



PresPress

December 2022

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

Into the Light

One of my favorite subjects of study that fills me with immeasurable curiosity is probably not what you would expect from a pastor. Astrophysics. That's right. Specifically, I am intrigued by the concept of the evolution of the cosmos: from the inconceivable 'before the big bang' to the theories of the end of the universe as we know it (if there is an end at all).

There is a TED Talk on YouTube by a man named David Christian that takes one through the journey from nothingness to the robust universe of today that is fascinating. (If you are interested, here is the link: <https://youtu.be/yqc9zX04DXs>.) It begins in a place where the laws of physics don't even exist and moves all the way to a universe that is absolutely shaped by those laws in such a way that life itself becomes possible. There are countless times throughout the 13.8-billion-year history of the cosmos that, had circumstances been microscopically shifted, the universe could have been very different – sterile and devoid of life. If the laws were different, if there had not been more matter than antimatter, if chaos did not somehow coalesce into order, we would not be here.

But aside from all of the stages of evolution of the universe, it is the creation of light that has captivated my imagination. When the first stars blazed into existence illuminating what was unseen, formless and void, the key to life was birthed. Light penetrating the darkness changed everything.

I think about this when I open up and read the first chapter of John's gospel. There is all this interplay and metaphor that points to Jesus who is the light; light that has always been but, in whose revelation, has changed and shaped everything.

After a stroll through cosmic history, we learn that stars are more than burning balls of gas undergoing nuclear fusion, hence creating heat and light. It is in stars that the elements we know so well and that form the material universe as we know it are created. When massive stars reach the end of their life, they undergo what is called a supernova. They explode, blasting the elements of life into the universe. The carbon that makes up so much of our bodies was created in the supernovae of exploding stars. We are, quite literally, stardust! We are children of the light, one might say.

I think about this too when I think of John's gospel. Christ is the light of the universe: in Him is life. From Him comes life. With Him we live life. As our bodies are made of stardust, our lives are given full life in Jesus, the light of the world. We are not fully alive without the one who resurrects, renews, and reveals to us who we truly are. In Christ, all things were created and given life and now live.

As we move through Advent and toward Christmas this year, we will be focusing our worship toward Jesus, the light of the world, and we will be learning about what it means to be reflectors of the light as well. I encourage you to take some time and pray about what it means to you that Jesus is the light in whom all things were created and in whom we have life today. How does Jesus shine in your life? How does that light unveil who we are? What does the light reveal about our own lives: the good, the bad, and the promise of grace? And how do we serve to reflect that light in our own lives? What is it that shines through us that reveals Jesus to our neighbors and to the world?

Blessings to you, saints, as we “Enter the Light” in this Advent and Christmas season.

With Care,
Adam



Join us on Christmas Eve as we celebrate the birth of our savior, Jesus Christ. At 5 p.m. we'll have our family Christmas Eve candlelight service with music provided by our PCN Praise Team. At 7:30 p.m., we begin our traditional candlelight service with our Chancel Choir concert, followed by our worship service at 8 p.m.

Join us Christmas Day for carols and celebration! Worship will be about 30 minutes long, and you are encouraged to wear your PJs! Hope to see you there!

MISSION

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

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

Camp Compassion

Thank you for all the donations to help us fill the backpacks that we donated to Camp Compassion, located by the library, last month. We had 40 backpacks given to us with just a mitten and hat set, but we wanted to do more. You helped us stuff 20 of them with socks, scarves, hats, snacks and even hand warmers. We had a couple of monetary donations that allowed us to provide a brand new long-sleeved warm shirt as well. We also included a Covid-19 test kit. Regina and Hilary delivered these goodies to the residents of the camp (fewer than 20 right now). We will keep the other 20 backpacks for a later donation drive. Residents of this camp come and go, and we want to continue supporting this population of loved people in our town.





What makes PCN stand out in the community, and why?

Did you know that PCN has given 25% (or nearly that much) of all its revenue every year for at least 20 years to our community? We have given funds to local organizations fighting hunger and homelessness and international organizations building housing.

We give to Christian-based agencies that are evangelical in nature, seeking to bear witness to Jesus Christ and the Christian Gospel. These agencies serve the hungry, sick, poor, prisoners, immigrants and orphans as Jesus commands. Each organization has a PCN liaison that ensures the organization is a 501c3 nonprofit and uses the funds efficiently and effectively and provides significant community service.

