



Good News for the Pews

February 2021

A Quarterly for the English-Speaking Worshipping Community

Issue No. 26

From Pastor Don

I spend as much time in nature as I can, though I would not say that I am particularly “outdoorsy.” I like hiking trails, I really like mountain biking, and I enjoy kayaking on occasion. The first time I ever tried kayaking was on Napeague Bay between Amagansett and Montauk on Long Island, just a couple of years ago. I did a fair amount of thinking ahead: sunscreen, water bottle, and a waterproof bag for my cell phone. Then I just got in and started rowing. I made a classic mistake. I kept going until I was tired. Then I turned my kayak around and I realized, “uh oh” because I had to row the same distance back, and as I mentioned, I was already tired. Oh well, live and learn. Actually it was pretty miserable, but clearly I made it.

My next big learning moment in a kayak happened this last October when I was on retreat at Lake Shasta. This time I was very aware of making sure that I had plenty of energy to row out **and** row back, but I was also sharing the water with motorized boats. I was paddling along when a speedboat cruised by. I watched as the wake from the boat’s motor sent ripples out. My kayak was parallel to the boat, so the waves which were created in its wake hit my kayak broadsides. I almost capsized. The next time a powered boat cruised by I made sure to turn my kayak perpendicular to the waves of their wake.

Turning the bow of the kayak into the wave allowed the keel of my vessel to cut through the waves, making the kayak more stable and significantly decreasing the likelihood of me capsizing and going under water.

I have had reason to reflect on both of these kayaking lessons recently in relation to the church. Generally interim ministry is focused on sustaining programs and initiatives in churches, and not starting new things. Often there is troubleshooting work to do as well, especially when the interim follows a pastoral relationship that ended abruptly, for whatever reasons. But the COVID-19 pandemic has had major impacts on our worshipping community and required some major adaptations that required a lot of creativity and problem solving, a lot things not covered in ‘interim training.’ In some congregations in our presbytery and around the country the shift to online-only services was a major hardship. In addition to the social stresses of canceling in-person worship, and the profound effects that it has on the mental and emotional well-being of church members, the economic disruption significantly impacted many church budgets.

We could have been hit broadside with these disruptive waves, but we were able to be very nimble and we metaphorically turned the bow of our big kayak, (the church), into the
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wave. We've been buffeted but we have remained afloat. Now we have to begin to row to our next destination, even though we've been rowing pretty hard for the last year and half. When I turn my attention to make an assessment of the energy level of our community, it is obvious that we are collectively suffering from fatigue, from COVID-19, from the chaos generated by the Trump White House, and from the anti-Asian surge—particularly anti-Chinese—racism. But we find that we still have work to do. As Joe Biden and Kamala Harris, and their administration, begin their stewardship of our nation as its new President and Vice President, we can breathe a little easier knowing that on a national level there will be a turn back toward responsible governance, but we know that it will be *many months* before the COVID-19 crises is resolved. We must still guide our community through the challenges ahead, and it will take the same level of energy, talent, resources, and perhaps most importantly, willpower for us to keep moving on. We are still going to need “all hands on deck.”

Clearly I am now mixing my nautical metaphors a bit, but bear with me. We have a unique opportunity before us, our shift to online has increased our outreach in significant ways. While most of us are very much looking forward to our eventual ***safe return*** to in-person services, we must carefully consider how we can sustain a hybrid service for the future. Since moving online our best estimates on online viewing is at least equal to, but probably greater than in-person worship attendance. We know we have worshippers joining us from other states and from overseas. Each week we can estimate that we have between 65 and 75 devices logged into our chat during worship. If each device represented only one person

we be roughly keeping pace with in-person attendance. But we know that some of these devices are being viewed by couples or families, which means that our average attendance has actually gone up! The question for all of us now is how do we sustain this? Not only that, but how do we continue to expand? And how do allow remote worshippers to participate more fully in our mission? If our worship streaming service and our Gospel messages are reaching more people, surely we will want to keep that going even when we get back to the sanctuary. Church is not just worship, but it certainly starts there.

Our standing committees (Worship and Nurture, Mission and Evangelism, and Resources in particular) are going to be working on some new projects and goals. We'll be making adaptive changes, even while the Mission Study Team continues its work to help us plot our future course. There is plenty of opportunity for more folks to get involved. We need prayer! We need energy! We need creativity! We are certainly off the chart, but together, working in the spirit of unity, dedicated to the *missio Dei*, (the establishment of Community of God on earth), we'll need to keep rowing, though we are tired, and we'll need to turn into a few more waves. But I have never felt more confident in a church community's adaptability and dedication than I do here at PCC. Together, with faith and reliance in the Triune God, the Creator (who makes order in the midst of chaos), the Son (who heals with love and grace), and the Spirit (who inspires and energizes), we will become stronger and more vibrant as we continue on this journey of discovery and exploration.

