



PresPress

January 2020

Presbyterian Church of Novato, 710 Wilson Ave., P.O. Box 631, Novato, CA 94948

The Christmas Gift of Love

Why go to church?

That's the question so many people ask: Christian and non-Christian alike. From the outside looking in, the church can seem pretty messed up: full of hypocrites, family drama, cliques, discrimination, political squabbling, and a persistent request for time and money.

So why in the world should anyone be a part of the church?

Oh, we in the church have all sorts of spiritual, 'churchy' answers, but most seem to fall flat with our neighbors. 'Because Jesus said so.' 'Because you just should.' 'Because that's where you grow in your faith.' 'To do Bible study.' 'To learn about Jesus.' 'To grow as disciples.' 'Because Jesus forgives your sin.' And there are countless others.

And yet at the end of the day our neighbors are saying, 'So what? None of that matters to me. What you're selling, I'm not buying.'

We're often not very good at sharing the good news of Jesus Christ with others, at least not in ways that build bridges of relevance to the community. By 'bridges of relevance' I don't mean conforming to the ways of the world, but rather communicating answers to the world's question: 'So what?' We can say 'Jesus, Jesus' all we want with the best and most heart-felt intentions, but the heart of the good news we're trying to share, that which is relevant to ALL of humanity, may never be communicated to the world; an invitation never extended; good news never shared.

When I think about Jesus' ministry in the world, he was constantly on the move. He didn't have a single edifice of worship from which he offered classes, told everyone to come on Mondays at 5 p.m., or hand out flyers inviting folks to the next event. He went to weddings, people's homes, mingled with the lowly, the immigrant, and the outcast. He extended bridges to everyone he met, and he did it not with fancy, theological words, creeds, doctrinal soundbites, or guilt-tripping condescension. He extended bridges through compassion, kindness, and generosity. He embodied love itself: love that listens, values, and cares. Love that spoke volumes to those he was with: "You matter. You are worthy of love and respect. You are worth my time, my energy, and my love. I want to be with you."

I think sometimes we forget that the Christmas gift of love – this sacrificial, selfless love we are given in Jesus Christ, who is God with us, who came into the world to reconnect us to God – is a gift that we not only receive, but that we choose to live into, live out, and share with our lives.

Well, let me amend the previous paragraph. Maybe we don't forget the gift of love we receive in Jesus. Maybe we soften it and take the edges off. We remove its radical nature and domesticate it to make it comfortable, easy, and safe. The only trouble with this is that Christ's love is not a warm and fuzzy feeling, but an act of will that would give everything away for the sake of others. It's scandalous to the world, foolishness even. It turns enemies, strangers, outcasts, and sinners into brothers and sisters. It pursues relationship in the midst of divisiveness. It builds bridges when we might want to erect walls. It pushes us out of our comfort zones, out of our church walls, out of our norms, time and time again to go to our neighbors to share and to be the love of Christ inviting all to be a part of it ... after all, this love is a gift for the world.

In Luke 21, Jesus speaks of the temple and its coming destruction. This edifice of faith that the people have long held onto will fall. Times will get harder not easier, Jesus says. In the midst of being faithful to God, and sharing God's love with the world, things get harder, not easier. So while God's gift of love is for everyone and is absolutely life-giving, hope-instilling, filling those who see and receive it with both joy and peace that passes all understanding, in realizing this love and its claim on the world, and its counter-worldly way and shape, it's a challenge to embody. The gift of God's love doesn't make life easy. That's a common misconception. But in living into God's love, we find that we become truly human, truly ourselves, truly who God intends us to be.

In verse 19 of Luke, chapter 21, Jesus tells his disciples, “By holding fast, you will gain your lives.” I’ve wrestled with that statement in Luke’s gospel, but have come to understand its call to ‘lean in’ when things get hard in life; to not run away; to not capitulate to the call of selfishness and fear in the world, but to endure in God’s love. To choose over and over again to love as God loves in a world where that seems ludicrous. And in doing so, Jesus says that you gain your own life ... you become who you truly are.

What if we spent more time loving as Christ loves, living into the heart of the gospel, and spent far less time debating theological nuance, blindly holding onto ‘right’ doctrine, telling our neighbors we’ve got all the right answers? What if we didn’t sit in our fortresses of power and self-righteousness waiting around for people to walk into our churches to ‘see the light’ in our programs, classes, and worship services? What if the world around us has seen through the empty shell that the church can often become when the radical, selfless love of Christ is diluted or missing in its life and ministry? After all, what is the church without love?

