

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

Return Service Requested

PresPress



April 10 – Good Friday Tenebrae service at 7 p.m.

April 12 – Easter service at 10 a.m.

April 16 – Rev. Dr. Greg Love's class begins



PresPress

April 2020

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

Adam Smith

"Make a joyful noise to the Lord, all the earth. Worship the Lord with gladness; come into his presence with singing...For the Lord is good; his steadfast love endures forever, and his faithfulness to all generations."

-Psalm 105:1, 5

Saints of PCN,

Blessings and peace to you from your PCN pastors and staff. We continue to pray for each and every one of you, knowing that God is with us in this strange new wilderness we've entered. As we enter the month of April and on towards Easter, I can tell you that this is not the situation I had hoped we would be in.

This "shelter order" has been quite the challenge on all of us, some of us more than others. I continue to pray for the most vulnerable in our midst: those who have lost jobs, those who are struggling financially, those who are lonely and in need. I pray that this forced isolation will be over soon, and that we can enjoy glad reunion together as a church family.

However, as we find ourselves still in this wilderness with no certain end date specified, we are doing our best at PCN to create opportunities for connection: for worship, for Bible study, for prayer, and for helping one another out during this time. What you need to know is that there is a "one-stop shop" for everything going on in the church, and that is THE WEBSITE. If you want to find out any information during this time or connect with any group, www.pcnovato.org is where you will find the hub for all activities, groups, videos, worship, etc.

Here is what we are doing to connect with God and one another at this time:

WORSHIP

On all Sundays in April until we share otherwise, worship will be online at 10 a.m. via Zoom. A link and phone number will be on the website and emailed to all of those on our email lists. We have increased our audience capacity to 500 people and so can accommodate larger groups.

GIVING

At this time you will still be able to give to support our staff, ministries, and missions either by mailing a check or using our online giving service. To give online, simply go to the church website (www.pcnovato.org), use the top menu bar and hover over “Give” until it gives you a sub-menu. Click on “Make a Donation Online.” Then click on the DONATE button.

CARING FOR ONE ANOTHER

During this time there are both people who are in need of assistance (groceries, rides, call check-ins, etc.) and those who feel God’s call to offer assistance. We are working to coordinate a team of volunteers to help meet needs in our community.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY – If you are someone who would like to help other people out during this time, we are compiling a list of volunteers. Simply **contact the church via phone or email** (pcnadmin@pcnovato.org) and let us know how you would like to help. As needs come in, we will match volunteers with folks in need.

OPPORTUNITY TO RECEIVE HELP – If you have a need during this time of “sheltering,” please also call or email Tammi, and we will work to help you out as best we can.

Friends, let us lean on one another during this time.

NEW OPPORTUNITIES AT PCN

With our new challenges, we are creating new opportunities. Here are some ways that you can connect with God, with the church, and with each other during this time of “sheltering.”

Sermon Talk-Backs – Adam is leading two discussion group opportunities that gather online to talk about and discuss the Scripture and sermon from the Sunday before. **Talk-backs on are Mondays at 9 a.m. and 6 p.m.** These groups will meet online using Zoom. Anyone can join using the links on the website.

Prayer Groups – We offer two online prayers every week. You can connect with these groups via Zoom. To join, click the link on the website. Pastor Adam facilitates a prayer group on **Thursdays from 9 to 9:30 a.m.** Ariel facilitates a prayer group on **Tuesdays from 8 to 8:30 p.m.**

Friends, we continue to pray for each and every one of you and look forward to the day of glad (in-person) reunion. Until then, we will continue to discern how God is bringing us together even as we are physically apart.

With grace and peace,

Adam



David Mink

At the end of each youth group time we all circle up and hold criss-crossed hands. This gives me a chance to say some last-minute announcements, and then we say our benediction. As we all shout the last line of the benediction ("And give you peace!") we spin around until we are holding hands in a circle facing outwards.

Since we may not be able to do this together for a while, I wanted to share it here. It is my prayer for all of us:

May the Lord bless you – My prayer for you is that God's blessing will continue to rest on each one of you during this new, strange, and difficult time

And keep you – I pray that God keeps you safe and in continued good health

May His face shine upon you – May the glory of the Lord be in your face so that you can turn it around and show His love and compassion to others

And give you peace – Let the knowledge that God is in control give you a calmness that affects and influences your daily life

AND GIVE YOU PEACE!