Yours with blessings, and anticipation,
Pastor Don

Presbyterian Church in Chinatown

Volunteer Acknowledgements 2020

We are ever so grateful for the services and contributions that our volunteers add to our church's ministry and mission. These individuals are recognized and honored for generously giving their time and service to their faith and their community.

Thank you!

David Soohoo, Chair of the Resource Committee

Other Volunteers

Annie & Peter Wong
Irene Ng - Newsletter editor
Jeanette Huie - Ragsheet editor
David Miller - Webmaster and Email
Winchell Quock - English Treasurer
Mary Wong Leong - Clerk of Session
Mary & Dayton Leong - Tea Time Facilitators
David Soohoo - PCC Treasurer
Rev. Don Hammond
Rev. Norman Fong

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Greg Chan
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Norma Chan

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Building Work crew

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Wayne Eng
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Terry Leong
Dave Chan

Flower/decorations

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Richard Jann
Susie Wong

Audio Visual

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Mildred Hall
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Heidi Wong
Kimball Wong
Vivien Wong
Mary Wong Leong
Jerrick Woo
Jo-Jo Woo
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Rev. Ronnie Kaan
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Marie Chin
Annie Wong
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Mark Chung
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Carrie Phillips
Darren Wong
YMCA Chinatown Staff
Friends & Family of PCC FP
Project by Project
Donaldina Cameron House

Deacons

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Pam Jang
Jackie Jew
Eddie Kam
Irene Ng
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Deacons+

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Marie Chin
Wayne Eng
Terry Chan
Norma Fong Chan
Richard Jann
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Mark Fong
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Sharlene Hall
Elaine Chan-Scherer
Jeannie Choy Tate
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Gilbert Lee
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Terry Leong
Winchell Quock

A Letter from Rev. Ronnie Kaan

Dear brothers and sisters,

Greetings in Christ in behalf of the Cantonese Commission in this severe COVID-19 pandemic time. Thank God for keeping everyone peace and safe!

2021 has begun as the beginning of the post-epidemic era. It has left many unknowns and made people feel uncertain. However, by looking up at our Lord we still should say to each other “Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go” (Joshua 1:9)

Looking back at this faithful God who has been my strength to serve in the Presbyterian Church for the past nine years, I have encountered many challenges in ministry:

- * Organized the Youth Fellowship 2011-2013.
- * Organized “Mei Lin Yuan” Fellowship 2012-2018.
- * Held Senior Fellowship 45th Anniversary Thanksgiving Worship 2013.
- * Held Cantonese Elders Leadership Seminar 2013-2015.
- * Organized Gospel leaflet distribution in Chinatown 2013-2015.
- * Organized elementary school student tutoring 2013-2017.
- * Organized adult English conversation class 2014-2019.
- * Reorganized Young Couples Fellowship 2015-2017.
- * Held three-day and two-night Cantonese congregational retreats 2015-2019.
- * Co-organized the gospel outreaching program of “Jesus Loves Chinatown”. 2015-2019.
- * Organized a *Healthy Living - Eating Well* training seminar 2016-2018.
- * Organized a personal evangelism training course 2016-2018.
- * Co-operated a youth karate class 2016-2019.
- * Held candlelight service in remembering of Jesus establishment Of Holy Communion Night 2016-2020.
- * Held the 500th Anniversary of *Martin Luther Reformation* music worship 2017.
- * Prayer Day 2017-2020 for high school and college students.
- * Organized by the choir: *Faith, Hope and Love* music evangelism 2018.
- * Participated in the audio-visual mission’s music testimony talks in 2018.
- * PCC 165th anniversary
- * Cantonese Thanksgiving Worship 2018.
- * Organized a Bible recital contest 2018.
- * Organized a singing/vocal training class for beginners 2018.
- * Co-organized the Earthquake Safety First Aid Certificate Class 2019.
- * Distributed masks to Food Pantry and low-income seniors 2020.
- * Organized the Mid-Autumn Festival Photo Contest 2020
- * Ordained five new Elders for Cantonese WC: Elder Rachani Lu, Elder Kay Wong,

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A Letter from Rev. Ronnie Kaan *(continued from page 6)*

Elder Xiu-Zhen Luo, Elder Xin-Hong Huang and Elder Raina Mak, as a serving team for the Cantonese ministry. There are also 11 baptized and 14 transferred to the Cantonese congregation. These are truly great blessings from God.

