

Presbyterian Church of Novato  
Annual Meeting of the Congregation  
January 29, 2023

AGENDA

11:00 a.m. Call to Order and Invocation – Adam Smith, Pastor

Necrology Report for 2022 – Kathy Takemoto, Clerk of Session

Recognition of retiring Elders and Deacons

Elders:

Diane Kaljian-Combs, Personnel

Joe Simmons, Property

Patty Reed, Fellowship

Beth Flynn, Stewardship

Carol Dacquisto, CE

Robert Coleman, Worship

Ellen Breazeale, Mission

Deacons:

Audrey Boland

Laurie Dougherty

EB Hanlein

Jo Richman

Bill Bradfield

Report by Emme Monahan, Director of Youth Ministry

Report by Sally Carbonaro, Director of Children's Ministry

Report by Sydney Fletcher, Director of Communication

Report by Adam Smith, Pastor

Questions regarding the printed Annual Report

Review of church finances and budget

12:00 p.m. Closing prayer and adjournment

12:01 p.m. Lunch and fellowship

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## CHURCH STAFF 2022

Adam Smith	Pastor
Emme Monahan	Director of Youth Ministry
Sally Carbonaro	Director of Children's Ministry
Sydney Fletcher	Director of Communication/Assistant Director of Children's Ministry
Katy Hatfield	Director of Music for Traditional Worship/Organist/Chancel Pianist
Bob McBain	Contemporary Worship Pianist
Tammi Jester	Office Administrator
Linda Ward	Administrative Office Assistant
Suzanne Schneider	Bookkeeper
Diane Ashley	Wedding Coordinator
Renee Garza	Nursery Caregiver
Carol Robinson	Nursery Caregiver
Kathy Takemoto	Clerk of Session
Brook Stahley	Deacon Moderator

## SESSION

### **Class of 2022**

Melodie Baird  
Beth Flynn  
Diane Kaljian-Combs  
Patty Reed  
Joe Simmons  
(vacant)

### **Class of 2023**

Bob Clausen  
Brad Praun  
Steve Revere  
Jim Rolka  
Regina Rus

### **Class of 2024**

Ellen Breazeale (resigned)  
Robert Coleman (resigned)  
Carol Dacquisto  
Bekah Harmon  
George Pilloton

Clerk of Session: Kathy Takemoto

### **Corporate Officers 2022**

Brad Praun, President, CEO  
George Pilloton, Treasurer, CFO  
Kathy Takemoto, Secretary

## BOARD OF DEACONS

### **Class of 2022**

Audrey Boland  
Bill Bradfield  
Marcus Combs  
Laurie Dougherty  
EB Hanlein  
Jo Richman

### **Class of 2023**

Janalee Holmes  
Brenda McIvor  
Becky Praun  
Brook Stahley  
Linda Ward  
(vacant)

### **Class of 2024**

Sandi Class (resigned)  
Larry Dacquisto, Jr. (resigned)  
Carol Robinson  
Kristen Rush  
(vacant)  
(vacant)

Moderator – Brook Stahley  
Vice Moderator – Audrey Boland  
Secretary – Linda Ward/Laurie Dougherty  
Treasurer – EB Hanlein/Janalee Holmes

## Pastor

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I always feel at a loss when it comes to encapsulating an entire year's worth of ministry into a single, concise annual report. In some ways the year seemed to have been a noteworthy paragraph outlining a simple course adjustment in our congregation's epic journey, and yet at the same time it was a full-length chapter with dramatic twists, sharp turns, and extraordinary happenings.

Perhaps I overthink the whole process when I should simply write, but then again how information is framed, interpreted, and presented is often what really gives any report real meaning.

2022 began with a big leap of faith. A budget was presented to the congregation in January: an ambitious budget that encapsulated our PCN vision. It outlined an investment in a new ministry area, Community Life, and in emergency response. It included adaptation of our leadership model and leadership training as well as an investment in communications both inside and outside of our congregation to create visibility and help build community. It bolstered our contemporary worship music that had been without a director and had fewer musicians; and it pointed toward investment in new avenues of stewardship in order to finance our vision.

In short, we plunged headfirst into unknown waters equipped with our faith in Jesus Christ and a willingness and determination to follow the Holy Spirit. We invested in the forementioned ministry and mission priorities. Sydney Fletcher became a full-time employee at PCN as she was hired as our Communications Director. As a result, our visibility as a congregation has never been better, especially online in social media and on the website. Our worship live-stream continues to improve. In order to intentionally build closer relationships both within our church and with visitors, we created a Community Life Committee, a Welcome Team, a visitor assimilation strategy, and a Life Group program. We continued our partnership with Marin VOAD (Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster) to be a part of our community emergency response effort, and we received grants toward this initiative. We hired several musicians for our contemporary music program, raising the quality of our contemporary music. We made incredible progress toward financing our vision, receiving a large sum from the Employee Retention Credit, better managing our investments, and tightening up our finances.

Our weekly children's program, Seekers, started up again with great effort from our Children's Ministry Director, Sally, as well as Sydney, and their volunteers. VBS was held in person and was a wonderful success!

In 2022, blessedly, we experienced church growth. We had more than 20 people join our church family, and many others become regular participants. Our youth program has been steadily growing. More and more families are returning to participate in Seekers. We saw more than 100 visitors in person with more joining online this year.

In the pages that follow you will read a more in-depth reflection of PCN's story in 2022, but I hope I have given you a snapshot of God's movement this year. We lived into our call, moving toward our vision as a congregation. We took leaps of faith, learned, adapted, tried new things, and we saw God bless our work together. In 2023, things will not get easier, but now we know what we are capable of when we trust and follow Christ. We can build up the body of Christ with God's help.

**Ministry & Mission Opportunities in 2023 include:**

- Continuing to invest in and grow in the ministry of Community Life, grow our Life Group program, and hire a part time Director of Community Life to help partner with us in this effort.
- Continuing to find ways to finance our ministry and mission priorities.
- Distributing and sharing ministry roles and responsibilities amongst the congregation. With the joys of growth come the challenges of growing pains. With more children and youth participating in our programs, we need more helpers. With long-time members stepping back from teaching and leading positions after years of faithful service, we are looking for others to help.
- Looking at a revised leadership model that slims down our leadership boards (Session and Diaconate) and better empower others in the congregation to share in ministry in order to better reflect our identity as a priesthood of all believers.
- Organizing an intentional, targeted outreach effort to the community.

**Pastoral Stats for 2022:**

- Preached 50+ times during the year and presided over communion over a dozen times.
- Led the Sermon Talk-Backs on Mondays at 9 a.m. via Zoom. Average participation was between six and nine persons.
- Staffed the Diaconate.
- Organized an officer retreat with Kim Stahley in the summer of 2022 for the purpose of reflection on our PCN Vision & Strategic Plan, adjusting priorities, leadership development, and overall fellowship.
- Met with seven indigent persons on behalf of the Deacons and provided support in the form of food or gas certificates.
- Provided 150+ in-person and phone pastoral visits.
- Provided pastoral counseling to seven individuals.
- Officiated at nine memorial services; 0 weddings
- Staffed the following Session Committees: Mission, Personnel, Worship, Stewardship, Nominating, Finance & Administration, Community Life.
- Worked with Community Life to help create a PCN assimilation strategy as well as organize a new Life Group Ministry.

- With Personnel, I helped conduct all staff evaluations and participated in staff search processes.
- Worked with Session to continue to lead from Vision including continued discernment, big-picture thinking and planning, and working toward specific initiatives. This included many one-on-one and small-group meetings to rethink ministry leadership.
- Participated in the Orange Conference in Atlanta in the spring with a focus on its leadership and family-ministry track.
- Led weekly staff meetings on Wednesday mornings.
- Participated in the Novato minister gatherings.
- Provided monthly articles for each edition of our newsletter.
- Participated in all Presbytery meetings.
- Created a new Welcome Team training curriculum and created a training video.
- Took over leadership of the Praise Team following three searches for a music director.
- Sang in the choir January through Easter.
- Created video content for promotion, social media, and training videos.
- Revised the new member class curriculum and led three new member (Inquirer) classes.
- Updated the officer training program and led officer training in December.
- Moderated all Session meetings.
- Worked with the Sound Tech to make our worship stream better.
- Read seven books.

Blessings to you all in this new year.

