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# The Weekly RAG

*For the United Ministries of the Presbyterian Church in Chinatown and Donaldina Cameron House*

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**Sunday, August 13, 2017**

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## Happy Birthdays

### August

Cindy Lee Gong  
David Miller  
Karen Jin Soohoo  
Lindsey Sid Quock  
Rebecca Yip  
Jim Quan  
John Yamasaki  
Brian Mark Fong  
Steve Hung  
Rachel Victoria Jew  
Lauren Gayle Kam

Please help stack chairs after worship so that we may be of service to our Cantonese worshipping community.

## Youth Sunday School Class

Starting Sunday, September 17th, Tad Hopp will be teaching another Youth Sunday school class from 12:30 - 1:30 PM. The topic this fall will be "How to Be a True Friend" and uses stories from the Biblical witness to talk about the qualities to look for in a friend and the qualities we need to show our friends. You won't want to miss this class. Let Tad know if you want to participate in this engaging class.

## Pride Service

On Sunday, August 27th, we will celebrate our first ever Pride Worship service. Why are we doing this? Because it is important that as a religious community, we show our support and solidarity with our LGBTQ brothers and sisters. In these trying, tumultuous times when fear and hate seem to be coming from every direction, a Pride service sends the message that there is no

shame in being gay. That it is indeed something to be proud of and that it is a beautiful and powerful way of existing in the world. Most importantly, having a worship service centered on Pride conveys the message that who we are is a gift from God and should be celebrated, not denigrated. By having a Pride service, we at PCC are living into our commitment to love and serve all in our community. This service will have a special focus on the experiences of being gay in the Asian community. Our guest preacher will be Ellen Tanouye. Ellen is a former PC(USA) pastor who came out of the closet 6 years ago (2011). She is now married (February, 2017) to her best friend who helped her come out of the closet! She graduated from SFTS in 1995, served in two Japanese American churches (Sycamore Congregational Church in El Cerrito and Calvary Presbyterian Church in Stockton); worked at the Presbytery and at Menlo Park Presbyterian Church in the early 2000's. She is now a member of Many Journeys MCC in San Mateo and is helping to plant an MCC church in Folsom CA. She loves to sing and play the piano; she has lead retreats and planned conferences in many capacities (NAPW; NAPY; NRJ; Tadaima); she loves to write and has written chapters with Dave Ng (SFTS) (People on the Way), Parenting curriculum, Church school curriculum for youth on Sexuality and Gender and has written devotionals for many years; she was trained to do daycamp from a former Cameron House leader (Rev Mariko Yanagihara) and has led many a daycamp at many a church; she was trained to form and lead small groups in St Louis MO from her church in Lodi (St Paul Lutheran Church); she loves to preach and teach and lead in worship.

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## Our Theme & Readings

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13 Genesis 37: 1-4, 12-28  
1 Kings 19: 9-18  
Romans 10: 5-15  
Matthew 14: 22-33

20 Genesis 45: 1-15  
Isaiah 56: 1, 6-8  
Romans 11: 1-2a, 29-32  
Matthew 15: 21-28

### Women's Retreat

Sign Up Now for WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP  
RETREAT : "How Well Has Your Faith Aged?"

Come gather with us to reflect on how your faith has evolved as time has gone by. Does faith still enrich your life? What have been the changes and turning points? Share with others to gain insights on where we've been and where we're going. Richard Rohr says there is a spirituality for the first part of life and another for the second part. Is this true for you? Rev Cal Chinn will lead us.

Date: September 30, 2017, 9:30am to 3:30pm  
Place: Sequoias, 1400 Blvd, Greeters at the entrance will direct you.  
Cost: \$25. Please sign up and give payment to Mary Wong Leong  
Meal: Coffee and light snack upon arrival and bento box lunches!  
Transportation: Some street parking, Japan Center Garage. Muni convenient.

### Homeless Supplies Needed

It's that time of the year when Deacons are replenishing items for the homeless. If you have: white tube socks (not too thick), backpacks, pop up can goods and granola bars, we'll gladly accept them. A large bin will be available at Tea Time for your donation.

### Saturday, September 23. Horizons Bible Study Day

Melissa Bane Sevier will be leading a study on the book of Hebrews at SFTS on September 23 from 10 to 4. Her prayer is that the study of community in Hebrews will help us strengthen our own communities. Register at [sfts.edu](http://sfts.edu). Check with Mildred Hall if you have questions or to see who else may be attending if you want to carpool.

([mildredhal@sbcglobal.net](mailto:mildredhal@sbcglobal.net))

### Tea Time for August

The Deacons would like to give special thanks to the following people for taking the time to provide treats for Tea Time for everyone to enjoy.

8/13 Eddie & Peggy Kam  
8/20 Marie Chin & Jon Chan  
8/27 Mark & Barbara Fong

If you're interested in providing treats, please sign up on bulletin board in social hall. If you'd like to make a monetary donation towards tea time, see Dayton Leong. We also are in need of volunteers to help clean up after Tea Time. If you are available to help, please stay after Tea Time.

## Minute for Mission

Noor arrived in Europe with two young children and without her husband. She had left her home in Aleppo, Syria, two years earlier because conditions in the war-torn country had made it impossible to live there. Her family felt they had no other choice. During her passage across the Mediterranean Sea, the boat she was on sank with her young children and a group of other migrants. Noor had trained for years as a swimmer so she was strong enough to stay afloat and keep her children safe until they were rescued. But she had tears in her eyes as she remembered one mother who screamed repeatedly for her lost baby.

Those listening to her story were silent as she cried.

Noor arrived in Germany, but didn't understand the language. She remembered having to take her young son to the doctor because he had a serious illness, but she couldn't understand the doctor's instructions. In those moments, she felt alone and uncertain. Noor decided she had to conquer the language to navigate life in her new country so she studied hard and attended regular German language classes. She told her story in fluent German.

After having been a nurse in Syria, Noor hopes to someday continue her work in Germany.

Someone asked Noor about her family in Aleppo and she fell silent. Another person asked her what she misses about Syria. The tears started to fall. She said she misses everything about Syria. Someone asked her if she'd go back if she could, and she replied, "Yes, of course." Although she has conquered the language and worked hard to

establish herself in her host culture, nothing compares to the idea of life in her home country, her home city free from war. She has lost a great deal but now has a small community of other Syrians and has finally reunited with her husband, who traveled separately from Syria.

The circumstances that brought her to Germany are incomprehensible to most of us. But her story brought light to those who listened. We heard her voice, her hope and her uncertainty. We learned she is more than just a "refugee." She is a mother, wife, daughter, nurse, swimmer, language learner, culinary creator and human being in search of peace.

As a mission co-worker working with refugees, I encourage individuals and congregations to sit and listen to a refugee's story. Their humanness will take shape in those interactions. After all, aren't we all human beings in search of peace?

In many churches, we "pass the peace" to each other every Sunday morning without a second thought. What if we chose to pass the peace to everyone we encountered, not just on Sunday mornings? What does that look like if it's not just a brief handshake and repeating familiar phrases? Maybe it's welcoming someone new into the neighborhood. Maybe it's helping them sort mail in an unfamiliar language, accompanying them to the doctor's office, finding furniture or helping them navigate unfamiliar systems. Maybe it's breaking down walls, real and imagined. Maybe it's following Jesus, who was once a refugee, forced to flee as a baby into Egypt, and who calls us to love one another.

