

The Presbyterian Church of Novato  
710 Wilson Avenue  
Novato, CA 94947

Return Service Requested



May 4 – Town Hall  
May 10 – Italian Aperitivo Festa  
May 11 – Mother's Day



**PresPress**

**May 2025**

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

### **“New Life”**

Perhaps I am still on the ‘mountaintop’ following PCN’s Easter worship and the retelling of the greatest love story there ever was, but I can’t help but share the message of resurrection and new life. This happens most years for me, but this year has held such great significance. I’ve been through my own season of personal discernment and have experienced the gift of new life on so many occasions this year, big and small. Ironically enough, having done a large number of Celebration of Life services this past year, remembering the lives of some truly inspirational disciples of Jesus Christ has revealed to me again God’s goodness and love. It has strengthened the hope I experience every day.

But I’ve also experienced resurrection in our church at PCN. Friends, it’s no secret we’ve been through so many changes in so short a time. Some of them were planned, but most simply happened, and we’ve faithfully followed the Holy Spirit as we’ve adapted. I’m so proud of how our leaders have responded to so much and just how supportive you, as the congregation has been throughout. Of course, opinions have been robust and even at odds at times, but that’s why our movement forward has been ever more impactful and meaningful.

In short, our church has been and is experiencing resurrection and new life. Not all churches have been as resilient and enduring through as much change as we have in so short a time. And I know it’s the power of resurrection at work in our community. Thank you, my friends, for your faithfulness and your commitment to Jesus Christ in the community at PCN.

But I think this motif is not over. New life is not a passing phase. New life will define the future of PCN. Here’s where we’re going:

- As I write this, a Youth Director search team is being formed to find a Youth Director to join our awesome staff, to build up and develop an impactful, faith-forming youth program.
- We continue to build our mission strategy to focus on relationships first with the non-profits we support, followed by hands- and feet-involvement, and lastly through finances.
- We continue to build relationships with the community and community organizations, to create visibility of our church and what Christ is doing here.
- We are revitalizing our facilities and grounds to be more welcoming, hospitable, and accessible to the community. This will involve things like looking at updating our parking lot, our worship

space including the sound system and our gathering spaces. Expanding and updating Trevitt Hall to accommodate our congregation is also under exploration.

- Our music program is continuing to grow and expand. Instead of two programs we've been able to unify into one, wholistic music program incorporating a variety of music styles and expressions. The bell choir has expanded, and we're working to build up our choir again.
- We've seen a rise in the number of people visiting our church and are developing new strategies for welcoming and connecting people into the life of the church.
- Our safety team has worked and continues to work diligently to make our campus safer and more accessible for all people.

We have a vision for our future at PCN, and we're moving toward it with humility and faithfulness. It's an exciting time in the life and ministry of the church.

And you can help be a part of it in so many different ways. Pray. Pray for our church and God's work here. Get to know your pew neighbors. Spend time with them. Share life with them. Share your testimony of Christ with your neighbors. Invite people to church or a church activity. Join a team or a life group. Become an elder or deacon. Volunteer for events and activities. Tithe and give generously.

And I have one more suggestion that perhaps we don't talk about very often. What about considering a legacy gift to PCN? We all know we can't take our worldly possessions or wealth with us when Jesus calls us home, but these gifts to the church could be a blessing to Jesus' Church at PCN as we continue to be the body of Christ long into the future. Legacy gifts can help the church not just endure into the future, but faithfully and courageously answer God's call. What if your legacy gift could help PCN redevelop and expand Trevitt Hall to make room for future growth so our congregation can have fellowship indoors? What if your legacy gift could help us repave our parking lot, or make our campus ADA compliant? What if your legacy gift could help us renovate the entirety of our facilities to better foster our call to be 'a beacon of hope, reviving the world through God's love?'

God is doing amazing and miraculous things at PCN, and we have the great blessing to be a part of it together. Prayerfully consider how you might be a part of what God is up to at PCN, and let's jump in together.

With humility and grace,  
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.*

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## **2025 Medical Mission with Faith in Practice American and Guatemalan Team**



PCN has supported the Faith in Practice Mission for many years through our budgeting, the annual Alternative Christmas Faire, and providing reading glasses for the mission to provide to clients in Guatemala. The objective of Faith in Practice is to provide medical care to the poor of Guatemala. Each year more than 2,500 volunteers provide healthcare to more than 30,000 through an integrated and coordinated network of care.

