

Hill 'n Vale

Newsletter of the Tomales and Two Rock Valley Presbyterian Churches
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PASTORAL PONDERINGS

Dear Friends in Tomales and Two Rock,

As Protestant Christians, we greatly value our Bible and emphasize the importance of Scripture. That stance is clearly reflected in our worship, where the Word of God is central each and every Sunday.

The way in which we approach Scripture on Sunday mornings follows an ancient tradition that goes back to the Jewish roots of our Christian Faith: we read the most important sections of our Bible in a three-year cycle. This cycle is called the *Lectionary*, from the Latin *legere*, to read. For each Sunday, the Lectionary assigns four Biblical passages: one text from the Old Testament; one from the Psalms, the hymn-book of the Bible; one section from the epistles, the collection of letter in the New Testament; and one passage from the Gospels.

From the beginning of November through Trinity Sunday in May or June, we generally follow the guidance of the lectionary. Doing so allows us to follow the life of our Lord Jesus Christ from his birth through his earthly ministry to his passion and into his resurrection and ascension. Following the lectionary is also a discipline that invites us to be open to the entire breadth and depth of Scripture, including texts

that may challenge us or may nudge us to examine important questions about our Christian faith.

However, during stewardship season in October and during the summer months, we typically set aside the lectionary and instead we go exploring! In summers past, we have delved into the Six Great Ends of the Church; read the stories of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob/Israel; focused on the letter to the Galatians; and heard stories of the first kings of Israel: Saul, David, and Solomon. And last summer, prompted by the 500th anniversary of the Protestant Reformation, we reflected on the ten essential tenets of our Protestant-Reformed faith.

This summer, I propose to offer a sermon series on the “Top 10”, on the ten most important passages of the Bible. Obviously each of us will have our own list of Scripture texts that are most central to our lives. Hence I want to invite all of us to work together on this “Top 10” list. So my question to you is this: Which is your favorite passage of the Bible; or even: which three of four passages are most important to you? Is it a story about Jesus from one of the gospels; a text about the early church from the Book of Acts; tales about family issues from the Old Testament; some wisdom from the book of Proverbs or words of hope from one of the prophets? And would you mind sharing your list with me?

I hope to hear from many of you and find out which Biblical texts are

crucial to your lives. And I am also wondering: Why are these passages so important to you? Do they offer you comfort? Do they invite you to grow as a person of faith? Do they give you courage when you face a difficult situation?

My plan is to sort through all the top-3 or top-5 or top-10 lists that you share with me; to talk with you about your favorite Scripture; and then to compile a Two-Rock-and-Tomales list of our very own “Top 10” favorite Scripture passages. That will be the basis of my summer preaching, after Trinity Sunday and through Labor Day.

God bless you all,

Pastor Cornelia

THANK YOU'S

We had great fun at the **Easter Egg Hunt in Tomales Town Park on March 31!** Thank you, everyone, who donated sweet treats to put into the plastic eggs; spent time stuffing hundreds of them; contributed eggs that were already filled; or brought small gifts as prizes. Thank you, **Liz Mitchell and Amanda Graves**, for hiding oodles of eggs for those energetic and enthusiastic kids! Thank you, families in Tomales and nearby communities, for bringing your children and enjoying time in our marvelous town park. And thanks be to God for the beauty of creation and for the newness of life that we sense all around us each Easter season.

JOYS TO SHARE

☺ At the beginning of March, a **healthy baby boy was born to Sage and Aaron Holm**. The couple, and then their daughter **Adabelle**, were an integral part of the Two Rock congregation until Aaron was transferred last summer to a new Coast Guard assignment in Cleveland, OH. Now the Holm family has been joined by little **Asher**, who is an alert and delightful baby and a joy to everyone. Sage writes, "Asher is a healthy and huge little guy and Adabelle is a very caring and attentive sister. Whenever he cries, she runs over to him and sings *Jesus Loves Me*." What a delight for Aaron and Sage to have a another child and for Adabelle to have a sibling! May God bless Asher all the days of his life and surround the entire Holm family with grace and joy.



☺ For about a year now, **Tim and Amanda Graves and their three children** have attended worship at Tomales Presbyterian Church. Our small church is much closer to their home in Dillon Beach than the much larger Lafayette-Orinda Presbyterian Church in the East Bay where they have been members for years. Hence at the March 26 session meeting, **Tim and Amanda Graves** were received as new members of **Tomales Presbyterian Church**,

and the whole family was formally welcomed by the congregation during worship on April 15.

