



July 2025 Edition



ATASCOCITA PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

THE COMMUNICATOR

This Month from Pastor Wayne Sharing the Jubilee

By now, most have heard the good news that our Jubilee at APC Campaign has been blessed by God with an amazing response. As of the middle of June we have received donations and pledges of \$431,000. We have already been able to pay off the building loan of \$240,000. We are now whittling down the roof work from last summer, and the balance of that loan has been reduced to around \$50,000. As promised in the campaign, we have also set aside money for missions. In making this commitment to support missions even as we retired our debt, we were tapping into a key theme of Jubilee, the idea that the life and ministry we have been given is one that comes alongside people in their time of need, offering to others the support and encouragement that helped our church through the terrible loss we experienced in the fire on Pentecost Sunday in 2001.

The first project we have chosen to support hits very close to home. We are supporting a sister church in the Presbyterian Church USA that recently lost their entire building in a fire, the Palisades fire, part of the Southern California fires that began burning in the Santa Monica Mountains of Los Angeles County on January 7, 2025. The fire grew to destroy large areas of Pacific Palisades, Topanga, and Malibu before it was fully contained on January 31, after 24 days. The fire, driven by hurricane-force Santa Ana winds, burned 23,448 acres, killed 12 people, and destroyed 6,837 structures, making it the most destructive fire to occur in the history of Los Angeles.[1] One of the 6,837 structures destroyed was the Pacific Palisades Presbyterian Church.

This past January, our Session met and approved moving forward with the Jubilee Campaign, including establishing a mission fund of \$40,000. In a bittersweet bit of timing, our plans to retire the debt that is directly related to the fire we suffered in 2001 were taking place at the very same time a sister church burned to the ground. I reached out to one of the pastors at the church to offer our support and to inquire how we might help. At the time, we had not even begun our campaign, and so we had no idea what level of support we might be able to offer. In the months that followed, as we established a leadership team led by Will and Charis Nees, as we worked on our brochure to share the story of our campaign, and then as blessing after blessing began to be poured out, leading to the joyous celebration on June 8, 2025, the Pentecost Sunday 24 years after our fire, we have stayed in touch with Pacific Palisades Presbyterian Church.

It is hard to describe how right it has felt to offer our support to another church going through the difficult journey we have traveled. Before any mention was made of financial support, the pastor whom I contacted, Grace Park, conveyed a deep sense of appreciation just knowing that another church that knew the challenges facing Palisades cared and was offering our prayer support. It gave Pastor Grace great encouragement to hear that through the power of God and the perseverance of our church, we had not only survived the fire and ashes, but God had led us to a new season in ministry where the vitality of the Holy Spirit and the love of Jesus Christ were leading us forward in faith.

[1] From Wikipedia

Continued on Page 2

What's Inside

**Letter from Pastor
Wayne**

Worship in July

APC Highlights

**APC Mission
Committee Update**

HAAM News

EarthCare Letter

**Birthdays &
Anniversaries**

This Month from Pastor Wayne

Sharing the Jubilee

With a relationship established, we followed up as the campaign began to bring in many generous donations. At the May Commitment Committee meeting \$23,000 was put into the Mission Fund, the first fruits of our effort to reach out with God's love through mission support. The Mission Committee met in June. Realizing we actually had some financial resources available, we stepped up our efforts with Pacific Palisades. As we discussed with them what immediate needs the church faced, we also asked how the fire had affected their community. One of their elders sent us this note:

You asked about how the fire affected our congregation and our recovery efforts. We all thought that the fire, which started 3-4 miles from the church on January 7, would be promptly extinguished. But within 24 hours, with the aid of extreme wind conditions, our church was completely destroyed as were some 7,000 homes and businesses in our community. Our beloved sanctuary (constructed in 1999), office buildings and preschool were all lost. And, we had just celebrated the church's 75th anniversary. As we began to deal with the loss, our two pastors reminded us that a church is its faith community and that the buildings simply provided us with a place to gather and worship. Within days, they arranged for us to gather for worship on Sunday afternoons at nearby Westwood Presbyterian. A month later we relocated to Culver City Presbyterian where we worshiped until about a month ago when we moved to Brentwood Presbyterian, the closest church to the Pacific Palisades community. We expect to share space with Brentwood for at least two years. As we immediately began addressing the clearance of debris and rubble from the church site, we formed a small task force to work with our insurance claims' adjuster, FEMA, the city, state, etc. Now, after 5 months, we are beginning to focus on our future: do we rebuild on our devastated site? If so, when and what will we need? Will our destroyed community be restored and when? Can we sustain our congregation when so many have been displaced? We meet often to address these many questions and to discern God's will for our church.

In the meantime, we are blessed to have congregations such as Atascocita Presbyterian pray for us and share their undoubtedly modest resources so that we might realize restoration in order to meet the needs of our congregation and the devastated Pacific Palisades community.

*We are so very grateful,
George Browning, Elder*

Something about that response touched a place in my heart I didn't realize existed. We were not even here when our church burned. But through serving alongside this precious church, and through the process of the Jubilee Campaign, we have come to understand the deep faith that emerged from a devastating loss. And now brothers and sisters in Christ are walking that same journey. Just to read those few ending words from George Browning sets my spirit on fire with gratitude. "We are so very grateful." We have not only retired our debt, we have now embraced our role as ones who share Jubilee with others, as ones who bring hope to others, as ones who gladly accept the call to share God's love with a hurting world.

The Session of APC approved on Sunday, June 15, to send a gift of \$5,000 to Pacific Palisades Presbyterian Church. As the letter from George Browning explains so clearly, their community is scattered and finding a meeting place has presented a tremendous challenge. Their request was for financial assistance to rebuild their website and their weekly newsletter, the two primary means the church has to keep their community informed and connected in this time of displacement.

I hope you will share in the joy of this first mission project. In a small, but very real way, we are sharing Jubilee with another group of Christians, Christians we have never met, and yet Christians who are truly our brothers and sisters in faith. I am so grateful for the vision of our church, the Atascocita Presbyterian Church. May the coming days find us continuing to reach out and bring hope to a hurting world.

With the love of Christ,
Wayne

Worship in July

July 6: *I can only imagine*
(Mark 2:1-12)

July 13: *Good soil* (Luke 8:4-8)

July 20: *Jesus calms the storms* (Luke 8:22-25)

July 27: *Jesus calms the troubled soul* (Luke 8:26-39)



Americans eat about 150 million hot dogs on the 4th of July! That's enough to stretch from Houston to Washington, D.C. over 11 times! Now that's a *frankly* impressive celebration of freedom.



Office Hours

Pastor Wayne Eberly

Mon-Wed
9 AM – 2 PM

Gail Mayers-Tran

Mon-Fri
9 AM – 2 PM

Church Staff

Pastor - Reverend Wayne Eberly

Office Coordinator - Gail Mayers-Tran

Director of Music - Joe Weir

Pianist - Carl Braden

Director of Creative Learning Center - Cathy Gerald

JUNE 8, 2025

JUBILEE AT APC



Dear Atascocita Presbyterian Congregation and Friends,

It is with abundant praise and sincere appreciation that we thank all the committee chairmen and members who gave so much of their time and talents to make the "Jubilee at APC" successful.

On behalf of the committee, we also want to thank the congregation and friends of APS for their generous pledges and contributions that helped us surpass the original goal of \$425,000.00.

Most importantly, we thank God for leading us in this endeavor and blessing us with each step of the campaign. Lastly, but not least we thank Pastor Wayne and Julie for their enthusiasm, love and guidance throughout this process. We cannot thank you enough.

This church is such a blessing to both of us.

