

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

Return Service Requested

PresPress

JULY AUGUST

July 5-11 – Youth Mission Trip
July 6 – Office closed for Independence Day
July 19 – Deacon Blood Drive



PresPress

July/August 2020

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

Adam Smith

“The best is yet to come.”

You’ve heard the phrase before.

As Christians, we know this to be the truth. We know that God’ kingdom will one day be fulfilled here on earth it will be a day where there is no more hunger, thirst, violence, mourning, weeping, death. The best is always coming.

That’s part of the nature of our faith in Christ ... being filled with hope. Hope that overcomes all circumstances. Hope that never diminishes, that never stops, that lives on with us, within the church every minute of every day.

The best is yet to come.

When the temple was complete after the people of Israel returned home after 70 years of exile, it was a shadow of what Solomon’s temple had been. It was smaller, less ornate. And it had only been built because of the support and financial aid given by an alien king who had allowed the people to return in the first place.

And yet, the people celebrated with passion, with renewed faithfulness, beginning anew not less hopeful than before ... but even more so ...

Because the best was yet to come.

They celebrated the Passover and the festival of Unleavened Bread. It was a watershed moment that marked the end of the old and the beginning of the new. They celebrated God moving among them, God’s deliverance, God’s mighty acts that brought them home and would continue to do so forever. It was not a minor celebration lost in the mindset that things were less than before ... it was the greatest of celebrations for the best is yet to come with God.

When God brings us home together in our new forms and patterns of life and ministry, while things may look different, maybe even look less than what they used to be on the outside, I can tell you with absolute certainty that the best is yet to come.

Do you know how I know that, apart from God’s ultimate plan for creation? Because it’s a confession you and I have already made. It’s in the very vision statement that we, as a church, fashioned in the first half of 2020:

“We are a beacon of hope, reviving the world through God’s love.”

Hope defines our church. Hope defines our faith. Hope doesn't diminish. Our identity doesn't change just because of COVID-19 or any other interruption to ordinary life. We embody hope as we embody Jesus Christ.

When we come home, we will bring along with us what makes us the Presbyterian Church of Novato. We will bring our heart for mission, our passion for caring for the least of these, our love for serving Jesus Christ.

We will bring the best of our traditional worship, of our contemporary worship, of our rich liturgical diversity and we will worship God with all that we are remembering the God who delivers us, saves us, empowers us, and sends us out into the world to be the hands and feet of Christ.

While it may take time, we will find creative ways to bring back our choir, our praise team, and all the blessings of our rich musical programs.

We will study the Bible like never before, offer classes, prayer groups, fellowship events and be able to connect in even more ways than before.

We will have a youth program and children's ministry, and while they may look a little different for a while, they will be exploring even more new avenues to connect children building on the knowledge and wisdom we've gained over these last three months.

We will come back home in a financially challenging time, where so many struggle in this down economy, and God will provide for our needs, to further God's vision for us into the future, and to help those in need.

You know what, my friends ... I can't wait to come home; whether for you that means sheltering in place longer and connecting to worship and ministry online or whether that means coming back onsite together physically. I can't wait because YOU, all of us, will be able to connect, to be a part of the community ... the best is yet to come. The best is always yet to come with God.

This will happen, my dear saints ... we are preparing for this coming home; this beautiful day of arrival. Right now, our vision is being made into a reality. Here's how we're doing it:

We have a task force solely focused on reopening: creating all the signage, protocols, procedures, and overseeing the readying of our physical plant.

We have another task force working to upgrade our campus technology for live-streaming, networking, and video conferencing.

We have yet another team working to release a brand-new website for the church that is easy to navigate, full of important information, professional, and a tool for our life and ministry together.

We have yet another group working to switch over to a new church management database to better manage how we care for one another, how we equip one another for ministry.

Session has begun to look at our needs as a congregation and is starting to think about future staffing and how we might best live into our vision as a church.

My dear saints, as we approach a day of return, of coming home, know with absolute certainty that no matter what things may look like, or how different things may seem, know that we are still the PCN.

We will still hold on to what makes us who we are, but we will also be more ... more because of God who is transforming us to better live into our call.

Know that the best is yet to come!

With Gratitude and Humility,
Adam

Ariel Mink

Dear Friends,

I was baptized and joined PCN as a teenager. David and I got married at PCN. My father's memorial service was at PCN. I've served on numerous committees and task forces as well serving as your Commissioned Pastor for the last few years ... PCN has been, and always will be, my church. My home. My family.