The Graves family have lived in Dillon Beach for seven years. **Amanda** is originally from Colorado; she came to the Bay Area to go to college and then stayed on. For about ten years, she was employed by a not-for-profit organization that assists immigrant families; then she worked for three years for the County of Sonoma, first with the Board of Supervisors, then the Public Health Department. **Tim** was born in Los Angeles, though his family moved to Atlanta very early in his life. When he was seven, they returned to California and settled in Moraga. That is where Tim grew up, went to school, and went to church. Tim is now working in the field of Information Technology, and he is also an avid surfer.

Amanda and Tim are the parents of three delightful children: **Maya**, age 7; **Mickey**, age 3; and **Emma**, who will soon turn 2. The entire family is active in the community: Tim is a volunteer fire fighter with Tomales Fire Company; Amanda is involved with Tomales Elementary School where Maya is a student; and all enjoy participating in events at church and in the community.

What a joy to welcome the Graves family to the mission and ministry of Tomales Presbyterian Church! God bless you all!



☺ On April 15, Two Rock member and master violinist **Kyle Craft offered a free concert** in Two Rock to an overflow crowd of more than 100 people. Introduced by choir director Kay Fish and accompanied on the piano by Sonoma State music student Emma Webb, Kyle delighted his many fans with 19th century music from Vienna. He played waltzes, polkas and popular tunes by Johann Strauss, Franz Lehar, Robert Stolz and others. People were energized by this marvelous music, sensed the stirrings of itchy feet, and felt like waltzing down the isle of the Two Rock sanctuary. We sang along to Rogers and Hammerstein's *Edelweiss* and clapped along to Strauss' famous *Radetzky March*. Thank you immensely, Kyle, for sharing your great musical gifts with us! What a terrific treat on a Spring afternoon, what a joy to gladden our hearts!

WORSHIP

Please join us
For Sunday Worship
In Tomales at 9:30 am
In Two Rock at 11:00 am

We are now in the **Easter Season**, those great fifty days between Easter Sunday and Pentecost. During this time, we ponder the mystery and joy of Jesus' resurrection, and we try to glean signs of renewal in our own communities. Through this year's Easter sermon series we seek to follow our Lord Jesus Christ to Galilee, hoping to discern **newness of life** in Tomales-Galilee or Two Rock-Galilee or any of the other places where we live our ordinary human lives. Please join us for our Sunday services!

Please note these special worship emphases in the next two months: † **Ascension of the Lord Sunday on May 13**, when we celebrate Jesus ascending to God's presence after his resurrection. This is also **Mother's Day**, when we will honor all the women in our midst. Because of the Abelskiver Breakfast, there will be no worship in Tomales but instead one joint worship in Two Rock at 11:00 am. We will have lots of special music that day to honor the women who have loved us and helped us grow in life.

† **Pentecost on May 20**, when we give thanks for the gift of the Holy Spirit to the early church, and for the continuing presence and guidance of God's Spirit among us now.

† **Trinity Sunday on May 27**, when we celebrate the joy of being drawn into the life of God through the wonder of creation, the grace of redemption, and the love we share with one another as the people of God.

† **End-of-school celebration on June 10**, which is pure joy about being done with another school year, and happiness at having weeks of summer vacation stretching out before us.

† **Celebrating the men of the church on June 17**, when we give thanks for all the men in our lives who have loved, mentored, and guided us: fathers, brothers, uncles, grandfathers, cousins, teachers, coaches, friends or Big Brothers.

Do join us for any and all of these worship services!

The **choirs of both Tomales and Two Rock Churches** continue to delight us on Sunday mornings with their inspired and uplifting music. Please join Gary Foster in Tomales at 9:00 am for choir

rehearsals before the service, and Kay Fish in Two Rock at 9:30 am. New choir members are always welcomed and always needed!

In Two Rock, there is also a **Men's Choir**, a **Contemporary Worship Ensemble**, **Margaret Todt** on the organ or piano, and **Kyle Craft** on the violin; all of whom take turns playing or singing the introit on Sunday mornings. It is wonderful to hear such a variety of musical styles, though they all express the same love and devotion to our gracious Lord and God.

