

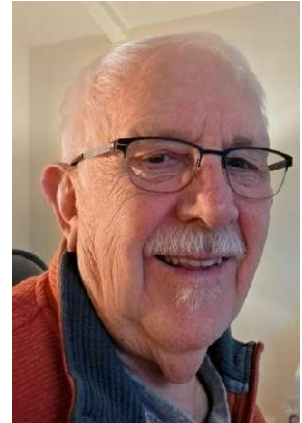
Meet Your 2026 Church Officer Nominees

ELDERS

Class of 2026–2029 (3-year term)

Bob Gardner

On April 1950, when I was 9, my entire family of aunts, uncles, grandparents, siblings, along with 50,000 other people, attended the Billy Graham crusade on Boston Commons. We all made the decision there to follow Christ. Harold John Ockenja, the minister of historic Park Street Church, had personally invited Billy Graham to Boston and was instrumental in planning for this event. I subsequently grew up at Park Street Church, leaving Boston in 1959 to attend Taylor University for a BA in biology and then an MA at William and Mary. Five years of high school teaching followed, first in the Netherlands and then in Swampscott, Massachusetts during the Woodstock era (such fun). Then I went on to North Carolina State University in 1970 for a Ph.D. with subsequent employment as a research scientist at Oak Ridge National Laboratory. Two sons were raised in Oak Ridge before I accepted employment at the University of Maryland as a Professor and Director of their environmental laboratory in western Maryland. In 2014 I married Kim Schumacher and relocated to Santa Rosa, immediately joining the First Presbyterian Church of Santa Rosa. Since retirement I have been writing, teaching and traveling and receiving, as well, the comfort and love of a large family.



Penny Cleary

has been attending FPCSR 20 years and has been a member for 19 years. During her years worshipping and serving in this church family, she has been involved in the music ministry in choral and contemporary music, helped to start the Community Engagement Team (in 2008), and has served as a Deacon. Penny is also an ordained elder, having served one term on session from 2020-23 and served on the Leading Through Change steering team to support our church as we emerged from Covid and to help prepare our retiring pastor and the congregation for that transition. Additionally, Penny served as co-chair of the Pastor Nominating Committee to help lead the search for our new pastor.

Penny is happily married to Rich Mason and between them, they have 4 amazing adult children and 2 sweet grand dogs. Penny is “semi-retired” with a small non-profit consulting



practice and serves as board chair for Catholic Charities of Northwest California. When she is not busy with these activities, Penny enjoys pickleball (actually, semi-obsessed!), cycling, weight training and hiking with friends. Oh and she loves good food and wine!

Penny is eager to serve again on Session and looks forward to working alongside Aeryn and the elders to lead our congregation to the next chapter of our life together.

Joe Maloney

I was born and raised in Terra Linda, (San Rafael), California. I have lived within a 100-mile radius of my birthplace, with the exception of two long summers working for the National Park Service in Yellowstone National Park. My curiosity for serving and knowing God was born in my early childhood within the Catholic Church, and through the guidance of many mentors who crossed my pathway. My passion and fire for knowing God was sparked by one of my coaches who led a Fellowship of Christian Athletes group at my high school.

I met Linda, the love of my life, at UC Davis. We were Resident Advisors and married at the age of 22. We live in Sebastopol, and farm over 20 varieties of apples, mostly Gravenstein, as well as pinot noir grapes. I've been a General Contractor for over 35 years, and teach Math, Science and Construction to students in and out of the Juvenile Justice system, as well as adults through Santa Rosa Junior College. Over the past 4 decades, much of my time was spent on an athletic field coaching football, baseball, soccer, and rugby. I am very proud of my four sons, Parker, Nicholas, Joseph, and Cooper, along with 6 beautiful grandchildren. We have a few other sons who have been grafted into our household and continue to be part of our family.

My passion is to mentor young men, most of whom have absent or missing fathers. The scripture verse that guides me is from Colossians 3:23, "Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord and not for man."



