

PResPRess May 2019 Presbyterian Church of Novato, 710 Wilson Ave., P.O. Box 631, Novato, CA 94948

Adam Smith Embrace the Mystery

I remember greeting members of the congregation as they filed out of the sanctuary on Easter Sunday years ago. Most people, as usual, were kind and gracious with their smiling faces shining back at my own. And then...I stood face to face with Bob...who was not smiling. He wore the scowl of a man who felt cheated. "Adam, that was a good sermon...but you reeealy disappointed me, son," he sighed with despair. As I kindly invited him to have a chat after I finished greeting folks, he continued his criticism. "You had this ONE opportunity to tell all these visitors exactly HOW Jesus rose from the dead and HOW God saved us, but you missed it!! I am so disappointed!" And then...he walked off.

Days later I shared my sermon with my pastor cohort group. After reading it together one of my colleagues said matter of factly, "Adam, there is no answer to the question, 'How?' How God does anything is a complete mystery."

And if we think about it, dear saints, the creation of the cosmos, the grace received in baptism, communion with God in the eucharist, and even resurrection are truths we confess that have no concrete answer to the question, 'How?' We do not and cannot fully know all there is to know about God and how God works. God is mysterious.

I wonder sometimes if this drives Christian apologetics' experts crazy as they seek to develop arguments and stances to defend the faith. I know, in my own experience, the mysterious God we serve can be difficult to share with others, especially those who have little experience with faith in the inexplicable. And Easter - resurrection - is a tough pill to swallow for some. After all, in our post-Enlightenment world, we've shunned the idea of mystery and replaced it with verifiable answers. Answers are more desirable in the sense that they seemingly give us control of the world around us. When we can quantify everything, we can control our own destiny. Mystery, on the other hand, begs us to ask more questions, inspires our imagination, prompts ongoing dialogue and cooperation, and keeps us moving forward. Mystery squashes the arrogance of certainty and keeps minds open to possibility.

We need mystery as much as we need answers in this life.

As we journey through Eastertide and into Pentecost together in worship, we will be exploring the mystery of Jesus' resurrection through a series called: "From Death to Life: Stories of Resurrection." We will be traveling through the book of Acts to uncover the effects of resurrection on the community of faith. While we cannot know the answer to the question 'how,' we can explore the life-giving power of resurrection as it reshapes and transforms the world forever. We can begin to paint a picture that, while still shrouded in mystery, addresses two even more important questions about resurrection: 'why?' and 'so what?'

Blessings to you, dear saints, whose lives have been claimed by this Paschal mystery. May God open our hearts and minds to Christ's transforming power each and every day.

Ariel Mink

If you've attended a recent Inquirer's class with me, you know that I love to talk about our polity – how we are governed. As a quick refresher, every congregation is governed by its church council, or Session. Each congregation belongs to a presbytery (we belong to the Presbytery of the Redwoods), and each presbytery belongs to a synod. There are 16 synods that report up to the national church; we belong to the Synod of the Pacific. For those of you who have been members of our congregation for a while, you may remember Rev. Nancy Martin Vincent – she recently began her new role as Synod Executive.

At PCN, there are fifteen elders, who are elected by the congregation and who serve as officers of the church. The word "elder" comes from scripture and is the source of the name of our Presbyterian denomination. *Presbuteros* means "elder" in Greek and refers to someone who is mature in their faith and knowledge. Elders in the Presbyterian Church are ordained to their work, as are deacons and ministers of the Word and Sacrament. Elders in our congregation are normally elected to serve three-year terms on Session. Once a person is elected and ordained as an elder in the Presbyterian Church, he or she remains a Presbyterian elder, even after he or she is no longer actively serving on Session, and even if the person moves to a different Presbyterian church. Once an elder, always an elder!

Session oversees the business and policy of the church. We have a number of committees with dedicated leadership: Mission (Mike Robinson and Ellen Brezeale), Finance and Administration (Tonya Church and Joe Simmons), Property (Bill Walker and Don Erba), Worship (Dan Rice and Delane Ramser), Membership and Outreach (Ruth Haas and Bev Winsor), Program and Fellowship (Patty Reed), Christian Education (Hilary Kinney and Walt Campbell), Personnel (Susi Lynam), and Stewardship (Brad Praun). These elders, along with their associated committees, are the groups that make things happen around here. As you consider your role as part of the body of Christ, and the gifts with which you have been blessed, I'd urge you to join one of these committees to help make things happen and to be an active participant by guiding the life of our congregation. Or, this summer when the Nominating Committee begins their discernment process to call people to serve as elders and deacons, that you would prayerfully consider saying "yes!" to be an ordained officer of the church.

