



Presbytery of San José

July 10, 2026



Dear Members and Friends/Colleagues of the Presbytery of San José,

Greetings in the love of God, the grace of Jesus Christ, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit.

With Teaching Elder commissioner Deborah Troester (Santa Teresa Hills), Ruling Elder commissioner Beth Wylie (Saratoga-Westhope), Young Adult Advisory Delegate Kemal Munkem (Santa Teresa Hills), and Stated Clerk Grace Kaori Suzuki, I returned last week from the 227th General Assembly, which met in-person in plenary sessions in Milwaukee, Wisconsin from June 29-July 2, and in committees via Zoom the week prior (June 22-24). We will schedule this Fall a townhall-style gathering (whether via Zoom or in-person) so that we can share more in an interactive format our impressions and reflections as a Presbytery delegation on what transpired at the General Assembly, and where we are headed in the next two years.

This General Assembly was my 16th one. Of all the General Assemblies I have experienced, the sermon preached by our dear friend and colleague, The Rev. Laura Mariko Cheifetz (transitional executive presbyter of the Presbytery of San Francisco), was the finest one, in its incisive analysis and prophetic exhortation for the Church to interrogate, confront, and confess power and privilege, and counterfeit spirituality within the Church and in society. We see this when the Church neglects caring for the vulnerable, the hungry, the thirsty, the immigrant, LGBTQIA+ siblings. No amount of Scripture memorization and enactment of worship liturgies will justify the Church falling short of doing justice, loving mercy, and walking humbly with God. Watch Laura's sermon and/or read the transcript at: <https://www.reyes-chow.com/guest-laura-mariko-cheifetz-general-assembly-sermon-text/> (thanks to The Rev. Bruce Reyes-Chow for furnishing the transcript)

As past Moderator of the 220th General Assembly (2012-14) and the designated dean of the community of moderators, I joined other General Assembly moderators in welcoming the newly elected Co-Moderators of the 227th General Assembly, The Rev. Marta Pomeroy-Cordero and The Rev. Dr. Kris Schondelmeyer. They will itinerate throughout the denomination and around the world representing the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). I hope to have one or both of them in our Presbytery within the next two years. At the same time, we expressed our collective gratitude to the outgoing Co-Moderators of the 226th General Assembly, The Revs. Cece Armstrong and Tony Larson, for their outstanding and faithful ministries. We in the Presbytery were blessed to have them both visit.

Our Presbytery's overture on repudiating Christian Nationalism was overwhelmingly approved with some amendments. Thanks to our Ruling Elder Commissioner Beth Wylie for serving as the overture advocate. Together, we worked with other

commissioners in bringing to the floor a much improved resolution. The part of the approved overture that is an amendment to the Book of Order section on the Foundations of Polity will be sent to all presbyteries for a vote.

Other areas of intense debate, discussion, and discernment included:

- Establishment of an independent General Assembly commission to investigate the closure of the former Presbyterian World Mission ministry and the termination of mission co-workers.
- Approving the location of the 228th General Assembly (2028) to be in San Juan, Puerto Rico
- Naming the Israeli government's policies and conflict against Palestinians as constituting acts of genocide as defined by international law
- Sending for further study at every level of the Church (congregations and sessions, presbyteries, synods) the draft new confession and the establishment of another special committee to report back to the 228th General Assembly (2028) on what was learned from the churchwide study and bring a recommendation to that General Assembly on whether a new confession in the Book of Confessions is needed and a proposed text
- Sending to the General Assembly Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy for further study and possible policy proposals on monogamous relationships
- Approved a new Organization for Mission, which codifies and operationalizes the new unified agency now called Presbyterian Life & Witness (formerly the Presbyterian Mission Agency and the Office of the General Assembly), and which establishes the relationship of national agencies one to another and with the General Assembly. With that, an inaugural governing board for Presbyterian Life & Witness was elected
- Approved balanced budgets of \$90.5 million and \$97.9 million for 2027 and 2028 for Presbyterian Life & Witness, respectively, with accompanying General Assembly per capita apportionment rates of \$13.04 for 2027 and \$12.72 for 2028.
- Approved a bilateral dialogue with the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), with the stated aim of making steps towards full communion between our two denominations
- Approved a fourth round of bilateral dialogue between the Episcopal Church and the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) from 2026-2032; I have been elected to again serve on this bilateral dialogue

One matter that generated much conversation at the Assembly, and which continues on social media, among mid council leaders, and among General Assembly moderators is the presence of a group called Presbyterian for the Kingdom (PftK). PftK belongs to an umbrella movement/organization called Operation Reconquista, whose stated self-aim is to bring biblical orthodoxy to mainline denominations such as the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). What began as an online group of GenZ adherents, PftK leaders and adherents were present at General Assembly, and some who were YAADs who were aligned with the PftK. I had the opportunity to speak with and listen to the leaders of the PftK at General Assembly, introduced to them by an act of providence and serendipity. I joined fellow General Assembly moderators in endorsing a statement from a few YAADs, who raised great concern in what they viewed as PftK co-opting YAADs and mischaracterizing a planned lunch gathering at the Assembly under the pretext of unity. We will continue to watch and engage the actions, statements, and activities of PftK. For my part, I have pastoral, ecclesial, theological, and ecumenical concern having met with and seen PftK's leadership at the General Assembly. I will have more to say in the months ahead.

