

# the SPIRE

January 2024

First Presbyterian Church of Granada Hills

---





# From the Pastor's Desk

---

## *“Where Have All Young Ones Gone?”*

*“You shall teach [these commandments] to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit down in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise.” -Deut. 6:7*

Where have all the young people gone? I've spoken to many parents over the years who have expressed great sadness over the fact that their children – who grew up in the church – have departed from the faith. I can appreciate this sadness. As a former Director of College Ministry, I know that many young people step away from the faith soon after leaving home.

This is not unusual. Young people need to take ownership of who they are, what they believe, and how they will live. Once they step out from under their parents' watchful eyes and protective wings, they must learn to fly for themselves. I've always loved the idea of parents giving their children both roots and wings, stability and freedom.

Research shows that almost half of graduating seniors struggle deeply with their faith. Statistics suggest that two-thirds of young people who grow up in the church stop attending once they leave home. There are many reasons for that. First, it's natural for young people to differentiate themselves from their parents during this time in their lives; this is a natural part of human development. Secondly, while the largest influence in the life of a child is the parents, when that child becomes an adolescent, the biggest influences are people slightly older than they are. Thirdly, we cannot overlook the great influence of media, both social and commercial; the church has been depicted poorly, and most pastors are portrayed as buffoons, or wickedly self-serving.

And while it's easy to point the finger at outside influences, we, in the church, must take some responsibility for this exodus of young people from the church. For several years, I served a large (4,000+ member) wealthy church. The youth ministry was top-notch, with 100+ regularly attending both middle and high school ministries. And while relationships were built with peers, the ministry was strongly program-driven. I'd often speak to former students when they were home from college, and they would tell me that they just couldn't find a church that offered the same kind of ministry that they had experienced in the youth group. Ironically, our top-notch youth ministry did not ground young people in their faith or in the church. We need to do better!

Earl Palmer one time said, “The most important staff position in a church (after the pastor) is the Director of Children's Ministry, and the third most important position is the Director of Youth Ministry.” Statistics suggest that nearly 80% of people who come to faith do so before the age of 18. Our attention to quality ministry to our young people is vitally important. Not to mention the fact that when children are happy, parents are happy, and the entire church benefits.

For this reason, I'll be starting the year focusing on building a healthy inter-generational church. For my primary resource, I'll be using the book titled Sticky Faith by Dr. Kara E. Powell & Dr. Chap Clark. This book came out of the *College Transition Project* conducted by Fuller Theological Seminary's Fuller Youth Institute (FYI). The goal of this project was “to identify the relationships and best practices that can set children and teenagers on a trajectory of lifelong faith and service.” If you feel that you're past the time of having influence on young people's lives, stay tuned! You are not. Your influence is vitally important to these precious ones. And it takes the whole church, not just a compartmentalized section of it.

I'm excited that we have two new staff members serving as co-Directors of Youth Ministry: Helen Magaña and Maggie Benjamin. I think the combination of these two will be a great addition to our church staff and to our ministry. Let us pray for them as they seek to develop a ministry for our young people that will engage them and encourage them to think Biblically, and to grow in the knowledge and grace of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Parents and students, please come to the Youth ministry meeting on Sunday, January 7<sup>th</sup>, at 12:15 pm after the 11<sup>th</sup> Hour in the Youth Room (in Fellowship Hall). We want *your* input as we start to rebuild the Youth Ministry here. If you are in this age bracket (both students and parents) and are not receiving Youth Ministry communications from the church, please let us know so that we can add you to the Youth Ministry contact list.

For those who are not parents of adolescents, we're putting out a call to all who might be interested in helping our church family strengthen its ministry to young people. Would you be available to assist as a youth volunteer working directly with young people? Would you be willing to mentor an individual student? Would you be interested in working behind-the-scenes helping to plan and coordinate activities? Would you be interested in driving young people to camps and/or special events? Would be interested in cooking and/or providing food for youth activities? If you answered yes to any of these questions, please contact the church office. And please remember, all people who work with children and adolescents must pass a background check and do some training.

I remain yours in Christ's Love and Service,

Pastor Lance

# Prayer Requests

---

## Hospital/Recovering:

Bill Cornwell Jr.-recovering from surgery.

Jenny Pelliconi– recovering from surgery

Darlene Libby- recovering from a fall.

