

# Hill 'n Vale

Newsletter of the Tomales and Two Rock Valley Presbyterian Churches

Visit us at [tomalespresbyterian.org](http://tomalespresbyterian.org) and [tworockvalleypresbyterian.org](http://tworockvalleypresbyterian.org)

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## ***PASTORAL PONDERINGS***

Dear Friends in Two Rock and Tomales,

For many people, the season of Lent evokes a sense of penance, sacrifice, and self-deprivation: we think that we ought to give up chocolate, or meat, or other foods we like; we wonder if we should fast from watching favorite movies or from going out with friends. But will those Lenten practices draw us closer to God?

Here is my suggestion: when we think of Lent, let's think of a feast instead — the feast of Jesus' words that speak to us so clearly and urgently from the Gospel; the feast of time to study together and talk about our faith; and let's not forget the feast for our eyes as nature breaks into the blooming garb of spring.

Hence I want to invite as many of you as can make the time to join me for worship each Sunday of Lent. We will hear about four marvelous conversations between Jesus and a variety of men and women of his time: the Pharisee Nicodemus, the Samaritan woman at the well of Jacob, the man born blind, and Lazarus' sister Martha. All these conversation touch on the same question, "*What Makes for True Life?*"; which is also the worship theme for this year's Lenten season.

In addition, I want to invite you to our Lenten study. We will meet at Two Rock Church on all five Mondays in March, from 2:30 to 4:00 pm, and will read Kent Annan's book "*Slow Kingdom Coming: Practices for Doing Justice, Loving Mercy, and Walking Humbly in the World.*" People from both of our churches and from the wider community are invited to this time of study and conversation, and every participant of the Lenten Study Group will receive a copy of the book.

So may we feast on the conversations of our Lord this Lent and on conversations we have with one another, both during worship on Sunday mornings and during our study group on Monday afternoons. May all this help us explore what really makes for true, full, abundant life; and may it help us grow in faith and to trust more deeply in the goodness of God.

Blessings to all of you this Lent,  
Pastor Cornelia



**Daylight Savings Time begins on March 8.**

## ***JOYS TO SHARE***

**Congratulations to Two Rock members Rich and Gail Casarotti**, who both celebrated their birthdays at the beginning of the year!

Richard Casarotti was born on January 22, 1935, in the old Petaluma General Hospital on 6th Street. His family was all local: his father was born in Chileno Valley, his mother came from Cotati, and they made their home in Petaluma. Rich has one brother, and the boys grew up during WW II: Rich was six years old when the US joined the war, eleven when the war ended, and he remembers years of saving, rationing, and making do. Rich went to Philip Sweed School, Washington Grammar School, then to Petaluma Junior High and High School. At Petaluma High, he was in a class with Paul Lewis. He graduated in 1952.

After high school, Rich went to College of Marin, then transferred to UC Berkeley. He studied mechanical engineering and acquired two licenses, in Naval Architecture and Nuclear Engineering. He worked hard and even took 21 semester units his last year to graduate on time.

After he completed his Bachelor of Science in 1956, Rich went to work at the Naval Shipyard on Mare Island in Vallejo. He was just going to be there for two or three years, but then ended up working at Mare Island for 37 years, until he retired in December 1993.



Gail Casarotti was born on February 1, 1938, in south Texas, just a few miles north of the border with Mexico. When she was three, she moved to Burlingame with her parents and brother, then to San Francisco. Gail started school when she was just 4 years old and went to Catholic schools all through high school. In high school, she sat behind the boy who would become a four-time Governor of California, Jerry Brown. She graduated in 1955.

After high school, Gail went to Lone Mountain College, a women's college in San Francisco that later became part of the University of San Francisco. She trained as an elementary teacher and graduated with a BA in 1959. She worked for Old Adobe Union School District for 31 years, teaching kindergarten, 1st, and 2nd grades at La Tercera Elementary School, a year-round school on east side of Petaluma. Gail retired from her teaching position in June 1993. Later she would volunteer 3 to 4 hours each week at Wilson School where grandson Alex attended.

Rich and Gail met in April of 1956, on a blind date on a Friday the 13th, when they were getting ready to be attendants at the same wedding. They courted, went steady, and married 3 ½ years later, in September 1959, when Rich was 24 and Gail was 21. After their wedding they made their home to Petaluma, quite a change for Gail who came from

San Francisco to a small town of less than 10,000 people. Plus, everyone in town seemed to know the Casarottis and seemed to be related: the sister of Rich's grandmother had had 17 children, so imagine the number of cousins in this big extended family!

Gail and Rich have three children: daughter Nancy, who lives with her husband in Indiana; and sons Jim and Richard, both of whom live in the Petaluma area. The couple also raised their grandson Alex after he was born in 1987. In all, they have eight grandchildren and four great-grandchildren, with the fifth one on the way!