You trusted me to be your interim pastor, bridging the time between Kent's departure and Adam's arrival. I am grateful for that trust and love. I have been blessed by your prayers and words of encouragement. And, to a very large degree, it is because of that love and trust, as well as your encouragement, that I have started a new chapter in my ministry, now serving as the Stated Clerk of the Presbytery of the Redwoods.

My intention was that following my election on May 16, my last day at PCN on staff would be May 31. Given the current context in which we are now living, I felt that July 31 would be a better date – Adam will be on vacation and on study leave during most of the month of July, so this revised date felt good to us both. (July 31 also happens to be my 50th birthday, so that felt like another natural milestone!)

I will still be a member at PCN, and David will still be the interim Youth Director, but you may not see me virtually or onsite for some time – I'll be attending worship services around the Presbytery to develop deeper relationships with those pastors and congregations. And, as needed, I may provide pulpit supply to those congregations when their pastors take some much-needed time off.

Thank you for all the love and support you have shown me over the last two decades. Thank you for nurturing and equipping me. Thank you for being you. I have spent a lot of time over the years working at the Presbytery level, talking with other pastors and congregations, and I know that PCN is a strong, healthy, vibrant congregation. We have numerous leaders in addition to the pastoral staff who are committed to being the Body of Christ in Novato and in the world. And that makes PCN – and each of you – very, very special.

With love,
Ariel



Sally Carbonaro and Sydney Fletcher

Our virtual VBS was a truly amazing experience as you will read in the comments below. I cannot express it any better than they have. I received emails every day, all week. We had more than 60 kids join us on Friday for our live Zoom party. No one wanted it to end.

For me, connecting in homes turned out to be even more personal. Each child had a personal stage and we talked directly to them. As evidenced in the number of emails and comments at our Zoom party, clearly the kids very much felt a part of the action. Being able to email the families and communicate throughout the week was a bonus. I plan to continue to engage our new friends moving forward.

There were 14 different churches represented with 92 kids registered. We had friends from Bend, Oregon; Paso Robles, California; San Jose, California; American Canyon, Vallejo, Petaluma, San Rafael and all over Novato. We met some new friends and saw some friends who moved away! I know for me, the summer would not have been the same without VBS: gathering a bunch of friends and getting crazy about God's amazing love. Seems especially providential during this time.

Praise God who always finds a way.
~Sally

Some comments received about VBS:

I just want to say how fabulous this VBS already is.

Already one God Sighting: my son Wyatt and I talked about how you and the church put this all together.

They have really enjoyed all the messages and are having a blast with the videos and songs.

It looks like there was so much love put into this week and we are truly thankful. For me watching my girls connect and enjoy the videos is where I have found God this week.

They were excited that you mentioned friends who had moved.....like us!

This was a lovely blessing as it helped us to be present and take a moment to slow down.

I wanted to tell you how WONDERFUL the whole hour turned out.

The girls are absolutely LOVING VBS!

The pictures do not fully express how excited my son is each day to participate in his Rocky Railway camp.

You have done such an amazing job bringing this virtual camp to life.

Thank you for making VBS at home possible. They are having a super fun time and the program is great; reaffirms their belief in God.

Thank you so much for this gift to our family.

I feel so blessed that we found this "camp" and your amazing community of faith.

We've had a great time watching the videos this week. 😊

We will be sorry when this over. He loved VBS last year, but I never expected the virtual version to be as engaging and effective as it is. Virtual VBS and the magnificent teachers!!!! Thank you!!!!

Thank you so much for doing this for the kiddos!

We love it and you!! Thank you!

We're having a blast! Thanks again!

We had a great time at VBS today, thank you!

Thank you for letting my son be a part of this great experience.

They had so much fun; thank you – awesome videos.

The girls are enjoying these wonderful videos! Thanks so much for putting in all this work! What a challenge converting to virtual VBS!

Thank you! we are having a fun time with the assignments!

We are about 3/4 of the way through and the kids are LOVING it. Thank you so much for hosting this!!!

Such a great time and you all are amazing in video. ❤️

You should be so proud of what you have accomplished.

