Gift From The Heart

BY KIM KELLOGG

Piedmont Church member Rod Brown (right) accepts an $8,000 donation from business partner and friend Rex Shoemake for his work in the church’s Malawi and Mexico missions. Rod was honored with the H. Ted Olson Humanitarian Award by Promotional Products Association Intl. Short video clips from the Malawi and Mexico mission trips were shown as part of Rod’s acceptance in Las Vegas January 13. The donation came from Reciprocity Road, a group of philanthropic custom printing distributors.

The Fazlis: ‘Adopted’ Family Of Seven

BY KIM KELLOGG

Just weeks into 2020, the Fazli family - the Afghanistan family most recently adopted by Piedmont Church and our Refugee Task Force (RTF) - is bringing energy and commitment to making the most of their opportunity for a new life here in California.

Here’s a snapshot of where they are as of January:

Employment: Mahmood, the Fazli dad, secured a holiday job at Target, thanks to the effort of RTF volunteers Susan Butenhoff and Chris Mani. That job ended recently and now he is looking for full time employment. Mahmood is a skilled electrician and has already helped several church families with electrical needs (see sidebar). We are now helping him learn how to get certified as an electrician and find a good position. In the meantime, if you or your friends need help with electrical issues, please contact RTF Chair Scott Willis at scottwillis724@gmail.com to arrange help from Mahmood.

Health and Dental: RTF volunteers Judy and Bob Wright took charge of getting all the physical health checks scheduled and completed for the family, as well as figuring out the

See ‘FAZLI’ Page 2
Prayer Boxes

Prayer boxes are located at the main entrance and in the breezeway and in the Sanctuary next to the lectern.

Our congregation, along with the wider Piedmont community, is invited to write joy and concerns for our church to pray over in confidence.

Donations: During the holidays, the donation tree in our courtyard before church services brought in all kinds of toiletries needed by our partner, Jewish Family & Community Services, to help with the needs of 21 new families they received in October. Our donation drive to help them replenish their supply of toiletries for their overwhelming need was a big success, with toothpaste, toothbrushes, shaving tools and soaps contributed in volumes.

Driving and the DMV: Learning to drive is a crucial skill for resettled refugees. With the help of RTF volunteer Kirk Miller, Mahmood has passed the written portion of the driver’s test. He is scheduled for his driving portion of the test in February.

Now, a Dental Committee has been established, led by RTF volunteer Rita Liston. A local dentist, Dr. James Watson, has volunteered to provide pro bono services for check-ups and dental work needed by the family.

In September of this year, Senior Minister Dr. William McNabb will retire. In preparation, the Board of Trustees has studied our church Bylaws and guidelines issued by Presbyterian Church USA to ensure a smooth and thoughtful transition.

With the goal of full transparency, I’d like to share the next steps in the process.

Within three months of Dr. McNabb’s departure, the Board will install a transitional minister. The Board will then assess the needs of the church and its members. Based on that assessment, the Board will establish a Pastoral Search Committee.

If you have any questions or would like clarification on any of the above, I plan to host a coffee hour in Guild Hall following the 10:30 am service on February 9. Some members of the Board of Trustees will join me to talk about next steps for the church.

If you wish to play a role in planning and participating in the celebration of Dr. McNabb’s nearly two decades of service, please contact me at mike@osbornclan.com
In February we will continue our lessons on the Ten Commandments.

February 2
God’s Commandments: Honor Your Parents (Exodus 20:12; John 19:25-27)

February 9
God’s Commandments: Murder (Exodus 20:13; Genesis 4:1-16)

February 16
God’s Commandments: Stealing (Exodus 20:15; John 12:1-8)

February 23
God’s Commandments: Lying (Exodus 20:16; Acts 5:1-11)

Summary Verse: “Jesus replied, ‘You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, and all your mind’” (Matthew 22:37)

Contact Leslie Quantz at Leslie@PiedmontChurch.org

Our church is blessed by your gifts. We are growing. We are reaching more people in this community and around the world.

Note: The goal thermometer includes all church income - including facilities, general operations and pledge income of $1.5M
A Question Of Character

Character - The word is not used in the Bible, but it has been used much lately and the nature of its meaning has been debated. As we enter only the third impeachment trial in the history of our country, the topic of character is front and center.

What sort of character does one need to possess to be the leader of our nation?

For Christians, the matter of character is of utmost importance. In fact, most of the New Testament consists of Paul writing to the early Christians explaining what sort of character a Christian should have.

By now, Christians should know what it means and immediately recognize its absence.