With Heartfelt Thanks,
Will and Charis Nees

APC Summer Camp 2025

The APC 2025 Summer Camps were an adventure in learning, laughing, and creating with Music, Science, and Art and lots of fun. The Christian Growth and Nurture Committee extends our deepest gratitude to those who donated their time and talents to our Summer Camp program. We could not have achieved this level of success or fun without each of you. Everybody please be sure to thank Pastor Wayne, Erik Jones, Summer McKay, Joyce Olson, Lisa Cruz, Libby Boyce, Lisa Stacy, Cathay Gerald, Tara Colescott, Lisa Clark, Terry Harshaw, Alaina Harshaw, Julie Eberly, William Nelson, Boni Russell, Melissa Fry, Rayne Fry, Terri Thomson, the guys from Sportball and of course the wonderful children who added the joy and laughter.

Memories Made Here!



Ancient Mariners Road Trip

On June 20th, the Ancient Mariners set sail for an unforgettable evening aboard the Yellowstone Paddle Wheeler!



APC Houston Food Bank Service Day

Service Day at the Houston Food Bank – June 23

APC volunteers rolled up their sleeves to help fight hunger and presented a \$1,000 donation — tripled through a special 3-to-1 match! A morning of hard work, big hearts, and even bigger impact.

APC Mission Committee: Mid-Year Update

As we pass the midyear point, the Mission Committee wants to share a brief update on how your support has helped make a difference this year. Through your giving, volunteering, and prayers, we've been able to serve our neighbors both locally and globally in meaningful ways.

HAAM

We renewed our covenant partnership with HAAM, supported them financially, and collected nonperishable items and monetary donations during the Souper Bowl of Caring. Your generosity continues to help families in our local community access essential resources.

Sleep in Heavenly Peace

Our work with Sleep in Heavenly Peace has expanded in a big way. So far this year, APC volunteers have helped deliver 130 beds to children in need, donated 43 "beds in a bag" sets, and partnered with FedEx to build 50 new beds. Thank you to everyone who helped make sure kids in our community have a safe and comfortable place to sleep.

Houston Food Bank

A group from APC volunteered at the Houston Food Bank to help combat hunger in our region. In addition to hands-on service, we provided financial support to assist the Food Bank in its mission to feed families across Southeast Texas.

Family Promise

Our partnership with Family Promise remains strong. This year, we've hosted families at the church, provided financial support, and contributed funds toward the purchase of new beds and bedding for guests. Your involvement helped provide both shelter and comfort to families in transition.

Seafarers Center

We supported the Seafarers Center with a monetary donation to help care for international seafarers who dock in Houston. These funds go toward providing hospitality, spiritual support, and much-needed resources for workers far from home.

Earth Care & Community Garden

Our Earth Care team continues to lead efforts in environmental stewardship. The APC Community Garden, part of this initiative, donated over 300 pounds of fresh produce to HAAM in 2024. As of mid-2025, we've already donated 31 pounds, and with our garden expansion, we expect to surpass last year's total.

Blood Drive

This spring, we hosted a successful blood drive—thank you to all who rolled up their sleeves to save lives and support our community's health care needs. Based on its success, we plan to make the blood drive an annual tradition at APC.

Kids Hope at Oaks Elementary

Through Kids Hope USA, APC mentors have been meeting weekly with students at Oaks Elementary, building relationships and offering encouragement. We wrapped up the school year with a joyful end-of-year celebration, supported by the Celebration Fund.

Faith in Practice

We sent funds to support Faith in Practice, an organization providing medical mission work in Guatemala. Your giving helped send doctors, nurses, and volunteers to serve patients who otherwise have limited access to care.

Tres Rios Border Foundation

We supported the Tres Rios Border Foundation with a financial donation and hosted their director for an informational session. This opportunity helped our congregation learn more about challenges and ministry efforts along the U.S.–Mexico border.

Pacific Palisades Presbyterian Church

Thanks to your generosity to the Jubilee Fund, we were able to contribute \$5,000 to Pacific Palisades Presbyterian Church in California. This gift is helping them rebuild their website and newsletter capabilities after they lost their building in the Los Angeles area wildfires earlier this year.

