



PResPRes

September 2021

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

“Renewal and Growth”



As I write this article, I confess that I have more things in motion than seems possible to manage. Things are lively, readying for the program year to come, and I am excited about God’s movement amongst us in this season of renewal and growth.

Did you catch that? Renewal? Growth?

Whatever could you mean, pastor?

Well, I’m glad you asked! And the answer might surprise you.

FIRST THINGS FIRST

First, we’re doing it. After a year and half of discernment – of prayer, scripture engagement, holy conversation, and no small amount of strategic planning, we are beginning to implement the fruits of our labor. No longer is our work simply preparation and behind the scenes. Our discernment is moving into our life and ministry where faith in community is lived out.

Do I have specifics for you yet? As of right now while I write this article, it is the day your Session will meet to make some of those decisions. So the answer I have is a regretful ‘no.’ But perhaps by the time you read this some of the ‘yet to be decided’ news will have reached your ears.

Regardless, what I can tell you for certain is that whatever the Session moves us to do as a church, whatever changes it might decide to make, it will not ‘make’ renewal and growth happen. What it will do is position our congregation in such a way to best listen to and follow after Jesus with what makes us ‘us.’ That’s it.

And just as certainly I can tell you that no program, no staff model, no leadership training the Session moves to incorporate will be magic beans that when planted will guarantee a growing, thriving church. The Session lays down a foundation, positions and directs the ship, lays the framework.



THE KEY TO RENEWAL AND GROWTH

There is a second, even more important piece to this season of 'Renewal & Growth' on which the Session's work and the key to moving forward into this season of hope and grace rests.

This piece is YOU. It is US.

It is each individual at PCN and WE as a community together.



You see, renewal and growth is not a top-down leadership decision and initiative despite what we might assume from our experience in the business world. Rather it is a bottom-up covenant between God, each of us individually, and all of us together in answering God's call for PCN. The Session has positioned us to follow after Jesus and will continue to do so, but it is each and every one of us that will covenant together to enter this season of renewal and growth.

It will involve shifting our mindset from scarcity (to not having enough, not being enough, not being willing to change) to abundance (God is providing, God taking care of, God moving us to risky discipleship). It will involve beginning to see and live into the royal priesthood of which

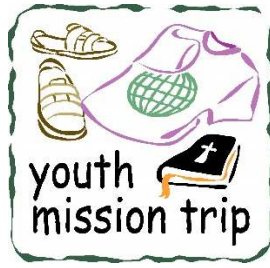
we are a part. In it, each of us both leads and follows, invests in the life and ministry of church. We are not simply consumers, but vital tools of what God is up to at PCN.

Entering and living into a season of renewal and growth will be up to each of you. It will be up to us together as we follow after Jesus.

Friends, I cannot wait to walk with you in this new season, to share with you the fruits of the Session's labors on your behalf, to jump into the unknown with you trusting in Jesus to lead us. I know it won't be a cake walk and it will involve transformation and change. Such is the way of discipleship. But I have hope in new life, in being made whole, in the kingdom of God coming on earth, all of which Jesus brings in his wake.

So my friends, in this season that we are about to enter, ask yourself, "How can I be about hope and grace, renewal and growth, and being the Body of Christ at PCN?" Because God needs each and every one of us.

With Hope & Grace,
Adam



David Mink, Director of Youth Ministry

For the youth mission trip this year, we drove down to Yuma, Arizona to work with a Native American tribe doing mostly construction work on a house on the reservation. We worked for four days on the roof, reinforced some trusses, and put up some drywall. Outside the house hacked back weeds and did general clean-up. The people we met from the Quechan tribe were very welcoming, and we formed a strong relationship with Darnella, our tribe liaison, and her family. Overall, it was a fantastic, meaningful trip that really pushed us physically and mentally.

Below are some pictures of our time there.







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.