*Rev. Dr. Adam Smith, Pastor*

## Session

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During 2022, Session held eleven monthly stated Session meetings and one Special Session meeting. Session meetings were held via Zoom except for October and November, which were conducted via a hybrid format.

There were two congregational meetings in 2022, April 3 and December 18, for the purpose of electing church officers. At each meeting the previous congregational meeting minutes were available for review.

Elders participated in a leadership retreat on August 20.

PCN was represented at the 2021 Presbytery of the Redwoods meetings by Ruling Elder Delegate Ellen Breazeale. Alternates were Carol Dacquisto and Bill Walker.

In January 2022, Session approved officers for the 2022 Corporation to satisfy California Nonprofit Corporation law:

Brad Praun: President/CEO  
Joe Simmons: Treasurer/CFO  
Kathy Takemoto: Secretary

A summary of session meetings, entitled “Session Highlights” appeared in the *PresPress* throughout the year.

### **Active Membership Count:**

As of January 1, 2022	297
• Received into membership	+18
Losses:	
• Deaths	-6
• To inactive list	-14
• Transfer of membership	0
Reactivated	0
Total change in membership	-2
Membership as of December 31, 2021	295

### **Necrology Report:**

David Price Jones	February 21, 2022
Frances MacDonald	June 21, 2022
Carlene Searway	August 15, 2022
Tali Sundberg	October 27, 2022
Maverly Gaspari	December 17, 2022
Ruth Sommer	December 25, 2022

**Elder Committee Assignments:**

Christian Education: Melodie Baird and Carol Dacquisto  
Community Life: Bekah Harmon  
Finance and Administration: George Pilloton and Brad Praun  
Mission and Christian Action: Regina Rus and Ellen Breazeale  
Personnel: Diane Kaljian-Combs and Steve Revere  
Program and Fellowship: Patty Reed  
Property: Bob Clauson and Joe Simmons  
Stewardship: Beth Flynn  
Worship: Robert Coleman and Jim Rolka

The following members served on:

Bethany Stahley, Presbytery Finance Committee, Class of 2024  
Brad Praun, Presbytery Committee on Ministry, Class of 2024  
Sandy Peterson, Presbytery Committee on the Preparation for Ministry, Class of 2023  
Kathy Takemoto, Presbytery Representation & Review Committee, Class of 2024  
Tonya Church, Treasurer, Synod of the Pacific, through December 2023

*Kathy Takemoto, Clerk of Session*



## Community Life

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In our first year as a committee, we launched a lot of new programs as well as continued multiple programs from the membership and outreach committee.

Continued:

- Continued partnership with the Chamber of Commerce
- Oversaw membership increases and decreases
- Facilitated three inquirers' classes
- Participated in Novato Christmas tree lighting

New:

- Developed assimilation strategy for visitors including selecting new visitor gifts and the creation of a welcome team designed to provide additional touch points for welcoming new visitors
- Finalized a job description for a part-time Community Life Director
- Designed and launched a life groups program with more than 70 participants to increase connections in our community

In looking forward to 2023 our goals include:

- Hiring a part-time Community Life Director
- Increased participation numbers in welcome team
- Updating inquirers' class to increase its practicality
- Partnering with other ministries to increase community engagement and connection at PCN ministries and events

*Bekah Harmon, Community Life Elder*

## Christian Education

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The Christian Education Committee's primary mission is to shepherd children from infancy into adulthood while building the foundations of faith. We carry out this mission by developing and offering programs that will benefit the faith development of every PCN age group – infant to adult. In 2022, our committee was chaired by Elders Melodie Baird and Carol Dacquisto and included PCN staff members Sally Carbonaro, Sydney Fletcher, David Mink (through March), and Emme Monahan. We were supported by at-large members Walt Campbell, Margaret Franz-Costello, and recently by new members Sandy Fong and Virginia Saysette.

### **2022 CE Goals**

We began the year by asking what we wanted to accomplish, whether it was realistic and how we could measure our progress. We focused on exploring new ways to serve our children and youth, expanding our outreach to the community, and continuing to develop new and constructive approaches to adult education. We also were challenged to respond to new legislative requirements for our children and youth programs and to complete a revision of PCN's campus safety protocols.

Here are the goals that we set and our results.

### **Recruit Additional CE Committee Members**

We said goodbye and job well done to our intrepid Interim Youth Ministries Director David Mink in early 2022 and welcomed Emme Monahan as our new PCN Youth Director. We added three new members: Margaret Franz-Costello, Sandy Fong, and Virginia Saysette.

### **Develop a CE Ministry Volunteer Database**

Carol Dacquisto began the development of a list of potential volunteers, which we continued to develop during the Grace and Giving fest. In 2023, this will likely be incorporated into a new PCN database.

### **Expand Outreach Activities for the Children's Ministry**

Sally and Sydney looked for new ways to attract PCN and Novato children to our programs, and they greatly succeeded. They increased outreach to the wider Novato community and re-launched in-person Sunday School, Vacation Bible School, and Seekers. Thanks to their creative efforts and talents, participation in our programs grew substantially in 2022. Be sure to check out Sally's summary for more details.

### **Increase Engagement in Youth Programs/Expand Touchpoints**

Having a full-time Youth Director has been a huge plus this year. Emme has enthusiastically set out to grow and expand our middle school and high school programs by increasing the frequency and quality of our offerings and by building positive relationships with both students and parents. She offers an up-close look at what she has accomplished in her summary.

## **Expand Adult Education Classes**

Walt Campbell and Ellen Breazeale ventured into a new realm of providing quality adult education by introducing two *Great Courses* programs in 2022. These college-level lecture-based courses offer the benefit of being pre-recorded and taught by highly respected subject masters. In January, Walt and Ellen introduced and moderated an 18-week course on "Reading Biblical Literature," which followed the story of the Hebrew people from Genesis to Revelation. This class was offered at no cost to both PCN and the wider Novato community on Saturday mornings. About a dozen students completed the series.

In October, Walt and Ellen began a second *Great Courses* series featuring two sequential classes, "Church History and Church History II." Offered over 35 weeks, this class covers the history of Christianity from the dawn of the church to the modern megachurch. It is also offered on Saturday mornings and will run until August 2023. This class currently has 15 members.

We continued to support and grow our traditional adult classes in 2022 as well. Although health restrictions made it difficult to meet in person, we found that Zoom offered the unexpected benefit of allowing PCN members who have moved away or who are unable to leave home to continue to attend their favorite classes. Sunday Adult Bible Study and Women's Bible Study have greatly benefitted from this.

Our classes include:

- Sunday Adult Bible Study meets on Zoom on Sunday mornings at 8:30 a.m. Led by teachers James Baird, Carol Dacquisto, Larry Dacquisto, and Doris Dooley, the group reads each week's assigned scripture, then focuses on the passage. This class includes up to 15 members each Sunday.
- PCN Men's Group meets on Zoom on Wednesdays at 7:30 a.m. for bible study and fellowship. In 2002, the group said goodbye to Phil Dougherty, who had faithfully led them for 16 years. Walt Campbell now leads the group, which is currently studying Dietrich Bonhoeffer's book *The Cost of Discipleship*. This group includes about 20 members.
- Women's Bible Study meets on Zoom on Thursdays at 10:00 a.m. Led by Carol Dacquisto and Margaret Franz-Costello, the group completed a study of I and II Samuel in 2022. In January 2023, the class will begin an in-depth study of the Gospel of John. This class attracts up to 20 members each Thursday.

## **Sexual Abuse Prevention: Develop AB506 Protocols**

This by far was one of our greatest challenges in 2022. Assembly Bill 506, passed in 2021, was a California legislative change that expanded sexual abuse prevention requirements in youth programs. This new legislation required us to update or implement a number of important new procedures and protocols. Some of these included:

- Revising and expanding background check and fingerprinting processes;
- Revising and expanding PCN's Child Safety Volunteer Requirements/Code of Conduct/Forms;

- Developing and completing additional sexual abuse prevention training;
- Appointing a *Safe Church Coordinator* to oversee and track compliance with the new Child Safety protocols.

Using information provided by industry experts, we completely rewrote and replaced PCN's Safe Church Policy (ca 2012) with a new Safe Church Misconduct and Abuse Prevention Policy, which became effective on March 16, 2022. We nominated and received approval from Session to appoint Sydney Fletcher as PCN's *Safe Church Coordinator*.