Morgan Smith

This past month has been a good one, beginning my role here at PCN and beginning to get to know all of you. I am grateful for the love, support, and encouragement that I have received from you all this first month here in Novato. I'm looking forward to the coming months and years continuing to grow in the Lord with you all!

Becca Lee has been hired as Youth Ministries Intern. She grew up at PCN and was an active youth member while she was here. She graduated from Azusa Pacific this past year with a degree in Christian Ministries. She has a heart for discipleship, relational ministry, and missions. She will be a key piece to helping the Youth Ministry at PCN move forward, and we are incredibly excited to add her to the team!

Many youth groups in Marin County are coming to PCN on May 4th for the 2nd annual Marin Nerf Battle. This will be a fun evening where our campus will be full of students and adult leaders from all around Marin County. It will be a wonderful event, showing unity within the churches and youth groups of our region.

This summer the Youth Ministry will be traveling to Sonoma County to do mission work, seeking to help repair some of the homes which were damaged from the fires in October 2017. The team will be there from July 7-13. Please keep the formation of our mission team in your prayers, as people are thinking about and signing up to come on our mission trip this summer.



Spring into action with three different ways to bolster PCN's support of Gilead House's mission to serve homeless mothers and children.

Safely dispose of all your outdated documents by coming to the "Big Shred" event on May 11th. Donate what you can and feel great about it as all proceeds go to support Gilead House.



Securities offered through LPL Financial, Member FINRA/SIPC

Celebrate The Special Women In Your Life with meaningful "Gift of Love" Mother's Day Cards

There is no gift that could ever repay the special women in your life for their unconditional love. This Mother's Day, give a special donation in her honor to help a homeless mom and child in need.

In return, Gilead House will send her a beautiful card on your behalf to recognize your gift. Simply visit the Gilead House website for more information.



Questions? Call the Gilead House office at 415-895-5575 or email <u>carly@gileadhouse.org mentioning "Mother's Day Tributes" and your</u> <u>honoree's name and mailing address.</u>



You're invited to the 20th Anniversary Celebration

Won't you be my Neighbor?

Saturday, June 1, 2019 5:00 pm

The Club House at The Seminary at Strawberry 201 Seminary Drive, Mill Valley CA 94941

The evening will focus on raising funds to serve...

homeless single moms and kids

Tickets are \$75 per person Includes local wines, savory bites, dinner and dessert Tickets must be reserved by Monday, May 20, 2019 TO JOIN A PCN TABLE CONTACT CAROLYN GERRANS AT GRACE624@COMCAST.NET OR 415-897-1504 FIRST



Dress like Mr. Rogers and wear your favorite cardigan sweater and sneakers.



PCN has been supporting the people who use the mobile showers in Novato for more than six months, providing "snack sacks" of peanut butter, a bagel, breakfast and granola bars, fresh fruit and a homemade cookie. We are supporting a program of Downtown Streets that helps the homeless. Every week we have provided food for 20 people, and the program has been very appreciated. They want more!

We will meet on Wednesday, May 1st at 5 p.m. (in the Youth Room) to discuss how we can expand this local mission project. Please join us; the meeting will be only half an hour (it is before the monthly Mission Committee meeting). If you can't attend but would like more information, please e-mail Regina Rus at <u>reginabrus@gmail.com</u> and she can get you attached to this great project.

It takes lots of generosity to donate the bagels, fresh fruit and homemade cookies. PCN buys the other nonperishable food. This project also takes a bit of leadership and Sunday volunteer time after first service to assemble the bagged food. Find us on Sign Up Genius (PCN Snack Sacks). Thank you to the people already helping – you are very much appreciated!



Mill Street Homeless Center

Mill Street Center in San Rafael is Marin County's only night-to-night emergency shelter for homeless individuals. A network of volunteer community groups share a monthly rotation to provide a home-cooked hot meal each day. This significant gift has endured for more than 25 years. Our church is a vital contributor, and we

rely on our church as a collective body of volunteers to provide nutritious, homecooked meals on the third Monday of each month. We appreciate your support and will ensure your contributions are delivered to the shelter on time to 60 individuals in need. Together we serve 720 meals each year, and we thank you for your support of this important mission.

If you would like to contribute, please contact

Patty Reed (415.699.5246) pdreed@sbcglobal.net or

Annie Clausen (415.892.4127) annieclausen62@gmail.com.

