



Presbyterian  
Church of  
Novato

# PR esbyterian ess

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## KENT'S COMMENTS – JANUARY 2016 NEWSLETTER “My Thoughts About Future PCN Staffing”

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In March, I will be celebrating my 65th birthday and anticipate that I will retire some-time before my 70th. Given this, I have recommended that PCN close the Associate Pastor position and move in a different direction in terms of our staffing structure for the duration of my tenure here at PCN. In December, our Session voted to approve this configuration change. However, this decision must also be presented to the congregation for approval by voting (active) members.

Why make this change? What might be the benefits of doing so?

\* Prior to my retirement, this would avoid the difficulty of trying to recruit a new Associate Pastor who would be aware I would be departing relatively soon after his/her arrival.

\* Following my anticipated retirement, it would also avoid the awkward situation of having an Associate Pastor in place before the arrival of a new Head of Staff, who might well want a hand in choosing his/her colleague in ministry.

\* Rather than hoping a new person will fit in with other staff and our congregation, by hiring mostly from within as I am suggesting, at least two of the three persons I envision are already known and loved and have the confidence and support of the vast majority of our congregation.

\* The plan I propose will not require a lengthy search process (in general, it is a 1 year minimum search time for a new Associate Pastor; our search for Amanda lasted 2 years, in fact).

\* This plan provides coverage for all of the major responsibilities listed in the Associate Pastor Position Description.

\* Closing the AP position and creating three 3 part-time positions reduces the overall Personnel budget. This is not the key reason for the change, but it does have the benefit of costing less.

First, I have suggested that we hire Ariel Mink as our “Ministry Assistant”,

a 15 hour a week position. Ariel grew up in our church and has chaired our most recent Associate Pastor Nominating Committee. She has frequently assisted in worship, preached occasionally, and served as the Moderator of the Presbytery of the Redwoods.

**Regular Worship  
Hours Resume  
January 23**

**Contemporary  
Service  
9:00  
Traditional  
Service  
10:30**

## Kent's Comments Continued

She would pick up the administrative duties Amanda had – including supervising Jeff Page, our Director of Youth Programs as well as another new part-time staff person, a new Director of Children's Ministries. Ariel would oversee our congregation's outreach efforts and follow up on those who attend worship with us. Ariel would lead worship regularly and preach approximately 4 times per year. She would also handle other organizational and administrative duties as requested by me. The Book of Order (our Presbyterian "rulebooks") allows for Ruling Elders to be commissioned to perform a variety of pastoral duties and functions. Ariel has agreed to complete the required training within the next 18 months. As a Commissioned Ruling Elder, our Presbytery could allow Ariel the freedom to perform all pastoral functions – presiding over the Sacraments, performing weddings and funerals, and moderating meetings of the Session and Congregation.

Second I have suggested that we hire (ideally) a PCN member or other properly skilled individual to be our part-time Director of Children's Ministries (25 hours per week). This person would provide leadership and oversee 3 children's ministries – our Seeker's Ministry, our Sunday School and monthly Power Hour program, and finally our annual week-long Vacation Bible School.

Third, I have suggested that we employ Parish Associate, the Rev. Dr. Steve Giordano to preach approximately 8 – 10 times per year and to provide pastoral coverage when I'm on vacation. Steve has been part of our church family for the last three years and is widely known and appreciated. He preached and responded to pastoral emergencies during my sabbatical in 2013 and during Amanda's sabbatical in 2014.

This plan has been endorsed by the Personnel and Finance Committees and was approved by the Session. Following that approval, the Elders used that anticipated staffing configuration as a framework when adopting our 2016 budget. However, as I stated above, the congregation alone has the authority to open or close a pastoral position. We will therefore vote on the issue of closing the Associate Pastor position at our Annual Meeting on Sunday evening January 31 at 6:15 p.m. in the Sanctuary. Between now and then we'll offer multiple opportunities to ask questions and make comments about this idea. In terms of the future, an Associate Pastor position may be re-opened any time the congregation approves that action, so this change isn't irreversible and needn't be permanent, unless the congregation desires.

Warmly in Christ,

Kent

## Explorers' Annual Game Day

Jan. 23<sup>rd</sup>

1 P.M. – 4 P.M. Trevitt Hall

Join in on the fun as we play games and munch snacks.

Will it be Mexican Train, Yahtzee, Tripoli, or something else that you choose to play? Bring a snack to share. Beverages are provided. If you know a game player that would enjoy the afternoon, feel free to invite that person.

As is the tradition at Game Day, Pat Sullivan will sell jigsaw puzzles to raise funds for the Presbyterian Women. This year she needs some inventory. If you have any puzzles taking up space in your cabinet, consider donating them to Pat's sale. Just bring them along with you when we gather on January 23<sup>rd</sup>, to kick off the 2016 Explorers' schedule of events.



## Session Highlights 2015—Last Quarter

The Session of the Presbyterian Church of Novato met in regular stated meetings in September, October, November and December and:

Welcomed new members to the PCN family: Carolyn Ainsworth, Betsy Ricketts, Wayne Flower, Jane Flower, Lori Pas, Todd Paddack, Stephanie Paddack

Called a Congregational Meeting for Sunday November 29, 2015 for the purpose of electing new church officers. Session also recommended the following to be submitted to the congregation for church offices:

For the office of Deacon: Nominee Class

Delane Ramser 2017  
Les Church 2018  
Jane Flower 2018  
Pat Innes 2018  
Carol Robinson 2018  
Ray Shanahan 2018

For the office of Elder:

Kay Jones 2016 (Program/fellowship)  
Ellen Breazeale 2018 (Mission)  
Marcus Combs 2018 (Worship)  
Natalee Fisher 2018 (Christian Ed)  
Sylvia Jensvold 2018 (Membership)  
Tanya Church 2018 (Finance)

Endowment Committee member:

Bill Bell 2018

At-Large Members of the Congregational Nominating Committee

Glenise Johnson, Steve Kinney, Ariel Mink, Judy Regalia, Bruce Stahley,  
Kathy Takemoto

- Approved the purchase of three wireless microphone systems from Sound Expressions in Santa Rosa.
- Approved the 2016 Youth Mission trip to San Diego.
- Approved paying final legal expenses to the attorney representing PCN in conversations with a neighbor
- Approved the following policy regarding weddings performed at PCN:
- Clergy authorized to officiate at weddings on the PCN campus is limited to PCN's installed pastor or pastors.
- Approved a budget for 2016, including 25% allocation for Mission and a 2% raise for staff.
- Approved and recommend to the congregation the adoption of a new staff structure for PCN:
- -Closing the Associate Pastor position, and filling those AP functions with three part time staff members:
- -Hiring Ariel Mink as our Ministry Assistant. She would supervise the Director of Youth Ministry and the proposed Director of Children's Ministries, as well as perform some preaching and other ministerial duties—this person would be a Commissioned Ruling Elder
- -Hiring a Director of Children's Ministries who would oversee Seekers, Sunday School, VBS, and serve on the CE committee
- -Retain Parish Associate and retired RCA pastor Rev. Dr. Steve Giordano to help with preaching and pastoral vacation coverage

