

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

2016 Annual Report



Congregational Meeting
Date: Sunday, January 22, 2017

Table of Contents

Engaging Together In Christ's Work	4
A New Spark	5
A Place To Call Home	7
Clerk's Report	9
Finance Report	10
2016 Ministry Budget Review	11
Deacons' Report	11
Christian Education	14
Community Growth	17
Facility and Grounds	18
Mission	19
Outreach	21
Personnel	23
Worship	24

Engaging Together In Christ's Work



Thank you for opening the pages of this First Presbyterian Church, Fresno Annual Report for 2016. The reports that follow represent the very important work of our congregation to continue in our purpose of engaging together in Christ's work of making disciples for the redeeming transformation of our city and world. The best stuff is in the pages to follow, but it is my privilege to highlight something that, I think, has been particularly important for the whole church this last year.

In February, we hosted a special guest: Rev. Dr. Ken Priddy. Ken was with us to lead the Church Vitality Weekend. Well over a hundred of us gathered on Friday night and Saturday morning to walk through Ken's G.O. 1 Seminar. He presented the facts about how churches naturally experience a lifecycle. All churches naturally move from incline to recline and, eventually, to decline. One of the most important moments of our time together with Ken was when we looked together at the characteristics of churches in each of these life stages and agreed that our church was showing signs of decline. It was sobering, but also refreshing to talk openly about it together. Every transformation in an organization's life always starts with an important moment of truth. I believe the Church Vitality Weekend was that moment for our congregation. And, transformation is exactly what the rest of the seminar was focused on. Churches that experience new vitality are ones that focus again on becoming Great Commission Churches.

Since that weekend, the Session's primary strategic initiative has been to become more and more of a Great Commission Church. We believe that our Purpose Statement already aligns with that vision, as do our Core Values of Transformational Relationship, Partnership, and Leadership. So what does it mean to be a Great Commission Church? It means that we are a church committed to making disciples of Jesus who are making disciples of Jesus.

Soon after Ken was here, we established a Vision Team to work together, under the authority of Session, to discern and facilitate the necessary initiatives that will help us move forward in the best way. The Vision Team members are Emily Dull, Pam Sells, John Ellenberger, Jamie Franklin, and me. Each of us has the much appreciated support of a prayer team that we are regularly updating. At the start of 2017 we will begin working with particular ministry teams to guide them through a Great Commission strategic planning process.

As I think about all the wonderful stuff that the Lord was doing among us in 2016 (as is evidenced in the pages to follow), I believe one of the most important was to help our Session rally behind this vision to be a Great Commission Church. I praise God that He has renewed this vision among our leaders. It's an essential step in being a church that grows deep and wide. Now, the work ahead is to figure out how we're going to get there. Please join me in praying about this in 2017.

It seems remarkable to be reflecting on another year of life and ministry with First Presbyterian Church Fresno. This was my fifth Christmas as your Senior Pastor. Though it certainly has its challenges, I find great joy in my work with you. This congregation is a gift to me and my family. Thank you for your loving kindness toward us. Surely, the Lord has been faithful to us. May the Lord bless you and keep you in the year ahead.

Rev. Jeremy Vaccaro, Senior Pastor

A New Spark



One of the things that I believe most shaped 2016 for our church and its ministries was the Church Vitality Weekend last February. Pastor Ken Priddy and the GO1 materials he presented to us were challenging. If you were there, you will recall that the group was an energetic mixture of people of different ages and stages of life. Many who came are newer to FPC, they attended alongside those who've been here for decades. There was a good representation of lay people and also church officers, pastors and staff. The eclectic nature of the group, I believe, speaks well for how God wants to unify our whole congregation so we can be on mission together. In terms of my own ministries, partly in response to the vitality weekend, both Deacons and Women's ministry have been casting about to find significant ways we can reach outside of our congregation to participate in the mission of God in our community. We have not yet found the perfect fit, but I see glimmers of opportunity and growth in a number of areas. I take those glimmers as a sign reminding me that God is at work and will help us to see and join in as we recognize where we are called. One glimmer is the new director of the Marjaree Mason Center, who is a follower of Jesus and has reached out to me to explore bringing a spiritual element to the center. Another is our Deacons' decision to host

Hope Authentic in April, opening our campus to the community for a seminar on how the church deals with issues of mental illness. I am hopeful that these new opportunities will bear fruit for the kingdom, and look forward to serving in my increased capacity in 2017.

