



Radical Generosity
Conversation with First Presbyterian Church of Hayward
January 10, 2021

LETTERS TO THE CHURCH

The New Testament contains many letters written to the early church. What might a letter to the modern church say? In our January sermon series Letters to the Church, the Rev. Dr. Charlene Han Powell explores this question alongside fellow pastors from Presbyterian churches in the Bay Area and across the country. Join us in worship to hear and learn from their stories of struggle, joy, and transformation. Then, gather in your Community Group ready to listen for how God is speaking to and working in and through the church today.

WELCOME

Watch "[Belong. Believe. Become](#)" (3:57), a welcome video from our siblings at First Presbyterian Church of Hayward. What strikes you?

LISTEN, CONVERSE, IMAGINE

2 Corinthians 9:1-15 (NRSV)

¹Now it is not necessary for me to write to you about the ministry to the saints, ²for I know your eagerness, which is the subject of my boasting about you to the people of Macedonia, saying that Achaia has been ready since last year; and your zeal has stirred up most of them. ³But I am sending the brothers in order that our boasting about you may not prove to have been empty in this case, so that you may be ready, as I said you would be; ⁴otherwise, if some Macedonians come with me and find that you are not ready, we would be humiliated—to say nothing of you—in this undertaking. ⁵So I thought it necessary to urge the brothers to go on ahead to you, and arrange in advance for this bountiful gift that you have promised, so that it may be ready as a voluntary gift and not as an extortion.

⁶The point is this: the one who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and the one who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. ⁷Each of you must give as you have made up your mind, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. ⁸And God is able to provide you with every blessing in abundance, so that by always having enough of everything, you may share abundantly in every good work. ⁹As it is written, 'He scatters abroad, he gives to the poor; his righteousness endures forever.'

¹⁰He who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will supply and multiply your seed for sowing and increase the harvest of your righteousness. ¹¹You will be enriched in every way for your great generosity, which will produce thanksgiving to God through us; ¹²for the rendering of this ministry not only supplies the needs of the saints but also overflows with many thanksgivings to God. ¹³Through the testing of this ministry you glorify God by your obedience to the confession of the gospel of Christ and by the generosity of your sharing with them and with all others, ¹⁴while they long for you and pray for you because of the surpassing grace of God that he has given you. ¹⁵Thanks be to God for his indescribable gift!

1. As you revisit Paul's letter to the Corinthians and our conversation with First Pres Hayward, which of the following topics discussed most moved, excited, or confounded you?
 - What are the challenges facing the church?
 - Where do you see God at work?
 - If you were to write a letter to the church, what would it be?

How did this conversation speak to your experience of/at First Pres Berkeley?

2. Watch "[Dear Church](#)" (5:30), a spoken word piece by First Pres Hayward community member Bailey Fan. What do you hear in her letter to the church?
3. Watch "[Building a Home](#)" (20:30), which shares the motivation, process, and hopes undergirding First Pres Hayward's homeless services and creative housing solutions. What strikes you?
4. What is a key takeaway for you from our dialogue with First Pres Hayward?

PRACTICE

Pray for the life and ministry of the Church--at First Pres Hayward and First Pres Berkeley--and for the challenges, graces, and opportunities before us. Spend some time this week getting to know [First Presbyterian Church of Hayward](#) better. Ask the Spirit to reveal and inspire ways that we might learn with and from these beloved siblings in Christ.