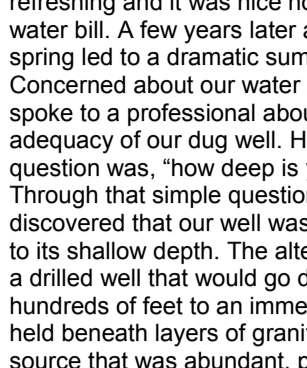


A resource to connect with each other as we serve together in the name of Christ

HOW DEEP IS YOUR WELL? SPIRITUAL NOURISHMENT FOR THE LONG HAUL

by Mary Westfall, Transitional Presbyter



Years ago when we moved into a home nestled among the woods, about 10 minutes from town, we were not on a municipal water line and for the first time had a well. The water tasted cold and refreshing and it was nice not to get a water bill. A few years later a very dry spring led to a dramatic summer drought. Concerned about our water supply we spoke to a professional about the adequacy of our dug well. His first question was, "how deep is your well?" Through that simple question we discovered that our well was at risk due to its shallow depth. The alternative was a drilled well that would go down hundreds of feet to an immense aquifer held beneath layers of granite, a water source that was abundant, pure and available. "You've got to get down to the source," the professional added, and that is what we did with positive and lasting results.

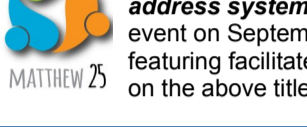
Droughts occur across the country and are something with which Californians are well acquainted. However, there is also another kind of drought, that of the soul, the inner spiritual life of each one of us. These months of pandemic, uncertainty, civil unrest, and change may have left a lot of us feeling rather dry and brittle in the depths of our inner lives. The resilience and refreshment received through corporate worship, pot-luck meals, shoulder-to-shoulder mission projects, which sustained us for years, have given way to months of sheltering-in-place and social distancing, leaving many of us experiencing emotional and psychological weariness, perhaps even a deep spiritual thirst.

How deep is your well? That question seems relevant as we experience a dearth of good news, a season in which even our inner spiritual life may feel brittle and barren, a drought of the soul. These are the times spoken of in scripture by prophets, preachers and poets: O God, you are my God, earnestly I seek you; my

soul thirsts for you, my body longs for you, in a dry and weary land. (Psalm 63) My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. Where can I go and meet with God? (Psalm 42:2) Throughout the ages, God's people have experienced all manner of difficulty and challenge, times, perhaps like today, when people struggled to remain hopeful and spiritually refreshed. However, we need not languish, but open ourselves to the good news of the gospel reminding us from where our deepest spiritual refreshment comes, Jesus Christ, the living water that quenches our deepest thirst, the Source in which we live, move and have being.

We are in the midst of times like none we have known before. Our national political scene is as contentious and divided as anyone can remember, our streets filled with voices lifting up the injustices and structural racism affecting Black Americans, the threat of another wave of COVID-19 looming large. All of this weighs heavily upon us and we need, all the more, to ground ourselves in living water, drawing upon the rich resources our faith tradition offers. Through daily opportunities to listen deeply to God's voice through scripture and intentional prayerful meditation, we deepen our spiritual well, refreshed by the living waters Christ offers, renewed by the presence of the Holy Spirit. Such practices will sustain us through these times, offering us hope and promise like nothing else can. "Drilling down" into the vast reservoir of our Christian faith offers us insight, healing, strength that will guide and sustain us on the path ahead.

As North Central California Presbytery engages in visioning and discerning God's call, our first and most important task is to continually ground ourselves in the immense love of the One who created us, knows us by name, loves us, that even in times of upheaval and uncertainty, we will be renewed, refreshed and reclaimed for a holy purpose. May we, individually and together, deepen our spiritual well for the long haul as we seek to faithfully follow the living God in whom all things are possible.



FREE REGISTRATION- SPACE LIMITED for the Intercultural Transformation Workshops- September 19 & 26 10 a.m.-12 p.m. (PT)

NCCP will be co-hosting these workshops. The 2018 General Assembly declared 2020-2030 as the "Decade of Intercultural Transformation" and, as a launching event, the Presbyterian Intercultural Network has gathered co-hosts and workshop leaders to bring a virtual workshop spanning the country. North Central California Presbytery will co-host and three individuals from the presbytery will provide workshops during the event: The Reverend, Dr. Aart Van Beek, Honorably Retired & Pastoral Mentor; Rola Al Ashkar, Candidate for Ministry & Pastoral Resident at Parkview Presbyterian Church; and Reno Tiwa, Inquirer & pastoral worker.