Mission Trip Planning

We've begun organizing a mission trip to North Carolina to assist with rebuilding efforts after Hurricane Helene. Keep an eye out for meeting announcements, or reach out to Pastor Wayne if you're interested in learning more or getting involved.

Thank you for all the ways you've supported APC's mission efforts so far this year. Your generosity has helped deliver 130 beds to children, donate over 30 pounds of fresh produce, support food and housing ministries, fund international medical care, and provide \$5,000 to help a sister church recover from disaster. Whether you gave time, funds, prayers, or encouragement—it made a difference. We look forward to what's ahead in the second half of 2025!

Jamie Hannan
Moderator, APC Mission Committee

HAAM NEWS

BACK-TO-SCHOOL FOOD BAG

HAAM is once again teaming up with Humble ISD to co-host the Erase the Needs Fair for families preparing for the 2025-2026 school year. Last year, this meaningful collaboration provided 1,000 food bags to families in our community – a goal we are committed to reaching again this year. To help achieve this goal, we are invited to contribute by donating food. There are three ways to participate:

- Option 1: Collect all of the items and pack in a reusable bag as explained below.
- Option 2: Collect any of the items and leave them in the grocery bag.
- Option 3: Donate cash (Give to George or Gail).

Food Bags

- Gather the items below and pack neatly into a reusable bag.
- Tie the handles of the bag in a knot so nothing falls out.
- NO GLASS JARS PLEASE.

Item	Quantity
Reusable Cloth Bag	1
Box of Cereal	1
1 lb. Bag of Rice	1
1 lb. Bag of Beans	1
Canned Fruit	1
Peanut Butter	1
Can of Tomato Sauce	1
Cans of Soup	2
Cans of Tuna	2
Cans of Chicken	2
Boxes of Mac & Cheese	2
Box of Pasta	1
Cans of Green Beans	2
Cans of Corn	2

The items needed are listed below and should be dropped off at the church by Sunday, July 20th. Thank you for your continued support of HAMM. If you have any questions, please contact George Williams at 281-772-4706.

Wildflower Garden Coming to APC – Watch for It!

With great anticipation, let's watch for our new wildflower garden just outside the east narthex doors to be prepared this August/September. Flowers will be planted in November. Their beauty will emerge next Spring. So, why replace grass with a wildflower garden? Wildflowers are beautiful AND they play an important role in our ecosystems. Our new wildflower garden will have big EarthCare impacts through these benefits:

- Increase biodiversity
- Improve soil health
- Reduce water consumption
- Sequester carbon from atmosphere
- Reduce mowing cost
- Beautify our campus

Our wildflower garden will provide a habitat and pollen-rich flowers as food for beneficial pollinator species – bees, butterflies and hummingbirds. Wildflowers also help provide our food. According to the Natural Resources Conservation Service, about 35% of our world's food crops depend on pollinators to reproduce. Planting wildflowers mitigates global decline in pollinator population. Without pollinators, many plants, including crops, fail to reproduce, posing a serious threat to food security. In urban environments where natural habitats are shrinking or have been destroyed, wildflower gardens contribute pollinator services to sustain natural ecosystems, gardens, and local agriculture. The roots of wildflowers stabilize the soil and hold on to nutrients that might be washed away in the rain. Their presence can improve soil health, prevent erosion, and improve water quality.

Pests and diseases affecting crop yield are farmers' and gardeners' nightmares. Because controlling pest populations is challenging, many growers rely on synthetic pesticides to eliminate pests. However, with wildflowers, pest control is achieved naturally with no need for pesticides. Wildflowers are resistant to pests and diseases because they've evolved to survive in their natural environments and they developed defenses to repel pests. Native wildflowers contain natural compounds making them more resistant to diseases and pests – compounds which have medicinal, antimicrobial and anti-inflammatory properties. Wildflowers attract beneficial insects such as lacewings, hoverflies, and ladybugs to help reduce the pest population by feeding on pests like aphids, thus ensuring environmental sustainability and reducing reliance on harmful chemical pesticides.

