

CLARION

Bridging the Centuries through Faith
1913 – 2020



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, ALTADENA

Altadena, California 91001
Wednesday, December 1, 2021
Volume LXXIII, Number XLVIII

OUR CALENDAR

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 29

Clarion Mailing 8:00a

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 2

Mission Study Team Zoom 7:00pm

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 5

*Second Sunday of Advent and
Communion Sunday
In Person Worship Service*

Sunday Family Worship 10:30

MONDAY, DECEMBER 6

Clarion Mailing 8:00a

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 12

Third Sunday of Advent

Sunday Family Worship 10:30

LEADERS IN WORSHIP

We are grateful to those persons who led us in worship on Sunday, November 28, 2021, with social distancing. Call to Worship, Gini Ishida; Advent Candle Lighting, 3 generations of the Maeda Family (Jon, Susan, Zak, and Myles); Scripture, Nick Tomoyasu (Jeremiah 33:14-16); music, Kenny Elliott, Ann Kiriya, Ron Ota, Greg Middleton, and Gus Zdanovich; Sound and Visuals, Sam Gin, Bob Hayashi, Ron Ota, and Nick Tomoyasu; and the Rev. Anne Oglesby Edwards for her sermon "Advent Journey".

A reminder for those who cannot join us in person, we are live streaming our 10:30 worship service via YouTube. The link is sent out by email the day before service, or search "First Presbyterian Church Altadena" on YouTube. Service is simultaneously recorded, and can be viewed at a later time.

WHO'S MAILING

December 6	Volunteers
December 13	Volunteers
December 20	Volunteers
December 27	Volunteers

STAFF NOVEMBER 22

Editor	Donna Kiriya
Printer and Mailing Crew:	
	Gini Ishida, Dorothy Kirkland, and Bob & Mae Uchida
Mailer	Bob Uchida
Email	Bobby Hayashi

Minute for Missions

Welcome to Phygital Worship

As many churches navigate the both/and world of hybrid ministry, where in-person and online worship coexist, there's a word to keep in mind: "phygital." I didn't invent it. It was coined in 2013 to describe creating a seamless experience that is the best of both the digital and physical realms. And there lies the goal — and the challenge — for our churches, that of creating hybrid worship where two intrinsically different environments come together seamlessly.

During the pandemic, many churches changed their order of worship to accommodate the digital venue. For example, at my church we used to have up to five pieces of music at an in-person service. That is too much for an online service, so we have limited the music to just two pieces. Another interesting development over the past year is that online we encourage people to engage with one another using the chat function. We would never encourage people to chat in their seats during in-person worship. While we had been livestreaming our worship since 2017, before the COVID-19 pandemic, our livestream made no provision for church school. During the pandemic, though, our online church school has been one of our strongest features.

As we return to in-person services, our main question is: How can we provide an optimal experience for both our online and in-person congregants? I believe that many churches are placing too much emphasis on providing simultaneous, identical experiences, rather than tailoring the experiences to their respective environments.

In a hybrid worship experience, a single event is created that is simultaneously provided to both in-person and online attendees. The drawback to the hybrid approach is that it causes churches to include only those things that can be provided in both environments. People have different expectations in the different environments, and we need to try to meet those needs. Educators have told us that hybrid classrooms, where a single teacher tries to teach in-person and online students at the same time, are not working well. But the other extreme of creating separate online and in-person worship services is also unsatisfactory. This presents the risk of creating such divergent experiences that people are unable to move seamlessly between them from week to week.

When thinking through such challenges, I often turn to professional sporting events as one of my "thought models." The in-person and home experiences of a sporting event are simultaneous but different. Announcers and camera angles aid the home experience. The ambiance of the in-person experience is wonderful, even if you can barely see the players on the field. We like both options, yet our expectations of each are different. Some 60 years ago, when sports were first being broadcast, team owners feared that broadcasting games would kill ticket sales. The opposite happened. Broadcasting games enlarged the fan base and ticket sales soared along with viewership. I believe that vibrant online worship will eventually increase in-person attendance.

As we look toward our post-COVID-19 worship, we need to ask: What is the optimal online worship experience? What is the optimal in-person worship experience? Which aspects must be or can be shared, and which must be provided separately? In my ministry context, the most important common aspect of our worship is the Prayers of the People. Right now, people text in their prayer concerns, which are read aloud and prayed for. Our church school probably needs to be offered separately in a context-specific format. The sermon for the online service might be live from the worship space, or it might be prerecorded. We're still working through the complexities of providing quality worship experiences that are accessed in person and online.

It is important to remember that I am not claiming that either online or in-person is a superior experience. I believe that most people will appreciate both. Our ultimate goal is for people to connect with God through worship as often as possible, using the means that works best for them in any given week. I don't think any of us has all the right answers, nor is there one right answer for everyone. But this is an opportunity to rethink our worship services. My encouragement is simply for you to step back, think about the most effective way to reach more people more of the time, and tailor your worship to suit each mode in order to best nurture the relationship of the people with Jesus Christ

Richard Hong, Pastor of First Presbyterian Church, Englewood, New Jersey

December 1, 2021

OUR THANKS

Our church expresses our sincere appreciation to the following members and friends for their gifts from November 24, 2021 thru November 30, 2021

Christmas

Elsie Hayashi

Clarion

June Ogawa
George Sugimoto

Deacons

Frank and Marian Sata

In Lieu of Fall Festival

Rick and Michi Matsumoto

General Purpose

George Sugimoto

In Memory of Julia Sugita Nakano

Alice Hamane

Thanksgiving

Joel and Nancy Castillo
Rick and Michi Matsumoto
JoAnne SooHoo
George Sugimoto
Jason Tajima

*** **



**SUNDAY,
DECEMBER 12, 2021
CONGREGATIONAL
MEETING**

**TO PRESENT AND APPROVE
THE SLATE OF NEW CHURCH
OFFICERS.
STEWARDS, DEACONS,
ELDERS**

2022 BUDGET

BE THERE OR BE SQUARE

Communion on Sunday, December 5

Please join us for Communion on Sunday, December 5 at 10:30 am at our IN-PERSON worship service in the church sanctuary. Alternatively, you may join us via livestream on Sunday, December 5 at 10:30 am. The livestream link will be sent to everyone closer to December 5. (If you miss the livestream at 10:30 am, a recording will be available for viewing later that day.)



MISCELLANY

Do you have or are you eligible for Medicare?



You are invited to our contactless drive-up event.

Questions about Medicare? Licensed agents Jane Reese-Wilkins and Kelly Hokyo will be available to assist you.

The Medicare Annual Enrollment Period is from
October 15- December 7.

It's important to review your current plan and learn about upcoming changes and new Medicare benefits for 2022

**Saturday, December 4 9:00am – 11:00am
Pasadena Japanese Cultural Institute
595 Lincoln Ave Pasadena, CA 91103**

We're still collecting holiday food items for our December Flavor of the Month. Christmas is on the way.... what will you have on your holiday table? **Canned fruits and vegetables, soups, boxed side dishes, jello/pudding/bake boxes, pasta, canned meats....** Drop them off in the marked boxes in the sanctuary foyer.

And remember December 12 is the deadline for our toy and gift drive for the Christmas holiday. Bring a toy or small gift for a child (toddler thru High School aged), and drop it in the same box as the Flavor of the Month. Our ever-busy Deacons will be delivering food and toys to the appropriate entities.

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

CLARION is published by
FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
2775 Lincoln Ave., Altadena, CA 91001
(626) 791-4271 FAX (626) 791-3489
<http://altadenapresbyterian.org>
e-mail firstpresaltadena@sbcglobal.net