The Apostle Paul answers this question in 1 Corinthians: “If I speak in tongues of human beings and of angels but I don’t have love, I’m a clanging gong or a clashing cymbal. If I have the gift of prophecy and I know all the mysteries and everything else, and if I have such complete faith that I can move mountains but I don’t have love, I’m nothing. If I give away everything that I have and hand over my own body to feel good about what I’ve done but I don’t have love, I receive no benefit whatsoever” (1 Corinthians 13:1-3). In other words, love is the beating heart of the church. Without love, the church is not the Church of Jesus Christ.

Christ’s love is at the heart of the Christian faith, it’s at the heart of the gospel itself, and it’s at the heart of why anyone should ‘go to church,’ or be a part of the community of faith. The love of Christ is a love that distinguishes the church from any other club, committee, organization, or small group. In the community of faith, we remind ourselves again and again of God’s love in Jesus Christ that has claimed our lives, and we practice and embody that love together because we know it is so hard to do. And we live into that love in our lives and invite others around us to be a part of it. It’s this love that connects us all together, this love that is the bridge to the world, this love that speaks to and changes hearts, and minds, and lives, and the world itself for the better.

That, dear saints, is why we go to church and why we should invite others to join us. Forget doctrine, buildings, traditions, programs, polity, and the like for a minute ... what matters, what is at the heart of our faith, is God’s love in Jesus Christ.

Through it, we have been saved. In it, we discover who we are. Living into it, we have new life now and forever, and Jesus transforms the world around us, making what is broken into that which is life-giving and hope-instilling for a better tomorrow.

The love of Christ is what the world yearns for: love that is not passive and weak, sterile words stuck in the pages of the Bible that DO nothing, but love that is at work: powerful, lived-out, life-changing, and world-transforming.

Oh, my friends, may the Christmas gift of love we receive fill us with hope for a brighter tomorrow, and may it be the way of our faith as we follow after Jesus each and every day.

With Grace & Peace,
Pastor Adam

Per Capita ... Per What-A-Wah? by Ariel Mink

If you've received giving envelopes in the past, you may have noticed an oddball envelope, usually blue in color, reserved for per capita giving. What is that, and why is it important? Every congregation belongs to a presbytery (we are part of the Presbytery of the Redwoods), every presbytery belongs to a synod (we are part of the Synod of the Pacific), and then every synod belongs to the national Presbyterian Church (USA), the General Assembly. We are a connectional church and relate to each level of Presbyterian governance.

The official definition: "Per capita is an opportunity for all communicant members of the Presbyterian church through the governing bodies [mid councils] to participate equally, responsibly, and interdependently by sharing the cost of coordination and evaluation of mission; and of performing ecclesiastical, legislative, and judicial functions that identify a Reformed Church, while at the same time strengthening the sense of community among all Presbyterians" (GA Minutes, Part I, 1995).

Congregations (through their sessions) pay an annual amount of money per church member – per capita apportionment – to their respective presbyteries. The per capita amount requested from a congregation is a combined total of requests from that congregation's presbytery, the synod in which the presbytery is located,

and the General Assembly – based on their respective budgets for the coming year(s).

In 2020, PCN will contribute \$31.43 per active member.

Your contribution enables many faithful ministries, including, among other things:

- Discerning God’s will together as a denomination – through biennial General Assemblies (GA) and covering expenses for commissioners and advisory delegates, the venue, technology, training of leaders, the exhibit hall, and more.
- Through special committees established by a GA to dig deeply into issues of particular concern to the church, and through standing committees providing guidance for ongoing work.
- Training church leaders – for sessions, congregations, and mid councils through events and the new “Equip PC(USA)” online platform.
- Engaging with those studying and preparing for ministry, through ordination exams and connections with seminaries.
- Supporting the call processes of churches through the Church Leadership Connection online portal and personal consultations.
- Building connections with local councils, through the travel and presence of the GA Co-Moderators, the Stated Clerk, and OGA staff
- Preserving and maintaining our history through the Presbyterian Historical Society, which can preserve the minutes and other history of your congregation, along with other records of the PC(USA).
- Engaging in issues of justice through immigration advocacy and legal support, including helping church workers from abroad obtain the appropriate visas.

Thank you in advance for submitting your per capita contribution!

