

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

Return Service Requested



**September 1 – Labor Day; office closed**  
**September 2 – The Truth Project begins**  
**September 30 – Grace Generation resumes**



**PResPReSS**

**September 2025**

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

***The Goodness of Impermanence and the Gift of “Liminal Spaces”***

“So, how did you first discover the church?” This is a common question people are asked when they are invited to share the beginnings of their experience at a local church. We can sometimes forget that at one time, we were all ‘new’ to our church family. We were part of the impermanence, the change, the transition that marks all living, breathing communities.

As a Transition Pastor, I often get to hear church leaders practice what I call ‘self-talk’ about the season of life their faith community has recently moved into. Church leaders say things like, “We are searching for a permanent pastor.” “Really, a permanent pastor, you don’t say...”

Have you ever wondered what counts for permanence in a pastor’s season of ministry? Does 10 years of service make them permanent, or 20 years of service? You get what I am suggesting, right? The truth is, every pastor is an impermanent leader. Every pastor is called to a church for a season of time. The season of time’s boundaries are known to the Lord but remain hidden to the pastor and the local congregation. Clearly, the Lord believes there is goodness in the experience of impermanence in the life of the church.

In the New Testament, several metaphors are employed to talk about the nature of the church. At times, the church is called a holy temple, a household of faith, a family, even a living body made up of many parts. None of those metaphors speak about things in life that are permanent, that are closed off from change or transitions. Temples decay and, given enough time, the footprints of their facility will become altered and modified to fit new seasons of life. Households and families change as new members are added to them. Our physical body also changes as we age, as some of us have discovered to our dismay. So, either the Lord has missed the point of the great value of permanence, or the Lord knows that the healthiest thing a local church can experience across the span of its life is to encounter impermanence, again and again and again.

Friends, what I am suggesting to you is that we should embrace the goodness of impermanence. Pastor Kent was a gift while he was with you. Pastor Adam was a gift while he was with you. Both were impermanent leaders, and their impermanence doesn’t take away from the power of their time with you. The next Installed Pastor will also come to you as a gift. Their ministry will invite you into new and exciting spiritual discoveries and adventures.

**BUT THERE IS AN IMPORTANT TIME BEFORE THE NEW PASTOR ARRIVES ...** Friends, you are entering what is often called a ‘transition season of ministry.’ If we interpret this season of life in our

church family as ‘merely’ transitional, we might be tempted to believe that this is not a deeply important, transformative season. We also might be tempted to think that the next season is somehow not transitional. In truth, every season, including the season of an Installed Pastor’s ministry, is, to a degree, a transitional season. But these short seasons of life between Installed Pastors are what some people call ‘liminal spaces’ – times that are betwixt, in between. Liminal spaces are often shorter than longer transitional seasons of Installed Pastors, but that does not make them less critical, less vital, or less vibrant for church families.

Consider this: over the next year or two, new people will join your church and discover the joy of being at the Presbyterian Church of Novato. Also, some of your long-term members will go home to the Lord, to experience wonderful reunions with loved ones who passed before them. Some of you will celebrate the birth of children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren. Even Novato itself will change as a city; its borders and housing communities will expand, new businesses will open, just as others will close. There are myriad gifts waiting to be discovered and celebrated in this ‘liminal space,’ this time that is betwixt, this time that is in between.

The God who was faithful to you in your past, who has journeyed with you into this present season of transition, will continue to go before you, creating new opportunities for faithful presence in the future. One of my favorite missionaries of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Lesslie Newbigin, who spent a good part of his life in South India, used to say that the Holy Spirit is the true great missionary. The Spirit of the Lord is always working ahead of the church. The local church’s job is not to create new opportunities for witness, for sharing the love of neighbor. Instead, the church’s true mission is to join in the work that the Lord has already been doing ahead of the local community of faith.

Friends, let us, with faith, hope, and love, join in the work that the Lord has already been doing as the Presbyterian Church of Novato moves into this liminal space, this time of transition, that the Lord has planned for you.