In early 2020, when normal lives of people suddenly got interrupted by the COVID-19 resulting in home quarantine, our Cantonese Worshipping Community still held its Sunday worship online through WhatsApp and YouTube. Cantonese members also participated in the three weekly Bible study classes for their spiritual growth.

The epidemic had an impact on year 2020 indeed, but as the children of God, there are still great hopes in the future. On December 14th, the Cantonese Caring group visited Cantonese WC families for the third time. Although we have limitations outside our homes because of social distancing, people feel joyful, inspired and encouraged when greeting each other. On December 22nd, the third Sunday of the month, the Cantonese Worshipping Community held a special worship for Christmas celebration online. On Christmas Eve, we invited members and friends to watch the movie *Jesus* so they were able to study the life and teaching of Jesus Christ again, as well as affirming him as the Messiah.

Please continue to pray and support the ministry of our Church and the Cantonese Worshipping Community. Let God guard us in year 2021, so we will all be able to serve our church together!

Peace, *Rev. Ronnie Sze-Yan Kaan*



Five ordained Cantonese Elders - Rachani Lu, Kay Wong, Xin-Hong Huang, Xiu-Zhen Luo, Raina Mak.



Mission & Evangelism 2020 Report

In the month of December, the committee made decisions on year-end donations to non-profit organizations or church programs. For 2020, the following was approved:

\$500 Living Waters World Mission (set aside for a future mission trip)
\$500 Interfaith Movement 4 Human Integrity
\$500 PCC Cantonese Congregation
\$500 PCC Food Pantry
\$300 SF SafeHouse
\$300 Asian Women's Shelter
\$300 Pipit Fund
\$100 SF Interfaith Council

Following the brutal death of George Floyd and peaceful demonstrations turning violent, the Commission approved an Anti-Racism statement and M&E approved two \$500 donations to organizations working on racial justice issues: Coleman Advocates for Children & Youth and the Poor People's Campaign.

We reported extensively on the origami cranes many of you folded and when the cranes were delivered, M&E included a \$500 donation to Tsuru for Solidarity. The cranes were initially stored away for use in a future pilgrimage to Washington DC but Tsuru for Solidarity needed our cranes for an event in October. Below is the thank you letter from Nancy Ukai -

"Your church cranes flew beautifully with love, grace and solidarity in a ritual art performance at the San Francisco International Arts Festival. They were part of two performances of NaOmi Shintani's "Dream Refuge for Children Imprisoned Ritual" at upper Fort Mason.

The artist had requested that Tsuru for Solidarity take part and she needed cranes to represent the 545 children who the government intentionally separated from their parents and is unable to reunite them at present. Four members of Tsuru for Solidarity carried 545 paper cranes folded by your Presbyterian Church in Chinatown. They were beautiful suspended from an eight-foot-long bamboo pole!

The socially-distanced ceremony was based on NaOmi's art piece titled "Innocent Dreamers" in which she painted figures of sleeping children on mattresses to represent children in U.S. history who have suffered atrocities, including indigenous children in boarding schools, Japanese American children in the camps and immigrant children who have been put in cages at our southern border. She arranged the cots in a beautiful space above Fort Mason and about 16 attendees followed a short procession to the circle where we heard taped interviews with those who had been incarcerated, from the present situation and during WWII.

Please thank your church members for taking such care in folding, stringing and packing the cranes so beautifully. Their intention of support and compassion could be felt in each paper crane and together they made a profound statement of solidarity. It was an honor to carry them and as you can see from the photos, they were an important visual and symbolic statement."

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Your contributions for Chinatown families who live in SROs totaled nearly \$4,000 and 200 families received a \$20 Target gift card at the start of the school year. For Christmas, 55 gifts were donated by PCC members and 45 gifts from Sabrina Gee Shin's outreach to family and friends. Chinatown CDC staff organized the distributions and many families in need benefitted from your care and support.

Also in 2020, English Worshiping Community (EWC) members contributed to special offerings of the PCUSA: One Great Hour of Sharing (\$457), Peace & Global Witness (\$520) and the Christmas Joy Offering (\$1,650).

Last, but not least, Cameron House annually receives \$7,500 from the EWC budget to support their programs and services.

We pray that through these financial resources from PCC, justice and peace will touch the lives of men, women and children in our community and beyond.

