



Presbytery of San José

February 6, 2026

Dear Members and Friends of the Presbytery of San José,

Grace and peace to you in the midst of our life together as the Church. For this week's Digest, Colin Richardson, our Communications Coordinator, offers the following reflection:

Warm greetings to you all,

As we look ahead to the season of Lent, with its call to reflection and discernment, we turn our attention to an important moment in the work of our Presbytery. On Saturday, February 7, we will gather for a Called Meeting of the Presbytery of San José—a time set aside for thoughtful deliberation, attentive listening, and collective decision-making. These gatherings are a vital part of our shared responsibility, shaping the leadership and direction of our Presbytery with care and intentionality in mind.

This meeting carries particular significance as we reflect on the growth and evolving life of our community. Among the actions before us is the motion to charter the First Thai Presbyterian Fellowship as an official congregation of the Presbytery, a meaningful step that affirms our commitment to unity, representation, and expanding the Church's presence in the communities we serve. We will also examine candidates for ministry and consider reports from across the Presbytery, underscoring the care we take to ensure that our leaders and congregations reflect our shared values with integrity, dedication, and faithfulness to the Church's mission.

Throughout these proceedings, we remain mindful that our work is grounded not only in process but in purpose. As we gather, we do so seeking wisdom beyond ourselves—trusting in God's guidance, staying rooted in faith, and holding fast to our call to serve with humility and love. May this time together help set our community on a faithful path forward—shaping our future decisions, strengthening our shared witness, and renewing our trust in one another as we participate in God's work among us.

In Joy and Justice,
Neal

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

#CalledToCommunity
#CommittedToJustice



Final Reminder: Presbytery Meeting This Saturday
In-person only
Saturday, February 7, 9:00 a.m.
Trinity Presbyterian Church, San José

This is an official business meeting of the Presbytery. Please register [here](#) if you have not yet done so.

The **docket** for this meeting is now available on the Presbytery's website and can be viewed [at this link](#).

Reminder to all Attendees: Please have the docket available on your laptop or smart devices as this will be a largely paperless meeting.

We will gather for worship with Communion and install our Presbytery Moderator-elect CRE Tim Parmentier, approve the COM recommendation to charter the First Thai Presbyterian Fellowship as an official congregation, examine Steve Fainer to certify him ready to receive a call, examine Cory Piña for ordination to a call, hear a report from the Stated Clerk Search Committee, celebrate the ministries of our outgoing Stated Clerk and Accountant, consider reports from various committees, and so much more!

Upcoming Travels/Preaching of our Executive Presbyter

- February 7, 2026: Presbytery Meeting at Trinity Presbyterian Church-San José (9:00 am-12:30 pm)
- February 21, 2026: *(if the way be clear)* Commissioning of Elder Wayne Shen as CRE, El Estero Presbyterian Church-Monterey, 11:00 am-12:00 pm
- March 1, 2026: Preaching at First Presbyterian Church-Mountain View, 10:00 am
- March 2-5, 2026: Study Leave - Center for Pastor Theologians at Oak Park, Illinois

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



Employment Opportunities February 2026

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

The Presbytery invites prayers and attention to the following congregations as they seek to fill ministry positions:

Gilroy Presbyterian Church

- **Family Ministry Director**

First Presbyterian Church of Santa Clara

- **Nursery / Childcare Worker**

To learn more about this employment opportunity and others, please [click here](#).

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.

Fundraising Updates:

Thanks to the generosity of our congregations and partners, this initiative is already surpassing expectations! As of January 28, Amigos de Guadalupe has raised **\$11,000**—making them eligible for the full \$7,500 in matching funds that the Presbytery will be sending to support their work.

The Presbytery has also committed up to \$7,500 in matching funds to the Santa Cruz Community Action Board, with the Peace and Justice Working Group gathering updated fundraising information in hopes of reaching their goal.

We give thanks for the compassion and commitment shown across our Presbytery, and we encourage continued support through May 24, 2026, as we work together to uphold dignity, justice, and mercy 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)



**Save the Date! Thursday, March 26 at 6:00pm
NEAR Gathering 3 hosts:
General Assembly Co-Moderator Cece Armstrong**

Our third NEAR Gathering will be Thursday, March 26 at Westminster Presbyterian Church, San José, where we will welcome The Rev. Cece Armstrong, Co-Moderator of the 226th General Assembly (2024-26).

This will be a time for worship, dinner fellowship, and to hear the dynamic preaching and wise insights from one of our General Assembly co-moderators.

We are hosting this event, with participation from the Presbytery of San Joaquin, and in partnership with the Presbyteries of North Central California, San Francisco, and Redwoods, all of which are hosting events March 24 and 25.

Early registration is at [this link](#)

This event is free. Your per capita and mission dollars at work through the Anne Penke Fund of the Synod of the Pacific.

NEAR is an in-person gathering of the members, friends, and guests of the Presbytery of San José held twice a year (Winter/Spring and Autumn) for Nurturing our faith, Equipping for ministry, Advocating for justice, and Resourcing for support. This is done through worship, food fellowship, networking, learning, reflection, conversations, and prayer. NEAR 1 was at First Presbyterian Church-Monterey. NEAR 2 was at First Presbyterian Church-Mountain View.