Love,
David



Sally Carbonaro

One of the things I love most about Seekers, besides the kids, is the adults who join us. The ones who choose to walk beside our youngest ones and listen. These caring, committed adults share dinner with kids every Tuesday night for months and months! Many of these adults are grandparents and great grandparents in their own right. It is for this reason we will take a break from Seekers and Sunday Services.

As one of our pastor friends from Healdsburg said, “We make this decision not from a place of fear but from a place of love: love for the elderly and immunocompromised in our community, love for our medical professionals who are asking for our help to slow the spread of the virus, and love for our brothers and sisters. We make this decision in fulfillment of our call from Jesus to love our neighbor as ourselves.”

Amen!

It is with a sad heart we sent this message to our Seeker families – sad because we will miss the children! But we are so grateful for our volunteers and neighbors, that we are able to honor them in this way. We appreciate everyone’s love and understanding.

Our Children’s Ministry has changed dramatically. Children’s Sermons and Seeker Worship are prerecorded and online, and we have emailed our Seeker lessons out to families with crafts and games. We have sent postcards to more than 80 children from Seekers and Sunday School. We are planning for online Palm Sunday and Easter. We have updated and refreshed our website.

We miss the children terribly and there is no replacement for being together. We ask you to join us in praying for a swift recovery and return to “normal.” Until then, may the children know we care, that God loves them dearly and unconditionally, and that they are precious in His sight.

Hopefully, by the time we read this, our lives will have returned to normal, and spending time together will have new meaning.

We praise God for the opportunity to serve.



Because the Downtown Streets Team cannot pass out food at this time, Snack Sacks are temporarily “paused.” However, they are in need of hygiene kits now more than ever because the showers are still open and being used. Visit <https://gooddler.com/Wishlist/10205> for a list of needed items that you can buy from the website or purchase on your own to donate.

MILL STREET CENTER

Mill Street Center in San Rafael is Marin County's only night-to-night emergency shelter for 60 homeless individuals. To support this mission, a network of community churches participate in a monthly rotation to provide dinner every day. This significant gift has endured for more than 25 years.

Our church is a vital contributor, and we rely on our volunteers as a collective body to provide nutritious, home-cooked meals on the third Monday of each month. Together we serve 720 meals each year, and we thank you for your support of this important mission! If you would like to contribute food and/or transport the food to Mill Street, contact Patty Reed at 415.699.5246 or email pdreed@sbcglobal.net.

Monetary donations are welcome too! If you would like to contribute, please write a check to Presbyterian Church of Novato, marked “Mill Street” in the memo line. Drop off your check to the church office or mail it to Presbyterian Church of Novato, P.O. Box 631, Novato, CA 94948.



March 23, 2020

Dear Church Friends,

Tomorrow begins the second week of our new shelter-in-place reality, and life at Gilead House is much quieter these days as the families mostly stay settled in their apartments and the staff are generally working from home. Certainly staying settled in their apartments is challenging for the moms as they are unable to work - and that's always a very unsettling feeling for them. We've reminded them to not be surprised if they're feeling stressed or anxious or uncertain. It's totally to be expected. But thanks to the generosity of so many great supporters, the staff have been able to make Costco runs every three days or so to pick up food, paper products, and other staples, and have been distributing care packages door-to-door to the families to help them get through this.

This is certainly an unprecedented time we find ourselves in, and at times the world seems to be standing still. Perhaps like you, I find I've reached a saturation point on negative news, and beginning to deeply appreciate positive events breaking out around the world:

- Italians joining together in impromptu concerts, singing songs together from their balconies. I recently saw a video of a neighborhood at night where people were singing together in three-part harmony (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bbQbm62Ola4&feature=youtu.be>)
- A young tech worker in San Jose who posted on NextDoor his willingness to help the elderly in his community by going out shopping for them so they wouldn't risk becoming exposed to the virus. And just today, a post in the Marin NextDoor offers the services of a high school junior to help set up video chat or other technology means to enable seniors who may have trouble connecting with their loved ones. (if you know a senior who could use help, please call Zack at 415.389.6920 or email at seniortechhelp@3-arm.com)
- A woman on the West Bank who has for many years rescued injured cats and dogs and taken them to an animal hospital in Israel since there are no rehabilitation centers on the Palestinian side of the border. With Israel's recent announcement that anyone entering the country is subject to a 14-day mandatory quarantine, she is now no longer able to do her life's passion. So a young Israeli soldier has offered to help by taking the animals from her at the border and conveying them to the hospital.

Wouldn't it be a true blessing if the world became just a bit closer and more kind as a result of these times.

