



# SONSHINE

Monthly Newsletter of the Palm Springs Presbyterian Church  
July/August 2014

'In you, O lord, I lift up my soul; in you I trust, O my God.'  
(Psalm 25: 1-2)

These are the words that I carried in my heart throughout the 221st General Assembly of the PCUSA. They are the words that I spoke when I headed out for a long walk on unknown streets in Detroit, and those I sometimes practically chanted during tense, emotional discussions on 'big issues' of the church. Between this psalm and 'Blessed Assurance,' I felt covered for about anything! And, I was.



Being a person of 'on the sleeve' emotions, it came as a surprise to me how calm I often felt when others were ranting, raving, or looking like they were about to keel over from the stress of change or possible lack thereof. For one of the few times in my life, it didn't feel like there was a need to take everything on. Instead, there was a realization that, in fact, one didn't need to, if one chose to hand it over to God.

While I feel my faith is strong, I don't know if has ever been stronger since the desire to truly embrace -or at least try to- a peaceful nature has become a goal not only worthy of achieving, but one that is within my grasp, even at this later stage of life. It feels wonderful to say that! As a model, the myriad of overtures, motions, emotions and amendments were no match for the prayers, respectful discussion, singing and other proper diversions that drew all present back to the center of our hearts, to God, and away from the often petty nature of the body politic. Which, Presbyterian or not, tries to sway us from the simple truth of God in Christ and the presence of the Spirit among us. So, two things: nothing that happened at the General Assembly changes the constant nature of our Creator and our personal relationship to God and, we are a better people if we lift up our souls to The Lord and trust, trust, trust.

While in Detroit I was often encouraged by the sense that the souls I know at Palm Springs Pres were well represented by the diversity of voices in daily meetings. That sense lifted the inner conversation to a place where every opinion encountered would be countered not by fear or frustration, but by love. This is the core of our faith, and what God wants for us. It is why Jesus died for us, and the reason for the Spirit in our lives. It is easy to forget the simplicity of who we can be as followers of Christ in a world that demands the very opinion, polarization and alienation that Jesus came to overcome through love and acceptance.

The heat of summer can make tempers short; it can be just plain uncomfortable, can't it? The news is never good, and families and friends don't always behave like we want them to. Everything on television is a repeat. When there is a need to shout at the windshield because another driver just took your parking spot, Jesus doesn't come into one's mind at all.....does he? Lift up our hearts to The Lord, trust in God. These times, these hot, uncomfortable, challenging, different- than- we- think- it- should-be- times are exactly when we need to hand over the keys to a driver who isn't bound by earthly paradigms but longs to bridge the lonely gap that chains the human heart to human concerns. Who longs to release us into that place of 'unbearable lightness of being,' and out of trying to fix everything to suit ourselves.

Whether you spend time this summer at the beach, in the woods, by a pool, or simply relaxing in air conditioned splendor, speak the words of the Psalmist out loud. At the beginning and end of the day, a conversation, a prayer: 'In you, O Lord, I life up my soul; in you, O Lord, I trust.....'

Happy Summer!, Peace, Christine

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**A MINISTRY OF GENEROSITY**

The cost of keeping the doors of our church open requires a financial commitment from all of us as well as a participatory commitment of worship, prayer, and helping in many ways. Every gift makes a difference.

The summer months are extremely difficult for our small congregation. As of 7/16/2014 we have \$10,250 in outstanding expenses for July. Our cash reserves are \$230 in the general account and \$3200 in the reserve

account which leaves a deficit of \$6820 in July. We estimate that we will receive \$2000 a week for the last 2 weeks of July which still leaves a difference of \$2800. If we can achieve a goal of \$10,000 that will give us a cushion to get through the summer and to build on. Please take a moment to review our financial report. We need help to keep a healthy ministry going and your help would be deeply meaningful. Our church is richly blessed and we give thanks for our ministry with our brothers and sisters in Christ.

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**FINANCIAL REPORT**

2014

Month	Revenue	Expenses	Balance	YTD
June	\$14178	16625	(2447)	(3161)
May	15891	17888	(1997)	(714)
April	17117	16698	419	1283
Mar	21940	17939	4001	864
Feb	16788	16968	(180)	(3137)
Jan	14824	17781	(2957)	(2957)



Congratulations to Suzanne Swartz. She has been called to serve Gardena Presbyterian Church as its part-time Pastor effective August 1, 2014. She will be ordained on Saturday, September 6, 2014 at 2:00 PM at First Presbyterian Church of Santa Monica. Yea Suzanne!

