

THE MESSENGER



The Pastor's Corner A Message from Pastor Cheryl Raine

Through the prophet Isaiah God says to God's people, "I am about to do a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it?" This is a great question for us as we start 2025 and begin to imagine what God might be up to in and through us this coming year. What new thing is God trying to do in and through us?

There is a quote that is probably familiar to many of us: "Insanity is doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results." Well, all institutions, including churches, are skilled at doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results!

The world in which we live today is dramatically different than what it was even five years ago let alone ten, twenty, or fifty years ago. Technology continues to evolve. The powers and principalities influencing our lives continually change. The earth is groaning from the impacts of human civilization. Through Isaiah God urges us not to place too much energy in remembering former things and things of old, wishing that things could be like they once were.

When we look back, we often put on our rose-colored glasses and see only what we want to see. We forget the struggles that were present. We forget all that was not right. Instead, we remember things like Sunday school classes filled to the brim or not enough room in our sanctuaries for all the worshipers. So, when we look at the challenges that we are facing we are tempted to spend all our time looking through the rearview mirror.

Now, can you imagine driving a vehicle anywhere by only looking in the rearview mirror? Unless you are an expert at driving backwards, I suggest that you would not get very far very fast, or you would end up crashing and making a mess of things. Notice that the front windshield in a car is much larger than the rearview mirror! Consider this a metaphor for what God is saying to us this January, "I am about to do a new thing; now it springs forth," and its out in front of you, not behind you!

(Continued on page 4)



INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Birthdays.....	2
Worship Schedule	3
Staff Whereabouts.....	3
Contemplative Corner....	5
Property & Finance.....	7
Deacons Moment.....	8
Young Disciples	10
Session Summary.....	11

SESSION MEMBERS

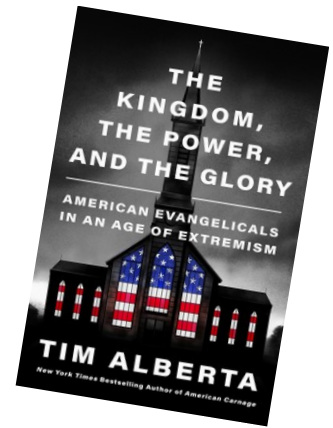
- **Jim Appleton**
- **Gayle Timilione**
- **Paul Lambert**
- **James Rager**
- **Kasim Barus**
- **Harry Muaya**
- **Jeffry Suban**
- **Marcia Fagan—Clerk
of Session**



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN MONTHLY BOOK CLUB

The next FPC Book Club meeting will be **Thursday evening, January 16, at 7:00 P.M.** at Pastor Cheryl's and Paul's home.

The book selected for discussion is *The Kingdom, the Power, and the Glory*, by Tim Alberta.



Books under consideration for next year:

- **Challenger** by Adam Higginbotham
- **Nuclear War** by Annie Jacobson
- **Demon Copperhead** by Barbara Kingsolver
- **Peace By Chocolate** by Jon Trattie



January 1	Adrian Roiballove
January 2	Delima Sitompul
January 7	Lorene St. John
January 13	Jonathan Lal
January 15	Elita Barus
January 16	Isabel Browne
January 18	Cakra Toar Nelwan

January 20	James R. Appleton
January 20	Gayle Timilione
January 21	Gretta Sitompul
January 24	Larry Dwight
January 30	Marcia Stewart

First Presbyterian Church of Redlands

JANUARY WORSHIP SCHEDULE

All services will be held in the sanctuary on Sunday and available on Facebook Live on demand .

<https://www.facebook.com/First-Presbyterian-Church-of-Redlands-106569590974548>

English Worship Service 10:00 A.M.
Indonesian Worship Service 5:00 P.M.

Third Sunday of the Month—11:30 A.M. Urdu
(Facebook Live Only)

January 5, 2025 All Church Sunday Communion & Ordination/Installation of Deacons and Elders Welcome of New Members

First Reading	Isaiah 60:1-6
Second Reading	Matthew 2:1-12
The Message	Arise, Shine!