## Ongoing Concerns:

Marian Morrow, Norma Cooper, Jackie Lundgren,  
Jill Ralke, Maureen Boyer, Alice Yoder,  
Kenny Thomason, Kathy Palmer, Ally Treptow

## Our Love and Sympathy:

To the family and friends of Jules Van Someren who passed on December 17, 2023. A Celebration of Life will take place on January 4 at 11:00 am.

To Evelyn Sterkel and the Sterkel family after the passing of her husband, Ron Sterkel, on December 6, 2023.

To the Monroe family after the passing of Barbara Monroe, on Monday, December 4, 2023.

To Shannon Barry and the Barry family after the passing of her husband, Duke, on November 15, 2023. A Celebration of Life service will take place on January 20th.



# Raising Awareness About Hunger and Poverty

The Community Concerns Ministry in conjunction with Children's Ministry, Youth Ministry, and Adult Ministry have organized an opportunity for all of us (youngsters, oldsters, and those in between) to gain a better understanding about the hunger and poverty that exists in our world, and how we can share God's love with others to help those with less than us. The Children's Hunger Fund has created an immersive experience telling the story of four real-life children living in poverty in other parts of the world. A few of us who made a scouting trip came away with our eyes opened a little wider to the suffering of others and with a desire to make a difference. We hope that you will take this opportunity to experience the Poverty Encounter at the Children's Hunger Fund, which is located at 13931 Balboa Blvd., Sylmar, CA 91342.

We have reserved spots for our group on Saturday, March 9, 2024. The tour will begin promptly at 10:30 AM. Everyone is asked to arrive at least 15-20 minutes early to allow time to get checked in. Please make your reservation by purchasing tickets (group rate \$7 each) using the link below between now and February 17, 2024. The tour lasts 2 hours, followed by a short hands-on service activity.

**Go to [fpcgh.org/outreach](https://fpcgh.org/outreach) for ticket links**

Children 5 and under are free, however they will still need a ticket. You will see the option to select tickets for "adults," "youth (6-17)," or "child (0-5)."

Each guest 18+ will need to sign the CHF Hold Harmless Agreement and include the names of the minors in their care. Please complete the form at [fpcgh.org/outreach](https://fpcgh.org/outreach), print it, and bring it on March 9. CHF also provides the form in the Poverty Encounter lobby, so you may also complete it onsite.

**Go to [fpcgh.org/outreach](https://fpcgh.org/outreach) for the HHA Form**

Please wear comfortable, closed toe shoes. Please contact Janis Brown ([jbrown@usc.edu](mailto:jbrown@usc.edu)) with any questions. We look forward to seeing you!



## Adopt-a-Family

We are so thankful to the congregation for their enthusiastic support of the Adopt-a-Family program. This year we were able to provide gifts to 29 families identified through 3 schools from the Valley. At this busy time of year, we appreciate your willingness to shop, wrap, donate, or otherwise contribute to providing gifts to these families! While distributing the gifts to the families, we felt the joy and amazement of the families as they saw all that they were being given. Several commented that they wouldn't have been able to purchase gifts this year for their kids. One mom brought us homemade flan in thanks. Thanks for serving as the hands and feet of Christ!

# Upcoming CSUN Food Pantry Drive on Soup'r Bowl Weekend February 10-11, 2024

Our Soup'r Bowl weekend Food Drive will soon be here. We will be collecting the donations using a drive-thru drop off at Fellowship Hall on Saturday, February 10 from 10:00 am-1:00 pm and on Sunday, February 11, from 8:30- 11:00 am, as well as in the church office until Monday, February 12. We will deliver the food to the CSUN Food Pantry on February 13. We cannot accept donations in glass containers, or items that require refrigeration.

People often ask about the specific needs of the food insecure students for whom the pantry is so important. In the words of their program coordinator "As always, canned items such as low sodium soups and stews, broths, canned fruits, and canned vegetables are greatly appreciated, as well as 1 lb. bags of dried beans, rice and pasta. Currently, there is a particular need for canned beans. They are also in great need of toiletries: 8-16 oz. bottles of shampoo and conditioner, soap bars, toothpaste, body wash, lotions, toilet paper, menstrual products (pads and tampons) etc. would be greatly appreciated."

Of course, cash, gift cards and checks made payable to the CSUN Foundation-Food Pantry are always appreciated. Acknowledgements of donations come directly from the CSUN Foundation. If you have any questions about how you can support this project to help food insecure students, please feel free to contact Sharon Rose, Elder of Community Concerns Ministry at [srose48419@aol.com](mailto:srose48419@aol.com) or 818.708.8596 to leave a message for a call back. Thank you.

