

MARCH 2024

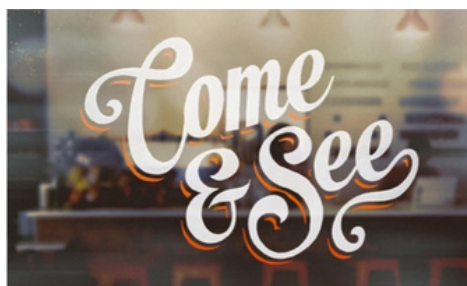
# PBPC news

DEAR PBPC FAMILY & FRIENDS

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Blessings to you as we march into March!

Can you remember the last time you were invited into an opportunity that changed your life? One of my favorite examples in the Bible is found in the first chapter of John's Gospel. In verse 43, Jesus decides to go to Galilee, finds Philip, and invites him on a life-changing journey with the words, "Follow me." To his credit, Philip not only accepted Jesus' invitation but passed it along to his friend, Nathanael, with the words, "Come and see." Those invitations not only changed the lives of those disciples but eventually changed the world through their witness. All it took was two or three words.



Our family had a similar experience with one of Ben's friends recently. Knowing that the youth group retreat was happening over Presidents Day Weekend, I asked our sons if either of them had a friend he'd like to invite. Since Tony, Haley, and Ty were leading the retreat at Pine Valley Bible Conference Center, I knew it was going to be a great weekend for the students, and I saw an opportunity for our boys to blend their church life with their school friendships. Ben seized the day and invited his closest friend. Ultimately, his friend had to remain at home due to a health concern, but the invitation opened up some really exciting conversations with that friend's family, who have been interested in finding a good church and having Ben's friend baptized. What an honor to be able to join them at this stage in their faith journey and to say, "Follow us as we follow Jesus, and come and see the great church congregation we're privileged to be part of!" Only the Lord knows how the world may change through a simple invitation.

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Have you invited folks to join the journey with you recently? Who in your life could you invite in a meaningful, personal way to follow you as you follow Jesus? Which of your friends, family members, neighbors, or coworkers could benefit most from hearing about your wonderful church and then receiving an invitation to come and see the good things God is doing here at PB Pres?

March will be a great month for invitations. Life Groups are happening all month, including the Men's Breakfast, a Ladies' Tea, Theology on Tap, the Lunch Bunch Fellowship and Cookbook Club. We have special events like Hospitality for Heroes, Sunday Night Ministry dinners, and the God Loves You: Frontera Tour worship night with Franklin Graham. And of course, it's the month of Holy Week and Easter, so we'll have special services for Palm Sunday, Good Friday, and Easter Sunday that provide a perfect and easy opportunity for folks to come and see! Additional information about each of those events can be found in the pages of this newsletter.

In February, we hired Ari Higginson (Erah Rhei's partner) to do some social media work to help us get the word out about this wonderful church and the many opportunities here. And, she's doing excellent work. But, I still believe that a personal invitation has the greatest potential for inspiration and impact. So, let's follow Jesus' example and Philip's example and change the world by changing lives with a simple invitation. What will God do through us and our invitations? Come and see!

Blessings to you in the month ahead! ~Pastor Bill



## **MARCH SERMON SCHEDULE**

- March 3: "The Sweet and Simple Message of the Cross"  
Ps. 19:7-10; 1 Cor. 1:18-25  
Lord's Supper Sunday
- March 10: "Lifting Up God's Source of Salvation"  
Num. 21:4-9; John 3:11-21  
Daylight Saving Time (spring ahead 1 hour)
- March 17: Youth Sunday
- March 24: "Regal Cries and Royal Tears"  
Luke 19:29-44  
Palm Sunday; One Great Hour of Sharing annual offering
- March 29: Good Friday/Tenebrae Service
- March 31: "Restored"  
John 21:12-19  
Easter Sunday; Sanctuary – WHITE (Eastertide through May 12)

# GET TO KNOW ERAH RHEI

Erah Rhei is a mystery. Formless, like his name; a euphonic whisper on the breeze. A wide-ranging explorer. Discovery is the ever renewing purpose of his life. "What does this do?" "Does it need to have this here?" "Oh, what a fun sound that makes!" Sparked by questions, driven by possibility and vision, he delights in experimentation. Combining glitches and unintentional intermodulation, with play and discovery, he is designing an interactive multimedia experience to teach young people STEAM concepts. If you ask him, I'm sure he'll be able to explain what that all means. Maybe Erah isn't a mystery, maybe he's a complex expression of meta-ideas with a cheerful smile; eagerly watching the world and what will happen next.