HERE'S A LITTLE PEEK AT SOME OF MY 2016 MINISTRIES:

Our Women's Ministry Team continues to provide leadership and vision, supporting Bible study opportunities on Tuesday and Thursday mornings, as well as Wednesday evenings. For WednesdayNight@FPC, we started 2016 with the study Seamless and followed that up with a very successful experiment we called Spring Six. We liked the idea of gathering multiple groups around town and giving women the choice of where, with whom, and what material they wanted to pursue. We heard lots of great feedback on the structure and will probably do something similar in the early spring of 2017. We had a mighty fun group of women attend our annual Women's Conference (or WoCo, as we're now calling it!) in Santa Cruz. Props to Annika Fink who has led WoCo for three years – that's a lot of commitment! We are actively seeking one or two women to chair the 2017 in-town conference. Is God calling you to step up? My goal for the women of FPC, and indeed all women who belong to Jesus, is that each of us will be confident, knowing first who we are in Christ, and then as women who are called and equipped to step into our roles in the Church and Community. Also, I am FPC's liaison to the CityFest women's events, and we will be hosting a table at the luncheon in April.

We welcomed new members in the spring and fall, which is a source of joy every year. In June I handed over moderating our Deacons to Greg Tallman. That left me a little more free to invest the time required to launch FPC's Stephen Ministry.

The training is good for equipping and life-skills, but we also built a solid sense of community through sharing. I am so grateful for each of our Stephen Ministers and for those who helped with the training. You'll be hearing a lot about Stephen Ministry in the future, including ways in which it opens doors to those who don't know the Lord. Please keep this valuable ministry in your prayers!



I had the pleasure of officiating at two weddings in 2016 — one right here in our sanctuary, and one in beautiful Roche Harbor, WA. Weddings are always marked by joy and celebration, and it's a privilege to walk

alongside couples as they begin their new life together. Weddings, memorial services, conversations about Jesus and what God is doing in the lives of our congregation, preaching and teaching are a regular part of my weeks and months. It seemed to me that I travelled a bit more this year, with two Women's Conferences, the GA's Women's Resource Council, Presbytery and General Assembly. The fall was especially busy! Every place I go, I am reminded of God's faithfulness and goodness, and get to encourage others in their faith even as they encourage me in mine. I am very grateful for that.

You may have heard that most of the staff recently switched office spaces. After 10 years in the same spot, changing offices seemed like it would offer a fresh start, so I moved down the hall. Please come by, even if it's a quick visit to say hello. On a personal note, a much more important move was the one Brian and I made in June into our new home east of Clovis. A still bigger change is that by the time you are reading this, Brian will be retired from 20 years as the Theatre Company Director at TCOE. We are transitioning into a new stage where Brian's life will be more about the garden and the grandkids than driving to Visalia every day. But don't worry about us getting bored; we are adopting a puppy and his mama from the good folks at Fresno Labrador Retriever Rescue. Get ready for some delightful doggie stories! As always, we are grateful for God's abundant blessings.

Rev. Lana Roberts, Associate Pastor

A New Place To Call Home



Lisa and I are very excited to be here at First Presbyterian Church, Fresno. Beginning at our initial visit to FPC we have felt very warmly welcomed. Even our first day here in Fresno we were so thankful to have smiling faces greet us at the airport and walk into our new home with a well stocked fridge and pantry. The house was even decorated for Christmas! It blew us away to the point of tears. We know there are many who put forth effort to get us here and many have given gift cards, hugs, handshakes, and words of encouragement. From both of us we wish to say THANK YOU! We have felt very loved even though you know very little about us.

In case you missed the question and answer session on December 12th during the adult education hour, here is a short introduction to Lisa and

me. We both grew up in Pittsburgh, PA attending the same large non-denominational church. We knew of each other but our paths did not cross until much later.

After I graduated from Geneva College in 2004, I worked for the CCO at Kent State University in Ohio. The Coalition for Christian Outreach staff and events had a great impact upon my life in college and I was glad to give away what I had received as a student to students at KSU. During my five years on staff, I partnered with Habitat for Humanity and assisted in building/remodeling eleven houses for families in need. It was also a great opportunity to share the Gospel with students as there was an easy connection between the nails of a house and the nails of the cross. Transiting out of the CCO, I sojourned to Guinea Bissau in West Africa to discern a call to full time mission work. In my 11 months there I taught English and did discipleship with some of the nationals.

Strongly sensing a call to pastoral ministry, I went to seminary at Trinity School for Ministry in Pittsburgh, PA. It was during my first semester working part time and going to school that I started a Bible study. After being reacquainted and sharing a heart for the Gospel, Lisa became my co-leader as she cared for the women while I cared for the men of the group. After lots of talk about the Bible and plenty of prayer together we came to a place of deep friendship, love, and care for each other. I married Lisa early July of 2013 and we lived in student housing at the seminary until I graduated in 2015.

It was from May 2015 until Dec 1, 2016 that the Lord put us in a place of waiting. Not to say we just sat around all day. During this time Lisa finished up her Masters in elementary education from Liberty University and I began working at Memorial Park Presbyterian Church as their sound technician. Some of those days were very difficult as we wondered at times if the Lord had forgotten us. Yet there were moments of hope like Lisa's graduation from Liberty University, watching a few friends and family members get married, meeting Pastor Jeremy at General Assembly in June of 2016, and finding truly my theological home in reformed theology and a Presbyterian form of church government.