**PEDAL FOR PROTEIN 2021!
A WONDERFUL OPPORTUNITY TO
SERVE OUR PRESBYTERY AND FIGHT FOOD SCARCITY**

Pedal for Protein began seven years ago in the Redwoods Presbytery and has earned close to \$250,000 toward 'beefing up' the protein offerings in food banks presbytery-wide. This year, for the first time, the seven-day bicycle ride will stop overnight in Novato. PCN is the host church from the afternoon of September 20th through the morning of September 21. We need afternoon greeters, pot-luck dinner providers and hosts, overnight hosts (individual riders or couples), and breakfast set-up and provisions.

Please go to <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10c0d44a9ae2ba0f94-pedal> or contact Carolyn Gerrans at 415-897-1504 or email grace624@comcast.net to volunteer or with any questions. It's an important way we can work for good and stay connected to the whole!

If you would like to join in for part of the ride itself, please register at www.pedalforprotein.com. Ride registration went live on June 1st. For further details about the ride, please call Bill Morgan at 707-694-9660.



Keep in mind our Peacemaking Offering will be held on World Communion Sunday, October 3, 2021. Our speaker that day is yet to be determined, but rest assured an excellent speaker will be with us that day, and the theme of peacemaking in all its varied efforts will be showcased: **PEACE AT ALL TIMES IN ALL WAYS.**

GILEAD HOUSE BOCCE BALL TOURNAMENT will be held Saturday, September 25th from noon to 3:30 p.m. Come join your PCN family at a great social event for an even greater cause. Gilead House's primary fundraising event gives us a chance to enjoy each other's company in a fun outdoor environment. There is a wide price range of tickets; all include lunch and one drink. Sign up as a four-member team or individually and Gilead will do everything possible to put you with other PCN team players. Go to <https://www.gileadhouse.org/> for tickets or contact Carolyn Gerrans for questions.

THANKS FOR KNITTED SLIPPERS – PCN's mission committee would like to thank Carol Robinson's friend, Ann Bento, for donating three bags full of cozy and comforting hand-knitted slippers, sized for children and adults. A few have been given to Gilead House already, for new families coming in. The rest will be given out as the weather gets colder to various needy people. Ann's pandemic project will help people she has never met throughout the winter. And thanks to Carol, too, for bringing up PCN as a good donation point.



CENTER FOR DOMESTIC PEACE The Center for Domestic Peace (C4DP) has asked PCN for 21 bags full of non-perishable groceries, specifically rice, pasta, pasta sauce, cans of beans, sugar, flour, sweets, chocolate and juice. To pledge one or more bags of groceries for September 13 and 14, contact Barbara Gildea at BJGildea9@aol.com or Carolyn Gerrans at Grace624@comcast.net.

Pledged groceries (double-bagged, please) are to be dropped at the church office September 13 and 14 and then will be delivered by Barbara Gildea to the C4DP location. "Thank you" cannot be said enough to everyone donating groceries to C4DP. Every month will be the same list of non-perishable items. Again, thank you for your generosity!



Thank you to everyone who donated groceries in August!



Dear Friends at PCN,

I sure hope this finds you well and in good spirits today. We are so grateful to all of you for your donation of groceries to the participants in our programs. As you know, it takes a community to end domestic violence, and we are honored that you are a part of the caring group of supporters who financially invest in the work of Center for Domestic Peace ([C4DP](#)).

We truly appreciate your donation and willingness to help those struggling with domestic violence. You make all the difference to those looking for help, hope, and sometimes a way out of a dangerous situation. Since the pandemic began, thanks to supporters like you, we have helped hundreds of individuals through our robust services, including emergency shelter, legal advocacy, and counseling and referrals using our 24-7 English/Spanish hotline.

Creating change in the lives of these survivors is not easily articulated; it is somewhat like the challenge of measuring the impact of watering a seed. What we can say for certain is that your generosity is stopping domestic violence - one individual, one family, one community at a time. C4DP remains forever hopeful that the day will come when organizations like ours will no longer be necessary. To that end, we are grateful for your partnership and support.

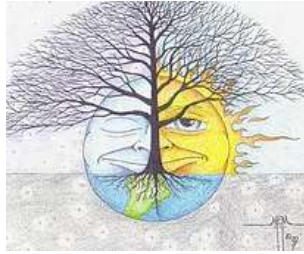
Thank you again from all of us! May compassion, kindness and justice lead us all forward!