Pastor Tony



# Session

## Session Highlights – August 2025

At the August 20, 2025 stated Session meeting:


- Session welcomed Rev. Dr. Tony Stiff as PCN's Transition/Interim Pastor.
- Approved up to \$5,000 to carpet the nursery, and up to \$12,835 to repair/improve breezeway to prevent slips and falls. Both recommendations were made by the Safety Team.
- Approved the Commissioned Ruling Elder Covenant Agreement for Sally Carbonaro. The next step is approval of the Covenant Agreement by the Presbytery Committee on Ministry.
- Confirmed Saturday, October 4, 2025 for a Session retreat to focus on the next steps in the transition season process which includes completing a Mission Study (done by a small team with input from the congregation) and forming a Pastor Nominating Committee (Pastor Nominating Committee candidates will be discerned by the Nominating Committee).

Kathy Takemoto, Clerk of Session



### Join Us for “The Truth Project” – A Life-Changing Journey of Biblical Worldview

Sally Carbonaro's morning Life Group is excited to host a Tuesday morning class featuring *The Truth Project*, a powerful 12-session video series produced by Focus on the Family. This thought-provoking program explores the foundations of a Christian worldview and challenges participants to live out their faith in every area of life.

 **Tuesdays, 10:00 – 11:30 a.m.**

 **September 2 through November 18**

 **Location:** The Christensen Room

Whether you're new to exploring biblical truth or looking to deepen your understanding, this series offers rich teaching, meaningful discussion, and spiritual encouragement.

All are welcome – come grow with us!



***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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**"Saddle Up for Gilead House"**

Join Sally Carbonaro and Carolyn Gerrans at "Saddle Up for Gilead House," a fundraiser taking place Sunday, September 21 from 2 to 5 p.m. at Novato Horseman's Club. There will be live music, food, wine and auction items. Contact Carolyn Gerrans at [grace624@comcast.net](mailto:grace624@comcast.net) or call 415.328.1578 for information or tickets. Let's get a PCN table together!

Every dollar raised at Saddle Up for Gilead House directly funds life-changing services for families in need. Your generosity helps provide safe transitional housing, job-readiness programs, emotional counseling, parenting classes, and ongoing mentorship for mothers seeking independence and healing. It's more than a donation, it's an investment in hope, resilience, and community.

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## **Camp Compassion**

On both August 20 and 27, members of PCN delivered food to 30 unhoused children and adults at Camp Compassion. Volunteers did the meal-planning, shopping, preparing and cooking, and finally delivered and served the grateful recipients. Many thanks to all who volunteered, and a special thank you to Hilary Kinney, who spearheaded the project.



You may have noticed that the Praise Band isn't part of our Communion Sunday worship services. It was decided that Communion Sundays should have a more traditional, reverent feel to them, so we're giving the band the week off the first Sunday of each month. If you have any questions, you can reach out to the members of the Worship Committee.

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## **SUPPER CLUB GROUPS ARE FORMING FOR 2025-26**

We have had a successful year where groups of three and four couples have met in their individual homes over this past year! For new members, it is a fun way to get to know others in the church. Supper Club groups are not limited to couples; singles are also welcome to join! Besides dinner in a home, picnics and restaurants are also an option. If the gathering is in someone's home, the host couple provide the main dish and the others provide the appetizers, salad and dessert. You can sign up to be a substitute as well; this list is used when a fourth couple is needed.

If you're interested in joining a Supper Club group, contact Janalee Holmes (415.860.0275) or E.B. Hanlein (415.225.6496) either in person at church, or by phone or text. Please sign up by October 1.

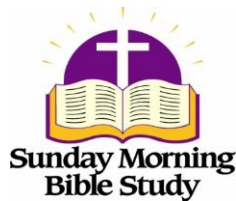


Women's Bible Study's will no longer be meeting on Thursday mornings. For the time being, we are attending The Truth Project video series on Tuesday mornings beginning September 2 from 10 to 11:30 a.m.

We will continue collecting 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.

If you have any questions, 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 via Zoom Sunday mornings from 8 to 9 a.m. 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



## Church Committees

PCN is blessed to have amazing volunteers who generously give of their time and talents to serve our congregation as well as visitors and, through Mission, the greater community and world. Below is a list of each committee, the day/time it meets, and its chair and members. If you are interested in joining a committee, you can contact the chair or a member to get more information. Thank you to all who serve!