Diane Cretin

I was raised Catholic in east central Illinois and graduated from the University of Illinois. I moved to California when I was 23 to work for an import-export company. I met my husband Lee through an alumni group for those who had gone on international exchanges through International 4-H Youth Exchange. We were invited to attend First Pres by an acquaintance 34 years ago. We taught 4 and 5 year olds in Sunday School first. I then served on the Children's Ministry Committee for several years before focusing more on



Missions, including chairing the Missions committee for 5 years. I have served as a deacon multiple times, the last time as moderator. I worked in the church office twice, including the last 7 years before I retired. My faith has grown tremendously since becoming a member of this church, especially through small groups, fellowship with church friends, and most recently Presbyterian Women. I love to read, walk, and garden as well as spend time quality time with family and friends. I feel joy during worship and am greatly looking forward to serving as an elder.

Greg Murphy

I've been a member of First Pres for 17 years and this congregation has been a critical part of my faith journey. My wife Kelly and I have found community and my three boys have grown up in the church from preschool through the youth program.

I've served as a Sunday School teacher, been ordained as a deacon, helped lead youth trips to Mexico, and I'm currently on the finance committee. I'm excited to be a part of discerning where God is challenging this church to grow and for the opportunity to serve in a new capacity.



DEACONS

Class of 2026–2029 (3-year term)

Bev Swift

My father was attending flight school in California and my mother was living with her parents in tiny Waterville, Iowa when I was born on July 2, 1946. I was baptized shortly thereafter at Old East Paint Creek Lutheran Church where the largely Norwegian Congregation had once been pastored by my great-grandfather, my grandmother's father. When I finally met my father at the age of 9 months I began attending the base non-denominational churches and Sunday Schools wherever my father was stationed until at last, when my father was stationed at NAS Alameda, my mother got her wish, and we began attending Central Lutheran Church in Oakland, California. I was confirmed and took my first communion at 13, and I attended Central Lutheran faithfully until, at the age of 19, I left the church. I continued as something between an agnostic and an atheist until God got my attention through a series of events and people, and at the age of 29 I began to feel a deep longing. I finally found that I was drawn to an Episcopal church in Petaluma, and when I moved to Santa Rosa, transferred my membership to Incarnation, where Bob and I were married in 1998 by Bob's pastor, Dale Flowers, and my priest, Evan Ardley. After we were married,



Bob and I continued our engagement pattern of attending separate churches but visiting each other's churches monthly until August 2000, when Alike and Destinie came to live with us. At that time we decided the larger and more active youth group at First Presbyterian Church Santa Rosa made it a better choice for our family. It was a wrench for me to leave my church, but I soon felt like part of the community at First Pres., became a member, joined the choir, a small group, dinners for 7 and 8, became a coffee maker and coffee server, facilitated classes, and became a Deacon twice, first with Bob and then alone, went on missions, supported Bob's Ecuador Mission, joined committees, and otherwise drilled deeply into community life. I have currently accepted my third call to be a deacon. As I look back now, I am deeply grateful to God and this Church, its leaders, and the community I have found here, and for the Nominating Committee, which has once again trusted me enough to give me this opportunity to serve.

Karen Caskey

Karen and her husband Patrick have been married 46 wonderful years and have lived 38 of those years in Santa Rosa as they raised their three children - Colin (34), and twins Brendan and Laurel (29). They have been blessed to be members of First Presbyterian Church for 36 years. As Patrick started his Retinal Ophthalmology practice in town, Karen, who previously trained and worked as a Medical Technologist, was kept busy raising young children and volunteering in the Sunday School and co-chairing Vacation Bible School. As the kids grew, so did her faith and ministry at FPCSR. She has participated in women's small groups, moved out of her comfort zone learning how to build houses in Tijuana with her family and church community, and has served as an Elder on the Missions Committee helping to develop a Community Service Team reaching out to the needs of Santa Rosa's underserved populations. Karen now volunteers for the Redwood Empire Food Bank and at Whited Elementary School and is honored to be called to serve the Lord and our church family as a deacon.