Mission & Evangelism Committee: Jeanine Lim Chan, Ed Chin, Carole Chinn-Morales, Doreen Der-McLeod, Shar Hall, Clinton Huey, Jeanette Huie, Cindy Joe

Every year, every season, no matter the location, people will have to summon help. Hopefully, there will be first responders who can come to the scene and help without delay, like the S.F. Fire Department did in the spring of 2018 when the sprinklers at church went off after a fire alarm and flooded the church.

PCC and Cameron House respond to folks in need, too, like right now during the COVID-19 crisis with the food bank. PCC folks also went to New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina and have been to Guatemala to help set up potable water resources. So we're all familiar with ways to help our neighbors in need. At about the time Jeannette Wei asked me to come help for a Spanish-speaking girl at the Bilingual After-School Project at Cameron House and I started there, I also became a volunteer with Wesley United Methodist Church in San Jose and their **United Methodist Volunteers in Mission** (UMVIM) trips to Mexico. All told, I've been to Mexico about 6 times and once to Fiji with the church. In addition, about ten years ago I took a class to be a certified Early Response Team member for, the **United Methodist Committee on Relief** (UMCOR), in the California-Nevada District. In 2015 I went on an UMCOR trip to help assemble birthing kits for distribution in Africa and the Middle East at the warehouse depot the United Methodist Church has in Salt Lake City.



With mallet and chisel making space for a wiring conduit in Puebla

When I left northern California to be closer to family and the border (so I could use my Spanish more), I knew I didn't want to stop volunteering like I have with PCC, Cameron House or the folks in San Jose. I got in touch with the California-Pacific District office of the United Methodist Church in Pasadena about re-certifying for my Early Response Team qualification, took the refresher class and have been active in the Disaster Relief Task Force for this district, which stretches all the way from the Arizona border to Saipan and Guam. We have monthly meetings (now on Zoom) to report on our activities responding to disasters across the region, from the numerous fires, earthquakes and to the typhoon that hit Saipan and Guam.

The level of talent and dedication in the task force is amazing. For the work in Saipan and Guam, we were able to send people with expertise in carpentry, plumbing and electrical work. With the fires, we have people working on helping survivors to negotiate rebuilding with the Federal Office of Emergency Management (FEMA).

I've been involved mostly with helping out at the border ministry with the Calexico United Methodist Church since I used to live and work in the Imperial Valley and know it well.

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Churches in Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino and Los Angeles counties have pitched in to make hygiene kits and provide us with diapers, personal care items, and now we have a monthly stipend set up so the Callexico church can purchase supplies in Mexicali for distribution to the asylum seekers waiting for their interviews and stuck in Mexico.

A year ago at Thanksgiving I made a trip both to El Paso to see how the Catholic church is assisting and housing asylum seekers and also to Tucson to learn how the First United Methodist Church in Tucson is helping. We had hoped to have a center set up in El Centro but so far only the Callexico church is active in this ministry.

Loading up supplies for the asylum seekers in my Honda with help from Susan Harriss and Gary Stenberg, both of University UMC, Irvine >



The July 4th and 5th, 2019, earthquake sequence in Ridgecrest and Trona did a lot of damage, and our team responded to a community center in Trona that was impacted in the quake. Some of our team members worked inside on the ceiling, some worked on fixing doors so they could close properly, and another team member and I dug a trench around the foundation since the building had shifted in the earthquake. This would permit foundation work to begin. We also broke up a cinder block wall that had fallen in the quake series. One of our great sources of strength are the folks from Shepherd of the Hills UMC in Monterey Park, a church with a Chinese-language ministry. One of their members, a woman from Taiwan, really helped me break up what was left of that fallen wall with a sledge hammer.



In February we had a work day assembling new equipment for the disaster trailers we use on site, and another member from Monterey Park and I assembled wheelbarrows. Our latest work project was at the Valley Fire site here in eastern San Diego County where about 30 properties burned in September. A small, masked and distanced group of us from Laguna Beach, Hemet, La Mesa and San Diego helped clean up what was left of a ranch house and filled a semi-trailer full of debris.

< *Fire site in Jamul from the ranch clean up.*

I have found the work both here and outside our borders to be very rewarding and worth the effort. Like those of us who've volunteered at PCC and Cameron House know, volunteering affords us the opportunity to meet a great group of folks, establish lasting friendships and be able to serve society, even if we often physically ache after helping out!

Mildred Hall, Elder

When you tell people you were born and raised in San Francisco, many will be surprised, especially those from other cities/countries. But in our church community, I believe there are many of us who are native San Franciscans.