## Handy Handouts

Community Concerns will sell Handy Handout bags on January 14 on the patio between services. During the cold winter months, we are including a warm, handcrafted beanie hat to ward off the cold, along with a non-perishable meal, personal hygiene items, and a brochure on homeless resources.

Bags sell for 1 bag for \$3 or 2 bags for \$5.

As always, please collect the small personal-sized soap, shampoo, conditioner, and lotion from hotels and bring them to the church office marked for Community Concerns. We depend on your donations for the bags. As in November, we were able to provide 60 beanies to the North Valley Caring Services to distribute along with the hot meal prepared by Community Concerns to homeless people in the Sepulveda Basin. We are grateful to the Knifty Knitters and other knitters for making the beanies.

## Mission Ministry

Mark Your Calendars!!! FEB. 4, 2024

Our Missions Committee presents: MISSION POSSIBLE!

All are welcome to enjoy a lunch, see a past mission trip to Cabo San Lucas, and to discuss plans to make another mission trip possible for 2024! Join us February 4, 2024, right after the 11:00 A.M. service. You may even decide to become a part of our Missions Committee!

## Missionaries Tom and Mary Lou Shedd write:

Tom is at week-6 of recovery from rotator cuff surgery, and is doing much better, but still having trouble sleeping. However the doctor says he is progressing nicely and on schedule. With doctor approval, Tom is scheduled to leave for **Zambia, Tanzania, and Burundi on January 14**, returning **February 20**. Tickets are purchased and the itinerary is set.

Please pray for a safe journey and thorough preparation. Tom will lead Music and Worship Arts Training in Zambia in three cities (Mazabuka, Livingstone, and Lusaka), then Timothy Leadership Training, course 4 in Kasulu, Tanzania, and Understanding the Bible, course 4 in Bujumbura, Burundi. At the end of the trip he will meet Mary Lou in Phoenix where they will attend the annual weekend Gathering of the Global Training Network (GTN) Senior Staff.

Last week Tom led on online TLT 4 course on "Biblical Preaching" for three hours each day for five days and participants attended from many countries. 120 participants registered, but many in, Central and East African countries had power issues which interrupted their live involvement. However, a recording of each day's session was posted on Tom's YouTube page so anyone could catch up on anything they may have missed.

At the end of the year, Tom and Mary Lou share that they are once again SO very grateful for the support of all of the Ministry Partners at First Pres Granada Hills. They thank you for seeing the value of training pastors and church leaders in the Majority World. Both the church financial support, and the many individuals who add additional investment in the ministry are highly valued. This ministry cannot happen without all of your participation.

Tom and Mary Lou ask the Lord to bring great blessing to FPCGH in 2024 as it reaches out to the world through them, and the many other missionaries which the church supports. They pray that the desires of the Lord's heart be met as everyone works together for His Kingdom purposes. Amen.



## Taking Down the Greens

It is time to take down all of our beautiful sanctuary decorations that we have enjoyed from the first Sunday of Advent through the coming of the Kings on Epiphany Sunday, January 7. We would love to have some extra hands to help take down and pack everything away for next year.

Please join us on **Saturday, January 13 at 9:30 AM**. There will be coffee and donuts!

## Property Ministry

Beginning in January, Property Committee will be broadcasting our monthly meetings via Zoom. This is not instead of the in-person meeting, but to allow anyone not able to drive at night or those with conflicting schedules to attend. For more information, contact Stephen Deichler at [stephen@accurateir.com](mailto:stephen@accurateir.com)

# Stewardship

---

I wanted to thank everyone for the wonderful response to our stewardship campaign.

What a joy for me to be with a congregation of cheerful givers! Thank you!

And if you have not yet made your faith pledge, I encourage you to do so.

These pledges help us budget for the coming year.

God is on the move here in Granada Hills, and we're excited to be a part of what He is doing! Join with us as we seek to follow His will and further His kingdom in Granada Hills as it is in heaven.