When Gail's and Rich's children were young, they were quite active in sports, particularly in swimming and baseball. Gail took them to meets all over Northern California; daughter Nancy achieved some very competitive swim times, and son Richard played professional baseball as a young adult. The family also worked their ranch on Bodega Ave: each year they raised two cows, they had up to 28 sheep, and there were always chickens. No wonder that their children were active in FFA and showed their animals at local fairs. And to this day Rich grows his own vegetables, for healthy local food.

Gail, Rich, and their children traveled extensively during school breaks, taking their motor home and visiting most every major National Park west of the Mississippi. Rich also loved to go skiing and fly fishing and still enjoys working on the ranch. Gail leads the Tuesday Crafts Group at Two Rock Church, where the couple have been active and engaged members since 2014. In the summer, the two of them spend time at their house near Quincy, at the Buck's Lake area in the Sierra Nevada.

Congratulations, Rich, on your 85th birthday, and congratulations, Gail, on your 82nd birthday! May God bless you and keep you healthy and well for many years to come!

**Congratulations to Tomales member Kip Spragens, who turned 75 in February!**

Kip was born on February 20, 1945, in Poughkeepsie, NY, where his father was doing research at the Texaco Lab. When he was ten months old, Kip and his parents moved back to Kentucky; first to Lexington, his mother's home town, then to Louisville, where his father worked as an engineer in the new field of air conditioning.

Kip had no siblings but had lots of cousins his own age, for there are many Spragens family members in Kentucky. He went all through school in Louisville and in Lyndon, one of the suburbs, graduating from high school in 1963. His family's home church was Harvey Browne Memorial Presbyterian Church.

After high school, Kip went to the University of Kentucky in Lexington, where he studied civil engineering. A grant from the Public Health Department allowed him to do an internship in sanitary engineering, involving water and waste-water treatment. He completed his Bachelor of Science in Civil Engineering in 1968.

In the fall of 1968, Kip began graduate school in engineering but soon realized that he would either be drafted into the Army or that he could enlist in another military branch. So he joined the Navy in February 1969, was trained at the Officer Candidate School in Newport, RI, and spent additional training time in Gulfport, MS. Then in October 1969, he was shipped out to Vietnam. He was part of the United States Naval Construction

Battalions, better known as the Navy Seabees, during his roughly 10 months deployment in Vietnam. When the US began to draw down troops in Vietnam in mid-1970, Kip was dismissed early from active duty military service. He was still in the reserve for some time, but was home from late-1970 on.

Right after high school, Kip and a friend had traveled across the US in a VW, and Kip's favorite places had been the Rockies and California. So, after spending a year in Kentucky, working for the state as an inspector, he moved to the west coast in November 1971. He soon began working at East Bay Municipal Utilities District and lived in Oakland.

In 1985, Kip and his family moved to the North Bay, to be closer to the coast they all loved. Kip continued working at East Bay MUD for 34 years until he retired in 2005. He really enjoyed his working environment, the diversity of Oakland, and all the different cultures, customs, foods, and languages.

In the mid-1990's, Kip attended worship at Tomales Presbyterian Church because he had always wanted to see the inside of that sanctuary. He soon found himself a member, served as an elder and clerk-of-session, was on the board of trustees, and is now a deacon. He is also on the board of Tomales Regional History Center and of PEP Housing in Petaluma. For fun, Kip and his wife Mary love to travel and visit their children and grandchildren during summer vacations and any time they can get away.

For Kip's 75th birthday, all the children came: Kyle with wife Andrea and son Caleb; Evan with his girlfriend Summer; Frances

with husband Jeremy and sons Reese, Riley, and Aidan; and Jacob with wife Becky and sons Clayton and Calvin. There were special meals, a treasure hunt, and leisurely time to talk, share, and be together. Happy birthday, Kip, and God bless you as you begin the fourth quarter of the first century of your life!



## ***NEW CHURCH OFFICERS***

At the **annual meeting of the Two Rock congregation** on January 26, three elders were elected to serve on session: **Bruce Carrington**, who had served as elder at St. Peter's by the Sea Presbyterian Church in Palos Verdes in So. California; **Carol Griffith**, who had served as elder in Two Rock in the 1990's; and **Kathy Stroke**, who is serving a second three-year term of office.

At the **annual meeting of the Tomales congregation** on February 2, Elder **Sharon Knudsen** and Deacon **Kathy Foster** were both elected for a second three-year term.

All church officer gathered in Two Rock for a retreat on Saturday, February 15, spending time sharing, learning, and visioning. The new officers were installed the following day, Sunday, February 16, during worship.

Many thanks to our newly elected elders and deacon for serving another term! We are grateful for your faith, dedication, and leadership.