Connect and learn with these and other intercultural leaders in our denomination [Learn more](#) or [Register](#)

NCCP Visioning Task Force Launched

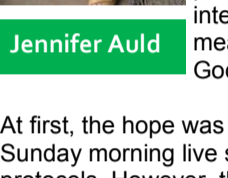


The Council of Sacramento and Stockton has launched a visioning process that aims at defining the goals, priorities, and possible structure of the new presbytery. The hope is to engage both presbyteries with their leaders, committees and congregations in dialogue about the shape of the new presbytery, taking into consideration the rich differences/similarities in the "DNAs" of...

[READ MORE](#)

FIRE RELIEF EFFORT through PRESBYTERIAN DISASTER ASSISTANCE (PDA)

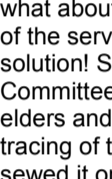
- Through this link you can share your financial blessings for wildfire disaster relief -



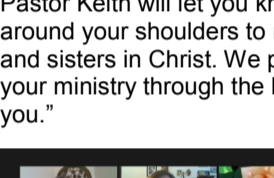
PDA is working with Santa Barbara Presbytery, Sacramento Presbytery and the Presbytery of the Pacific to respond to the recent wildfires in California. We are using our U.S. Wildfires account for this disaster-[DR000165](#).

Looking for a hands-on way to help? [Gift of the Heart kits](#) are a great option. School kits and hygiene kits will be needed in California especially.

Next Matthew 25 Event Focuses on Eradicating Poverty

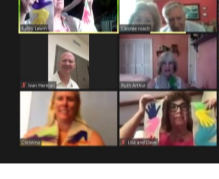


Explore the question, *Where in your church can you take action to address systemic poverty*, by participating in the third Matthew 25 event on September 16. To register and learn more about the event featuring facilitated dialogue, guest speakers and resource sharing, click on the above title.



Liability Issues to Consider on Reopening Churches for Live Worship Services

A resource written by Michael Kirk, General Counsel, PC(USA)



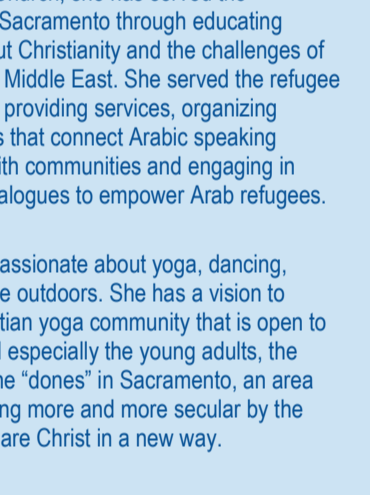
These are stories of new ministries, ideas, best practices, and more coming from our congregations even as justice issues and COVID 19 dominate the landscape. Please share your faith community's "Silver Lining" story by emailing it to Shelley, smitchell@sacpresby.org. Include a photo or two so we can see you in action or provide a link to your resource.

A Story of Change & Innovation from Carmichael Presbyterian Church

submitted by Karen Gray & Mary MacDonald



When we ordain and install elders, deacons, and pastors in our congregations, one of the questions they are asked is "Will you pray for and seek to serve the people with energy, intelligence, imagination, and love?" (*Book of Order* W-4.0404). All of these were needed to find a way to ordain and install CPC's newest class of elders and deacons. In more "normal" times, we ordain and install officers during Sunday morning worship services and invite all elders to come forward to lay hands on the new officers as a prayer of blessing for their service and ministry.

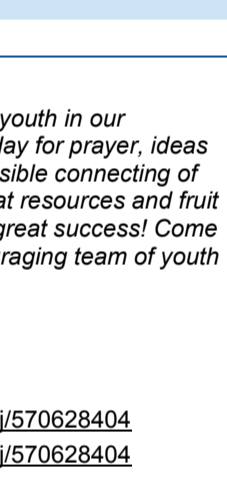


Laura & Lilly Janik

Since the pandemic made all of the "normal" processes impossible, our Session and pastors had to use their "energy, intelligence, imagination, and love" to come up with a safe, yet meaningful way to ordain and install these members who answered God's call to leadership.

