

Although I have much to write to you, I would rather not use paper and ink; instead, I hope to come to you and talk with you face to face, so that our joy may be complete.

*2 John 12*

## **An Eventful Summer**

This summer looks to be one full of blessings and transitions.

We will gather on June 14<sup>th</sup> at Praise Community Church in Covina. Normally we try to have a very short meeting in June, followed by our annual Day of Service. But the day proves to be action-packed this year, for many reasons:

- Two of our churches have extended calls to new pastors, and both are coming from far away. So this will be our opportunity to welcome our potential new members, and give them a great opportunity to come to know our presbytery family.
- Village Presbyterian Church is set to close, and this will be a time for us to honor their work and witness as Christ's body in south Arcadia, and to show our care for the members.
- We will install our new Vice Moderator, Deidra Goulding, and commission four young people as they go to Triennium.
- We will be asked to give final approval on returning the La Casa de San Gabriel property to the Gabrieleno/Tongva tribe.
- We welcome Jihyun Oh, Stated Clerk and Executive Director of the Interim Unified Agency, the combined Office of the General Assembly and Presbyterian Mission Agency, who will share her perspective on the future of the church.
- We will gather in small groups and all together to discern our identity as a presbytery, which will help guide the work of the Executive Presbyter Nominating Committee.
- We will do hands-on service, at the site of our joint venture with Habitat for Humanity at the former campus of First Presbyterian Church in Baldwin Park, and compiling hygiene kits for homeless patients at LA County General Medical Center.

There are several milestones we will be reaching this summer, with the approval of the June presbytery. With the retirement of two of the three Chaplains for Retired Presbyterian Church Workers—Diane Frasher and Rob Crowell are retiring, Harlan Redmond is actually living at Monte Vista Grove because of being displaced by the Eaton Fire, but he still has some very important work to do!—this became an opportunity to review the structure of the program. We received feedback from Monte Vista Grove especially that they are ready to include the chaplain in much more of the Grove's community life, but they also asked for one full-time chaplain rather than two part-time chaplains. This fit with our staffing plans, that we identify a lead chaplain who can provide more regular support and coordination with the retirees and retirement communities, and with the House of Rest. This will provide better focus for the program, and free up the incoming Executive Presbyter from supervision and fundraising for the program, which I have done very poorly. The positions are open for applications now, and we hope to hire quickly, as Diane and Rob have already begun their retirements. (As for Harlan, I have asked him to consider the Westminster Gardens position. Though the Grove's residents love him and wish he would take the full-time position, I am thinking he has his hands full with the major renovations happening at Interwoven's campus at Eagle Rock, and with their leadership hoping to charter as a member congregation by their fourth anniversary next Easter!)

Another major change is coming with La Casa de San Gabriel. You may remember that the Presbytery formed an administrative commission (AC) to effect a transfer of the La Casa property, to be returned

to the Gabrieleno/Tongva San Gabriel Band of Mission Indians. The La Casa AC has been working with the board of La Casa Community Center and the Tongva tribe, and will be attending the final graduation of the preschool next week, followed by a lunch that we are hosting to show our appreciation to the staff. If the way be clear, it is likely that the transfer can be legally completed by July 1, and we are planning a public ceremony to commemorate the return on Saturday, August 2, starting at 10 am. Jihyun Oh will return (again!) for the event, along with Jermaine Ross-Allam, director of the Center for the Repair of Historic Harms. As the Interim Unified Agency has come together, they are making multiple changes in organization and staffing to align with the following priorities:

- Support of Mid Councils
- Leadership Development
- Unifying
- Reparative Justice*** (*emphasis added*)
- Life of the Communion
- Strategic Partnerships
- Operations.

So our efforts to offer the La Casa campus in the name of repair and reconciliation are more than timely!

I hope you get a sense of the momentum of shalom we will be experiencing starting this summer. *Shalom*, which we often translate as a greeting of peace, is related to a feeling of wholeness and healing, a completeness that comes from justice prevailing and relationships being restored. I am so grateful to be able to share in these steps towards shalom in our churches and in our community.

Although I have already written much to you, I would rather not use emails and blogs; instead, I look forward to this June when we will come together and talk face to face, so that our joy may be complete.

Shalom,