## ***WORSHIP***

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

Our **Joint Hand Bell Choir** rang rousingly at Tomales Church during worship on February 23. The ten players from Tomales and Two Rock Presbyterian Churches performed the introit and the anthem, and accompanied the congregation during the first hymn. The music was marvelous, and it sure lifted people's hearts and spirits!

The Hand Bell Choir will ring their joyous tunes in **Two Rock on Sunday, March 8.**

And also on **March 8, Bob Hayman will play his Hand Pan during worship in Tomales.**

The **season of Lent** began with Ash Wednesday on February 26. Please join us for these **special worship events in March and April:**

† **March 1 is the first Sunday in Lent**, when we remember Jesus' temptation in the wilderness and prepare for our own Lenten journey  
† On March 8, 15, 22, and 29, our worship theme will be *Lenten Conversations: What Makes for True Life?*

† **April 5 is Palm-and-Passion Sunday**, which we will observe with a happy procession of palms and songs, followed by a solemn reading of the Passion Story

† On **April 9, at 7:00 pm**, we will hold our **Joint Maundy Thursday Service** in the fellowship hall in Two Rock for everyone from our churches and communities

† On **April 12**, everyone is invited to the **Easter Sunrise Service in Two Rock at 6:30 am**, followed by

a delicious breakfast. We will also have our **regular worship** in Tomales at 9:30 am and in Two Rock at 11:00 am.



**John Martin Jacobs**

Oct 24, 1926 -

Jan 12, 2020.

*The LORD will keep your going  
out and your coming in.*

Psalm 121:8

## **EDUCATION & LEARNING**

☺ We have an engaging **Lenten curriculum for our Sunday Schools** called “*Reflections on Giving.*” It lets our children explore Gospel passages about giving and talk about why we give, what we give, and the power of our gifts. And it includes fun activities, craft ideas, and coloring pages. Do bring your children and grandchildren to church and Sunday school!

☺ Our **Adult Lenten Study** will meet at **Two Rock Church on the five Mondays of March**, from 2:30 pm to 4:00 pm. We will read Kent Annan’s book “*Slow Kingdom Coming: Practices for doing Justice, Loving Mercy, and Walking Humbly in the World,*” while always remaining mindful of Jesus’ words, “*Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these, you did it to me*” (Matthew 25:40, 45). Do join us!

☺ We extend a special invitation to all children and youth to several happy events in April:

\* **Palm Sunday Procession on April 5th** at the beginning of the service

\* **Easter Egg Hunt in Tomales Town Park on Saturday, April 11, at 1:30 pm sharp**

\* We will observe **Earth Day on April 19** and give a plant to each of our children to take home to nurture and grow

☺ It’s never too early to plan for summer vacations, and our local **Westminster Woods Summer Camp** has its brochures out already! They offer six weeks of summer camp, from Sunday, June 21, to Saturday, August 1. The first five weeks feature camps for entering 2nd graders through high schoolers, the last week offers their four-day Friends and Family Camp to anyone who wants to come! For more information, talk to Pastor Cornelia or go online to <https://www.westminsterwoods.org/summer-camp>.

## **MISSION & OUTREACH**

On Sunday, February 2, the Sunday School of Two Rock Church hosted its annual **Souper Bowl Fundraiser**. Kathy Stroke and Jessica Briggs had prepared five delicious soups, plus bread and dessert, and the congregation donated \$ 273 for this very special after-church luncheon. The proceeds will be given to food programs near and far, so that all people will have at least a warm bowl of soup to eat.

On **Holy Saturday, April 11, at 1:30 pm sharp**, the congregation of Tomales Presbyterian Church will host the **annual Easter Egg Hunt in the Town Park**. Leading up to the event, church members will fill hundreds of eggs with sweet treats for children from Tomales, Two Rock, and all surrounding communities. We hope to see lots of families with children and grandchildren; and do bring baskets or bags for gathering the eggs.

The next gathering of the **Tomales Global Information Forum** is coming up in late April. **Marsha Englebrecht**, who is part of the Tomales congregation and a resident of Dillon Beach, will speak about, “*Caring for Marine Life Around the Globe: Notes from the Field.*”

Marsha is a North-Bay native, having grown up on her family’s ranch that straddled Napa and Solano Counties, on the edge of the urban regions of the Bay area. That’s where she learned to love wide open space, natural settings, ranch animals, lots of wildlife.

After high school, Marsha studied biology, specializing in *Animal Health*, with emphasis in *Marine Field and Species*. Much of her work was done in laboratory and veterinary settings. In 1983, she passed the California State Boards to become a Registered Veterinary Technician (RVT).

Marsha’s first job was at Marine World Africa USA, when it was still in Redwood City. She was part of the Oceanarium department and curator of the Shark Experience Project, always monitoring water quality and chemistry, keeping the animals as healthy as possible, and in the process, collecting huge amounts of research data. When the park relocated to Vallejo she helped with moving all the marine animals.

