



PresPress

April 2024

Presbyterian Church of Novato, 710 Wilson Ave., Novato, CA 94947

Resurrection Story

What is your resurrection story?

Do you know what I'm talking about? You know... that time when the mighty acts of God in Jesus Christ transformed your life...where you experienced the grace of God in some profound, life-changing way...where grace became real and full of hope?

What is your resurrection story?

When push comes to shove, the good news that we are called to share with the world is best shared through our own stories and experiences. Why? Because our stories of grace are real. In our stories, grace is not a theological concept, an ideology, an archaic idea, or some legalistic, religious metaphor; it's something that has ultimately changed our lives and our communities for the better. In these stories, people can relate, can see the power and promise of God's love in Jesus Christ.

So...what is your resurrection story?

Do you know how to tell it? Do you know how to share it in such a way that others see its life-giving impact?

Every time we come to Easter, I'm reminded of my resurrection stories. It's like I am pushed back to those moments where Jesus transformed my life, almost like I'm reliving them. The potency and energy, the joy and gratitude, the hope and promise of eternity seem to overwhelm me, so much so that I don't just feel called to share the gospel, I can't help but tell everyone about how Jesus changed my life.

But where to start?

It begins with that question I keep posing: What is your resurrection story(s)?

As we continue to celebrate and remember the hope and promise of Easter, I challenge each of you to articulate your resurrection story(s). Write them out. Remember them. Give thanks to God for them. Let them fill you again with that feeling of overwhelming joy and gratitude. Perhaps someone out there needs to hear your story. Maybe it can be the catalyst for another's journey towards God's wide-open arms. Maybe it's the best evangelism tool you will ever have.

With Gratitude & Joy,
Pastor Adam



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.



BRUNCH, BUBBLES, AND BOCCE!

Join us on Saturday, May 18th for an Italian-themed brunch, champagne, live music, bocce games and silent/live auctions to benefit the NMCS mental health program! The event will be held here in Novato at the Margaret Todd Center.

Tickets are \$100 per person, but, keep in mind, NMCS's mental health program is a critical and in-demand program. They are hoping to expand it to serve all those who need it and have applied. If you are unable to attend, think of buying a ticket for a friend to introduce them to the good works being done at NMCS. Go to www.northmarincs.org/connect/brunch-bubbles-bocce/ for tickets.

Special guests include Mike McGuire, California Senate President Pro-Tempore, and Eric Lucan, Marin County Supervisor for District 5.

Take a Tour!

We invite you to join us for a behind-the-scenes tour of our weekly food pantry. Tours take place the first Tuesday of every month from 9 to 10 a.m. Sign up now for a tour in April, May, or June.

Go to the NMCS website, www.northmarincs.org to register.



Thank you to everyone who has donated groceries for the Center for Domestic Peace. C4DP has a new family, and the organization needs donations of non-perishable goods, including specifically rice, pasta, pasta sauce, cans of beans, sugar, flour, chocolate and juice. C4DP serves women and children who are victims of domestic abuse. You can drop groceries off in the office anytime. Questions? Contact Barbara Gildea or call the office.



Mike Robinson, who has spent countless hours overseeing the “All Dressed Up” mission, which provides clothing to inmates leaving San Quentin prison, recently received this wonderful letter. Mike said, “It made me realize how much these clothes mean to these guys when they are getting out of prison.” Many thanks to Mike for his years of dedication to the program.

Andrew Hardy
CDCR# BB5017
SQSP 2-WB-03
1 Main Street
San Quentin, CA 94964

28 December 2023

All Dressed Up Ministry
P.O. Box 354
Novato, CA 94948

Dear ADUM:

I just wanted to say thank you for the dress-out clothes you folks sent for my upcoming release from San Quentin.

I was expecting to be released to a transitional house in Oakland, because my support system, job prospects and resources are centered here in the Bay Area. Today I received a notice that I am being sent somewhere else instead: Bakersfield.