2020 is ALREADY shaping up to be an exciting year! Looking ahead ...

January 1 – Happy New Year! Think about some new year resolutions that may help you begin or strengthen some spiritual disciplines... read Scripture, attend a Bible study, join a PCN committee, engage in prayer and meditation, invite a friend to worship, volunteer at Lynwood school’s reading program, become a table parent at Seekers. The possibilities are endless.

January 16 – Beyond the Pew. Patty Dougherty will be sharing about her semester at sea, and what it means to be a faithful steward of God’s creation. Join us in the sanctuary at 7 p.m.!

January 26 – Annual congregation dinner and meeting. Please join us at 5 p.m. on Sunday, January 26, for supper hosted by the Program and Fellowship committee. The annual congregational meeting will begin at 6 p.m. This is an important opportunity to look back at 2019 and then focus on how we are building for the future in 2020 and beyond.

Morgan Smith

A new year is often marked by New Year's Resolutions. In these resolutions, people are declaring how they will strive to live in the new year. Losing weight, exercising every day, and breaking bad habits are all common examples of what people commit to beginning on January 1st.

People start the new year excited at the potential of what they could be. They start the year fired up at all the change that will happen in their life. This excitement lasts ... for about two weeks. One analysis from Strava shows that most people abandon their resolutions in mid-January.

Why is it that one's excitement can turn quickly to giving up? Because it's hard. Change is hard. Breaking the old and turning to the new is hard. Once the adrenaline wears off, and people realize that it will be challenging to get to this new place, they abandon their goals and return to their old ways of doing things.

This is true of the masses out there in the world. But it is also true with all of us. We know, in our own lives, that we have unhealthy patterns of sin. We know that we need to fight gossip in our lives. We know that we need to fight greed in our lives. We know that we need to speak better of others, instead of tearing them down. We know that we need to fight pride in our lives. We know that we need to fight temptation, instead of giving in to it. We know that we need to develop patterns of growth with Christ in our lives. We know that we need stronger community and greater degrees of accountability in our lives. Yet how often do we simply lack the motivation to do something about it?

We know all of this, but will we proactively do something about it, or will we simply be complacent and let these unhealthy and sinful patterns remain?

We need to grow – not remain the same. We need to sow the fruit of the Spirit, not sow fruit of the flesh.

The prophet Samuel, in his farewell speech to the people of Israel, said “do not be afraid; you have done all this evil. Yet, do not turn aside from following the Lord, but serve the Lord with all your heart” (1 Samuel 12:20). In the past, perhaps our commitment to Christ has been like our commitment to New Year’s Resolutions - strong for a bit but fades quickly. We need to realize that like Israel we “have done all this evil,” but at the same time in realizing that, it must lead us towards passionately following Christ.

How can understanding how we have failed Jesus lead us toward following Him more passionately? In reflecting on how we have fallen, we recognize, to a greater degree, the depth of Christ’s love. We understand that it was “while we were still sinners, that Christ died for us” (Romans 5:8). We realize that in our sin, Christ purchased our salvation. We realize that Christ gave us his Holy Spirit, as our security, as a guarantee of our future inheritance (Ephesians 1).

Christ’s commitment to us won’t last only until mid-January. Christ’s commitment to us doesn’t simply last until we fail him and sin.

Christ’s commitment to us lasts in spite of our ongoing failure, in spite of our lingering sin, in spite of our hardness, in spite of our arrogance, in spite of our failure to be the people He calls us to be.

When you realize Christ’s commitment toward you, should it make you want to be sort-of passionate about Him for a week or two this year? No. When we understand Christ’s commitment to us, may it in turn lead us to passionately follow Him, every minute of every hour, and every hour of every day, and every day of every year, until we meet Him in eternity, because that’s how committed He is to you.



A new year. A new start. A new beginning. I always think about the new year as a time to reflect on the gift of new life that Jesus gives to us. We are a resurrection people after all. We are constantly renewed, refreshed, and brought back to life each and every day. God is never done with us, but always building for the future.

In 2019, we began a season of *building for the future* with Christ. In addition to a worship series, we chose to take a step back from our architectural planning and began to explore PCN's call from God. We formed a Mission/Vision/Values Discernment Team to prayerfully listen to God, to you the congregation, and to the world around us. They were commissioned by you to articulate our call into mission, vision, and values statements. We created a Communication Team to share about this prayerful work. And we commissioned a Website Team to work on the creation of a new website.

