

PresPress



February 1 – Carol Dacquisto Celebration of Life

February 2 – Jigsaw puzzle swap

February 2 – Lily Pad presentation

February 14 – Happy Valentine's Day!

February 17 – Presidents Day; office closed



PResPRes

February 2025

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

“Faithful Invitation & Shepherding”

What is the #1 reason people invest in a faith community long term? My guess is that you all know the answer because it's the reason you've been at PCN for many years. Sure, some part of us would say it's our worship services, our music, our classes, etc. But the answer most of us would give is this: we are here because of the community of people, the friends we have, the relationships we've developed.

And that makes perfect sense. Church is a body of believers, seeking to get to know and follow Jesus. We can't be Church by ourselves. Church is a body of people who love one another, need each other, go out of their way to care for and support one another. Church is a community in which we can be ourselves, authentically us, and be loved and accepted. People stay and invest in a church community because they find their sense of belonging there.

This is no secret. I think we've known this about Church since Jesus commissioned us. But in our world today, people around us need an extra push, tug, or nudge to discover Church. The Church has developed a bad rap over the years and people have searched and found places of belonging outside the Church. The Church doesn't have the influence it once did. It's not as prominent in society and doesn't hold the cultural power that it used to. Nowadays, people have to be persuaded to even step into a church community. And even then, they are dubious about the institution itself and easily looking for the nefarious Church they've heard so much about. When people visit churches, they usually have one foot still out the door.

So what does this mean for the Church today and for PCN? Well, it means that, from the get-go, if people explore a church community, they have to see, experience, and understand why Church matters to them, why it is valuable, and why they might stick around ... and they have to see this within the first visit (or before). They have to realize, straightaway, that God loves them, that the community loves them, will bend over backwards for them, will be there for them. They have to realize that the community is a safe place for their family, that it is a breath of fresh air from the grind of everyday life, that this community can enrich their lives.

But how can all of that happen in the first visit?

It begins with an invitation to join worship, a class, a program, or some event. But it's not just any kind of invitation we are called to extend, rather an invitation with the intent to shepherd. It's no arbitrary thing when we invite our neighbors to join us. It's an invitation to experience the grace of God in Jesus Christ in and through the Church. And what is the Church? The Church is the Body of Christ, the community of faith built on the relationships we have with God and each other. So, the invitation itself should take on the characteristics of the type of relationship Jesus draws us into; the type of relationship where people give of themselves for the sake of someone else, where we go out of the way for each other.

So when we invite people to church events, we should be ready with the intent to invite them to join 'us/me.' In other words, the plan should be to do this thing **together**. We should expect those we invite to journey with us, and for us to shepherd them into the life and ministry of the Church. We have to put on display from the beginning that they matter, they're worth our time, and we think the Church will change their lives like it has ours.

As a congregation at PCN, we have something special as a community, something we think is worth sharing with the world. And we want people to join us. So in 2025, the challenge for each of us is to invite one person or family per month to join us for some church event, worship, class, etc. But that invitation should not be a simple 'ask,' but rather the invitation to 'accompany me' to that event. We should invite with the expectation of shepherding.

At first, this might mean having them accompany you. And later on it might lead to connecting them with other people in the church and other programs and ministries. But it is the *relationships* that matter and building up the body of Christ in community together.

What do you think, my friends? Can we develop a culture of invitation and shepherding in 2025? I know we can. Let's do it together!

With Grace & Peace,
Pastor Adam



Session

Session Highlights – January

At the January 15, 2025 meeting, Session:

- approved a Sunday through Thursday workweek for staff. Scheduling exceptions will be made by the Head of Staff.
- approved half-days on Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve for staff, repurposing the Friday after Thanksgiving.
- received an update from the Worship and Property Committees and Art Maramba, Director of Music Ministry, on plans to reconfigure the sanctuary to accommodate the band, choir, and bell choir. The committees will return with up to three mock-ups of how the space can be reconfigured as well as needs to repair and update technology in the sanctuary.

Kathy Takemoto, Clerk of Session



Dear loving church family and friends,

We, Ann's family, can never fully explain how much and how deeply we appreciate your outpouring of condolences and love on Ann's transition into her Lord's care. She was ready to leave us and go to a place where there is no Parkinson's Disease or suffering. She loved all of you, and she talked about, worried about, prayed for and taught you since becoming part of the church family in 1971. Thank you for your gracious comments about her and for your thoughts, notes, cards, calls and prayers. You are the BEST!

~Bruce (spouse since 1969), Brook, Kim, Bethany, Abram, Ellis, Annelise, Weston, Tennyson, Sennett, Avalon, Wilder and Alouette



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.

SoCal Wildfires: PCN Steps Up!

Imagine the pain of losing your home and everything in it: the sadness and sense of complete loss, and even the loss of friends and family. We at PCN had to do something and in *one week* we did! In response to the *urgent* emergency email call-to-action to the congregation, SIXTY PCN Hearts pitched in on Thursday, January 16 and in *one hour* "filled the order"! We put together 40 prayer blankets and shipped them off to Pastor Grace of Pacific Palisades Presbyterian Church, which was destroyed in the fires. As you read this, PCN Prayer Blankets have been handed out to fire victims!

Message from Pastor Grace:

"Please thank everyone, from the bottom of my heart, and please let them know that this ministry is so incredibly important at this time for everyone who is suffering from deep trauma.