Please take a moment to send your pledge to the church office



**Pledge online at  
[fpcgh.org/pledge](http://fpcgh.org/pledge)  
or fill out a pledge card!**



## Finance

---

### 2024 Per Capita

Every year our budget includes money to cover our congregation's share of the administrative costs of being a part of the Presbyterian Church (USA). An individual congregant's share is calculated on its total membership. This is called "Per Capita." This year the per capita is \$37.18 per member, or \$74.36 per couple. There is a blue Per Capita offering envelope located in your box of offering envelopes. The Per Capita assessment covers overhead cost of our Presbytery, Synod, and General Assembly. You can also make your Per Capita payment through our web page utilizing the Online Giving feature at [www.fpcgh.org/donate](http://www.fpcgh.org/donate) or use the QR code.



QR Code for the Giving Page



QR Code for the App

# Youth Ministry

---

Meeting Sunday, January 7  
At 12:15 pm in the Youth Room  
to discuss Youth Ministry with Pastor Lance, Maggie Benjamin, and Helen Magaña



# Men's Ministry

---

GMen BaconDay returns Saturday, January 27th at 8:00 am.

# MOPS

---

Meets every other Tuesday morning at 9:30. Our first meeting is 1/9/24.  
Childcare is available by reservation only.  
For more information please contact: [mopsgranagahills@gmail.com](mailto:mopsgranagahills@gmail.com)

# Family Ministry

---

Save the date: Saturday, February 10, 6:00 PM

Family Valentine's party - all are welcome!

Food, crafts, games, dessert and more!

More details to follow!





# Bible Studies

---

## Sundays (Co-ed):

10:30 to 11:30 am– Discusses the Sunday sermon -Leader Cindi Treloar- cindi6906@gmail.com

10:30 am to 12:00 pm- If you are looking for an awesome co-ed Bible study, look no further! Come join us on the **2/4<sup>th</sup> Sundays from 10:30-12:00 pm** in Hampton Lounge If interested, please contact Sue O'Connor at: taffie1@verizon.net. If you haven't joined a Bible study for a while...why wait? God is calling us to dig deeper into His glorious Word. Come join us!

After the 9:00 am service– Are you looking for an opportunity to study and expand your knowledge of Scripture as well as enjoying the fellowship in a small group? We are a co-ed group looking for people to join us on Sundays at 10:30 am after the 9:00 am service. If you are interested in joining, or need more information, please contact Erik Brannon at 310.806.0284.

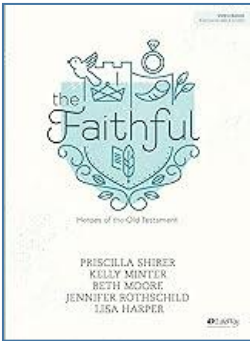
## Mondays

Men: 7:00 pm in the church library– Leader Rick Spence –rjspence1@msn.com

## Wednesdays

Women: 9:30 am– 11:00 am in Hampton Lounge. Resuming January 10! We will be picking up at week 7 of our study “God of Deliverance; A Study of Exodus 1-18” by Jen Wilkin  
Leader Helen Magana –helenmagana@yahoo.com

Co-ed 6:00 pm– Wednesday Evening Bible study is at 6:00 pm in Hampton Lounge!



Starting January 24!

Join us on Wednesday for Heroes of the Old Testament!

Borrowing from best-selling studies by Beth Moore, Priscilla Shirer, Lisa Harper, Kelly Minter, and Jennifer Rothschild, this 5-session study explores crucial moments in the lives of five Old Testament figures—Esther, Gideon, Malachi, Nehemiah, and Hosea. Through their stories, discover how God uses the lives of ordinary people for His glory and the good of His people. Strengthen your faith as you walk alongside these larger-than-life figures who all chose to obey God no matter the circumstances. Email Carol Morain at cmorain@fpcgh.org.

## Thursdays

For Men: 7:00 am- A Bible Study with Dr. Gary Ventimiglia. 818.497.8000, harvestgv@earthlink.net

For Women: 9:00 am– Thursday Morning Women's Bible Study will be studying *Twelve Women of the Bible*. The first meeting is 9am on 1/11/24. –Leader Michelle Brekke- brekkefamily@me.com

For Men: 7:00 pm– For Men: 7:00 pm We are beginning a study of the book “After You Believe” by N.T. Wright. We meet every other Thursday in the church library. New members are welcome! Leader Dave Peterman– dmp88@earthlink.net

For Women: Day Circle- 9:30 am. Day Circle's is continuing “Browsing through the Psalms”-  
Leader Dee Di Stefano– cjddrd@gmail.com

