



PResPress

April 2021

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

Resurrection Life

As we march into Easter and the season of resurrection in the church year, I've thought long and hard about the season that PCN is in. The end of the pandemic is in sight. The total vaccination percentage in Marin County is above 50% as I write this article. We are now in the yellow tier with the option of beginning onsite church activities. The Reconvening Task Force is now working to create a timeline for when we will return onsite.

Resurrection indeed!

But a return to onsite worship and in-person activities, as life-giving as that will be for our congregation, will only be the beginning of living into our vision as God's church here in Novato. The pandemic did more than cause us to go 'virtual' for church life, it also revealed things about us as a congregation...our capacity for resilience, improvisation, creativity, caregiving, and our strengths for ministry. Yet it also revealed our gaps, our needs, our fears, our desires for the future. In this 'wilderness,' we've learned about ourselves: the good, the bad, and the ugly. And the more we learn, and the more we lean on and listen to God, the better stewards we will become of our call together.

We embark into Easter season a bit like the women who came to Jesus's tomb in Mark's gospel. In awe and wonder we stare at the empty tomb. Could it be? Is resurrection possible? Jesus is not here. What does this mean? What possibilities does this create? How will life change now that death is defeated and new life is real for us?

The women's lives were turned upside down in a moment. They went from assuming they'd live their lives in a particular way, to now shifting on a dime to live and be different...to live as if resurrection is real, and to continue to follow after Jesus who changed everything.

In this season in the life and ministry of PCN, we stare at the empty tomb once again and are being changed by resurrection. What will life and ministry be like post-pandemic? As we seek to be a 'beacon of hope, reviving the world through God's love' as our vision exclaims, 'business as usual' is not the answer. Returning to the way

things were is not being 'who we truly are' as stewards of our call. It misses what God has gifted us in knowledge and understanding over the past few years.

No. In this Easter Season we begin to carve a new path as 'sharers of God's love,' connecting to our neighbors (inside and outside), creating new, intentional relationships in which we can grow in worship, faith, and service together. We take what we've learned, what God has given us, and we follow after God.

We begin the challenging, difficult, and yet absolutely life-giving work of being transformed by God - resurrection life - beginning now and happening every day that follows. We see a vibrant, active PCN; a powerhouse for mission and service; a beacon for the community longing for wholeness, hope, and love. We see a congregation that boldly connects with its neighbors, unabashedly shares the gospel in word and deed, and creates intentional, meaningful relationships in community together. We see a church that utilizes technology to augment its 'love-sharing' ministries; a church where people's lives are touched by impactful worship, a church where relevant, meaningful Bible study and programs shape lives; a church that people know by its loving reputation and speak highly of the God at work in them.

We begin to work toward this vision, to be this congregation that we know is absolutely us. The pieces are here, the people are here, God is here, the passion and energy are here. Our call has been articulated, our discernment has been ongoing, our leaders are preparing. Now is the time to move boldly, directed by God, to embrace this call, to make a covenant together, knowing that it will not be easy. It will not be a straightforward process. It will involve taking wrong turns at times, making wrong decisions, and learning from our mistakes. But now is the time to move forward into this new resurrection life at PCN, trusting in God to protect us, to direct us, and to equip us.

With Hope & Trust,
Adam



Good Friday, April 2

6:45-7:30 p.m. – choir concert via Zoom

7:30-8:30 p.m. – Tenebrae service via Zoom

Easter Sunday, April 4

6:30 a.m. – sunrise service at PCN

10 a.m. – worship service via Zoom



Session Highlights March 2020

In March, Pastor Adam provided the following updates:

By next month, the Discernment Team will present to Session a document which summarizes their work and recommendations.

Discussions continue with Good Shepherd Lutheran School on improvements to the PCN campus for outdoor activities.

The Reconvening Task Force will be sending out a survey to gauge congregants' readiness to return to in-person worship within COVID-19 guidelines.

The City of Novato will not have the 4th of July parade in 2021. Can PCN provide a substitute event which meets COVID guidelines?

Kathy Takemoto
Clerk of Session



Thank you, Kelsey McIvor, youth intern!

Kelsey recently resigned from her position as a youth intern. Kelsey has moved to on-site learning at UC Berkeley. Kelsey did a great job in her position. Her contributions to the youth program include leadership at youth group and the discipleship class as well as the middle school girls' small group. She also assembled and led the band for the TWIG retreat. Kelsey kept the PCN youth online resources updated. She did a great job supporting the PCN youth ministry, and we wish her many blessings!





We are excited to launch our second season of Epic. This season is from the Sermon on The Mount, and we will discuss the Be-Attitudes.

[Episode 1](#) is now available and is accessible on our website and secure YouTube kids channel! We will send a new one each week through email.

We hope you enjoy it! Abundant blessings to you and your families!



Our Epic 2 puppeteers: David Mink as Solomon the sloth, Sydney Fletcher as Orin the orangutan, and Tammi Jester as Roscoe the rescue dog.



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...