I'll tell you a wonderful point of irony: our church has a knitting blanket ministry ... a small group of women from our church ... I distribute them to folks who are coming out of hospitals or who are dying, and this has been an incredible ministry of our church. Each holiday season, we deliver them to hospitals as well. And now, *our church folks will be receiving these blankets that they have been giving to people for years.*

We have a tremendous number of people in our little church who have lost their homes. This is a wonderful, wonderful gift for those in our church. Please thank everyone again and give them our heartfelt gratitude!

May peace be the journey."

PCN, you have shown these fire victims, in a very real and tangible way, that people from afar, the congregation of PCN, are thinking of them, comforting them, and praying for them, offering hope during a tragic time.

Special thanks to ALL of you amazing Prayer Blanketeers for rushing to church on short notice to meet the immediate need! And special thanks to George Pilloton, Tonya Church, Sally Carbonaro, the Deacons, and the Mission team for putting this together!

The kids from Grace Generation also contributed to PCN's efforts, as shown in the pictures below.







For the Love of Mothers

Join friends and congregants for Gilead House's "For the Love of Mothers" fundraising party on Sunday, February 16 at 2 p.m. There will be live music, hors d'oeuvres, cheeses, desserts and wines. Tickets are \$108.55 per person or \$810.15 for a table of eight.

Go to www.gileadhouse.org for individual tickets or contact Carolyn and Art Gerrans at 415.328.1578 or grace624@comcast.net to join a PCN table. Thank you!



Jigsaw Puzzle Swap

"It is the brain, the little gray cells on which one must rely."

~ Hercule Poirot"

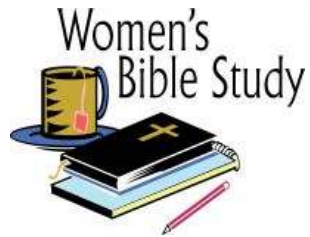
It's time for another PCN Jigsaw Puzzle Swap. At last, you can clear out all those puzzles you have solved and get some new ones to challenge your "little gray cells." Look around the homestead and decide which jigsaw puzzles can go to church with

you to be exchanged for other fascinating challenges. There is a collection box in the church office if you want to drop off puzzles beforehand.

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 2nd

during **Time for Fellowship**, after Sunday morning worship service.

Contact Bill Bradfield at (415) 408-3427 if you have questions or would like to help with set-up and take-down.



A Tribute to Carol Dacquisto



This month, Women's Bible Study pays tribute to our dear Carol, who continued valiantly teaching our study of Joshua until a few weeks before her passing on December 12, when she went to be with the Lord. This was the same day as the passing of Larry, Sr., four years earlier.

At the first 2025 Women's Bible Study, the ladies expressed their favorite memories of Carol: "She always wanted the members to have a voice in what we studied; she saved me after my husband died; Carol never met a stranger; she was a friend to all; my first class was **1984**; Carol helped me raise my sons – she supported them like a Godmother; I treasured Carol's humbleness and faith in the Lord, her thrill of interpreting the Scriptures, and her humor and laughter; Carol always saw the person inside, not their race or ethnicity; if she said she would do something, she did it; she was one of a kind; her organization was beyond measure; you received remembrances in the mail, you never fell off her list of 300 people!"

Margaret Franz-Costello and Karen Carlson assisted Carol throughout 2024. Carol's spoken plan for the future of Women's Bible Study was to pass on leadership to class members, and we have done that by adding Melodie Baird to our teaching team. We will continue meeting on Zoom Thursday mornings from 10 to 11:30 a.m. We would be happy to have you join us in our study of Joshua, the

story of God fulfilling His promise to give the land of Canaan to Jacob's descendants if only they would trust and obey. Joshua portrays the Lord as their general, leading His people in victorious battles. It is an exciting narrative!

In addition to its studies, our group provides a warm fellowship time before class and a service component involving the collection of pop-top tabs. We enthusiastically collect these from friends and PCN members all year to donate to the Shriners Hospital for Children in Sacramento, which sells them to a recycling company. The proceeds are used to help parents with expenses. We also enjoy acting as PCN greeters at special events, wearing our signature red clothing and "Ask Me About WBS" buttons.

To learn more about our group and receive the link to our Zoom class, please contact:

Margaret 415-806-8849 allaboutchoices@yahoo.com
Karen 415-382-9616 kcarlson39@icloud.com
Melodie 415-897-7512 melodie.l.baird@gmail.com





Join our lively discussion as the Sunday Morning Adult Study Group continues meeting via Zoom at 8:00 a.m. For information, please call Doris Dooley (415-895-5104) or Karen Carlson (415-382-9616).

Your study leaders are Larry Dacquisto (415-577-2115), Karen Carlson and Doris Dooley.

Link for the Zoom meeting:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82970812537?pwd=eGZESUo3dzQ4NXh3WFFNT3AvQmpDdz09>

Meeting ID: 829 7081 2537 Passcode: pcnovato



**Blood Drive
Thank You!**

Thank you to everyone that helped with the blood drive on Sunday, January 12. We had 24 donors including one first-timer. We collected 21 units of blood. Saving lives in this manner is so important!

The Deacons will be holding another blood drive on Sunday, June 8. Please share this information with your friends and family who can donate. It's a gift!

Gratefully,
PCN Deacons



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.



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 or email walterlcampbell@aol.com.



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!