You can also sign up directly to provide food through www.<u>signupgenius.com</u>. It's easy and fun! Click on "find a Sign Up" and enter Patty's email, <u>pdreed@sbcglobal.net</u>, to locate our Mill Street sign up sheet.

Donations are welcome by sending a check made out to PCN, marked "Mill Street."

Thank you kindly, Patty and Annie



The Deacons will be holding their annual blood drive on Sunday, June 2 from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. in Trevitt Hall. For more details or to sign up, contact Becky Praun, PCN's blood drive coordinator, at (415) 472-1733 or email <u>beckypraun@yahoo.com</u>.



Fall Prevention at PCN

The "A Matter of Balance: Managing Concerns About Falls" fall-prevention program has proven results in reducing falls in older adults. This course is for seniors whose fear of falling limits their social and physical activity and for those who may not have fallen but want to be proactive.

A new class has been scheduled to start on Monday, July 1 at PCN. The class will meet on Mondays and Fridays (skipping July 5) from 2 to 4 p.m. for eight sessions, ending on July 29.

Please contact Beverly Winsor at 415-99FALLS (415-993-2557) or email injuryprevention@maringeneral.org.



The Deacons would like to extend a very big thank you to all our members who helped provide delicious finger sandwiches and desserts at our memorial receptions for our beloved Jerry Mason and David Walchli.

Loving hands providing food were: Audrey Boland, Kathy Botko, Jane Bradfield, Bev Cobb, Jo Crocker, Annie Clausen, Mary Jo Dreosch, Roberta Dunham, Becky Erba, Carolyn Gerrans, Janalee Holmes, Pat Innes, Kay Jones, Nancy Mandell, Sharon Nebb, Sandy Peterson, Marilyn Pfeffer, Delane Ramser, Kristen Rush, Shirley Shanahan, Don Taylor, Kay Walker, Bev Winsor and Kathy Wright.

Blessed helping hands from: Don Erba, David Mink, Tom Olson, Brad Praun, Bill Walker, Delane Ramser and the Walchli grandsons.

Together you served with love and grace and the Deacons appreciate you all!

God Bless You!

~Becky Praun, Deacon Moderator



Dear Friends of the Woods,

Here at Westminster Woods, we strive to create an environment where everyone feels loved and accepted and is challenged to grow while connecting with creation. Many of our staff work long hours to keep camp clean and functioning, serve nourishing meals, and deliver quality programming to campers, students, teachers, and guests throughout their stay.

In 2018, we had the honor of seeing this hard work reflected in our guests' feedback. A high school camper shared, "This is my favorite place." A parent wrote that the school program she attended was, "The best education program I've experienced (and my oldest child is 22)." And the community voted us Sonoma County's Best Summer Camp in our local newspaper, the Santa Rosa Press Democrat!

Here are a few things that our guests shared about Westminster Woods in 2018:

- 1) People feel welcome at the Woods. "Westminster Woods is so accepting and open to everyone!" wrote Carina, a Buccaneer camper. "Staff were role models of kindness and enthusiasm," wrote a parent chaperone. Friendship camper Elyssa shared, "Camp makes me happy, because of the nice people. I loved camp!"
- 2) Experiences at the Woods strengthen community. "Westminster Woods has been central to the building and health of our youth and our whole church," said Reverend Kelsey. A parent chaperone wrote, "Your naturalists were all SUPERB! Good modeling for students on how to encourage each other - be respectful - how to bring it back home!"
- 3) People are impressed by our programs. A parent wrote, "The program not only met my expectations but soared past them." Reverend Lauren shared, "The long term value and impact is immeasurable. You've shown them the reality of God's love is not a 'church' thing but an everywhere thing."

It is because of support from the people who love this place that we are able to attract exceptional staff, to provide experiences that help people deepen their spirituality and build community, and to focus on embodying our mission.

Thank you for helping Westminster Woods flourish.

With gratitude,

his Black

Chris Rhodes, Executive Director Brian Gidney, Board President

Bill



"This is my favorite place."







<u>Easter morning brought joy of all kinds to all ages!</u> Our gratitude goes out to Property elders, Bill Walker and Don Erba, and to their springtime elves for making our campus so beautiful.



Thanks to Dick and Jo Crocker, our beautiful roses will be flourishing by Pentecost Sunday



And gratitude to Morgan Smith, David Mink, Sydney Fletcher and our senior high youth group for Easter egg rocks on Sunday morning



Thanks are due to Beth Flynn, for our beautiful lily-covered cross



Last, but not least, gratitude to Sally Carbonaro and Sydney Fletcher for the wonderful EGGstravaganza they organized for our children, and the volunteers who made it happen!









