

Hill 'n Vale

Newsletter of Tomales and Two Rock Valley Presbyterian Churches
January / February 2019

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PASTORAL PONDERINGS

Dear Friends in Two Rock and Tomales,

Since 1717, the Presbyterian Board of Pensions and its precursors have seen to the well-being of Presbyterian clergy. For many decades now, that has meant providing health insurance while pastors are serving actively and pensions after they retire. The Board of Pensions seeks to keep its members healthy by urging us to get regular check-ups and by advocating that we keep ahead of health challenges. To achieve this goal, the Board of Pensions even offers incentive programs and support programs.

One of these support programs are the CREDO Conferences that the Board of Pensions hosts for pastors. As you know, I was invited to attend such a CREDO Conference the week after Thanksgiving, from November 27 to December 3, in Live Oak, FL. Credo conferences were designed about a dozen years ago to support and affirm pastors in the tasks they do, with the hope of retaining leaders in a line of work that can often lead to burn-out and ill health.

In the past, CREDO Conferences were held only for mid-career pastors in the 35-55 age range; though more recently also for pastors in the first five years after graduating from seminary. I was

in the first CREDO group specifically for pastors in the 55 to 70 age bracket: people who have served for some years, have lots of experience, and might need a boost for the final stretch of their ministry. There were twenty of us in this group from all across the US, led by an eight-member faculty, most of them also pastors in the Presbyterian Church (USA).

The focus of this conference was not on our churches or on issues within our congregations, but on us as pastors and people who seek to serve the Lord. The purpose was to address issues that might affect our health and well-being, and so we were asked to examine five areas of our lives: our physical health, emotional health, spiritual practices, sense of vocation, and financial health. Through lectures, small-group discussions, worship, personal reflection, prayer, and journaling, we embarked on a four-step process of self-assessment by asking ourselves: 1. Where am I now in terms of my roles and tasks (identity), 2. Is this where I want to be (discernment), 3. What might I do to move ahead in new ways (taking action), and 4. How might this lead to some positive changes (transformation).

Being at the CREDO Conference was not only a time of retreat and rest, it was also a good time to take stock and to reflect on my life and ministry. And it was helpful for me and everyone there to realize how much support there is for us within

the denomination, for all pastors feel at times that they are laboring heavily and muddling through largely on their own. This conference helped us rediscover the joy of ministry and reaffirm our commitment to serve with gladness.

With Christmas behind us and the new year beginning, this might be a good time for all of us to take stock of our lives. What are our tasks, we might ask ourselves; what is our sense of vocation and purpose; how are we doing in terms of our closest relationships; and how is our physical, emotional, spiritual, and financial health? Each of us might take some time in prayer, personal reflection, and conversation with loved ones to do some self-examination and self-assessment. Surely this will also be helpful in preparation for Baptism-of-the-Lord Sunday on January 13, when we as congregations, and each of us individually, are invited to re-affirm our baptismal vows and recommit ourselves to the mission and ministry of our churches.

God bless all of you in 2019,

Pastor Cornelia

JOYS TO SHARE

What a joy: at the session meetings on October 23 and November 13, the elders of **Two Rock Valley Presbyterian Church** received **Barbara Russell-Cambra** and **Bruce and Patti Carrington** into **membership**. At the November 13 meeting, they also **restored to full membership** **Carol and Don**

Griffith, who have been attending church again for the several months. All five were welcomed during worship on November 18.

Barbara Russell-Cambra is originally from Independence, Missouri. Her father served in the National Guard; and when she was eight years old, the family moved to San Bernardino where her father helped build Norton Airforce Base. Barbara grew up in San Bernardino; there she graduated from high school and went to Junior College. Then, together with some girlfriends, she moved to San Jose State University to complete her Bachelor's degree in preparation for being a teacher; a profession she would have for many years.

It was at church in San Jose, at the group for youth and young adults, that Barbara met Bruce Russell. He had completed an art degree in Oakland, but was taking more college courses in preparation for going to seminary. After Bruce completed his degree at the Baptist Seminary in Berkeley, Barbara, Bruce and their son Brent moved to Denver, CO; to Springfield, MO; and to Cedar Rapids, IO, all locations where Bruce served as pastor. Eventually, the family came back to the San Francisco Bay area, to Fremont, where both Barbara and Bruce became school teachers. Sadly, Bruce died of cancer in 1984. Later, Barbara married Joseph Cambra, though he, too, has now passed away.

In 2010, Barbara moved to Petaluma to be near her son Brent, daughter-in-law Sue, and their three children. She has attended Two Rock Church for the past two years, sings in the choir, is

active as choir assistant, and keeps the bulletin boards in the fellowship hall well organized.



