



Good News for the Pews

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Summer-time musings.

In mid-July I was at Zephyr Point Conference Center as part of the teaching faculty with the Art of Transitional Ministry program. This was the first time that I was part of the teaching team and there was an awful lot to prepare. It was also about ten years ago when I first came up to Zephyr and was a participant in the very same program. At that time it was referred to as the Interim Training program, but the content was essentially the same. Transitional Ministries include both “interims” but also “designated” pastorates. So although we are in process to change my role with PCC, the work will still be transitional ministry.

While I certainly spent a lot of time on the various subjects that encompass the subjects I had come to teach, I was also processing some thoughts and reflections from my internal world. I had arrived on Friday afternoon and spent time Friday evening, all day Saturday and Sunday morning going over the curriculum and making last minute adjustments with the other faculty members. Sunday afternoon the participants began to arrive and that evening about 7 pm we had an opening worship service overlooking the lake. To be honest campsites don't usually do that much for me. When I was little we lived in a small cabin in the Mayacamas Mountains between Santa Rosa and Calistoga, so a campsite and retreat center still seem pretty developed and artificial to me. But only a robot could be on the shore of Lake Tahoe and not be moved by the beauty of Creation. It was during the hymn *Great Is Thy Faithfulness* that I had a profound moment of connection with the Triune God and was really struck with how much has happened to me between the ten years since I took that training and now when I was there to help teach the next generation.

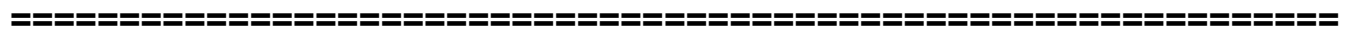
I won't bore you with the details of what I thought about but I will give some highlights. As you all know from my sermons, my call to follow God has been an adventure from the first moments up until now. I never prioritized my comfort, my security, or even my desire for connection. The Scriptural description of my call is expressed in Isaiah 6:1-8. Having never felt that I was worthy of service to God's church, never-the-less, the presence of God in my life has been so compelling that I have undertaken to fulfill God's call, knowing both that I am totally inadequate (a man of unclean lips) and also that with God who strengthens me, all things are possible (here am I; send me!).

It seems to me that anyone who has walked the path of Christian discipleship must live in that eternal tension of feeling unprepared for the work we are called to and yet also feeling the exuberance of God filling our sails with energy, excitement and determination. Nowhere is there a promise that we will know what to do, that we will have the perfect plan, or that we have a prophecy of the future. All that is assured is that our world and the people in it are in need, and we are called to give what we have. Ministry is like the miracle of the loaves and fishes: you never

have enough in the beginning: never enough time, never enough resources, never enough solutions, and yet in the moment, when we are willing, when we simply give what we have with trust in God, there will be more than enough with some left over. So as we take our rests and our vacations this summer, I hope that each and everyone gets recharged. I hope that everyone spends some time in prayer and in contemplation, asking God for vision, for energy, and resilience. Probably none of us think we are ready, and yet all of us are called. Believe it or not, there is plenty to do and some of it is perfectly tailored to your gifts and skills. Do not think for a moment that you have nothing to contribute. Manifold within you are the gifts of God. You are able to help multitudes!

As the summer draws to a close and we all reconnect, I am looking forward to ministering with each of you, and ministering collectively for the good of our community. So recharge and rest up! Then let's all reconvene here at church to roll up our sleeves to serve. Whether you are praying and supporting remotely, or serving and helping in person, we are a collective of God's servants for a world in need!

With thanks and blessings,
Pastor Don



For Your Information

by Dave Soohoo

The Presbyterian Chinese Mission held its first meeting on November 6, 1853 with four members. In 1925, the mission was put under the auspices of the Presbyterian Board of National Missions and renamed the Chinese Presbyterian Church. It was renamed again in 1958 as the Presbyterian Church in Chinatown to better reflect its context in the Chinatown community. We are the oldest [Chinese American](#) or [Asian American](#) church in North America and have been incorporated with the state of California since 1972.

Over the generations, our church building has housed worship services, three worshipping communities, weddings, memorial services, anniversaries, Session/committee & community meetings and classes, housing project meetings (Mei Lun Yuen), daycare, food pantries and a myriad of ministries.

Did you know that the title of the church property on 925 Stockton Street, San Francisco belongs to the Presbytery of San Francisco? Yes, the Presbyterian Church in Chinatown is its tenant and caretaker. Over the decades, we have been stewards and caretaker to the church building, its structures and grounds.

In taking care of our church building, here are some highlights from this year (January-May):

- Installation of a new tankless water heater
- Repair/replacement of valve body assembly in second floor women's bathroom

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- Repair of cabinet door also in second floor women's bathroom
- Realigned and reset door panic bar and lock system on alley door
- Realigned, repaired hinges and reset door panic bar and lock system on basement rear exit door.
- Repaired hinges and deadbolt on basement to sidewalk door (north easement)
- Installed new door stop/holder for front doors
- Replaced magnet for office door holder
- Installed new camera in the north easement
- Repaired motion sensor lighting in the north easement
- Installed new camera in the entry area (outside) by the north gate
- Installed gate lock hardware and re-keyed into building key system on the new north gate
- Purchased and installed new carpet/runners for both hall ways on first floor
- Purchased carts and shelving for food pantry
- Replaced several light bulbs/LED's in various rooms including bypassing failed ballasts
- Checked water leak reported by the SF Water Department
- Accompanying (opening & closing) a host of vendors responsible for regular maintenance.

All these highlights and more were performed by David Chan, our volunteer extraordinaire, saving us much in labor and overhead costs. These savings are in addition to his A/V work to bring our worship services online. We continue to grateful for his expertise and generous support.