In her role as *Safe Church Coordinator*, Sydney applied for and received certification from the CA DOJ to complete LiveScan fingerprinting. She also researched and established processes to order DMV reports, expanded background checks, and training courses. She also established an online tracking system to document the completion of all requirements by every involved individual.

A few of the most significant new requirements include:

- All children and youth volunteers must complete MinistrySafe's 1.5-hour Sexual Prevention training, and two-hour mandated reporter training prior to/or within 30 days of beginning their volunteer work;
- Expanded background checks including CA DOJ/FBI fingerprint searches are required for all PCN staff members, in addition to volunteers who regularly interact with infants, children, and youth.
- All elders, deacons, and volunteers in PCN Children and Youth programs must be trained on the Safe Church and Abuse Prevention Policy and agree by signature to conduct themselves in accordance with the policy.

Thanks to the efforts and cooperation of all our staff, teachers, volunteers, elders, and deacons, we were able to introduce and complete these requirements in 2022. We believe these efforts will help us to continue to provide the safest possible environment for our children and youth.

### **Update PCN's Campus Safety Policy**

CE continued to research and co-lead the PCN Safety Plan Committee, which is tasked with evaluating and responding to potential PCN emergency situations. 2022 committee members included co-leaders Melodie Baird and Beth Flynn, Walt Campbell, Robert Clausen, Robert Coleman, Carol Dacquisto, Delane Ramser, and Jim Rolka.

In early 2022, the committee agreed to rely on material provided by our insurer, Church Mutual, to revise PCN's 10+-year-old safety plan. Using their Secure Education Consultants Emergency & Security Preparedness Guide, we began by evaluating how we could communicate during an emergency, necessary roles and responsibilities, evacuation plans, and responding to medical emergencies and potential security threats.

During the year, Robert Clausen, Property Elder, inventoried and made improvements to our smoke detectors and made sure that all of our fire extinguishers were fully charged. We

developed a campus evacuation plan and decided to form a group of volunteers or “safety wardens” to help lead us to safety in an emergency and began recruiting volunteers. We decided to offer first-aid training classes and held the first class of 10 volunteers in October. We also identified areas of the campus and buildings requiring safety upgrades or improvements, and so much more.

In March, we completed our first draft of the revised PCN Emergency Guide. We are looking forward to completing and introducing the completed Emergency Guide in the near future.

CE thanks you, the PCN family, for your continued support, encouragement, and enthusiasm. Your willingness to volunteer to help or teach in our children, youth, or adult programs is vital to our success.

*Melodie Baird, Christian Education Elder*

## **Children's Ministry**

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We have been energized by the return of in-person ministries. We have embraced the benefits of technology and connection as well as in-person experiences, all of which enable us to reach families wherever they are.

### **Sunday School**

This year we relaunched Sunday School. As we continue to compete with sports and activities on Sunday in our community, we also provide a robust, fun program for all the kids when they visit us. We have had 24 kids attend Sunday School and the nursery. This program will continue to be a soft spot for kids and an entry point for visitors. We have had a number of kids visit and continue to attend this and other programs including Seekers.

### **Easter**

We had a wonderful "Eggstravaganza" on the turf field this year. Many families participated, and it was a great time to introduce our visitors to our programs. We gained several new Seeker families from this event.

### **Vacation Bible School**

We were over the moon this year with an in-person VBS. We offered a K-5<sup>th</sup> program and did not have enough volunteers to offer a pre-school program this year. Our numbers exceeded all previous years for that age group. As several years have passed since we were 'live' we were short on youth volunteers, many having actually graduated from high school! We extended the opportunity to Good Shepherd Middle School and they embraced it wholeheartedly. Our crew leaders were younger than usual and participated in each activity almost as much as the kids. This created a different kind of synergy and excitement. It also opens the door to more joint ventures with the school.

A big thank you to all who helped with registration, leading a station, stage design and build and all the other details of a VBS. We could not have done this without you! We would also like to thank the Deacons and the Mission Committee for assisting us with covering scholarships! These are an important part of all our programs.

### **Seekers**

Seekers began a bit light but is rocking now. We relaunched in September and have been adding new kids each week. We take a break in December and will return in January. We have reached capacity with our volunteers. To allow for additional registrations we will require additional support. At the close of November, we had 33 kids attending and 50 served at dinner. We have had five children in the nursery, which will require two care providers each night. We will need to hire another one by January. Less than a third of those kids are PCN families. We need a couple of teachers, table parents and some kitchen help! As a church we are blessed to have received new dishes and cutlery as well as a dishwasher! Thank you, Program & Fellowship, Property and everyone else involved.

This is our flagship outreach program; there is nothing like it in our community. It is a perfect way to spread God's Word into the community and among families, building resilience in our youngest ones God's way.

### **Children's Messages**

Sydney and I have done more than 50 children's messages again this year. We have a very active YouTube site and have been able to reach people literally all over the world. Whenever our children travel or sadly, move, they can still receive a message from a friendly face. This has served as a comforting way to stay connected. We receive lots of comments from our distance families about our messages. It also is a reference point for families who can look up certain topics and seasons on our secure YouTube channel.

### **The Halloween Harvest Festival**

We are pleased to say this event was a success. We had more new families than current families! We made many connections and hopefully will see some new faces on Sunday and beyond. We used the turf field again this year for games and 'family time'. Families gravitated there for safe play and containment (😊). Such a great addition. An indication of the importance of providing a safe, fun place for kids and families to connect. A shout out to the amazing creative trunks and all who stepped up to provide a fun way for kids to trick or treat. Special thanks to Program & Fellowship for the chili, dogs and for helping to make this happen!

### **The Children's Christmas Service**

We received rave reviews for our video last year and have added it to our traditions for this year. In addition, the live performances are always fun and never predictable. We appreciate all the support and help from so many to make this happen. We had 25 kids registered to participate with two last minute fill-ins. The children worked really hard this year, and we believe delivered a command performance!

### **YouTube**

This year PCN kids have posted 53 children's message videos with 1,239 views in total. Our video's 'thumbnail' has appeared to other people on YouTube **24,800** times with 501 views. This is outreach beyond PCN and our kids and families! These are people who found us by searching the internet! Whoa!

### **Facebook**

We have an active PCN Kids Facebook page. This year in addition to communicating program information, Sunday worship and children's messages, Sydney promotes all PCN Kids events both before and after with pictures. Our Facebook posts have been viewed 517 times so far this year.

### **The In-Between**

We maintain all connections that we have had throughout the years. We have sent hundreds of birthday cards, Valentine's Day cards, postcards for VBS, Seekers, Trunk or Treat, Christmas Eve and Christmas cards.

We have had a number of families reach out to us during this year for support in dealing with family and crises issues. This was very inspiring to be their church of call so to speak when emergencies tested their resolve.

### **Conclusion**

For all of us, the world is constantly changing and unpredictable. One of our goals is to continue to help the children develop the resiliency needed to survive and thrive in today's environment.

As we meet for Seekers each week, we have unique opportunities to talk about what is happening in the community and the world beyond. Kids don't always know what they think until they are able to verbalize what is happening. As we work through our questions and find answers together, we are all strengthened by the process.

As we respond to Jesus's call and embrace the here and now, we are both energized and overwhelmed by God's love for our community and the work here at PCN.

We thank God for the opportunity to serve.

*Sally Carbonaro, Director of Children's Ministry*



## Youth Group

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This has been a robust year for our PCN Youth Ministries! As COVID restrictions were lifted we were able to return to so many of the activities that our church and youth group know and love while being flexible with the current health climate. We met weekly, sharing meals (so kindly donated by families of our programs and members of our congregation!), playing games, and learning more about God!

In January I came on part-time as our Director of Youth Ministries and worked closely with David Mink, the former Interim Director of Youth Ministries, to learn the ropes leading our youth group! We took nine middle schoolers to Hume Lake Christian Camps in the Sequoia National Forest. Since none of them had had a chance to go to winter camp yet, many of us experienced it for the first time together. We played in the snow, got to hear a message based on Jonah about God's love for everyone, and grew closer in our friendships with each other!

Later, in February, we got to go back but with five high school students! It was so rewarding to see kids who had been before get excited about building our sled and being back in that place, but also to see kids who hadn't had a chance to go to camp experience the fun-filled weekend for the first time.