Do you want to help PCN allocate funds to these organizations? Do you know of an organization that could use a boost of funds to help people in our community? We want to hear from you!

We invite you to the Mission Committee. We meet as needed to allocate funds. Our next meeting on December 8th will be our wish list meeting where we make a list of the organizations we fund and add new ones. Please contact Regina Rus at reginabrus@gmail.com or 415-497-2212 if you would like the Zoom link.



Jonathan's Place (formerly Mill Street Center) has been completely renovated and reopened in November. PCN has resumed its mission to contribute dinners each month. Volunteers are needed to provide a main course, side dish, salad and whole fruit for 45 people each month. We will continue to provide a meal on the third Monday of every month. Contact Patty Reed at (415) 699-5246 or pdreed@sbcglobal.net.



The Christmas Joy offering will be taken Sunday, December 18.

The Christmas Joy offering has been a cherished Presbyterian tradition since the 1930s. The offering distributes gifts equally to the Assistance Program of the Board of Pensions and to Presbyterian-related schools and colleges equipping communities of color. The Assistance Program provides critical financial support to church workers and their families. Presbyterian-related schools and colleges provide education and leadership development while nurturing racial and ethnic heritage. This has been a Presbyterian commitment for nearly 140 years.

As a Five for Five congregation, PCN is part of a much larger communal effort:

\$1.1 million in gifts from 2021 are being used to provide critical financial support and grants for current and retired Presbyterian church workers in their times of need

26 countries are represented in the last 25 years at Presbyterian Pan American School

98% of graduates from Menaul School go on to college

84% of faculty at Stillman College hold terminal degrees

We hope you will take part in this important offering and thank you for your support.



GETTING TO KNOW YOUR NEIGHBOR'S FAITH:

“Ask Me Anything!”

Come join the The Marin Interfaith Council to get to know your neighbors and hear about their different faith traditions.

Every Third Wednesday of the month at 6pm, we will be hosting an hour-long event where you can join, either in person or online, to learn about a different faith tradition from a practitioner of that faith, and ask any questions you may have. Our guest each month will share a little about their faith, then take questions.

Upcoming Speakers:

November 16, 2022 at 6pm - **Roman Catholic** - Monsignor Harry Schlitt

December 21, 2022 at 6pm - **Wiccan** - M. Macha NightMare, Witch at Large

January 18, 2023 at 6pm - **Baha'i** - Ms. Sherna Deamer



Monsignor Harry Schlitt
God Squad Priest, TV Mass



M. Macha NightMare
Witch at Large



Ms. Sherna Deamer
Member of the San Rafael Baha'i's

In Person: First Presbyterian Church San Rafael, 1510 Fifth Ave. San Rafael
in Canoles Hall (entrance on Mission Ave.)

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86322721681?pwd=cGxINWlvT1ZNdHNPS1lEb3dyMW5PZz09>

Meeting ID: 863 2272 1681

Passcode: 602664

Thank you for all the grocery donations this year for the Center for Domestic Peace. The drop-off dates for this month are Monday, December 12 and Tuesday, December 13. Thanking you in advance for your generosity!

Monthly Meditation



with **Scott Clark**
Wednesday Dec 14th, 2022 at
5:30 - 6:30 pm PST

Join the online meditation with video or phone:

Join Zoom Meeting:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81415259890?pwd=NE9GcVB3ME4zeVYrNmVZMmZtd25UZz09>

Meeting ID: 814 1525 9890

Passcode: 252042

One tap mobile

+16694449171,,81415259890# US

+16699006833,,81415259890# US (San Jose)



2022 *Alternative Christmas Faire*



There are many organizations in need of help, and we know the congregation has stepped up for many years to support the organizations sponsored by PCN. The Mission Committee is organizing the annual “Alternative Christmas Faire” event that will be held December 4th. This “in-person” event will follow the worship service. These are the organizations we’ll be sponsoring:

Homeward Bound – Provides housing, training and hope to end homelessness. Housing is provided to homeless families, adults, and veterans. Services include mental health counseling, job training, and help with accessing other needed services. The Homeward Bound organization will also be providing goods for purchase at the event. Please see the Homeward Bound order form attached to this article for a list of the products that will be available at the faire. Unlike our Alternative Christmas Faire last year, we will not be accepting orders until the of the ‘in-person’ event.

