



PResPRess

May 2017

Presbyterian Church of Novato, 710 Wilson Ave. Box 631, Novato, CA 94948

KENT'S COMMENTS – May 2017 PRes PRess
*“Your word is a lamp to my feet
and a light to my path.”
Psalm 119:105*

I want to share with you about my Fall Adult Bible Study, “EXPLORING THREE MINOR PROPHETS IN THE BOOK OF THE TWELVE (MICAH, JONAH, HABAKKUK)” which will be offered on Monday mornings (9:30 – 11 a.m.) and evenings (7 – 8:30 p.m.) in the Christensen Room here at PCN, beginning September 11 and running through November 13. While most Christians feel more comfortable and familiar with the New Testament, I want to focus next Fall on three Minor Prophets – included in the Book of the Twelve. What makes a written prophetic document “major” (Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel) or “minor” (Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi)? It’s simply a matter of length. There is nothing “insignificant” or “unimportant” about the message of the shorter prophetic books known as “the Minor Prophets”! That being the case, and since these books are largely ignored by Christians, I’ve chosen three to focus on in my 9-week Fall Class – Micah, Jonah, and Habbakuk.

Micah is an eighth-century prophet near the time of Isaiah. His hometown was in Moresheth in the Judean hill country, a short distance southwest of Jerusalem. Writing during the time of the divided kingdom, he addressed leaders and peoples of both the northern Kingdom of Israel (10 tribes with its capital in Samaria) and the southern Kingdom of Judah (2 tribes with its capital in Jerusalem). He addressed a variety of subjects and topics, particularly that of social and economic justice. One of his most famous statements found in chapter 6, verse 8 is, “What does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and walk humbly with your God?” Micah also speaks of the ideal, coming king and about God’s merciful character.

Jonah is completely unique among biblical prophetic books, most of which include many prophetic oracles - “messages from God” to the Hebrew people. Instead, Jonah is a story about a prophet, actually a disobedient prophet who refuses his God-given assignment, to go to the city of Ninevah (ancient Iraq), the capital of the hated Assyrian Empire and bring a message of judgment against it. Although the story is very humorous it conveys a very important and serious message for believers – ancient and modern!

Habakkuk is the third Minor Prophet we'll explore together. Like the Old Testament Book of Job, Habakkuk also deals with the question of theodicy, trying to justify the ways of God for those who question God's management of the universe. One of the treasured passages in Habakkuk is contained at 2:4 – "Look at the proud! Their spirit is not right in them, but the righteous shall live by their faith." That important verse is cited by the Apostle Paul in his Letters to the Church at Rome (1:17) and Galatia (3:11) and by the writer of the Letter to the Hebrews (10:38-39).

I hope you'll consider joining the fifty others who have already registered for the class! I'll be providing a printed Study Guide for class participants and am requesting a \$20 donation to cover paper and printing costs. To register, you may phone the Church Office or fill out the registration form on a class brochure and turn it in.

I'll hope to see many of you in class this Fall!

Warmly in Christ,
Kent

MESSAGE FROM ARIEL

Grateful Hearts

"I am grateful to Christ Jesus our Lord, who has strengthened me, because he judged me faithful and appointed me to his service, even though I was formerly a blasphemer, a persecutor, and a man of violence. But I received mercy because I had acted ignorantly in unbelief, and the grace of our Lord overflowed for me with the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus." (1 Tim. 1:12-14).

In college, one of my spiritual disciplines was keeping a journal and recording God's daily blessings that I encountered. When our daughter, Sierra, was small we had a bedtime tradition of reading stories, sharing as a family three things for which we were grateful, then thanking God in prayer for those things. PCN Connect is the Small Group Ministry formed with the desire to connect with God, connect with each other, and serve a greater community. One of the active groups right now is the Hiking group, with a faith focus on gratitude.

One of the most basic Christian doctrines is that of salvation by grace through faith. God acts first: God reaches out to us with love. We can do nothing to earn this love, it is a gift freely given to us by Him, not because we deserved it but because God loves to love, God loves to forgive, and God loves to bless. As we experience this love, we are transformed by it, and we begin to want to serve God out of gratitude. Discerning what our call is (and everyone is called by God into ministry) and responding to that call is a way to give back to God.