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Recycling income was \$220 for the last quarter. Thanks for all your recyclable cans and bottles.

You are helping the environment as well as the church finances.



Attention: All Seasonal Friends, Visitors or if you just miss a Sunday



You can listen to the Sunday worship services on PSPC's website, [pspresby.org](http://pspresby.org). Alex has the current Sunday Service

available by Tuesday of the following week. Even if you are away you can still enjoy Rev Christine's sermons, hear our great choir and keep up with what's going on here.

## COMMISSIONER REPORT FROM THE 221ST GENERAL ASSEMBLY

As most Presbyterians are aware, on June 14 - 21, 2014, the General Assembly of the PC(USA) was held in Detroit, Michigan. As a 'first-timer' I was both eager and tentative, so I made sure I did plenty of homework and all of the reading before I left for Detroit. The training provided by our Synod was essential in letting me know what to expect.

I arrived in the Detroit area a couple days ahead of the Assembly, which proved helpful in orienting myself and being 'time zone' ready. My hotel was located in the downtown area of the city, a monorail ride away from the COBO center. This provided the chance to experience Detroit, both in walking opportunities and the circular 'People Mover' route that often carried us to and from the venue.

My fellow Riverside Commissioner Ruling Elder Melodee Kirstner, YAAD John Black and I found ourselves seated in the FRONT ROW of the Plenary. Just walking towards the front of the hall and making that discovery was pretty awesome! The opening worship was moving and inspiring, and brought home both the solemnity and intensity we would be facing in the coming week. The legos, candy and extemporaneous singing throughout the week reminded us that this was also a time of joy and renewal. My 'quote of the week' came from a Ruling Elder Commissioner who spoke the first day. He related that, when he told a friend he would be attending the General Assembly, his friend had said, 'Sounds like you're about to get aboard the Titanic!' To which he responded, 'Actually, I feel like I'm getting on the Mayflower!' I liked that, and it set an emotional tone for all that was to transpire. The business of the Denomination began with the election of our new Moderator, Heath Rada, and Vice-Moderator, Larissa Kwong Abazia. As the week unfolded, their faith, leadership abilities, and uplifting personalities confirmed a decision well made.

I had been randomly assigned to the Committee on Middle East Issues, and it quickly became apparent that this was to be the hot button issue of the 221st GA. The entire Committee experience was incredibly interesting, filled with deep consideration, intense listening, times of speaking, cooperation and mutual respect. Oh, and becoming very knowledgeable of Roberts Rules of Order. Emotions were high, opinions rampant and presentations by all concerned parties fair and impassioned. And yes, there were some demonstrations, but none that were aggressive or distracting. For those who want to know, I can speak for my committee in saying we were well informed, well versed and well prepared as we negotiated our many Overtures. The issues at hand were passionate and well researched, including a study called for by the 220th GA. In the end, we recommended Divestment from Caterpillar, Hewlitt Packard and Motorola Solutions until such time as their products ceased being used in conflict with investment policy guidelines of the PCUSA. This motion, accompanied by others confirming our support of Israel, the two-state solution, non-support of the BDS movement and in support of human rights for all people in Israel/Palestine, were presented, debated and affirmed or not affirmed during the Plenary. A most difficult part of the process is the misrepresentation of our deeply felt work by the press, and the critical (and sometimes a little threatening) emails received following GA.

Of course, many other important issues were addressed during the week, including Overtures on marriage, the environment, and social justice among others. Our Denomination shows incredible resiliency and relevance in engaging sometimes difficult choices without fear, and it was clear to me that the Spirit was present in all that occurred, from expression of Scripture, feelings of the heart, concerns, the spoken word and song. Each of us present had feelings of victory and loss, and no one was made to feel 'less than' or irrelevant. The many voices that are God's people were heard and attended to, and at the center of it all, was Prayer. Always.

While it was true what I had heard, that we would work from seven a.m. until midnight, it is also amazing how one can find adventure in a lunch hour or a walk to and from the Assembly at those times when no informational/special interest meal was scheduled. So, yes, I discovered parts of Detroit starting with an inspirational Sunday Service at St. John's, a run through of Motown, the biggest used book store ever, streets that were eerily empty of cars and people for miles, the reality of

homelessness and decay and the hopefulness of renewal combined with some of the most generous, friendly and open people I have ever met in any great American City. I loved Detroit! If I had one suggestion, it would be that time be set aside during the General Assembly allowing Commissioners to engage the city in which the Assembly meets. To be in the midst of such a profound American Experience and not be able to encounter the culture and surroundings was spiritually disappointing.