God's hand was always with us and we now look back and praise God for the many ways he was working quietly yet still very powerfully in our lives. We look forward to the coming year as I grow into the Community Growth Director Position and this spring come before the Presbytery of the Pacific for ordination. I now join the Psalmist in saying,

*“For you, O Lord, have made me glad by your work;
at the works of your hands I sing for joy.” Psalm 92:4*

Chris Popadich, Director of Community Growth

Clerk’s Report

It has been my pleasure to once again serve as Clerk of Session. It brings me great joy to work with our pastors and the other Elders on Session to serve the church.

Most of the work of the Session can be seen in the Ministry Team reports that follow. I did want to emphasize a couple of efforts that the Session undertook as a group. The first was training and self-evaluation as we explored the book Saturate. We read one or more chapters per month and then discussed those chapters as led by either Pastor Jeremy or one of the Elders. This is the book that also served as the basis for the fall session of WednesdayNights@FPC. We explored the place that Christ held in our lives and the way we related to others in light of that. We tried to personally apply what we learned. It was a good time of growth.

We also spent time on church membership. We worked with Ataloa and Audrey in the church office to create a new system for tracking all of our members and notifying the Session when there are needs that should be addressed. In addition, the Session spent time discussing the needs of specific members, and contacted many people personally as needs arose.

Membership Report	Membership as of 12/31/2015	Additions	Deletions	Membership as of 12/31/2016
Active Members	606	21	54	573
Inactive Members	57	36	16	77

Our decline in membership numbers this year was the end result of some of this work, as we have contacted a number of people who have moved or who are no longer participating. At the same time, our attendance numbers have remained fairly strong. Those numbers are published on the next page.

Stuart Conrad, Clerk of Session

Annual Sunday Worship Attendance

Year	Attendance
2012	24,709
2013	24,937
2014	24,380
2015	24,533
2016	24,154

Note: 2012 figure is an estimate

Finance Report

We restarted the Finance Committee this year. Those serving on the team with me were Torsten Grunberg – Director of Finance and Facilities, Dick Herrinton, and Rich Hughes.

We reviewed the financial work and processes of the church, and at times recommended changes to Torsten or to the Session. Topics we reviewed included cash handling procedures, a spending threshold for ministry teams, the online giving process, insurance issues, specific issues with certain accounts, and reviews of the budget and monthly finances.

We were especially blessed this year with the level of giving by the congregation. Our work is easy when the congregation gives generously, and that is what happened this year. Our giving met our budget needs, while our expenses were lower than expected. The main reason for the low expenses were vacancies that existed in personnel: the Assistant Pastor position was not filled until December, and the High School Director position was open for about five months. Next year, we will not have those openings and will need continued strong support in order to meet our budget.

Stuart Conrad, Finance Committee Chairman

2016 Ministry Budget Review

Ministry	2016 Budget	2016 Actual Spending	2017 Budget
Administration	66,418	76,447	67,430
Christian Education	36,150	25,981	33,550
Community Growth	10,650	4,923	12,850
Deacons	1,500	910	3,600
Facility and Grounds	144,981	146,178	143,816
Mission	135,000	134,980	139,000
Outreach	12,800	5,095	10,500
Personnel	883,403	779,648	922,424
Worship	19,098	20,564	19,330
Total	1,310,000	1,194,726	1,352,500
2016 Giving and Other Income: 1,344,938			

Deacons' Report

“Leading the Congregation In Its Ministries of Care and Compassion”

The Deacons serve the function of leading the congregation in its care and compassion ministries. We once again welcomed 6 newly elected Deacons as well as replacing 2 who left the area. The Deacons serve in one or sometimes two of the ministry areas. The most significant and touching part of the Deacons work is “InTouch”. The Deacons are assigned certain FPC folks who have a hard time attending service

regularly. The Deacons visit these folks throughout the year and often will visit with family members as well. The stories that come out of these visits are shared during the monthly meetings and prayer requests are always welcome from these folks. The Deacons always conclude the monthly meetings with prayer time for those who have been identified by staff or others in need of prayerful support. It is the privilege of the Deacon team to pray regularly for those identified throughout each month as well.

The Deacons held their third annual retreat this year and got to know each other a bit better as well as introduce ourselves and ministries to the newly elected Deacons. The third retreat was aimed at clarifying our various roles and aligning ourselves with the FPC purpose statement. The Deacons left the retreat with an understanding of how our roles fit into the overall purpose of FPC and an appreciation of each other's gifts and talents. As part of the retreat the Deacons pair up with a "Prayer Partner" who commits to praying for and with each other and their ministries throughout the year.