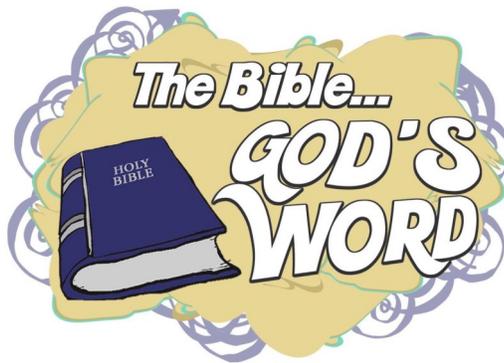
What are you grateful for? What have you been called to do? How can you obediently serve God with a grateful and joyous response?

One way to refresh your sense of call, or perhaps discern it anew, is to reflect on your

history with God. Divide your life into decades (twenties, forties, sixties) or life stages (childhood, teen years, young adult, etc.) and reflect on the blessings God provided you during that time. Write down major events that happened to you, how you experienced God's presence in your life during that time, who the people were whom God used to bless you, and how you can see God at work during that period of your life. This simple act of reflection can help give you some perspective and can open an energizing well of gratitude in your heart and mind.

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

ADULT SUNDAY BIBLE STUDY



"JONAH: THE RELUCTANT PROPHET"

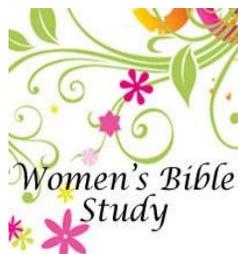
The Sunday Adult Education Class during the month of May will be starting at 9:00 A.M. We meet in the library. We are easy to find. We hope many of you will join in May as we will be studying "**Jonah: The Reluctant Prophet.**" The four lessons in May will be on Jonah, which will highlight God's unconditional love for humans and the natural world. God shared for Nineveh, even though the Assyrian were the ruthless enemies of Israel. God loves all humanity and wants to bring all people to a saving knowledge of Himself.

Jonah got into trouble because his attitudes were wrong. To begin with, he had a wrong attitude toward the will of God. Obeying the will of God is as important to God's servant as it is to the people God's servants minister to. It's in obeying the will of God that we find our spiritual nourishments (John 4:34), enlightenment (John 7:17), and enablement (Hebrews 13:21). To Jesus, the will of God was food that satisfied Him; to Jonah, the will of God was medicine that choked him.

We sincerely hope you will join us to hear how Jonah had a wrong attitude toward the Gentiles. Instead of wanting to help them find the true and living God, he wanted to abandon them to their darkness and spiritual death. He not only hated their sins -- and the Assyrians were ruthless enemies--but he hated the sinners who committed the sins.

Carol Dacquisto,
Study Leader

WOMEN'S BIBLE STUDY



When Thursday mornings 9:30 A.M. to 11:00 A.M. (September- early May)
Where: Christensen Room

This month, on May 4, our Women's bible study will begin its annual sabbatical break. But we are greatly looking forward to returning on Thursday, September 14 to continue our study of the book of Luke, beginning with Chapter 8. We would love to have you join us. No matter where you are on your faith journey, you will be welcomed. We are a friendly and supportive group of women, and we are holding a seat open for you! Beginning in September, we will join Jesus on his second tour of the countryside. His ministry in Galilee is drawing to a close. He has puzzled or offended most of His hearers, but a few have responded and become disciples. From now on, He will focus His efforts on training the disciples. On this last, long journey to Jerusalem, Jesus will work to equip His disciples to later preach the meaning of His life.

Luke tells us more about women than we find in Matthew, Mark or John. We will read about how women supported and traveled with Jesus, a radical departure from common practice. We will learn how Mary Magdalene and other women are cured of disease or released from demonic possession by Jesus. Come learn with us.

Your Study Team
Carol Dacquisto, Elaine Harris and Melodie Baird

ANNUAL PCN DEACON'S BLOOD DRIVE

SAVE THE DATE: Sunday June 4th 8am - 12noon; Trevitt Hall

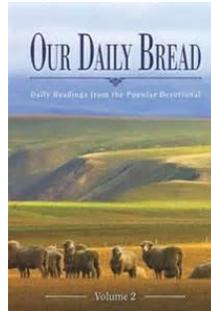
It's not too early to start pumping some iron.
Sign ups available online at www.bloodcenters.org to fund the
PCN Blood Drive

Thanking you all in advance for your wonderful donation to save a life.

