



## Presbytery of San Gabriel

# MONDAY MORNING UPDATE

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Monday, July 9, 2018

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### PLEASE REMEMBER

Please remember the Indonesian Worshipping Community of Claremont, in the Prayers of the People in your worship service on Sunday, July 15, 2018.

### ON THE CALENDAR

Executive Presbyter, Wendy Tajima will be on vacation this week.  
Mission Advocate, Wendy Gist will be on vacation July 5 - July 29

### A REFLECTION FROM OUR EXECUTIVE PRESBYTER, WENDY TAJIMA

The saying is sure and worthy of full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners-of whom I am the foremost. - 1 Timothy 1:15

#### July 9, 2018: God Isn't Fair

Yesterday I had the opportunity to preach at Community Presbyterian Church in West Covina. I asked to come that day because I will be in New Mexico this week, so could not get back in time for their 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebration this Saturday. If

you are available this Saturday, you might stop by for the music program in the sanctuary, starting around 1:15 pm.

I preached about Abraham, who at the age of 75 was called by God to pack up his belongings and venture off on an unknown journey with the improbable promise that he and his 65-year-old wife, who were childless, would have a multitude of descendants. I saw a corollary between this 70-year-old church that has recently become a fellowship of the Presbytery, and how at this point they are embarking on a new venture, with all the uncertainty and questions related to trying something that has never been done before.

I do not know of a presbytery moving an established church to fellowship status, so we are trying something new. This has caused some consternation for the people who have had responsibility especially for the corporate functions of the church, as we try to figure out what continues, what gets stopped, and what is now to be managed by the Presbytery. As with many transformations, some of the past will be kept in the future.

**This is good news for most of us. I have sometimes been surprised how strongly North American church folk proclaim "If anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new!" (2 Corinthians 5.17) Obviously it is biblical, but frankly most US Christians have much they would prefer not to pass away, for we enjoy great privilege, far beyond that of the average human in this world. I understand this emphasis as rhetorical flourish, because I do not believe the average American Christian has offered up all that we are and all that we have to the service of God.**

Now I happen to believe that it is an important exercise to offer up all that we are and all that we have to God; I just don't think most of us do it. Even Abraham, the epitome of faithfulness, who wandered around for a quarter of a century before seeing the miracle of the child promised by God, was able to take all his relatives and servants, and all that he could move, when he left his luxury homestead in Haran.

From a skeptic's standpoint, it would seem that the idea of a new birth, where everything old has passed away, is really only attractive to those who have nothing, those in great pain or want, or those who have done something terribly wrong. In the scripture passage cited above, it was the latter situation, for Paul. He goes on to say that by saving the most wretched sinner, God is giving hope to all who might believe: "for that very reason I received mercy, so that in me, as the foremost, Jesus Christ might display the utmost patience, making me an example to those who would come to believe in him for eternal life." (1 Timothy 1:16) But even Paul did not give up everything-he retained his privilege as a Roman citizen, his marketable skills as a tentmaker, and his education and rhetorical gifts from his Jewish culture. He was, however, willing to subject himself to the scorn of his former peers, and to be thrown in jail for his faith-and to use all that he had in service to the Gospel.

I'm meandering around an essential question that has always plagued me: does God play favorites? How does God deal with the great diversity among individual experiences, from the extremely wealthy few to the masses of homeless and hungry; from those of us who enjoy the best of American life to those in Puerto Rico, also

American citizens yet struggling with multi-layered challenges; from criminals who are given leniency and released while small children are being incarcerated by a government that didn't seem to even have the sense to keep written record of their identities and families of origin? How is it that so many of us-myself included-have become entranced by the saga of 12 boys and a young adult coach trapped in a cave in Thailand, while over 125 people are killed in and around Hiroshima and Kyoto, Japan with barely a mention on the news?

Perhaps I am confusing God's view of us as individuals with the way the world looks at individuals-and whether we are in any position to judge if God is being "fair," as if we have any right to demand that God be held to our standards of justice and fairness. But this question has been a central puzzle in my faith life-how dependable is God who allows me to have such an easy and privileged life, when others (as close as my own mother) had to live such a difficult life?

We all want to understand and rationalize what we see God doing in our lives. We like to keep our faith-and God-manageable, not too threatening to our way of life or the way we see ourselves. But while I cannot know what God sees, nor can I demand that God reduce God's wisdom to my understanding, I can look to the Bible and see how God repeatedly tells us to care for the widow and the orphan, to seek justice for the oppressed, and how God can overthrow the most powerful or work through them, depending on how they hinder or help God's plan.