Now, in this new year, the fruition of this faithful work is upon us. A website is in the process of being created, and the Discernment Team will be wrapping up the mission, vision, and values statements in early January. It is truly a time of celebration and of something new around the corner.

To this end, I would like to extend an invitation to each and every one of you to join us at the annual congregation meeting @ 5 p.m. on January 26th.

In addition to our normal business conducted at this meeting, we will be unveiling our new statements for questions and conversation. I will also be giving a presentation entitled, "**A New Beginning**," in which I hope to share with you answers to the questions: "Why are we 'building for the future?'" and "Where do we go from here?" This will be a perfect time to come together as a church family for food, conversation, fellowship, and to begin to look at 'What's Next' as we continue to build for the future with Christ.

With Grace & Peace,
Pastor Adam

BUILDING FOR THE FUTURE A NEW BEGINNING

Early January

- Mission, Vision, Values Statements finished!

Wednesday, January 15th

- Session Approves the statements

Sunday, January 26th

- Annual Congregational Meeting
- Statements are shared
- Presentation: "A New Beginning"



2019 CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PAGEANT

Our congregation thanks our children for a wonderful pageant on December 8th! A highlight of the year, for sure. Thanks go out to Sydney Fletcher for her detailed organization and her boundless energy; to Sally Carbonaro for her unlimited faith and welcoming heart; to our musicians, David Harmon, Brenda McIvor, and Sarah Smith; and to ALL THE PARENTS for prioritizing their children's involvement in this celebration of "God with us – Emmanuel!" when life is going by so fast. And a special thank you to THE CHILDREN for *their enthusiasm, purpose, and love, which makes working with them such a joy!!*





advent CELEBRATION

A fun time was had by all who attended the Advent activities following the children's Christmas program. A big thank you to all who volunteered to make it a success!





On Sunday, December 1 we wished our dear friend Gary Pearce a fond farewell. The spirit of aloha was in full force as parishioners donned Hawaiian shirts and decked out Trevitt Hall. We wish Gary all the best in Oregon, but he will be greatly missed!





PCN Snack Sacks continues into 2020!

The Downtown Streets Program continues to serve people in our community with a place to take a shower every week and get fresh socks and underwear. Here at PCN we will continue to support this program with food every week. We provide 60 snack sacks with protein, carbs and fresh fruit.

Thank you to everyone who has supported this program, done some shopping, helped stuff the sacks on Sunday, drove the sacks to the mobile showers on Monday morning, etc. Charleen Kuykendall shares the Sunday lead and overall leadership with me; Tonya Church is our Number One Shopper along with Kathy Wright. Audrey Boland, Kristen Rush, Jo Crocker and Deanna Lutzeier have provided homemade cookies, individually wrapped for 60 sacks, and finally Patty Reed, Robert Coleman, Carrie Ford, Kay Walker, Tammi Jester and Mary Contreras have been there on Sundays, along with others, to help stuff those sacks. Ellen Breazeale and Sandy Peterson have driven the sacks to the showers on Monday morning and helped coordinate with the Downtown Streets staff.

This local mission project is funded by a special mission grant, and we are very appreciative of the funds to continue serving our community with fresh food.

If you would like to start participating in this local mission activity, there is a place for you! Please contact Regina Rus at reginabrus@gmail.com or 415-497-2212 to talk about ways we can welcome you. We really need more people to step up and take a piece so that we can continue providing food weekly to those in our community who need it most.



Session

Session Highlights November 2019

Session approved:

- Contract for a new website provider, Ekklesia 360. Initial cost is \$3,750 in addition to an app fee of \$480 per year and a website hosting platform fee of \$552 per year. The Session thanked the website committee members for their work: Tonya Church, Brad Praun, Rebekah Harmon, Bill Walker, Patty Reed.
- Novato Federated Teacher poster to hang on the information kiosk through December 31, 2019.
- Membership transfer of Rosemary and William Nichols to St. Andrew Presbyterian Church, Pacifica, CA.
- Baptism of Alouette Elisabeth Mae McMicken, born on 4/27/2019.
- Special Congregational Meeting at 11 a.m. on December 8, 2019 for the purpose of electing Deacons and Elders.
- Annual Congregational Meeting on Sunday, January 26, 2020 at 6 p.m. A dinner will be held from 5 to 5:45 p.m., coordinated by the Program and Fellowship Committee.
- To accept, with thanks and regret, Janaina Correa's resignation as a Deacon effective October 31, 2019.