In March we took a trip as a youth group up to Santa Rosa First Presbyterian Church to attend their Second Sunday worship night, giving our youth another look into different ways we can all worship and praise God together!

In April I came on full time as our Director of Youth Ministries and invest more time in ramping up programs for this year! We were also able to start up our Rise Against Hunger meal-packing event again, which helps put 10,000 meals into the hands of people who need them across the globe! A generous donation from our mission committee and the time of many people from the congregation helped us accomplish this radical goal. We were amazed by the fun and fellowship that happened as you all made this possible!

May has traditionally been home to our annual All-Marin Nerf War and we were able to host again this year too! Youth groups from around the county came together to have a massive nerf battle, all at PCN. This year, we had more than 100 students on grounds to have fun together and realize how big the church in their community truly is!

In June, the McMickins were kind enough to host our youth group summer pool parties, so we got to splash around and have fun to kick off our summer vacations! Many of our youth group students also helped out with our Vacation Bible School in early June, helping to lead elementary students in a crew or helping out with games or tech.

Watch out Nashville! Here comes PCN Youth! In July we got to take a crew of six high schoolers on a trip with Mission Discovery to Nashville, TN. We worked together with their leaders and community partners to help build school infrastructure, provide day programs and lunches to children from working-parent households on summer break, and partnered with a sliding-scale daycare to help restore a garden that had been overtaken by weeds. Our high-schoolers had a great time learning more about the stories that the people of Nashville (and the other group from Plano, TX) had to share, hearing a message each evening, and of course, trying Nashville Hot Chicken!

In August we took a trip out to Limantour Beach with the whole youth group! We got to boogie board, “bask” in the foggy day, and get some quality time with one another.

Each September we get to take a group of high school students to the Arrows Conference at New Life Church off of Rowland Blvd. A whole team of youth pastors and volunteers from different churches work together to put on an ecumenical weekend full of encouraging worship and messages for students. This year our theme was *Speak* and we focused on 1 Samuel 3 where Samuel is called by the Lord. I was invited to share about ways we can listen to God speak through the chaos in nature and loved sitting in on the other speakers' messages, too!

In October, we took our annual corn maze trip to the Petaluma Pumpkin Patch and Corn Maze off of Stony Point Road. We had 22 kids attend and everyone enjoyed a stop at In-N-Out Burger before racing through the maze and enjoying the hay pyramid. We didn't lose anyone in the corn – and that's pretty a-maize-ing!

We also had our first Youth Leadership Team Meeting in October, which was attended by four of our high school students. They each applied for the team in September, and now help to provide feedback and make decisions about activities and changes in the youth group.

Over Veteran's Day weekend in November, we had a youth overnight where we played games, watched movies, and ate doughnuts while hanging out with each other. We had 14 students join us for our late-night fun. And when we came back from Thanksgiving break, we had a pajama movie night and watched “The Emperor's New Groove” as we settled back into our school routine.

In November we also started up our weekly after school video game clubs on Monday and Tuesday afternoons. Modeled after Satellite Gaming Ministries in Oregon, our video game club aims to provide students with a positive and welcoming after-school environment that engages them with something they love and point them towards our other programs that might introduce them to the abundant love of Christ! We've had a group of about three to six students attending so far this year, with plans to advertise and invite more students in the new year!

In December, we went caroling and had our annual Christmas party! On December 11th we were able to visit the homes of a few of our congregation members to carol and spread some Christmas cheer – and we were even treated to a little Christmas cheer ourselves in the form of hot cocoa. A big thank you to everyone who allowed us to stop by and share our voices with you! On December 18th, we had our Christmas party, which included a hot chocolate bar and our white elephant gift exchange. Over break, some of our youth helped in our Christmas Eve services.

Providing this kind of program is only possible thanks to God and with your help. As we look back at what we've done this year, it's clear the kind of impact your support has made on our youth and in our community. We were able to provide a weekly program for middle and high school students to attend on Sunday evenings, weekly after-school clubs, and fun and spirit-filling experiences I've just described throughout the year! We've experienced stability and a small amount of growth in our numbers this year, despite the change in leaders, and have been able to build relationships with new youth while continuing to invest in the lasting relationships we have with the youth we've known for years.

As we look forward to the new year, we are grateful to continue creating a welcoming community with each other, serving our community, and growing closer to Christ and each other! We are excited to see the big ways we are sure God will work through our ministry this year.

We will start back up our weekly youth group on January 8th, and lots of new and fun things are in the works for the new year, and we hope EVERYONE had a very Merry Christmas. We are so grateful for all the support our youth ministries receive in the way of volunteers, donations, meals, prayer, and well-wishes! We hope you enjoyed a season of joy with your loved ones while we all, as the church, celebrate the birth of the Messiah.

*Emmeline Monahan, Director of Youth Ministry*

## Sunday Adult Bible Study

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Lively Bible study! That's what happens here. As adults study the Bible and discuss what they found, they gain a growing understanding of how to move forward on their discipleship journey.

We spend time reading the Scriptures and discussing the passage. A Bible exploration becomes alive through the exciting expressions, actions and most of all everyone's participation as they share what they have discovered from the lesson. Every week adults are encouraged to prepare for the next week's lesson. Preparation isn't difficult, but it does encourage participation. When adults have invested something of themselves in the lesson, they will get more out of it.

The biggest part of our Sunday school lesson doesn't happen in the classroom. It happens on Monday and Tuesday – and through the week – when instead of following their own desires or the crowd, the adults dare to say, ***“No, I will follow Jesus.”***

The Sunday Adult Class meets every Sunday via **Zoom** at 8:30 a.m., which still leaves time for those who want to travel to church. We have 10 to 12 adults who attend each Sunday. We would like to invite each of you to come and join us for a wonderful group of people as they bring **the Bible to life**.

*Study Leaders,*

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

## Mission

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*Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.*  
- Matthew 25:40

In 2022, the Mission Committee was blessed to act on your behalf and distributed a total of \$120,504, including the budgeted PCN \$100,000 plus special offerings, Alternative Christmas Fair and 2 cents/meal for the Redwood Presbytery food program. Not included in this amount is the generous contribution of food purchased and prepared for Jonathan's Place dinners, groceries for Center for Domestic Peace or the coffee and backpacks for Camp Compassion. The Mission Committee thanks you for your continuing support.

In deciding who should receive mission funds, the committee has used the following guidelines to grant a donation to a program, group or person:

- A registered 501C (3) non-profit
- A ministry which intentionally bears witness to Jesus Christ and the Christian Gospel
- Focused on serving the poor
- 'Sponsored' by a PCN member who acts as a liaison to the Mission Committee
- An effective manager of its funds

**International mission support** – PCN continues to support six families serving in countries around the world. \$22,500 was shared with Mark and Jenny Hare in Costa Rica, Bob and Kristi Rice in South Sudan, Sarah Henken in Columbia, Rev. Ryan and Alethia White in Germany, Revs Shelvis and Nancy Smith-Mather in South Sudan, and Rev. Cathy Chang and Juan Lopez in the Philippines. Additional international activities funded were Faith in Practice \$1,500 (a Guatemala medical mission project) and Matthew 25 Ministries International \$1,000 (PCN member Jeff Pinar in El Paso supporting people living in Juarez).

**Supporting church organizations and youth** – PCN provides funding to the Presbytery of the Redwoods <http://www.redwoodspresbytery.org/> \$14,000 plus a contribution to the General Assembly \$3,500. In addition, we provided a \$1,000 grant to Westminster Woods, \$3,000 for the annual Rise Against Hunger youth project and \$10,000 to the PCN youth group mission trip last summer.

**Funding Hands-On Mission Work** – For the third year in a row, we did not send a team to Juarez, but we still funded one house to be constructed (\$6,000). Until we find new leadership for this mission trip, we won't include this in a future budget. The local mission trip did not occur in 2022 either, and the budgeted \$9,000 was redirected to local agencies through the discretionary spending voted on in the December meeting.