January 12, 2025 Baptism of Jesus

First Reading	Isaiah 43:1-7
Second Reading	Luke 3:15-17, 21-22
The Message	More Powerful

January 19, 2025

First Reading	Psalms 36:5-10
Second Reading	1 Corinthians 12:1-11
The Message	Common Good

January 26, 2025

First Reading	Psalms 19:1-14
Second Reading	Luke 4:14-21
The Message	What's Our Purpose

Have You Surfed Our Website Lately?

www.fpcredlands.org

Have you had a chance to look at our website recently? Please take a moment to surf around and let the office or Pastor Cheryl know your thoughts. What do you like? What is missing? What needs to be updated? We appreciate your willingness to help us make our website compelling!

Jesus and Apostle Paul both went to where people were. Well, today people are on the web and other social media platforms. This is where the church also needs to be these days! I know not all of us are on these platforms, but future generations will be.

If you are interested in being part of this ministry or have skills that might help us increase our footprint in social media platforms, please let Pastor Cheryl or the office know!



STAFF WHEREABOUTS

The office will be closed Wednesday, New Year's Day, January 1.

Judy will be in the office Monday, Tuesday and Thursday, from noon until 4:00 P.M.

Pastor Cheryl is always available by phone and by appointment.

(Continued from page 1)
The Pastor's Corner



Will we look together through the front windshield as we move into 2025. Will we dare to see where God is already at work in community? Will we face the uncertainty of the world and the way it is and seek God's direction for a new way forward? What new thing is God calling us to be? Could we more effectively engage those who are with us through technology? What new skills do we need to learn? How might we listen more intently to the Spirit at work in us? Are we even willing to perceive these new things God is doing all around us?

Let's not be another causality of insanity! Let's be willing to look through the front windshield, for God is at work all around us.

Looking forward,
Pastor Cheryl

Jesus and the Disinherited – Adult Faith Formation January 2025

During Advent we had just begun to explore the writings of Howard Thurman. We will continue to move through his book, *Jesus and the Disinherited* (published in 1949), in January. Thurman wrote the book in response to this question: "What [do] the teachings and the life of Jesus have to say to those who stand, at a moment in human history, with their backs against the wall?"

As an African American man in the middle of the 20th century he wonders why "Christianity seems impotent to deal radically, and therefore effectively, with the issues of discrimination and injustice on the basis of race, religion and national origin."

We have four chapters to go: Fear, Deception, Hate, and Love. The format of the class will be a sharing of quotes and discussion starters as we explore the timeliness of his words to us today for as a nation for we still struggle with discrimination and injustice on the basis of race, religion, and national origin.

Come and be engaged with others as we discuss Thurman's writings on Sunday mornings, January 12, 19 and 26 after worship at 11:30 AM!



Christmas Sunrise Lectio Divina

We will meet Thursday, January 2nd and Thursday, January 9th will be our final Advent/Christmas Sunrise Lectio Divina. We will meet via zoom at 7:30 A.M. and listen for God's still small voice through a spiritual practice called Lectio Divina, which simply translated means "divine reading". The biblical text is based on a portion of a text to be used for the upcoming Sunday. As we gather, we will still our bodies and quiet our minds so we can listen for the stirrings of the Holy One among us. The Spirit consistently gifts us with new insights, as we willingly open our lives to the movement of the Holy One among us.

The next Sunrise series will be held during the season of Lent, and it will start on Thursday, March 6, 2025, the day after Ash Wednesday. This Lenten Sunrise series will meet each week until Maundy Thursday, April 17.



Photo by [Sage](#)

“By the tender mercy of our God, the dawn from on high will break upon us.”

Contemplative Corner

Praying with the Gospel of Luke

The Gospel of Luke is beloved for the telling of the Christmas story, through the birth of John to Elizabeth and Zechariah, and the birth of Jesus to Mary and Joseph. Mary and Zechariah break out in songs of praise and prophecy. Below I offer a few lines from these songs for our reflection this first month of the year:

“Mary said... ‘God has shown strength, scattering the proud in the thoughts of their hearts. God has brought down the powerful from their thrones and lifted up the lowly; God has filled the hungry with good things and sent the rich away empty.’”