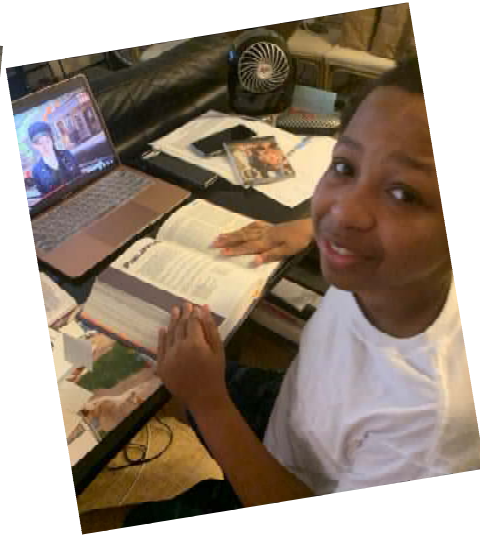
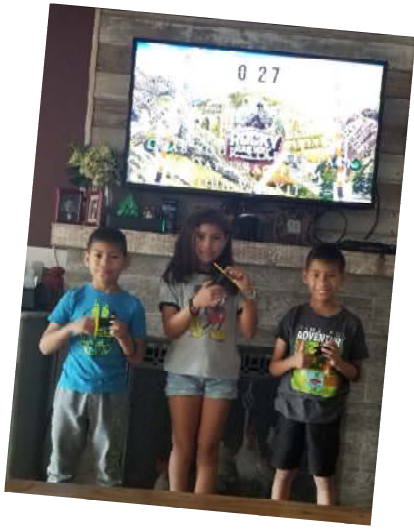
My sons wake up super excited each morning and look forward to what will happen at VBS that day.

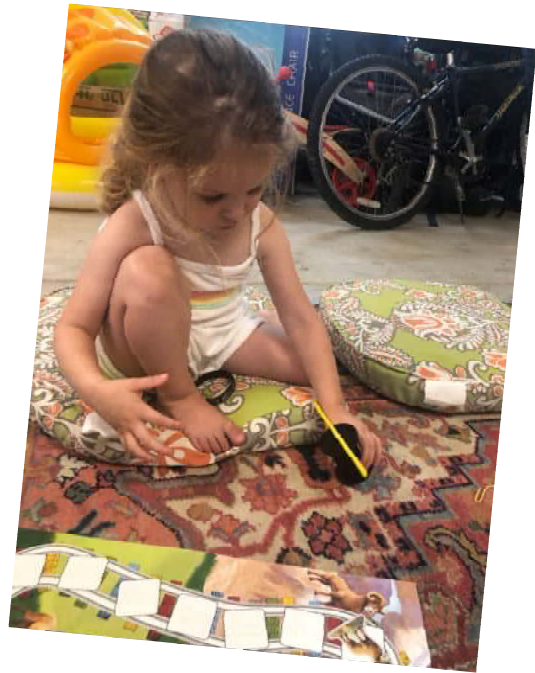
The kids look forward to watching the videos and doing the activity each day.

My children look forward to our virtual meetings with you every day. In fact, my son and his sister asked if they can attend services at your church AND attend real VBS with you next summer.

Below are some photos we received:







Rocky Railway Production Credits

We thank God for all of you!

The VBS Oversight Committee

Sydney Fletcher, Carolyn Gerrans, Miss Sally, Melodie Baird,
Michelle Roberts, Michelle Lubey, Nancy Foster

Set Design & Creation

Melodie & Jim Baird

Stage Set Up & Take Down

Melodie & Jim Baird, Miss Sally, Madison Eshoff

Filming & Production

Miss Sydney & Miss Sally

Editing

Miss Sydney (Fletcher)

Crafts

Miss Nancy (Foster)

Drama (Felt Friends)

Mr. David (Mink), Mrs. Gerrans, Miss Tammi (Jester), Miss Sydney

Kid Vid

Miss Sydney (Fletcher)

Sing & Play / Wrap-Up

Miss Sally

Skits

Written and Acted by

Choo Choo Caboose (the talented and hilarious Mark Clark)

VBS Kit Compilation & Distribution

Michelle Roberts, Kelsey McIvor, Jackson Roberts, Carolyn Gerrans, Miss Sally, Miss Sydney,
Sophia Lubey, Bill & Jane Bradfield, Jim & Melodie Baird, David Mink, Tammi Jester

Special Thanks

Pastor Adam

The Deacons

Prayer Warriors



We have a growing, interactive community online!



There are always fun, new, engaging videos on our PCN site. Children's sermons, children's worship singalongs and our curriculum for kids aged birth through middle school!