Faith in Practice – The mission of Faith In Practice is to improve the physical, spiritual, and economic conditions of the poor in Guatemala through short-term surgical, medical, and dental mission trips and health-related educational programs. Its mission is based on an ecumenical understanding that as people of God we are called to demonstrate the love and compassion that is an outward sign of God’s presence among us.



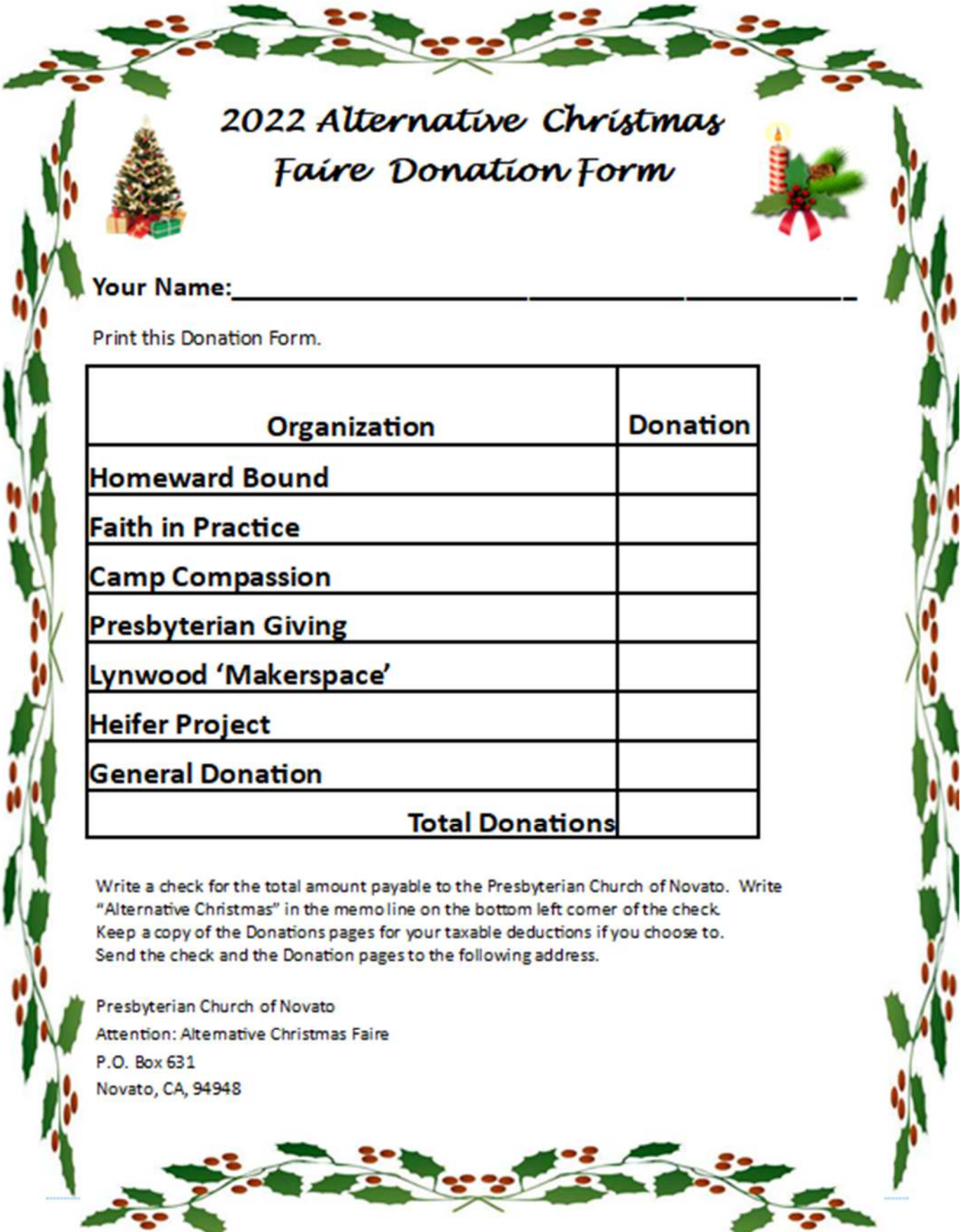
Camp Compassion – The Street Chaplaincy’s primary mission is to bring compassionate spiritual care to unsheltered and temporarily sheltered persons in Marin County and to build community between homeless persons and non-homeless faith communities and other organizations.