“Zechariah said... ‘By the tender mercy of our God, the dawn from on high will break upon us, to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace.’”

It seems that the proud and the powerful are still on their thrones and the rich have not been sent away empty, yet the tender mercy of our God is very present giving light to the shadowlands in which we live. God’s light breaks through even in the darkest of situations. Where have you seen glimpses of God’s light this past Advent and Christmas season in your life or in the world? Name those whom you have seen bear light into the darkness. How will you bear light this first month of the New Year?

Let us remember that we are to bear fruit that will last, the fruit of love and light, drawing others into the love and light of the Holy Child whose light is never overcome by darkness.

Biblical Reading Challenge for the New Year!

The Gospel of Luke

The church's liturgical calendar begins with Advent each year and this year the Gospel of Luke is highlighted in what is known as the lectionary readings. Therefore, this would be a good year to reread the Gospel of Luke.

Two opportunities will be offered via zoom for us to read the Gospel of Luke together, one in the morning and the other in the evening:

Mondays 10:30 to 11:30 A.M. (starting January 13th)

Tuesdays 6:30 to 7:30 P.M. (starting January 21st)

There are 24 chapters in Luke, so we will read and reflect on two chapters a week until we finish.

You might know that Gospel according to Luke and the book of Acts are traditionally ascribed to the evangelist Luke, the physician who accompanied Apostle Paul. Another thing to keep in mind is that "Luke," was NOT an eyewitness to the activities of Jesus. We see this in Luke's prologue:

"Since many have undertaken to set down an orderly account of the events that have been fulfilled among us, just as they were handed on to us by those who from the beginning were eyewitnesses, and servants of the word, I too decided, after investigating everything carefully from the very first, to write an orderly account for you..."

Luke had access to other sources as he compiled his text, and the universal mission of Jesus is emphasized. As Eugene Peterson writes, "Luke is a most vigorous champion of the outsider. Luke shows how Jesus includes those who typically were treated as outsiders by the religious establishment of the day: women, common laborers (shepherders), the racially different (Samaritans), the poor.... As Luke tells the story, all of us who have found ourselves on the outside looking in on life with no hope of gaining entrance now find the doors wide open, found and welcomed by God in Jesus."

Annual Congregational Meeting

Save the Date—Sunday, February 16, 2025, at 11:15 A.M.

Our annual congregational meeting is planned to be held in John Knox Hall after worship on Sunday, February 16, 2025. The annual report will be available by email prior to the meeting and some copies will be available at the meeting.

As with any congregational meeting, a quorum of the congregation is required for the meeting, which is 10% of the membership or currently, 15 people. Of course, the hope is for participation that far exceeds this minimum!

On February 16, 2025, we will be conducting the following business:

1. Receive the Annual 2024 Report for the Congregation and answer any questions you may have about it, including a presentation of the 2025 budget.
2. Electing at Large Members of the Nominating Committee and elders for the vacancies on Session.
3. Remember those who joined the Church Triumphant in 2024.

Other business could be conducted, according to the limitations noted in the Book of Order, but at this point none is planned!

Hopefully, this will prepare all members for active engagement in our annual meeting.

PROPERTY AND FINANCE UPDATE



Property Update:

Pledges: We have received \$115,940 in pledges for 2025 calendar year. In addition, we have an anticipated undesignated giving of \$65,000 for 2025, for a total of \$180,940. You may still turn in a pledge for 2025, it would be welcomed. Our collective generosity makes ministry possible!

Financial Update as of November 30, 2024:

Here are some broad highlights from our financial reporting Year to Date November 30, 2023:

	<u>Actual</u>	-	<u>Anticipated</u>	=	<u>Difference</u>
Pledges and Donations	\$171,443.52		\$176,458.34		(\$ 5,024.82)
Rental Income	\$128,319.92		\$120,095.82		\$ 8,224.10
Total Income	\$312,775.21		\$310,291.67		\$ 2,486.54
<u>Total Expense</u>	<u>\$295,644.36</u>		<u>\$303,196.35</u>		<u>(\$ 7,551.99)</u>
Net Unrestricted Income*	\$ 17,133.85				
Adjusted *NUI	\$ 10,019.94				

So, what do these numbers mean? Our donations and pledges are less than what was anticipated at this point in the year by \$5,024. Even so, our Net Unrestricted Income (NUI) was less than our expenses by \$10,020. The Adjusted NUI happens below the NUI line because the principal payments on our loan are not considered an expense for accounting purposes, although the principal payment does come out of our checking account (\$7,133.91 YTD Principal). Therefore, at the end of November our Adjusted NUI was more than our expenses by \$10,020. This is good news given that in December we have a quarterly insurance payment which is at bit more than \$7,000.