Yours Toward Peace,

~Marla

Marla Hedlund
Development and Community Relations Officer
Mhedlund@c4dp.org
415-526-2543

Faith Ambassador Needed



Matthew 25:40 "The King will reply, Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me."

The Mission Committee is looking for a person in our church to be our main contact with The Street Chaplaincy (TSC), a Marin organization addressing the needs of the homeless community.

Your Mission Committee works on allocating the mission budget to nonprofit organizations in our community, region and internationally. These organizations are usually faith-based and well-researched by our committee. One person is our contact with each and every organization we support in order to stay connected and find opportunities for our church for local mission projects as well as funding needs.

The Street Chaplaincy <https://www.streetchaplaincy.org/> employs two part-time people, including Rev. Marty Tracy, who is the boots on the ground, and Nick Morris, the executive director who keeps the faith organizations informed and coordinates the efforts of these churches. PCN is the first Novato church to become a Faith Ambassador Congregation. The Mission Committee is very excited about this new relationship.

What does this mean for our new volunteer who could be you? You would be the person in contact with Nick to find out how we, the whole PCN congregation, can help our neighbors in Novato who are homeless. This might include financial support, and the Mission Committee might and probably will include TSC in the 2022 mission committee budget. This might include a food outreach project that Nick and Marty would tell us would be well-received and is greatly needed. This might include a dinner at our church (when Covid restrictions allow us to) that supports volunteers to the homeless, and maybe even include the homeless too so that we all meet each other and learn and understand each other.

Will this be you?

Please contact Regina Rus reginabrus@gmail.com or Carolyn Gerrans grace624@comcast.net if you would like to consider this and have questions. We are your Mission Elders and are available to you to ask any questions at any time. Thank you for considering this awesome opportunity.

A Posting from Bob and Kristi Rice who are back home in South Sudan Summer 2021

1. We thank God for a good transition back to Juba.
2. NTC faculty are preparing for a curriculum review in October. Pray for God's vision and wisdom.
3. The SSPEC reconciliation team hopes to do a workshop in Malakal, a northern city. Pray for God to bring the right people and bring healing.
4. Pray for health for people in South Sudan and protection from various diseases, including COVID-19.

A Letter from Nancy & Shelvis Smith-Maher, serving South Sudan, currently stationed stateside due to COVID – Summer 2021

Dear friends,

As a U.S. citizen living in Africa, I am constantly aware that American consumerism and politics have caused harm. It was not until I called a diverse group of friends together to discuss colonization, however, that I grappled with my link, as a European-American, to that particular injustice. That recent past remains a palpable part of the present in East Africa: East Africa – where I lived, worked, and raised my children for ten years; where people undoubtedly associated me with colonial times.

Even with my 2019 realization of involvement with “the scramble for Africa,” it wasn’t until 2021 that I took the next step, recognizing my connection to the root causes of South Sudan’s civil war.

For years, Shelvis and I gave presentations on Sudan’s war. We described the differences between the northern and southern parts of the country. In the north, the ethnic majority is Arabic and the south mainly “black African.” The north is mostly Muslim while the south has Christian and indigenous religious roots. The north far surpassed the south in infrastructure development, yet the south was rich in natural resources. Consequently, the tensions included ethnic, religious, and economic dimensions.

Those aspects remain etched in my memory. During a recent look into the war’s history, though, one piece of the struggle struck me differently than ever before. After British forces stripped power away from indigenous leaders, they ruled Sudan as two separate colonies, one in the north and one in the south. When returning control back, however, they decided to unite the colonies under one centralized government in the north.

That decision led to violence. The war that ensued spanned decades, killed millions, and traumatized generations. Even though South Sudan eventually seceded, the lingering, unresolved divisions from years of conflict contributed to South Sudan’s own civil war.

So, my ancestors are on the list of root causes of the war that pushed our colleagues, neighbors, and our own children out of Yei, South Sudan in 2013 and again in 2016.