I recently came across a very interesting story that talked about "spreading the Karunavirus." The Karunavirus? Turns out Karuna is a Sanskrit word meaning compassion, and it is actually translated in two ways: not only as "compassion" in the general sense, but also as self-compassion. And in Sanskrit, the two words are interlinked - it's impossible to have one without the other, or as the Dalai Lama said, "if you have no compassion for yourself, then you are not able to develop compassion for others."

In I Peter 3:8, we are told, "Finally, all of you, be like-minded, be sympathetic, love one another, be compassionate and humble." Gilead House has always been about compassion - to those who are the most vulnerable in our community, to those who need the assistance of others to reach the first rung on the ladder, to those who just need a helping hand to get pointed in the right direction. As we cultivate these positive experiences going on around us, we have a unique opportunity to ramp up our efforts to spread compassion - for ourselves and for others. Even if compassion can't independently solve the coronavirus issue, imagine the positive collateral effects increased compassion will have on our own lives, the lives of those we help, and the lives of those around us.

At Gilead House, our mission doesn't end during crisis. Our strength is that we are driven by our purpose, and I'm certain that while we will learn a lot from all of this, I know we are resilient and will weather this while keeping one another safe. I am confident that we're getting through this together, which is precisely how we've accomplished so much over these past 20 years.

Our continued thanks to each of you who have long supported our moms and kids. God bless you and stay safe.

Best wishes,

Mike Smylie
President, Board of Directors

Even though we will not be having a traditional worship service on Palm Sunday, you can still give to One Great Hour of Sharing. You can donate online under "Special Offerings" by denoting "OGHS" or if mailing a check, please write "OGHS" on your check's memo line and mail to PCN at P.O. Box 631, Novato, CA 94948.



***You shall be called repairers of the breach. –Isaiah 5:8
Palm Sunday, April 5th, 2020***

One Great Hour of Sharing is an ecumenical humanitarian effort of which our denomination has been a part since its inception in 1949. It was begun to give aid to war-ravaged Europe. Our congregation's special offering will be taken on *Palm Sunday, April 5th*, this year. Please give generously to OGHS; here are a few of the efforts your dollars will support:

PRESBYTERIAN DISASTER ASSISTANCE (PDA) PDA is the emergency program of PC(USA), enabling people to survive and thrive after natural and human-caused catastrophic events. Due to rapidly changing US immigration policies, PDA has had to regularly reassess and shift its attention in order to respond to the changes in circumstances. Midway through 2019, PDA has disbursed eight grants totaling \$152,420 to presbyteries and US partners assisting refugees and asylum seekers and is currently studying how to increase support for shelter services in Mexico. PDA also provided a grant to the Reformed Calvinist Church of El Salvador (IRCES) for its new ministry with Salvadorans returned from US soil and Mexico.

PRESBYTERIAN HUNGER PROGRAM (PHP) takes action to alleviate hunger, care for creation, and face the systemic causes of poverty, supporting 113 grant partners, and making an impact in 21 countries, including the United States. In addition to these grant partners, PHP also works with 20 presbytery Hunger Action Advocates, 116 Hunger Action Congregations, and 213 Earth Care Congregations.

SELF-DEVELOPMENT OF PEOPLES (SDOP) invests in communities responding to their experiences of oppression, poverty and injustice and educates Presbyterians about the impact of these issues (active efforts focused on literacy, worker-owned cooperatives, advocacy, youth-led initiatives, farming, worker rights, and immigration/refugee issues). Through your gifts to One Great Hour of Sharing, more than 5,000 projects in poor communities in the US and around the world have had an opportunity to develop solutions to their own challenges since SDOP's inception.



A MATTER OF BALANCE

MANAGING CONCERNS ABOUT FALLS

Attention Matter of Balance Grads!

If you have attended the fall-prevention course at PCN in the past you may be interested in joining the group of grads that are getting together online to work out together. Monday through Friday at 11:00 a.m., a group is gathering via Zoom to do the 30 minutes of exercise together. It is a great way to stay in touch – and in shape! Email mob.beverly@gmail.com to access the link.



As of this writing, all Easter events are considered “tentative” and will be conducted via Zoom. Look for more information on the PCN website and in weekly updates.



On Good Friday, April 10, we will have a Tenebrae service. The word “Tenebrae” comes from the Latin word meaning “darkness.” The Tenebrae is an ancient Christian Good Friday service that makes use of gradually diminishing light through the extinguishing of candles to symbolize the events of the week from the triumphant Palm Sunday entry through Jesus’ burial. This increasing darkness symbolizes the approaching darkness of Jesus’ death and of hopelessness in the world without God. The service concludes in darkness, symbolizing the death of Jesus. The worshippers leave in silence to ponder the impact of Christ’s death and await the coming Resurrection.