**Local and regional organization support** - \$37,199 total was spent in annual grants to our local and regional organizations including North Marin Community Services \$5,500, Lynwood School ROAR (reading) program \$1,000, Gilead House \$1,000, Downtown Streets Team \$1,000, LITA \$1,000, Extra Food \$1,000, Ceres Community Project \$1,000, The Street Chaplaincy \$1,000, All Dressed Up Ministry \$3,750 (clothing for exiting San Quentin

prisoners), Homeward Bound \$4,000, SF/Marin Food Bank \$3,000, and Center for Domestic Peace \$1,000. The committee approved special funding from the discretionary fund to help Gilead House repair an apartment at their Lynwood site \$6,000, and to North Marin Community Services to help fund the repair of a fence on Novato Boulevard \$4,000. In addition, we provided a contribution to the NOAH food pantry program in Rohnert Park that also supports our local agencies \$1,500, a contribution to Alchemia of \$473 and a rock-painting project for Ceres of \$256. Last, the committee voted to spend discretionary funds of \$420.43 for The Street Chaplaincy and Camp Compassion (weekly coffee) and \$300 for youth VBS scholarships.

The Mission Committee continued to support our neighbors in Novato:

1. Addressing the homelessness crisis in Novato – PCN is the first Novato faith organization to be a Faith Ambassador Congregation, and we provide weekly support to Camp Compassion, which is the only remaining encampment in Marin County. We bring coffee weekly and talk with the residents if they want. This can be a challenging thing to do because people are very sensitive, but our consistent support is building trust. PCN also provided 20 backpacks full of warm things the week of Thanksgiving. Thank you to Hilary Kinney for her leadership. <https://www.streetchaplaincy.org/about>.
2. Center for Domestic Peace C4DP Grocery Program – We are appreciative of Barbara Gildea's leadership in the monthly grocery bag donations of food for the clients of C4DP. She estimates we provided at least 140 bags of groceries in 2022. Becky Erba also made 60 handmade pillowcases to provide for children in the program this year. This agency supports families that have been subjected to domestic violence and are living safely now. Barbara delivers them to C4DP which is much appreciated. <https://centerfordomesticpeace.org/>
3. Lynwood ROAR reading program – Five volunteers have recently cleared a medical check and will be trained and back to reading to students at Lynwood very soon. We are grateful that the Covid pause to this important program is almost over, and that Art Plumstead has kept in communication with the school and will continue to lead this program.
4. Jonathan's Place – at Mill Street in San Rafael, operated by Homeward Bound, reopened in September to fanfare as the community toured the three-story building. The street level is parking, the first floor is a short-term emergency shelter for 40 people per night, and the second and third floors are permanent supportive housing for 36 people receiving services that will allow them to move to independence. The monthly meal program supports the emergency shelter. Thank you to Patty Reed who continues to organize the meal program that restarted in November. The Mission Committee is also grateful that Bob Clausen drives the donations to the site each month with additional help from Carolyn Gerrans in 2023.
5. Alternative Christmas Fair Dec. 4 – Six organizations participated in the 2022 ACF. The total collected at this year's event was \$5,637. The organizations include Heifer International \$1,088; The Street Chaplaincy \$654; Lynwood Elementary School Maker

Space \$608; Presbytery mission programs \$1,044; Faith in Practice \$939 and Homeward Bound \$1,304.

6. Rock painting for Ceres food program – Barbara Gildea’s 2022 rock-painting project for CERES Community Project client holiday gift bags came in under budget and ahead of deadline. Mission Committee unanimously funded. PCN Seekers and Youth Group and NMCS youth were artists. CR/Marin Landscape and RileyStreet Art Supply donated rocks and paints. Many thanks to all who helped!
7. Special Offerings – PCN participates in four special offerings <https://specialofferings.pcusa.org/page/pgcresources/>. In 2022 the special offerings collected a total of \$14,577: One Great Hour of Sharing \$6,042 (including \$3,347 special offering to Ukraine), Pentecost \$2,495, Peace and Global Witness \$2,978 and Christmas Joy \$3,062. Two of these offerings allow the committee to choose an organization to support from the total offering:
  - a. Pentecost: 40% of the offering (\$895) was donated to Lynwood School to support the Maker Space for students.
  - b. Peace and Global Witness in October: 25% (\$1,131) was donated to North Marin Community Services. We invited Cheryl Paddack, the Executive Director, to provide the sermon that Sunday.
8. Two Cents a Meal – The Presbytery of the Redwoods participates in the Two Cents a Meal program which is then used to fund local food programs. PCN raised \$591 in the first Sunday of the month offering.
9. Buckaroo Breakfast – The Mission Committee chose the SF Marin Food Bank as the beneficiary of the profits of this year’s event. However, due to restarting the breakfast after two years of hiatus, there actually was no profit to remit. We hope that next year does have a profit!

Much appreciation to our hardworking Mission Committee members! Ellen Breazeale, Bill Cameron, Carolyn Gerrans, Barbara Gildea, Vicki Martinez, Jeff Pinar, Art Plumstead, Mike Robinson, Regina Bianucci Rus, Bill Walker and Hilary Kinney.

God has imbued PCN with a deep and compassionate spirit to actively work to help others in need locally, nationally and internationally. We give Him thanks for this blessing.

*Regina Bianucci Rus, Mission Elder*

## Program and Fellowship

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### **Committee:**

Patricia Reed, P&F Elder  
Kathy Takemoto  
Mary Contreras  
Tonya Church  
Becky Praun  
Audrey Boland

### **2022 in Review:**

PCN Fellowship supported PCN events throughout the year for our congregants and our community at large.

**Virtual Bingo** – Hosted several of these in January, February, March and September with various themes and prizes.

**Scout Sunday** – Held at PCN on February 6<sup>th</sup>

- Scouts and families from Troop 200, Pack 186 and Pack 85 were invited to join us for church service, where Pastor Adam received their charters and recognized their leaders. We hosted special fellowship treats afterwards to welcome them.

**Resurrection Garden** – April 3<sup>rd</sup>

- Hosted a craft event after church whereby congregants could bring a pot and make a craft to celebrate the resurrection.

**Palm Sunday brunch** – April 12<sup>th</sup>

**Mother's Day** – May 8<sup>th</sup>

- Our teen children handed out red roses to all ladies as they entered church service.

**Father's Day lunch** – June 19<sup>th</sup>

- Held directly after church outside on patio.
- Served hot dogs, chips, fruit and cookies
- Invited all VBS families to join

**Buckaroo Breakfast** – July 4<sup>th</sup> at Redwood Credit Union parking lot on Grant Avenue.



**Grace and Giving event – October 9<sup>th</sup>**

- Held directly after church outside on patio.
- Served containers with pulled pork sliders, cole slaw, fruit skewers and brownies.

**Harvest Festival/Trunk or Treat – Saturday, Oct 29<sup>th</sup>**

- 2:00-4:00 p.m.
- Decorated several cars and had carnival-style games, activities and trunk-or-treating with wrapped candy and trinkets.
- Provided chili and crackers, hot dogs and drinks

**Friendsgiving – November 12<sup>th</sup>**

- Hosted a full Thanksgiving dinner for PCN congregants and guests from two local missions we support: Gilead House and North Marin Community Services

**Advent Afternoon – December 4<sup>th</sup>**

Hosted activity tables including Christmas card making, cookie decorating, green swag decorations, ornaments and advent coloring books.

**New Member reception – December 11<sup>th</sup>**

Decorated Trevitt Hall with holiday décor and hosted various finger foods and beverages for all congregant attendees to welcome our 17 newest members.

Planning for 2023 will take place in January with Tonya Church taking on leadership of the committee.

Respectfully submitted,

*Patty Reed, Program and Fellowship Elder*

## Property Committee

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PCN is well into the second year of operation of the mini-split HV/AC system. However, at the beginning of this year there were three instances of valve failure that shut a portion of the system down for a minimum of a day. All the repairs were done under warranty. For the past seven months there have not been any failures. At the beginning of 2023 we should have enough history to be able to determine the utility cost impact of the mini-split.

Throughout the year there were many routine maintenances performed by committee members. Failed light fixtures, dripping faucets, lawn care, scrapping the boiler and piping and converting the boiler room to a storage space for Mike Robinson. November 19 was the second property clean-up day of 2022 with about 10 volunteers doing a great job.

An example of completed items that required outside labor are:

1. Replace sign board clear panel that was destroyed by vandals: \$279.00
2. Tree trimming to comply with an inspection result from Novato Fire Department: \$755.00
3. Heavy lifting of old boiler and removal to scrapyard: \$450.00
4. Replacing water fountain valve: \$515.00
5. Locksmith services to remove broken key: \$238.00
6. Installed a new dishwasher. Total includes plumber, electrician and cabinet revision: \$1085.00

The 2023 property budget request is increasing a small percentage, but Property and four additional Elders have been appointed to a task force to explore and prioritize needed capital projects. Current emphasis is on (a) replacing carpet in the office, Christensen room and kitchen hallway and (b) repair of the parking lot.