Blessings,
Becky Praun
PCN Blood Drive Chairman

DEACONS

First Sunday of each month, the Deacon's offering is received.



OUR DAILY BREAD

Pick up your copy of on the hall table in the office. Helping you connect with God every day.

HELP PREPARE FOR OUR INTERNS

Dear All,

We are in the process of recruiting ministry interns for the dual purpose of expanding the reach and ministry of our church as well as equipping and investing in the next generation of ministry leaders. We would love your help as we prepare to welcome them.

We are collecting donations of new and slightly used items for our Intern House (the Manse). Please sign up for as many items as you wish. Please do not just drop off items without signing up, and we do not need multiples of items. Please drop off your items in the Church's front office until May 31. Stephanie will have donation forms, or you may go to the link below. Please note the quantity we need for the items. Call or email Colette or Jeff if you have questions about your donation or items needed.

Thank you very much for your help. We're very excited about this new program for PCN.

Jeff Page, Director of Youth Ministries and Intern House Coordinator
Intern House Committee:

Colette Weil Parrinello, Donations Volunteer, mypurpleleaf@yahoo.com, (415) 606-2974 (cell)

Here is the link to sign up:

www.SigUpGenius.com/go/409054FA9AD2FAOFDO-intern

MISSION

YOUR SPECIAL MISSION OFFERING GIVING DURING 2016... PCN's mission committee thanks **ALL OF YOU** for your continued generosity toward mission outreach. Your commitment has kept us a **FIVE FOR FIVE CONGREGATION**: by participating in all four special offerings during the year, and also, donating directly to missionaries in service around the globe. The following statistics will help you compare 2015 to 2016 and show our part of the PCUSA whole.

	PCN		PCUSA	
	2015	2016	2015	2016
CHRISTMAS JOY	\$3,863.00	\$4,140.00	\$3,270,701	\$3,048,083
ONE GREAT HOUR	\$3,441.17	\$4,074.64	\$5,998,872	\$5,333,442
*PENTECOST	\$2,054.40	\$1,866.60	\$656,886	\$717,021
*PEACEMAKING	\$1,195.66	\$1,137.34	\$872,573	\$829,578

*These two offerings do not include the portion held back for local mission, i.e. High Risk Hope, the Ritter Center, and California Re-entry Program

Following these statistics are two important communications from our supported missionaries.....

UPDATE ON WORLD MISSION...NEWS FROM BOB AND KRISTI RICE ON THEIR NEW POSTING...."

Last month's ePResPRes reported that Bob and Kristi were eagerly awaiting their return to Congo. However, due to the instability and physical dangers there, plans have had to be changed. The following is a synopsis of their most recent newsletter and their webcast held on April 10th....

The Rices are currently on their way, via Rwanda and Congo, to their new posting in **South Sudan**. South Sudan is the youngest nation on the planet, having been recognized as independent in 2011, after splitting from (northern) Sudan. They admit that "living in limbo has stretched our faith, not knowing where we might be one or two months in the future. We are grateful for the humbling and challenging process of being in limbo, forcing us to refocus and depend on God as our rock...we have found a worship song which has become a theme song for us in this season:

"There is strength within the sorrow/There is beauty in our tears/And You meet us in our mourning/ With a love that casts out fear/You are working in our waiting/You're sanctifying us/When beyond our understanding/You're teaching us to trust. Your plans are still to prosper/You have not forgotten us/ You're with us in the fire and the flood/ You're faithful forever/Perfect in love/You are sovereign over us."

Bob and Kristi are on their way to Juba, the capital city, where local church partners have expressed needs that fit them both remarkably well. Bob will be teaching theology and ethics at Nile Theological College, and Kristi will serve as economic empowerment and community development advisor.

Still, living in a world of war, famine, and suffering, more than 100,000 people are expe-

riencing life-threatening hunger with thousands in refugee camps in surrounding nations. Two denominations are partnered in South Sudan: Presbytery of South Sudan and South Sudan Presbyterian Evangelical Church.