We will have one services on Easter Sunday, April 12, at 10 a.m. We will celebrate the good news that is at the very heart of the gospel: that Jesus Christ is risen from the dead. The faith we claim and the life we live depend on the affirmation, celebration, and proclamation of Christ’s resurrection. On Easter morning, a new world was born – raised up with the crucified and risen Christ. Easter is a time of transformation, of becoming a resurrected people, God’s new people. God gave the world a new beginning, a new humanity, a new you!

CHANGE TOWARD WHOLENESS



WHAT: Rev. Dr. Greg Love's adult education class

Both the New Testament and psychology speak of a person's change from brokenness toward wholeness. But how does that change happen? Do we just "set our mind to it, and make the changes?" Or is it more difficult and, if so, why? What is God's role in creating this change in us, and what is our role? This class looks at how we change, comparing and contrasting the views from neurobiology, psychology, and spirituality. We begin with the classic Christian and Protestant view that change is impossible without God. We then look at recent works in science, particularly in neurobiology and psychology. Finally, we look at the New Testament and Reformed theology to describe the Christian view of how we change.

WHEN: Thursday evenings, April 16 – May 21

WHERE: Christensen Room at PCN

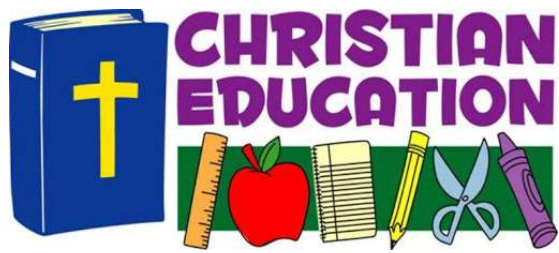
**TIME: Light supper served at 5:30 p.m.
Class runs from 6 to 7 p.m.**

Optional texts (in addition to the Bible):

Addiction and Grace, by Gerald May

Willpower, by Roy Baumeister

***Please RSVP to the church office for
class attendance and dinner
(415) 897-6152 or pcnadmin@pcnovato.org***



SEEKers' Mardi Gras Pancake Supper was a great event for all ages...

For friends and family....



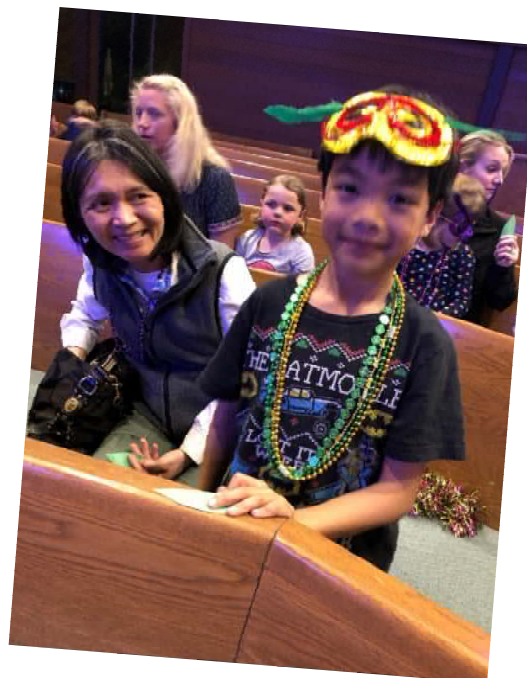
With mask-making...



And all the pancakes you could eat....



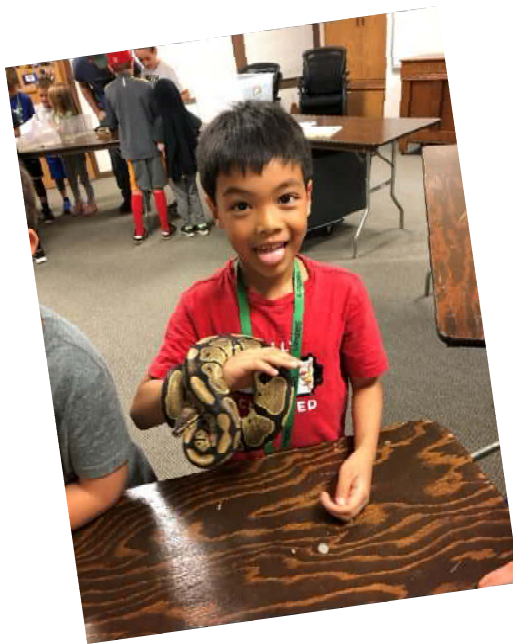
And worshipping along with our King Abram and Queen Sarah....