As we prepare to celebrate the New Year, the Property & Finance Committee will be highlighting the need for a new roof on the John Knox Hall Complex. Over 5 years ago the church put temporary repairs in place and those repairs have now outlasted their usefulness. As we will be using our church property to generate over 43% of our revenue in 2025, we need to invest literally in keeping the roof over our heads. Please be with us as we seek partners in this new and key project.

Please join me in thanking James Rager for his four years of service as Moderator of this Committee and as Treasurer. Too many things were accomplished under James' leadership for me to list, but thank him especially for his leadership in the Sanctuary Renovation Project as well as the new bike rack!

Our collective generosity and our community partnerships along with the movement of the Spirit among us makes our ministries possible. Thanks be to God for our ministries.

If you ever have any questions or concerns about finance or facility issues, please ask Paul Lambert, our Property and Finance Moderator, or Pastor Cheryl.

Deacon's January Moment

Our moderator, Angela Lambert, is nursing a cold, but will report all the Deacon news in the next newsletter.



Point In Time Count An Opportunity to Serve January 23, 2025

The Point-in-Time count is a count of sheltered and unsheltered people experiencing homelessness on a single night in January. The 2025 Point-In-Time Count will be conducted beginning on January 23, 2024, from 6:00 A.M. to 10:00 A.M. Housing and Urban Development (HUD) requires that Continuums of Care conduct an annual count of people experiencing homelessness who are sheltered in emergency shelter, transitional housing, and Safe Havens. Continuums of Care must also conduct a count of unsheltered people experiencing homelessness on an annual basis. Each count is planned, coordinated, and carried out locally. Here is the registration link if you would like to participate:

Registration Link- [Point-In-Time Count – Homeless Partnership](#)

David Rabindranath, our City of Redlands Homeless Solutions Coordinator, is requesting our help! To participate requires one early morning and a training session. You just need to be willing and able to walk with others who can record those encountered in the area you have been assigned. If you have any questions, just ask!



Redlands Area Interfaith Council January 9, 2025

The Redlands Area Interfaith Council's (RAIC) first meeting of the New Year will be a rich celebration of the diversity of faith traditions in our city. The meeting will take place at Redlands Seventh-Day Adventist Church, located at 520 Brookside.

This organization is building bridges that promote interfaith relationships with mutual respect and understanding and working towards peace in our community in tangible ways.

Be a part of their work by reaching out and getting to know someone of another faith tradition! We are to be repairers of the breach in our community and our world.

Facebook Daily Psalm Reading



Did you know that the First Presbyterian Church of Redlands has a public Facebook page? This is where people from around the globe can access our weekly worship services as well as a daily post, which shares a portion of a psalm each day. We have had people from a Redlands, Long Beach, Europe, Indonesia, Arizona, Pakistan, New Jersey, Malawi, Oregon, Scotland, Texas, and other places around the globe drop in to see what God is doing in our midst! The good news of great joy is being shared worldwide through this gift of technology.

If you don't have a Facebook account, you can still access all worship services by copying and pasting the following link into your web browser: <https://www.facebook.com/106569590974548/live/>

The Daily Psalm Reading shares a portion of a psalm with a reflective question, a prayer, and a photo. Here is an example of what you can expect:

Daily Psalm - Monday, January 1, 2025 Happy New Year!

