



Presbytery of San José

January 2, 2026

"New Year: The Day After"

Dear Members and Friends of the Presbytery of San José,

Grace and peace in the name of Jesus Christ, who is still Lord and who is still Savior, and in the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, who is still Comforter and who is still our Breath of Life.

On New Year's Eve, as we've done for the past 22 years, my buddy and I reflected on the fact that we don't really make New Year's resolutions because every single day is a recognition that we are works-in-progress, God's mercies are new every morning (Lamentations 3:22-23), God is faithful in every season, and that each day are opportunities to resolve to do a bit better than the previous day. So whether it's December 31, 2025 or January 1, 2026, the sun still rises and sets, sin and grace will be ever present in our lives and in the world, and Christ is still Lord and Savior.

As I reflect upon 2025 and as this is Day 2 of 2026, I give thanks to God for each and all of you and for our continued partnership in the Gospel. Our commitment to God's transformative work in the world hasn't changed; in fact, I pray that it has deepened and broadened.

January 6th, while infamous in our country's history because of the tragic insurrection of 2021 in our nation's Capitol, is in our liturgical calendar the sacred Day of the Epiphany. One of the liturgies I find most moving is Reaffirmation of the Baptismal Covenant. Whether there is someone being baptized on Epiphany or the Sunday adjacent to Epiphany, it is a wonderful time for a congregation/worshipping community to reaffirm what baptism means, to concretize the commitments we have to one another and to God because we are a part of the body of Christ, and to acknowledge with gratitude that we are claimed as children of God by virtue of our adoption into God's love through Christ in the Holy Spirit.

When the Presbytery of San José hosted the 218th General Assembly in 2010, a Reaffirmation of the Baptismal Covenant liturgy was used, together with a celebration of the Lord's Table. You can access that liturgy and hopefully use it in your own contexts: [click here](#)

In that 2010 liturgy, after a litany of confessing sins and brokenness, the following is prayed:

*Lord, have mercy on us.
Remember the promises you made to us in our baptism,
forgive our sinful ways and heal our brokenness.
Set us free from all that enslaves us,
and raise us to new life in Jesus Christ,
that we may be your faithful servants,
showing forth your healing love to the world,
to the glory of your holy name. Amen.*

May that prayerful commitment be our daily resolve, not only this second day following the first day of a new year, but every single day we live and move and have our being in the presence of our God.

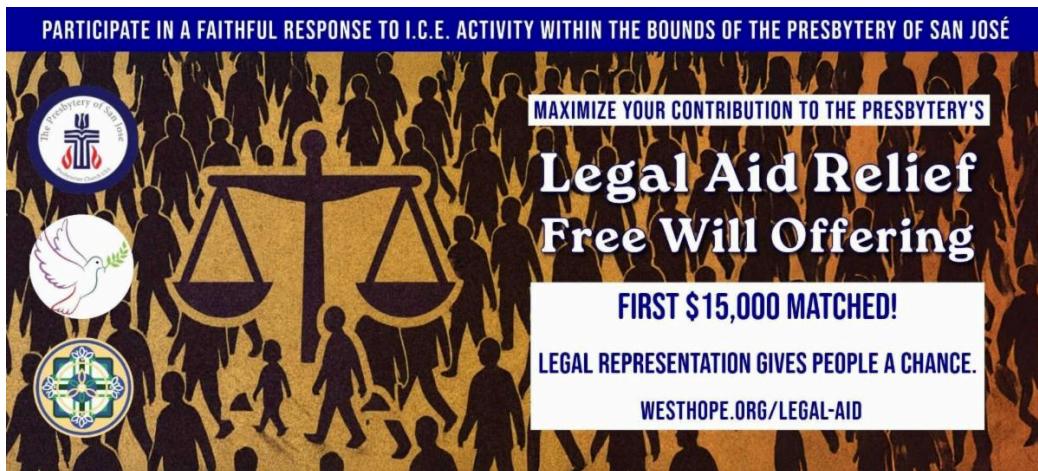
Rev. Neal D. Presa, Ph.D, Executive Presbyter
(408) 763-5004 | Neal@sanjosepby.org