So just to help myself go forward in faith, I let go of any notion that God will be constrained to my understanding of "fairness." God's knowledge, wisdom, and mercy are far greater than what I can comprehend, and I accept that. While I cannot be callous to the pain of others, I've also come to believe that my bearing all the pains of the world does not necessarily lessen the pain of others; rather, can I trust enough in God's plan of salvation to enjoy what I have been given, while I work for others to find peace and joy in their lives as well? But I have to challenge myself not to lessen my obedience to God's will so that I may retain my privilege-but to the extent I can put my gifts and privilege to the service of God's will, all the better. As with Abraham, I believe God blesses us, that we may be a blessing to others.

As you might have guessed, this is a central puzzle in my life, and I don't have any easy answer, except "let go, and let God"-offer up my life, and all that I have, to God, and pray without ceasing, that I may be guided to be and do as God wants to use me in this life.

Following the "enjoy what I have been given" lesson, I am trying to take some vacation time this week. Hopefully my mind will become clearer in the New Mexico desert-we shall see!

Blessings,  
Wendy

## ***Immigration Sunday***

Immigration and immigrant rights are very hot topics right now. We are hearing and seeing a lot on these subjects everywhere we turn. July 1, 2018 the PC(USA) celebrated Immigration Sunday. I would guess that many of us never heard of Immigration Sunday or knew it was on the calendar before today. However, with all that's going on in our country (and world) currently I think it's time we make note of it and get educated. The PC(USA) has a wealth of information and resources through various offices. A list of some of them is below.

The Office of Immigration Issues <http://oga.pcusa.org/section/mid-council-ministries/immigration/> has lots of information and resources available. The Office of Public Witness has put together a comprehensive toolkit on Ending Family Separation to help groups discern and take action. It can be found at: <https://www.presbyterianmission.org/opw/2018/06/19/end-family-separation-decriminalize-migration-grassroots-tool-kit/>

The Mission Yearbook has a Minute for Mission for Immigration Sunday and other worship resources posted at: <https://www.presbyterianmission.org/yearbook/July-1-2018/>

Stated Clerk of the General Assembly, Rev. J. Herbert Nelson, II, issued a statement in response to the executive order issued on June 20, 2018 regarding family separation at the U.S. border. You can read it at: <http://www.pcusa.org/news/2018/6/28/stated-clerk-issues-statement-executive-order-rega/>

Immigration Sunday, while on the calendar July 1, 2018, can be celebrated any Sunday that works for your congregation. Take time to look over all the information and resources our denomination has to offer and plan a Sunday focused on immigration and immigrants this year.

**Are you interested in learning about root causes of poverty and injustice? Would you like to share in mending the brokenness that exists in our world?**

The Presbyterian Peacemaking Program brings leaders from partner organizations to interpret issues of peace and justice each year. By sharing stories of their work and witness, these International Peacemakers help us understand peace and justice concerns around the world.

Come hear firsthand from both an International Peacemaker and a Mission Co-worker who represents the PC(USA) in Haiti. Together Fabienne Jean and Cindy Correll will share stories of connection and partnership between the PC(USA) and ministry partner FONDAMA.

Fabienne and Cindy will be in Southern California from September 22-26.

Please contact Liz Daley at [Liz@Daley.name](mailto:Liz@Daley.name) to schedule a visit.



Fabienne Jean is the coordinator of Hands Together Foundation of Haiti. Known by its Haitian Creole acronym FONDAMA, the network is part of an initiative of the

Presbyterian Hunger Program. Her role is to work with the member organizations to find lasting solutions to the problems that impoverish the population of Haiti. The member organizations serve their individual communities in promoting agriculture, environmental improvements, clean water, and education. The organizations address root causes of the country's poverty such as land-grabbing, food imports, and climate change by creating campaigns to reduce their harmful effects.

Cindy Correll worked as reporter and editor for The News Leader in Staunton, Va., until leaving to serve as a Mission Co-worker with PC(USA) in 2013. She serves as a companionship facilitator with the Presbyterian Hunger Program's Joining Hands network in Haiti.

<https://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/peacemaking/international-peacemakers/>

### **International Peacemaker from Haiti coming to Los Angeles in September**

The Presbyterian Peacemaking Program brings leaders from partner organizations to interpret issues of peace and justice. The Presbytery of San Gabriel is hosting an International Peacemaker and a Mission Co-worker from Haiti. Together Fabienne Jean and Cindy Correll will share stories of connection and partnership between the PC(USA) and our Haitian ministry partner FONDAMA, an organization working to find lasting solutions to the problems that impoverish the population of Haiti including; land-grabbing, food imports, and climate change. Fabienne and Cindy will be in Southern California from September 22-26.