A stewardship update was given by Elder Brad Praun. Follow-up telephone calls are being made for estimates of giving for 2020.

Kathy Takemoto
Clerk of Session



Mark your calendars for our annual congregational meeting, which will be held Sunday, January 26 at 6 p.m. in the sanctuary. The meeting will be preceded by a simple soup supper at 5 p.m. in Trevitt Hall. We hope to see you there!

NorCal Prayer Summit

If you would you like to connect with God in a deeper way when you pray, consider attending a Prayer Summit. An opportunity to do so is coming [January 30 through February 1, 2020](#), when Strategic Renewal will host a co-ed Prayer Summit in Yuba City, CA. This once-a-year gathering will offer men and women the chance to undergo life-changing prayer experiences in a supportive atmosphere guided by the Holy Spirit, Scripture and songs of praise.

Prayer Summits are a truly unique experience. They are often referred to as “the most New Testament prayer gathering” you can experience. Three days of no agenda other than to seek God together, through Scripture, song, and prayer. They strike a beautiful balance between corporate but still personal: spontaneous, but orderly; scriptural, but led by the Spirit. This simpler worship format has profound power to transform lives and congregations. What better way for you to contribute to PCN’s “Building for the Future.”

PCN members who have attended these summit workshops in the past can verify the profound effect of these gatherings. If you have questions, and would like to carpool, please feel free to contact Janis West, Ruth Haas, Melodie Baird, Kai Lancaster and Laura Haney.

Visit <https://www.strategicrenewal.com/event/norcal> for information and to register. If six or more register there will be a 20% discount!

LIVING LIFE, SPREADING JOY AND SUPPORTING THE FUTURE

Advent is a time when we are looking forward to the coming of Christ. The birth of Christ for me is more than a reminder about life. It is because of Christ that we can live life and live life to the fullest. One of my favorite authors, Frederick Buechner, has an interesting viewpoint on life that he writes about in his book *Wishful Thinking*. He talks about the mystery of life, expanding it way beyond the terms rat race or a bowl of cherries. He asks several questions in his definition of life, challenging readers to find out if you are really living or “dead.” Each year as we do the budget at PCN, I wonder if the way we spend our money shows we are really living?

Frederick Buechner also has a definition of joy in his book. He uses the same passage we heard Adam use in his sermon for the third Sunday of Advent, John 15:11. The way Buechner defines joy is this: “Happiness turns up more or less where we would expect it to – a good marriage, a rewarding job, a pleasant vacation. Joy, on the other hand, is as notoriously unpredictable as the one who bequeaths it.” Again I ask the question, does the budget at PCN intend to spread joy?

As I look forward to the new year being 2020, I see many things that will change for me personally. I am looking forward to retirement, cashing in on the senior discounts with Les, and having more time to serve. This to me is living life to the fullest, and through service I find that joy is something I not only feel in myself but see on the faces of others through smiles.

As I look forward to the new year in the life of the church, I would have to say that our budget shows that we are really living, spreading joy, and allowing people to experience joy. We will be getting a new website next year. Websites are often referred to as a “welcome mat.” We will be getting a new welcome mat next year which will tell visitors about our church, what to expect when they come for the first time, and expand services to one location for the current members and friends of our church through online giving and an app for our cell phones.

The excitement I have felt being a part of the website committee is no match for what I feel on Sunday morning as I worship. I often sit in the back and have a great privilege. Each week during the contemporary service there is a children's message. These messages are even more exciting to watch if the “box” comes out. The privilege I have is to watch the children as they “walk quickly” to children's worship, some with way more energy than I ever remember having, and huge smiles on their faces. It brings a smile to my face every time. This to me is an expression of joy, and I am thankful often for the commitment that our church has to educating children so they can come to know Jesus. It also gives me great pleasure to know that we are often expanding our outreach programs and choose not to make budget cuts in those areas, where there no longer seems to be value added because of advances in technology. I don't often embrace technology, but in the coming years technology will play a very important role.

My hope for all of you as you embrace a new year is that you remain faithful in your generosity, find a way to serve PCN even if it is one time a month for 30 minutes, and look for the ways to really live life to the fullest.

Happy New Year!

Tonya Church, Finance Committee Chair



Would you like to improve your listening and relationship skills?

Would you like to help someone through a difficult time in their life?

Are you a compassionate Christian?