As a true San Franciscan, I was raised in SF Chinatown with my brother and sister. My father owned a drugstore on the corner of Stockton and Clay Streets. It was a place where he welcomed customers as well as relatives and friends of the community. Once a week before opening hours, the store was the meeting place for a weekly men's Bible study open to community church members and clergy. My mother, besides taking care of the home and us, decided later in life to work as a teachers' aide at Commodore Stockton school, and she took classes to learn how to drive and to type(!).

Growing up, we were active members who participated in church life through Sunday School, church choir and later as officers of the church following our parents' footsteps of being faithful to God in service. My parents were bi-lingual and attended the Cantonese worship service.

I was grateful to grow up in a 'musical' family: My father played the violin, my mother and siblings the piano. My service to our church focussed on music, as I was asked to play piano and organ for choir as well as worship services. I learned how to play the organ when we had a minister of music. Not having had any formal lessons, it was 'learn by doing.' But there was opportunity to increase my knowledge of the instrument by attending some workshops offered at S.F. Theological Seminary. Their music director was the leader who shared his great knowledge of church music as well as hints on playing the organ. I still enjoy the organ to this day; although, as you can imagine, I've been out of practice for almost a year because of pandemic.

I was active in the Cameron House club and leadership programs during school and working years and participated in the annual Carnival and other major events. I was introduced to the church women's group when I was in high school and have continued that membership into what is now more than 50+ years of the group's existence. As members of Women's Fellowship we are Presbyterian Women. PW has given many of us opportunities to become leaders on the different levels of our church. There might sometimes be a reluctance in serving; but once on board, working and meeting with women from here and across the country gives you experience in community through sharing and receiving the love of God.

We've come through a very different experience of life in this year of pandemic. I look forward to serving as an Elder in this 'new age.' This time period will be challenging as our church will look into our future — with new work to do and eventually a new pastor. I pray to God for guidance for our church in these endeavors.

May we all be blessed with Hope, Joy, Peace and Love.

<https://1funny.com/fond-memories-of-the-1950s/>



St. Charles Bridge, Prague, June 2019

I've found enjoyment in tracing my church/faith journey recently.

I grew up in Denver. My parents built their own house in the Denver suburbs and we moved in when I was 5. We worshipped at the newly built Wellshire Presbyterian Church not far away. It was a time of lots of kids in the neighborhood and lots of people in the churches. I went through a communicants class and joined the church when I was 14. My parents were part of the Presbyterian Mariners who held annual meetings at a new location around the country each year. Traveling to the meetings was always an adventure and there were lots of things to do and lots of people to be with at these meetings.



Dave with his parents and little brother at a Mariner's conference in 1958. My mom made us matching outfits.

I went to Stanford for my undergraduate years and worshipped most often at Memorial Church on campus. The Dean at that time was B. Davie Napier who led us through coming to grips with how we would live our faith in the upheaval of the 1960's. As a result, I declared myself a conscientious objector to war and registered with the draft board. They turned me down. I appealed. They turned me down. I appealed again. And, finally, on Valentine's Day 1969, my request was granted.

By God's grace, I was led to you as a church family. I performed my conscientious objector alternate service by working and living at Cameron House for two years. Many of you were leaders or youth in the programs at that time and I came to value my relationship with you. I had the joy of getting to know Lorna Logan and May Wong. Chester and Jeannie Fong "adopted" me; I knew I always had a place to have *jook* and a good conversation. I also started accompanying worship on the organ. I switched my membership to PCC.

After my service at Cameron House, I went back to Stanford to get a Ph.D. in Sociology and headed cross-country to teach at Dartmouth College in New Hampshire. The Church of Christ (Now UCC) was the logical spot for me to continue my faith journey, but they were even more focused on words than the Presbyterians! I interspersed worship at the Church of Christ with worship at the Episcopal Church where I could experience the mystery of God's presence within me and others.

I've always loved singing and decided to try out for the Boston Symphony chorus despite the 135 mile drive from Hanover to Boston. Even the snowy days couldn't keep me from enjoying being surrounded by other good singers and a fantastic orchestra conducted at that time by Seiji Ozawa. For one of the concerts, the chorus, orchestra and extra singers traveled to New York's Carnegie Hall. We didn't sing in the first half of the concert. While we were waiting backstage, a mutual friend introduced me to Norm and we got to know each other such that we decided to move to New York after I finished my contract at Dartmouth. That was in 1980 and the date when Norm and I

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considered ourselves fully connected as a couple – not married because that wasn’t possible then, but committed to each other.

