



Presbytery of San José

August 14, 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 offered by Colin Richardson, our Communications and Executive Support Associate:

Last week, we gathered for a successful Called Special Meeting of the Presbytery, where we took several meaningful steps forward in the life and ministry of our community. Among the actions approved were the establishment of an ordainable Peacemaking and Justice Minister position, the candidacy of Ms. Veronica Ota to serve in the role, as well as the validation of Good Growth Gardens as a new worshiping community. Each of these decisions reflects the ways God continues to open new possibilities for ministry among us. Through the creativity and leadership of our ministry leaders, and the dedication of church members and volunteers, we continue to build ministries that serve our congregations, strengthen our communities, and support our neighbors in need.

Looking ahead, let us be reminded of Paul's words to the church in Corinthians: "I planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God has been making it grow" (1 Corinthians 3:6).

Our work often revolves around laying the groundwork for goodness. Creating structures, nurturing relationships, and thus making room for new expressions of ministry. We do what we can and turn toward God in hopes that our efforts blossom to their fullest extent. May we set our intention to tend what has been entrusted to us in the weeks to come.

In Joy & Justice,
Neal

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

#CalledToCommunity
#CommittedToJustice

EP's Upcoming Travels & Preaching/Speaking

August 10-23: Vacation

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

September 2: Mid Council leaders of Northern California retreat - San Damiano Retreat Center, Danville

September 6: Northminster Presbyterian Church-Salinas preaching (10:00am) and 102nd anniversary of St. Philip's Presbyterian Church-Salinas preaching (11:30am)

September 9: Co-hosting retired clergy luncheon at Presbyterian Church of Los Gatos (11:30am)

September 10-16: Personal Leave - visit parents in Guam

September 19: Attending ordination of Veronica Ota - First Presbyterian Church, Altadena, Presbytery of San Gabriel

September 26: NEAR Gathering IV - Gilroy Presbyterian Church (9:00am-1:00pm)

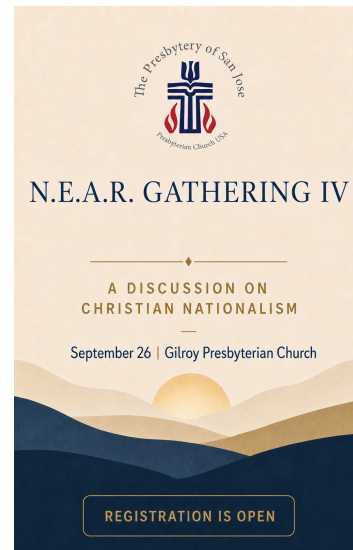
If you would like to invite the EP to guest preach, facilitate a class, lead a retreat, help with strategic visioning/planning, or grab a cup of coffee, email neal@sanjosepby.org or call/text (408) 763-5004.

Featured

NEAR Gathering IV **Register by Sep. 12**

The Presbytery of San Jose's fourth N.E.A.R. Gathering will take place on Saturday, September 26, 2026 (9:00 am to 1:00 pm) at Gilroy Presbyterian Church. This year's gathering is centered around a pressing and timely theme: Christian Nationalism.

Guest Speakers from Princeton Seminary will deliver keynote addresses and partake in a sit-down discussion with EP Neal Presa. Light Breakfast and lunch provided. This event is made possible by the Synod's Anne Penke fund.



Register Here

This Week

Reminder: Clerks of Session Training
Saturday, August 15 | 9:00 – 1:00 pm
St. Andrew's PC – Aptos

Clerks of Session and other church leaders responsible for minutes are asked to attend one of two upcoming trainings, the first being this Saturday at St. Andrews Presbyterian Church of Aptos.

An additional training will be held on September 12th at Westminster Presbyterian Church, also from 9:00 – 1:00 pm. Both dates will include the same content (a sessions minute review and clerk-specific training), facilitated by Stated Clerk Grace Kaori Suzuki. Direct any questions regarding minutes review or clerk responsibilities to Stated Clerk Grace Kaori Suzuki at gracekaori@sanjosepby.org.

REGISTER HERE

Interfaith Climate Justice Summit Sunday, August 23 | 1:00 – 5:30 pm

Join faith leaders, lay leaders, youth, and community members from Silicon Valley for the South Bay Interfaith Climate Justice Summit on Sunday, August 23, from 1:00–5:30 p.m. at First Unitarian Church of San José.

As communities face growing threats to climate protections and environmental justice, this interfaith gathering will equip participants with advocacy tools, foster meaningful relationships, and strengthen a shared moral voice for climate justice and the common good.

The summit is open to faith and lay leaders, as well as youth and community members of all faith traditions. [Visit the event site to learn more and RSVP.](#) For questions, contact the event host: info@greenfaith.org



Clergy Robe Available

Rev. Nancy Harrington, honorably retired and a former member of the Presbytery of San Jose, would like to gift her clergy robe to a minister who may have need of one. The blue women's traditional robe (Bentley & Simon in excellent condition, pockets, and reversible stole; white on one side and red on the other).