If you answer “yes” to any of these questions, the Stephen Ministers would love for you to become one of us! Stephen Ministry is very active in our church, with several ongoing, caring, one-on-one relationships, and we would gladly welcome your help.

Throughout all care-giving relationships, every contact and detail is kept strictly confidential – which is why you may not be very familiar with who we are. We work quietly, behind the scenes, offering compassionate Christian care for people who need someone to talk to.

Stephen Ministry is offering a 15-week training which will meet on Tuesday evenings along with a few Saturdays and one Friday evening. Classes will be taught by Stephen Leaders and professionals in related fields. We begin on Friday, January 24th!

For more information, please call Ruth Haas, 897-7629; Kathy Botko, 897-7783; or Jane Sime, 497-5158. We look forward to hearing from you!



The Deacons would like to thank all our PCN family members for lovely and delicious holiday treats during our Advent season coffee hours.

Remember to identify your treat trays as you bring them ready to serve. Our church members never cease to amaze and spoil us all with your gifts!

Blessings,
PCN Deacons



A very belated thank you to all the loving passengers on the 'Sarah Smith Meal Train' this past fall. Delicious meals were provided by:

Tonya Church
Jo Crocker
Ruth Jankowski
Becky Praun
Patty Reed

Nothing like a warm meal to heal the body, soul and heart!

Thank you again,
PCN Deacons



We would like to invite each of you to the Sunday morning Adult Bible Study. The group meets in the church library at 9 a.m. We have a lively group and great discussions of the Scriptures each Sunday.

In January and February we will be studying and discussing ***Building the Temple – and the Church***. The story in 1 Chronicles of building and dedicating the temple encouraged the Jews in their labor centuries ago, and the story can encourage us today we seek to build the church (Ephesians 2:19-22).

David knew that God’s temple had to be built with gold, silver, and costly stones, and Paul took these materials and applied them spiritually to the local church. They stand for the wisdom of God as found in the Word of God. Wood, hay, and straw can be picked up on the surface, but if you want gold, silver, and jewels, you have to dig for them. We don’t build the local church on clever human ideas or by imitating the world; we build by teaching and obeying the precious truths of the Word of God.

Solomon didn’t have to draw his own plans for the temple, because the Lord gave the plans to David. As we read the Word and pray, He shows us His plans for each local church.

The temple was built to display the glory of God, and our task in the local church is to glorify God. When Solomon dedicated the temple, God’s glory moved in, but when Israel sinned, the glory moved out. We wonder how many local churches go through the motions of worship Sunday after Sunday, yet there’s no evidence of the glory of God.

The temple was to be a “house of prayer for all nations,” but the religious leaders in Jesus’ day made it into a den of thieves. How many local churches are known for their effective ministry of prayer? They may be houses of music, education, and even social activities, but are they houses of prayer?

The temple was built and God honored it with His presence because the leaders and people gave their best to the Lord, sacrificed and followed directions. This is a good example for us to follow today. We are privileged to assist in the building of the church, and our motive must be only the glory of God.

(Above comments are from noted Bible commentator Warren Wiersbe)

Carol and Larry Dacquisto, Study Leaders



1 & 2 SAMUEL

When we left our study last month, Israel was reeling from its defeat by the Philistines, in which it had also lost possession of Yahweh's Ark of the Covenant. We followed the Ark as it was passed by the Philistines from one nation to another, each one finding to its distress that its possession of the Ark brought curses instead of blessings.

As we rejoin our story in Chapter 6 of 1 Samuel this month, the Philistines have become so terrified by Yahweh's power that, defeated and humiliated, they return the Ark to Israel. Yahweh is ready to do something new, but will Israel respond by finally putting away all foreign gods and directing their hearts to God only? This is the question young Samuel asks and we too will ponder as we begin this new year.

If you have considered joining us, this would be the perfect time to visit and get to know us. You are welcome to visit our class and participate in our lively discussions at any time. The only cost is our \$6.00 study guide. Feel free to contact one of our study leaders if you need more information.

We will meet on the following days and times in January:

January 9:	9:30 to 11:00 a.m.	in the Christensen room
January 15:	9:30 to 11:00 a.m.	in the Christensen room
January 23:	9:30 to 11:00 a.m.	in the Christensen room
January 30:	9:30 to 11:00 a.m.	in the Christensen room

Carol Dacquisto (415-892-2070), Elaine Harris (415-382-0854), Melodie Baird (415-897-7512)



Presbyterian Women nurture their faith through prayer and Bible study, support missions of the church worldwide, and build an inclusive, caring community of women.