*Pastor's note: Erah is also our new Custodian!*

## BIRTHDAYS AND ATTENDANCE

# HAPPY BIRTHDAY

March 3

Joanne Holcomb

March 4

Richard Bodor

March 7

Gerry Ritz

March 15

Richard Harrington

Jason Holland

March 24

Chelsea Johnson

March 29

Tony Daskalakis

### ATTENDANCE

January 28: 70

February 4: 80

February 11: 62

February 18: 53



# DIRECTOR OF DISCIPLESHIP MINISTRIES

Howdy Pacific Beach Presbyterian!

Many of y'all know that our students left for winter camp this past President's Day weekend, and I am glad to report that we had an INCREDIBLE time at Pine Valley Bible Camp together! I'll let the pictures do the talking in a moment, but let me just say: This church came through for our students this winter. That's frequently true, but it was especially true this time around.

Despite a bake sale that beat our previous fundraising record (at least in the last 12 years), many of our families needed a little bit of extra help to afford camp. Season to season, camp to camp, PBPC has always made a promise that no student would be prevented from attending camp and experiencing this valuable ministry for financial reasons. This winter camp, that same promise was made, and kept! Thanks to PBPC, over half of our attending students were able to have their camp partially or completely covered - allowing them to attend when they otherwise couldn't. Again, this isn't counting the \$60 per student that we were able to knock off thanks to the bake sale!

The theme of our camp this season was "Transformed by God." Thanks to your stewardship, students who've never set foot into a church learned that God loves them as they are; no matter what. Students learned that our God is faithful to help shape them into the people they are meant to be - even when change feels impossible. Lastly, our students learned what christlikeness really looks like, and how we can learn to love ourselves when we love God.

These are powerful lessons. When you couple them with three days of friendship, games, and a youth minister who lets you stay up waaaaaay too late... they become life changing. I am so incredibly grateful to God for the blessing he provided our thirteen students, and three leaders, and I am also incredibly grateful to be a part of a church who made it possible for each and every student to participate - regardless of their context. Enjoy some action shots below!



**Tony Daskalakis**



# LIFE GROUPS

Weekly  
Sunday Morning  
9:30-9:45am  
Church Office

*Prayer*

Weekly Bible Study  
Every Tuesday @1pm  
Hosted by the  
Ritz & Stahl Families



**THEOLOGY  
ON TAP**

TUESDAYS 7PM  
THE TAP ROOM  
ON GARNET



Men's  
Breakfast  
Saturday, March 2  
8:00 am  
Broken Yolk Cafe  
1851 Garnet Ave



Wednesday, March 13 - 12pm - Calvin Hall  
Bring your lunch and enjoy some company while you eat

**COOKBOOK  
CLUB**

ONCE-A-MONTH  
THEMED  
POTLUCK  
LUKE COWELL  
& JOY PHILLIPS  
HOME

Next theme &  
meeting date will  
be announced  
soon



## CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

We had a joy-filled time at the Pancake Dinner that we hosted for the Preschool families. Barb McDonald and Joanne Holcomb did most of the food shopping, prep and cooking. Tony made his family's pancake recipe (yum!) and he and I and Joy Phillips flipped the pancakes. Leslie Ritz led kids in a craft and Steve Ritz provided the game activities. Pastor Bill mingled and chatted with folks. We served around 50 people. The best part was watching and hearing the buzz in the room. Laughter, conversation, balls bouncing, kids playing...These events continue to help us forge relationships and build trust with the families of the Preschool and we are beginning to see fruit from it. Our next one will be on March 27, when we will be hosting a dinner and egg hunt in our building especially for the Preschool families. Let us know if you want to come and be a part of it.



Stacey Kay



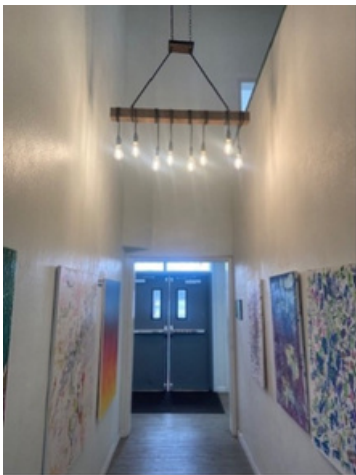
# PRESCHOOL NEWS

February was a busy month at the preschool. We celebrated Valentine's Day with love parties and discussed Jesus' love for us. We wore our red and pink to school learned about color mixings...reds, pinks and purples!



We conducted parent teacher conferences which allowed for time to discuss the children's strengths, activities, routines, and things that are being worked on.

