



**PresPress**

**March 2021**

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

### **Discernment Team UPDATE!**

It has been three months since the PCN Discernment team (tasked with fashioning a new ministry, leadership, and staffing structure in alignment with our call as a congregation [a.k.a. Mission, Vision, Values]), and the team has been hard at work on your behalf.

One of our goals throughout this process has been to be transparent in what the team is working on and to include you, the congregation, in the work that is being done. Afterall, this is our work together.

The team has, to this point:

- Met six times, with three of those meetings being 3+ hours each.
- We have prayed and reflected on Scripture in each meeting.
- We have reflected on PCN's call and 'dreamed' about what PCN might look like in the future should we live into our vision.
- As we honed a collaborative, articulated picture, we began to bring into our conversation the Growth Positioning Study created by Brown Church Development. This included results from a survey PCN took a few years ago, statistical data for Marin and Novato, and recommendations for PCN. We also brought into our conversation notes from PCN's officer retreat in April 2020.
- We took a SWOT analysis of our congregation (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Challenges) and did some critical reflection of our organization.
- With all this data, we began to compile a list of ministry priorities centered on PCN's call.

We are now working to fashion a ministry structure that best supports our call and context as a church.

The team will be meeting the next few Saturdays (February 27 and March 6) to finish up the first draft of our ministry, leadership, and staffing structure. Our work will then go to Session for review and discussion at the March Session meeting before going back to the Discernment Team for editing.

At this point (late March) we will need your input!! While we have not yet decided what the format will be (survey, virtual town hall, or other) you will all have a chance to add

input and join the discernment. The information the team receives from you will add to the finalization of the new structure which we hope to have approved for implementation by June.

Wheewww...for Presbyterians...this is a FAST process!! Believe me, I know. But, from what I've come to learn from you at PCN, and from where we stand right now as a congregation (in the middle of transition with staffing turnover, a lingering pandemic, and the like), we are ready to see what God has in store for us in this new season. We are ready to make a prayerful, hopeful change. We are ready to trust the Holy Spirit and lean on God more as we move through 2021 and beyond.

Blessings to you, dear saints. May we journey together in this year of transformation.

With care,  
Adam



Come out and join us at the church on March 27<sup>th</sup> to help pack 10,000 meals to be distributed by Rise Against Hunger. Packaging will be COVID safe and limited to two shifts of 20 people each. The youth are hosting the event, but all are invited to participate. A fun and purposeful time will be had by all!

Please use the SignUpGenius link to secure your spot and your shift:  
[www.signupgenius.com/go/30e0b49aea72fa1ff2-rise](http://www.signupgenius.com/go/30e0b49aea72fa1ff2-rise)

Please contact me if you have any questions!

Thank you so much,  
David Mink





*Where your treasure is, there your heart will lie also. –Matthew 6:21*

Below you will find evidence of the many places where your heart, time, and money are making a difference, both local and abroad....

One Great Hour of Sharing offering will be taken on, and around, Palm Sunday, March 28<sup>th</sup>. OGHS supports Presbyterian Hunger Relief, Presbyterian Disaster Assistance, and Self-development of Peoples, each in equal thirds. Read on for a closer look at just one of hundreds of programs....



## Because Water is Life

When Manuel Nazario casts his net into the water these days, his catch is far less plentiful.

In the remote area of Bolivia near the Paraguay-Argentina border, Manuel and the members of his indigenous community are finding that fishing, their traditional livelihood, is now in severe jeopardy.

The Capirendita ([pronounced CAP-IR-EN-DITA](#)) community is grappling with the devastating impact of climate change, irregular rainfall patterns, prolonged droughts, disease and mining pollution. As a result, their age-old ways of life and their means of economic support are increasingly threatened. The degradation of the environment and the mounting lack of access to water threatens their very survival.

Manuel has emerged as one of the leaders in his fishing community. A born innovator and community organizer, he is now leading the families in Capirendita toward the promise of a better way, in partnership with a local organization called CERDET ([Center for Regional Studies of Tarija](#)). Together they are working to develop irrigation systems and to collect and store rainwater for safe drinking.