Our Purpose

Everything we do as an organization and as a community is guided by our PW Purpose, and that includes ministry, resources and relationships.

Forgiven and freed by God in Jesus Christ, and empowered by the Holy Spirit, we commit ourselves

- *to nurture our faith through prayer and Bible study,*
- *to support the mission of the church worldwide,*
- *to work for justice and peace, and*
- *to build an inclusive, caring community of women that strengthens the Presbyterian Church (USA.) and witnesses to the promise of God's kingdom.*

Anyone who supports the purpose in any way is participating in Presbyterian Women. So even if you're just learning about Presbyterian Women, there's a good chance you're already supporting Presbyterian Women – in spirit or in action! Won't you consider joining us in person?

Presbyterian Women are aligned under a shared purpose, but the gifts of the Spirit allow us to live into the purpose in our own, unique ways. Some individuals or groups find themselves particularly drawn to one or two points of the purpose. Other groups or individuals consciously work toward fulfilling all points. There are many faithful ways to live out the PW Purpose!

All women who attend The Presbyterian Church of Novato (PCN), please consider becoming an active member of the Presbyterian Women (PW) of PCN ... ALL ARE WELCOME (*invite a friend*)! We currently have two active PW circles at PCN that each meet once a month in the Christensen Room:

Ruth Circle usually meets the 4th Tuesday at 2 p.m. (Glenise Johnson, leader)

Rachel Circle usually meets the 4th Wednesday at 6 p.m. (Pat Sullivan, leader)

Join us for the next circle meeting(s) in January 2020 – we are saving a chair for you! It's never too late to join us!

Books are available for our 2019-2020 Horizons Bible Study titled:
"LOVE CARVED IN STONE, A Fresh Look at the Ten Commandments," by Eugenia Anne Gamble.



I am excited about this Bible study!

If you are unable to attend a Bible study circle, but still want to actively support the Presbyterian Women of PCN, you can participate in any of the following PCN PW projects. Any amount will add up to help PCN Presbyterian Women fulfill our larger Purpose!

PCN Presbyterian Women's Mission Projects:

- (1) **Least Coin Offering:** Since 1956, Presbyterian Women have been collecting the Least Coin offering worldwide for evangelism, service, and relief projects.
- (2) **Nickels For Nets:** Each month, our women donate at least \$0.05 for mosquito nets to help stamp out malaria in the world. Even the smallest donation will make a difference in the world when added together.
- (3) **Birthday Offering:** Each spring, we collect at least one penny for each year of our lives. This donation also goes toward innovative mission projects in the United States and worldwide.
- (4) **Thank Offering:** During the autumn months, we collect money for the Thank Offering. The Thank Offering provides food and water, alleviates homelessness, provides educational opportunities, promotes health, and improves the lives of women, children and men throughout the world in many other ways.
- (5) Knitted layette items (baby blankets, caps and booties, etc.) will continue to be given to new mothers and/or grandparents as our local PCN mission project. Anyone with knitting and/or crocheting skills can participate in this program. A big thank you to the women from PCN who have already contact me and brought me their beautiful knitted handiwork.

If you have any questions about Presbyterian Women, please don't hesitate to contact me:

Glenise Johnson: home (415) 897-8759 or cell (415) 717-7635. We always welcome new women interested in becoming an active part of our circles of Presbyterian Women ... **come try us out!**



Glenise Johnson, Moderator



Join us in January when Patty Dougherty shares about her six-week study program at sea. Hear what she researched and learn what a marine protected area is and why it's important. Patty will show pictures from some of the uninhabited islands and talk about the importance of sustainability.

Mark your calendars: Thursday, January 16 at 7:00 p.m. See you in the sanctuary!



Dear friends,

My brother John wishes to thank you all for your prayers. It has been a year since his stroke. John is now able to work up to five hours per day. Unfortunately, his left field of vision has not returned, making driving impossible. Despite these challenges, things are looking up. John is now engaged to Mary, a wonderful co-worker who we had the good fortune to meet during their visit to California after Thanksgiving.