This year the Faith In Practice medical team consisted of 45 American and Guatemalan volunteers: nurses, pharmacists, physical therapists, translators, pastor, and support staff. The team traveled to the village of San Agustin Acaseguastlan, Guatemala where we held our clinics for a week of medical service to those in need.

**We thank the many friends, colleagues, and family who have supported our mission trip with prayers and funding. You all have been a strong part of our team and enable us to do great work for the Guatemalans, otherwise not possible.**

### **Here is what we did!**

- Fitted 112 disabled people with brand new custom wheelchairs
- Fitted 42 adults and eight deaf pediatric patients with hearing aids
- Screened 193 women for cervical dysplasia and treated 10 positive women with Thermo therapy, which will render them free of developing cervical cancer!
- Cared for 73 ENT patients
- 185 orthopedic patients evaluated and most given Cortisone injections to painful joints

- Evaluated and treated 371 adult patients
- Evaluated and treated 119 pediatric patients
- Medications dispensed to 709 patients
- 133 gynecological patients cared for
- 256 patients referred for surgeries to be done by the surgical teams that follows us

The following contains the log of activities for the annual trip that was performed this year of this incredible journey in God's service to the clients in Guatemala.

### **March 9, 2025, Day 1 Guatemala medical mission**

*"Wherever you are, be all there."* – Jim Elliott

It is hard to believe that this is my 22nd consecutive year volunteering with the wonderful organization called Faith in Practice in Guatemala. I have formed deep relations with so many return volunteers through our shared experiences caring for needy people. FIP has matured into a first-class charity with deep roots in the many communities it serves. I am honored to be a part of it and thank the many of you who have financially supported and given so many Guatemalans a better life.

Our two buses filled with 45 American and Guatemalan volunteers left Antigua at the crack of dawn for the Department of "El Progreso," three hours to the north, where we will serve the village of San Agustin Acaseguastlan. A large truck crammed with medical supplies, wheelchairs, meds and our armed transport accompany us to the school in which we will be holding our clinics. When we arrived, an equal number of local volunteers, who will help us organize and assist our patients, was there to greet us. It was many hands on-deck in the 95° heat that enabled us to quickly set up the clinics for pediatrics, adults, gynecology, orthopedics, pharmacy, laboratory, and mobility that begin tomorrow morning. Local liaisons help to identify those in greatest need, and we expect to see 1000 patients this week!



**School where clinics were held**



**Unloading the equipment**



## March 10 2025, Day 2 Guatemala medical mission

*"If you want others to be happy, practice compassion" – Dalai Lama*

First day of clinic, and I am assigned to the mobility clinic. There are so many disabled people here that are desperate for wheelchairs and other mobility devices. Cerebral palsy, a spastic, neuromuscular weakness condition, usually secondary to a home birth gone bad, is widespread. Strokes, car accidents, with loss of limbs and amputations secondary to diabetic complications are very common in this country. Family members must carry around their loved ones due to lack of available wheelchairs.

FIP has partnered with an organization that allows us to provide wheelchairs to our patients, vastly improving the lives of the family unit.

Today, we fitted dozens of people for wheelchairs. My photos show some the recipients. We are blessed in the United States to have access to healthcare that these people do not have. While waiting for the bus to depart from our clinic, I learned that Fuego, an active volcano in the city of Antigua (that we left yesterday) has erupted. Volcanoes in Central America "burp," with frequent minor eruptions. This one is significant. We are three hours away and safe at this time.



**Mother and child with cerebral palsy  
awaiting a wheelchair**

### **March 11, 2025, Day 3 Guatemala medical mission**

*"Alone we can do so little, together we can do so much."* – Helen Keller

Yesterday, three busloads of people who had driven five hours came to our clinics. Many of them desperate for medical care, others coming for wheelchairs and other mobility devices. They patiently waited for many hours and then would have to endure a five-hour ride home. These are very humble people, incredibly grateful for the care that we give.

Yesterday, a man arrived holding his 10-year-old son, completely disabled from cerebral palsy. They lived in the mountains, and he had never seen a physician since birth. Their clothes were immaculate and his love for his son radiated. Guatemalans are gentle people who accept what is. Be it loss of limb, severe illness, or other disability, they accept the life that they are dealt with grace.