Because of gifts received through One Great Hour of Sharing, like the gifts you and I will make to this offering here in our congregation, CERDET is building infrastructure to address the communities' critical water shortage. Their goal is to create 500 meters of pipes to transport safe well water to those in need. Manuel will be responsible for carrying out the excavation work on the underground piping system. Our gifts will also support the distribution of plastic containers to collect and save rainwater.

One Great Hour of Sharing helps us address critical water needs in places like South Sudan, training technicians to dig water wells for their communities and on maintenance, hygiene and sanitation. And in places like Detroit, our gifts have joined We the People of Detroit to secure access to water for those who have had their water shut off during the pandemic. Imagine not being able to wash anything during the pandemic!

One Great Hour of Sharing is the single, largest way that Presbyterians come together every year to share God's love by becoming "repairers of the breach," joining with people in need to build

God's house, together. Together we are making a better world for those in need no matter where they are. Please give generously, for when we all do a little, it adds up to a lot.

*Let us pray ~*

*Meet all the needs for which the world thirsts, O God. May your spring of justice, compassion and peace spring up quickly, and may it spring up quickly in us. Amen.*

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Despite challenges of the Coronavirus, Rev. Ryan & Alethia White have chosen to stay in Berlin, reaching out to the Iranian Christian refugee community....

# Interconnected

February 11, 2021

## A Letter from Ryan and Alethia White, serving in the Iranian Presbyterian Church in Berlin

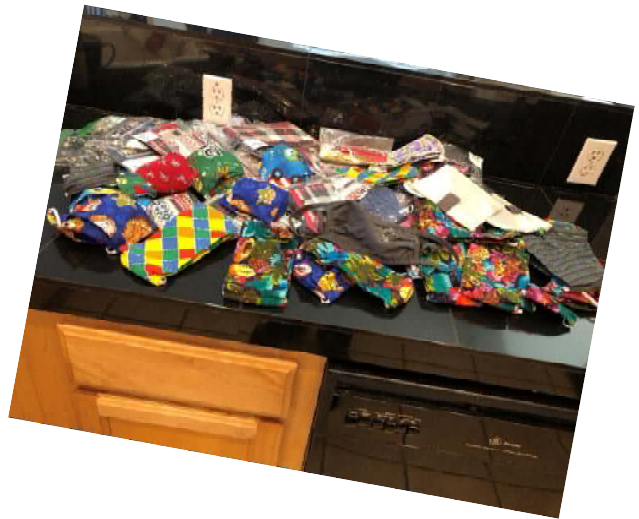
Dear friends,

Although Germany is again in strict lockdown mode since before Christmas, we have been no less busy in the last weeks. The new year began at full speed as Ryan helped prepare, with a partner organization, *Gemeinsam für Berlin* (Together for Berlin), to hold a prayer event to mirror similar events held by churches throughout Germany and Europe. A week of "Prayer for Christian Unity" has been a yearly event backed by the World Council of Churches since the 1980s, and this year seemed especially important as churches around the world are working hard to maintain a sense of community amidst the isolation of the pandemic and also are reaching out in innovative ways to help people facing mass migration, poverty, and injustice. A pause for prayer in the midst of these challenges was and is still needed. The program here in Berlin was originally going to be in-person at the famed Berliner Dom church, but because of the current restrictions was moved to a digital format with Ryan in charge of the technicalities. Only a small group facilitated the event inside the Dom and the participants joined virtually. Overall, it went well!

Alethia recently took part in a PC(USA) webinar on the subject of the migration crisis in southern Europe. The webinar was hosted by Presbyterian Disaster Assistance, World Mission, and the Office of Public Witness and featured three presenters from Italy and Greece. Efi Latsoudi from Lesvos Solidarity in Greece was someone whose insight we were quite impressed by when we participated in the Europe and Middle East regional gathering in Lesvos, Greece in 2019, so it was a pleasure to hear an update from her about the current situation on the island. There were great resources given by PC(USA) on ways you and your congregation or community can get involved in support of refugees. You can find the "Choose Welcome" guide online [here](https://www.presbyterianmission.org/resource/choose-welcome-action-guide/):

<https://www.presbyterianmission.org/resource/choose-welcome-action-guide/>

Ladies of PCN, we cannot thank you enough for the dozens and dozens of homemade and/or store-bought masks you have donated to Jeff Pinar's mission work in Juarez, Mexico, both with adults and children at three different orphanages. We have shipped down three boxes so far. And Carolyn Gerrans will be happy to keep taking any masks you can give. The need is great and ongoing. It will be many months before the coronavirus turns a corner in their poverty-stricken area. Below are just some of the cheerful masks ready for shipment....