Wishing you Christmas joy,
James & Lamona Wood & family

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Have you ever bought luminarias at Christmas time? Probably, but have you ever seen the group effort it takes to get it done? Dozens of volunteers working all day, being fed on the run as they pull off box making, bag set-up, sand and candles, and finally the finished product. PCN is proud to have supported Troop 200 for decades in their endeavor to give Novatans a special Christmas, not found everywhere. We hope yours was happy, and that 2020 will bring abundant joy to you and those you love. **HAPPY NEW YEAR!**





MINGLING SINGLES PIZZA Our next get-together will be January 17 at 5 p.m. Hope to see you then!



MEN'S BIBLE STUDY

The Men's Bible Study group meets Wednesday mornings at 7:30 a.m. Starting September 4, we will begin a study of Revelation. Join us for this one-hour mid-week boost and share great fellowship with brothers. And no homework!



If you would like to listen to a copy of the Sunday sermon, you don't need to request a CD. They are now being posted on a PODCAST at <http://www.buzzsprout.com/218646>. They are usually available by the Tuesday following the service. Thank you to Jim Rolka for making these available!



Here's an important number to jot down: (415) 472-0911. This is the **non-injury** lift assist phone number from the Novato Fire Department. If you or someone you know has fallen and you can't lift him/her, the fire department will come help!

"Here for you now is a Senior version of Jesus Loves Me":

JESUS LOVES ME

Jesus loves me, this I know,
Though my hair is white as snow
Though my sight is growing dim,
Still He bids me trust in Him.

(CHORUS)

YES, JESUS LOVES ME.. YES, JESUS LOVES ME..
YES, JESUS LOVES ME, FOR THE BIBLE TELLS ME
SO.

Though my steps are oh, so slow,
With my hand in His I'll go
On through life, let come what may,
He'll be there to lead the way.

(CHORUS)

When the nights are dark and long,
In my heart He puts a song..
Telling me in words so clear,
"Have no fear, for I am near."

(CHORUS)

When my work on earth is done,
And life's victories have been won.
He will take me home above,
Then I'll understand His love.

(CHORUS)

I love Jesus, does He know?
Have I ever told Him so?
Jesus loves to hear me say,
That I love Him every day.

(CHORUS)

Thank you to Lyle Borcharding for sending this in!

JANUARY

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1  <i>Office closed</i>	2 6:00 Women's Prayer	3	4
5 9:00 Adult Bible Study 9:00 Contemporary 10:30 Traditional 6:00 Youth groups	6 9:00 Morning Prayer 6:00 M&O	7 8:00 Stephen Leaders 2:00 PW Coordinating Team 5:30 SEEkers	8 7:30am Men's Group 10:30 Prayer Quilters/ Marian Stitchers 5:30 Mission Cmte. 6:00 Worship Cmte. 6:30 Deacons 7:00 CE Committee	9 9:30 Women's Bible Study 2:00 Singles Coffee Creekside 6:00 Brown Consulting Implementation Team 7:00 Choir rehearsal	10	11
12 9:00 Adult Bible Study 9:00 Contemporary 10:30 Traditional 6:00 Youth groups	13 9:00 Morning Prayer 5:30 Finance Cmte. 6:30 Program & Fellowship	14 5:30 SEEkers 6:30 Personnel Cmte.	15 7:30am Men's Group 6:00 Session dinner 6:30 Session meeting	16 9:30 Women's Bible Study 2:00 Singles Coffee Creekside 7:00 Beyond the Pew 7:00 Choir rehearsal	17 5:00 Mingling Singles Pizza Night 	18
19 9:00 Adult Bible Study 9:00 Contemporary/ SEEker Sunday 10:30 Traditional 1:30 Creekwood 6:00 Youth groups	20 9:00 Morning Prayer 2:00 Mill St. meal p/u	21 5:30 SEEkers 5:30 Inquirer's class 7:00 Stephen Ministry Supervision	22 7:30am Men's Group 5:30 Rachel Circle	23 9:30 Women's Bible Study 2:00 Singles Coffee Creekside 6:00 Brown Consulting Implementation Team 7:00 Choir rehearsal	24 6:30 Stephen Ministry training	25 8:30 Stephen Ministry training
26 9:00 Adult Bible Study 9:00 Contemporary 10:30 Traditional 5:00 Congregational dinner and meeting 6:00 Youth groups	27 9:00 Morning Prayer	28 2:00 Ruth Circle 5:30 SEEkers 7:00 Stephen Ministry training	29 7:30am Men's Group	30 9:30 Women's Bible Study 2:00 Singles Coffee Creekside 7:00 Choir rehearsal	31	

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