*Bob Clausen, Property Elder*

## Personnel Committee

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### **Staff:**

#### *PCN paid staff members:*

Adam Smith, Pastor  
David Mink, Director of Youth Ministry (ended in April)  
Emme Monahan, Director of Youth Ministry (beginning in April)  
Sally Carbonaro, Director of Children's Ministry  
Sydney Fletcher, Children's Ministry Assistant  
Renee Garza, Nursery Provider  
Katy Hatfield, Director of Traditional Music & Organist  
Bob McBain, Contemporary Worship Accompanist  
Sydney Fletcher, Director of Communication  
Tammi Jester, Office Administrator  
Linda Ward, Administrative Assistant  
Carol Robinson, temporary Office Administrator  
Lewis Berkhout, Bookkeeper (April – July)

#### *-Contract positions:*

Kendall Kinney, Worship Production Technician/Videographer (ended February)  
Suzanne Schmidt, Bookkeeper  
Mark Heims, contemporary service musician  
Roland Tolaso, contemporary service musician  
Dave Formato, Sound Technician

<b>2022 Personnel Committee Goals</b>	
Develop standard Personnel files & reports	Progress/Continue
Recruit and hire for vacant positions. Expand recruitment methods.	Progress/Continue
Establish Staff Appreciation practices & events	Accomplished
Standardize PCN staff position descriptions and employment letters	Accomplished

In addition to the annual goals, the Personnel Committee met monthly and addressed various personnel related and confidential items:

- Collaborated with F&A on Pastor Terms of Call and Equity allowance
- Hired: Director of Communication, bookkeeper, sound tech, contemporary musicians
- Completed annual staff evaluations, individual review, self-evaluation, and goal-setting meetings
- Implemented new Paychex system for PCN staff and contract employees
- Updated Personnel Policies related to sick leave

- Collaborated with CE Committee on Safe Church Policies/Background checks
- Recommended budget adjustments and COLA (cost of living adjustment) to Finance and Administration/Session for PCN 2023 budget
- Distributed PCN staff appreciation holiday gift cards
- Participated in Director of Youth Ministry search committee and hiring
- Participated on the Contemporary Music Director search committee

We appreciate the dedicated work of the committee members. The 2022 Personnel Committee members are Don Brand, Mike Winsor and Pastor Adam Smith.

Mike Winsor has resigned at the end of December from the Personnel Committee. We are grateful to Mike for many years of dedicated, insightful guidance on the Personnel Committee. Thank you, Mike!

*Steve Revere and Diane Kaljian-Combs, Personnel Elders*

## Stewardship

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Committee Members: Beth Flynn, Stewardship Elder; Reverend Dr. Adam Smith, Pastor; Tonya Church, Brad Praun, and Bruce Stahley

Supporters: Patty Reed and the Program & Fellowship Committee, Brad Praun and George Pilloton and the Finance Committee, the Men's Group, and the Community Life Committee

The Presbyterian Church of Novato members and friends continue to be generous and faithful stewards of its church programs and mission, serving those in need in its congregation, community, nationally and worldwide, blessed by the finances and talents gifted by our gracious God.

The Stewardship Committee chose to continue using the Consecration Sunday Stewardship Program that has been used by PCN for more than 25 years with a few modifications. The program includes outreach during services, mailing of a letter and estimate of giving cards to members and friends of the church which allows us to communicate the church's mission, program successes and needs, in a way that encourages and challenges each individual/family to search out how Christ is calling them to respond to the sharing of their gifts from God in support of PCN and those less fortunate. This year we combined the Time and Talents Fair with Consecration Sunday and held our first Grace and Giving Festival to celebrate the giving of both our monetary gifts and our talents as we planned for 2023. The Stewardship Program highlights:

- Stewardship letter updating status in August 2022 highlighting our giving status.
- "I Love this Place" sermons in September and October focusing on what the church is, how we can help, what our mission is, and what is our call.
- Consecration Sunday (October 9, 2022) - On Consecration Sunday, we heard from Pastor Adam and considered the importance of our financial gifts and the act of sharing with our larger community.
- Following the Consecration Sunday service, the Stewardship Committee, in conjunction with the Fellowship Committee and the Community Life Committee, provided a Grace and Giving Festival to highlight the opportunities to share our gifts with others, meet our Community Life Group leaders, and celebrate our "giving" opportunities for the sharing of our talents and joining in fellowship. Various committees gave presentations, including by Mission, Fellowship, Worship, Property, Finance and Administration, Deacons, and Christian Education. There were opportunities to paint rocks as part of a mission project and enjoy a tasty barbeque lunch.
- In early November, the Stewardship Committee sent a letter to members to provide a status on receipt of Estimates of Giving. The committee also made contact via telephone with members with outstanding EOGs, so that we could consider everyone's stewardship gifts in our 2023 budget-planning process.
- As of December 28, 2022, we had received 138 "estimates of giving" pledges for a total of \$539,071, up \$41,920 from last year's pledges.

- The increase in total estimates of giving was related to new members providing estimates of giving and an increase in the average pledges this year.
- Average pledges equated to \$3,906, an increase from \$3,737 last year.

In total, the fall 2022 Stewardship campaign represents a wonderful expression of living the vows we all took as members – “to give of our time, talent and assets.” The uncertainty that we are all still feeling this year related to inflation, living with COVID, the aging of our membership, and longtime members moving to new communities continues to challenge us, but with new members joining us and the continued faith and support of all our members and friends we had a very successful 2023 campaign. Because of your gifts, PCN will continue to retain the best pastoral and administrative staff; fund ministry, worship, Christian education, youth, fellowship, mission, administrative and property needs; and Community Life mission.

The Stewardship Committee would like to express its thanks to everyone who helped with organizing and conducting the campaign. We would also like to express our thanks to the congregation for strongly supporting Christ’s work through His Church. Most importantly, we want to thank God for entrusting us with this treasure, and we pray we are good stewards of all God’s gifts.

*Beth Flynn, Stewardship Elder*

## Worship Committee

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Although the Presbyterian Church of Novato started in-person worship services during 2021, at the beginning of 2022 there were still many issues revolving around in-person worship services. Issues primarily addressed “getting back to normal, pre-covid, services.”

While the Worship Committee consisted of nine or ten individuals, it takes dozens of volunteer participants to make worship happen every Sunday. The pre-Covid structure and operation of ushers, greeters, communion servers, communion preparation, sanctuary maintenance (candles, envelopes, sign-in sheets, etc.) had dissolved. Many long-time volunteers have aged and “retired” from serving whether as Covid precaution or just relinquishing responsibilities.

Changes in personnel and worship included recruitment of liturgists to assist the pastor. The new sound and video system, including the now-indispensable worship broadcast required new and more volunteers and training.

Having one service instead of two meant that contemporary worship volunteers needed to learn how to shut down equipment and lock up and clean up, while traditional worship volunteers needed to show up early and “open up” the sanctuary and start-up equipment. The old procedures were simply no longer appropriate.

There was still quite emotional and emphatic separation of members regarding preference for contemporary versus traditional services. And membership clearly communicated the desire to have a resolution, a stated plan. The Worship Committee needed to decide how, as a church, we would proceed further. Go back to two services, or stay with one? If one service, how should we continue? Move to a single type of service? Traditional, contemporary, or blended (which was what we had been doing in 2021 but that did not seem to please many)? Continue with both types of services but alternate Sundays? How would the congregation accept that? How would that be scheduled?

Similarly, what about Communion Sundays? Trays or intinction? When? What about health concerns? Pass offering plates? Pass communion trays? Use of hymnals and Bibles.

We recognized that one good outcome of the Covid-induced single service, whether via Zoom or in-person, was that congregation members began to meet, recognize and get to know other members who previously exclusively attended the “other” service.

Our plan needed to be supported by weekly attendance, availability of volunteers for ushers and greeters, liturgists, communion, and adequate staffing for operating the equipment in the booth.

We also recognized the obvious: streaming online services was no longer Covid-temporary. Streaming is now an integral part of the Presbyterian Church of Novato worship delivery. The Worship Committee has the responsibility to ensure the ongoing delivery, quality and content of worship service both in-person and online.