In 1997, Marsha was offered at position that involved a tunnel tank — at Pier 39 in San Francisco! She was Director of Husbandry Operations and Curator, overseeing big holding tanks of northern California coastal species. That’s also when she began working with students from regional and national universities, mentoring them in caring for Marine Life.

In 2000, Marsha left Pier 39 to do consulting work. She has since been

involved in many aquarium and coastal conservation projects and in the management of offshore fisheries, not only in the US, but also in Canada and Mexico, around the Pacific Rim, in East Africa, Sri Lanka, Abu Dhabi, Dubai, really all around the world. Do watch your church bulletins and emails for the exact date of our next TGFI, and come hear an inspiring Marine Life educator!



Don't forget to plan ahead for **Abelskiver Breakfast on Mother's Day, May 10th**. The men of our churches will host a fabulous breakfast of fresh-from-the-pan Abelskivers with syrup and ham, fruit and jam, and a good cup of coffee. All proceeds from this fundraiser go into our Community Emergency Fund to assist people in surrounding communities.

## **PROPERTY & FINANCE**

Good news from **Tomales Church**: After soliciting and reviewing four bids to **replace the sanctuary roof**, we chose David Roofing, a company that presented a competitive bid and also comes highly recommended by local carpenter David Judd. The sanctuary roof is now scheduled to be done some time in April, weather permitting, of course. The roof over the fellowship hall and kitchen was

done in 2005 and still has some good years of life in it.

At the beginning of each year, Presbyterian Churches send in their *per capita* contributions. This money helps support the work of our Presbytery of the Redwoods, of our Synod of the Pacific, and of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (USA). For 2020, we are asked to make the following donations to

General Assembly	\$ 8.95
Synod of the Pacific	\$ 5.22
Presbytery	\$17.26

Our treasurer will send a total of **\$ 31.43 to Presbytery for each active member**; this number is unchanged from 2019. Please consider making a donation for this amount to your church, in addition to your regular contribution. It will be much appreciated by your session. Thank you!

With Easter approaching, the **Two Rock gardening crew** has been pruning, weeding, and planting around the church building and constructing the last planter along the church patio. Many thanks to Sue Russell for organizing this, and also to Brent Russell, Don and Judy White, Bruce and Patti Carrington, and Pastor Cornelia for their work. The next gardening day is scheduled for **Saturday, March 7**, and all are invited to lend a hand.

**Two Rock** session is planning **new fencing** on two sides of our cemetery, matching the one that separates the cemetery from our parking lot. The crumbling telephone poles that served as **parking stops will be replaced by good-sized rocks** that will be placed several feet apart. And **Crepe Myrtle bushes** will be planted along the cemetery, to enhance the beauty and serenity of that setting. Many thanks to elder

Paul Lewis for taking the lead with this project!

There will be a **workday in Two Rock** to spiff up the inside of the church in time for Palm Sunday and Easter. Please come on **Saturday, March 21**, and bring some cleaning supplies and some elbow grease. For more information, contact Kathy Stroke at 707-971-9598.

## **CHURCH CARE & FELLOWSHIP**

We had all kinds of **special food for our annual meetings** in January and February. We are grateful to Two Rock deacons Doreen Coe, Pat Huber and Nan Leavell; to Tomales deacons Virginia Campbell, Carl Carter, Kathy Foster, Liz Mitchell, Kip Spragens; and to all others who keep preparing snacks that can be shared during coffee hour.

And please ask your deacons how you may help with **Easter breakfast or brunch on April 12!**

## **SMALL GROUPS AT CHURCH**

The **Two Rock Crafts Group** on Tuesdays from 9:30 until noon is going strong! This group of women gathers for coffee and conversation while doing knitting crocheting, and embroidery work. There is always room for another chair to be pulled up, so feel free to join them. For more information, contact Gail Casarotti at 707-762-6931.

As of February 27, the **Two Rock Quilting Group** has resumed its weekly sessions. You can join the quilters on Thursdays from 9 am to noon in the Fireside Room at Two Rock Church and help create warm and colorful quilts of all sizes. For information, contact Judy Burton at 707-762-4966 or Carol McClarnon at 707-778-6279.

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“ Lift high the cross, the love of Christ proclaim,  
Till all the world adore his sacred name.”

**April 5:** Palm-and-Passion Sunday with Children’s Procession during worship

**April 9:** Maundy Thursday Service in Two Rock at 7 pm

**April 11:** Easter Egg Hunt In Tomales Town Park at 1:30 pm

**April 12:** Easter Sunrise Service in Two Rock at 6:30 am, followed by breakfast, plus regular morning worship in Tomales at 9:30 am and in Two Rock at 11 am