<b>2025-26 Committees &amp; Teams</b>	
<b>Christian Education</b>	
<i>Meets the second Tuesday of the month, 10 a.m.</i>	
Virginia Saysette	Committee Chair
Walt Campbell	
Miriam Campos	
Sally Carbonaro, staff	
Sydney Fletcher, staff	
Barbara Sparrow	
<b>Community Life</b>	
<i>Meets the fourth Wednesday of the month, 5:30 p.m.</i>	
Diane Blalock	Committee Chair
Cindy Amadea	
Sally Carbonaro, staff	
Sydney Fletcher, staff	
Glenise Johnson	
Karen Marks, Elder	
Becky Moser	
Greg Smith, Elder	
Bruce Stahley	
Kathy Takemoto	
<b>Endowment Fund Committee</b>	
<i>Meets quarterly</i>	
George Pilloton, Elder	Committee Chair
Brad Praun, Elder	
Patty Reed, Elder, 2028 class	
John Reuscher, 2027 class	
Bruce Stahley, 2025 class	



<b>Fellowship</b>	
<i>Meets the second Monday of the month, 6 p.m.</i>	
VACANT	Committee Chair
Audrey Boland	
Tonya Church, Elder	
Mary Contreras	
Becky Praun	
Patty Reed, Elder	
Kathy Takemoto	

<b>Finance &amp; Administration</b>	
<i>Meets the second Thursday of the month, 3 p.m.</i>	
Brad Praun, Elder	Committee Chair
Don Brand	
Walt Campbell	
Tonya Church, Elder	
George Pilloton, Elder	
John Reuscher	
Greg Smith, Elder	
<b>Mission</b>	
<i>Meets the fourth Wednesday of the month, 6 p.m.</i>	
George Pilloton, Elder	Committee co-chair
Patty Reed, Elder	Committee co-chair
Jackie Dold	
Dotty Fehring	
Bill Walker	
<b>Personnel</b>	
<i>Meets the first Monday of the month, 4 p.m.</i>	
VACANT	Committee Chair
Audrey Boland	
Tonya Church, Elder	
Greg Smith, Elder	
<b>Property</b>	
<i>Meets the first Wednesday of the month, 6 p.m.</i>	
James Wood, Elder	Committee Chair
Don Erba	
Jay Haney	
Becky Praun	
Brad Praun, Elder	
Bill Walker	

<b>Worship</b>	
<i>Meets the first Wednesday of the month, 6 p.m.</i>	
Wayne Anderson	Committee co-chair
Diane Blalock	
Bill Bradfield	
Sally Carbonaro, staff	
Sydney Fletcher, staff	
Sandy Fong	
Bruce Stahley	

<b>PCN Safety – Emergency Plan Team</b>	
<i>Meets every two weeks on Thursday, 6 p.m.</i>	
Sydney Fletcher	Interim Committee Chair
Melodie Baird	
Mark Combs	
Loree Draeger	
Beth Flynn	
Diane Orsini-Tarkman	
Delane Ramser, Elder	
Walt Searway	
Bruce Stahley	
<b>Property Refresh Team</b>	
<i>Meets as needed</i>	
Melodie Baird	
Mary Contreras	
Becky Praun	
Patty Reed	
James Wood	
Lamona Wood	
<b>Presbytery Commissioners</b>	
George Pilloton, elected 2023	
Sally Carbonaro, elected 7/24	
<b>Nominating Committee 2025-26</b>	
Kathy Botko	at-large
Walt Campbell	at-large
EB Hanlein	at-large
Sally Jacob	Deacon Vice Moderator
Art Plumstead	Elder
James Wood	Elder
<b>Presbytery Committee Members</b>	
Susi Lynam, 2026 class	Personnel Committee
Bethany McMickin, 2028 class	Committee on Mission Finance
Brad Praun, 2024 class	Committee on Ministry
Kathy Takemoto, 2026 class	Representation & Review
<b>Synod</b>	
Robert Coleman, 2027 class	Commissioner

## Ushers & Greeters Ministry

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.



**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!

*Your laugh for the day ...*