All of our VBS videos are available to watch on our "PCN KIDS Novato" secure [Kids YouTube channel](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCcLX2L3yPVwhWygSiD5upKA) (<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCcLX2L3yPVwhWygSiD5upKA>) until July 15th. They are also accessible on our website (www.pcnovato.org).

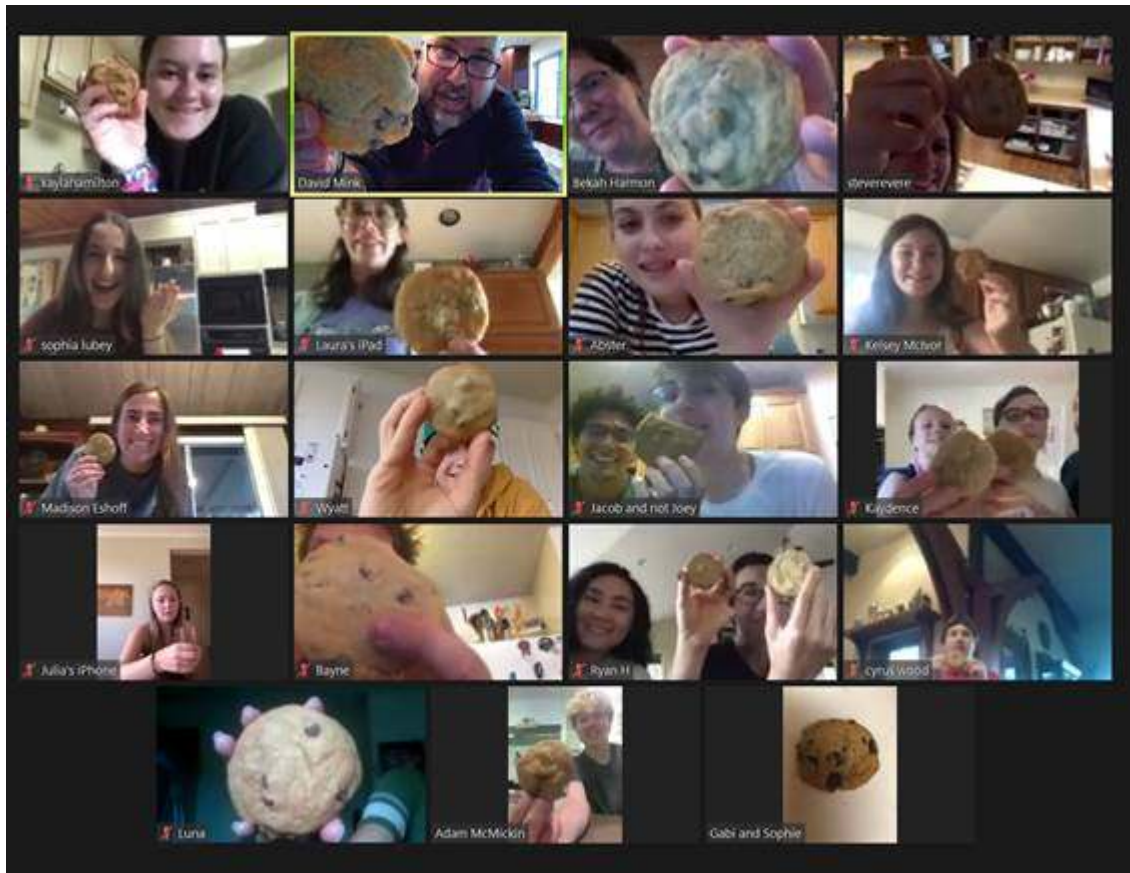


Our [Kids Facebook page](https://www.facebook.com/pcnkidsnovato) (<https://www.facebook.com/pcnkidsnovato>) has frequent updates including pictures of fun events and family devotionals. Don't forget to 'Like' us! We will keep putting out fun, engaging videos, so be sure to subscribe and you will be notified when we post something new!



The Great Presbyterian Bake-off!

On May 31st the youth group all baked cookies together via Zoom. No major disasters and most agreed that the cookies were delicious. Special thanks to Marilyn for coming up with the idea, to Bekah for the logo, and especially to Delores who purchased the ingredients, assembled the jars, and walked us through the baking process. A fun time was had by all!





Pandemic Ponderings II by Tonya Church

June 25 marks 100 days of our pandemic awareness. Sheltering in place, social distancing, wearing a mask, and testing are new buzz words for our daily life. Zoom, Skype, Microsoft Teams, Webex and FaceTime became the major ways people could still gather at this time, as close to being in person as we could be. Last time I wrote about all the opportunities that the pandemic offered, and this time I would like to focus on the challenges the pandemic presented as well.

