



# GENEVA NEWS

Worshipping | Learning | Connecting | Giving | Serving



## Congregational Meeting

Sunday, August 27 • 11:30am

A Special Congregational Meeting will be held Sunday, August 27th immediately after worship for the dissolution of the pastoral relationship between Pastor Steve and the Congregation. This meeting is a required step as outlined in the Presbyterian Church (USA) *Book of Order* for any pastor to retire. Geneva members are encouraged to attend.

### Read the FAQs!

The retirement of a Pastor/ Head of Staff is a huge change for any church. We encourage you to read carefully the **Frequently Asked Questions** (FAQs) included with this newsletter. We're hoping many of the questions or concerns you may have will be included in this document. If not, additional questions may be directed to us at [info@genevapres.org](mailto:info@genevapres.org).



## Retirement Announced

*A message from the Rev. Dr. Steven M. Marsh*

For those of you who did not hear my retirement announcement at the end of the worship service on Sunday, July 2nd, let me fill you in.

I am retiring December 31, 2023. This is a decision that Janet and I have been pondering the past year. Our two oldest children and our seven grandchildren live in Wichita, Kansas. We will be moving to or should I say, returning to Wichita, to be near our family. When and if we move my dad is yet to be determined. We are doing medical consultations and want to do what is best for him.

My retirement will also benefit Geneva. In 2023 we struggled to overcome a \$315,000 budget deficit. A Deep Dive 2024 Budget Committee was elected by Session and began the task of figuring out how to overcome this deficit. It became increasingly clear to this committee that transitioning to a one pastor church made sense.



## Sermon Series

*June 4 - August 27*

Pastor Steve continues the series *Words & Deeds Part I: "They Matter"*. Join us for worship at 10:30am in the Sanctuary or view the live stream at [genevapres.org](http://genevapres.org). Referenced scriptures for each sermon in the series may be found at [genevapres.org/currentsermonseries](http://genevapres.org/currentsermonseries).

## Choir-For-A-Day

*Sunday, August 13 • 9:45am*

Summer is here, and the Geneva Chancel choir is taking their traditional August hiatus. The exception is Sunday, **August 13**. Choir Director Eileen O'Hern invites anyone who likes to sing to join in on "choir-for-a-day". Just show up in the sanctuary at 9:45am. No robes; music will be provided. Bring a friend, neighbor or your opera singer pen pal! If you've ever thought about joining the choir, consider this a great test run. **All are welcome!**

In search of \$315k in budget expenses, I felt it was only appropriate to remove my compensation package from the 2024 operating budget. That leaves \$123k to find. Session is looking at other recommendations from the Deep Dive 2024 Budget Committee to accomplish a balanced budget in 2024.

Janet and I are at peace with our decision. We both believe that this is best for us and Geneva. God's hand is in this.

We have begun the collaborative process to shape the new Geneva. I am inviting you to participate with your leadership, staff, fellow congregants, and me to prepare for a successful handoff to Pastor Ryan, who will serve as our Bridge Pastor beginning January 1, 2024.

More details are in the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ, which is included in this edition of the Geneva News). Questions and/or comments are encouraged! Please direct them to [info@genevapres.org](mailto:info@genevapres.org). Pastor Ryan and I are also available to meet with anyone who feels the need for pastoral support.

On the new Geneva journey with you, I remain faithfully yours,

The Rev. Dr. Steven M. Marsh  
Pastor/Head of Staff



## Worship Celebration

### Geneva Organ Festival Well Received

In June, as part of our first ever Organ Festival, Geneva hosted two organ recitals featuring recent graduates from the Juilliard School. The week also included a field trip to Christ Cathedral for a concert featuring Grammy winning organist and Juilliard teacher, Paul Jacobs, accompanied by the Pacific Symphony and Chorale. By all accounts from the artists, organizers, and attendees, the event was a resounding success!

Recent Juilliard Master's recipient Bobby Nguyen, who performed at Geneva June 23rd, has this to say about the event:

*"It's an honor to be able to play a recital here at Geneva Presbyterian Church, where I've had my privilege to consider the place as my 'musical home'. From*



Over 120 people attended Juilliard student Bobby Nguyễn's recital at Geneva June 23rd.