<https://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/peacemaking/international-peacemakers/>

If you would like them to speak at your church contact Liz Daley. [Liz@Daley.name](mailto:Liz@Daley.name)

### **Presbyterian Women**

The Synod PW Fall Gathering will be October 6th at Westminster Gardens. If you didn't attend the recent Spring Gathering, you missed a great time! Thanks to the ladies of Diamond Bar: Northminster for hosting a lovely day. There were about 75 in attendance and we commissioned almost 30 people who will be attending the National Gathering in Louisville. Besides a short business meeting and a great lunch, we made about 50 sani-pantis and cut out fabric for many more.

BTW, it's not too late to register for Louisville. The deadline is July 7th. You can download a form at [www.presbyterianwomen.org/gathering](http://www.presbyterianwomen.org/gathering).

### **2018 REVIEW OF RECORDS**

Saturday, October 13, 2018 at New Hope Presbyterian Church, Pasadena

**Meet us in St. Louis  
Meet us at Stewardship Kaleidoscope  
September 24-26, 2018**

Looking for ways to transform how your church or judicatory views stewardship? This year's Stewardship Kaleidoscope conference will help you think about generosity in a whole new way! Stewardship Kaleidoscope is an annual event offering keynote speakers and workshops to renew your mind, and worship experiences to renew your spirit. There will also be plenty of time for incredible networking opportunities with others passionate about generosity and giving. Since you've attended a previous Stewardship Kaleidoscope event, we thought you'd want to be among the first to know about this year's transformative event. [SEE MORE](#) and [REGISTER HERE](#)

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**2018 Presbytery Meetings**

September 15, 2018 @ Calvary Presbyterian Church, South Pasadena  
November 10, 2018 @ First Thai Presbyterian Church, Covina

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**2018 Presbyery Minimums**

Pastor's Mimumum Salary: \$53,745  
Travel/Professional Expense Reimbursement: \$2,550  
Study Leave: \$950

**2018 Mileage Reimbursement Rates:**

Ministry .545 cents per mile                      Charitable 14 cents per mile  
Business .545 cents per mile

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**Quick Links**

[www.sangabpres.org](http://www.sangabpres.org)



## EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

### La Verne Heights Presbyterian Church is looking for a Children's Ministry Summer Intern

#### RESPONSIBILITIES:

- \* Teach Sunday school as assigned by the Children's Ministry Director;
- \* Spend time interacting with children on Sunday mornings;
- \* Plan and lead special activities/events for children and families throughout the summer;
- \* Work with adult volunteers;
- \* Other duties as assigned.

Please click [HERE](#) for a complete Job Description

La Verne Heights Presbyterian Church  
1040 Baseline Rd., La Verne, CA 91750  
909 593-1017  
[www.lvhpc.org](http://www.lvhpc.org)

### Emmanuel Hispanic Presbyterian Church

1111 No. Mountain Ave., Claremont, CA, 91711 is looking for a Temporary pastor, or Student Pastor , half time, who would like to offer his or her leadership in the work and growth of our ministry to the hispanic people in the area where we are located.

The position requires preaching on Sunday morning, conducting a Bible study every Friday evening, some visitation, and cooperating with other activities of the church.

Salary according to experience and preparation.

Please send your resumé to Zoila A. García, Emmanuel Hispanic Presbyterian Church, 1111 No. Mountain Ave., Claremont, CA 91711. Or to [iglesiapresbyterianemmanuel@gmail.com](mailto:iglesiapresbyterianemmanuel@gmail.com)



## ITEMS OF INTEREST

This year the Office of Hispanic/Latino-a Intercultural and Congregational Support is hosting a Pastoral Leadership Development

## **Seminary in Mexico City on July 18-22.**

*Would you help us share the word with Hispanic and Latino-a leaders in your Presbytery and consider supporting them so that they can have a time for continuing education and network with other leaders in the PCUSA?*

During the event, leaders will have the opportunity to engage in Intercultural Reading of the Bible and our guest speaker Dr. Hans De Wit\* will guide them in this popular and contextual method of reading the bible within their diverse faith communities as well as within their presbytery as a tool to encounter people from different cultures and build bridges of understanding so we may intentionally give steps toward becoming the beloved community that we are called to be in the Gospel.

The cost to attend is \$450.00 which includes 4 nights of a shared hotel room, one dinner, 4 breakfasts, 3 lunches, a guided tour to Teotihuacan and materials. For more information and questions, contact Marissa Shearon at [marissa.shearon@pcusa.org](mailto:marissa.shearon@pcusa.org) or 502-569-5385.

### **Save the Date - La Casa's Annual Fundraising Dinner**

Thursday, October 11, 2018 6 P.M.

LA/San Gabriel Hilton