If you or someone you know could use this robe, please contact Rev. Nancy Harrington directly at snowhard@comcast.net or 408-219-8777 with any questions or to inquire about receiving it.



PWP San Jose Presents:
An Afternoon with Pastor Deb Troester
GA 227 Discussion & Recap
Stone Church of Willow Glen | August 29

Join us Saturday, August 29, from 2–4 p.m. at Stone Church of Willow Glen for a time of discussion, reflection, and conversation about the 227th General Assembly (GA 227) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Teaching Elder Commissioner Deb Troester will share her experience and reflections from GA 227, offering an opportunity for members and all who are interested to learn more about the Assembly's work, decisions, and ongoing impact on the church. The gathering will take place at Stone Church, 1937 Lincoln Ave., San José. All are welcome! To RSVP, email PWP Moderator Rosaleen Zisch directly: rmgzisch@gmail.com



The Presbytery of San José will host a an additional event via Zoom to reflect on outcomes of GA 227 (see "Presbyter Reminders").

Support Good Growth Garden
at Community Yard Sale
Westview PC | August 29

Westview Presbyterian Church will be hosting a Community Yard Sale on Saturday, August 29, from 9:00 a.m.–3:00 p.m. Donations of furniture, tools, clothing, household items, and more are welcome and may be dropped off on Friday, August 28, from 10:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m. and 6:00–8:00 p.m., or by appointment.

All proceeds will benefit the Good Growth Garden ministry project, supporting its ongoing work to serve the community. For donation information or to arrange an alternate drop-off time, contact Veronica Ota at Veronica@sanjosepby.org.



Common Roots Presents:
Raise the Barn Festival
In Support of the Inclusive Barn Project
Common Roots Farm | September 12

Our hunger advocate Ryan Althaus, in collaboration with Common Root's Farm, would like to invite any and all to the *Raise the Barn Festival* on Saturday, September 12, from 3–7 p.m. A family-friendly afternoon of live music, food, art vendors, games, and more, the also event aims to help Common Roots complete its new barn.

The new barn will expand Common Roots' ability to offer year-round opportunities for people with



disabilities, including farming and gardening classes, employment in the barn's retail store, and space for community gatherings and celebrations.

The event is open to members of the Presbytery and friends alike, we encourage all to come out in support of a worthy community cause. Learn more and register at the link here:

commonrootsfarm.org/barnfest

Want to learn more about Common Roots' Barn Project?

Visit the link here: barn.commonrootsfarm.org

In Case You Missed It



World Communion Offering

***New Grant Opportunity for Mid-Council Initiatives**

A new World Communion Offering Grant opportunity is now available to support innovative ministry and mission initiatives across the Church. All mid-council leaders—Sessions, presbyteries, and synods—are eligible to apply. Grant funding may be used to launch new ministries, expand existing programs, purchase project-related materials and supplies, or support outreach, education, and communication efforts connected to an approved initiative. Congregations and ministry leaders interested in exploring this opportunity are encouraged to learn more and begin preparing proposals.

Additional information and application resources are available here: Learn more about the grant, and the process of approval at the link here: sanjosepby.org/new-grant-opportunity-for-mid-council-leaders-world-communion-offering

For those interested in learning more about this and other grants, PC(USA) Special Offerings staff will host a webinar on Thursday, September 3, at 4:00 p.m. PT; Register at the link here:

events.teams.microsoft.com/special-offerings-webinar-pc-usa

Denominational Service

Beyond the Presbytery, did you know that our immediate past Executive Presbyter, The Rev. Joey Lee, honorably retired, serves on the Board of Directors of the Board of Pensions of the PC(USA), and recently became a member of the Board's executive committee?

Did you also know that our immediate past Stated Clerk, The Rev. Erica Rader (associate pastor at the Presbyterian Church of Los Gatos), serves as the co-moderator of the General Assembly Funding Model Development Team, established by the 225th General Assembly (2022) and will be offering its final report to the 228th General Assembly (2028). Here's more about that Team's work: <https://pcusa.org/about-pcusa/church-structure/general-assembly/committees-commissions/ga-committees-other-groups/funding-model-development-team>

Veronica Ota · Peacemaking & Justice Advocate

Read Veronica's August entry of the Peacemaking and Justice Column at the link here:
sanjosepby.org/peacemaking-justice-advocacy/pieces-on-peace-august-2026-edition



Support Education for Incarcerated Neighbors

The Transformative Justice Center in Monterey invites our congregations and community members to support its Summer Freedom Match Campaign, benefiting the Empathy in Action program. Empathy in Action brings college students, faculty, and members of the public into meaningful conversation with incarcerated participants...

[LEARN MORE](#)

Sunday,
August 30th
 3pm - 4pm

ICE out of GILROY

FREEDOM VIGIL

STOP DETENTION CENTER NEAR GILROY FROM OPENING!

7240 Holsclaw Rd
 Gilroy, CA 95020

This is a recurring monthly vigil for peace in our communities and in the world, in solidarity with our friends, neighbors, and community members who are being unjustly detained and deported by ICE. Join us every 4th Sunday of the month!