I do not know why this is happening. I have never lived in Bakersfield; I have no family, resources, or support there. My parents both died during my incarceration, and I have no one in the world.

Then I received your card, with your simple message, that God is with me everywhere.

God bless you for your kindness, because you have no idea how powerful these words are, and how timely. I am in tears as I type this. I was beginning to panic; in fact, my heart is still beating hard. But I have reassurance now, from someone I've never even met, that no matter where they send me, not only will God be waiting to meet me there, he will be holding my fearful hand all along the way.

Thank you so much, for the clothes, and especially for your generosity of spirit. I hope and pray that God blesses you a thousand fold what you have blessed me with.

In faith,



Session

Session Highlights – March 2024

At the March meeting, Session:

- Approved solicitation of donors and sponsors for the Buckaroo Breakfast. Proceeds from the breakfast will be donated to Homeward Bound.
- Approved up to \$3,000 for repairs and upgrades to the Meditation Garden.
- Approved up to \$5,000 for tree removal, trimming, and brush clean-up in response to the 2024 Novato Fire District Defensible Space report.
- Reviewed the results and comments of the Emergency Evacuation Drill held on March 10, 2024.
- Discussed a communication strategy and development of a tag line for PCN which can be used for social media, printed materials, and banners.

Kathy Takemoto, Clerk of Session



PCN's First Evacuation Drill a Success!

Thank you to each of you who participated in our evacuation drill on March 10. Everyone followed directions, helped their neighbors as needed, and, most importantly, remained calm. Because of this, we managed to exit the sanctuary in under four minutes and reach our designated assembly point in eight. This is a remarkable achievement for our first practice drill!

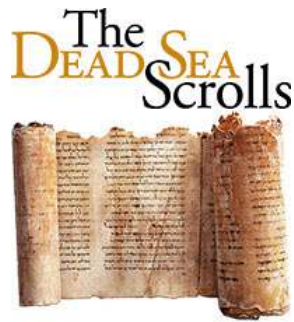
We especially thank two groups of volunteers:

1. PCN's CBERT (Church Building Emergency Response Team) volunteers, who helped direct and lead us: Bruce Stahley (super organizer), Garrick Fong, John Marks, Art Plumstead, and Greg Smith.

2. PCN's Safety-Emergency Committee members who planned and fulfilled many vital roles during the drill: Sydney Fletcher (interim chair), Melodie Baird, Marc Combs, Beth Flynn, Loree Draeger, Don Foster, Delane Ramser, Walt Searway, Bruce Stahley, and Diane Orsini-Tarkman.

We are grateful for those who took the time to return the "How did we do?" survey. 100% of you said you believed the drill was a success overall! We also appreciate the thoughtful feedback we received. Your comments will go a long way in helping us to improve our emergency response plans.

Although we can't promise to serve donuts in an emergency, we can be counted on to follow directions, be helpful, and remain calm.



The Christian Education committee is sponsoring a new spring/summer adult learning opportunity: "The Dead Sea Scrolls," a series of 24 video lectures via Zoom that presents the discovery, translation, and significance of ancient scrolls found at Qumran in 1947.

The videos are produced by The Teaching Company as one of its "Great Courses" series, and feature Dr. Gary Rendsburg, Ph.D., chair of the department of Jewish Studies at Rutgers University.

The scrolls shed light on Jewish culture and theology at the time of Christ and also raise issues about the transmittal of the Biblical record across time. Weekly sessions will cover two thirty minute lectures and discussion led by Walt Campbell. Twelve sessions are scheduled for Saturdays at 10:30 a.m. from March 23 to June 8.

Please see the PCN website or email Walt Campbell at walteracampbell@aol.com to enroll. This opportunity is open to non-members. Participants will receive a weekly email with a pdf document of the course guide pages and discussion questions for the upcoming Saturday session.



Tammi will be out of the office from April 4 through May 29, visiting her father. Many thanks to the lovely and capable Carol Robinson for holding down the fort while Tammi is gone. And Tammi is very grateful to Personnel and the church staff for allowing her this time away.