The Worship Committee had its challenges!

## **PROGRESS**

At the beginning of the year, in-person attendance was 90-115. Online attendance was 30-45 computers. Since online viewers were often couples or families, “online people” were estimated between 60-80.

Sydney Fletcher provided training for camera and computer technicians and developed written instructions for their use.

In April, the committee decided to try alternating services – traditional one week, contemporary the next week, etc., for two months (as had been done in previous years for services during the summer). After that, we would survey the congregation and use that feedback to guide services beginning in September.

The committee developed written instructions for ushers and greeters including opening and closing the sanctuary for worship. Kay Walker developed detailed instructions for communion, both by intinction and via passing trays.

Due to the need for quality sound, a professional sound technician was hired to run the audio board during services.

A survey was taken of the congregation regarding worship format preference. The results revealed no overwhelming preference between the traditional (37%), contemporary (21%), and blended (32%) formats. Among respondents, 9% expressed “no preference.” Apparently, the extensive use of the blended format during the second year of the pandemic was warmly received by many in the church. The survey also showed that a start time of 10 a.m. is the overwhelming preference among the 151 respondents.

By mid-year, attendance online continued to be about 36 connections per Sunday, estimated to include about 60 individuals. In-person attendance averaged 121. This information made it clear, for now, that the church does not have sufficient attendance to support two services every Sunday.

The committee decided that for the remainder of 2022, at least, we will have alternating worship styles each Sunday, but we may have blended worship on special services. The services will be uniquely their own but will have certain liturgical pieces that are the same to link the two services (same call to worship and benediction). The aim for each ‘style’ of service will be to be professional and ‘the best they can be.’



Due to the enthusiasm for the memorial service held in 2021, the committee decided to make it an annual event on a Sunday near November 1<sup>st</sup> (All Saints Day). To eliminate potential confusion and disappointment concerning which persons qualify for inclusion such as members vs non-members, or family vs friends, etc., members can submit requests for anyone they wish.

Pastor Adam Smith provided training for liturgist volunteers. We now have 22 persons who have offered to serve in that capacity.

Since communion by intinction had been associated with the contemporary service and passing of bread and wine trays with traditional service, the practice of alternating weeks caused concern that due to months containing five weeks, the first Sunday of the month (Communion Sunday) caused disproportionate occurrences. The committee decided that communion would alternate each month regardless of worship style scheduled for that day.

The committee heard that some congregants with sight issues can't read the projection screens and therefore can't participate in the unison reading. The unison readings had been dropped from the printed order of worship. In November, we reverted to the practice of church bulletins which include much more information as had been the practice in previous years. And, in December we will begin to provide large-print handouts for visually impaired.

### **CONTINUING ISSUES**

The Worship Committee needs greater representation by members who represent those preferring the contemporary form of service. We continue to lack sufficient volunteers, especially for audio/visual support during worship.

The following illustrates volunteer support needed for ongoing worship services:

- AV system
- Ushers
- Greeters
- Liturgists
- Communion supplies and preparation and clean-up
- Mid-week clean-up
- Communion server (must be current or previously ordained elders or deacons)
- Sing/play in praise band (tryout)
- Chancel Choir
- PCN Bells

In addition to items discussed in this Annual Report, the Worship Committee regularly dealt with the more mundane issues that come up frequently such as dealing with supplies, requests, decorations, equipment issues, etc. Although they need to be addressed by the committee, they are not considered of such import as to be included here.

### Worship Committee

Diane Blalock	dianeblalock1@gmail.com	415-608-4402	
Bill Bradfield	janbil33@gmail.com	415-408-3427	
Robert Coleman	robhcoleman@comcast.net	415-492-1007	Elder Representing Contemporary Service
Jeanne Convis	j_convis@yahoo.com	415-328-2319	
Katy Hatfield	katynotes@gmail.com	415-897-6239	Music Director of Traditional Worship
Jim Rolka	jimrolka@gmail.com	415-517-8475	Elder Representing Traditional Service
Rev. Adam Smith	RevDrAdamSmith@gmail.com	415-488-7845	Pastor/Staff
Bruce Stahley	bastahley@verizon.net	415-328-9278	
Kay Walker	walker@comcast.net	415-883-5780	

*Jim Rolka, Worship Elder*

## Communication

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Here is an overview of some of the activities I have undertaken as Director of Communication this year.

### **Internal and External Communication**

I continue to design and manage PCN's website, which includes communicating with all the committees, deacons, and staff to keep it updated with current information, events, and sermons. We have had more than 17,384 website views from 4,542 different users.

I continue to manage Ekklesia, the church management system. This entails keeping the directory up to date, creating forms, running reports, and training staff and members how to utilize it.

I assisted our bookkeeper, Suzanne Schmitt with the online-giving integrations in Ekklesia and Easy Tithe.

I worked with the stewardship committee to reach this year's pledging goals by inputting and organizing the pledge cards and running reports for the committee.

I have increased our marketing and promotion for our PCN events and programs. I have made more 160 posts on our PCN Facebook account, and they have reached more than 27,490 people – double last year's reach!

I have claimed and promoted PCN on Yelp, TripAdvisor, Nextdoor and Patch. These have been major strides in improving our online presence and connecting with the greater community!

### **Worship Production Tech**

I took over most of Kendall Kinney responsibilities of the worship production tech for our services. I train and oversee the worship production volunteer team and provide assistance when a substitute is needed. We YouTube live stream our services with an average of 30 people watching live each week. During the stream, I manage our online chat to engage our community. Our YouTube channel had more than 26,177 video views this year!

### **Safe Church Coordinator**

One of my greatest challenges this year was the additional responsibility as PCN's Safe Church Coordinator. Part of those responsibilities is to confidentially handle all PCN Safe Church misconduct and abuse-related confidential information, confidentially order and receive background check information (e.g., technical background checks, references, and similar required information), and implement the new requirements that California Legislative Assembly Bill 506 passed in 2021. This new bill requires all employees and regular volunteers of a youth service organization to implement five new procedures and protocols.

1. Complete California Mandated Reporter Training (two hours for volunteers, four hours for employees and six hours for clergy)

2. Complete a Sexual Abuse Awareness Training (we chose the MinistrySafe's 1.5-hour training)
3. Department of Justice LiveScan Fingerprinting Background Check
4. Sex Offender Registry, National, and Civil Records Background Check (these types of background checks are not available with a LiveScan fingerprint background check; therefore we must run a separate check)
5. Develop an in-depth safe church policy, which includes child abuse prevention and reporting. The CE committee rewrote and replaced PCN's Safe Church Policy (ca 2012) with a new Safe Church Misconduct and Abuse Prevention Policy.

To meet these new requirements, I participated in multiple trainings to understand how to properly implement them.

I applied to the DOJ for PCN to receive Live Scan Services. I was approved as the custodian of records with the DOJ, and I organized a mobile live-scan service to come to PCN to run Live Scan fingerprints for our regular volunteers and employees.

I set up a Protect My Ministry account to meet the Sex Offender Registry, National, and Civil Records Background Check requirement, then integrated it into our existing management system.

I set up and ran our MinistrySafe Sexual "Abuse Awareness Training" account.

I worked with the CE committee and created a new appendix (Appendix J, Driver Authorization Form) for our safe church policy which increased the requirements for anyone driving minors. I have created three additional appendices to be added to the safe church policy in 2023.

I facilitated the compliance of all these requirements with our employees and volunteers. Another wonderful safety initiative I was able to implement this year was a First Aid, AED and CPR training course. We required that all youth and children employees get First Aid, AED and CPR trained. This course is offered to our children and youth volunteers as well. In November, Sally Carbonaro and I organized with North Bay Security to come out to PCN to offer a training. I will continue to organize these trainings for our staff and volunteers, as needed.

Thank you for your help and support in these efforts to increase the safety and protection of the minors in our care!

Thank you to the entire congregation for supporting me in this ministry of communications. I am looking forward to what 2023 will bring and am excited for the challenges that will be presented. I can't wait to see what we are able to accomplish together!

*Sydney Fletcher, Director of Communication/Assistant Director of Children's Ministry*

## Stephen Ministry

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It has been a quiet two years for Stephen Ministry at PCN, in large part due to pandemic restrictions. The program was brought to PCN by church member Edith Penfield and pastors Don Rayment and Bob Grove in 1987. They were trained to become Stephen Leaders.