Bruce and Patti Carrington moved to the Two Rock area a couple of years ago and have been coming to worship at Two Rock Church ever since.

Patti and Bruce are both from Southern California. Patti grew up in Alta Dena, near the foothills of Angeles National Forest; and Bruce comes from Redondo Beach. Both Patti and Bruce have a background in Information Technology, one specializing in hardware, the other in software. That meant a career in banking for Patti and in management for Bruce: he worked at Northrup for 35 years, then for IBM for another 10 years.

For 43 years, Bruce and Patti made their home in Rancho Palos Verdes, just south of where Bruce grew up. There they raised their four children, Matt, Tim, Mark, and Samantha. They regularly attended St. Peters-by-the-Sea Presbyterian Church in Palos Verdes and were active leaders of the congregation. Bruce served as elder and chaired the buildings-&-grounds committee for some years.

It was their son Matt, his wife Kristen, and their two young sons who enticed Patti and Bruce to move to our area: that family lives in Sausalito, has a house in Duncan Mills, and loves to be near the grandparents. Bruce's and Patti's other sons also have children; in all, they have five grandchildren.

Patti and Bruce enjoy being part of the Two Rock congregation, they

love the friendly family feel, and recently Patti joined the choir.

Carol and Don Griffith first attended Two Rock Church in 1971, when Marion Hicks, their neighbor, invited them to join her for worship. The Rev. Henry Rankin was pastor at that time, and Don and Carol regularly brought their four girls and one boy to church and Sunday school. To this day, their adult children fondly remember Lea Ray Schultz as the Sunday school teacher who helped them memorize the Lord's Prayer. In later years, some of Carol's and Don's 13 grandchildren would also come to worship in Two Rock. From 1994 to 1996 Don served as Trustee.

Carol and Don first met when they were nine years old, spinning wheels at the Chico roller rink. In 2018, they were married for 60 years. In addition to their five children and 13 grandchildren, they also have 13 great-grandchildren and two small, sweet dogs.

In 1997, Don and Carol sold their home in the country with space for their children and animals and moved from the west side of Petaluma to the East side. Their life slowed down a bit: Don retired from working full-time as a podiatrist and Carol stepped back after working in his office for ten years. However, Don is still seeing patients twice a week; he loves being around people and has kept an office in Petaluma.

Everyone is delighted that Carol and Don found their way back to Two Rock Church, and we're glad to reconnect with them.

Welcome, Patti, Bruce and Barbara; and welcome back, Don and Carol, to the mission and ministry of Two Rock Valley Presbyterian Church.

THANK YOUs

A big and heartfelt **thank-you to all church officers** who are completing a term of office this January.

In Tomales, elder Mary Spragens served for three years, David Burbank filled in a one-year term on session, and Liz Mitchell completed another three-year term on the board of deacons.

In Two Rock, Lonnie Wernstrum and Gail Turcotte are stepping down from session after serving two three-year terms; and Margaret Todt has completed two terms as a deacon.

We are grateful to these church officers for giving of their time and talent, for their dedication to our congregations, and for their loving service to our churches and wider community. **Thank you Mary, David and Liz, and thank you Lonnie, Gail and Margaret.**

ANNUAL REPORTS & MEETINGS

The new calendar year has arrived and with it the time for **annual reports and annual meetings of our congregations.**

In early January, the pastor, clerks-of-session, committee chairs, deacons, and leaders of groups within our churches write their **annual reports**; these will then be made available to our congregations prior to the annual meetings.

The **annual meeting of the Tomales congregation** will be held on Sunday, January 27, following worship and a lunch. The **annual meeting of the Two Rock congregation** is scheduled for Sunday, February 3, after worship and coffee hour. Our churches' annual meetings have a

threefold purpose: to receive the annual reports, to elect new church officers (elders, deacons, and financial secretary), and to vote on the pastor's terms-of-call. Everyone is invited to attend the annual meetings, though only members of the congregations may vote.

Following the annual meetings, there will be an **officer retreat and officer training** in Two Rock on Saturday, February 9, from 9:30 am until 2:30 pm.

New **church officers will be ordained or installed** during worship on Sunday, February 10.

WORSHIP



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

Our **worship in November and December** is greatly enhanced each year through beautiful decorations and marvelous music.

† **In Tomales**, Suzie Harms provided a sizable cornucopia with pumpkins and gourds for Thanksgiving. The following weekend, Gary Foster and Carl Carter put up the Christmas tree; Kathy Foster and Liz Mitchell decorated the tree plus the sanctuary windows and the tables in the fellowship hall; and Sharon Knudsen donated two poinsettias and prepared the Advent wreath.