#CalledToCommunity
#CommittedToJustice

Upcoming Travels/Preaching of our Executive Presbyter

- January 4, 2026 (10:00am): Preaching at First Presbyterian Church, Palo Alto
- January 10, 2026 (10:45am): Attending installation of The Rev. Jason Barraca as Designated Pastor, Lincoln Avenue Presbyterian Church-Salinas
- January 26-28, 2026: Lead, Presbytery Clergy Retreat at Villa Maria Del Mar, Santa Cruz
- January 29-February 1, 2026: Strategic Planning Meeting and Installation of the General Secretary, World Communion of Reformed Churches at Hannover, Germany

If you would like to invite the EP to guest preach, facilitate a class, lead a retreat, help with strategic visioning/planning, or grab a cup of coffee, email Neal@sanjosepby.org or call/text (408) 763-5004



A report issued November 20, 2025 by the American Immigration Council indicated that without the benefit of an attorney at immigration court proceedings, people in our Presbytery have a 70% chance of being deported, often erroneously.

In response to this, the Presbytery's Peace and Justice Working Group has worked with EP Neal Presa to establish a free will offering initiative to support crucial legal counsel for people facing the threat of deportation. The Working Group and Presbytery staff have identified Peacemaking Offering and other related special funds that can provide up to \$15,000 in matching funds. This initiative will run through Pentecost Sunday, May 24, 2026.

We invite you to give generously to two organizations in urgent need:

- Amigos Center Rapid Response Network of Santa Clara County

- The Santa Cruz Community Action Board
- Your support helps ensure access to legal counsel and a fair day in court for our immigrant neighbors.

How To Contribute:

- Amigos de Guadalupe Rapid Response Network Legal Services of Santa Clara County amigoscenter.org
- Click in the drop-down menu underneath "My donation is for*" and select "Presbytery of San José Donor - RRN Legal Services/ Family Support"
- Community Action Board of Santa Cruz County (cabinc.org) Please check "SCCIP-IMMIGRATION LEGAL SERVICES—Presbytery of San José Donor".
Or:
 - Cash dropped off at 406 Main Street to 2nd floor reception
 - Checks sent to 406 Main Street Ste 207, Watsonville, CA 95016
 - Stock Donation: Please email CFO directly lorettaz@cabinc.org

If you have questions about this initiative, please contact EP Neal Presa, Westhope Presbyterian Church pastor The Rev. Erik Swanson (esfishrev@gmail.com), Peace and Justice Working Group co-chairs The Rev. Julie Porras-Center (pastorjulie@somoswatsonville.com) and Beth Wylie (bethwylie21@gmail.com)



Saturday, January 10th : Installation of The Rev. Jason Barraca

You are cordially invited to celebrate the installation of our longtime colleague, The Rev. Jason Barraca, as the Designated Pastor of the Lincoln Avenue Presbyterian Church-Salinas on Saturday, January 10 at 10:45am at the church sanctuary located at 536 Lincoln Avenue in Salinas. Jason, who has until this point served faithfully for more than a decade as the part-time Stated Supply Pastor of Lincoln Avenue, was officially approved by the Presbytery's Committee on Ministry and called by the congregation of Lincoln Avenue Presbyterian Church to serve as the full-time Designated Pastor. All are welcome to attend as we bear witness to this important milestone in LAPC's history, Jason's ministry, and our Presbytery community.



2026 Corrected Budget Approved - Coordinating Council

The Coordinating Council, acting *ad interim* Presbytery (Standing Rule 4.28.1) and at the recommendation of the Financial Affairs Committee, unanimously approved a corrected 2026 budget via online vote on December 29, 2025. This action was necessary to put in place the 2026 budget before the start of the new year, and to correct a technical error in the Excel formula that generated the budget document considered by Presbytery on October 23. All expense items listed in the budget had been previously approved by Financial Affairs Committee, Coordinating Council, and, subsequently by Presbytery. The corrected budget increases the draw from investments by \$42,900. So for 2026, the projected draw from investments will be \$550,403.26 instead of what was presented on October 23 which was \$507,503.26. This compares to the 2025 budget, which had a draw from investments of \$583,225.93.

You can view the corrected approved 2026 budget at [this link](#)

If you have any questions, you may contact EP Neal Presa, Stated Clerk Erica Rader, 2025 Financial Affairs Committee Chair Lindsay Woods Wong, or 2025 Coordinating Council Chair Andy Rausch.



Presbyterian minister, the late Rev. Frederick Buechner, famously observed on the nature of vocation and a Christian's calling to serve: "Calling is where the heart's deep gladness and where the world's deep hunger meet."

