



Presbytery of San José

July 3, 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.
This week's reflection is once again offered by Colin Richardson, our
Communications and Executive Support Associate:

As we approach the Fourth of July weekend, we do so in a year of particular significance, as our country marks 250 years since its founding. For many, this holiday is one of equal parts celebration and remembrance. It invites us to reflect not only on the history of our country, but on the ongoing work that is required of democracies.

For Presbyterians, Independence Day aligns closely with our origin story in America. In 1789, The synod held its first inaugural meeting of the General Assembly (PCUSA) in Philadelphia, at a time when the United States' civic life was still being shaped. As put by established clergyman Dr. Walter L. Lingle, Presbyterians had “a large part, directly and indirectly, in shaping the Constitution of United States.”

The history of this holiday should rightfully invoke nostalgia, but it should also encourage faithful reflection. At its best, the Fourth of July reminds us that the rights of people matter, and that justice and equality remain inherent attributes of our national character. However you spend this weekend — with family, neighbors, church friends, fireworks, food, quiet rest, or your own cherished traditions — may it be a time to give thanks, to remember, and to recommit ourselves to our common good as a union.

In Joy & Justice,

Neal

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

#CalledToCommunity
#CommittedToJustice

EP's Upcoming Travels & Preaching/Speaking

July 5: Preaching at Cornerstone Church of Silicon Valley (11:00am)

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

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

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

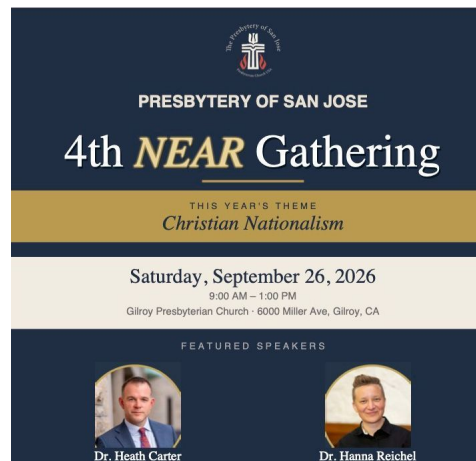
Featured



Registration Now Open: Clergy & Church Leaders of Color Retreat October 19th — 22nd | Zephyr Point Conference Center

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](#)



4th NEAR Gathering Announced

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.

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@sanjosepby.org.

In Case You Missed It



New Grant Opportunities for Ministers & Congregations

Two recently announced grant opportunities are available to support congregations, pastors, and ministry leaders in strengthening their work through technology, study, and faithful reflection. The Presbyterian Foundation is offering Church Technology Grants of up to \$5,000 to help pastoral leaders strengthen their ministry through technology.

[Read More](#)



Representatives from Presbytery of San Jose | 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](#)

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.

When I first heard of the event, I was excited to learn about local organizations that provide services and create safe spaces for the LGBTQ+ community. The event was remarkably collaborative – organized by the Silicon Valley Faith Leaders Collaborative; with representatives from the Office of LGBTQ Concerns and the Division of Equity and Social Justice, the Gender Health Clinic, the Q Corner, and the Qmunity Foundation; and with faith leaders from various traditions well represented as attendees and guest speakers. What I neglected to realize, likely due to my position as someone who identifies as a cisgender (meaning my gender identity matches the sex I was born as) straight woman, was how **monumental** it was to organize an event for faith leaders to get together with LGBTQ+ community and organizational leaders [...]

[Continue Reading](#)

Protecting Immigrant Neighbors

**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

To learn more about ongoing peacemaking & justice-related projects, contact Veronica at veronica@sanjosepbj.org, or visit the website's Advocacy page below:

[Advocacy Resources](#) | [PSJ](#)

Unity Candle ☐

SUNDAY, JULY 3



Westminster Presbyterian Church San Jose

This Sunday, we invite you to pray for the clergy and ruling elders of Westminster Presbyterian Church in San José. We give thanks for the leadership of their Pastor, Rev. Dr. Bryan Franzen, and Associate Pastor Rev. Neneth Ross for all they do to support and guide the ministry the many ministry and community of their congregation.

Originally named Second Presbyteria Church wll over a century ago, the congregation has grown and adapted along with in accordance with the community of faith it houses. Westminster's current property was constructed following the 1906 earthquaking giving way to a new opportunity to plant its roots in the heart of the South Bay. Today, Westminster stands at the border of downtown San José, serving a community shaped by changing generations and cultures alike.

Westminster's ministry spans far beyond their worship service, offering a plethora of communal opportunities like English as a Second Language classes for Cambodian

refugees, Brown Bag outreach to people experiencing hunger, affordable housing organizing with PACT, and partnerships with groups such as the San Jose Symphonic Choir, Silicon Valley Gay Men's Chorus, and the Bill Wilson Center.

Sunday school classes are held weekly at 9:30 a.m. followed by worship at 10:30 a.m., both in person and online. The congregation also offers Youth Group gatherings on Sunday evenings, Young Adult Ministry, family-friendly outings, and Summer Bible Blast for children during the summer. As their sanctuary serves as host to our Unity Candle, we ask that the neighboring community lift up their leaders and members alike in prayer and reflection.

To learn more about this week's congregation, you can visit their website here:
[Westminster Presbyterian Church](#)

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

Clergy Reminders



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!

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 Jobs](#)

www.sanjosepby.org

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

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