VBS at the Presbyterian Church of Novato June 17 – 21, 2019

New friends • Amazing experiments • Creative games • Super-fun snacks Surprising adventures • Incredible music

Join us for the best week of summer, June 17th – 21st from 9 a.m. to noon to learn about God's love for us.

Potty-trained 3-year-olds through incoming 6th graders are invited to participate.

To register and for more information visit <u>www.pcnovato.org</u>

Or contact: Carolyn Gerrans at (415) 897-1504 or grace624@comcast.net

710 Wilson Ave., Novato



Thank you for your generous giving and patience as we have now added online or electronic giving as a convenient option for PCN's congregation and friends! There are two ways to access the secure giving portal: Go to our website, <u>www.pcnovato.org</u> and click on the "Donate Now" button or download the "Easy Tithe" app on your mobile device from the Apple or Google app stores. Look for the "EasyTithe" Finance (**not** EasyTithe Lifestyle) app, download and open, and then search for PCN at zip code 94947.

Both options have the choice to create an account and select the payment method that works best for you. By creating an account, you can also choose to make recurring donations at the frequency, amount, and type of fund that suits your needs. Leave a note in the comment field for any special giving that you want to designate. As a final note, you can also check the box that would include 2% to help with the cost of processing your donation. If you have any questions, please contact the Finance Secretary at (415) 897-6152, x204.

God loves a faithful and cheerful giver (2 Corinthians 9:7 ESV). Thank you for your support and generous giving to PCN Ministries!



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

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 <u>once a month</u> in the Christensen Room:

- (1) Ruth Circle usually meets the fourth Tuesday at 2 p.m. (Glenise Johnson, leader)
- (2) Rachel Circle usually meets the fourth Thursday of the month at 5:30 p.m. (Pat Sullivan, leader)

I have books available for our current Horizons Bible study titled "*GOD'S PROMISE, I AM WITH YOU,*" by Amy Poling Sutherlun. The circle meetings are all presented via a video narrated by the author of the study book, which provides a very meaningful study and discussion among us for each lesson.

Join us for the next circle meeting(s) ... we are saving a chair for YOU. It's never too late!

This year, on **Saturday, May 4th**, PCN PW is hosting the spring PW Presbytery meeting and luncheon. **This will be a time to meet and have fellowship with women from PCN and** PW members from other churches in the Presbytery of the Redwoods. **Save the date and look for more details in the near future.**

Mission Projects:

- (1) Least Coin Offering: Since 1956, Presbyterian Women have been collecting the Least Coin worldwide for evangelism, service, and relief projects.
- (2) **Nickels for Nets:** Each month our members donate at least 5 cents for mosquito nets to help stamp out malaria in the world. When added together,

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) Our newest project is providing baby caps and blankets to newborns. ANYONE with knitting and/or crocheting skills can participate in this program. A BIG THANK YOU to the women from PCN who have already contacted me and brought me their beautiful knitted handiwork.

If you have <u>any</u> questions about PW, 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 circle of Presbyterian Women ... *Come try us out!!!*

Glenise Johnson, Moderator



Women's Bible Study is led by Carol Dacquisto, Elaine Harris and Melodie Baird. We meet **Thursday mornings from 9:30 to 11 a.m. in the Christensen Room** for lively study and discussion of God's word. On May 2, we're marking the end of our 2018-2019 session with a potluck following class at 11:00. If you've been thinking about joining us, this would be a perfect time to stop by and visit. We're always eager to welcome new members.

Please consider joining us in September when we will return to our regular weekly schedule and complete our study of the Gospel of Luke. If you have questions, or need more information, please contact one of our study leaders:

Carol Dacquisto	415-892-2070, <u>dacqmom@aol.com</u>
Elaine Harris	415-382-0854, <u>e.harris@comcast.net</u>
Melodie Baird	415-897-7512, melodie.l.baird@gmail.com



The Sunday Adult Bible Study is held every Sunday morning from 9 to 10 a.m. in the church library.

We are preparing to explore the diverse way in which Jesus' disciples were challenged to exercise their call to ministry: (1) by witnessing to the Gospel, (2) acting with loving kindness, (3) sharing the Resurrection story, and (4) by making new disciples, through preaching, teaching, and baptism.

We would love to have you come and join us for great studies and terrific discussion, as we learn together how to become one of Jesus' disciples and follow Him through our lives.

Always remember: "But God demonstrates his own <u>love</u> for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ <u>died</u> for us."