This past year, the **combined hand bell choir** under the direction of **Kay Fish** has played a number of times in both of our churches. On May 15, the bell ringers will get together for a planning meeting, to determine the best time for rehearsals and to figure out how often to play in worship during the church year. For this coming fall, Kay would love to find more people who are interested in ringing hand bells. The bells sound best when there are as many as ten ringers covering our three hand bell octaves, plus Kyle on the violin. So if you are interested in being part of the hand bell choir, please contact Kay at 707-696-6145.

Pastor Cornelia and her husband Carl will travel to Pittsburgh at the end of June to visit her son Nikolaus and his family; then to Carl's childhood home in Potsdam, NY, and to the Adirondacks; finally to Boston to spend a few days with Carl's sister and brothers.

While Pastor Cornelia is on vacation, the **Rev. Linda Powers** will lead worship on **June 24 and July 8**; and of course she will bring her **service dog Beta**. The guest preacher for July 1 will be announced soon.

MISSION & OUTREACH

On Saturday, May 5, from 9:00 am until 1:00 pm, the Two Rock congregation will host the annual **Open Trunk Flea Market** of the **Coast Guard Spouses Association**. Close to 20 families will have trunks open and tables out in the Two Rock parking lot. Come find some useful household items, fun children's toys, or one-of-a-kind treasures, and show your support and appreciation of the Coast Guard families in our midst.

This year's **Tomales Farm-and-Flea Market is happening on Sunday, May 6, from 9:00 am until 3:00 pm**. As always, it will be held on John Street and extend towards the Elementary School. Tomales Presbyterian Church has reserved a double booth, to sell food for breakfast and lunch, and to offer fabulous flea market treasures. For this important church fundraiser we continue to accept anything that is in good repair and can be transported fairly easily, though no clothing, please, and no books.



And we are grateful to all who came to the **workdays at Tomales Church on April 21 and 28** and sorted the many items that have already been donated: dishes and kitchen ware; toys for children; tools for the workshop; trinkets like the clown-pendant or the small horse statues; pictures, baskets, an

ancient steamer trunk, and an antique type writer — remember those? All of it will be for sale at the Tomales Farm-and-Flea Market, so do check out the church booth!



On May 6, we need extra hands to transport tables, chairs, canopies and sale items and set up the booths in downtown Tomales early in the day; we are asking for people who will work in the church's food and flea-market areas; and we are hoping for fresh help with breaking down the booths and hauling things away after 3 pm.

A huge thank-you to **Virginia and Rob Campbell, Kathryn LeMieux, and Eric and Sharon Knudsen** for heading up this event, and to everyone who is donating items and staffing our booths! And may we have lots of fun with this fundraiser!

May 13 is the date for **Mother's Day and the Abelskiver Breakfast in Two Rock!** Please bring the women you love and all your family to this joint church fundraiser, which the men of Tomales and Two Rock Valley Presbyterian Churches will be hosting. They will prepare delicious Ableskivers with jam and syrup, warm ham, fresh fruit, good coffee, juice and milk. The money raised will be set aside for

emergency needs of people in our local communities. Please support this fundraiser, honor our women, and join us in Two Rock from 7:30 until 10:30 on Mother's Day.

EDUCATION & LEARNING

☺ Once again the **Tomales congregation** is taking a special offering to support the **Tomales High School Senior Project Scholarship Fund**. This fund is meant for students who do hands-on projects during their senior year, including internships at a local Fire Department, in a near-by hospital, at a childcare center, or similar placements. The scholarship will allow graduating seniors to continue their education and help with tuition, books, and other expenses after high school. If you are able to contribute to this fund, please make out a check to *Tomales Presbyterian Church* and write *THS Senior Project Scholarship* on the memo line.

☺ All children and youth are invited to be in worship on **Sunday, June 10**, as we give thanks for the **end of the school year!** We would love to hear how the year went, which grades were completed, and what plans and tasks lie ahead for the summer. Be sure to join us for this celebration!

☺ The **Coast Guard Chapel** will hold its annual **Vacation Bible School from June 18 to June 21**, from 9 am until 12 noon. All children from preschool through age twelve are invited. Please let Coast Guard spouse Amy Vullo (858-472-0588) know if you are interested in sending your child or grandchild to VBS. Amy will help with registration and will also be

glad to sponsor any non-Coast Guard children onto the Base.