At first, the hope was that we could invite incoming officers to the Sanctuary during a Sunday morning live stream service while observing safety and social distancing protocols. However, the spike in COVID-19 cases in California and the reinstatement of restrictions on indoor gatherings put an end to those plans.

So, on to Plan B (or is it Plan C at this point?). So many of us use Zoom for classes, meetings, and social gatherings, it seemed possible to have ordination and installation on Zoom as well. The date was set and the incoming officers notified. But what about the laying on of hands that is such a meaningful part of the service? Ruling Elder **Mary MacDonald** had the perfect solution! Stemming from an idea in discussions at a Presbytery Committee on ministry meeting, she asked several of the current elders and deacons (and **Pastor Keith DeVries**) to send her a tracing of their hand. Mary transferred each handprint to felt and sewed it onto a stole—one for each incoming elder and deacon. They were delivered with a note that read in part, "During the Zoom ordination and installation service on Sunday, August 16, Pastor Keith will let you know when it is time to put the stole around your shoulders to represent the hands of your brothers and sisters in Christ. We pray that you will feel God's blessing on your ministry through the hands of those who serve alongside you."



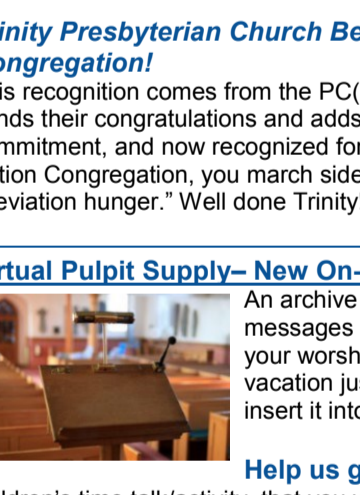
Kathy Lewin



About 60 members and friends of CPC joined the Zoom meeting and raised hands of blessing while those being ordained and installed wore their stoles. Everyone felt more connected because of the symbol of the stoles. It was not the same as actually being present and physically surrounding the new group of Elders and Deacons, but it was a good alternative. Even as this pandemic limits some

aspects of our church life, we also are discovering new practices and ways of being the church. Thanks be to God!

Candidate for Ordination Selected for PC(USA) Apprenticeship Program



ROLA AL ASHKAR

Rola Al Ashkar is a native of Lebanon. Through her position in Multicultural Ministry at Parkview Presbyterian Church, she has served the Presbytery of Sacramento through educating churches about Christianity and the challenges of ministry in the Middle East. She served the refugee community by providing services, organizing cultural events that connect Arabic speaking refugees to faith communities and engaging in ecumenical dialogues to empower Arab refugees.

Al Ashkar is Passionate about yoga, dancing, fitness, and the outdoors. She has a vision to create a Christian yoga community that is open to everyone, and especially the young adults, the "nones" and the "dones" in Sacramento, an area that is becoming more and more secular by the day, and to share Christ in a new way.

1001 New Worshipping Communities, a program of PC(USA)'s Mission Agency has developed an apprenticeship opportunity that has three major components:

- Inaugurating a contextual and transformative new ministry from scratch
- Participating in a cohort of peers and mentors for reflection, training and discernment
- Learning through a professional coaching session every three weeks

All apprentices and residents participate in a national training together. Participants will team-build, experiment in diverse models of worship, receive asset-based leadership analysis training, participate in a reflective anti-racism training led by the Open Table KC, receive missional theological training, and develop skills in entrepreneurial leadership and faith-based formation. [Learn more.](#)



Youth Leader Connection

We would love for anyone working with youth in our Presbytery to join us every other Thursday for prayer, reading for online or in-person ministry, and possible connecting of our groups with one another. Some great resources and fruit have already been shared and utilized among other groups with great success! Come join us. Just tune in and introduce yourself to our small but encouraging team of youth leaders! If you have any questions, contact Brett Shoemaker at bshoemaker@faithpresby.org.