Character, Bill Hybels once said, is who you are when no one is looking. Character is not what we’ve done but who we are.

It consists of (1) the courage to do what needs doing, (2) the discipline to make decisions and carry them out, (3) the vision to see what needs to be done and (4) the endurance to keep going in spite of discouragement, discomfort or boredom.

As we go about making our New Year’s resolutions this year, I hope that we will all ask God’s help in perfecting our character - who we are when no one is looking - so that our lives will be an example to others and the kind of lives that would make God proud to be our Father.

Alternative Gift Market Raises More Than $42,000

BY SELMA CHIN

Celebrating our 16th year of the Alternative Gift Market, your generosity raised $36,865 for our local and global communities. Additionally, $6,000 was raised on Africa Sunday, September 29, for our missions in Malawi.

Here’s how you helped:

- Over 20 Canine Warrior service dogs will receive new collars, leashes and flea medications
- 45 food boxes for families and over 400 meals for the homeless through CityTeam Oakland
- 49 children will be able to go on a field trip through Harbor House
- 42 Foster youth will receive new school supplies or items for their first apartment
- 23 dance classes for Oakland students that otherwise would not be exposed to music through Destiny Arts
- Over 300 students will receive new reading and math supplies through Children-Rising
- 12 weeks of rice feeding the entire Chilanga Blind School
- Over 175 people will receive food for 1 month through the Kafita Fund
- 16 business will receive 1 year of training and mentorship through Village Enterprise
- 4 nurses will be trained in Haiti through Medical Benevolence Foundation
- 32 people will receive glasses, medications and sight saving surgery through SEVA Foundation
- 18 African villages will have protected water wells installed through Marion Medical Mission
- 54 chickens and 11 goats will be provided for families through World Vision

Tiny Time Commitments

Many of our volunteer activities take minimal time and effort.

**USHER OR GREET** at the 10:30 am service (simple training sessions available). Check your calendar and sign up after church.

**PROVIDE A MEAL** through our Food Angels for a member going through a difficult time. Contact Linda Rice at ljrice@sbcglobal.net
Current And Future Ushers

■ BY SUZANNE LATHAM

No more notebook! We are now using PCC connect to schedule ushers for upcoming services. If you have ushered in the past, you have been invited to join this Usher Team. If you have not, we would love to have you join us.

To get involved, you may email Suzanne Latham at suzlatham3@gmail.com or speak to any deacon. If the process of learning how to use PCC Connect, or even to usher at all, makes you reluctant to serve - don’t worry, we can walk you through this.

Michael Barber has graciously agreed to create a YouTube video explaining the procedures.

Pick-A-Party Available

Sign up after church or email Selma Chin at selmachin@yahoo.com for an open Pick-A-Party. New Orleans Gumbo Luncheon is Sunday, March 1, 11:30 am, Guild Hall. All proceeds go to Piedmont Church missions.

Donation is $30 (cash or check)
Ash Wednesday Worship Service
Wednesday, February 26, 7:30 pm in the Sanctuary

BY HELEN STEERS

A delicious dinner will be served in Guild Hall at 6:30 pm prior to the Ash Wednesday worship service. Parents with young families as well as new members and visitors are especially encouraged to attend. Sign up at the table in the courtyard before or after worship, or email Jean at Jean@PiedmontChurch.org

Cost is $15 for adults before February 21 or $20 there after. Children 10 - 7 years $5.

Save The Date
Treasures Sale Is March 14, 15

The Piedmont Community Church Treasures Sale raises funds for the Youth Mexico Service trip. Students and adults will build 18 houses this April for the poorest of the poor in Tijuana. These students forego a typical spring break vacation to serve others who are less fortunate and come back transformed.

Donate March 7-11, Saturday and Sunday, 9 am - 2 pm, Monday - Wednesday, 9 am - 7 pm. The sale is Saturday, March 14, 9 am - 3 pm and Sunday, March 15, 9 am - 2 pm.
Visit PiedmontChurch.org to learn more. Click SERVE.
From Out Of The Ashes

Last night, I was watching flames dance and sway in a fireplace. It was beautiful and comforting. It made me feel warm and alive.

But eventually, after a few hours, the wood was spent, transformed into a pile of ashes. And the dance was over; for fire only lasts for a time – as long as there’s fuel and oxygen. Without it, it dies. So, for a fireplace to come alive again, someone has to do something. They have to stir the embers, add some fuel, or blow on it to get it going again.