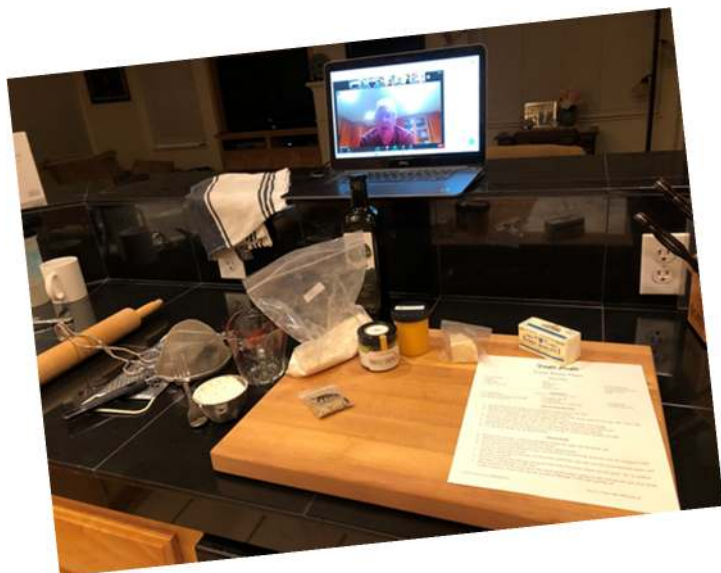
BSA Cub Pack 186 is donating another \$1,000.00 from its popcorn sales to Homeward Bound due to their gratitude to PCN as their charter organization. The money will go to support Homeward Bound's meals program kitchen that prepares and delivers 8,000 meals a month to Next Keys Shelter residents throughout Marin. Many thanks to Cub Pack 186 for its generosity and compassionate spirit!!

Center 4 Domestic Peace has asked PCN for 21 bags full of non-perishables groceries, specifically: *Rice, pasta, pasta sauce, cans of beans, sugar, flour, sweets, chocolate, juice*. Four have already been pledged; we are asking for 17 more from our congregation. To pledge one or more bags of groceries, contact mission co-elder Carolyn Gerrans at grace624@comcast.net. Pledged groceries will be dropped at the church office, day and date to be determined, and then will be delivered by a mission committee member to the Center 4 Domestic Peace location. When pledges are fulfilled, more details will follow.

Ceres Community Project continues to offer FREE and interesting Zoom classes to learn more about their support for chronically and acutely ill residents of Sonoma and Marin. The upcoming class, *Stories of Client Care*, will be Thursday, April 22nd from 4 to 5 p.m. Contact Carolyn Gerrans or Barbara Gildea for the Zoom link.

Ceres Marin is experiencing a very important need as they have lost the lease to their kitchen in central Marin and are searching for a new one. Please contact them directly at www.CeresProject.org if you might know of a building which could suit or know someone who works in commercial real estate.

Thanks to those who participated in Gilead House's Quarantine Kitchen. It was a lot of fun (see below), raised funds for badly needed programs at Gilead House, and provided a sense of community without leaving our own kitchens. And the turn-out was delicious homemade pasta (also seen below).



It's not too late for your One Great Hour of Sharing offering, which was taken on Palm Sunday, March 28th. PCN will gladly take your donations via check to the office or the church website. Please earmark your method of payment as "OGHS." By doing so, you are supporting Presbyterian Hunger Relief, Presbyterian Disaster Assistance, and Self-development of Peoples, each in equal thirds. Read on for a closer look at the importance of your help and good will.

Because We Are the Church, Together

Life during COVID has been challenging. That feels like an understatement, right? At times, we have all felt disconnected, confined. Missing family, missing friends. Lonely. Worried about the groceries holding out. Unsure of what the future may hold. Imagine feeling all of those things but living in a place or in a situation that was already challenging each and every day without the added pressure of the pandemic. A place where access to food is day to day. Where access to vital health care is questionable and finding clean water is a daily struggle. A place where you are denied racial justice or plagued with outright violence and oppression.

*But one thing remains steadfast and true: We are the church, together, no matter where we are, and the church belongs to those struggling for justice, righteousness and peace **for life**.*

The Special Offerings of the PC(USA), including One Great Hour of Sharing, offer the whole church a way to embody Matthew 25 through the Spirit-inspired stories and gifts that place us in service and partnership with those who have the least. Our gifts directly support people experiencing hunger, homelessness, thirst, imprisonment, sickness and deprivation, as well as welcoming the stranger. One Great Hour of Sharing is the largest way that Presbyterians come together in mission and ministry with those whom we see are in need.

*Because we are the church, together ... we give to One Great Hour of Sharing because of where the church belongs, of **who** the church **is**. Please give generously so that our church will continue to become, as Isaiah said, "repairers of the breach." And as we always say: When we all do a little, it adds up to a lot.*

Lynwood pre-school teacher, Robin Pence, has had children in three separate pre-school classes, no more than a dozen students in each one, since August, 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.





