners often travel to visit us, but how often do we go visit them? In July, a multi-generational group took a field trip to San Francisco to visit EPC church planters Troy and Caroline Wilson and The Table church. After worshipping with them, we served nearby residents at the Civic Center Hotel. It was inspiring to be with them and serve with them.

Most recently, we organized our first ever Amazing Race. Through games we engaged all ages in learning about God's mission in the world. Together we shared different languages, bread, and a little bit of spilled water. It was a valuable time to connect. We hope it becomes a tradition that highlights God's local and global mission, and moves each of us to engage in that mission.

Finally, we want to celebrate the sweet fruit of your generosity expressed in many ways this year. One way is this: over the Christmas season, you gave \$7,985 to assist victims of the Camp Fire in Butte County. When we provided the opportunity, you responded. Thank you.



Amazing Race



Amazing Race - Celebrating the Finish

# OUTREACH

DONALD NORMAN & TERRY JAURENA

Outreach Elder

Mission/Outreach Director

We are the team concerned with how we invite, welcome, host and communicate with one other, with guests and with our community. Our blue-vested LinkCrew engaged in some retooling along with the ushers to enhance our welcome to guests as part of the new First Impressions Team. Our efforts to follow up with newcomers was enhanced by additional volunteers to the rather new team striving to ensure those new to us are invited to connect personally with someone in the congregation. The ArtHop team also welcomed some new volunteers. The move into the new Gallery located much closer to a campus entrance made it easier to welcome ArtHoppers and the improved lighting delighted our featured artists. And check out the benches made from the old doors of our Sanctuary.

When our website broke, we took the opportunity to overhaul and update it, improving our digital presence. We began sending out Stories@FPC via email, attempting to share more regularly the way the Lord is at work in and through us. We began to intentionally connect with young families in our congregation to build a new vision for invitation and inclusion! It's been full year and we look forward to inviting, connecting and hosting in 2019.



Welcome to First Presbyterian Church!

FPC Website



ArtHop in The Gallery

# WORSHIP ARTS

SCOTT NORVELL

Personnel Elder

The Worship Arts Ministry is made up of many different teams whose goal is to lead the congregation to honor and glorify God. We have many things that we are grateful for this past year.

A Liturgical Decor Team has been working on updating and refreshing the decorations in the narthex and sanctuary.

Music interns continue to work with the choir in what can be described as a discipleship relationship. The interns are not only getting vocational training, but they are also being encouraged in their faith.

The First Impressions Team (Link Crew, Greeters, and Ushers) are improving capacity to host well to those that attend our worship gatherings.

Full Court Pres, the grade 3-6 children's choir, Joyful Ringers (the Bell Choir), the Brass ensemble and the Chancel choir continue to provide worship music for the congregation. The screen and sound technicians continue to support the pastors and worship teams with quality support. Additional members have joined the 2nd service worship band including some of our high school students.

A spring 2018 benefit concert for the restoration of a church organ in Germany generated a donation that enabled the Blankenfeld-Jünsdorf Parish Church to restore their organ. They will celebrate on Reformation Sunday 2019.

The Messiah Sing-Along continues to be an event that glorifies God and serves as an outreach event to the community.

Prayerfully consider the many opportunities for you to get involved in one of the many teams in the Worship Arts.



Thanksgiving 2018



FPC Christmas Choir



Full Court Pres - Christmas Eve

# PERSONNEL

LAURA SPONGBERG

Personnel Elder

On the Personnel Committee we have the privilege of supporting our terrific staff. This year we want to celebrate at least a small part of what some of them have accomplished.

Terry Jaurena had her 25-year anniversary of working for FPC. Terry and her Missions Team exemplify “engaging together in Christ’s work of making disciples for the redeeming transformation of our city and world”. How many lives have been redeemed through this ministry? Think about how you can be a part of this...

Pastor Jeremy is finally Dr. Vaccaro! He finished his PHD, focusing on good church leadership. His thesis analyzed the sermons of effective leaders. Pastor Lana took a sabbatical, spent time resting in the Lord, and came back refreshed and renewed. Pastor Chris is bringing about more discipling opportunities as well as more Go-teams who will work on the redeeming transformation of our city. What Go-team do you want to join?