*all the shoulder pats, to all the "good job", hand shakes every time I play here. It feels warm, it feels cozy, it feels nice. Many many many gratitudes towards Charlotte and Eileen, as well as the music ministry at Geneva for making this happen!"*

Additionally, we sent three vans full of enthusiastic concert goers to the Christ Cathedral event, which was awe inspiring. We worked with event organizers at Christ Cathedral to jointly promote the Geneva recitals and the Paul Jacobs concert to mutual benefit. The Geneva contingent attending the Paul Jacobs concert received a very warm welcome and were treated as VIP guests, with preferred parking and reserved seating. We look forward to working with them for future events.

Thank you to the Geneva Music Ministry for the vision and implementation of the Organ Festival. Sharing the beauty of this magnificent instrument and supporting and encouraging young artists is an example of using the gifts God has given us to inspire others.

## Let's Connect

### Meet & Greet Lunch

Sunday, August 6 • 11:30am in McLennan Lounge

Visitors and guests are invited to join Pastor Steve for a light lunch directly after worship in Simpson Hall to chat, ask questions and discover how we can help you connect with the church. This is a great

## Tech Volunteers Needed

Thank you to June volunteers **Ben Romberg** and **Liz Njoroge**, and **Janet Marsh** and **Im Sook Lee** for stepping up in July, to serve as technical support for the live-streaming of our 10:30am service. Live-streaming allows people not able to attend in-person worship to enjoy the same experience as those on campus. It takes a little extra effort to make it happen, but it's worth it. Over 400 people have live-streamed our service in real time since we began this new process in February.

We need more volunteers so we are not overtaxing those who have already stepped up to help. Anyone can be trained to volunteer for this ministry. It's not difficult, and you don't have to be a tech genius to serve on the team! Contact Worship Celebration elder Kwangho Seo at [kseo1948@gmail.com](mailto:kseo1948@gmail.com) if





## Get A Lifeline Ask for a Stephen Minister

### What is a Stephen Minister?

Stephen Ministers are loving Christians. They have received at least 50 hours of training in effective listening and provide care to those who are in crisis.

### What kinds of crises?

Throughout life, we all suffer: injury, illness, loss, confusion, moves, changes in our routine. It helps to have someone to talk to, not to provide advice or counseling, just someone who will listen. This is the role of a Stephen Minister.

### How do I get one?

Just ask. Email the Stephen Ministry Team at [caring@genevapres.org](mailto:caring@genevapres.org) or call the church office at 949-837-2323. All requests are strictly confidential.

**BE A LIFELINE** – Become a Stephen Minister! Are you a good listener? Do people often come to you for advice? Consider serving as a Stephen Minister. Email us at the address above if you're interested.

first step you are interested in Geneva membership. Register at [genevapres.org/events](http://genevapres.org/events) or call the church office at 949-837-2323.

## GPW Summer Daze Rally

*Saturday, August 19 • 12pm in Simpson Hall*

Put on your poodle skirt, if you still have one, and join the Geneva Presbyterian Women for their "Oldies But Goodies" Summer Daze Rally! For entertainment, we welcome *Asian Persuasion*, a vocal harmony group singing music of the 50's, 60's and 70's. Bring goodies to share: fruit, small summer sandwiches, veggies, salads or desserts (no hot food). Register on the courtyard on Sundays by August 14 or call the church office at 949-837-2323.



## Geneva Women's Book Club

*Tuesday, August 22 • 1-2pm in Annex*

The book for August is *The Whistling Season* by Ivan Doig. To participate online, join the group at [genevapres.churchcenter.com/groups](http://genevapres.churchcenter.com/groups) to receive an email with the Zoom meeting ID. For questions or technical assistance, contact the church office at 949-837-2323 or email us at [info@genevapres.org](mailto:info@genevapres.org).

## Dementia Education Series

*Saturday, August 26, September 23 October 21 • 9am-11:30am in Simpson Hall*

According to the new estimate by Alzheimer's Orange County (AlzOC), 164,346 OC residents have dementia or some form of mild cognitive impairment. Unfortunately, Alzheimer's is only one of many

types of diseases which fall under the dementia umbrella. If dementia or Alzheimer's has touched your world, we invite you to attend three free educational offerings presented by Alzheimer's of Orange County and hosted by Geneva. Topics include:

**August 26: Living with Dementia: Making Each Day Count**

Caring for someone living with dementia has burdens but also has potential for moments of deep loving connection. Incorporating faith-based values enhances the journey and provides support.