Presbyterian Giving – The objective of Presbyterian Giving is connecting people as neighbors with others who are experiencing needs; supporting projects and friendships that grow gardens and generations; bringing water and watching for corruption; sharing education, tools and training; and linking each of us more closely with one another and with God.

Lynwood ‘Makerspace’ – The vision for the program is to focus on STREAM activities (science, technology, relationships, engineering, art and math) that allow time and space for its students to create, tinker, learn how to do something new, problem-solve, and take risks. Makerspace provides a safe and supportive space that inspires children to be challenged, creative, innovative and collaborative – all skills needed for a 21st-century world.

Heifer Project – The Heifer Project provides a seed investment of livestock or agriculture, followed by mentorship to help project participants build a business and ultimately gain access to supply chains and markets.

If you wish to participate but cannot attend the in-person event, you can send in the attached donation form with a check to the church. Simply print out the donation form and follow the instructions to make the donation. Forms will also be available in the office if you prefer to pick one up there. We will be taking donations for the Alternative Christmas Faire until December 11.



2022 Alternative Christmas Faire Donation Form

Your Name: _____

Print this Donation Form.

Organization	Donation
Homeward Bound	
Faith in Practice	
Camp Compassion	
Presbyterian Giving	
Lynwood 'Makerspace'	
Heifer Project	
General Donation	
Total Donations	

Write a check for the total amount payable to the Presbyterian Church of Novato. Write "Alternative Christmas" in the memoline on the bottom left corner of the check. Keep a copy of the Donations pages for your taxable deductions if you choose to. Send the check and the Donation pages to the following address.

Presbyterian Church of Novato
Attention: Alternative Christmas Faire
P.O. Box 631
Novato, CA, 94948



2022 Halo Holiday Gifts

HANDMADE CHOCOLATE BARK

6OZ. BAG / \$7

Dark Chocolate with Dried Cranberry and Pumpkin Seeds

Quantity

HALO PRODUCTS

\$10 EACH

Seedless Blackberry Jam - 9oz

Strawberry Jam - 9oz

Bread & Butter Pickles - 16oz

Sweet Smokin' BBQ Sauce - 16oz

Oaxacan Mole Sauce - 16oz

OTHER HALO PRODUCTS

Hot 'n' Holy Pepper Sauce 5oz

\$7

Halo Honey from our Novato Hives - 9oz

\$15

WAGSTER DOG TREATS

\$10 / BAG
OR ALL 3 FLAVORS FOR \$25

Apple & Peanut Butter

Banana & Toasted Coconut

Peanut Butter & Molasses

3 pack - One bag of each flavor!

Wagster Treats Gift Box - \$50

1 Bag Each: Apple & Peanut Butter, Banana & Toasted Coconut
and Peanut Butter & Molasses

+ 6-Pack of Custom Doggie Notecards

Take a Bite Out of Homelessness!

All proceeds support Homeward Bound of Marin
1385 N. Hamilton Pkwy. Novato, CA. 94949 | 415-382-3363, ext. 214





Session Highlights – October 2022

Session approved:

Motion from the Property Committee to purchase and install a dishwasher in the church kitchen, expense not to exceed \$1,000 to come from Property reserve.

Motion from Program and Fellowship Committee on behalf of the committee, Seekers program, and Deacons to purchase new melamine dishes, not to exceed \$3,000. Funds will come from the Operating Reserve.

A Property sub-committee will be formed to discuss and prioritize improvements to the PCN campus such as vinyl flooring in the church office, Christensen Room, kitchen, and Trevitt Hall; lighting solutions; landscape improvements to the manse; parking lot; ceiling tiles.

Ariel Mink
Clerk Pro Tem

Session Highlights – November 2022

Pastor Adam thanked Robert Coleman for serving as a Worship Elder though 11/30/2022.

Discussion on organizational improvements for future church leadership.