¹The Eternal is the sovereign *ruling over all*; let all people shake *in fear*. The Eternal is enthroned, settled between winged guardians; let the planet tremble. ²The Eternal is great in *the hearts of the Eternal's people*; God has made Zion God's sacred mountain, and God reigns majestic over all people. ³Let them express praise *and gratitude* to Your amazing and awesome name—because God is holy, *perfect and exalted in power*. ⁴The Sovereign who rules with strength also treasures justice. You *created order and* established what is right. You have carried out justice and done what is right to *the people of Jacob*. ⁵Lift up the Eternal our God *in your heart*; bow down *to the earth* where God's feet rest. God is holy, *perfect and exalted in power*." [Psalm 99:1-5; The Voice Translation]

Prayer

Eternal God, there is a season for everything. We are so thankful that in the midst of this new season you never fail to give us all that we need, and even more. Give us such joy in living and such peace in serving Christ, that we may gratefully make use of all your blessings and joyfully seek our risen Lord in everyone we meet. Amen.

#dailypsalm#redlands #fpcredlands #prayer

YOUNG & YOUTH DISCIPLES CORNER
SUNDAY SCHOOL,
WORSHIP LEADERSHIP,
AND MORE!



January Happenings

Here is the plan for 2025:

The first Sunday of the month everyone participates in worship on Communion Sunday.

All other Sundays Ms. Sereena and Mr. Wilson will be our lead teachers, with Mr. Wilson teaching and helping with any technology needs! Thanks, Mr. Wilson! These teachers are assisted by other capable volunteers, as we always need at least two teachers in each class. Has God been nudging you to become a helper or teacher? Let Ms. Sereena or Mr. Wilson or Pastor Cheryl know. Thank you!

Let Mr. Wilson know if your young disciple would like to participate in worship. We give thanks for the Young Disciples that assisted with leading the Prayer for Illumination during December: Nevil Cunningham, Penelope Cunningham, Arianna Emmanuel, Alison Kayange, and Lorence Kayange.

If your children and youth would like other opportunities to lead worship let Pastor Cheryl know!

**May we instill in our children and youth a lifelong passion
for nurturing their relationship with God!**

SESSION HIGHLIGHTS DECEMBER 2024



The Session of the First Presbyterian Church of Redlands held its regularly scheduled Stated Session Meeting on Monday, December 16, 2024. The meeting was held via a Zoom Meeting, and the following actions were taken:

Received the Unaudited Financial Report for the month ending November 30, 2024.

Report for the month ending November 30, 2024:

Total Unrestricted Income:	\$35,731.58
Total Unrestricted Expense:	\$24,813.04
Unrestricted Income (Loss):	\$10,918.54
Less Principal Payment on Loan:	(\$578.03)
Adjusted Unrestricted Income:	\$10,340.51
Balance in General Account:	\$60,561.54
Total Operating Funds (in General Account):	\$32,624.76

- Received information on their work from each of the FPCR committees and the Board of Deacons.
- Reviewed and discussed the FPCR Membership Roll as of November 30, 2024. Approved the recommendation for removal of seven members from the Roll as of December 31, 2024. These seven members have either moved from the Redlands area or have indicated they no longer wish to participate at FPCR.
- Approved the Final Report to the Lilly Foundation for the grant received for Pastor Cheryl's sabbatical.
- Approved a report to be filed with the Synod of Southern California for the Congregational Partnering Grant received by FPCR.
- Approved Saturday, January 18, 2025 for a FPCR Leadership Meeting with the new (as well as current) members of Session and the Board of Deacons.
- Reviewed and discussed a draft of the 2025 budget for FPCR. This budget will be discussed and considered for approval by Session at the Leadership Meeting on January 18, 2025 as well as the Stated Session Meeting on January 20, 2025.



OUTREACH – SHARE MINISTRY

On January 27, 2024, we will offer hearty soups, bread, fruit, and cookies to those without homes in our community at the University Methodist Church located on Colton Avenue. at 3:00 P.M. Volunteers are needed to help make this a success!

1. Volunteer on January 27, 2024, from 2:30 P.M. to 4:00 P.M. on site, to prep the space, serve the food and clean the space.
2. Volunteer to assist with the planned January menu – hearty soups, fruit (bananas, cuties, etc.). You can donate the food, or the Outreach committee can assist with costs with submitted receipts.