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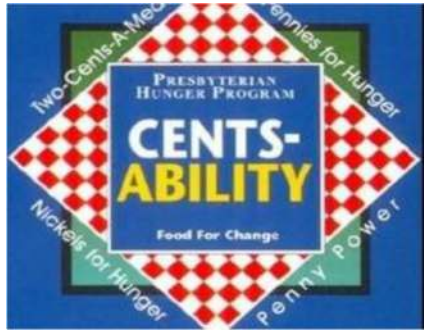
Congratulations to Connie and Katrina Tharin for being recognized by the *Novato Advance* for their mask-making during this past year. PCN is only one of the many beneficiaries of their cheerful homemade masks made during the pandemic. They have also given to local elementary schools, essential workers, St. Vincent de Paul Society, and many others. Congratulations to you both. Job well done...and continuing onward....





Since August, Lynwood preschool teacher Robin Pence has had children in three separate pre-school classes, no more than a dozen students in each one, without one single positive test of Covid-19. Below are just some of the pictures of the cheerful, creative environment Robin and her staff provide Monday through Friday for these three- and four- year-olds, most of whom are middle- to lower-income and learning English as their second language....





## **Supporting Cents-Ability (formerly Two Cents A Meal)**

Have you missed the little box in the Narthex labeled Two Cents A Meal? That box faithfully appeared each month at Communion to collect donations for the Presbytery Hunger Program. Well, just like everything else, that box has now gone virtual. This means that you and I can still “drop in” our donations via the online giving page. Just select the Two Cents A Meal Presbytery Hunger Fund online or mail or drop off a check to the church office. Just be sure to note your check is for “Two Cents A Meal.”

### **What is Cents-Ability and why did its name change?**

Cents-Ability originated in 1976 as “Two Cents A Meal,” a project begun by Presbyterian Women to involve individuals and families in a corporate response to world hunger. Over the years, presbyteries have developed similar programs entitled Pennies for Hunger, Nickle-A-Meal, etc. The name Cents-Ability merely brings all these programs under one umbrella.

In the Presbytery of the Redwoods, your Cents-Ability donations enable churches all the way from Humboldt County to Marin to feed the hungry through food pantries, community gardens, meal programs and much more. In 2020, the \$21,925 in donations received by Cents-Ability was awarded to 18 grant recipients. A couple of local examples of these awards include a Napa church community garden and the Extra Food program. With nearly one in four households experiencing food insecurity, every dollar donated to Cents-Ability helps sustain someone in their time of need. Please give as generously as you are able and thank you.

Melodie Baird  
Secretary, Presbytery of the Redwoods Hunger Task Force





## Session Highlights December 2020

Session approved:

- 2021 budget as recommended by Finance & Administration Committee.
- Hiring of a videographer at \$25 per hour, 10 hours per week while a Technology Director is being recruited.

January 2021:

- Session approved the 2021 mission budget as recommended by the Mission Committee.

Information items:

- The Discernment Team continues to work to evaluate PCN resources and staffing in light of where God is leading PCN.
- Program & Fellowship will host bingo in 2021 as well as monthly Litter Bee clean-up on the first Saturday of the month at PCN.