Popie Stafford

has been a member of First Presbyterian Church for 43 years. During much of that time she served as the church's Counselor in Residence working with individuals and families in the community and our church. Popie is married to Tim Stafford, and together they have three grown children (who grew up at First Presbyterian) and seven grandchildren. Before moving to Santa Rosa, Popie and Tim lived in Nairobi, Kenya for four years where Popie taught at Daystar University. She is a licensed Marriage and Family Therapist, now retired.



Mary Rodgers

I grew up in Petaluma and joined the Methodist Church as a child. I was very active in choir, Sunday school, VBS and youth group. We had a wonderful and dedicated minister Mr. Mee. He spoke to us as children of God who mattered in this world. David and I were married in 1971 at this church, as my sisters were married here also in the sixties. By then Reverend Mee had been transferred to another church and was not allowed to marry any of us. That was hard for all of us as he knew us from childhood. David and I met in college, married, graduated 9 months after and both got jobs in our majors. David in Electronics and myself in Early Childhood Education, Our son,



Chad, came along the following year and we started looking for a church. Finding First Presbyterian Church was a godsend and proved to be right where God led us. We knew no one but took a leap of faith as it felt right where we belonged. Chad flourished, we joined in small groups and made friends, some to this day. Our daughter, Kendra, arrived 2 1/2 years later to complete our family. The weekend we were having Kendra, we joined the church. Our children joined in all the childhood teachings of Sunday School and youth groups. Westminster Woods was introduced to them at an early age and both attended at 8 and 9 years old and were hooked. Every year summers were spent at WW learning and being mentored until they both graduated high school and became staff members. Our faith continued to grow as we watched our children become followers of Jesus. They both went off to college and Chad became a pastor and Kendra became a youth director. Both were married in our church. We've been members for 50 years and this church is home to our family. I have stayed involved in the church as an Elder, Deacon, Serving on the Nominating Committee, PW, Sunday Greeter and scripture reader. Since the fires here in 2017, David and I have served as chairmen for the One Worship Breakfasts as God's hands and feet. We look forward to serving as Deacons again.

David Rodgers

I also grew up in Petaluma. My family went to the Congregation Church in Petaluma and I took confirmation class at 13 and was baptized at that time. Not long after the Congregation Church joined with the Evangelical and Reformed Church to become the United Church of Christ. My parents were very involved with the building of a new church home in Petaluma which I attended until I went into the Air Force in 1966. While in the service I attended church occasionally depending on where I was stationed. After returning home from the service I again attended UCCC and at one point was youth leader for a short period. After Mary and I were married we moved to Santa Rosa. After graduating from SRJC I worked at OCLI in electronic fabrication and maintenance for 42 years

retiring in 2014. We have been very involved in the life of First Presbyterian church for the past 50 years. I have served as Elder and as a Deacon several times and have been on the B&G committee for about 28 years.

Andy Lumadue

In my early childhood, my grandmother was an influence in my life in the Christian faith. Remembering her walk of faith in my mid-twenties caused me to rededicate my life to the Lord. Since then, I have regularly attended church. It has been a privilege to usher, greet people at the Connect Center, help with the Nomadic Shelter and be a Deacon Coordinator here at First Pres. I enjoy studying the Bible with my Small Group and the fellowship of the church.



Vicki Lumadue

I grew up in a Christian home where both of my parents were active in the church. It is by their example I came to know the Lord and experience salvation. Their faithful service taught me to become a servant of the Lord. It has been my great joy to teach children's Sunday School, go to Jamaica with YWAM, help start a ministry with young adults and to be a Deacon Coordinator here at First Pres. In every capacity, I have felt the Lord and His presence guiding and directing me. I am grateful for His love and care in all areas of my life. As I study the scriptures, I find the desire of my heart is to follow Him wholeheartedly!

