

The Chaplaincy Report

LA County General Medical Center
Rev. Stephanie Kang MDiv BCC CT
May 31, 2026

Greetings to you all,

This past month was truly rich and full. I appreciate a Christian author who described her life in ministry as “rich and full” rather than “busy.” That phrase has stayed with me and feels especially fitting as I reflect on the events of the past month at LA General and in the surrounding communities supported through the Presbyterian chaplaincy ministry.

Announcement on the New Pastor of St. Camillus – May 1

The Los Angeles Archdiocese announced the new pastor: Fr. Alejandro Enriquez (goes by Fr. Al) who is going to begin his ministry July 1, 2026. Before receiving this call to St. Camillus, Fr. Al worked as a psychiatric nurse at a mental health care facility. He has extensive experience in pastoral counseling. Many staff and volunteers at St. Camillus know him in person since he took one unit of CPE at St. Camillus in 2019. More updates will be shared in the coming reports.

Visiting First Presbyterian Church of Newhall (San Fernando Presbytery) – May 3

This was my second visit to First Presbyterian Church of Newhall since January of this year when I led the Blessing of the Blankets. The second visit was mainly for preaching during Rev. Rich's time off, and it also included the Blessing of the Blankets. The congregation was outstanding in their spirit of love, joy, and generosity expressed during and after worship. During the worship, they celebrated the 90th birthday of a congregant who joined the church in the 1950s. Furthermore, I was deeply impressed by vibrant young families and youth participating in the life of the church. During the Prayer of the People, Rev. Rosie, led by the Spirit, spontaneously offered a special prayer for those 30-years-old or younger for their dreams, visions, and their faith journey in today's challenging contexts, nationally and globally.

Celebrating Chaplain Nick's Retirement – May 11

Chaplain Nick Jordan has been on the chaplain team for about 12 years with a great impact on many people's hearts at both St. Camillus and LA General Medical Center. Even though my time with Nick at LA General was quite short, I could deeply sense his passion and dedication to soul-care ministry to those on the margins. Many staff members joined in the retirement celebration and wished him health, wisdom, and peace in his future journey.

Interesting Topics Discussed in the Ethics Committee Monthly Meeting – May 13

Since everyone comes with different life experiences and ethical standards, each topic brought up during the Ethics Committee meeting often deepens reflection and challenges

stereotypes. One of the heated topics was about the rights of a premature newborn delivered during a pregnancy termination – whether the infant should receive CPR or not, regardless of the mother’s wishes.

The other topic was about the protection of incarcerated patients’ personal information, including criminal history. It is mandatory for medical professionals to treat people equally regardless of their backgrounds, so the standard practice according to the article is that medical staff should not review criminal history of their incarcerated patients. While it seems to be right to respect each human being’s privacy, there was an intriguing case that brought up a different view. It was a patient in a palliative care program who needed a safe place to be discharged. The patient would have been discharged to a family member’s place where the family member had critically assaulted the patient to the point of near death. When a medical team member caught the fact, the team revised the placement plan for the patient to go to a safe place.

6th Annual Staff Memorial & Sandra Shells Scholarships Award Ceremony - May 13



The annual ceremony of remembering the fallen hospital staff throughout the past year and honoring the recipients of the Sandra Shells Scholarships was held on the hospital patio. This year we remembered 31 late heroes of LA General Medical Center, including Fr. Chris Ponnet, who passed away in October 2025.



I was honored to read a poem as part of remembering the heroes. I chose “Roads Go Ever On” by J.R.R. Tolkien, which captures the spirit of adventure, the passage of time, and the enduring nature of life’s journey. Though the road belonging to the fallen heroes has turned beyond our sight, the impact of their contribution remains in our memories and continues as it is woven into the roads we walk together. At the end of the ceremony, twelve white doves were released into the sky. I was one of those who would hold and release the doves. It was an unforgettable experience to feel a tiny, feathered, and incredibly soft

creature in my hands suddenly and gracefully take flight into the sky.

Guest Speaking for Monte Vista Grove Homes (San Gabriel Presbytery), May 21

I spoke as a guest speaker at the weekly Convocation at Monte Vista Grove Homes on May 21, 2026. It was a rich and joyful experience connecting with Presbyterian ministry leaders and their families who reside in the community in various accommodations depending on their needs. Their intuitive and wise questions after my presentation led us to further exploration of where I am in ministry and life in this current season, and their encouraging and caring comments were uplifting to my soul.

Angel Interfaith Network (AIN) Presentation to LA General Social Workers, May 27



As one of the leadership board members, I collaborated with Maria Salazar, AIN administrative officer, for a presentation to the group of social workers at LA General. About 120 social workers gathered in one of the conference rooms highly appreciated the AIN ministry as they could see how AIN has supported those who are extremely underserved in society. One of the photos we shared had a couple of brand-new car seats being delivered

to a young family who had been in a motor vehicle accident. The family had two children in the car at the time of accident, and their car seats had also been destroyed by the accident. It was a touching gift AIN could deliver when the children were now ready to be taken home in need of their car seats immediately.

“I Need a New Body.” – A Mental Health Patient’s Cry

A tall and thin middle-aged man followed me to ask for a visit with a prayer while I was walking toward another patient’s room. His eyes were looking at my “Chaplain” badge, and he looked serious. I promised to see him after the current call I was heading to. When I finished the first visit, I found him waiting for me in the hallway.

He looked restless and shared his struggles with “the ugly and bad guy” who was copying him and even pretending as if he were the patient. I thought the patient was talking about someone in his life circle in the past, but then he said that he could see the guy following him wherever he went even now. Then he suddenly walked into the restroom, pointing out the man in the mirror and shouted with frowning facial expressions, “Here he is. Look at the ugly and bad guy!”

I gazed at the patient quietly. He started venting, “People think the guy is me... But that’s not true! People don’t believe me. It’s not me. I’m not the ugly and bad guy...” Considering the intensity of his mental illness admitted with the inpatient psychiatry unit, my pastoral care approach goes with validation in compassion rather than in a judgmental or fixing posture. I validated his struggle, which was “real” to him, and prayed that God would set him free from all harm.

At the end of the visit, I asked if he needed anything else from a chaplain or the chaplain’s office. He looked at me intently and said, “I need a new body.” I told him that his struggle of being stuck in the body he could not accept or embrace must have been overwhelming and that I unfortunately did not have the superpower to bring a new physical body – a healthier and younger-looking one - to offer him. Then I encouraged him to bring his deep struggle and heartfelt petition before God in prayer and to trust God to guide him forward. He accepted my recommendation and seemed to have a sense of peace as his concerns were heard and validated.

Since that day, the patient’s cry for a new body has been lingering in my mind, and I have been asking myself how my relationship has been with my inner person.

My prayer is that we may all continue to find ways to connect more deeply with our inner selves, seek reconciliation where it is needed, and cultivate a sacred space within where the Holy may dwell and guide us through life's challenges.

In Christ,
Stephanie