The electrician came and installed new outlets in the classrooms and outside on the playground. We also bought a chandelier for the back hallway which really lights it up!...thank you B&G for making that happen! The children are thoroughly enjoying the new climbers!



The pancake dinner hosted by the church for the preschool was well attended and lots of fun! Thank you Ms. Stacey, Mr. Tony, Joy Cowell, Steve and Leslie Ritz, Barbara McDonald and Joanne Holcomb! We appreciate you all!

# MUSIC MINISTRY

Hi PBPC!

Can you believe that Easter is only a few weeks away? In preparation for Holy Week, I want to give you a quick preview of what we are planning for that week. On Palm Sunday and Easter Sunday, our hope is to have a short 15-minute prelude "concert" featuring a few songs from the Bells and Choir. Plan to arrive at church a little bit early March 24 and 31 to enjoy some extra music! I am also planning a Good Friday Tenebrae ("shadows") service. Much like our Lessons and Carols service, we will have a collection of readings, music and prayers but instead of focusing on the birth of Christ we will focus on His Passion and death. The time of that service is to be decided.

As always I want to invite you all to join any of our music or media groups. For more information on any of the ensembles or training for the sound and media components, please email me at [haley@pbpres.org](mailto:haley@pbpres.org). Experience in worship music is not required for any of our ensembles. We hope you will feel called to join is in song!

**Haley Pettersen**

## OUTREACH & MISSIONS

### Sunday Night Ministry (SNM)

Irene Forbes has agreed to lead the meal planning and cooking portion of SNM for us. Lighthouse Bible Church of Clairemont has agreed to continue to provide volunteers for serving and sitting with those who come to share a meal with us. We could sure use some help from the congregation for the actual meal preparations. Typically, that will start between 2:00pm-3:00pm on Sundays, with meal ready by 5pm. To get involved, text Irene directly at (858) 722-4660. If you call, leave her a Voice Message and she will get back to you. If you find you can't come help personally, we always need money to help with purchasing the meal supplies. Make checks payable to PB Pres Church – SNM. If you donate on-line, choose "other" and note for SNM.

### SDRM (San Diego Rescue Mission) Help Day

Friday, March 8, corner of 2nd and Elm Downtown SD. 9am-11am

Our monthly helping hands at San Diego Rescue Mission has moved to the second Friday of each month, 9:00am – 11:00am. We are aligned with the Navy volunteers, and we never know how we can help. We just help wherever needed. In the past we have taken down or placed seasonal or holiday decorations, stuffed and sorted backpacks, sorted paperwork, wrapped eating utensils for meals. Come on down and share some love with our neighbors. See the last page of the Newsletter for registration details.

### Hospitality for Heroes Night

Saturday, March 16, 4:00pm – 8:00pm

Our H4H night's have been a great success, giving our First Responder and Military families an opportunity to get out for a date night while leaving kids with reliable care takers. If you want to be involved, talk to Steve Ritz. We will be serving the kids a meal, playing some games with them, then watching a movie in the Youth Room. We also have need of someone to help Leslie with the toddlers. Lots of opportunities to get involved.

See the next page for an update from Isaac Chung and his family, the missionaries we support in Central Asia....

Dear friends,

This first month of 2024 has had me still giddy and hopeful from the nearly two weeks full of events in December. From hosting two different cookie making and decorating parties with kids and families (one of them over 50 people came!), meeting even more family members of local friends, and finally grasping enough language to get both of my daughters to the dentist for some needed dental work the final days of 2023 were exhausting but satisfying.

I have some pictures of the cookie making parties that occurred the Thursday and Saturday before Christmas but none that capture the whole scene - people of different faiths fellowshiping together. Foreigners and locals enjoying an expat tradition of cutting out and decorating cookies (although most Tajik women are skilled at handling dough). Meeting family members of local friends we've never met. Running out of the two huge degs (pots) of Osh and Kebab we had prepared.

I had a moment of horror when I realized we had run out of food only to see Malika's\* (our house helper) eyes sparkling as she proudly announced, "We ran out of food!" For the entire week after she would talk about how fun these events were, emphasizing HAPPILY that we ran out of food...sharing with others how Isaac and an expat friend of his were in the kitchen helping to prepare the food (many men will work in restaurants professionally but avoid being seen working in the kitchen at home)...hearing back from her family members kids that they liken our home to the movie "Home Alone" (we're still trying to sort this one out but think it's a good thing).