We said goodbye to Audrey as she was called to the Philippines as a missionary. In her place, we welcomed Rocio, who came on board to work the front desk. Ataloa blessed the FPC women by speaking at Women’s Conference.

You’ll read in the rest of Annual Report about many more great things our staff is doing. We are grateful for a committed staff who seek to serve God with creativity and joy.



Celebrating Terry's 25-Year Anniversary



Pastor Jeremy's unofficial Ph.D. Certificate



Israel Trip - Pastor Jeremy & Marianne Lee

# FACILITY & GROUNDS

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## TORSTEN GRUNBERG

Director of Facilities & Finance

We started 2018 with a remodel of the former library. The new name for the space next to the M Street gate is *The Gallery*. Besides serving as a meeting room for all sorts of activities, the location is the new space for our monthly ArtHop event. Art can be professionally displayed in a cozy and inviting environment.

The highlight of 2018 in regards to the FPC facilities was the recent completion of the bathroom remodel by our patio area. Those bathrooms now have twice as many shiny new stalls available. We have also created direct access from the patio and inside access from the Fellowship Hall. We are excited to now have better facilities for the activities happening throughout the week and to be able to offer updated and more accessible restrooms to outside organizations.

Other facility changes include a wrought iron fence protecting the roof mounted sanctuary AC equipment and a wrought iron gate at the alley entrance to the Hub. Both areas have been prone to vandalism. We are also continuing to make lighting changes. Several new lights have made our campus a bit brighter at night time. Meanwhile, many of our existing classroom lights have been replaced with energy-saving LED lights. The double effect of providing more/better light while reducing the consumption cost has been very attractive.

The facility team is ready for the continuing efforts to make our place of worship a more inviting and better suited place for all of us. In this undertaking we appreciate the help of our custodians Freddie and Oscar. We are also thankful for the many volunteers who have helped with campus projects in 2018.



New Bathrooms!

# FINANCE

ALLAN KNEPPER

Finance Elder

We wonderfully responded to last year's call "to be obedient if God ask you to give more." Beyond giving extra funds to FPC, I heard some congregants share how God used their choice to be obedient to bless their family in ways that further strengthened and deepened their faith in Him.

2018 giving was about \$1,413,000. An increase of about \$77,000 over 2017 (hear Session applauding). We spent about \$1,478,000. We approved a 2018 budget that represented a deficit of \$175,000 over 2017 revenues. The congregation's obedient response and having expenditures under budget netted a deficit of only \$65,000.

## Budget Comparison 2018 to 2019

Ministry	2018 Spending	2018 Budget	2019 Budget	2019-2018 Change
Administration	77,014	72,254	76,254	4,000
Christian Education	50,530	59,925	60,800	875
Community Growth	60,538	75,121	71,850	(3,321)
Deacons	3,399	5,180	4,030	(1,150)
Facility & Grounds	162,480	161,500	151,500	(10,000)
Mission	157,216	158,250	152,000	(6,250)
Outreach	13,565	14,785	9,850	(4,935)
Personnel	927,332	950,099	968,469	18,370
Worship	25,765	23,830	22,285	(1,545)
TOTALS	1,477,839	1,520,944	1,516,988	(3,956)

The budget for next year is basically the same as 2018. There were some increases due mainly to increased costs of our human and facility resources which were offset with reductions in other ministries. At the end of 2017 we had about \$1,000,000 undesignated cash in the bank and Session wanted to put those funds to kingdom use. Session approved a 2018 plan to put \$775,000 of that cash to Kingdom use in three areas; Fellowship Hall bathrooms \$200,000, solar in parking lot \$400,000 and approving a budget to spend \$175,000 over the previous 2017 giving. We actually didn't spend that much. The bathroom was finished under budget, the solar was delayed (PGE), and God provided extra funds through the congregations regular giving.

To start 2019, we have about \$700,000 undesignated in the bank. For 2019, Session has approved putting about \$430,000 of that to kingdom use. The areas are solar (God prevailed over PGE) and about \$100,000 to cover the budget over expected 2019 giving.

Session is always concerned that we use the funds God has given to us to further increase His Kingdom and will continue to evaluate our spending to further help engage our FPC congregants in sharing and deepening their faith.