Westminster Woods has several camps this summer, including three different sessions of "Camp Soulspring" for ages 8 to 17; The Grove family camp that runs June 30 through July 5; a camp for high schoolers called "Woods to Waves" from July 21-26; and Friendship Camp for adults ages 18+ with developmental disabilities.

For more information, visit www.westminsterwoods.org/summer-camp.



Change takes courage, compassion, coordination and cooperation. All these were exhibited over the past two weeks.

A BIG thank you to everyone that participated in the Church Spring Clean-up days on Saturday, March 9th and Saturday, March 16th.

The Scouts from Troop 200 helped with painting curbs, parking markers, gardening and garbage clean-up, under the direction and teaching of Jay Haney and Don Erba.

Did you know getting cobwebs from the high ceilings in the sanctuary are caught and removed by helium balloons? Well, thanks to Sally Carbonaro, they are gone. Awesome.

Next time you see the following folks, please share your appreciation for gardening, trimming hedges, trees, weeding, and showing love for our church home:

Bill Bradfield, Miriam Campos, Sally Carbonaro, Jackie Dold, Don Erba, Connie Fischer, Garrick Fong, Cathy Haney, Jay Haney, Ron Hune, George Pilloton, Steve Revere, Brad Praun, Bruce Stahley and Kathy Wright.

Angels, all of you!

Blessings,
Becky Praun/Property Curb Appeal Committee



Christ caring for people through people

STEPHEN MINISTRY

**Stephen Ministry Training @ PCN!
January 2024!**

*"Bear one another's burdens,
and in this way
you will fulfill the law of Christ." Galatians 6:2*



The Stephen Series...

MEETS THE NEEDS OF PEOPLE

The Stephen Series equips lay people to provide effective caring ministry to . . .

- the hospitalized
- the terminally ill
- the bereaved
- the elderly
- the disabled & handicapped
- those in job crisis
- the lonely or depressed
- the inactive in your congregation
- the shut-in & institutionalized
- new members in your church or community
- those in spiritual crisis
- ... and many more

DEFINITION

The Stephen Series is a system of training and organizing lay persons for caring ministry in and around their congregations.

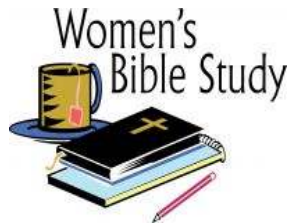
MULTIPLIES THE MINISTRY OF CONGREGATIONS

- Increases significantly the number of congregational members involved in ongoing, caring ministry.
- Gives pastors renewed joy and fulfillment as they equip others and so extend the reach of their own ministries.
- Enables the entire congregation to grow as a warm, loving, nurturing community as the contagious caring of Stephen ministers expands to touch more and more lives.
- People who receive ministry from lay persons in the Stephen Series—
 - receive quality Christian care,
 - deepen their relationship with their Lord,
 - increase involvement in their congregations,
 - willingly accept and value ministry from a fellow lay person.
- Stephen ministers apply caring skills to other important relationships and discover that their whole lives are enriched.
- Pastor, church staff, and lay people form a strong and supportive ministry team to bring God's care to others.

SUPPLIES COMPLETE RESOURCES TO CONGREGATIONS

- A *Leader's Manual*, consisting of training materials along with experiential teaching aids for leaders to use in equipping lay people for caring ministry.
- *Trainee Manuals*, with clear outlines and helpful Reference Notes for use by every lay person trained as a Stephen minister.
- A 12-day Leader's Training Course where leaders are trained to organize, teach, and administer the Stephen Series system.
- An approach to lay training that is easy to understand, yet in-depth—simple, but profound.
- A carefully planned series of steps that the congregation takes to set up a workable and lasting lay caring ministry.
- Free, ongoing consultation with the Stephen Ministries staff to respond to your questions and concerns.
- Enrolled congregations can send any number of people to any Leader's Training Course in any year as part of the one-time enrollment fee. This insures continuity and permanence for your lay caring ministry.