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## Reconvening Task Force Update

The Reconvening Task Force met for the first time in 2021 on January 14. We discussed where we are regarding returning to in-person worship and opportunities for fellowship together at the church. We are working on preparing for indoor worship, preparing for outdoor services, and gathering information on changes to state guidelines on reopening. We will be meeting as needed to make sure we are ready when it is safe to return to indoor services. While we wait for indoor services, we will be able to meet outdoors and several outdoor chapel services are scheduled. For the outdoor services we will follow all guidelines and requirements for outdoor services. The requirements include limiting the number of people that attend to around 40 people to allow for appropriate distancing. Please reserve your spot ahead of time by making a reservation. Masks are required and seating will be set up to allow social distancing of family groups.

Other items we are working on include tracking supplies for ongoing operations and identifying how groups can start to meet safely outdoors and indoors. The vaccines are starting to become available, and we anticipate that there will be a time when some of us are vaccinated while many are still waiting. Planning for this time, identifying when we can meet, and what it might look like may be challenging.

If you have any questions, concerns, or suggestions, please contact a member of the Reconvening Task Force.

Task Force Team: Beth Flynn, Adam Smith, Beverly Winsor, Bruce Stahley, Delane Ramser, David Mink, Walt Campbell, Diane Kaljian-Combs, Don Erba, Dan Rice, and Becky Praun



### **Quasquicentennial Memory Book**

The following individuals have submitted a memory, story, or photos for the Memory Book:

Dick and Jo Crocker  
Don and Becky Erba  
Sandy Fong  
Janalee Holmes (awaiting receipt of photos)  
Sylvia Jensvold  
The Lutzeier Family  
Chelta May  
Lisa Shanks  
LaVerda Shaver  
Mary Tofanelli

If I missed your contribution, please email it to me at [kathy.takemoto@outlook.com](mailto:kathy.takemoto@outlook.com) or mail to:

Kathy Takemoto  
8 Hollyleaf Way  
Novato, CA 94949



Are you interested in learning more about membership at PCN? If so, please join us for a new members class on Sunday, March 7 from 1 to 2 p.m. We will be meeting via Zoom. The class will be led by Pastor Adam Smith. Learn what it means to be a member of the Presbyterian Church of Novato. RSVP to [pcnadmin@pcnovato.org](mailto:pcnadmin@pcnovato.org) or call 415-897-6152.



**JIGSAW PUZZLE SWAP** Our next puzzle swap will be Saturday, March 20<sup>th</sup> from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. If you want to drop off some puzzles, the donation box is in the office.



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](mailto:larrydacquisto@gmail.com).



### **First and Second Samuel**

**Thursday morning Women's Bible Study** continues its weekly study of 1 & 2 Samuel via Zoom from 9:30 to 11 a.m. Bible study leaders are Carol Dacquisto and Melodie Baird. All women are welcome to join us at any time. To be added to our Zoom contact list, email Melodie Baird at [melodie.l.baird@gmail.com](mailto:melodie.l.baird@gmail.com) or call her at 415-897-7512 for more information.



### **WOMEN'S PRAYER GROUP**

Spend time praising God for His many blessings through prayer and receive His assurance for you. Together we seek His intimate presence, led by the Holy Spirit and fed by scripture. Meetings are the first Thursday of each month at 6:30 p.m. The Zoom link is a series that runs through 2020; the same link can be accessed each month. Contact Janis West at [Janisw99@gmail.com](mailto:Janisw99@gmail.com) with questions. <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81107446679?pwd=Yy9ub1pReGdMTHVhbDJpRzhHVVdHQT09>  
Meeting ID: 811 0744 6679 Passcode: pcnovato



## MEN'S BIBLE STUDY

Come join us for study and fellowship. We meet every **Wednesday at 7:30 a.m.** via Zoom. We have started a new study called "Old Testament Characters." The author writes "It is my prayer that we might be better participants in the shaping of God's drama today by our careful reflection on the successes and failures of the men and women who have gone before us." All men are welcome. To be added to the Zoom contact list, contact Phil Dougherty at (415) 328-6674 or email [phild@dhis.com](mailto:phild@dhis.com) for more information.



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!



If, during this unprecedented time, you find yourself in need of someone to talk to, the Stephen Ministers are here to listen, and all conversations are confidential. Please contact Jane Sime at (415) 497-5158 or Gail Penfield at (415) 897-7929 for more information.



## 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!