A huge thank you to my Presbyterian Church of Novato and my Novato Sunrise Rotary Club who donated more than 400 reading glasses and 200 beautifully handmade quilted glass cases. For those of us with middle-aged eyes that can no longer read fine print, imagine what it would be like to have no access to reading glasses. All of you glass donors have made a significant difference in everyday lives that depend on close vision for work in crafts.

Intestinal parasites are very common, causing chronic abdominal pain and malnutrition in children. Tap water can never be trusted for purity. We deworm nearly everyone as they come through the line, except for pregnant and lactating women. We cannot fix the contaminated water supply, we can temporarily improve lives with our strategy.

### **March 12, 2025, Day 4 Guatemala medical mission**

*"The weak can never forgive. Forgiveness is the attribute of the strong."* – Mahatma Gandhi

What is striking about the Guatemalan people is how they lovingly care for each other. The country lacks a social welfare system, such as our Medicare and Social Security. Most people must pay for their healthcare and medications. Families, friends and neighbors shoulder the responsibility of caring for the disabled and each other.

A thin, sad-appearing 48-year-old woman was not meeting my glance. I realized that she was blind. She also has diabetes and, approximately one year earlier had become sightless overnight. I could not imagine her plight. No resources, other than her sister and husband, no TV, podcasts or other forms of stimulation. She admitted to suicidal depression but promised me she would not kill herself. I was able to give her an antidepressant and ask the local Guatemalan liaison to help her find psychiatric help. I am not hopeful for a good ending. There are many despairing cases like this.

Please meet Byron. He is a rockstar paraplegic wheelchair assembler! I first met him four years ago when he joined Faith in Practice's mobility team. He had suffered a traumatic injury, leaving him in a wheelchair. I have watched him blossom into an amazing, well-adjusted, confident master wheelchair builder. We are grateful for his contributions!

The clinics sweltered today. It was 95° and the fans did nothing but blow hot air on us. Many of our patients have been up since 4 a.m. and take all day to get through the clinic. I am grateful for the opportunity to serve.



**Father holding disabled son with cerebral palsy**



**Reading glasses for many**

### **March 13, 2025, Day 5 Guatemala medical mission**

*"Whatever you are, be a good one."* – Abraham Lincoln

This is our final clinic day. Always bittersweet. Today was the hottest day, our room temperature topping 105°. This week, we served a community of more than 50,000, plus many others bussed from villages more than two hours away. Medical care here consists of just a small community clinic that can provide only simple care at cost to patients. Anyone needing surgery or who has complex medical needs must travel far, which is out of the question for most.

Faith In Practice has saved many women from the horrors of cervical cancer. This country does not offer human papilloma vaccine, which prevents cervical cancer, to the children. As with developing countries around the globe, Guatemala has a very high incidence of cervical cancer because of absent vaccinations. FIP has a program training many local women to screen for cervical dysplasia, the precursor to cancer. This is done through a low-tech acid wash to the cervix which reveals telltale signs. Thousands of women have been screened, and those that are positive are sent to our clinics where we treat them with a Thermo device which freezes the superficial layers of the cervix and renders them pre-cancer free. A dear friend, Dr. Patty Baiza, has spearheaded many of these efforts, and we are thankful to have her as a valuable member of our FIP family.

Fifty-plus community volunteers and our fifty-plus medical team volunteers ended a long day with many thanks for the good we have done for so many people. I am always utterly amazed how a



disparate group of individuals can join up, set up a massive amount of equipment in a previously unknown site and efficiently care for adults, pediatrics, gynecological, ENT, orthopedic patients, perform hearing tests and fit hearing aids, fit reading glasses, distribute needed medications from a well-stocked pharmacy, arrange for surgeries with the future surgical teams, and build dozens of wheelchairs. Faith In Practice rocks!



Faith In Practice is a robust volunteer organization that currently has 12 weeks' worth of medical teams going to many sites and 34 weeks of surgical teams performing a vast number of interventions that will significantly improve the lives of many.

Blessings for your support!