What hits me the hardest about this reality is not that it took me so long to connect my identity with the conflict in South Sudan, though that feels embarrassing. It is not the sense of sadness and

brokenness that comes from again connecting my ethnic identity with histories of injustice and oppression, though those weigh heavy. What makes the biggest impression on me, in the midst of my personal discovery about this topic, is that leaders in the South Sudanese church, well aware the majority ethnic group in the U.S. is of European heritage, actually invited the church in the U.S. to partner with them in building peace.

They welcomed me to be a part of resolving the very problem which my ancestors helped to create. It feels like amazing grace. So humbling. Thanks be to God.

They gave me an opportunity to learn more about forgiveness and reconciliation. I pray for the courage to show up for difficult conversations. Historic wounds bleed into today's reality. Listening to and honestly acknowledging the past can help us move towards healing in the present.

Having recently celebrated ten years of independence, South Sudan still struggles with the residue of colonization, the effects of decades of war, and ongoing cycles of political-ethnic violence. Yet, the hand of the South Sudanese church remains extended towards us, the U.S. church, for partnership. May God use this unearned opportunity to facilitate and inspire a reconciled future.

Thank you so much for your prayers and support of our family, which allow us to continue to work in partnership with our South Sudanese siblings. At present, the Smith-Mather family remains in the U.S. due to the global pandemic. Nancy continues to work with Across, RECONCILE, and the Presbyterian Church of South Sudan as they implement education programs and peace-building activities. Shelvis remains connected with colleagues at RECONCILE and also with students and professors at Oxford University, with whom he researches peace-building in South Sudan. Thank you for being a part of the team that makes this collaboration possible! --Nancy and Shelvis



An abundance of thanks goes out to Regina Rus for her leadership in making PCN a COVID vaccination site twice over the summer. Her efforts have connected us with other community entities which lead the way in disaster response preparedness, tying us ever more closely to our Novato community and county.



The Prayer Blanket Ministry would like to thank the following people who helped make blankets on June 13:

Bill and Jane Bradfield
Laurie Dougherty
Becky Erba
Sandy Fong
Barbara Gildea
Judy Grossi

Ruth Haas
Cathy and Jenna Haney
Diane Kaljian-Combs
Deanna Lutzeier
Jo Richman
Brook Stahley

Litter Bee Clean-up



We hope you'll be able to join us for our next litter bee clean-up on Saturday, September 4. Meet in the church parking lot at 9 a.m. Wear your mask and bring gloves and tongs; garbage bags will be provided.



Session

Session Highlights August 2021

In August, Session:

1. Approved the lease with Good Shepherd Lutheran School.
2. Approved hiring of two youth ministry interns to replace previous interns who are attending college and until a Director of Youth Ministry is hired.
3. Thanked Mission Elder Regina Rus for coordinating with Marin County Health and Human Services for PCN to host a COVID vaccination clinic.

Kathy Takemoto, Clerk of Session



Stephanie Monahan, our financial secretary for the past 21 years, is moving to Grass Valley. 😞 Stephanie has been an invaluable member of our staff. We are collecting a love offering to express our appreciation for her many years of service. Please make checks payable directly to Stephanie, but send them to the attention of Tammi Jester, who will collect them. Stephanie will be given a list of people who contributed but not the amount. Please have your check in by Sunday, September 12. Call Tammi at (415) 897-6152 with any questions.

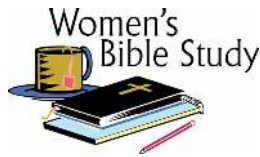
FALL PREVENTION AT PCN

“A Matter of Balance: Managing Concerns about Falls” (MOB) is a fall-prevention program with proven results in reducing falls in older adults. During the eight-session course participants learn how to 'fall-proof' their homes, learn specific exercises that help to prevent falls, and discover how mindset may lead to a fall.

The pandemic has put a halt to MOB in Marin County. We are hoping that with a vaccine requirement and holding the class outdoors, participants will feel comfortable attending again (classes will move indoors with a mask requirement if weather or air quality prohibits meeting outside). PCN has hosted MOB in the past with great success. A new class is scheduled to start on Monday, September 13.