It reminded me of why the Spirit of God is often symbolized both as a flame of fire and as the breath of life. The Holy Spirit is both the dynamic power of divine presence and the medium by which God brings new life to dead places.

The pre-Easter season of Lent starts on February 26th, Ash Wednesday. That night, during a service of worship, you’re invited to come up to the altar as an act of confession and as a petition for God’s mercy.

In doing so, you’re basically saying, “Here I am Lord: Just as I am. So, receive me, reshape me, and create in me a new heart.” Then you receive a mark of ashes on your forehead – which is an ancient sign of repentance.

No doubt, having ashes smudged on your forehead is a messy, unattractive thing – just as life itself can be. But, that messy symbol also serves as a reminder: that, just as a fire in a hearth needs someone to tend it, so we need God to rekindle our spirits and lead us out of the shadow of death into the warm glow of life.

That’s also why the ashes are applied in the form of a cross – to remind us of the power of resurrection as we start out on the road to Easter.

So, as we enter the season of Lent this month, I invite you to give up whatever you need to give up – or take on whatever you need to take on – so that you can reconnect with God.

Whatever you decide to do, or don’t do, let the Spirit of God inflame your heart with mercy, with peace, with joy and with love. And feel the warm glow of new life.

DR. DON
ASHBURN
Associate Minister

GOOD NEWS!

Hope Cafe

Share God’s Love at Hope Cafe CityTeam Oakland. The next Hope Cafe is Saturday, February 8, 5 - 8 pm. Ages 8+

On the second Saturday of each month, CityTeam offers a restaurant style gourmet meal with the help of volunteers. Please join us in serving Hope and sharing Love. Sign-ups will be in the courtyard Sunday after worship services. Contact Selma Chin at selmachin@yahoo.com or (510) 290-5732. Note: Next Hope Cafe date is Saturday, March 14.

Project Peace

Project Peace Community Service Day is Saturday, March 21, 9 am - 12 noon. All ages welcome.

Project Peace partners with local faith groups to support local schools and agencies. Working with our hands and hearts - we will meet our community’s needs. More details to follow. For now, save the date to volunteer with Project Peace in March.

Project Peace

has changed format, turning church information into welcomed inspiration. And, while reading online is a good thing, receiving your own copy by mail is even better.

Contact
Michael@PiedmontChurch.org to request your subscription.
## FEBRUARY CALENDAR

**Sunday, February 2**  
Communion Sunday

**Monday, February 3**  
Needles and Hooks Shared Interest Group, 2-4 pm, Guild Parlor  
– Board of Deacons, 7 pm, Guild Parlor

**Wednesday, February 5**  
Coffee and Conversation for Seniors, 9:30 am – 11 am, Guild Parlor

**Friday, February 7**  
KIDZ Club, 3:30 pm, Youth Room

**Sunday, February 9**  
Coffee with Church President after 10:30 am worship, Guild Hall

**Monday, February 10**  
Board of Trustees, 7 pm, Staff Workroom

**Monday, February 17**  
Presidents Day – office closed  
– Needles and Hooks Shared Interest Group, 2-4 pm,  
  Guild Parlor  
– MAT, 7 pm, Staff Workroom

**Wednesday, February 19**  
Coffee and Conversation for Seniors, 9:30 am – 11 am, Guild Parlor

**Monday, February 24**  
Board of Christian Education, 6:45 pm, Guild Parlor

**Wednesday, February 26**  
Ash Wednesday Dinner, 6:30 pm, Guild Hall  
– Ash Wednesday Service, 7:30 pm, Sanctuary

## RECURRING EVENTS

**Sundays**  
Children’s Sunday School, 10:30 am, Christian Education Building  
Journey, 10:30 am, Youth Room  
Rock, 5 pm, Youth Room

**Mondays**  
Spiritual Formation Group, 4:30 pm, Guild Parlor

**Tuesdays**  
Rock Pizza Lunch, Youth Room  
Just Breathe, 5:30 pm, Chapel  
Handbells, 6:30 pm, Clara Barton Room  
Small Group Bible Study, 7 pm, home of Bob and Judy Wright

**Wednesdays**  
Piedmont Gardens Bible Study, 10:15 am,  
Piedmont Gardens  
LiveWire, 2:15 - 3:30 pm, Youth Room  
Chancel Choir, 7:30 pm, Lindamood Choir Room

**Thursdays**  
Women’s Bible Study, 10 am Guild Parlor  
Walking Together, 7 pm, Guild Parlor

**Saturdays**  
Men’s Bible Study, 7:30 am, Founders’ Room