Vicki and Peter

To donate:

<https://donate.faithinpractice.org/VickiMartinezMD>

*For more information about other international missionaries, please refer to April "Find Your Light" emails from Sally Carbonaro.*



Dear Friends at Presbyterian Church of Novato,

We hope you will join us for our third annual **Brunch, Bubbles & Bocce** event! Enjoy a delicious brunch, live music from The Role Models, silent and live auctions, and a fun-filled afternoon of bocce, all while supporting essential human needs!

*Funds raised will ensure people in our community have access to critical resources that strengthen families and help individuals build a brighter future.*

**WHEN**

Saturday, May 17, 2025  
10:30am–2:00pm

**WHERE**

Margaret Todd Senior Center  
1560 Hill Rd, Novato, CA 94947

Visit [www.northmarincs.org](http://www.northmarincs.org) to purchase tickets.  
Unable to attend? Consider [making a donation](#) to support our programs.

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





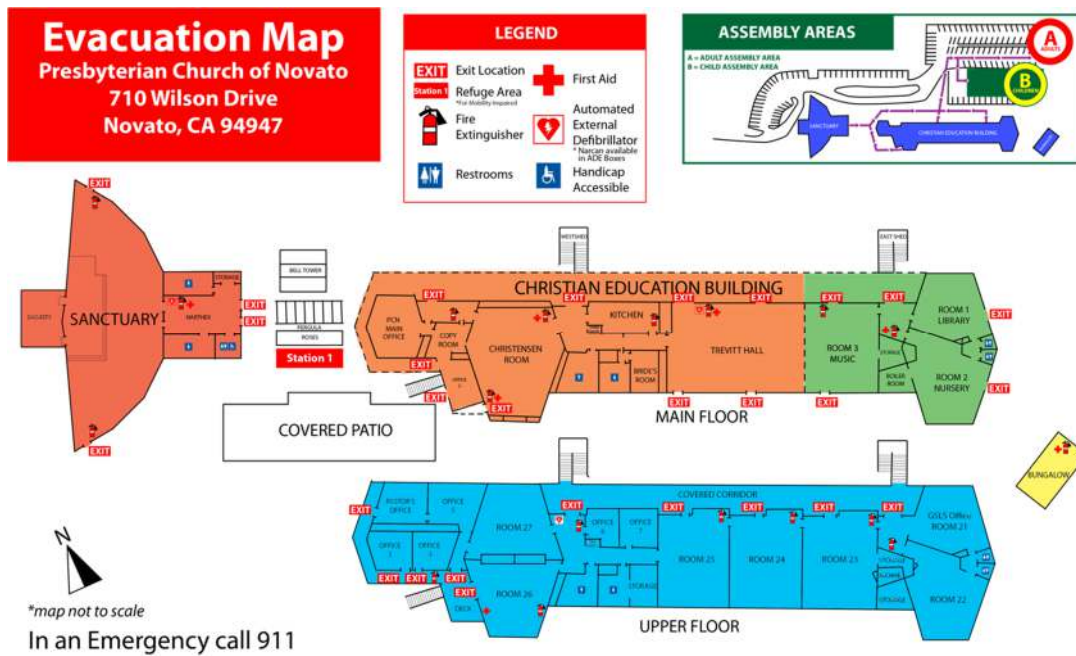
Holy Week was very special at PCN in 2025. From the entertaining children's Palm Sunday program followed by the amazing brunch, to the somber Good Friday Tenebrae service, to the celebratory Easter worship, members and guests were treated to a beautiful sanctuary, amazing music, delicious food and inspiring sermons. Many thanks to everyone who contributed to this amazing week.

Below are just a few pictures that commemorate the variety of events during Holy Week.









## Safety/Security Team Accomplishments Since 2021

- Two Certified First Aid training classes (one in 2022 and one in 2023)
- AED machines updated (pad replacement)
- Narcan is available at all AED machines
- Held a PCN evacuation drill on March 10, 2024
- Formation of CBERT (Church Building Emergency Response Team)
- Purchase/placement of emergency equipment: safety vests, walkie-talkies, bullhorn, light sticks, etc.
- Two wheelchairs in the usher closet
- 10 fire blankets for kitchen and PCN barbecues
- Installed two emergency storage benches by the assembly area, containing water, first aid kits, emergency blankets/ponchos, wipes, megaphones, headlamps, lanterns, tarps, and a camp toilet
- Safety tape by door thresholds and taped trip-hazard carpets down
- Updated both our indoor and outdoor garbage cans to enhance fire safety and provide clear instructions for proper waste disposal
- Completed risk evaluation of the campus (self-inspection safety checklist)
- Working on the final draft of PCN's Emergency Response Plan and our evacuation maps!