† **In Two Rock**, Pat Huber and Nan Leavell assembled a delightful Thanksgiving scene in front of the communion table. The next weekend, Kathy Stroke put up the Christmas tree in the fellowship hall; Nan and Pat decorated it, the Communion table, and the Advent

wreath; Joetta and John Furrer hung beautiful garlands and lights in the sanctuary and narthex; Carol McClarnon made the fellowship hall look festive; and Ben and Mary Lynn Visser put the wooden creche figures out in front of the church.

The Music at our churches was also truly special during Advent.

† The **joint hand bell choir** rang for worship in Tomales on December 9 and in Two Rock on December 16; the hand bells were also played at a holiday event at Sonoma State University on December 6, and again during the Two Rock Choir Concert on December 16. You can watch their performance online at <https://youtu.be/775e8GIgvIY>

† In the afternoon of December 9, the Tomales congregation hosted its annual **Community Christmas Sing and Children's Christmas Pageant.**

† A week later, the joint choir held its first **Choir Concert in Two Rock**, also at 3 pm. It was a terrific and joyful, event!

† **The Two Rock Candle Light Service** on December 23 was an opportunity to sing beloved carols and celebrate Christmas joy.

Many thanks to choir director Kay Fish, all members of our vocal choirs and our hand bell choir, accompanists Margaret Todt and Gary Foster, violinist Kyle Craft, guitarist and singer David Coe, the men's choir in Two Rock, and the Two Rock quintet! **Your music does lift our souls and brings smiles to our hearts.**



Darryl Jay Smith
March 28, 1948 – Nov. 10, 2018
I know that my redeemer lives!
Job 19:25

Here are some worship highlights for January and February:

† **Epiphany** on January 6, when Jesus is made manifest as Savior to both Jews and gentiles

† **Baptism of the Lord Sunday** and renewal of our baptismal vows on January 13

† **The Rev. Linda Powers** will preach in Tomales on February 3, while Pastor Cornelia moderates the annual meeting in Two Rock

† We will **ordain and install new church officers** on February 10

† The **hand bells** will be rung during worship in **Two Rock on February 24 and in Tomales on March 10.**

EDUCATION & LEARNING

Thank you, parents and grandparents, for **brining your children and grandchildren to church.** We love seeing them and including them in worship and fellowship, both on regular Sundays and for special events.

© The **children's Christmas pageant at Tomales Church** on December 9 was heart-warming and lively! From Tomales, Xenia McLean, her friend Jillian Bach, and Maya, Mickey and Emma Graves participated, as did Mary Briggs from Two Rock. Sunday school teachers Kathy Stroke and Jessica Briggs helped the children sort through the dress-ups and then joined the pageant as a king and a shepherd. This was part of a wonderful afternoon, filled with Christmas carols and a poetic rendition of the Christmas story.

© For its December meeting, **our local Cub Scout Troop 123** had invited Pastor Cornelia to teach a

“religion” module as part of their afternoon program.

How does one talk about “religion” to seven second graders and two fourth graders? Using the 1961 Norman Rockwell painting “Do unto others as you would have them do unto you” was helpful; as was bringing in maps of the world and of world religions; drawing a “family tree” of the Christian faith; and introducing the concepts of justice, kindness and humility for Micah 6:8, in addition to the great commandment.

What a wonderful opportunity to speak to these children about religion and try to respond to some of their questions. Thank you, Cub Scouts and Cub Scout leaders!

© Our **Two Rock Sunday school teachers and students** will host a **Souper-Bowl lunch** after worship on February 3. This is a great way to raise money for people who need extra food and to provide food for the congregation prior to the annual meeting. Please join us for this event and support the mission work of our children and youth!

MISSION & OUTREACH

Last fall, we experienced serious wild fires in our area, and our churches responded by offering practical help and financial support. This year, **wild fires devastated the town of Paradise**, near Chico; and again **our congregations stepped up to assist the fire victims.**

In mid-December, we received an email from the Rev. Dr. Henry Hansen, Pastor of Bidwell Presbyterian Church in Chico. He is the grandson of the Rev. Henry Rankin, who served Tomales and Two Rock Presbyterian Churches from 1964 to 1986. Pastor Henry

Hansen and his congregation opened their church as an emergency shelter and service center in the aftermath of the Camp Fire in Paradise. To help, our two congregations collected \$ 950 in donations, and session decided to send an even \$1000 to Bidwell Presbyterian Church. Here is Pastor Henry's email:

Thanks so very much for the gracious donation you sent from Two Rock and Tomales Churches. We are grateful for the gift and will steward it most carefully. There's such tremendous need in Chico and in the region. People here are really hurting, and this community is only at the beginning of what will be a long marathon [of recovery].