While in New York, I was a paid singer in many church choirs and got to experience everything from an incense-clouded Catholic worship to uplifting experiences in the Cathedral of St. John Divine. Getting to experience God in so many different settings helped me to know that God can’t be constrained. God’s love and commitment to the world is limitless.

Norm and I moved to San Francisco from New York and started worshipping at PCC again. In November 2011, I was elected to be an elder with the English Commission. But some members of the other worshipping communities were opposed to ordaining a gay person based on their reading of the Bible. I considered resigning to avoid controversy, but Kimberly Elliot was convinced that God wanted me to serve as an elder. She worked with the other communities and our church finally came to an understanding that each community would ordain its own elders. The other communities wouldn’t have to ordain me. I was ordained by the English Worshipping Community in April 2012.

The good news is that since that time, members of the other worshipping communities have come to know me and recognize that God’s love shines on me as much as it does on anyone else.

Norm and I got officially married in 2013 when the Defense of Marriage Act was overturned.

So here I am, 60 years after I first joined the church in Denver ready to serve you again as a ruling elder.



Dave singing folk songs at a talent show at Cameron House in 1970



Celebration at Tea Time for newly-ordained Dave Miller in 2012

Annie Wong, Elder



My name is Annie Wong; I have been member of this church by baptism for over forty years. I was ordained as an Elder of this church forty years ago. During my last year of my second term as an Elder, I had a chance to review the new organizational chart presented by the Presbytery of San Francisco, to be adopted by our church. I did not like the system at all, because it would cause confusion to church members. Some might think the Cantonese, English and Mandarin worshipping communities were independent entities, even though they were under the Session. This was only my opinion, and for that reason, I had declined invitations by the Nomination Committee to be an Elder or a Deacon.

My life is a sunny one so far, with showers from time to time; no deadly storm yet. When I was working for the United States Postal Service, I had a rare chance to work closely with the district manager of Personnel Service. Because of the ranking system of the Post Office between Clerk and Management, my manager could only give me assignments, so I could learn from them. One day my manager told me: “When you read an article, don’t just read it, but digest it.” That article she referred to was the National Contract between Unions and Management, and that message also changed my reading habits.

Casual conversations, friendly advices from my friends and members of this church, has made me better understand the current governing system and the structure of my church.

Last year, the Nominating Committee invited me to be an Elder for the Class of 2023. The invitation was so beautifully written by Deacon Lianne Leong, and the content made me think: was I was the person described in the invitation? Furthermore, was this the time for me to answer the Call? I asked for God’s guidance, talked to my family. I decided to accept the invitation.

I will cherish the administrative skills that I have learned from my manager, conversations and advice that I have received from my friends and members of my church. I will also cherish them as a reminder that I am an Elder of this church, a servant of my Lord and His people.

Carole Chinn-Morales, Deacon

I was born and grew up in Chinatown, a couple of blocks from the church, and have lived there most of my life. When I was in seventh grade, I was invited to play volleyball at Cameron House Friday night program by a classmate who knew how much I loved volleyball. From that first decision to check out the club program flowed all the significant decisions of my life, because I was given the opportunity to learn about faith and service, be nurtured within a community of faith, and to experience the many ways people of faith led their lives meaningfully and with purpose.

When I was fifteen, I made the decision to join the Presbyterian Church in Chinatown. Over the years, I have had a number of opportunities to serve in different roles at Cameron House and in the Church. I have been a club member, a club leader, day camp leader, church school teacher, curriculum writer, editor of the *Current*, volunteer in the after school program, food pantry volunteer, CH Board member, and an

elder and clerk of session in another Presbyterian church community across town in the Mission.

But in all these years of being a church member, I have never been asked to serve as a deacon, and now I find myself at the threshold of this new experience. I look forward to learning the different responsibilities of the deacons and discovering how I might be able to help lift the load with a team of deacons, especially during this time of COVID, when for many people, mental and physical health are being severely challenged.

I pray God strengthens all of us in our diverse callings and ministries, both as individuals and as a community. God's love can be expressed in so many different ways. I look forward to finding out how love is uniquely expressed through the ministry of deacons and being part of the effort to bring that love to our church family and beyond. Happy New Year to everyone in 2021!