It was also a joy to share my space with Rev. Anita Hendrix, and be present as she transitioned to her new position in St. Louis. She was wise and gracious, and as ever, fun. What a privilege! We have been blessed to have her as our Executive, and I will miss her even as I wish her well.

Since arriving back to Palm Springs, our church has held a discussion group on the major issues from the General Assembly. Those present represented a perfect balance of opinion as we followed the form of gracious listening. I confess to being proud of this congregation, their willingness to express their heart, withhold from judgment, and trust in our common faith in Jesus Christ as we go forward. I pray for all of you that this will be your experience together as well.

I thank my fellow travelers, Melodee and John, for their friendship, sense of humor, wisdom and patience. I thank you, members of Riverside Presbytery, for electing me as your Commissioner and allowing me this inspiring, renewing, revelatory experience. Wow. How blessed we are to be a part of a connected Denomination, an expression of God's presence in a world hungry for the Good News that is reflected in Christ's unconditional sacrifice and love.

God's Peace, Christine.



clockwise from top left - Rev. Christine at GA, Fort St Presbyterian Church, Detroit, Lynn & Jim Hamilton (Christine's hosts and tour guide in Ann Arbor) at the Ford Museum, plenary hall

# ONGOING PROJECTS

We recycle! Bring your empty aluminum cans and glass and plastic bottles to the church office. Thank you for helping our budget and the environment.

PSPC Aprons for sale "Have You Hugged a Presbyterian Today" - \$16.75 – See Morella, Jim or Jackie

PSPC cookbook, Love Feast, is for sale for \$5. See Jim or Jackie.

Save used ink cartridges for Palm Springs High School Band fundraiser. Collection jar is on Jackie's desk.

Save Box Tops for Education for Sabella's school. You can leave them in the office.

Bring a package, can or box of food for The Well in the Desert. Leave it in the bin by the front door. They can also use warm clothing.

Save used stamps and Campbell's soup Labels for The Tecate Mission. Leave a 1/4 inch border around the stamp when you cut them out. Leave them with Jackie.

Bring in your gently used women's clothing for Hacienda Valdez. You can leave it in the office with a note on it.

Sunday Morning Kerygma class with Ernie Moore – Fellowship Hall 8:30 AM. They will be on hiatus June through August.

Men's Bible Study with Allen Perrier – Fellowship Hall Wed 7:00 AM Breakfast after Bible Study.

Women's Bible Study meets on Tuesday at 9:30 AM in the Fellowship Hall. They will be on hiatus in July & August.

Yoga Classes Tuesday, 11: AM They will be on hiatus in July & August. The Thursday at 5:30 PM class (except on 5:59 Gathering Thursdays) will continue through the summer in the Social Hall.

Ukulele Practice will resume Thursday, August 21 at 1:00 PM.



Online giving is now up and running. Just get on our website, and click on the button in the upper right hand corner. The website will guide you through the steps to take advantage of online giving. It can be used to make regular tithes to the general fund or the piano fund. You can use this option weekly, every two weeks, monthly, quarterly or a one time basis.



## JULY BIRTHDAYS

Emilie Warren	15
Paula Newell	20
Jackie Morgan	21
Gene Hempy	22
Joyce Johnson	22
Sabella Trujillo	23
Suzanne Swartz	23
Lucile Kraehling	24
Jim Hamilton	27

## AUGUST BIRTHDAYS

Karol Egan	2
Brenda Erickson	4
Ruth Hunter	8
Marjorie Carlson	9
Marilyn Walker	18
Evelyn Wulf	27

This prayer is from

saying Grace  
edited by Sarah McElwain

Dance as though no one is  
watching you,

Love as though you have never  
been hurt before,

Sing as though no one can hear  
you,

Live as though heaven is on  
earth.

Anonymous





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#### OUR PURPOSE

The purpose of Palm Springs Presbyterian Church is to proclaim the Good News of God by reaching out to others and inviting them into a new relationship with Jesus Christ. We commit ourselves to be a center for spiritual growth and friendship, where the teachings of Jesus are faithfully received and God's grace is joyfully celebrated.



Pastor:

Rev. Christine Dickerson

Music Director:

Alex Danson

Office Administrator:

Jim DeHart

Church Secretary

Jackie Morgan

Sonshine Editors:

Jeff & Jackie Morgan

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