The Deacons continue to provide help to meet the needs of the local community through many channels, including, Food Closet, LOVE Inc, and Food Pantry Boxes. The congregation and others receive the ministries of Meal Support for families and individuals in need of short term assistance for prepared meals delivered by one of the Deacons. Additionally, over the year, many are provided transportation, benevolence and receptions are provided for the Memorial Services at FPC. The Deacons also provide support for Communion each month and most importantly provide prayers, spiritual and emotional support through In-Touch, the Prayer Team, Communication and Care Coordinators.

CARE MINISTRY 2016	
Cards/Notes Written . . .	119
Care Coordinated For People . . .	42
Families Served With Meals . . .	54
Meals Served . . .	190 Meals
Transportation Provided For . . .	60 people
Individuals & Families Helped By Our Deacons Benevolence Fund . . .	13

In 2016, the Deacons launched two additional ministries. Paul Marr headed up the launch of the First Pres Prayer Team and continues to look for members to come along him in this ministry. This brought the Prayer Ministries under the Deacons umbrella in 2016.

Additionally, we have launched Stephen Ministry and are in the process of getting it off the ground and getting people trained in the details of this ministry. Rev. Lana Roberts is leading this effort at this time and it will have an impact on our church community. The Deacon Board is committed to ministry of care and compassion but understands that it takes the body of Christ to meet these needs. In the coming year, please consider how you can come alongside of one of these ministries of FPC

Greg Tallman, Deacons Board Moderator

Saints Gone Home In 2016



Marian Griffin

April 13

Scotty Brooks

August 16

Dorothy Pipes

April 26

Henry Kliever

November 17

Jane Hightower

May 31

Richard Hughes

November 20

Betty Warren

July 24

Ed Deatherage

December 2

Christian Education

The CE team is very thankful for a congregation who is ready to support our ongoing ministry. This has been witnessed in the giving of your time as teachers, volunteers, and in your financial giving, sandwiched around a “Flamingo Summer.”



We have added a Pre-school Coordinator, Nursery Assistant & a High School Director and Summer Staff. As our desire to improve and enhance the ministry, we again look at scripture to guide us.

Psalm 127:3, “Children are a gift from the Lord; they are a reward from Him,”

and

Proverbs 22:6, “Train a child in the way he should go & when he is old he will not depart from it.”

CHILDREN

Nursery: For the past two years FPC’s Nursery has been managed by a wonderful and dedicated team of volunteers. Due to circumstances in their lives, these volunteers can no longer continue their generous commitment. Therefore, the C.E. Committee asked and Session approved a paid part-time Nursery Assistant (5-7 hrs/wk). We are pleased to announce that Julie

Goodale has been hired for this position.

We thank and bless Cathe Scott and Debi Stanley, our Lead Coordinators, and Elizabeth Morgan, Ashley Wiele, Stephanie Conrad and Anne Kavoian, our monthly Coordinators, for their genuine love, care and dedication to this ministry to our littlest ones. We LOVE and thank our many other volunteer caregivers too. We appreciate and need all of you!



Preschool: Thirty volunteers love and disciple our 2 to 5 year-olds, job-sharing throughout the year for the 3 hour-long classes during each worship service and Sunday School. Cathe Scott is our excellent volunteer Supplies Coordinator who prepares the teaching supplies for the lessons each week. Rosemary Avery, a real gem, quietly sneaks in to decorate our preschool bulletin boards and, more importantly, arrives early every Sunday to pray in each of our classrooms for teachers and children.

This department being a busy one, Session approved a 12 hr/wk part-time Preschool Coordinator position. We are thrilled to report that Whitney Aguilar has joined our

staff and will work with Margie Nunez, Children's Ministry Director, to meet the needs of our preschoolers and their families.



Elementary: Fifteen teachers disciple our Kinder to 6th grade children, and five couples take turns once a month teaching our Kids Alive class (K-2nd grade) during the 11 am worship hour. Sunday School hour with Kinder to 4th graders begins with singing and worshipping as Elizabeth Rooney, Gannon Murray and Caleb Parker lead. We thank our gifted teachers and leaders for creatively bringing the Scriptures to life for our students!



Our Fall WednesdayNights@FPC teachers (13 small group leaders) and two story-tellers taught elementary children the 7 realities of experiencing God. Three energetic teachers taught preschoolers how to follow God.

Large group games in the Fellowship Hall was led by our very fun game guru, Liz Smith.



City Bible Adventure this summer was a joint effort between FPC and several partner church to reach children of our city with the Gospel & God's

love. Melissa Murray was a fabulous Director, and many from FPC and neighborhood ministries joined God where he was at work in the lives of kids that week.

One of the greatest God sightings of this year was the baptism of four babies and two elementary children. What a privilege and responsibility we have to come alongside these families to help teach their children to love and follow Jesus.

JUNIOR HIGH

Our Junior High ministry staff and advisors come alongside junior high families during this transitional stage of life. We have witnessed growth in their faith and a commitment to follow Jesus with their whole selves.