PROPERTY & FINANCE

Many thanks to everyone who was part of the **workday in Two Rock on March 24**. We did some extra-deep cleaning in the Sunday school room, re-organized several kitchen cupboards, pruned bushes in front of the church building, sorted out the shed behind the Fireside Room, tidied up the pew racks in the sanctuary, and washed all the windows in the fellowship hall. This was just in time to have our church sparkle for Easter!

Also right before Easter, some **painting was done at the Two Rock Church** building and garage. Doors and door frames that had only been primed received a proper coat of paint, the eaves along the church's garage were primed and painted, and a spot in the sanctuary received some touch-up spackling and then paint. It does look good, and all the wood is properly sealed and protected now.



Two Rock members **Paul Lewis and Richard Casarotti** have taken the lead in doing some much-needed **repairs and clean-up behind the church building**. It's easy for refuse and debris to accumulate near overgrown brush or at the edge of a property. That

was true for Two Rock Church as well, and now it's time to do some thorough clean-up! Many thanks to Paul, Rich, Peter Karoitamana and Ben Visser, for all they have done to repair, improve, or remove things!

And a huge thank-you to Paul for overseeing the **smoothing of the driveway onto church property, the leveling of the parking area in back, and the application of crushed rock** for easier and smoother access all around! What a lot of work, and what a labor of love in support of Two Rock Church. Thank you immensely!



CHURCH CARE & FELLOWSHIP

Many thanks to all who contributed to the scrumptious **breakfast after the joint Easter Sunrise Service in Two Rock**. The deacons hosted this much-loved event, and people from the congregation brought hot egg-and-ham dishes and other special treats for Easter morning. How good it was to share this meal after we celebrated the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, how glad we were to be part of the community that was

gathered in his name. Thank you for this joyful ministry and the great hospitality shown to everyone in our communities.

What a fabulous reception we had after **Kyle Craft's concert in Two Rock on April 15**. Many thanks to Lonnie Wernstrum, Nan Leavell Pat Huber, Olga Pallo, Mary Lynn Visser, Doreen Coe, Ingrid Mahrt, Brooke Studwell, and Marlene Lewis. There were lots of flowers in the sanctuary and fellowship hall, including fragrant lilac to convey some of the sweetness of Vienna; there was a big Black Forest Cherry Cake, in the tradition of southern Germany and Austria; we had real whipped cream to be served over pound cake and strawberries; the napkins and plates were imprinted with musical notes — all these lovely touches and details made this reception truly special. Thank you, everyone!

Thank you, **Virginia Campbell**, for all the baking you do for the Tomales congregation! On Easter, for our workdays in April, and sometimes just as a special treat, Virginia brings delicious cinnamon rolls as only she can make them. Each third Sunday of the month, she bakes a birthday cake from scratch with creative decorations and often whimsical detail. On Communion Sundays, she bakes gluten-free bread, so that all can partake of the sacrament. We love your baked goods, Virginia; please keep on bringing them to church!

Following the October fires and the difficulties communicating in its immediate aftermath, several people had asked that a **FaceBook page be created for Tomales Presbyterian Church**. Then during the Easter Egg Hunt on March 31, **Amanda Graves** told

me that it would have been easy to let more people in the community know about this fun event — if the church would have just had a FaceBook page!

A couple of weeks later, Amanda stepped forward and created such a page by uploading information that is already on the church's website. According to her, this is how people can become part of our church's FaceBook link: Open FaceBook, search for *Tomales Presbyterian Church*, and "like" the page. You may then "share" the page, with or without any additional comments; and you can also invite family and friends to "like" the page. Go ahead and try it.

This social medium is meant to make communication easier among members of the congregation; and it allows church leaders to post information about special events, workdays, fundraisers, and any emergencies.

Thank you so much, Amanda for noticing ways to improve our church's outreach into the community; for taking the initiative to create a FaceBook page; and for telling us how to access it. We are grateful!

Now Amanda has volunteered to create a **FaceBook page for Two Rock Valley Presbyterian Church** as well, and session has gratefully accepted that offer. We will let everyone know when Two Rock's FaceBook page is up and running.

PRESBYTERY NEWS

†The next **Presbytery Meeting** will be held at Church of the Roses in Santa Rosa on Friday, May 18, from 10:00 am until 3:00 pm.