Finance & Administration reported the receipt of the Federal Employee Retention Credit payment of \$167,000, less \$8,000 consultant fee. This was a one-time federal program which provided financial assistance to employers who continued to employ their staff during the COVID pandemic.

Stewardship is following up on pledge cards so a 2023 budget can be created and approved at the December Session meeting.

Kathy Takemoto
Clerk of Session

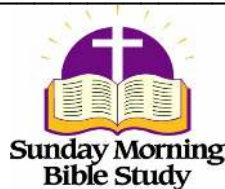


The Gospel of John

We are happy to announce that the **Women's Bible Study** is tentatively scheduled to return to its weekly study of the Gospel of John on Thursday, January 6, 2023, from 10 to 11:30 a.m. on Zoom. Your Bible study leaders will continue to be Carol Dacquisto and Margaret Franz-Costello. We are excited and grateful that we will be able to share God's word with all of you again. For class on January 6, it will be helpful to read Chapter 1 of John.

Please feel welcome to join us. We have only one requirement – we need to hear from you so that we can invite you to our meeting. To be added to our Zoom contact list, email Margaret Franz-Costello at allaboutchoices@yahoo.com or call her at 415-806-8849 for more information.

Grace and Peace,
Carol Dacquisto and Margaret Franz-Costello



The Sunday Adult Bible Study Group meets via Zoom from 8:30 to 9:30 a.m. We would like to invite you to join a great group of men and women who enjoy studying God's Word together. There is a place for each of you as well.

COMING THIS QUARTER: 'CHOSEN, NOT CHOICE: FROM DARKNESS TO LIGHT'

This quarter begins with **Unit 1** lessons from Luke on Zechariah, John the Baptist, and a Christmas lesson on Mary's song as she rejoices in the news that God has chosen the humble over the proud in the sending of His Son.

Unit 2 looks at God's promises in the Old Testament with lessons from 2 Chronicles, Isaiah, and Joel that remind us to hear prayers of repentance and to be present and restore His people after times of distress.

Finally, **Unit 3** explores God's call to His followers with lessons from 1 Chronicles, 2 Timothy, James, and 1 Peter. These lessons teach us that God's call -- and the responsibilities of that call -- is without regard to an individual's past. We are to live as chosen, royal, holy people who have been called out of darkness into God marvelous light.

Study Leaders:

James Baird, Carol Dacquisto, Larry Dacquisto, and Doris Dooley

Link for the Zoom meeting:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88401949220?pwd=QS9MMHJsbU5TVtJ6enVpU1hDL0VNQT09>

Meeting ID: 884 0194 9220 Passcode: pcnovato



December 26-27: closed
December 28: 9 a.m. to noon
December 29: 9 a.m. to noon
January 2: closed



Just a reminder that annual committee reports for 2022 are due December 16. Please email your report to Tammi at pcnadmin@pcnovato.org.



Covid Test Kits

Are you heading out of town for the holidays or having visitors at your house? We have lots of Covid test kits if you want to stop by the office and pick some up. This could provide some peace of mind for you during this busy time of year.



Youth Group Meal Train

Thank you for the delicious meals and love shared with the PCN Youth Group over October and November. Special thanks to Deacons Audrey Boland, Carol Robinson, Kristen Rush and Brook Stahley. Also, Anna Pilloton, Kathy Takemoto, David Harmon, and Betsy and Sam Ricketts.

And an extra thank you to Deacon Brenda McIvor for coordinating the Deacon volunteers every month.

Your warm meals warm hearts!

Blessings,
Becky/Youth Meal Train Coordinator

Tree Trimming

Did you know the white lights and white ornaments represent the light and purity of Jesus and the red bows represent the blood Jesus shed for our salvation? May we all gaze at the tree with delight and thanksgiving.

Thank you to the volunteers who decorated the sanctuary and trimmed the tree, getting everything ready for our Advent Season: Bruce Stahley, Jim Rolka, Bill Bradfield, Sandy and Garrick Fong, Chris Smith and Catherine Marshall-Smith, and Stephanie, Kimi, Becky and Brad Praun.



