

“Where, O death, is your victory?  
Where, O death, is your sting?”

*1 Corinthians 15:55*

### **Ash Wednesday to the Day of Resurrection**

As we begin Holy Week, we anticipate the glorious hope that comes with Christ’s resurrection on Easter Sunday. The exultation is made all the greater as it follows a season of reflection on our mortality, and the treacherous days of the betrayal, trial, and crucifixion of Jesus. For some of us, the image of ashes was made much more tangible after the Eaton fire. But life can emerge from the ash.

More on that later. It has been my practice to give a summary of our recent Presbytery meeting, and we did indeed have a meeting—the first of the year—on Zoom last Tuesday evening. In the meeting, we noted many endings and beginnings in the life of this Presbytery:

- On March 8, the effective date of Eagle Rock Presbyterian Church’s closure, there was a very well-attended and joyous celebration of ERPC’s ministry over the decades, as well as a blessing of Interwoven’s ministry that is now housed there. As the transition progresses, we received the resignations of elders Carolyn Harris and Rosie Zachow from the Eagle Rock (now Interwoven) AC, and elected Bong Bringas (San Marino) and Nick Okita (Interwoven).
- Cyndie and Rob Crowell will be retiring in the coming months, but will continue as members of San Gabriel Presbytery. Though they will spend half their time in Canada, with the help of Zoom they will stay active with our ministries.
- Village Presbyterian Church will hold its final worship service on Easter Sunday. We will honor their ministry at the Presbytery meeting on June 14.
- Holy Mountain Presbyterian Church and its pastor, Ohgweon Paul Kwon, were transferred to San Fernando Presbytery, where they will serve the Korean community in and around La Crescenta.
- We welcomed Laura Krauss to membership in the Presbytery, Evlyn Roper to the CPM process, and Peter Tan-Gatue to the Presbytery staff.
- We elected Matt Colwell to Justice Peacemaking and Mission as they will be guiding the Presbytery’s on-going response to the Eaton fire, and we installed Helen Darsie as Moderator. Soon after the meeting I received word that we will have a Vice Moderator to install in June!
- The Personnel Committee is making very good progress on starting the search process for the new Executive Presbyter.
- Triennium is coming up, and there is still time to register your young people! See the article and registration packet elsewhere in the MMU.
- WinterFest is now SummerFest (for 2025, at least). There will be Zoom-based sessions on Thursday and Friday evening, June 12 and 13, and on June 14, the day will be full:
  - 9:00 am Presbytery Meeting at Praise Community Church in Covina
  - 10:00 am Plenary SummerFest with Rev. Jihyun Oh, Stated Clerk and Executive Director of the “Interim Unified Agency” (OGA and Presbyterian Mission Agency), and an All-Presbytery discernment on the on-going identity of San Gabriel Presbytery
  - Noon Lunch
  - 1:00 pm Day of Service at Praise and at the Baldwin Park Habitat for Humanity site.

As we are experiencing so much more poignantly these days, there are endings as well as beginnings; we say farewell to some but we also say welcome. In God’s kin-dom, Good Friday is not final, but leads to Resurrection Sunday.

Two recent events demonstrate the life-giving power of God.

Yesterday, Westminster Presbyterian Church voted unanimously to call Rev. Katherine Lee Baker as their installed pastor. Katherine will begin her ministry this summer, bringing great experience in leadership in congregations, community organizing, and consulting in church and secular settings, and she has unusual insight in culture and justice, rooted in her own life history. I anticipate that she will help Westminster be a key player in the efforts to rebuild Altadena in coming years. We will meet her at the June Presbytery meeting.

We have been making good progress on our partnership with San Gabriel Valley Habitat for Humanity. At a recent meeting, their CEO, Bryan Wong, shared with Baldwin Park AC Moderator Melinda Forbes the great news that they were granted the very first building permit after the Eaton fire! They have ambitious plans to accelerate the rebuilding of Altadena, working with residents to preserve generational wealth, and their family homesteads, in Altadena. I love that the permit was for a house in West Altadena, not far from First Presbyterian Altadena, and where many families of color (Black, Latino, and Japanese) have owned homes for generations. Certainly, out of the ashes of the Eaton fire, new homes and new life will be rebuilt! Go to [www.sgvtribune.com](http://www.sgvtribune.com) [Habitat](#) to read the article.

As we move into Holy Week, we cannot forget that Jesus suffered greatly to reverse the power of death in our world. But God's plan of salvation did not leave Jesus in the tomb--God raised Jesus to glory, giving the good news to all of us that death is not final; we all live in the life-giving love of Christ. No matter what brokenness in the world or your life is burdening you, we will live on in the light of Christ. Let us rejoice in the new life that Jesus brings!

Thanks be to God!

*Wendy*