Stephen Ministers are congregation members who have been trained by their Stephen Leaders to offer care to people who are hurting. A Stephen Minister typically has one care receiver at a time and meets with that person once a week for about an hour. Care receivers are individuals in the congregation who are going through a crisis or change, which may include dealing with an illness, a divorce, a job loss or other life challenges. A caring relationship lasts for as long as the need persists. Since 1987 Stephen Leaders have trained more than 100 church members to become Stephen Ministers.

Stephen Ministers greatly appreciate PCN staff for their ongoing support of this ministry at PCN. If you or someone you know could benefit from a Stephen Minister's support, you can talk with a Stephen Leader for next steps and advice.

*Kathy Botko, Stephen Ministry Leader*

## Deacons

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*“As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God’s varied grace.”*

-1 Peter 4:10

As the loving hands and caring hearts of our church, the Deacons continued to deliver love and support to our PCN members, friends, and community in 2022.

### **Reaching out to spread love and stay connected.**

Every week, our “Deacons on Duty” connect with members of our congregation and friends of the church, offering encouragement, prayer, a note of celebration, or a reminder of care. Throughout 2022, we made hundreds of these connections — in visits, phone calls, cards, email, and text messages — to help lift a spirit, brighten a day, and assure our brothers and sisters that God is with them and in control of all things. The opportunity to extend God’s love to our church family and beyond is truly a blessing!

### **Providing support for church events, fellowship, and outreach.**

In addition to our weekly responsibilities, the Deacons supported the following activities in 2022:

- We helped guide and support seven memorials and receptions throughout the year, including services for Charlie Monahan, Larry Dacquist, Sr., David Price Jones, and Carlene Searway.
- We provided financial and production support for the church’s wonderful Prayer Blanket Ministry. In partnership with the indefatigable Tonya Church, the Deacons helped make and send out 41 blankets to a mix of church members and non-members in 2022.
- As in years past, our group continued to sponsor the making and delivery of dinner to our middle and high school youth groups one week of every month. We also made donations to help provide scholarships for children attending Vacation Bible School and Hume Lake retreats.
- We created a number of “meal trains” to provide dinner for members in need throughout the year.
- We continue to set up and serve liquid refreshments each Sunday for fellowship time, either outside on the patio or in Trevitt Hall. Often, there are treats.
- The Deacons continue to lovingly support those who come to our church with acute financial needs by funding and supplying gas and grocery certificates, which are distributed by Pastor Adam.
- Working closely with Vitalant, the Deacons sponsored two highly successful blood drives last year that were open to members as well as our larger Marin community.

**Money matters and looking ahead.**

Financially, the Deacons' bottom line decreased only slightly in 2022. We began the year with a balance of \$20,854.69 and ended with a balance of \$20,208.55, thanks to many generous donations throughout the year from our church family. In 2023, we'll be looking for more opportunities to serve individual members as well as our varied communities in the church — including our children, youth, and seniors. Any ideas from the congregation are welcome. Please share your thoughts and recommendations with your favorite Deacon!

**A note of appreciation.**

I'd like to recognize and personally thank every one of the 12 Deacons who so lovingly served our congregation throughout 2022: Audrey Bolland, Becky Praun, Bill Bradfield, Brenda McIvor, Carol Robinson, EB Hanlein, Janalee Holmes, Jo Richman, Kristen Rush, Laurie Dougherty, Linda Ward, and Marcus Combs. It's been an honor to serve alongside these kind, caring, and conscientious Christians. Come February, our ranks will be invigorated with the addition of five new Deacons! Our church should be so proud of this group for putting their hearts and souls on the line every week on behalf of others.

The Deacons look forward to playing a key role in the life of our Presbyterian Church of Novato in 2023, bringing love and light wherever God may lead us. With Him, all things are possible!

*Brook Stahley, Deacon Moderator*

## Endowment Fund Committee

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The Endowment Fund Committee (EFC) was reconstituted in spring this year to include two Elders and two at-large Members, with one at-large vacancy. The committee's role is to provide oversight of various investment accounts held at New Covenant Trust (NCT). In reviewing precedent and stated authorities, it was confirmed that the EFC is responsible for the Endowment, Doerksen/Wylie, and Temporarily Restricted accounts, while the Finance & Administration Committee oversees the Property Reserve and Operating Reserve accounts, with benefit of EFC's investment advice and counsel.

The Endowment Fund Committee reviewed, with NCT, the investment objectives of each of the NCT accounts, and ratified the current "balanced growth" long-term investment postures. While markets this year have declined quite a bit, these balanced growth postures best balance our objectives and offer long-term performance with returns (according to NCT), based on historical long-term performance, in the range of 8% per annum.

The EFC also authorized distributions to the operating budget of 4% (per year) of year-end account balances, from the three non-reserve accounts for the next year. NCT explained that most churches make such distributions and supported the most common level of 4%.

In October, the committee also reviewed the NCT accounts with an outside financial advisor (a PCN member and member of the Finance & Administration Committee), to begin preliminary evaluation of long-term capital sufficiency, looking at inflation, operating deficits, investment mix, investment returns and distributions.

Beyond the ongoing stewardship of PCN's capital, the EFC looks forward to supporting a possible legacy-giving program, and later, to a possible future capital program.

While markets were negative this year and we suffered a 9.5% loss in total asset value, we are well-advised and our \$2.4 million in NCT accounts is well-positioned for PCN's future.

With special thanks to our members (Elder Brad Praun, and Members-at-Large Walt Campbell and Bruce Stahley) and to our contributors, John Reuscher and Patty Reed.

*George Pilloton, Endowment Fund Committee Elder*



## Finance and Administration Committee

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We entered 2022 with our PCN Session having approved a Church Ministry Budget that included investments in our new Community Life Ministry and new staffing positions for Communication and Technology Directors, which resulted in underfunding (deficit) of nearly \$300,000. Early on, our committee developed aggressive initiatives to work with other committees to reduce/delay operating expenses and increase revenue opportunities in order to reduce this projected budget deficit.

Our committee, along with the Endowment Fund Committee, and with counsel from our investment managers at New Covenant Trust (NCT), put in place a new policy of taking monthly distributions from the interest, dividends, and gains from the non-reserve permanent NCT trust accounts, in the amount of 4% (annual), while *not* touching *any* of the Endowment principals. This policy significantly helps to reduce the operating deficit and is consistent with how other Presbyterian churches are managed financially.

Good news! With cost management, delays in hiring, and the distributions from our investments, we have been able to close out the year with a very minor *surplus* of about \$15,000! Unrelated to our budget funding, we were also fortunate in being successful in securing one-time only Federal Employer Retention Credits for 2020 and 2021, bringing us an increase in our Operating Reserves by \$165,000!

Additionally, our committee focused on continuing improvement of accounting processes and procedures, a complete review of the financial statement structures (making a variety of changes for better information and simplicity), and improved financial communications to our leadership and membership, through financials reporting, PresPress articles, and a September video for the congregation explaining our progress, which also included an appeal for increased stewardship.

The process for constructing the 2023 budget was started early in the fall to allow plenty of discussion with Session committees regarding their needs and the year's performance. Against the backdrop of higher inflation, budget challenges for 2023 are quite significant. The committees signed off on their portions of the budget, and the proposed budget was sent to Session on December 7, allowing for a full two-week review and discussion prior to the Session meeting on December 21, where it was approved. Significant to the 2023 budget, we built in projected impacts of inflation across all categories, cost-of-living increases for our staff, and continued funding of our "Discernment" Ministry Vision, while sustaining mission giving at 20% of PCN pledges (which resulted in an 8% increase in mission funds). Depending on the timing of hiring the Community Life Director, the projected deficit for 2023 will be in the range of \$60,000 (75% of this amount relates to hiring a half-time Community Life Director). Fortunately, operating reserves will cover this generously, yet will remain sufficient if needed in the future. We are hopeful and confident that new membership growth,

as we saw in 2022, will continue to help close the operating gap (deficit) and position PCN to fulfill its vision while balancing the budget and building financial strength.

2022 was a good year for the Finance & Administration Committee. Special thanks to our members (Walt Campbell, Tonya Church, Robert Coleman, Beth Flynn, and Adam Smith), our financial secretary, Suzanne Schmidt, and to those of you that supported our ongoing efforts.

*George Pilloton and Brad Praun, Finance Elders*