None of which could have happened without so many party-going volunteers! Thanks to: Johnson Kitavi and crew, Cathy and Jenna Haney, Melodie and Jim Baird, Les and Tonya Church, Ron and Marion Hune, Don and Becky Erba, Becky and Brad Praun, Art and Carolyn Gerrans, Tammi Jester, Sandy Peterson, Rick and Priscilla Rudy, Emily Gates, Nancy Mandell, Jane and Bill Bradfield, David Mink, Shirley Nye, Loree Draeger, David Harmon, Sally Carbonaro, and Sydney Fletcher.



Mr. C, the Science Guy came to SEEKers again to present one of the most fun and enlightening programs of the year. We can't thank him (and Sally for arranging it) enough. Whether it was snakes or three types of geckos, it was hard to tear the children away from these little critters!







Session

Session Highlights March 2020

In adherence to the Marin County Public Health order for all residents to shelter in place to reduce the spread of Corona Virus, the March 18, 2020 Session meeting was conducted via *Zoom*, a teleconferencing platform. All Elders were present.

Session approved:

From the Membership & Outreach Committee:

Motion for Detect & Connect, a two- to three-hour workshop coordinated by Rev. Ellen Baxter. The workshop helps identify different age-related ailments and connects people to resources in the community. Stephen Ministers are interested in promoting this workshop. As the host agency, PCN would provide refreshments for participants, no other associated costs.

From the Mission Committee:

Motion to allow Mission Committee to ask the congregation for donations of items for hygiene kits for homeless men.

From the Personnel Committee:

Motion to approve the hiring of Carol Robinson as extra-help Administrative Assistant/Secretary. Compensation not to exceed \$5,120 (plus any required benefits). Position and expense are contained within the 2020 PCN approved budget.

Motion to approve, in concept, the hiring of a web developer for pre-launch building of the new church website. Cost not to exceed \$1,500. A web developer job description will be brought to the Session in April for approval. Tonya Church reported the new website build is progressing with the next step being the addition of content.

Elder Melodie Baird has joined the Presbytery's Hunger Task Force Committee.

Pastor Adam provided an update on the work of the Mission/Vision/Value team and asked Elders to review the update document he provided.

Pastor Adam and Ministry Associate Ariel are planning a retreat for church staff, Deacons, and Elders in April.

The church staff is evaluating electronic tools which can be used to conduct worship, study, and keep members connected to one another during this time of sheltering in place.

Kathy Takemoto, Clerk of Session



The Deacons would like to send a special thank you to Charles Lee for his delicious baked goods he brings after the second service. We will look forward to enjoying those again soon (we hope!).

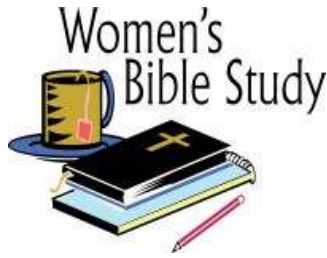


Deacons Annual Blood Drive

Save the Date
Sunday, June 7, 2020
8 a.m. – 1 p.m.

Even in our current 'at home' time, there is always a need for blood donations.
Please consider your donation.

For more information contact Becky Praun/PCN Blood Drive Coordinator
(415) 472-1733



1 & 2 SAMUEL

Women's Bible Study is currently suspended but will possibly return this month as an online class. If we accomplish this, we will contact each of our members to let them know the dates and times and how they can join us. We will also post details on the PCN website.

In the meantime, please continue to read 1 Samuel, keep in touch with us by phone or email and continue to pray for those on our prayer list. If you have any special concerns or need any help during this time, please let us know.

Until we "see" you in again in class, please know that we are holding each of you close to our hearts.

Your Bible Study Leaders,

Carol (415-892-2070), Elaine (415-382-0854) and Melodie (415-897-7512)



DO THE FIVE

Help stop coronavirus

- 1 **HANDS** Wash them often
- 2 **ELBOW** Cough into it
- 3 **FACE** Don't touch it
- 4 **SPACE** Keep safe distance
- 5 **FEEL** sick? Stay home



MEN'S BIBLE STUDY

The Men's Bible Study continues to meet virtually Wednesday mornings at 7:30 a.m. 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!