The term takeaway can mean something we learned from this event, or it can be a loss, something that was taken away. What was taken away for me covers several different realms. My personal takes from my last article were very positive and for the most part still are. However, I experienced a great amount of angst as the overwhelming state budget deficit caused by COVID-19 came into the foreground in May. A pay cut was on the table for all state workers. This is nothing compared to some of you who already have experienced a sudden and complete severing of your income.

I also realized the impact of our church doors being closed. I am not sure how many of you noticed at the end of the choral introit this last week, or the week before when the video ends at the closed doors of the church. The image has been very jarring for me to see, think about, and ruminate on. Although we are currently talking and planning for re-opening, the “when” really becomes the issue.

This last picture was contrasted on Father's Day with a much different image. During the last song, the images started in the church, walking out through open doors and driving away from the church. Our building is a wonderful place, but as Pastor Adam reminded us, it is not the only place where church occurs. For this I am very grateful, and it brings a smile to my face.

Christ's love poured out into the community is as grand and beautiful as the most majestic sunset you have ever witnessed. I reflected on the ways I saw this. For the first time ever, my neighbor participated in our Vacation Bible School. Penny came over yesterday to tell us all about it. She was so excited to show us all her new “friends” and the things that she made as part of the activities for the day. Both her mom and dad described the daily videos as “very well done,” “you can tell someone spent a lot of time putting this together,” and “this was very well thought out.” We even played the video again so she could see her picture. The joy in her heart and the smile on her face told the entire story without speaking any words.

I have also baked and delivered banana bread, lots and lots of banana bread. Les always comes in the kitchen and says “you are really in your element, right here.” He hears me hum, and while I bake the smile on my face mirrors the smile in my heart. I am still making my rounds, and will not be able to reach everyone due to current living situations and the restrictions of COVID-19, but when these restrictions are lifted, if some of you have been missed, please email me, and I will bring some over. The smiles of the faces as I unexpectedly showed up with a delivery were priceless. Your kind words warmed my heart.

I have also done lots of puzzles during this time. A few of you have blessed me with unexpected deliveries of your own. I still call you friends, but when you come to my door, drop off a puzzle and tell

me, “I could not finish this one and thought of you,” I am not quite sure how to interpret this. Thanks for bringing these, as I was almost out. The smiles exchanged at the door were heartwarming.

There is a new phrase I recently coined. It is “pandemic pace.” There are three different paces we live by: church pace, Presbyterian pace and pandemic pace. Recently, we formed a technology team, and within one month a proposal was brought back to Session and approved for us to get started. For our church, this is pandemic pace! We are compelled to keep everyone connected through our technology and know that when we return to our sanctuary for worship, we still want to keep everyone close. Technology often gets a bad rap because it makes our life easier and can isolate us, but now it is the only vehicle for us to stay connected. We were excited to act quickly, but with the same thoughtfulness we have always had.

Our church is precious. I was reminded the other day by one friend what a great place PCN is. I was reminded by another friend of all the benefits the pandemic has brought us. June 25 is a special day for me, it is my birthday. My birthday marks starting another year. I look forward to this next year. Our church will reopen for in-person worship, but I also believe our church will become a place of connection in Novato. Each of you plays a part in that connection, as these connections are a gift from God.



Online giving is easy with Easytithe. How to get started?

Visit our website at www.pcnovato.org. Click on DONATE. This will launch a page for the initial set-up. Choose GIVE NOW. You will enter your amount, the fund to contribute to, and comments to direct the use of your donation. You can make this a recurring donation by clicking the box. Once your information is entered and you have created an account, you won't have to re-enter your payment method each time. Also tick the box (optional) that contributes part of the processing fee to offset PCN's costs (adds 2%).

You can also text-to-give from your phone. Simply text “GIVE” to 415-599-8710. A link will be sent back for you from Easytithe to complete your donation. If you've already set up your information, this is very simple to do.

Thank you for your generous support of the ministry of the Presbyterian Church of Novato.