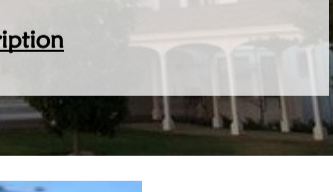
NEXT GATHERINGS AND LINKS:

Thursday, September 10, 1:00 p.m. - <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/570628404>

Thursday, September 24, 1:00 p.m. - <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/570628404>

NEXT ALL-GROUP ZOOM GET-TOGETHER:

We are having conversations about doing a Halloween Bingo night late in October. Tune in on these Thursdays to get the details!



Pastoral Support Grants



The Pastoral Support & Development Ministry Team offers support to pastors in several ways including grants for: spiritual direction, continuing education, and Covid-19 living support and emergency needs. Find the grant orientation letter and application [here](#).

Hunger Action Advocate Report:



Out of the Box Ministries (much more than a food pantry)

Twelve years ago, starting with a vision from a member in the congregation and encouraging support of the Pastor at Trinity Presbyterian Church, Out of the Box Ministries (OOTB) began serving the community in West Sacramento at 1500 Park Blvd. Their steadfast mission is simply to "Feed People Whenever Possible". Yolo County has an estimated 13% of people who are food insecure. [READ MORE](#)

Trinity Presbyterian Church Becomes the Latest Hunger Action Congregation!

This recognition comes from the PC(USA)'s Presbyterian Hunger Program (PHP) who sends their congratulations and adds "Through your local hunger ministry commitment, and now recognized for the next three years as a PC(USA) Hunger Action Congregation, you march side by side with other Presbyterians committed to alleviation hunger." Well done Trinity! [Learn more](#) about this program.

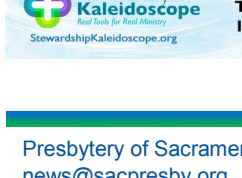
Virtual Pulpit Supply- New On-line Resource



An archive of recorded sermons and children's time messages that can easily be accessed and utilized. When your worship team needs respite or your pastor is on vacation just select an "on call" sermon from the archive and insert it into your live or recorded worship service.

Help us grow the list! If you have a sermon or two, or a children's time talk/activity, that you would be willing to share, please send the video link and title of sermon along with your statement granting permission to use, to, Shelley, at smitchell@sacpresby.org.

Free Webinars on Church Health



Healthy Churches / PneuMatrix / Pneumatrix / Pneumatrix Foundation free webinars continue each Thursday at 8 am Pacific. Content will be focused on meeting the practical needs of congregations facing our current challenges. Join the webinars at <https://zoom.us/j/9797655080>.

Important Resources

Racial Justice Resources

[NCCP Covid 19 Leadership, Worship, Safety Resources](#)

[PC\(USA\) Comprehensive COVID-19 Resource Center](#)

[Resource Center State of California's Coronavirus \(Covid-19\) Response Website](#)

Upcoming Meetings:

September 12: NCCP Stated Meeting

September 15: Clergy Zoom Gathering

September 19 & 26 Intercultural Transformation Workshop

Ministry Opportunity
CHURCH OFFICE MANAGER
Bethany Presbyterian Church
Sacramento
Bethany seeks a part-time office manager, 25 hours per week with some flexibility in scheduling work hours.
[job description](#)

Ministry Opportunity
DIRECTOR OF FAMILY MINISTRY
Faith Presbyterian Church
Sacramento
[job description](#)

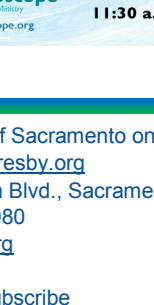
-Faith Presbyterian Church invites you-

"True Confessions: Hope Beyond the Headlines"

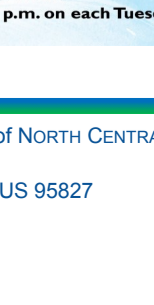
Sunday Evenings at 7:00 p.m.
on September 13, 20, 27, and October 4

[Click here](#) for Zoom link & info

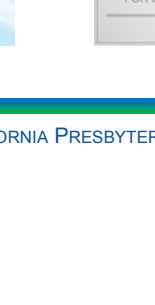
With facilitators:



Rev. Lorie Sprinkle



Rev. Rick Hull



Rev. Jeff Chapman

www.faithpresby.org



Igniting a Movement



Learn more about the speakers Register September 22 & 29 & October 6

Stewardship Kaleidoscope Three day virtual event! 11:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m. on each Tuesday