Bring signs!
 And a chair if you'd like to sit!

This is a peaceful, family friendly event open to people of all faiths and of none

Let's lift our voices to stop the deportations, shut the detention centers, and end the inhumane attacks on migrants

Sponsors:

Unity Candle □

SUNDAY, AUGUST 16



Sunnyvale Presbyterian Church Sunnyvale

This Sunday, we recognize Sunnyvale Presbyterian Church as they host the Unity Candle. Notably, we ask that you lift up their Pastor, the Rev. Hardy H. Kim, Associate Pastor Rev. Annanda Barclay, Worship and the dedicated directors and administrators who support the congregation's many ministries.

Serving members alongside the broader Silicon Valley community, Sunnyvale Presbyterian offers a variety of worship opportunities throughout the week, including traditional Sunday worship onsite and online at 10:00 AM, Modern Worship Collective gatherings with dinner and worship, and Evensong, a contemplative service featuring Taizé-style music, prayer, and meditative silence. The congregation also creates opportunities for spiritual reflection through offerings like their community labyrinth, which is open to all and patterned after the historic 13th-century labyrinth at the Cathédrale Notre-Dame de Chartres in France.

Beyond its worship and spiritual formation, Sunnyvale Presbyterian continues to live out a commitment to dignity and justice within the wider community. Under the leadership of Rev. Hardy H. Kim and other faith leaders, the congregation prioritizes creating affirming spaces of belonging, including the Out-Loud Choir, queer fellowship groups, and Queer-led worship gatherings. Their ministry also centers around community-based volunteering opportunities, like their ongoing work with Bill Wilson Center, Immanuel House, and their bi-annual Toy Drive.

As Sunnyvale Presbyterian Church receives the Unity Candle this week, we ask our neighboring congregations to lift its pastors, leaders, members, and ministry partners in prayer. May God continue to strengthen their witness as a community of worship, welcome, and action.

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

[Sunnyvale PC](#)

Follow the path of the Unity Candle here:

<http://tinyurl.com/SJUnity2025>

Presbyter Reminders

GA Town Hall Meeting: Hear From Our Commissioners & Delegates August 27 at 6:00 PM via Zoom

In addition to GA resources, the Presbytery will host a Town Hall via Zoom on August 27, 2026 at 6:00 PM, in which our commissioners and Young Adult Advisory Delegate will share their experiences from the Assembly. The Town hall will be via zoom, with the access link provided below and on the resource document. No registration is required to attend; more details will be shared in the weeks to come.



[Virtual Town Hall - Zoom Link](#)

Zoom Meeting ID: 889 4401 5745

**Stewardship Kaleidoscope Conference 2026
Cultivate Generosity & Leadership Practices
September 21 – 23 | Baltimore, MD**



Registration is now open for Stewardship Kaleidoscope 2026, an annual ecumenical conference taking place from September 21–23, 2026, in Baltimore, Maryland. Drawing participants from the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), and other ecumenical partners, the conference features informative workshops, plenary speakers and networking opportunities aimed toward expanding leadership skills and cultivating stewardship in congregations.

Whether you are a pastor, ruling elder, stewardship committee member, finance leader, or anyone passionate about generosity in the life of the Church, Stewardship Kaleidoscope offers practical tools and fresh ideas to bring back to your congregation. Registration information is available here: stewardshipkaleidoscope.org/registration/

The Presbytery of San Jose will cover the conference registration fee for those interested in attending. Those seeking financial assistance with travel and lodging expenses are invited to submit a sponsorship request to EP Neal Presa at neal@sanjosepby.org.



Retired Clergy Gathering & Luncheon
Presbyterian Church of Los Gatos
Wednesday, September 9 at 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. Additionally, the Board of Pensions is co-sponsoring this event in partnership with the Church Health & Growth Working Group. Retired clergy are warmly invited to gather for a meaningful time of fellowship, connection and conversation.

For those Elders who have already registered (via mail, online, email, etc.), you do not need to complete any other steps. We look forward to gathering together. Registration is now Available at the link below, we ask that you RSVP by to August 15th.

RSVP HERE



Clergy & Church Leaders of Color Retreat

Registration Now for this year's Clergy and Church Leaders of Color Retreat, co-facilitated with the Presbyteries San Francisco, Redwoods, and North Central California. Visit the link below to view event, payment & subsidy information. RSVP deadline is September 30.

REGISTER NOW

Employment Opportunities

The Presbytery and its partners/affiliates are always hiring. Visit our Employment Opportunities page or read about new opportunities below from congregation and Presbytery-affiliated organizations:



Stone Church of Willow Glen

- [Family Ministry Assistant Director](#)

First Presbyterian Church of Mountain View

- [Part-Time Female Vocalist](#)

First Congregational Church of San Jose (UCC)

- [Assistant to Interim Minister](#)

First Presbyterian Church of Snohomish (Washington State)

- [Installed Pastor](#)

Urban Sanctuary San Jose

- [Part-Time Lead Pastor](#)

VIEW ALL POSITIONS

www.sanjosepby.org

[View as Webpage](#)

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

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