The 227th General Assembly gathered under the theme "Persevering Towards Wholeness." Inspired by the text of Revelation 22:2 of the leaves of the tree of life for

the healing of the nations, and adapted from the theme of the 27th General Council (2025) of the World Communion of Reformed Churches meeting last year in Thailand “Persevere in Your Witness,” this was an Assembly which sought to emphasize the critical importance for living in and embodying hope and faith in Christ, so that we may be collaborators for wholeness and healing in the world. Here are worship resources for your congregations focused on this theme:

https://pcusa.org/sites/default/files/2026-06/GA227_Sunday_Liturgy_0.pdf

The brief summary of the 227th General Assembly above demonstrates the prayerful hope of God’s people to serve and worship together, to pray for and with one another and the world, to struggle together to discern the will and mind of Christ, to attend to our common life as a part of the body of Christ, and to see how those areas in our life together and in our common humanity can be named and lifted for healing and wholeness.

Thanks be to God that we are loved by the Savior, belong one to another in the community of faith, and therefore called to be the body of Christ in our communities and the world.

In Joy & Justice,

Neal

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

#CalledToCommunity

#CommittedToJustice

EP's Upcoming Travels & Preaching/Speaking

July 19: Preaching at Westhope Presbyterian Church-Saratoga (10:00am)

July 26: Preaching at Bonny Doon Presbyterian Church (10:00am)

August 9: Preaching at Trinity Presbyterian Church-Santa Cruz (10:30am)

August 10-23: Vacation

August 30: Preaching at Westview Presbyterian Church-Watsonville (10:00am);
Preaching at San Martin Presbyterian Church (1:00pm)

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@sanjosephby.org or call/text (408) 763-5004.

Featured



4th NEAR Gathering Announced

Registration Info will be shared on Friday, July 17th

The Presbytery is excited to announce plans for the 4th NEAR Gathering, taking place Saturday, September 26, 2026 (9:00 am to 1:00 pm) at Gilroy Presbyterian Church. This year's gathering takes up a pressing and timely theme: Christian Nationalism.

Beginning next week, members will be available to RSVP and view additional event details.

Event Info

This Week

Protecting Immigrant Neighbors

THIS SUNDAY

**Farmworker Reality Tour
Watsonville
July 12th, 3 p.m. to 7 p.m.**

The Peace and Justice Working Group would like to invite all who are interested to participate in a guided Farmworker Reality Tour, an opportunity to learn directly from farmworkers and advocates about the realities facing agricultural workers and their families in California.

The event will include the tour of a local migrant camp in Watsonville, before partaking in a meal and discussion with Ernestina, a Watsonville resident and farmworker as she shares her story of migration, challenges within the industry, and more.

The event is free to attend, sponsored by the Peace and Justice Working Group, with space limited to 30 participants. Donations to The Center for Farmworker Families are encouraged and may be made online or brought to the event. A car will be required for the tour, and carpooling is encouraged. Please wear casual and comfortable clothes/shoes, water, and sun protection.



Spots still remain, register and learn more at the link below:

[RSVP & Learn More](#)

*Shared by our Peacemaking & Justice Advocate, Veronica Ota
Stay connected: To get involved in these conversations or receive more in-depth updates,
contact Veronica at Veronica@sanjosephby.org.*

In Case You Missed It



Who's Representing Us?

Commissioners & Delegates | GA227 in Milwaukee

Gathering under the theme "Persevering Toward Wholeness," the 227th General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) will once again bring together commissioners, advisory delegates, mid-council leaders, and church partners from across the denomination for worship, committee work, plenary sessions, and prayerful discernment around the shared life and calling of the church.

[Read More](#)

A Place at the Table ☐○☐

SUMMER SPOTLIGHT

Rev. Ryan Althaus · Hunger Advocate



A New Hub for Hunger Resources

ISAIAH 58:10

“If you spend yourselves on behalf of the hungry and satisfy the needs of the oppressed, then your light will rise in the darkness, and your night will become like the noonday.”

Current Hunger-Related Happenings

- Sonrise Outreach, a ministry of Westview Presbyterian Church, serves breakfast five days a week at Plaza Park in Watsonville and recently opened Hope Village, a tiny-home community on the church's campus. Presbytery members recently volunteered at Second Harvest and toured Hope Village — Pastor Dan Hoffman would love to host your church too. To volunteer, call Westview at (831) 724-6222, or reach out to Ryan at ryan@sanjosepby.org.
- The Presbytery has also been building a relationship with Miracle Messages, an organization addressing the relational hunger of the unhoused through companionship and encouragement — because community and dignity matter just as much as food and shelter. If you'd like to learn more, or have the team speak at your congregation, let Ryan know [...]