The class will meet from 10 a.m. to noon for eight sessions, ending on November 1. The program is sponsored by MarinHealth and there is a \$20 materials fee.

Please contact Beverly Winsor at [415-993-2557](tel:415-993-2557) or email mob.beverly@gmail.com if you would like to register for the class.



WOMEN'S BIBLE STUDY

On Thursday, September 9, our Women's Bible Study Group will resume. We will continue our studies in 2 Samuel. We will be meeting on Zoom until this **"pandemic and Delta Virus"** is defeated and we are able to meet again at the church. We will be meeting from 9:30 to 11:00 a.m. The cost of the guidebook **"Life Change: 1 & 2 Samuel"** is \$7.00.

Women's Bible Class Link:

The link to class will be the same every week. Carol Dacquisto is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81726330698?pwd=a1hvY1JUOFV1OFRXUitr05FaTBZUT09>

Meeting ID: 817 2633 0698 Passcode: pcnovato

It is necessary for our reading of 1-2 Samuel to remember that the concept of covenant became Israel's most important and pervasive relational metaphor in the Old Testament. This became the best way to describe Israel's relationship with God, who is thereby portrayed as the Great King and Israel as the weaker vassal. From Israel's earliest recollection of national origins (the Mosaic covenant) and in its greatest theological explanation of its relationship with God, God most often assumed the position of King of Israel.

We hope that more ladies of the congregation will join and bring their friends to join as well.

Grace and Peace,
Melodie Baird, Carol Dacquisto, and Margaret Costello



You are invited to join the Sunday morning adult Bible study as we explore "Celebrating God." The upcoming quarter focuses on acts of worship and praise that celebrate who God is and what God has done for His people. We will be studying Exodus, 2 Samuel, Psalms, Mark, Acts and Revelation. We encourage anyone with a desire to understand scripture a little more deeply to join us on Sunday mornings. We are meeting via Zoom every Sunday from 8 to 9 a.m. Our new study begins September 5. If you're interested in joining please contact Larry Dacquisto at (415) 577-2115.

We will look forward to seeing you on Sundays – come and join us!

SupperClub

FOOD & FRIENDS

This past year we had to limit our social gathering and in-person church attendance. Fortunately, we have had technology but missing were our wonderful times of eating and schmoozing! We will continue with the same groups set in 2019-20 for the remainder of the year. Come 2022 we will have sign-ups for new groups and start again. In the meantime, stay safe, stay well and enjoy your times with church friends when you can.
~E.B. Hanlein and Janalee Holmes



Mark your calendars! The Deacons will be sponsoring another blood drive October 10. Keep an eye out in the update for more information as it becomes available. Contact Janalee Holmes at (415) 898-8418 for more information.



JIGSAW PUZZLE SWAP - - - SUNDAY EDITION

Yes, the popular PCN jigsaw puzzle swap is coming to Sunday morning! On Sept. 19th, you will have the opportunity to drop off some puzzles you have completed (or given up on!) and get some new puzzles as you drink your coffee, eat some donut holes, and visit with others who just attended the worship service. For some of you, this will be your chance to "get the puzzle bug." The swap tables will only be open for 30 minutes after the worship service concludes.



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 "Abiding in Christ." 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!

job opportunity



We're Hiring!

Help us find the right fit.

Ceres has grown quite a lot in the past two years, and we're hiring. If you or someone you know has been looking for a place to make a difference in the world, we encourage you to consider Ceres.

Could you be our next [Grants and Corporate Outreach Manager](#)? A successful candidate will have superior writing skills and proven success with raising funds from institutions and corporate/business partners. They must also possess sophisticated project management, organizational, and proposal budgeting skills. This position is part of a two-person Grants & Corporate Outreach team within our four-person Development Department and supervises the Grants & Corporate Outreach Coordinator.

Please forward this email to anyone you think might be interested in a meaningful career at a growing nonprofit rooted in caring for our community.