GILEAD HOUSE – ‘say cheese for mom!’ You’re invited on **April 15th, 2021** to a virtual Social Hour and charcuterie board how-to from **5:30 to 6:30 p.m.** with Chef Rachel with From the Pantry. We will be guided through preparing a few items from scratch followed by a guided demo on how to assemble your own charcuterie board that is sure to impress. You’ll receive an ingredient box on the day of with everything you need, **including the wine!**

Reserve your Culinary Box for \$100
\$10 Extra for delivery (Central Marin through Novato)
\$10 Extra for shipping (outside of Marin County, wine not included)

~ All proceeds benefit the Gilead House Education Endowment Fund ~
Must pick up at Gilead House on April 15th between 2 and 4:30 p.m.
Must be over 21 to participate

Culinary Experience Box + Virtual Demo

In your culinary experience box you’ll find everything you need to assemble an amazing charcuterie board—from cheeses and cured meats, pickled and fresh foods, to spiced nuts and breads. And of course a bottle of wine to accompany it all! You’ll be preparing a few simple items from scratch, then assembling your board. This will be ‘meal-size’ for 2 people, or appetizers for 4.



Registration closes on Monday, April 12th.

Go to www.gileadhouse.org home page or email grace624@comcast.net for registration link.



Need a weekend getaway? Think of the Woods!

Westminster Woods is a terrific place to get away, have fun, and be safe. Many of us don't want to travel too far and yet long for a place to go and relax. The Woods fits the bill! Just a short, beautiful drive to Occidental in southwestern Sonoma County forests drops you into God's world!

Weekend rentals are filling up, but there is still availability for the spring! Our guest houses can comfortably sleep eight or more and include a full kitchen, WiFi, and access to all the beauty of nature. Visit our website to learn more and begin the reservation process.

www.westminsterwoods.org

More to come soon on summer 2021!

Our Summer Leadership Team has met and is planning for summer 2021. More news will follow soon! We will be sure to send an email, update our website, and post on social media when we are ready to announce summer programming.



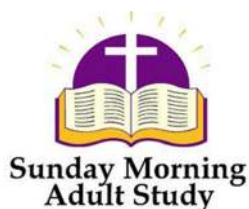
The Deacons will be sponsoring another blood drive on June 6 from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. Go to www.vitalant.org to register. Contact Janalee Holmes at (415) 898-8418 for more information.

Novato Distinguished Citizens Award

Congratulations to Abram McMickin, who was awarded the Novato Distinguished Citizens Award. This award is given to members of the community who display great courage under conditions likely to result in serious injury or the loss of life. We're so proud of you, Abram!



JIGSAW PUZZLE SWAP Our next puzzle swap will be Saturday, April 24 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.



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 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 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 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!

With a nod to Dr. Seuss

'Twas late in '19 when the virus began
Bringing chaos and fear to all people, each land.
People were sick, hospitals full,
Doctors overwhelmed, no one in school.
As winter gave way to the promise of spring,
The virus raged on, touching peasant and king.
People hid in their homes from the enemy unseen.
They YouTubed and Zoomed, social-distanced, and cleaned.
April approached and churches were closed.
"There won't be an Easter," the world supposed.
"There won't be church services, and egg hunts are out.
No reason for new dresses when we can't go about."
Holy Week started, as bleak as the rest.
The world was focused on masks and on tests.
"Easter can't happen this year," it proclaimed.
"Online and at home, it just won't be the same."
Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, the days came and went.
The virus pressed on; it just would not relent.

The world woke Sunday and nothing had changed.
The virus still menaced, the people, estranged.
"Pooh pooh to the saints," the world was grumbling.
"They're finding out now that no Easter is coming.
"They're just waking up! We know just what they'll do!
Their mouths will hang open a minute or two,
And then all the saints will all cry boo-hoo.
"That noise," said the world, "will be something to hear."
So it paused and the world put a hand to its ear.
And it did hear a sound coming through all the skies.
It started down low, then it started to rise.

But the sound wasn't depressed.
Why, this sound was triumphant!
It couldn't be so!
But it grew with abundance!
The world stared around, popping its eyes.
Then it shook! What it saw was a shocking surprise!

Every saint in every nation, the tall and the small,
Was celebrating Jesus in spite of it all!
It hadn't stopped Easter from coming! It came!
Somehow or other, it came just the same!
And the world with its life quite stuck in quarantine
Stood puzzling and puzzling.

"Just how can it be?"

"It came without bonnets, it came without bunnies,
It came without egg hunts, cantatas, or money."

Then the world thought of something it hadn't before.

"Maybe Easter," it thought, "doesn't come from a store."

Maybe Easter, perhaps, means a little bit more."

And what happened then?

Well....the story's not done.

What will YOU do?

Will you share with that one

Or two or more people needing hope in this night?

Will you share the source of your life in this fight?

The churches are empty - but so is the tomb,

And Jesus is victor over death, doom, and gloom.

So this year at Easter, let this be our prayer,

As the virus still rages all around, everywhere.

May the world see hope when it looks at God's people.

May the world see the church is not a building or steeple.

May the world find Faith in Jesus' death and resurrection,

May the world find Joy in a time of dejection.

May 2020 be known as the year of survival,

But not only that -

Let it start a revival. 🏠