Visit New Page Now

For ongoing reflections and relevant resources, visit Rev. Althaus's hunger advocacy blog [here](#). or feel free to contact him directly at: ryan@sanjosepby.org

Pieces on Peace ☮

JULY EDITION

Veronica Ota · Peacemaking & Justice Advocate



Reflecting on San Jose's Inaugural LGBTQ+ Faith Leader's Summit

In June I had the chance to participate in the first ever LGBTQ+ Faith Leaders' Summit in San José. It was an inspiring and meaningful morning for folks to gather, listen, and speak truthfully from experience about what it means to affirm the sacred dignity of all God's children [...]

Continue Reading

To learn more about ongoing peacemaking & justice-related projects, contact Veronica at veronica@sanjosepby.org, or visit the website's Advocacy page below: [Advocacy Resources](#) | [PSJ](#)



Taiwanese American Presbyterian Church

San Jose

This Sunday, we invite you to pray for the clergy, ruling elders, and members of Taiwanese American Presbyterian Church of San Jose. We give thanks for the leadership of Rev. Ting-Yin Lee, and for the faithfulness of a congregation whose ministry continues to nurture fellowship and community offerings within the Asian American community of the South Bay.

TAPC's story began in 1982, when several Taiwanese families gathered for worship in downtown San José under the leadership of Rev. K. T. Tsai. In the years that followed, the congregation moved, grew, and continued to take shape as a spiritual home for Taiwanese Christians in the Bay Area. By 1987, the church had become connected with the PC (USA) and was formally established as a congregation in 1991.

Today, TAPC continues to bear witness through weekly Taiwanese-language worship, children's worship and Sunday school, among others opportunities. For the last forty years, their presence as a targeted minority congregation has offered a meaningful reminder that the church is often sustained through both heritage and newfound community.

As their Santa-Teresa-based sanctuary hosts the unity candle this week, we ask our neighboring communities to lift up Taiwanese American Presbyterian Church of San Jose in prayer. May God continue to bless Rev. Lee, their ruling elders, and all who worship and serve with TAPC, that their life together may remain rooted in Christ's love and strengthened for the ministry ahead.

To learn more about this week's congregation, you can visit their website here:

[Taiwanese American Presbyterian Church](http://www.taiwaneseamericanpresbyterianchurch.org)

Follow the path of the Unity Candle here:

<http://tinyurl.com/SJUnity2025>



Required Training for Clerks of Session RSVP Now: Multiple Dates Available

Clerks of Session and other church leaders responsible for minutes are asked to attend one of the two upcoming trainings. Both dates will include the same content (a sessions minute review and clerk-specific training), facilitated by Stated Clerk Grace Kaori Suzuki. Available dates are listed below:

Saturday, August 15 — St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, 9:00–11:00am

Saturday, September 12 — Westminster Presbyterian Church, 9:00–11:00am

Please register in advance at the link below. Direct any questions regarding minutes review or clerk responsibilities to Stated Clerk **Grace Kaori Suzuki** at gracekaori@sanjosephby.org.

RSVP NOW!



Retired Clergy Reunion Luncheon Presbyterian Church of Los Gatos Wednesday, September 9, 11:30 a.m

A friendly invitation to all Retired Teaching Elders and Clergy across the Presbytery of San Jose to save the date for a first-ever lunch fellowship gathering, taking place on Wednesday, September 9, at 11:30am at Presbyterian Church of Los Gatos.

This special gathering will be co-hosted by the Rev. Jack Longley, HR, Parish Associate at Presbyterian Church Los Gatos, and EP Neal Presa, with grant support from the Church Health & Growth Working Group. Retired clergy are warmly invited to gather for a meaningful time of fellowship, connection and conversation.

Registration is now Available at the link below.
RSVP Deadline Is August 15th.

RSVP NOW!



**Registration Now Open: Leaders of Color Retreat
Zephyr Point Conference Center
October 19th — 22nd**

Registration is now available for this year's Clergy and Church Leaders of Color Retreat, facilitated by the Presbytery of San Jose. Visit the link below to view event, payment & subsidy information. RSVP deadline is September 30.

Register Now

Employment Opportunities

The Presbytery is always hiring. Visit our Employment Opportunities page or read about new opportunities below from congregation and Presbytery-affiliated organizations:



First Presbyterian Church of Mountain View

- [Part-Time Female Vocalist](#)

First Congregational Church of San Jose (UCC)

- [Assistant to Interim Minister](#)

View All Positions

www.sanjosepby.org

[View as Webpage](#)



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