Many thanks to everyone who made a donation to this fire recovery fund. Your support is appreciated!

For **Thanksgiving and Christmas**, each of our two churches reached out to our communities in order to make the holidays more joyful for local families.

Two Rock Valley Presbyterian Church provided all the makings for Thanksgiving meals to four families of Two Rock School children. For Christmas, some members of the congregation purchased gifts for 19 children and 8 classrooms of Two Rock School as part of the Giving Tree program; other members worked with Christmas Cheer, which provides gifts for older adults in Petaluma.

Tomales Presbyterian Church helped with the Scouts' Food Drive in November by collecting canned and boxed food items, which Cub Scouts Troop 123 delivered to the Food Bank. Tomales Church also made a financial donation to West Marin Community Services for their Holiday Food and Gifts Program; and church members

collected gift items for the Holiday Bazaar at Tomales Elementary School.

Thank you for all these generous donations, and for your kindness and love in the name of Christ!

PROPERTY & FINANCE

First there was the **Men's Group** in Tomales, which soon became the **Handy Men's Group**. Then they morphed into the **Handy Guys Group** and eventually they became the **Handy Guys and Gals**. This lively and enthusiastic group includes Fred Lawson, Lee Harms, Kip Spragens, Bruce Turner, Tim Graves, and Carl Carter; with elder Rob Campbell serving as liaison to session.



Kip Spragens and Fred Lawson; not pictured: Carl Carter.

After an initial meeting and some planning, here is what the Handy Guys have accomplished during several work days:

- * Cleaned the church signs outside of our building and along Dillon Beach Road
- * Installed two storm windows that Kip designed and constructed
- * Replaced the corrugated roof over the enclosed area behind the church kitchen, including some wood that was damaged

Thank you, Handy Guys, for the planning you did, for donating funds and materials, for purchasing needed items, for cutting wood and corrugated plastic to the correct length, for removing the old and installing the new! Our church building is in better shape and more able to withstand storms and rain because of your good work!



Bruce Turner, Tim and Mickey Graves; not pictured: Lee Harms.

Two trees were recently cut down on Two Rock Church property; PG & E requested permission to do that work, and session agreed. This helps to clear power lines and cut down on potential fire hazards.

Plans are underway to better light the front of **Two Rock Church**, specifically to **illuminate the cross in the front of our newly painted building**. Some preparatory work has already been done by Paul Lewis and Cliff Stroke; it will now take a licensed electrician to complete the task.

Brent Russell is currently creating designs for **hardscaping and landscaping around Two Rock Church**. After reviewing his plans and discussing his suggestions, session hopes to have new hardscape and landscape in place later this spring. And we are still waiting for the **church garage** to be painted. Stay tuned.

CHURCH CARE & FELLOWSHIP

Many thanks to all who helped host **receptions and fellowship times** during Advent and Christmas: at the Mother-Daughter-Friends luncheon in Two Rock on December 1, after Community Christmas Sing in Tomales on December 9, following the Choir Concert in Two Rock on December 16, and after Candle Light Service in Two Rock on December 23. Thank you so much!

SMALL GROUPS AT CHURCH

The **Creative Crafts Group** meets in Two Rock on Tuesday mornings from 10 am to noon. It's a time for embroidering, crocheting, and knitting, and for sharing stories, coffee, and cookies. Please contact Lea Ray Schultz (707-763-0297) or Gail Casarotti (707-762-6931) for more information.

The **Two Rock Quilting Group** is taking a break until mid-February. Please contact Carol McClarnon at 707-778-6279 or Judy Burton at 707-762-4966 to find out when the quilters will start meeting again.

All level of walkers are invited to join the **Tuesday walking group in Dillon Beach**. Led by Suzie Harms, people meet at her house right before 1 pm. For more information, contact Suzie at 916-342-0301 or at suzieharms@me.com.

PRESBYTERY NEWS

† The next **Presbytery Meeting** will be held at **First Presbyterian Church, San Anselmo**, on Saturday, February 2, from 10:00 am until 3:00 pm.

Two Rock Valley/Tomales
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“ O sing to the Lord a new song
Sing to the Lord, all the earth.” (Psalm 96:1)

Annual Meeting times:

Tomales: January 27th; Two Rock: February 3rd.

Officers’ Retreat: Two Rock Church, Saturday February 9th.

Ordination/installation of church officers: February 10th.