Christ Caring For People Through People



The Gospel of John

In the Sermon on the Mount (The Gospel of Matthew, chapters 5 through 7), Jesus instructs his disciples to repay evil with blessing. Can you put on the mind of the Lord and return only good for evil?

Women's Bible Study invites all women to know Jesus better and in a personal way as we study the Gospel of John – God's love letter to the world.

The first 12 chapters focus on the signs/miracles that Jesus performs. Presently we are in Chapter 13 where Jesus is exclusively with His disciples explaining the difficulties looming ahead: betrayal, parting words, the Lord's Prayer, condemnation, crucifixion and resurrection.

In class we discuss that Jesus knew who He was, where He was from and what power and authority He had.

Join us on Zoom Thursdays from 10 to 11:30 a.m. with Carol Dacquisto leading the study, using the NavPress "Life Changes" study guide. Our next study will be Joshua.

Our dedicated project for more than 40 years is Tabs for Kids – collecting pop tabs from aluminum cans from PC members, friends and neighbors. They are donated to the Shriners Hospital for Children in Sacramento which sells them to a recycling company. Proceeds are used to assist parents' families with care expenses.

If you want a wonderful way to connect to the PCN community and learn about the disciple John with a warm and open group of women contact Carol Dacquisto, lead teacher, at 415-892-2070; Margaret Franz-Costello, assistant, at 415-806-8849 or Karen Carlson at 415-382-9616.

Grace and Peace,
Carol Dacquisto, Margaret Franz-Costello and Karen Carlson

Here is the Zoom link and passcode:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81284025735?pwd=VTY4cWFJQWtDTlpUVE9MT0ljL1dHdz09>

Meeting ID: 812 8402 5735 Passcode: pcnovato



The Sunday Morning Adult Study Group will continue meeting via Zoom (until further notice) at 8:00 a.m. Please sign on to join a wonderful group of adults who share what they are learning about God's Word. The link to sign on is at the end of this article. If you want or need materials, please let Carol Dacquisto (415-892-2070) know, and we will see that you have the appropriate materials.

The quarter (March, April, May) is entitled "**Examining Our Faith.**" In this quarter, we will explore the fullness of faith as a response to God's desire to be in relationship with us. To be faith-less is to turn away from God – to put trust in something, or someone, other than God. The lessons of this quarter ask: Is your faith steadfast? Are you contending for the faith? What can today's Christians draw from these ancient accounts that will help us grow more deeply in faith?

Unit 1 has lessons drawn from Jude, Second Corinthians, First Peter, Acts, and Mark that invite learners to turn the challenges of life into opportunities for nurturing a vibrant faith instead of giving up, turning away from God, or rejecting faith. It includes the Easter lesson.

Unit 2, lessons from Luke and Matthew discuss the range of Christian faith.

The lessons in **Unit 3** from Romans encourage believers to continue standing in the faith.

Study Leaders,

James Baird, Carol Dacquisto, Karen Carlson and Doris Dooley

Link for the Zoom meeting:

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

Meeting ID: 884 0194 9220 Passcode: pcnovato



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



WOMEN'S PRAYER GROUP

Spend time praising God for His many blessings through prayer and receive His assurance for you. Together we seek His intimate presence, led by the Holy Spirit and fed by scripture. Meetings are the first Thursday of each month at 7 p.m. Use the same Zoom link each month. Contact Janis West at Janisw99@gmail.com with questions.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81107446679?pwd=Yy9ub1pReGdMTHVhbDJpRzhHVVdHQ09>

Meeting ID: 811 0744 6679 Passcode: pcnovato



MEN'S BIBLE STUDY

Come join us for study and fellowship. We meet every **Wednesday at 7:15 a.m.** via Zoom. All men are welcome. To be added to the Zoom contact list, contact Walt Campbell at (415) 497-5157.



Here's an important number to jot down: (415) 472-0911. This is the **non-injury** lift assist phone number from the Novato Fire Department. If you or someone you know has fallen and you can't lift him/her, the fire department will come help!