And this probably sums up how I've learned to reframe and understand many of my experiences from this past year living in Tajikistan. What feels chaotic and sometimes disconnected and frequently overwhelming to me is typically born out of my own faulty belief that I must be organized and in control and involved for things to go well or be well. When, actually, God, who is the author of all things life, continues to keenly and creatively and lovingly weave a beautiful tapestry of interactions and experiences.

And it is with this trust that we enter 2024. My own heartfelt desire is to sit at as many дастархон/ tables with as many women as possible. To listen deeply as they share their triumphs and struggles. To see and take opportunities to speak life and truth into their lives. To know deeper myself truly what is the height and width and breath of God's love in my own life. To live in the freedom in Christ that trusts that His yoke is easy and His burden is light.

For 2024 we are praying about work opportunities as we will still use much of this year to deepen our Tajik language studies (this is also in accordance with our Student Visa status). Isaac is exploring a new conversation partner and I am taking lessons out into the city and starting to read and understand one of the two translations of the Good Book that are in Tajik.

Isaac is also exploring creative business ideas and partnerships, as well as there are plans that he will begin a formal role as P@stor with the International Ch\_rch of Dushanbe. We both are considering opportunities to teach English and we both are volunteering many hours at the kids' school.

And how are the kids?

Evie is proving that she is ready to take some piano lessons. It is so fun to hear her pick out melodies on the piano and she expresses so much a desire to learn. We also just finished the first half of the school year and I love hearing about how she demonstrates both leadership and followership in her classroom.



Isaiah's reading is growing in leaps and bounds! His teacher thought to challenge him a bit and it has been amazing to see him grow so quickly in this area. One of his favorite dinner table games is a free form Mad Lib style game where one person thinks of a noun and another person constructs a sentence without knowing what the noun is. Shrieks of laughter are inevitable!

Alexis loves playing with Malika's\* 6 year old daughter on days when she comes to clean. She is also a favorite with the secondary kids volleyball team as she loves to go with Isaac on the days he coaches. We may have just learned about an opportunity to do a local gymnastics class and she is begging to be a part of it.

Nemo's speech grows every day, both in English and Tajik, and he loves to sing both the worship songs he has heard on Sunday mornings and other child favorites such as "Happy Birthday" and "Old MacDonald Had a Farm". Despite his frequent and scary struggles with respiratory viruses(prayers coveted!) his love for cars and dinosaurs and climbing things continues.

And I can't end this update without acknowledging... CARE PACKAGES! What a way to send a true HUG 5000 miles away! We have been so blessed and blown away by the thoughtfulness and effort it takes to fill and send these and it is such a fun and unique opportunity to share a few of our familiar treats with our local friends and to be able to gift their tables with American candies, just something a little unique (Hershey kisses were a big hit, although, are quite funny to describe the name 😊).

And I can't end a "Welcome to 2024" newsletter without extending a heartfelt THANK YOU to those of you on our prayer and financial support team that allow us the opportunity to live and serve here. ❤️ God has been here far longer than us and it is an honor to have a front row seat to the work he is doing here. From the bottom of our hearts, THANK YOU!

As we look ahead to 2024 there are work opportunities locally but they will not impact our overall budget much. For example, when Isaac begins his part time work as the pastor of IC-D he will likely earn \$147/month. For this reason we are thankful for our ongoing givers and we are seeking new financial partners to add to our team! If you or anyone you know would like to learn more about our life and work here in Taj we would love to set up a Zoom or phone call.

And, of course, we love knowing more specific ways that we can pray for you. If we haven't been in touch with you specifically, please reach out and let us know how we can pray. ❤️

Much love,

Misty and Isaac, Evangeline (8), Isaiah (6), Alexis (4), and Nehemiah (2)

# ENDOWMENT FUND UPDATE

Our church is blessed to have an Endowment Fund that was established by the gifts of members since 1991 to use in service to God through the missions of Pacific Beach Presbyterian. The Endowment Fund is unique in that the original donated principal is maintained for perpetuity with only proceeds from the investments being used each year for missional activity. Since 1991 over \$415,000 has been donated to this fund. The fund is currently managed by Paul Celentano of Objective Wealth Management using LPL Financial Services.

In 2023 the Endowment Fund contributed \$10,000.00 to the church; and received \$70 in new contributions. The overall fund did well in 2023 and you can see the details below.