Meagan Bergem, Junior High Director, and team of advisors walk with the students through their joys and sorrows. We are thankful for this team as they live out God's love and hope in their families, workplaces, and in ministry.



God is faithful in providing us with abundant grace, joy, and love. We are learning how to receive these truths for ourselves and allowing the transformative work of Jesus to change our hearts and minds. The students continue to seek opportunities to share the Gospel of Jesus with their friends, which often means finding courage to walk through the messy parts of life. We thank God for each one of these students and the team of advisors as they meet, laugh, cry, study, serve and go to camps together.



SENIOR HIGH

The High School ministry seeks to engage students by helping them to

enter into a relationship with Jesus, to grow as Christ followers and to send them out as Godly men and women of integrity who will seek to transform their homes, schools, teams, churches, workplaces, and their worlds for Christ. This year we said goodbye to Craig Blodgett, former High School Director. We are grateful for all the ways God used Craig and his wife Amber to love and disciple youth through several years of servant-leadership at FPC.

The advisors, summer staff, and many others have continued to pour time and energy into High School ministry during this season of transition. They have gathered with our students in places where they can bring their friends, have a lot of fun and laughter, spend time worshipping and hearing about Jesus and about the relationship He desires to have with each of us. They meet Sunday mornings, in mid-week small groups, pray, go to camps, and serve together.

We are excited to introduce the newest team member of FPC staff, Beth Paz as our High School Director, who will partner in leading youth ministry with Meagan! God is gracious in providing the ministry with someone who has an authentic joy of sharing the goodness and graciousness of Jesus with others. We anticipate what God has in store for youth ministry at First Pres. in the coming season.

- Elders Ron Dull, Michael Galbraith & Anita Ullner

Community Growth

To the glory of God, the Community Growth ministry team has tried to provide the congregation with new and different choices for personal growth. We continue to discern His will for making disciples through bible study and fellowship. We covet your prayers as we embark on this next year, which is already proving to be full of new and exciting challenges for us.



One of the most significant things to happen this past year was our Church Vitality Weekend. It was held February 26-28th, and it helped us to clarify the directive of making disciples of one another into one simple word....GO! Dr. Ken Priddy, is a seasoned ministry development practioner, trainer and consultant who serves as executive director of the GO Center, a ministry of the EPC Presbytery of the Mid-Atlantic and General Assembly. Dr. Priddy highlighted areas that are beneficial for churches that are committed to growing the kingdom of God through strengthening the congregation and reaching the community with the gospel.



March saw the roll-out of Right Now Media. It is a tool that can be used by Christian educators, and Bible studies- both personal or as a group. It can also be used as an entertainment tool for our families. Think of it as a Christian Netflix and You-Tube combined.

Spring Six

April saw the launch of a Spring Six book study. We had six different books, led by six different women and hosted in six different homes. Over 40 ladies participated in this new idea to promote fun and fellowship. Also on April 13th, our 55 and older group called "Encore" had a day at the zoo. Over 40 men and women were treated to a docent led tour of the new African Safari then enjoyed lunch in the Kopfe Pavillion.

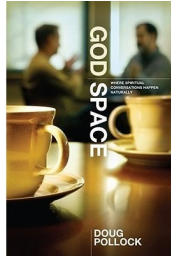
Not to be outdone by the ladies, 16 of our men headed to Mexico in May for a "Men's Mexico Build". In partnership with the men of Gig Harbor, Washington and Amor ministries they built a house from the ground up in five days, and built many new relationships in the process.



Men's Mexico Build

In June, Joel and Corinne Wilson began a series called "GodSpace", a six week study designed to help spiritual conversations happen naturally.

It was well attended and brought to light how it is to interact everyday, all the time, in a Christ focused way.



of a book by Jeff VanderStelt called Saturate that the session read this past winter.

On behalf of the Community Growth team I would like to thank you for your prayers, for your support and for the trust that you have put in us. We are humbled and honored to be part of this body of believers. To God be the Glory!

- Elders Laura Magnee, Jamie Franklin, Joel Wilson & Marty Martin



During our one service Sundays in June, July and August, we had all church clean-up days. June was LoveOurNeighborhood, we walked in a 1/2 mile radius of our church to pick up trash and beautify our surroundings, as well as pray for any that wanted it. We had some wonderful God sightings that day. In July, it was LoveOurChurch, we did chores in and around our campus to make it sparkle. Then, we concluded in August with LoveOurSchools. We went with our community groups to the schools in our CG areas, to pray for students, administrators, bus drivers and parents for the upcoming year.

Finally, this fall we resumed WednesdayNights@FPC. We did a combined men and women study of the Saturate Field Guide, based off

Facility and Grounds

Another year is in the books. Every January, we are looking forward to what adventures our 50-year old buildings will present us with. However, except for regular maintenance issues we have had only minor repair activity in 2016. In the beginning of the year, we finished the remodel of our Room 102. This room primarily serves as our Junior High Ministry home and has been converted to a worship/teaching/hang-out hub for our youth. A new ceiling and lighting plus a band-stage were the main improvements.