Grace and Peace,

Carol Dacquisto, Larry Dacquisto, and Rosie Nicholas

PCN WOMEN IN PRAYER



Transforming Prayer How Everything Changes When You Seek God's Face

PCN's Women in Prayer group meets monthly to share in fellowship, to pray and to read scripture as we are led by the Holy Spirit. This month we will meet on **Thursday, May 9, from 6 to 8 p.m.** in PCN's **room 26**. Prior to our prayer time, we will continue discussing and contemplating how to more fully connect with God through prayer using Daniel Henderson's book and video series: *Transforming Prayer, How Everything Changes When You Seek God's Face.* We'll have copies of the book available for purchase or loan in class. We would love to have you join us in prayer.

Feel free to contact one of our leaders if you have questions:

Janis West, 415-250-2122, janisw99@gmail.com

Melodie Baird, 415-897-7512, melodie.l.baird@gmail.com



Ann Glazner Parker has a new address and phone number. She would love visitors, but please call beforehand.

Sunrise Villa Sonoma 91 Napa Road, #216 Sonoma, CA 95476 (707) 721-1963



MEN'S BIBLE STUDY

The Men's Bible Study group meets Wednesday mornings at 7:30 a.m. We are studying ACTS. Join us for this one-hour mid-week boost and share great fellowship with brothers. And no homework!



If you are interested in being part of the Prayer Quilt/Marian Stitchers ministry, mark your calendars for the second Wednesday of the month at 10:30 a.m. You don't have to know how to quilt to participate and help!



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 <u>http://www.buzzsprout.com/218646</u>. They are usually available by the Tuesday following the service. Thank you to Jim Rolka for making these available!

OUR DAILY BREAD

Helping you connect with God every day. Pick up your copy on the hall table in the office.





(Second in a series of stories about PCN by long-time member Tali Sundberg)

So many of us enjoyed the cross covered with calla lilies gracing the church on Easter Sunday. It is a tradition that began many years ago. Back then our Christmas tree was a real tree (today we have an artificial one). However, in the early days of the real tree, when it was taken down the trunk was stripped of branches and laid out on the ground in back of the church where it rested until Easter time. The trunk was then cut into two pieces, which were fashioned into a cross. This was then covered with the calla lilies collected from members' gardens and placed in the sanctuary to celebrate the risen Christ. What a symbol that was! We used it to celebrate the birth of the Christ child and then later it celebrated the triumphal message of the empty cross. This tradition vanished when the church purchased the artificial tree, which now is always the correct height and is not disposed of yearly.



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 7:30am Men's Group 4:00 Bell Choir 5:00 Snack Sack mtg. 5:30 Mission Cmte. 6:30 Worship Cmte. 7:00 CE Committee	2 9:30 Women's Bible Study 2:00 Singles Coffee Creekside 7:00 Choir rehearsal	3	4 6:00 Youth Nerf event
5 9:00 Adult Bible Study 9:00 Contemporary 10:30 Traditional 10:30 VBS oversight committee 12:00 M&O 4:30 Youth Group	6 9:00 Morning Prayer	7 8:00 Stephen Leaders 2:00 PW Coordinating Team	8 7:30am Men's Group 10:30 Prayer Quilters/ Marian Stitchers 4:00 Bell Choir 6:30 Deacons 6:30 Finance Cmte.	9 2:00 Singles Coffee Creekside 7:00 Choir rehearsal	10	11
12 Happy Mother's Day! 9:00 Adult Bible Study 9:00 Contemporary 10:30 Traditional	13 9:00 Morning Prayer	14 6:30 Personnel Cmte.	15 7:30am Men's Group 4:00 Bell Choir 6:00 Session dinner 6:30 Session meeting	162:00 Singles Coffee Creekside7:00 Choir rehearsal	17 5:00 Mingling Singles Pizza Night	18
19 9:00 Adult Bible Study 9:00 Contemporary/ SEEker Sunday 10:30 Traditional 1:00 Adam Smith Installation/reception 1:30 Creekwood 4:30 Youth Group	20 9:00 Morning Prayer 2:00 Mill St. meal p/u	21 7:00 Stephen Ministry Supervision	22 7:30am Men's Group 4:00 Bell Choir	23 2:00 Singles Coffee Creekside 5:30 Rachel Circle 7:00 Choir rehearsal	24	25
26 9:00 Adult Bible Study 9:00 Contemporary 10:30 Traditional 4:30 Youth Group	27 Memorial Day – office closed	28 2:00 Ruth Circle	29 7:30am Men's Group 4:00 Bell Choir	30 2:00 Singles Coffee Creekside 7:00 Choir rehearsal	31	