Carole with new grandson Jacob

DEACONS' CORNER

By Jeanine Lim

When I first became a Deacon, our group was primarily task-and housekeeping-oriented. On any given Sunday, you might find a Deacon in the kitchen preparing Communion elements, doing dishes left from teatime or Sabbath Sunday lunch, packing up dirty dishtowels to be washed at home, slicing up a birthday sheet cake, or announcing another Deacon-sponsored potluck. We would help with ensuring there were scripture readers, liturgists, and ushers at our weekly worship services, assist with memorials and celebrations, monitor that there were sufficient pantry supplies, and perform many other miscellaneous chores. We regularly send electronic and snail-mail greeting cards, to extend thanks, concern, or sympathy, and to give recognition of life events such as birthdays, retirements, and graduations.

Over time, the Deacons began to discuss devoting more of our efforts towards our original calling; that of providing an organized way of bringing the love of Christ to our worshipping community, and serving as the caring arm of the church through acts of compassion and concern. For example, we coordinated meal trains and transportation, and made “get well” blankets for members who were medically ill or hospitalized. As we were setting about reframing our goals and objectives, and re-creating our organized ministry of care, along came COVID-19 and the shelter-in-place (SIP) orders.

The Deacons quickly recognized that there are ways in which disasters open up human reserves of improvisation, solidarity and resolve, and pockets of purpose and joy, even in the midst of loss and pain. This was not a call to celebrate disaster, but to pay attention to the possibilities it might contain, and how

it might shake us loose from old ways. Within the first couple of weeks of SIP, we developed a plan to ensure that every member of our worshipping community would be contacted by a Deacon who would “check-in” with each person, and reach out with information about our online worship services and weekly communications from PCC. We would invite people to share their concerns and requests for prayers, and through our efforts try to demonstrate the power of community and connection, especially during times of uncertainty and sorrow.

Now, at the time there were only 6 Deacons. How could we do all this outreach? As Mr. Rogers (who after all, was a Presbyterian minister) said, “Look for the helpers. You will always find people who are helping.” The 6 Deacons were able to recruit several more people to help with our outreach efforts. We call them the “Deacons-Plus,” and they include Norma and Terry Chan, Wayne Eng and Marie Chin, JoJo Woo, Diane Go, Richard Jann, Pat Chan, and Mary & Dayton Leong. Thanks to the “Deacons-Plus,” we were able to make connections with all those listed on our PCC roster, whether by phone, text, e-mail, Zoom, postcard, letter, or socially-distanced visit. We continue to stay in contact with people on an as-needed basis, or whenever the Spirit arises.

Another initiative the Deacons took during the pandemic was the establishment of a Compassion Fund. The intent of this fund is to make emergency monetary assistance available to members of PCC’s worshipping communities who are suffering from financial hardship. If you have the need to make a request from the Compassion Fund,

DEACONS' CORNER *(cont. from page 17)*

please contact a Deacon or Pastor Don. If you would like to make a financial contribution, please send your donation to Winchell Quock and indicate that you are designating the funds to the Deacons' Compassion Fund. You can use the Deacons' Fund envelope which was enclosed with Winchell's January 2021 letter.

In December, we gave thanks for the service of Pam Jang, who completed two terms as a super Deacon. In January, we welcomed two new Deacons, Rene Fong and Carole Chinn-Morales. We now have 7 Deacons! We have space for 9, so please consider whether you would like to join us in this very meaningful and fun ministry. We are a group of people who through small gestures and acts of kindness seek to embody and reveal God's love. As a group, as we experience a profoundly changing world, we are in the process of transforming and reframing how best to serve as the "caring arm" of the English worshipping community.

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Rene Fong, Deacon

Honestly, I don't remember my first time coming to church. It has simply always been a constant in my life going back as long as I can remember. It was a given that every Sunday I would take a dollar bill out of my piggy bank for offering, and our family would drive down to Chinatown for church. Joining the church and getting confirmed wasn't a question for me--I was that sure of what I was called to do and be within God's community. I believe my assurance in my faith is evidence I am on the path God means for me.

Besides my time with PCC, my faith journey has also been influenced by my Jesuit schooling, which taught me to do all I can "for the greater glory of God." My actions, large or small, can all be consequential when doing them to give glory to God. Another tenet of Ignatian spirituality is to become "men and women with and for others," and I've tried to incorporate that value as well in everything I pursue.

Currently I'm an undergraduate student at Santa Clara University, double majoring in management information systems and economics. I am also blessed with the opportunity to work with youth at Cameron House by serving virtually as a youth development leader at Friday Night Club.

I am just starting my first term as a Deacon, and I'm so excited to be able to serve the church community, just as I have witnessed many do so before me. I'm thankful for this opportunity, as well as the loving community that I know supports me.



Needless to say that it has truly been an abnormal 2020 year and we have all wished and hoped for some sense of normalcy through the holidays.