CITY OF NOVATO
CALIFORNIA

Community Emergency Preparedness

Below is a link to a great website for community preparedness information:

<https://www.novato.org/government/police-department/emergency-preparedness>

Find information on being prepared. Every disaster, whether it affects one person or millions, has one thing in common...it is disruptive. The greater the impact, the more it disrupts those things we depend upon and often take for granted. Universal emergency or disaster education and preparedness means everyone, regardless of age or circumstance, needs to devote the time, resources and energy to understand and benefit from being "ready" for any type of an emergency.

Know your evacuation route. The following link has information including an evacuation map, evacuation tag FAQs, and evacuation checklist and more.

<https://www.novato.org/government/police-department/evacuation-information>

Have you picked up your Evacuation Tag yet?

The Novato Police Department and Novato Fire Protection District are giving away evacuation tags to residents living in the City of Novato. Evacuation tags are a new tool to help us quickly ensure that neighborhoods are evacuated during a disaster. Hang the tag in a location that is highly visible from the street when they evacuate (mailbox, front door, garage, end of your driveway). This saves time and effort which we need to immediately check the next home. We have learned that seconds can count during evacuations, and we are excited to bring this new life-saving tool to our residents. Each tag comes with an instruction flyer in English and Spanish.

Evacuation Tag Pickup Locations

Downtown Novato

Novato Police Station (909 Machin Avenue)

Monday - Thursday 8am - 5pm

Central Novato

Novato Fire Administration (95 Rowland Way)

Monday - Friday 8am - 5pm

Get trained. In Novato, we offer a free two-hour course to prepare you and yours in an emergency. Check out a Get Ready training today. You can also go beyond the basics and get Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) training, which is offered throughout Marin County. For more information, go to Ready Marin.

Stay Informed.

Receive emergency alerts by phone, text and e-mail for your neighborhood, even when you are not home. **Register your phones and e-mail addresses** at:

- www.alertmarin.org to receive local emergency alerts sent by call, text, or e-mail from the County of Marin Office of Emergency Services, **and**
- www.nixle.com to receive emergency messages and related information from both the Novato Police Department and Novato Fire District.
- Check out our monthly emergency preparedness tips or sign-up to get these updates via our e-notify system.

Updated (Omicron) Booster Information

- 1 How does the updated booster differ from the previous booster?
- 2 Why do I need the updated booster?
- 3 Who is eligible to get the updated booster?
- 4 When am I eligible for the updated booster?
- 5 When can I get the updated booster if I recently had COVID?
- 6 Can I "mix and match" the updated booster?
- 7 Where can I get the updated booster?


Marin County Public Health strongly recommends the new booster for anyone age 50 and older.

- ✓ As new variants emerged, the booster was updated to **improve protection** against currently circulating variants.
- ✓ The updated booster strengthens protection against the newer Omicron variants, which account for most of the current cases.
- ✓ Everyone 12 and older who has had their primary series can get the updated booster.
 - **Pfizer:** 12 years of age and older.
 - **Moderna:** 18 years of age and older.
- ✓ 2 months after your last dose (including the booster).
- ✓ It is recommended to get the updated booster 2 months after a COVID infection
- ✓ You can "mix and match" no matter which vaccine you received for your primary series and prior booster doses. Mixing vaccines may enhance the immune response, and it increases flexibility in case the vaccine you initially received is not available.
- ✓
 - Local Pharmacies
 - Healthcare Providers
 - Select few Community Clinics



Would you like to be one of the first at PCN to welcome new visitors? Or to welcome back members who have not attended for a while? Please join our Hospitality Team if you are interested in serving in this ministry. Contact Bekah Harmon at bekahsbytes@gmail.com with any questions.



REQUESTING A PRAYER BLANKET is easy. Email Tonya or Laurie. Give us the recipient's first and last name, address, phone, and what colors they like. We try to send a prayer blanket that is meaningful for the recipient. Questions? Contact Tonya Church at tonya.church@comcast.net or Laurie Dougherty at ldougherty@me.com.



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 7 p.m. Use the same Zoom link each month. Contact Janis West at 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 7:15 a.m.** via Zoom. All men are welcome. To be added to the Zoom contact list, contact Walt Campbell at 415-497-5157.



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 Alan Dunham at (415) 897-8886 or Ruth Haas at (415) 897-7629 for more information.



Community Outreach for PCN

We would like your help in spreading the word about PCN's activities. 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. It's always a good time to get the word out about our congregation and what God is up to through us!