Linda Smith

I grew up in Southern CA. My Family moved to the Bay Area in my early 20s. We attended Redwood chapel in Castro Valley where many mentors nurtured my budding faith and taught me the value of "coming along side" in our journey. Christopher and I met in the church's singles group and were married at Redwood Chapel in 1976. Christopher's job moved us to Santa Rosa in 1978. I enjoyed serving as our church secretary for 18 months until our first born came along! First Presbyterian Church has been our church home ever since. We were blessed with 4 children between 1979-1989. As we continued to be nurtured in our faith, I enjoyed teaching Sunday school, studying the Bible with our church family, participating in VBS and serving as Deacon several times over the years. I thank our Lord for His faithful love and mercy over our family and our church family. I am grateful to have the opportunity to serve as a Deacon again.



DEACONS - 2-Year Term

Roxanne Nassan

My husband Elias and I have attended First Pres for about 17 years. This is my second deacon term. I also teach Preschool Children's Church, greet at the connect center, and have served as a Stephen Minister over the years. I love being a deacon, and feel it allows me to serve the Lord by using the gifts he has given me.



Barb Lawson

My faith journey began in the Presbyterian Church, and for the past 30 years I have been blessed to call Santa Rosa First Presbyterian Church my home. While earning my California Teaching Credential, I began serving in the church nursery, which started a lifelong commitment to our congregation. Over the years, I have enjoyed singing in the choir, participating in Bible study groups, sharing fellowship through Dinners for 8, and serving as a Deacon several times. Each of these opportunities has strengthened my faith and helped me build meaningful relationships within the church. Santa Rosa First Presbyterian Church is more than a place of worship—it is my spiritual family, and I am deeply grateful for the encouragement, friendship, and support I have found here.



Elly Gan

Elly and her husband, Antonius, have been married for 24 years and have lived in Santa Rosa for all those years. They grew up in Indonesia and met in a youth ministry at a Presbyterian church in Surabaya. They moved to the US to pursue their studies: Antonius in engineering at Calvin College, and Elly in hospitality management at the University of San Francisco. Elly is currently pursuing her dream to become a baker. They found FPCSR as soon as they moved to Santa Rosa. Throughout the years, as they raised their three children, the church became an inextricable part of their lives. Alethea, Renika, and Lysander grew up through Sunday school. They are thankful for the love and support they've received. As their children have matured, Elly feels a stronger pull toward serving the church community more actively as a deacon.



DEACONS- 1-Year Term

Sandy Ginger

I was 20 when a high school friend called to get together. She told me about Jesus and how her life was changed. She invited me to church. I was far from a church going person, yet, I said yes. I had never been to any church other than the one we went to as children. I was amazed at the joy and excitement I experienced there. The Holy Spirit got a hold of me and I said yes to Jesus. My Christian walk has been challenging yet Jesus is faithful. His "amazing grace has got me here thus far and He will lead me home." Don't be afraid to share your story of faith. Invite even an unlikely person to come to church. The Holy Spirit will take it from there.



MEMBERS-AT-LARGE, NOMINATING COMMITTEE (Two-Year Term)

Sarah Held

I was blessed to grow up in a Christian home where faith in Jesus was modeled and encouraged. I gave my life to Him early on and marvel at His love and care for me throughout my life. After graduating from BIOLA University with a business degree, I enjoyed a career in Finance and Human Resources. Now happily retired, my husband, Steve and I enjoy traveling and spending time with family and friends. FPCSR has been home for me for over 20 years where my faith and walk with Jesus has deepened. God has used my gifts to serve in a variety of roles including elder, deacon, several committees, Sunday School teacher and PW. I'm excited to be on the Nominating Committee and I'm already praying for those God will call to serve next year.



Amy Bowen

My Faith journey began when I was a small child at First Presbyterian Church of Ridgewood (NJ) but First Presbyterian Church of Santa Rosa has been an important part of that journey since I first started attending in 1995. Both of my children were warmly welcomed into our church home where they attended Sunday School, VBS, Club Paradise and Youth Group with Cory. In the past I have served as a Deacon and I continue to volunteer with Sunday preschool. I am excited to witness the current growth of our church and I am pleased to be called to serve on the Nominating Committee.