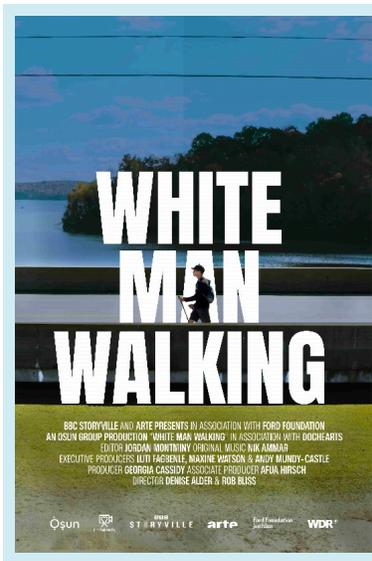
ICYMI: Clergy Winter Retreat 2026

At the end of last month, fifteen pastors of the Presbytery gathered for three days and two nights at the scenic Villa Maria Del Mar retreat center in Santa Cruz. The Winter retreat's theme was "Rediscovering Joy" based on Psalm 51 and John 15, with the common book reading being *Worship, Justice, and Joy: A Liturgical Pilgrimage* by EP Neal Presa.

Through morning and evening prayer services (with the musical accompaniment of Rev. Diane Ford, Trinity-Santa Cruz), small group and plenary discussions, fellowship, and quiet times, the group explored what it means to live and embody joy in the struggles of life, ministry, and the work for justice. They learned from the insights of Wes Granberg Michaelson's book, *The Soulwork for Justice* and the four obstacles of the soul: self-sufficiency, grandiosity, certainty, and control. The antidotes to those are belonging, authenticity, connection, and trust, respectively.

The retreat closed with a celebration of the Lord's Table, followed by some pastors whom Rev. Ryan Althaus (Sweaty Sheep) and his project partner, Capt. Takoda Fletcher, accompanied onboard Salty Sheep catamaran, a ministry of the Presbytery docked at and sailed around Santa Cruz harbor. Others who remained at Villa Maria engaged together in a Lenten Preaching Collaborative.

The next clergy retreat will be October 28-29 at St. Francis Retreat Center at San Juan Bautista. Save the date!



Congregation Event Spotlight: Westhope's Third Thursday Film Night February 19, 6:30 pm

In observance of Black History Month, Westhope Presbyterian Church invites the community to its Third Thursday Social Justice Film Night on February 19 at 6:30 p.m. (doors open at 6:00). February's theme is Anti-Racism, creating space for reflection, learning, and faithful conversation around justice and equity.

The evening will feature a screening of *White Man Walking*, followed by a facilitated discussion focused on allyship within the Black Lives Matter movement. Together, participants will explore what it means to listen deeply, act responsibly, and live out commitments to justice in their communities.

Admission is free and all are welcome to attend. To reserve your spot and learn more about the event, visit the [link here](#).



Presbytery Unity Candle
Sunday, February 8th:
First Presbyterian Church - Mountain View

This Sunday, please pray for our next Unity Candle recipient:

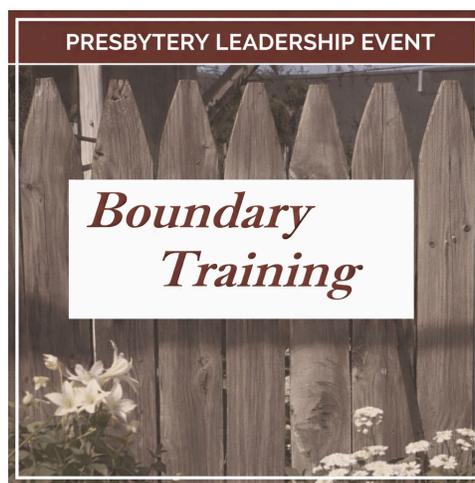
Located in the heart of Silicon Valley, First Presbyterian Church of Mountain View is a historic and vibrant congregation dedicated to using its gifts and talents to serve God and others. Seeking to be God's instruments in the world, the church strives to grow in faith, strengthen its community, and share the love of God throughout Mountain View and beyond.

The stated mission of First Presbyterian Church of Mountain View is simple and compelling: to make Christ known. Centered at the cross, the congregation understands its shared life as being anchored in hope, growing in love, and pursuing purpose. These commitments are embodied through values that are Christ-centered, Bible-teaching, Spirit-filled, and life-changing, while also being community-building, justice-serving, and complexity-embracing.

The congregation gathers for Sunday worship at 10:00 a.m., drawing together Scripture, prayer, preaching, and music. Opportunities for learning and connection continue throughout the week, including Bible study groups on Wednesdays from 1:00–2:30 p.m. and Sundays from 9:00–9:50 a.m., along with a Book of Confessions study each Tuesday from 7:00–8:00 p.m. Music is a cornerstone of worship at FPCMV, with offerings that range from contemporary praise band sounds to choral, spiritual, and classical selections, as well as musical contributions from staff and congregants. Together, these gatherings nurture faith, creativity, and community as the church seeks to make Christ known in word and action.