In late spring we switched to using a new security company for our parking lot and campus surveillance. We have been very happy with their service and I encourage you to greet our friendly guards.

An ongoing project has been the expansion of our wifi coverage.

Allan Knepper is our 'Energizer Bunny' when it comes to any technology maintenance and upgrades on our campus. He is continuing to spend countless hours running wires, updating software or finding new ways to improve our technology footprint.

The Community Growth and Facility & Grounds Ministry teams hosted a 'Love Our Church' event on July 31st. That day, many members of our church family stayed after the Sunday worship service and divided into groups to tackle small cleaning, organizing and beautifying projects all over our campus. We had a great time and walked away knowing that we gave back to our congregation by sprucing up the place for all to enjoy.

The last two months of the year were allocated to complete some 'internal' updates. With new staff members joining our team, we needed to find office spaces for them. Several staff members moved offices and added a new paint job along the way. We are starting the new year waiting to see what the Lord has planned for us.

- *Elders Tarry Rollf & Allen Jones*

Mission

The members of FPC's Mission Ministry Team are Ruling Elders Ralph York and Carole DuPertuis, with FPC members Adrienne Kimball, Louise Armstrong, Marty Martin, Karon Chambers, Cindy

Sterling, John & Lisa Goodell, Paul Marr, Charity Whitney and Terry Jaurena (staff). It's our privilege to lead FPC's efforts to find our place in the grand adventure of seeing the gospel planted, taking root and growing in every people group God created. We have 3 main goals each year. Those will be the headings for this report with highlights of those goals underneath.

CARE PERSONALLY FOR MISSION PARTNERS AND SEEK TO PROVIDE FINANCIAL SUPPORT THROUGH THE CHURCH BUDGET PROCESS

Caring personally has been important to us this year as two amazing men of God with strategic ministry leadership in their respective countries passed away.

- ◆ **Enoch Sirikul** suffered a fatal heart attack April 29. Enoch was CRU's national director in Thailand. There were 4 memorial services planned for him, evidence of his leadership in several ministry circles. His wife, Laya continues in ministry and son Noel is in college. We were connected to Enoch through his relationship with Marty Martin. They met years ago as they served together in a Thai refugee camp.
- ◆ **Phil Prasad** fought illness long and hard before he passed away May 30. He and his wife Elizabeth were FPC members when they founded Witnessing Ministries of Christ, a movement among the Dalits (Untouchables) of India. The

US memorial service was held at FPC and Allan Knepper accompanied Elizabeth to India for services and other ministry transition efforts.

We were given a \$3000 increase for our mission giving budget for 2016 which, along with some retirements and other shifting, allowed us to add these new partners:

- ◆ **Elliot Haught** serving with InterVarsity at St Mary's University in Moraga
- ◆ **Joseph & Heidi White** church planting here in Fresno
- ◆ **Azgan & Ida Mjeshtri**, Albanian Christians serving with CRU in Bosnia
- ◆ **Valley Edible Landscapes**, a social entrepreneurial effort in the Lowell Community
- ◆ **Adger and Sandra McKay**, EPC World Outreach workers serving refugees in Germany
- ◆ **Leadership Foundations**

HELP ALL AGES OF OUR CONGREGATION GROW IN WHAT THEY KNOW ABOUT MISSIONS IN GENERAL & OUR MISSIONARIES SPECIFICALLY

This is why we do Partner Spotlights during the Education Hour regularly, featuring visiting missionaries, our own short term mission participants and local partners. Most Sundays in worship you are introduced to one of our partners. Paul Marr planned and lead a class providing the chance to pray for the Persecuted Church. We

invited you to consider taking the Perspectives Class and will again. The annual Alternative Christmas Gift project is part support and part education. We hope to report that we had a significant increase in participation this year.



ENCOURAGE & PROMOTE PERSONAL INVOLVEMENT IN MISSION EXPERIENCES, LOCAL OR GLOBAL, BY ALL AGES OF OUR CONGREGATION

There was, again this year, quite a lot of going and serving near and far. Some of it we organized and recruited you to join:

- ◆ The Men's Mexico Build Trip in May connected with Chapel Hill in Gig Harbor was new to us this year. 12 men including our Senior Pastor invested 4 days to build a house with Amor Ministries in Tijuana. Look for this to be repeated in 2017.
- ◆ Some of you came regularly or occasionally to the Neighbors aRe Us monthly dinners, cooking or serving. And you gave food or otherwise supported the pantry food box give away in December.
- ◆ Many of you taught, assisted, cooked, shopped or prayed for our community collaborative

summer bible program City Bible Adventure this July. It was one amazing week that involved 150 Kids (3yrs - 6th grade), 110 adult volunteers, 34 teen helpers connected to 4 Churches & 3 local ministries, sharing One Lord, One Hope, One Faith.