# Advent Recap

## GRANADA TREE LIGHTING



## THE CHRISTMAS CONCERT



## AFRICAN CHILDREN'S CHOIR



## COMMUNITY CONCERNS

MAKING MEALS  
FOR THOSE  
IN NEED



## ADOPT A FAMILY



## POSADA



## CAROLING





# January 2024

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	<b>1</b> <i>Church Office Closed</i>	<b>2</b> 7:00 pm Boy Scouts 7:00 pm Monthly Property Meeting 7:00 pm Monthly Fellowship Meeting	<b>3</b> 9:30 am Women's Bible Study 10:00 am Senior Singles 12:00 pm Community Concerns Cooking	<b>4</b> 7:00 am Men's Bible Study 11:00 am <i>Van Someren Memorial</i> 10:30 pm Girl Scouts 6:00 pm Men's Bible Study 6:00 pm Gloribells 7:00 pm Cathedral Choir	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b> 9:00 am HSMS Wellness
<b>7</b> 9:00 am <b>Worship &amp; Communion</b> 10:30 am Bible Studies 11:00 am <b>Worship</b> 12:15 pm <b>Youth Meeting</b>	<b>8</b> 11:00 am <i>Monroe Memorial</i> 6:00 pm Cub Scouts 6:00 pm Girl Scouts 7:00 pm Men's Bible Study	<b>9</b> 9:00 am MOPS 4:00 pm Monthly Personnel Meeting 4:00 pm Monthly Adult Discipleship Meeting 5:30 pm Monthly Women's Ministry Meeting 7:00 pm Monthly Family Ministry Meeting 7:30 pm Monthly Finance Meeting	<b>10</b> 9:00 am GPS Chapel 9:30 am Women's Bible Study 11:00 am Monthly Membership Meeting	<b>11</b> 7:00 am Men's Bible Study 9:00 am Women's Bible Study 10:30 am Girl Scouts 4:00 pm Monthly Worship Meeting 6:00 pm Men's Bible Study 6:00 pm Gloribells 7:00 pm Cathedral Choir 7:00 pm Monthly Mission Meeting	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b> 9:00 am HSMS Wellness 9:30 am <b>Taking Down the Greens</b> 10:00 am <b>Deacon's Retreat</b>
<b>14</b> 9:00 am <b>Worship</b> 11:00 am <b>Worship</b> 12:15 pm 11th Hour Meeting	<b>15</b> <i>Church Office Closed</i>	<b>16</b> 7:30 pm Session	<b>17</b> 9:30 am Women's Bible Study 4:30 pm Senior Singles	<b>18</b> 7:00 am Men's Bible Study 9:00 am Women's Bible Study 6:00 pm Men's Bible Study 6:00 pm Gloribells 7:00 pm Cathedral Choir	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b> 9:00 am HSMS Wellness 1:00 pm <i>Duke Barry Memorial</i>
<b>21</b> 9:00 am <b>Worship</b> 9:30 am <b>Hispanic Ministry</b> 11:00 am <b>Worship</b>	<b>22</b> 6:00 pm Cub Scouts 6:00 pm Girl Scouts 7:00 pm Men's Bible Study	<b>23</b> 9:00 am MOPS	<b>24</b> 9:30 am Women's Bible Study 6:00 pm Bible Study	<b>25</b> 7:00 am Men's Bible Study 9:00 am Women's Bible Study 6:00 pm Men's Bible Study 6:00 pm Gloribells 7:00 pm Cathedral Choir	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b> 8:00 am <b>GMen Bacon Day</b> 9:00 am HSMS Wellness
<b>28</b> 9:00 am <b>Worship</b> 11:00 am <b>Worship</b>	<b>29</b> 6:00 pm Cub Scouts 6:00 pm Girl Scouts 7:00 pm Men's Bible Study	<b>30</b>	<b>31</b> 9:30 am Women's Bible Study 6:00 pm Bible Study			



10400 Zelzah Avenue  
Porter Ranch, CA 91326

SEND TO: (LABEL)

THE SPIRE (USPS 510-740) is a monthly publication of the First Presbyterian Church of Granada Hills, Northridge, CA 91326-3510. Periodicals postage paid at Northridge, CA and at additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to First Presbyterian Church of Granada Hills, 10400 Zelzah Ave., Porter Ranch, CA 91326-3510.



# First Presbyterian Church of Granada Hills



[facebook.com/fpcgh](https://facebook.com/fpcgh)



[@fpcgh](https://www.instagram.com/fpcgh)



First Presbyterian Church  
of Granada Hills