### **History of the Team:**

In 2021, Session created the PCN Safety Plan Committee as a subcommittee of the C.E. Committee. Our main goal is to assess and develop responses to potential campus emergencies.



In 2022, the committee agreed to rely on material provided by our insurer, Church Mutual, to revise PCN's 10+-year-old safety plan. We began by evaluating how we could communicate during an emergency, necessary roles and responsibilities, evacuation plans, and responses to medical emergencies and potential security threats.

We developed a campus evacuation plan and decided to form a group of volunteers, "safety wardens," to help lead us to safety in an emergency, and offered a certified first-aid training class for them.

We begin revising and updating PCN's Emergency Response Plan. This includes responding to campus emergencies and improving the safety and security of our buildings and grounds, including those occupied by Good Shepherd Lutheran School. The committee and GSLS work together on campus safety; this collaborative effort included our participation in a GSLS evacuation drill on March 10th, 2025. All offices will be equipped with walkie-talkies for evacuation communication.

In 2024, as the need to ensure the safety of our congregation grew, Session created a new stand-alone PCN Emergency-Safety Committee to continue this critical work.

To help us identify our campus's safety issues, we completed an extensive risk evaluation of the PCN campus with a self-inspection safety checklist from our insurance company, Church Mutual. We are working with the property team and personnel to address the issues that arose.

We formed CBERT (Church Building Emergency Response Team), a trained team of individuals capable of handling emergency situations. Their readiness was demonstrated during a successful evacuation drill on March 10th, 2024.

We are eager to share our progress as we plan for the next evacuation drill!!! And don't worry, there will be donuts!!

If you are interested in joining our team or helping with the drill, please contact Sydney Fletcher. Stay safe!!!



Are you a newer member of our PCN family? Are you looking for a way to meet people and be of service? An ideal solution for you might be to volunteer as a member of the PCN Usher and Greeters Ministry. Be part of the team that is an integral part of each Sunday morning's worship service. For more information, contact Bill Bradfield at 415-408-3427.

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### **Meditation Garden Update**

A big thank you to the Garden Angels that have been weeding and working in the Meditation Garden over the past month. Your love and tender care have made the garden blossom, once again, for the enjoyment on the eyes and contemplative time to sit and reflect. We invite everyone to take a moment to sit and find a little piece of heaven in the garden.

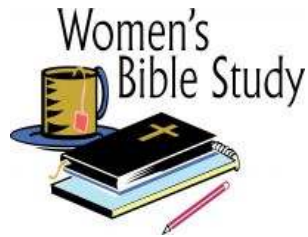
Thanks to our Garden Angels: Margie Betts, Miriam Campos, Pam McCart, Becky Praun, Dinah Sims and Barbara Sparrow. Special thanks to Kathy Wright for the sprinkling 'blessing' of weed deterrent. God knows which seeds should flourish!

With gratitude,  
Becky Praun/Property Team

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### **Property Team on the Move**

Thank you to the team that cleaned up the weeds and tall grass around the campus the past few weeks: Jay Haney, Don Erba, Ron Hune and Brad Praun. The campus looked spectacular for Easter Sunday.



Women's Bible Study's last meeting will be held Thursday, May 1 with a potluck celebration in the Christensen room. We'll resume meeting September 11 to continue our study of Joshua followed by a new study of the book of Mark later in the year. WBS meets Thursdays from 10 to 11:30 a.m.

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	<a href="mailto:allaboutchoices@yahoo.com">allaboutchoices@yahoo.com</a>
Karen	415-382-9616	<a href="mailto:kcarlson39@icloud.com">kcarlson39@icloud.com</a>
Melodie	415-897-7512	<a href="mailto:melodie.l.baird@gmail.com">melodie.l.baird@gmail.com</a>



All signs point to Jesus! Come join us on Zoom Sunday mornings from 8 to 9 a.m. We are launching a NEW study this spring focusing on Living a Purpose with the book of John and 2 Kings with Elisha, seeing the hand of God at work.

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



**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](mailto:tonya.church@comcast.net) or Becky at [beckypraun@yahoo.com](mailto: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](mailto: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!