I am so glad that we were able to pull off another year of the Cookie Project! It didn't quite look exactly the same as in years past but we were able to reach out to those in our community and beyond, remembering that they are not alone in this difficult time.



<Cookies from
20 bakers

Jordan, a cookie
baker >



Recruiting from bakers in the past, thank you to the 20 bakers this year as we made an unprecedented 34 cookie bags. This is the most cookie bags we've ever made. Coordinating and help with drop-offs and pick-ups of cookies came from those already out helping with our Saturday Food Pantry volunteers. After Food Pantry distribution, the PCC volunteers stayed to help with the usual packing around the table. Extra cookies were added into the bags as we did not have the usual children packing (or they would have been the recipients of the extra cookies).



Our usual cookie bags were put into an additional decorated bags for an added layer of safety with handling for the deliverers. Cookie bags were decorated by Caitlin Gong and Ella Vo who enjoy the time of arts & crafts (photo). In addition to the cookies, an ornament and homemade card were attached. The card was designed and made with help from Jojo Woo, depicting hope and peace for our world. The bags were then distributed and taken to

< Cookie packers

(cont. on p. 20)

The Cookie Project 2020 *(continued from page 19)*

others in our PCC community to make socially distanced visits and drop offs. Additionally three cookie bags were mailed to those beyond our local delivery area (thank you USPS).



Cookie bags, ornaments and card



< Bruce and Doreen

Lang and Ed >



As I have said in years past that it takes a village to care for one another and this project continues to be a testament to the thoughtfulness and care of everyone in our PCC community. From the card makers, bakers, packers, to the cookies deliverers and so many others who have continued to work together to bring a little extra cheer to those in our
(continued on page 21)

The Cookie Project 2020 *(continued from page 20)*

community during a very difficult year. I hope that we can each continue to share our gifts and talents as God calls us to do.

I wish you all good health and safety in this New Year. I pray that we will continue to weather through this with faith and hope of God's gift of Christ for the year to come.

Blessings always, *Nancy*

P.S. This was the message inside the card:

In a world filled with hate, we must still dare to hope.
In a world filled with anger, we must still dare to comfort.
In a world filled with despair, we must still dare to dream.
And in a world filled with distrust, we must still dare to believe.



Hope and Peace for the World



Tuesday, February 2	M&E and W&N Committees
Saturday, February 6	Board of Deacons Training
Friday, February 12	Chinese New Year of the Ox
Sunday, February 14	Resource Committee
Monday, February 15	President's Day Holiday
Tuesday, February 16	English Commission
Wednesday, February 17	Ash Wednesday, First day of Lent
Sunday, February 28	Board of Deacons
Sunday, March 28	Palm Sunday & Holy Week
Thursday April 1	Maundy Thursday Service in the evening
Sunday, April 4	Easter



Happy New Year! Happy Year of the Ox! Let's see if the new year will bring us more love, joy, peace, good luck, and good fortune to us all in 2021.

The later part of 2020 was a good year to a few church families.

. Congratulations to Camille Ho-Wong. She and her husband are proud parents of a little boy name Hiero Marcelino Formentos born on October 20. Baby Hiero has a caring Grandma Lolan and Uncle Ian. I'm sure Grandpa Henry is smiling in heaven and watching over his grandson.

. Congratulations to Dr. Desmond Ng. He passed his boards and can practice dentistry.

. Kyle Shin has been busy. He's been busy appearing at festivals and his newest work is called *Tea with My Uncle Irohs*. Laurene and Corey Chan were his first interviewing guests. Kyle is so proud to say that Laurene and Corey are two of his mentors that he admires. Laurene and Corey shared a little about their life. Corey shared about Kung Fu, Lion dance and helping out with BAP. If you want to see more of Kyle's work please go to: sonofpaper.com.

. Some people have pet dogs or cats but David and Jordan have two gray chinchillas named Pikachu and Gizmo. They are awfully cute.

. I hope you have been able to hear Caitlin Gong play the cello during worship. Thank you, Caitlin for playing and sharing your talent with us.

. Ed Chin just retired from Social Security. Enjoy your much deserved retirement.

. As for me. I'm still working at home. Emailing Kindergarten parents to have them send me their child's vaccination records. SFUSD also require a TB test and a Physical Exam. It's been very challenging this school year. I sure hope we can go back to the school building by next school year. Yes, I am waiting to get the vaccine. The Unions are asking for COVID-19 testing and vaccines for all SFUSD employees before we can go back to work this year. Stay tuned....

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