For more information about First Presbyterian Church of Mountain View, visit their website at the [link here](#).

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



Important Training Reminder:
Required Boundary Training for Elders

The Rev. Bruce Reyes-Chow (member at-large) will again facilitate required Boundary Training for ruling elders and teaching elders on Saturday, April 18 and Saturday, November 7.

The pattern for both days are:

9:00am-10:00 | Online for ruling elders

10:00-11:00 | Break

11:00-1:00pm | In-Person for teaching elders (with lunch included) held at the Presbytery Office/Cornerstone Church of Silicon Valley chapel at 890 Meridian Avenue in San José

Registration is available now at [this link](#).

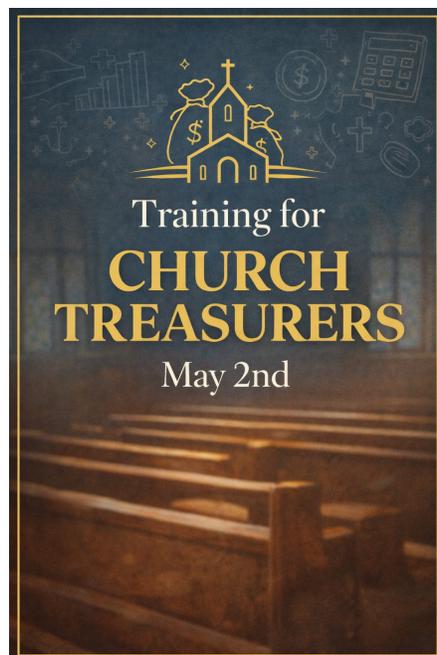
Registration is free. Your per capita and mission dollars at work.

This boundary training addresses maintaining safe and healthy ministry relationships, with such topics as power dynamics, financial boundaries, social media, pastoral care and counseling relationships, self-care and well-being.

Boundary training is mandatory, required by the Book of Order (G-3.0106), focusing on sexual misconduct, harassment, and child abuse prevention for clergy, session members, and church leaders to maintain safe, healthy ministry relationships. This training, usually every three years, covers professional conduct, technology use, and clear roles

To complete boundary training to address sexual misconduct, harassment, and child abuse prevention, you may utilize the Presbytery account with "Darkness to Light," which can be used anytime, contact EP Neal Presa or Stated Clerk Erica Rader.

Note, both sets of boundary training are required: (1) Addressing safe and healthy ministry relationships and (2) Addressing sexual misconduct, harassment, and child abuse prevention. While both sets are, of course, interrelated, there are distinct foci that are addressed and which all teaching and ruling elders are required to learn and engage.



**Training for Treasurers and Finance Chairs
May 2nd, 9:30am-12:00pm**

Our Presbytery Treasurer, Rev. Edd Breeden, will facilitate an annual workshop that covers the fundamentals of serving as a church treasurer, a finance chair or on a church finance committee. The workshop will be held in-person on Saturday, May 2 from 9:30am-12:00pm at the chapel of the Presbytery Office/Cornerstone Church of Silicon Valley at 890 Meridian Way in San José.

Register Early at [this link](#).

The event is free. Your per capita and mission dollars at work.

This training offers an opportunity to strengthen financial leadership within congregations by reviewing current developments in church finance and reinforcing core responsibilities of church treasurers and finance committees. Designed to be both practical and informative, the session is open and beneficial to pastors, church treasurers, elders, and finance committee members throughout the presbytery.

For more information, contact by email Edd@sanjosepby.org or (831) 239-6817

Gathered in Faith: Empowering Hearts, Changing Lives

2026 Winter Gathering of Asian Presbyterian Women, Northern California Chapter

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

Saturday Jan 31
2026



9:30 REGISTRATION & COFFEE
Westhope Church
12850 Saratoga Ave. Saratoga
Large parking lot,
Close to Highway 85.

9:45 INTRODUCTIONS
9:50 OPENING PRAYER AND HYMN



REV. RUTH KUO 10:30 – 11:45
Reclaiming Who I Am. Offering Here I Am.

Pastor Ruth's morning workshop on 'Empowering the hearts,' will begin with sharing her story. She will empower participants to reflect and share their own stories and gifts/callings. Then on offering who they are to God's mission and ministries.



11:45 – 12:45 LUNCH
from Dim Sum King, Sunnyvale
a chance to visit and walk the grounds

12:45 REGATHER



REV. DEBORAH LEE 1:00 – 2:30
On Immigration and Accompaniment

Rev. Lee, ordained in the United Church of Christ, is the Executive Director of Interfaith Movement for Human Integrity, which has made recent news. She is an engaging preacher and speaker on immigration, human rights, and the role of faith communities in social justice.



Registration ends Jan 24

2:30 CLOSING AND EVALUATION
3:00 END

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

www.sanjosepby.org

[View as Webpage](#)

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

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