Wildflowers naturally prevent soil erosion with extensive root systems holding soil firmly together, stabilizing soil and preventing it from being washed away by rain or blown away by wind. An additional environmental importance of wildflowers in improving soil structure is aerating soil and promoting water infiltration. As wildflowers decompose, they add nutrients to the soil, enhancing its fertility and water retention capacity. Wildflower gardens serve as natural barriers in regions prone to flooding by protecting nearby rivers, streams, and lakes from sedimentation and pollution as they slow water flow during heavy rain. Wildflower gardens support birds (sparrows and finches) and smaller mammals who feed on wildflower seeds. Smaller mammals (rabbits and mice) use wildflower gardens for shelter.

Wildflower Garden Coming to APC - Watch for It!

Wildflowers improve water quality by filtering pollutants before they enter rivers, streams, and lakes as their root systems absorb excessive nutrients like nitrogen and phosphorus often found in fertilizers. Excessive nitrogen and phosphorus in water bodies can affect algal blooms, which directly deplete oxygen levels and threaten aquatic ecosystems.

Since wildflowers grow naturally and thrive in the wild, they don't require the same level of lawn maintenance. They're affordable to maintain, with no regular mowing or watering needed. Some wildflowers are drought-tolerant, can survive in poor soil conditions, and are also self-sowing - reseeding themselves year after year.

Wildflowers improve our air quality by acting as air filters, absorbing carbon dioxide and releasing more oxygen. They filter out volatile organic compounds (VOCs), dust, and pollen, reduce airborne pollutants, and capture particulate matter from vehicle emissions and industrial activities.

As an EarthCare congregation, let's celebrate our upcoming wildflower garden, appreciating their beauty and all they provide for our environmental sustenance!



July Birthdays



Eric Hlavaty	Jul 01	Bobby Grawl	Jul 15
Debora Hedgepath	Jul 03	David McPherson	Jul 15
Mike Ryan	Jul 03	Daniel Michie	Jul 15
Elliott Denmon	Jul 06	Mya Lauer	Jul 17
Dianne Johnson	Jul 06	Sara Lewis	Jul 17
David Reppucci	Jul 06	Summer Humlick	Jul 19
Judy Brookby	Jul 07	Ashli Simms	Jul 19
Katie Hannan	Jul 09	Suzan Bosard	Jul 20
Sine McCarty	Jul 09	Ellen Nipe	Jul 21
Libby Boyce	Jul 10	Allan Griffin	Jul 22
Don Frye Jr.	Jul 11	Melissa Breda	Jul 23
Kathy Gava	Jul 11	Lisa Stacy	Jul 24
Alex Lemer	Jul 12	Will Nees	Jul 27
Jonathan Akrong	Jul 14	Bill Boyce	Jul 30
Sharis Mayer	Jul 14	Joseph Breda	Jul 31
Linda Sheppard	Jul 14	Natalie Burgos	Jul 31
Carol Cutshall	Jul 15		

July Wedding Anniversaries



Marilyn & Chris Friedersdorf	Jul 10
Lisa & Kevin Stacy	Jul 18
Thomas & Carol Hedgepath Sr.	Jul 21
Ronnie & Kristen Knecht	Jul 25

June Attendance & Offerings

2025 Worship Attendance and Offering Summary					
Date	In Person	BoxCast Live	Facebook Live	Total Viewers	Offering Total
1-Jun	109	18	76	203	\$5,278
8-Jun	108	30	164	302	\$3,884
15-Jun	85	18	113	216	\$1,479
22-Jun	79	31	110	220	\$1,706
29-Jun	65	32	132	229	\$1,179
June End of Month Credit Card Receipts					\$6,842
Total June Offerings					\$20,368
Total Offerings for Year-to-date					\$162,350
Budgeted Offerings for Year-to-date					\$187,619