**September 23: Understanding the Continuum of Care**

Join us for a discussion that will help decode the mysteries of levels of care, how they are paid for, and when they are necessary.

**October 21: Are You Good to Go?**

This program will discuss how you can anticipate and identify your wishes, ensure those wishes are honored, and start the often-difficult conversations with loved ones.

This educational series is open to everyone, so invite your friends, neighbors or anyone you feel needs additional resources to help navigate this life altering illness. A continental breakfast will be provided at each event. Please RSVP via email at [patty.mouton@alzoc.org](mailto:patty.mouton@alzoc.org).

## Connect with Geneva

*Getting the Church Center mobile app has just been made a little easier*

Downloading the Church Center app (CCA) on your smartphone allows you to engage with the church anywhere, anytime. And now we have a unique setup link to make the process easier. Follow these easy steps to download the app:

1. Go to [genevapres.churchcenter.com/setup](http://genevapres.churchcenter.com/setup) or access the link through the QR code above.
2. Tap on *App Store* or *Google Play* to download the app
3. Open the app and tap "Get Started"
4. If you have an iPhone, you'll be prompted to give permission to access the clipboard to finish this setup process. On Android, you'll automatically go to step 5.
5. Geneva will be automatically selected so you can log right in! ✨



## A Kingdom Story

*Contributed by Pastor Ryan*

This year's pancake breakfast had a moment that had never happened before. Simpson Hall went from completely empty to completely full in a matter of minutes. Masses of people were waiting to be fed. Our kitchen staff and youth worked like the wind but with the small size of our griddle, we quickly fell behind.

The last table to get their food was one of the first to be seated. They waited about 30 minutes for food. Pastor Albany Lee of ITPC was at that table. There were no more pancakes by the time he was served.

"That's okay," said someone at his table. "Look at all the pancakes we DO have. God will multiply them."

After the breakfast, a person at that table came up to me and said they'd like to give an additional \$500 to the youth scholarship account. This person ended up giving \$600.

This is the Kingdom of God. One where the first will be last, the last will be first, and generosity is the currency that fuels an economy of love. Praise be to God!

## School Supply Drive

July 23 - August 6

Since 2017, Genevans have donated generously to our School Supply Drive, providing hundreds of students from low income families the essentials they need for academic success.

All donations received in 2023 will go to San Joaquin Elementary School, with whom we've developed a strong partnership. To kick the supply drive off in style, a very generous anonymous Geneva donor contributed all 220 backpacks requested! A list of additional items needed may be downloaded at [genevapres.org/events](http://genevapres.org/events) or pick one up in the church office. The supply list will be updated as we collect items.

Donations may be brought to the church during office hours (Mon.-Thurs., 9am-4pm; Fri. 9am-1pm) or on Sundays **until August 13**. Bins for each item are specified. It helps greatly to put items in the right bin so we don't have to sort hundreds of items. Thank you for taking the extra time to do this! Thank you for your donations!



## Missional Life Update

### Geneva Welcomes Guest Preacher on Mission Sunday

Sunday, August 27 • 10:30am

On Mission Sunday, we highlight the local, national and international ministries Geneva supports. As part of the celebration, we are honored to welcome LaVal Brewer, President and CEO of South County Outreach as a guest preacher.



As President and CEO of South County Outreach, LaVal's goal is to transform the organization's Food Pantry into a place where people who are in short-term crisis situations can feel like they are shopping for nutritious, healthy food in a normal grocery store environment without having to pay. He also hopes to partner with cities, funders, and corporate groups to create revenue that will allow the organization to help people who have fallen behind on rent and utility payments, and then find ways for people to better themselves so that they can ultimately escape the hunger and homelessness cycle.

La Val is an Elder at the Presbyterian Church of the Master in Mission Viejo. His commitment to community engagement is further demonstrated through his roles as the Chair of the Family



Geneva youth went to camp on Catalina Island last month. Check out the cool video of their adventures at [genevapres.org/youth](http://genevapres.org/youth).

Solution Collaborative and the Family Solutions Collaborative, where he leads collaborative efforts to address family-related issues.

Additionally, he serves as a member of the Senior Citizen Advisory Council, the Board of the Public Law Center, and as a Commissioner for the City of Mission Viejo Planning Commission. Through his multifaceted involvement in these organizations, La Val showcases his dedication to both professional excellence and making a positive impact on society.