Main Dish – Hearty Soups

Bread and Butter

Fruit – Bananas, oranges, and/or cuties

Dessert – Cookies, variety is welcome!

We anticipate 20-25 individuals who will enjoy the meal. Please contact Pastor Cheryl via email, text, or phone if you would like to provide a hearty soup to ensure we have enough food!

3. Pray for this ministry and for those in our community who do not have housing or a place to stay dry or warm during the winter season. Continue to pray for our city their teams work with those in our community without homes.

The Outreach Committee aims to help us engage in hands-on ministry and this will be one of six opportunities through the Share Ministry to do so this year.

Elders and Deacon Gathering

January 18, 2023, from 9 A.M. to 1 P.M.

As we begin this New Year, please pray for our elders and deacons as they will come together on January 18, 2023, in Room One, from 9:00 A.M. to 1 P.M. Together we will review 2024 and strategize for 2025 and beyond.

In preparation for our meeting, we would love to hear from you. You can email fpcredlands@gmail.com or pastorcheryl@gmail.com with input to the following questions:

- Share your memorable moments of 2024! What fueled your faith?
- What challenges lie ahead for us in 2025? What needs to be changed, improved, eliminated or started?
- How do you see God calling you to serve this local faith community and the community beyond?

It is an honor and privilege to be your pastor, and I ask that you pray for all our staff as well as our elder and deacon leadership teams, as together we all seek to be faithful in serving this church responsibly with the gifts God has given each of us. Our faith is not static, but active and engaged in the doing the Work of Christmas year-round!



The Connectional Church at Work 2025 Per Capita

Each year, each member is asked to give, in addition to a pledge or general giving, what is called per capita. Per capita giving fuels the connectional nature of our denomination, with some per capita funding the Presbytery, Synod, and General Assembly. In 2024 the per capita per member is **\$44.00**. Here is the breakdown of how this **\$44.00** is apportioned:

Presbytery	\$30.31
Synod	\$ 2.85
General Assembly	\$10.84

In **2025**, the per capita apportionment for our church totals **\$6,380**, which is based on our membership as of **December 31, 2023, of 145 members**. If every member contributed \$44 that would free up our other giving to fuel our mission and ministry of living the heart and mind of Christ at the heart of the city.

Per capita is the gift that binds us together. Per capita allows the whole church to share equitably in those things that make us Presbyterian: our theological identity, our connectedness, our system of mid councils that allow elders and ministers to work together to discern the mind of Christ, our ecumenical connections that make us part of the church universal, our core structures that keep us together as a church, and our call to work for full participation in decision making as we further the mission of Jesus Christ around the world.

As a pastor, I have benefitted immensely from the connectional nature of our denomination, from the support and guidance of higher councils as well as availability of resources and expertise, not always available in a local church. Let us also remember that as a church we received several grants in the last five years: \$130,000 grant support for our sanctuary renovation, a \$30,000 grant for our sanctuary HVAC, a \$5,000 technology grant, and a \$5,000 grant for the park. As a church we have been abundantly blessed by the connectional church. Friends, we are blessed to be a blessing!

So, our giving enables us to support each other! *Let us all give our fair share towards our church's per capita apportionment!*

First Presbyterian
Church of Redlands

Living the heart & mind
of Christ at the heart of
the city

The mission of the First
Presbyterian Church of
Redlands is to grow
spiritually with the
community by sharing
the love of Jesus Christ
with all who seek to
know God through
worship, relationships,
exploration, and prayer.



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF REDLANDS

AN INCLUSIVE COMMUNITY
OF FAITH, LIVING THE HEART
AND MIND OF CHRIST AT THE
HEART OF THE CITY

You can Save Postage +

Save Paper =

Save \$\$ by subscribing by email.

We are pleased to share our newsletter with you and we
welcome your comments!

You may also view this newsletter on our web site. Go to
www.fpcredlands.org and then click on The *Messenger*
tab at the top of the page.

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH OF REDLANDS

100 Cajon Street
P.O. Box 2009
Redlands CA 92373

(909) 793-2839
office@FPCRedlands.org
www.FPCRedlands.org

**Return Service
Requested**

PLEASE
PLACE
STAMP
HERE