Are you or someone you know being called to serve in the Presbytery or in one of our churches?

The Search Committee for our next Stated Clerk has begun its work. See the Ministry Discernment Profile [here](#). Share this with your networks.

The Presbytery is also hiring for three new positions:

- Executive Assistant
- Communications Coordinator
- Peacemaking & Justice Advocate.

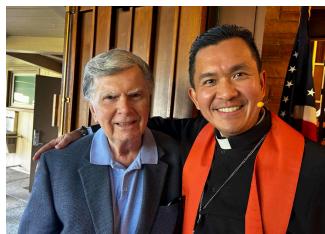
A couple of our congregations have job opening as well:

Santa Teresa Hills Presbyterian Church is looking to hire their next Director of Music.

Presbyterian Church of Los Gatos is looking to hire a half-time Accountant.

This is an exciting time to be a part of God's mission. Please pray for all these search and hiring processes, for all those involved, and for the persons whom the Holy Spirit is already preparing to serve in these ministry calls.

To learn more about all these employment opportunities, please [click here](#).



Presbytery Unity Candle

Sunday, January 4:

Presbyterian Church of Los Gatos (PCLG)

This coming Sunday, January 4, please pray for the members of the Presbyterian Church of Los Gatos (PCLG), their pastors, The Rev. Dr. David Watermulder (senior pastor) and The Rev. Erica Rader (associate pastor), their parish associate, The Rev. Jack Longley (honorably retired), and their candidate for ordination under care with the Presbytery, Steve Fainer (who is their longtime director of youth ministries).

PCLG has a long history, dating back to its initial organization on June 6, 1881. Now in its 145 year history, PCLG serves the community and the church worldwide through worship, fellowship, Christian education, discipleship, mission engagement, music, and Scouting.

Weekly worship is on Sunday at 10:00am in the sanctuary and live broadcast on Facebook and YouTube.

For more information about PCLG, visit their website at: <https://www.pclg.org/>

Follow the path of the Unity Candle: <http://tinyurl.com/SJUnity2025>



**Film Screening for Immigration Justice
hosted by Westhope Presbyterian Church
12850 Saratoga Avenue, Saratoga
Thursday, January 15, 6:30-8:30pm
(doors open 6:00pm)**

Westhope's Social Justice Team decided to dedicate January's Third Thursday Film Event Ministry to raising awareness of the Presbytery Legal Aid Relief effort, and the issues which drive the need for the initiative. The film, "From Here/From There: De Aquí / De Allá" will focus on the experience of being undocumented, the family impacts of deportation, and the crucial need for legal representation.

The screening will be followed by a discussion with local immigrant rights leaders from Amigos de Guadalupe and the Community Action Board of Santa Cruz

For tickets: click [here](#)

About the film: click [here](#)

Presbyterian Women of the Presbytery of San Jose celebrate their

*19th Annual
Epiphany Tea
at Stone Church of Willow Glen
Sunday, January 4th, 2026 at 2 PM*

1937 Lincoln Ave, San Jose, CA

And you are invited! RSVP by December 28, 2025
to Rosaleen Zisch, rmgzisch@gmail.com



Begin the New Year with food for body and soul.

All are warmly invited to join Presbyterian Women for tea and cake, followed by candlelit worship in the style of the Taizé Community: chanted song in prayer, meditation on scripture and seasonal readings.



Registration is open!

<https://tinyurl.com/GatheredinFaith-Jan31>



Asian Presbyterian Women, Northern California Chapter
Invites you to our 2026 Winter Gathering

*Gathered in Faith:
Empowering Hearts,
Changing Lives*

Jan 31

9:30 am - 3:00 pm

Westhope Presbyterian Church
12850 Saratoga Rd, Saratoga
Cost \$10

“For where two or three are gathered in my name,
I am there among them.” Matt 18:20

Join the Northern California Chapter of Asian Presbyterian Women for a special day of learning, encouragement, and fellowship among our Asian sisters in faith, led by:

Rev. Deborah Lee,
Interfaith Movement for
Human Integrity

Rev. Ruth Kuo,
Presbytery of San José



Registration ends Jan 17

We look forward to gathering in faith with you!

www.sanjosepby.org

[View as Webpage](#)

Presbytery of San Jose | 890 Meridian Way | San Jose, CA 95126 US

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