- ◆ Many of you have engaged with activities at Martin Park, the home and mission station of Oscar & Julie Rodriguez.
- ◆ You also brought socks, food, gifts and/or gift cards, participating in the work of local partners City without Orphans, Youth for Christ, Bethany Inner City Church or World Impact.

Some of the going you initiated and we supported and celebrated:

- ◆ **Marty Martin & John Verwey** returned to Cambodia with a Global Health Outreach medical mission team. Marty even took an additional trip in the fall to nurture and encourage the young and not yet believers he has connected with over the years.
- ◆ **Paul Marr** traveled with a team to Sicily in the summer to work among refugees with Praying Pelicans.
- ◆ College student, **Kaylene Norvell**, invested her summer in the Dominican Republic serving as an intern with Students International. Her parents, **Scott & Wendi**, also went for a week of service there in August. It was

Wendi's first such trip.

- ◆ Other collegiates also joined efforts promoted at their schools. **Annalise Rosik**, was part of a Cal Baptist team that served in Spain. **Brad Alkire** traveled to India through a Biola connection.
- ◆ Mission Director **Terry Jaurena** traveled to Romania and Turkey this June to visit workers where they serve.

We look forward to where the Lord will lead us in 2017.

*- Elders Ralph York &
Carole Du Pertuis*

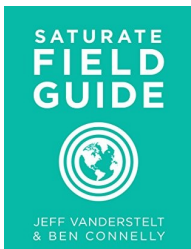
Outreach

The Outreach Team Members are current Ruling Elders Carolyn Johnson and Donald Norman, previous RE Skip Lynn, staff member Terry Jaurena with FPC members Heidi Lynn and Allan Knepper. We are grateful for the clarity of terms Ken Priddy provided in February's G.O. 1 seminar between Outreach and Evangelism below. Like all ministry teams we are thinking about our role in helping us become a Great Commission Church.

Outreach: The strategic connecting of people in the congregation with people outside of the congregation for the purpose of building sustainable relationships. It is these relationships that give opportunity for evangelism.

Evangelism: The strategic connecting of people outside of the Christian faith with a crystal clear presentation of the Gospel including an opportunity to respond to the call of the Gospel. Note: If the Gospel has not been made crystal clear, evangelism has not happened.

In addition to the G.O. 1 seminar two other experiences “outside of our team but connected to our purposes” have occurred.



1. The Saturate Field Guide (Practices and Principles of Being Disciples of Jesus in the Everyday Stuff of Life) studies emphasized the theme of being intentional in relationship development for the purpose of making new disciples. What God has done in you, he wants to do through you.
2. Pastors in our city have invited the Luis Palau organization to assist us in our outreach and evangelism. The Good News in the Valley and Fresno CityFest campaign has been building capacity this year for events to take place in 2017.



We look forward to the fruit that will come from these efforts. Read on to hear about our other, more regular and programmatic team activities:



Our fabulous Link Crew Team (blue vest volunteers) graciously are on our campus Hosting, Welcoming, Guiding, and Caring. Their assisting and welcoming newcomers to the FPC campus, answering any questions, and being available as needed has been awesome for our congregation! We have given out many visitor gift bags (initiated at advent in 2015). They contain a pen with our logo, ribbon wrapped cards and a note from our pastor with some scripture. They are positively received and appreciated by our visitors. Stay tuned in 2017 for a WELCOME CENTER this crew will host. If you're interested in serving on Link Crew, please contact Carolyne Johnson.

TwelveTen @ FPC

The **TwelveTen** Friday mid-day bible study moves into its fourth year and continues to encourage those who work downtown no matter where they are on their faith journey. It's fun and challenging and offers the opportunity to learn about Christ and how to take Him into the workplace. TwelveTen meets on Fridays at First Pres during the lunch hour (lunch can be provided) and we welcome you to join us as Jeremy leads this time

together in The Commons. Contact Skip Lynn or Dick or Kim Lee for further information.



We are an **ArtHop** venue the 1st Thursday of each month as are other businesses and galleries in the downtown area. We are grateful for ArtHop team members who find artists, hang art, provide hospitality in the room and on the curb, or spread the word. Some months we have lots of traffic, others very little. It seems to depend some on the weather and on the draw of the artist.

Also in February of 2016 we began a process of seeking feedback on the effectiveness of our bi-monthly newsletter. We invited participation in a Survey Monkey from leaders and the congregation at large. This feedback and the resignation of editor Rhonda Pope (who continued longer in that role than she planned, for which we are grateful) lead us to cease production and distribution. We continue to strive to celebrate and communicate experiences of God's work in and through our congregation; to tell the stories that connect us intergenerationally, encourage one another in our walk with the Lord engagement and together in His mission for us. We'd love to know if you're finding those on our website or Facebook page.