We hope you will join us for worship on Mission Sunday to help us welcome this very special guest, and show your support for our mission partners around the corner and around the world.



## Financial Recap

*January through June 2023*

Once again, we begin our recap with a thank you to Geneva members who faithfully follow through on their pledges. Pledge revenue started out strong in the first three months of the year, but has missed budget in two of the last three months. This reflects a normal giving pattern for Geneva over the summer months.

Note that significant revenues other than pledges are from special gifts and bequests made in prior years that were not designated for any particular purpose. Session utilized these prior gifts to balance the budget in 2023, but this is not cash coming in the door to fund current operating expenses, leaving us vulnerable to depleting our Endowment account funds.

Questions? Contact Geneva Business Manager, Gary Pado, at [gpado@genevapres.org](mailto:gpado@genevapres.org).

	<b>Actual</b>	<b>Budgeted</b>	<b>Difference</b>
<b>Pledges</b>	\$383,270	\$336,296	\$46,974
<b>Total Revenue</b>	\$605,911	\$554,819	\$51,092
<b>Total Expenses</b>	\$565,083	\$560,177	\$4,906
<b>Net Income</b>	\$40,828	\$(5,358)	\$46,186



## Peace and Global Witness Offering

*August 27-October 1*

A gift to the PC(USA) Peace & Global Witness Offering enables the church to address systems of conflict and injustice across the world. Congregations are encouraged to use up to 25% of this Offering to connect with the global witness of Christ's peace. Mid councils (Presbytery Synods) retain an additional 25% for ministries of peace and reconciliation. The remaining 50% is used by the Presbyterian Mission Agency to advocate for peace and justice in cultures of violence, including our own. Give online at [genevapres.churchcenter.com/giving](https://genevapres.churchcenter.com/giving) (choose *PCUSA Peace & Global Witness*) in the dropdown menu) or use the special envelope in your offering envelope box.

## Campus Closed

This is a reminder that the Geneva campus will be closed Monday, September 4th for Labor Day. Have a safe holiday!

## Food Pantry Needs Peanut Butter & Cereal

Our friends and mission partners at the South County Outreach Food Pantry desperately need unexpired peanut butter (any brand) and cereal to help their customers. Donations may be placed in the grocery cart on the courtyard on Sundays and in the church office during the week. Thank you!

## GPW Field Trip

*Geneva Presbyterian Women* recently enjoyed a docent-led visit through the Heritage Hill Historical Park in Lake Forest. The park includes four fully restored and furnished historic buildings that span the early

history of the Saddleback Valley and El Toro area. Afterwards, the ladies braved the elements for an old-fashioned picnic lunch on the grounds. Join this fun group for the upcoming *Summer Daze Rally* at the church August 19th (see page 4).

## Meals on Wheels

If you are 60+ and homebound because of disability, illness, or lack of mobility, you may qualify for the Meals on Wheels program. Call the Florence Sylvester Senior Center in Laguna Hills at **949-380-0155** to sign up and for more information.

## Receptionist Needed

Do you like people? Do you want to get out of the house for a while? The Geneva office needs a volunteer receptionist Monday and Wednesday afternoons from 12:30-4pm. Duties include answering phones, greeting visitors and light administrative tasks. Call Geneva Office Manager, Laura McCallum at 949-837-2323 if you are interested.

## Prayer Requests

Email prayer requests to [prayer@genevapres.org](mailto:prayer@genevapres.org), call the church office at 949-837-2323 or stop by and complete a Prayer Request Form.

- Heidi Belew
- Norm Coombs
- Joe DeMark
- Evelyn Fanous
- Bink Lewis
- George Marsh
- Kurt Messerschmidt
- Norma & Norm Petersen
- Penny Prol
- Louann and Ross Van Riper
- Doris Wendel
- Janie and Jerry Williams

## Our Church Prayer

Almighty God, living our identity in continuing honesty, openness, and realness is imperative for our ongoing experience of the identity we have in and through Jesus. May we celebrate the transformation we experience as your children for it is a blessing for others to consider discovering and living your hope, peace, joy, and love. In the identity we have in Jesus we pray, Amen.

Pastor Steve joins Geneva Presbyterian Women for a picnic at the Heritage Hill Historical Park.



Geneva Presbyterian Church  
24301 El Toro Road  
Laguna Woods, CA 92637  
(949) 837-2323 • [genevapres.org](http://genevapres.org)