The Deacons would like to thank the following Meal Train angels for their love and support of Ann and Bruce Stahley: Audrey Boland, Sally Carbonaro, Annie Clausen, Laurie Dougherty, Cathy Haney, Debbie Hanks, Janalee Holmes, Pat Innes, Kay Jones, Janet Locke, Deanna Lutzeier, Kelly McMickin, Sandy Peterson, Patty Reed, Judy Grossi, Virginia Saysette, Kathy Takemoto, Diane Tarkman, Kay Walker, Linda Ward and Shirley Witt.

Bless you all!



Deacons Blood Drive
Save the Date
Sunday, July 19, 2020
8 a.m. – 1 p.m.

Pre-registration is required.
Please consider participating.
For more information and sign-up options,
contact Becky Praun/PCN Blood Drive Coordinator
(415) 472-1733

The Deacons now have their own dedicated email address. If you need to contact them, email deacons@pcnovato.org.

BLOOD DRIVE



Because of you, life doesn't stop.

Presbyterian Church of Novato

Sunday, July 19, 2020

8:00 AM - 1:00 PM

Trevitt Hall

710 Wilson Avenue, Novato, CA 94947

To make an appointment, visit vitalant.org and click donate. Use your unique sponsor code: **PCNovato**. Appointments recommended. Please bring a photo ID.

"You're not just doing something good, you are potentially saving a life like mine. I wouldn't be here if it wasn't for the help of 32 strangers who donated blood, plasma and platelets back in 2016."

-Emily



Session

Session Highlights June 2020

The Session met via Zoom on June 17, 2020.

Session approved:

- 1) Technology Committee's recommendation to spend up to \$60,00 to purchase required equipment and services to continue online broadcasting of worship and other future church events
- 2) Consecration Sunday will be one service at 10 a.m. on October 18, 2020
- 3) Approved 2020 blood drives sponsored by the Deacons

Membership & Outreach committee member and Elder, Bruce Stahley, announced that the City of Novato will replace old, faded PCN directional signs on South Novato Blvd.

Kathy Takemoto, Clerk of Session



Community Outreach for PCN

We would like your help in spreading the word about PCN's online activities during this time of sheltering in place. Please share PCN info on your social media accounts (Facebook, Instagram, NextDoor, etc.). Share links to the music videos, worship services, children's sermons, etc. This will help broaden our outreach. With everyone having to shelter in place, it's a good time to get the word out about our congregation and what God is up to through us!



To the most wonderful and compassionate congregation: PCN

I so have enjoyed your kind thoughts, beautiful cards, and written healing prayers and words of encouragement during these trying six months of adjusting to my colonoscopy and setbacks along the way.

Many, many happy thanks for your continued healing support. Hopefully, before long, I will be able to return to you wonderful folks and “thank you” in person.

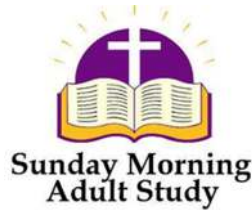
Much Godly love,
Bunny Dodson

Where is the Presbyterian Church of Novato?

The church's Membership & Outreach Committee decided to undertake a project to have new, visible, both east and west directional signs placed on Novato Blvd. at Wilson Ave. to enlighten travelers on how to get to our church.

The City of Novato Department of Public Works accepted the mission and now there is no doubt how to go. Photos of the signs are below!





The Sunday morning adult Bible study class is meeting via Zoom from 8 to 9 a.m. All are welcome to join! If you are interested in attending, please contact Larry Dacquisto at (415) 577-2115 or email larrydacquisto@gmail.com.



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! To be added to the Zoom contact list, contact Phil Dougherty at (415) 328-6674 or email phild@dhis.com for more information.



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!

A Quasquicentennial Celebration is Happening in 2021!

What's a quasquicentennial? It's a 125th anniversary. PCN will celebrate its 125th anniversary in 2021.

In preparation, please send a memory which can be included in a commemorative booklet for this special occasion. You can write about anything, but here are a few prompts:

- How you came to faith in Christ
- The first time you came to PCN
- Your favorite Sunday school, VBS, or youth group memory
- Fun fellowship activities and church friends
- Mission trips you have attended
- Children can write a poem or draw a picture
- Your wedding at PCN

Everyone is encouraged to participate to create a unique keepsake booklet. Email a Word document, or send your memory in an email to kathy.takemoto@outlook.com. Drawings/writings by children can be left in the clerk mail slot in the church office.

Patty Reed and the Program & Fellowship Committee would love to hear your ideas to celebrate this special occasion. Contact Patty at pdreed@sbcglobal.net.



Drawing of the church bell by Mae Wygant done in 1976