We hope that maintaining our website and Facebook page, banners, yard signs, special service invitational cards are tools for building sustainable relationships

that give opportunity for evangelism.

- Elders Skip Lynn & Carolyn Johnson

Personnel

2016 was a dynamic season of growth and change for the FPC staff as we pursue the call to be a "Great Commission" church. While the Personnel Committee is not per se a "ministry," it does support Pastor Jeremy, the various ministry groups, and the administrative staff to review, improve and implement our employment policies. We begin by acknowledging and confirming that God has blessed FPC with a Godly leader, Pastor Jeremy, and a gifted staff, all dedicated to serving the congregation and moving FPC forward as a manifestation of Christ in our city.

Last year the Personnel Committee conducted a study of Pastor Jeremy's work load and your Session approved a recommendation that FPC hire another full time pastor to develop and serve in the ministry of community growth. A search team was formed under the leadership of Pauline Kliever, and over the year worked hard to discern God's will for that position. As a result of that effort, Chris Popadich was called. Chris and his wife Lisa have relocated from their home in Pittsburgh, PA. Chris joined the FPC staff on Dec. 1st. We all owe the search team a great "thank you" for their effort.

Your Session also approved a change in Pastor Lana Roberts' workload and responsibilities. Effective January 1, 2017, Lana will become our full time Pastor of Congregational Care.

This year saw several additional changes in the staff. Early in the year, our director of Youth Ministry, Craig Blodgett, left FPC for a season to discern God's calling in his life. Consequently Meagan Bergem, moved from being the assistant director to the full time Director of Jr. High Ministry. A search team was formed under the leadership of Laura Spongberg to find a replacement for Craig. After many meetings and much prayer, it became clear that God was calling our own Beth Paz to a season of youth ministry. Session approved the selection and Beth began serving as our Director of Sr. High Ministry in late November. Again, we owe the search team a great thank you.

We also want to acknowledge and thank the administrative staff who give so much to make FPC a special place for everyone. Torsten Grunberg, our Facilities and Finance Manager keeps a careful eye on FPC's business affairs and has been an invaluable resource. Pastors' assistant, Ataloo Woodin, does a wonderful job keeping everything, and everybody organized. Audrey Arce and Diana Marr serve as the smiling "face" of FPC for all who call or come into the office. Audrey's duties were recently increased as she helps lead FPC into the world of new technology as our Front Desk and Systems Administrator. Anna Wells continues to serve in a part time capacity helping to develop and improve our communications. Susan Glover and Rosemary Avery faithfully bless and serve our congregation as a part-time chaplains. Pastor Paul Armstrong generously volunteers his time as

both a chaplain and an important member of the worship team. Oscar Rodriguez and Freddie Rodriguez work tirelessly behind the scenes to prepare FPC for its many activities and make it a welcoming venue. Last but not least, we want to recognize and thank Allan Knepper, and the many volunteers, who give generously of their time and talents to make FPC a better and more accessible place.

- Elders Dick Lee & Laura Spongberg



Let us not neglect meeting together, as some have made a habit, but let us encourage one another... Hebrews 10:25

One of the things that is so great about our corporate worship times on Sunday is that we all get to be a part of it. As we enter the Sanctuary on Sunday mornings, we bring our joys, our hopes, our sorrows, our hurts to lay at the foot of the cross and join together in adoration of the One True King. We bring listening hearts and open ears, and mouths ready to praise. And at times we come without those things, but we come anyway.

Each week a team of folks works diligently to put together the program for our Sunday morning worship times. Pastors and guest speakers prayerfully prepare sermons to encourage and convict us who hear them; volunteer and paid worship leaders choose songs, practice with their teams, and work with sound and screen techs in order to lead us into a spirit of

worship; singers and instrumentalists practice in their homes and at rehearsals to lead us in song; a team of prayer warriors meets in our prayer room during both services asking the Holy Spirit to move; ushers and greeters meet us and make us feel welcome; children practice in choirs led by loving leaders so they may lead us in songs of worship; drama folks both young and old practice skits and plays to bring scriptural truths to life; deacons prepare and elders serve communion each month; volunteer coordinators make sure ushers, greeters, sound and screen techs are ready to go; custodians help set up and clean up; and all of us fill the pews.

We also have seasonal teams who bring us fun festivities such as the Messiah Sing-a-Long & Soup-a-Long and our Christmas Eve Services, as well as more somber services such as Ash Wednesday and Maundy Thursday. Just a few months ago we added a formal decorating committee led by Stacy Johns to help us consider how the visual aesthetics of our sanctuary can encourage us as we enter into worship.

The heart of the Worship Team is to help all of us in the congregation to enter into reflective worship so that we can go out into our week refreshed and ready to serve as the hands and feet of Jesus in our homes, our work places, our school campuses, our neighborhoods, our city, and the world. We are excited to see what God will do in and through our congregation this coming year.

*- Elders Shiela Skibbie &
Scott Norvell*