In their webcast Bob and Kristi asked for all of us to remember them with the following prayers:

FOR SUDAN: 1) RELIEF FROM FAMINE

2) POLITICAL WILLPOWER TO INCREASE FOREIGN AID

3) ABILITY TO LOOK FOR RECONCILIATION AT THE HEART OF THE GOSPEL

FOR BOB AND KRISTI: 1) FACILITY IN LEARNING YET ANOTHER LANGUAGE:

JUBA-ARABIC

2) SUCCESS IN BUILDING NEW RELATIONSHIPS DURING THEIR TRANSITION

3) SAFE TRAVEL THROUGH AFRICA AND UPON THEIR ARRIVAL IN SUDAN

AGAIN, FROM WORLD MISSION: HAPPY RETIREMENT TO DOUG AND ELAINE BAKER...EXCERPTS FROM THEIR LAST 'MISSION CONNECTION' LETTER....

*"I have been reflecting a lot about 23 years of working with Young Adult Volunteers (YAV). There have been many positives, but also, some volunteers who seemed to be getting little out of their year or were at times quite frankly a pain. Then years later I have heard from those same individuals, sharing something wonderful they are doing and they tell me it is an outcome of what they experienced or learned during their YAV year. And I am left thinking – 'When did this person realize the importance of some seed sown during their YAV experience and make the connection with what it is producing now?' At this time of retirement I would like to share with you some current lives of the 133 YAV's who were shepherded here, in **Northern Ireland**, by Elaine and me."*

"Nine are studying, six of them in seminary. Thirty-seven are ordained ministers. Seventeen are employed in non-ordained positions in the church. Eighteen are teaching in elementary through grad school. Twenty-six are in social work or work with charities or nonprofits. Seven are in various forms of medical care. Most of the rest are working in industry, business, as lawyers, parenting full time, or self-employed."

"We remember this harvest of how others planted a seed in these young adults about the importance of serving God through serving others. Both Elaine and I want to encourage you and your congregations to look forward and keep the Kingdom of God still growing through them and through yourselves and your commitments to the YAV's."

--Faithfully yours, Doug Baker

2017 VALLEY FIRE MISSION TRIPS

Teams for trips to Middletown, CA are now being recruited to work with Hope Crisis Response Network rebuilding homes lost in the Valley Fire of 2015. Overnight accommodations will be at the HCRN Work Camp in dorm housing. RV sites are available with full hookups. Alternate accommodations may be arranged on your own if you wish. The nearest hotel/motel is Twin Pines Casino Hotel at \$99/night. Other motels are located in Clearlake, ½ hour away for about \$60/night. Supplemental insurance and a t-shirt will be provided by HCRN. Each person must fill out a *Medical Form* and a *Release of Liability Form*.

Housing \$100/person/week for dorm housing or \$100/ week for an RV space with full hookups (can accommodate several people),

Food: breakfast, lunch & dinner = \$50/week (Sunday dinner – Friday lunch)

Team fee: \$50 as a one time team fee to cover a team t-shirt, gas to the worksites & misc. expenses.

Scholarship assistance is available. A typical scholarship is up to 50% of your team costs. Each request will be reviewed individually

June 11-16 _____ (may include families and youth 12 – 18 when accompanied by a parent or surrogate)

Sept. 17-22 _____

October 8-13 _____

Housing requested:

Dorm housing _____

RV space _____

I will stay off campus, but will have meals with the group _____

Name _____ e-mail _____

Address _____ church _____

Cell phone _____ Home phone _____

Birthdate _____ T-Shirt size _____

Contact Bill Walker if you are interested

415 883-5780

Walkerb2@comcast.net

EVENTS

Pedaling to End Hunger

PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN

OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF NOVATO

“Pedaling to End Hunger in Redwoods Presbytery and Beyond”



YOU ARE CORDIALLY INVITED TO ATTEND THE
SPECIAL PROGRAM AND LUNCHEON ON
SATURDAY, MAY 20, 2017

11:00 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.

PLEASE INVITE A LADY TO ATTEND WITH YOU!

RSVP REQUESTED

CAROL DACQUISTO

(415) 892-2070

E-Mail: dacqmom@aol.com

Devotion

Program

Lunch

Cost of the Luncheon \$10.00

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