## Balance Sheet as of December 31, 2024

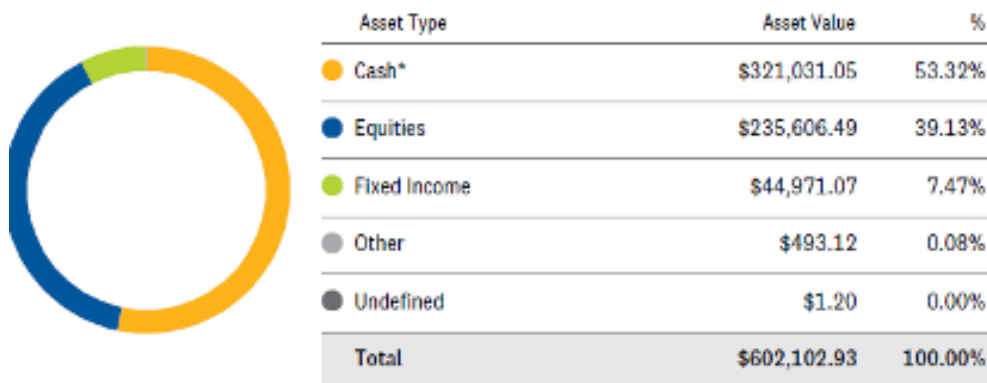
### Endowment Funds

Every Member	\$433,505.31
Trenton Endowment	\$ 15,657.14
Ingraham Bible Fund	\$ 2,042.11
Hollenbeck Endowment	\$ 56,345.98
Shoemaker Endowment	\$ 59,399.63
Sutherland Endowment	\$ 21,674.68
<b>Total Endowment</b>	<b>\$602,234.58</b>

### January – December Summary:

Starting Value (January 1, 2023)	\$560,251.59
Market Value Change	+\$ 50,186.50
Annual Interest + Dividends	+ \$ 5,396.66
New Contributions	+ \$ 70.00
Contribution to Church's budget	- \$ 10,000.00
Fees	-\$ 3,670.17
Net Gain on Investment	<b>\$602,234.58</b>

The allocations of the investments at year end are provided below.



If anyone is interested in making a gift directly or through an estate plan, please contact us. Also, we are always looking for new committee members!

**PER CAPITA & INITIAL OFFERING REMINDER:** It is not too late to include the Per Capita (\$42.75) and Initial Offering in your next donation. The Per Capital helps with what we pay to the Presbytery each year, and the Initial Offering helps offset the costs incurred by Stewardship for envelopes, etc.

**Pat Hom & Luke Cowell**

Christ, the hunted, the hated, the killed,

David's heart raced with the fear of being hounded.

His mouth prayed for refuge and rescue.

And his hands preyed on his neighbor's wife.

Your heart pounded with the Pharisees' pursuit.

Your mouth prayed for your cup to be removed.

Your hands were pierced all the way through for a crime you didn't do.

So now we ask to be hounded by grace,  
to be followed and tracked by your relentless pursuit  
in the pain we cause and the pain we endure.

Because our hearts race, our mouths pray, and our hands ache  
to be sought and held  
by a Love that is good all the way through.

Amen.

K.J. Ramsey, "The Book of Common Courage"



So, Jesus, wasn't that illegal for you to break the seal the Roman guards put there?

Bursting the bonds of death itself to come again, larger than life?

And was it wise to present yourself first to the women,

so lowly in social standing their word meant nothing in court?

And why did you keep appearing suddenly to the huddled believers

behind locked doors for fear of their enemies,

scared out of their wits to hear you say, "Peace be with you!"?

And isn't it the case that they were never the same again,  
these ordinary people who had been so cowed, receiving your Holy Spirit,  
emboldened to begin the work you set in motion,  
speaking life and health and peace to all who would listen?

This is what our newborn church looks like: Blessed

Blessed in our fear and inadequacy.

Blessed by your faith in us.

Blessed that we received, by your own hand, the gift of hope -

the beginning of the end of sin and of death.

We follow you as best we can along that downward path

with all the humility we can manage.

You came back to us.

Alleluia

Alleluia

Alleluia



# OPPORTUNITIES

Join the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association (BGEA) in the



Saturday, March 9 – 5:00 PM

North Island Credit Union Amphitheater, Chula Vista, CA

Website: <https://godlovesyoutour.com/en/>



## San Diego Rescue Mission Serve Day

Join the Mission Commission and Sailors from our local Navy command for a volunteer service morning at San Diego Rescue Mission.

When: Friday, March 8

Where: San Diego Rescue Mission  
120 Elm St. San Diego

Wear: Your PBPC Volunteer T-shirt! Also closed-toed shoes and clothing you don't mind getting dirty.

Who: All are welcome. Contact Steve Ritz to register:  
[SJRitz@pacbell.net](mailto:SJRitz@pacbell.net)

How: Advanced registration is encouraged at:  
<https://sdrescue.vomo.org/opportunity/sdrm-navy-work-day>  
or scan the QR code here:

