

Valley Voice

Thoughts for the Journey

Dear Friends,

Advent is the time when Christians recall the hope of the coming of the Christ child, and look forward to the Lord's coming again. We wait with expectation, hope, watchfulness, and joy.

This season of Advent gives us an opportunity to get ready for the weeks ahead. I want to invite you to travel along **On the Path to Bethlehem** with other Christian brothers and sisters. Please join us in many of the Advent and Christmas Eve services.

The season of Advent culminates in the celebration of the birth of Christ at Christmas. Emmanuel - God with us. **The Nativity of Jesus Christ.**

An unknown person wrote the following story. It is a story that helps us experience the King of kings and Lord of lords in a different way.

"Long ago, there ruled in Persia a wise and good king. He loved his people. He wanted to know how they lived. He wanted to know about their hardships. Often he dressed in the clothes of a working man or a beggar, and went to the homes of the poor. No one whom he visited thought that he was their ruler. One time he visited a very poor man who lived in a cellar. He ate the coarse food the poor man ate. He spoke cheerful, kind words to him. Then he left.

"Later he visited the poor man again and disclosed his identity by saying, 'I am your king!' The king thought the man would surely ask for some gift or favor, but he didn't. Instead he said, "You left your palace and your glory to visit me in this dark, dreary place. You ate the course food I ate. You brought gladness to my heart! To others you have given your rich gifts. To me you have given yourself!"

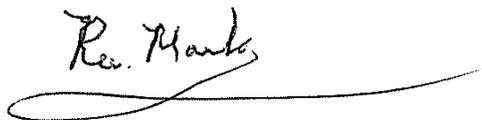
"The King of glory, the Lord Jesus Christ, gave himself to you and me. The Bible calls Him, 'the unspeakable gift!'"

The season awaits us. Everyone is invited to enter the season with hope and expectation.

A few items for the path ahead.

- **Communion Sunday is December 2.**
- **Christmas Cantata "The Christmas Story" is on December 16.**
- **Christmas Joy Offering taken throughout the month of December. Envelopes available in the pew racks.**
- **Staff Gift taken on Sunday, December 9 & 16.**
- **Christmas Eve service at 4:00 p.m. in Fellowship Hall, and**
- **Christmas Eve Candlelight service at 7:00 p.m. in the Sanctuary.**

Yours in Christ,



Rev. Mark A. Medina, Transitional Pastor

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Small Things

Recently, I discovered a website that has pictures of grains of sand magnified to 300 times their actual size. The magnified sand particles look like jewels (check it out at sandgrains.com). I never imagined something so small as sand could be so beautiful. When I think of sand, I think of the beach where I get dirty and grimy. Sand is often an annoyance to me, not a thing of beauty.

Sometimes life can be discouraging because it is filled with small things – dishes, laundry, cooking, cleaning, running errands, etc. Not a whole lot of beauty in these things.

Yet, God says in Zechariah 4:10 "Do not despise the day of small things." (Diane's version)

Did you know that God does some of His best work with small things?

God used one small stone and a small person to kill a giant (David).

God used a still, small voice to comfort a burned out prophet (Elijah).

God used an army of hundreds to defeat an enemy of thousands (Gideon).

God used a trumpet to break down a city's stone wall (Joshua).

God used a boy's lunch to feed 5,000 people.

Jesus worked with only 12 disciples who changed the world.

God's use of small things is all over the Bible.

So do not become discouraged when your life seems filled with small things. God can take those small things and work beauty in them. You just have to notice.

As we enter into Advent and approach Christmas, there is another small "thing." A small baby. God coming in a small package to be with us, a package that burps, poops and cries. Jesus was small, vulnerable and dependent. He was born in an animal stable. Nothing grand in our eyes. Yet this small package became the Savior of the world. The gospel comes to us in the smallness of a baby to show the bigness of God's love.

Do not despise the day of small things, my friends. God uses small things to surprise us, accomplish the extraordinary, and demonstrate God's love for us.



Rev. Diane Christopher, Pastor of Discipleship



Promoted to Glory



October 25
November 5

Fran Eustis
Maybelle McClure

Crossroads Nogales Mission Asks for Food Donations

Submitted by Janice Potter

Crossroads Nogales Mission has put out a request for the following food items: Canned fruit and vegetables, macaroni & cheese, powdered milk, sugar, rice, jelly, peanut butter, and tomato sauce.

If you can help, please place your donations in the box on the second shelf of the food cart.

Thank you for your kindness!

Supper Clusters

By Carmen Nylund, Organizer

Supper Clusters are in the process of being formed, but if you missed signing up, it's not too late.

Sign-up forms are still available in the church office. Just pick one up, fill it out, and leave it with the receptionist by December 17. Don't miss out! Supper Clusters are a lot of fun and a good way to get to know other folks who attend VPC.

Do you love children? Do you long to see more children here at Valley?

We are experiencing a great need for Children's Sunday School teachers starting in January. Teachers teach once a month with curriculum we provide. For more information, contact Pastor Diane (625-5023).

Mission Breakfast

January 19 at 8:30 a.m. in Fellowship Hall

Submitted by Doug Clark

Did you miss our November Mission Breakfast with Patti O' Berry? You missed a God-centered witness to His power and glory. Patti gave all credit for the Hands of a Friend's success in helping women, and her personal battle with cancer, to the hand of God and His provision. This journey inspired, informed, and invigorated all to trust in God and use His power through prayer. 61 tickets were sold for a great, inexpensive pancake breakfast with an opportunity to pray together, to have spiritual growth, and to practice fellowship. While not a goal, the freewill offering was generous, over \$1,100, and is greatly needed by the Hands of a Friend ministry. If you missed this event, the next Mission Breakfast is January 19, 2019 at 8:30 a.m. in Fellowship Hall. We are excited to feature Pam and Dave L, Operation Mobilization missionaries to Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Iran. This will be their third visit to Valley Presbyterian Church. Do you remember Pam praying over our old stove to make it work, their story of a cockroach kiss on their honeymoon, or God's amazing success through them to many, many, unreached souls? Dave will be bringing the message to our congregation on January 20, 2019, for Mission Sunday. Mark your calendars; you will not want to miss these events. You will be blessed.

Valley Readers

Monday, December 10
12:00 p.m.



Valley Readers will have their traditional holiday book exchange on Monday, December 10 at 12:00 noon. Please bring a gently used book from your own library that you think others would like to read, wrapped with no name. Each person picks a package when her number is drawn and can either keep it or exchange it for another book that has already been unwrapped. Lots of laughs and good times are guaranteed.

Please call Anne Morrison if you need additional information at 520-399-0762.

Around the Table Celebration

An informal, family-style Christmas Eve
worship service

4 p.m. Christmas Eve in Fellowship Hall

Sounds intriguing, doesn't it? What is an informal, family-style Christmas Eve worship service?

It is a worship service in a different location. We will be in Fellowship Hall sitting at round tables...just like a family.

It is a worship service with lots of Christmas carols. Joel will lead us in singing as together we tell the Christmas story through song and scriptures...like a family at table.

It is a worship service with an informal message by Pastor Diane as we look for the missing Jesus in our Nativity set. (Yes, children are welcome!)

It is a worship service that includes a potluck meal...eating together like a family at table. Bring your best Christmas dish, appetizer, or desert.

It is a worship service that includes communion at your tables as we serve one another...just like a family at table.

Please join us as we celebrate the birth of Jesus in a new way at Valley. Invite friends and neighbors, and bring them as your guest...just as you did in your family.

Christmas Caroling

Saturday, December 15 at 2:00 p.m.

We would like to invite everyone to join the Fellowship Committee, supported by the Valley Galley crew, to go Christmas caroling with us Saturday, December 15. First we will go to the Las Campanas Recreation Center at 2:00 p.m., sing Christmas songs, and have cocoa and cookies. Next, we head to the Sunrise Pointe Recreation Center at 3:30 p.m. and do the same there. We would love to have you join us to get into the Christmas spirit.

Join us for Taizé Worship

First Wednesday of every month at 5:00 p.m. in the Spiritual Life Center
The next Taizé is December 5

If you have not experienced Taizé worship, please come for a service of beautiful music, candlelight, prayer and scripture. If all that isn't beautiful enough, these services will often feature guest musicians as well.



Empty Bowls at Valley Presbyterian Church 13 years of filling bowls that have become empty

Saturday, February 16. Three seatings beginning at 11:00 a.m.

The original Empty Bowls event started in 1990 with a high school art teacher in Michigan and his students, who were searching for a way to raise money. Guests were served a simple meal of soup and bread. They were asked to keep the bowl as a reminder of those who could not have one. This became known as "Empty Bowls."

Now, thirteen years after the first Empty Bowls event by Valley Assistance in 2006, many bowls remain empty in our area. The number of those needing assistance keeps growing each year. This year, Valley Assistance celebrates thirteen years of holding the Empty Bowls event at Valley Presbyterian Church. This year the overwhelming needs have grown to over 5,000. Families and seniors are choosing between rent and health, food or prescriptions.

Thanks to the creativity of local potters (Green Valley Ceramics Studio, Quail Creek Clay Studio and the Quail Creek Ceramics Club), local restaurants, businesses who donate to this popular event, Valley Presbyterian Church, and so many wonderful volunteers, participants can select a handmade bowl (a new selection is available at each seating) and enjoy soup from one of 16 local restaurants. As you sample donated soup from local chefs, please take the bowl home as a reminder... that someone's bowl is always empty and you have helped fill some of that bowl.

Tickets are available for \$20 in advance and will be sold in Charter Hall after Sunday worship services January 6 through February 10. At the door, the tickets will be \$25. There will be three seatings beginning at 11 a.m. Join us and participate in Empty Bowls, Saturday, February 16, 2019 at Valley Presbyterian Church. Call Valley Assistance Services at 625-5966 for more information, or if you would like to volunteer during Empty Bowls.



Friendship Kettle Dinner

**Sunday, December 16
5 p.m. in Fellowship Hall**

The Green Valley Saxophone Quartet

Dinner: A delicious meal of Pork Tenderloin, vegetables and dessert will be served promptly at 5:00 p.m.

Program: At 6:00 p.m., join us in the sanctuary for an evening of music featuring the **Green Valley Saxophone Quartet**.

Tickets: (\$13) will be on sale in Fellowship Hall prior to, and following, the services on Sunday, December 2 and 9.

Volunteers: The Kettle Dinner is in need of volunteers to help with serving. If you are interested and can help, please sign up when you purchase your tickets.

Wednesdays in Advent

December 5, 12, and 19 starting at 5 p.m.

We have something special planned for you on Wednesday evenings during Advent. Please join us as we journey to Bethlehem during the month of December. Each Wednesday evening in December will include the following:

5:00 p.m. - Worship in the Spiritual Life Center

Each Wednesday will be a different type worship.

5:45 p.m. - Meal

A simple meal will be provided by various cooks in our congregation.

6:15 p.m. - The Music of Christmas

Music enthusiasts from our congregation teach us about the music found at Christmas time.

December 5: *Advent Messages in Christmas Music* led by Linda Freeman

Christmas music is not just heard in churches – it is everywhere. For each bit of music we hear in stores, restaurants, and our homes, we can weave in the messages of our Advent Wreath liturgy titled *Christ Be Our Light*. Here are samples of Christmas music with the weekly candle's message:

- anticipation – *Here Comes Santa Claus*
- comfort – *There is No Place Like Home for the Holidays*
- the glory of God – *I'm Dreaming of a White Christmas*
- healing after being hurt – *Rudolf will be asked to play with the other reindeer*

This class reminds us that the Light of Christ shines in the world around us – we only have to listen.

December 12: *Inside VPC's Music Ministry* with Joel Pierce

Have you ever wondered what goes into a music ministry, especially one as large as VPC's? Joel will give an interactive class/tour of the music area at Valley Presbyterian. You'll help Joel examine scripture, choose and sing some hymns, try out some Orff instruments, ring some handbells and more!

December 19: *The Messiah* led by Eloise Fredrickson

The *Messiah* has become as much a part of Christmas as evergreens, candy canes, and jingle bells. But did you know that the oratorio was not meant to be performed at Christmas? Given the fact that the text is Biblical and Handel dedicated it by writing "To God be the glory," why was it considered blasphemous by those who first heard it? We will learn about Handel and the music of his time and listen to some of the favorite choruses. Maybe we will even discover how the custom of standing during the *Hallelujah Chorus* began.

Patio Sale Dates for 2018

Sorting: December 13 at 8:00 a.m.

More Blog Readers Wanted (12 and Counting)

Submitted by Doug Clark

A blog reader is anyone with access to a computer who can type in “bobandkristi.blogspot.com.” Have you ever wanted to read a missionary’s diary? Consider reading the real-life story of Bob and Kristi Rice, who share, on a weekly basis, the story of God working in their lives.

Celebrating Peace

Last Wednesday, October 31, was a big celebration in Juba of the recent peace agreement in South Sudan. Several African presidents came to attend, along with leaders of opposition parties in South Sudan. As the city of Juba was busy preparing for the celebration by painting curbs, picking up trash and sending truck-loads of soldiers to beef up security, we were not sure what to expect. Leaders who had been at war were going to be in the same location. We were advised to stay home and lay low rather than join the crowds at Freedom Field.

Wednesday morning we heard commotion and voices in the street. After the recent shooting incident, I am rather reticent to head to the window when there is a commotion. But when we did, we saw hundreds of people lining up for a parade, with banners proclaiming peace. Boy Scouts and Girl Guides, women dressed in white, men and women in traditional clothes and dancers decked out in their tribal outfits – the lines of people stretched long distances down the street. A truck with big speakers provided some music, and they began their march toward Freedom Square – about a 2 mile hike. It was not an ordinary left-right march, either, but one with a few dance steps thrown in that gave it a real celebratory feel.

On Friday, Bob talked to Abraham, a fellow teacher at NTC. Abraham had arrived around 6AM to the celebration, and STOOD in the packed crowd of people for 12 hours. No food, no water. But he said he enjoyed seeing the dances of various tribal groups who performed, and was thrilled to be there to witness the historic event. He also saw many friends and familiar faces and described it as a “reunion,” a mixed group with all tribes together. A young woman who cleans in our building had to work the day of the celebration, but she went to the parade grounds in the evening and joined in the dancing and celebrating all night long. When we visited our friend Mary at her tea stall, she excitedly related how her kids could not sleep the whole night before the big celebration, because of all the commotion and rejoicing in the street. “Peace has really come,” she said, “But there is still a lot of work to do to help people to forgive and learn to live together.”



The parade lines up. One of the banners near the front reads “Welcome peace to every hut and heart”



We rejoice at this significant step forward in the quest for peace in South Sudan. We continue to pray, to work, and to look forward to seeing lasting peace come this land. We know that the wounds are deep and the healing will be hard, and only Christ can carry the pain and transform lives. Please join us in praying for true peace, for effective implementation by the government of this

peace agreement, and for the Church who has a great responsibility to model reconciliation and forgiveness that is beyond our human ability.

The past blogs read like a real-life novel, chronicling God in action through the writings of Bob and Kristi Rice. Please join me in following our missionaries, and let me know if you have joined the blog brigade by telling me, or emailing me (dougclark68@me.com).

Men's Weekday Bible Studies

Tuesdays at 8:00 a.m. and Wednesdays at 9:00 a.m.

***Two church-sponsored men's groups meet during the week,
and they would be glad to have you join them!***

The first group meets on Tuesday mornings at 8:00 a.m. They are now reviewing Warren Wiersbe's commentary "Be Loyal" on the Gospel of Matthew. A group of six men meet in the Media Room of the Silver Springs Retirement Community for fellowship and study and an all-around lively discussion. Anyone interested may join. Dave Tompkins is the leader (399-3500).

This group, with about six to thirteen men attending each week, meets Wednesday mornings at 9:00 a.m. This group meets at the church for one hour in classroom 1. The group is facilitated by Larry Phillips (777-8027), but focuses on group discussion. They use the NavPress Life Change Series study guide. They are studying the gospel of Matthew. Join the group any time to participate in the discussion or just to listen. In either case, your presence will be welcomed. Lessons are self-contained so feel free to join the group when able. **NOTE: The Wednesday group will only meet on December 5 and 12, then they will take a break. They will resume on January 9.**

The Inquisitors

**The History of Christianity:
From the Disciples through the Dawn of the Reformation**

Fridays at 1:30 p.m. in Classroom 1

The Inquisitors explores and attempts to understand "The History of Christianity from the Disciples through the Dawn of The Reformation," with Professor Luke Timothy Johnson. We have enjoyed a number of Professor Johnson's courses in the past. This course will examine how Christianity has interacted within different political and cultural contexts. The course will address what are usually regarded as the more "religious" aspects of Christianity: its experiences and convictions, its beliefs and practices, its mode of worship and its manner of life. These lectures will provide us with a new understanding of how Christianity has evolved and definitely enrich our background in our faith.

This class meets on Fridays from 1:30 - 3:00. We will not meet on the day after Thanksgiving or during the holidays.

Christianity and World Religions

Wednesdays at 11:00 a.m. beginning January 8

This class will cover Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam and Judaism.

Forming Your Faith: An Adult Sunday School Class

8:30 a.m. in Classroom 5

Start your Sunday mornings with study and conversation. The class discusses the sermon scriptures being read during the worship service that day. Be enriched as you hear how God speaks to others through the scriptures, and then hear the thoughts of the preacher of the day. This class is open to all, so please join us.

Moses

Thursday afternoons at 1 p.m. beginning January 17

The people who attended this class in the fall liked it so much they want more people to enjoy it. Therefore, we are offering it again.

Look for more information about these classes in the January Valley Voice.



December 30 is the fifth Sunday of the month, and you know what that means! Please gather up your loose change and toss it into the buckets during our noisy offering to help our mission programs. The recipient of this month's gifts will be the Pastor's Discretionary Fund.

What is the Pastor's Discretionary Fund?

Pastor Diane tells this story: "One afternoon, a man walked into the church office asking to see a pastor. I was available, and brought him to my office. He was new to the area, had a job lined up with a mine company, but he was out of money and gas for his car. He needed some funds to tie him over until his first paycheck. Could we help? Our church has a fund called the Pastors' Discretionary Fund. It is a fund that we pastors can use for people who walk-in or phone-in requesting help. It depends solely on donations. On the day this man walked into my office, the Pastor's Discretionary Fund was empty. I wanted to help, so I gave him some of my money to buy gas."

Today that fund is still empty. Donating your loose change on Noisy Offering Sunday (December 30) will help the pastors assist those in need in our community.

Advent Devotionals

Available beginning Sunday, November 25

Called "Hope-full Living," the devotionals will be at the Welcome Centers and the Faith Formation Kiosk in the Fellowship Hall.

We have plenty, so pick some up for friends and neighbors.

TO PROVIDE FEEDBACK OR COMMENTS TO THE WORSHIP COMMITTEE, PLEASE SUBMIT AN ONLINE FEEDBACK FORM AT WWW.VALLEYPRESBYTERIAN.NET/WORSHIP (OR CLICK ON THE WORSHIP TAB FROM ANYWHERE ON OUR WEBSITE). THE FORM IS IN THE BOTTOM-RIGHT CORNER OF THE WORSHIP PAGE.



SPECIAL BIRTHDAY MILESTONES!

Special birthday greetings to Carol Gutenkunst (December 29) as she celebrates her **90th birthday** this month!



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed
December 2018			
2 Communion Food Bank Collection 8:30 Adult Bible Study 9:00 Worship & Communion at LaJoya 9:15 Childcare 9:30 Service of Worship  Ron Bell, Betty Kiesle-Yoder, Helen Triplett	3 9:00 Parkinson's Exercise 9:00 Peace & Justice Resource 9:00 Mission Quilting 10:00 Chair Exercise Class 10:00 AAUW Meeting	4 8:00 Men's Bible Study (Silver Springs) 8:15 Staff Meeting 8:30 WM Coordinating Team 9:30 Prayer Ministry 10:00 Women's Ministries Bible Study 11:00 NOC Meeting 11:00 Employee Appreciation Lunch 2:00 Joyful Spirit Ensemble & Valley Ringers Concert  Larry Grove, Ruth Kroon	5 8:00 Ministry Of 9:00 Parkinson's 9:00 Men's Bible 10:00 Chair Exercise 1:00 Worship 5:00 Advent Service 6:15 The Music of  Earl Yarborough
9 Just Coffee 8:30 Adult Bible Study 9:15 Childcare 9:30 Service of Worship  Bill Case	10 9:00 Parkinson's Exercise 10:00 Chair Exercise Class 12:00 Valley Readers' Book Exchange 7:00 GV Community Chorus Concert  Frances Hayes	11 8:00 Men's Bible Study (Silver Springs) 8:15 Staff Meeting 8:45 Mission Committee 9:30 Prayer Ministry 1:00 Personnel Committee 2:30 GV Community Chorus Concert 3:30 Joyful Spirit Ensemble  Jeffrey Hawkins	12 8:15 Crossroads 9:00 Parkinson's 9:00 Men's Bible 9:00 Deacons 10:00 Chair Exercise 10:00 Lois Circle 1:00 Miriam Circle 5:00 Advent Service 6:15 The Music of  Carol Yarborough
16 8:30 Adult Bible Study 9:00 Worship at La Joya 9:15 Childcare 9:30 Service of Worship 10:45 Blood Pressure Screening 5:00 Friendship Kettle Dinner  Carol Claton, Hank Pederson Jr.	17 9:00 Parkinson's Exercise 9:00 Mission Quilting 10:00 Chair Exercise Class 4:00 Ruth Circle	18 8:00 Men's Bible Study (Silver Springs) 8:15 Staff Meeting 9:30 Prayer Ministry 11:30 Women's Gathering 1:30 Finance Committee 3:30 Joyful Spirit Ensemble	19 8:15 Crossroads 9:00 Parkinson's 10:00 Chair Exercise 5:00 Advent Service 6:15 The Music of  Kelly Lorrain
23 Just Coffee 8:30 Adult Bible Study 9:15 Childcare 9:30 Service of Worship	24 9:00 Parkinson's Exercise 10:00 Chair Exercise Class 4:00 Around The Table Service 7:00 Candlelight Worship Service  Bill Zwicke	25 CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED  Carol Cikanek, Joyce Smith	26 9:00 Parkinson's 10:00 Chair Exercise  Dave Nutting
30 8:30 Adult Bible Study 9:15 Childcare 9:30 Service of Worship  Tom Macfarlane, Anne Morrison	31 9:00 Parkinson's Exercise 10:00 Chair Exercise Class		

	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 7:00 Communion Prep 3:00 Civic Orchestra Of Tucson  Rick Nau
Presence Exercise Study Class Committee and Meal Christmas	6 9:00 Congregational Care Leaders 1:00 Alzheimer's Caregivers 2:15 Valley Ringers Rehearsal 3:45 Choir Rehearsal	7 CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED 9:00 Parkinson's Exercise 10:00 Chair Exercise Class 1:30 Inquisitors Class: The History of Christianity 7:00 Music In The Valley: Flutefinity & Harpfusion  Donna Allen	8  John Agner, John Dunham
Mission Lunch Prep Exercise Study Meeting Class and Meal Christmas	13 8:00 Patio Sale Sorting & Marking 9:00 Faith & Health Committee 2:15 Valley Ringers Rehearsal 3:45 Choir Rehearsal  Gene Arnold, Sadie St. John, Louise Netherton, Larry Root	14 CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED 8:00 Cookies for Home-bound 9:00 Parkinson's Exercise 9:00 Stephen Ministers Continuing Ed. 10:00 Chair Exercise Class 10:00 Stephen Ministry Peer Group 11:00 Stephen Ministry Leaders Meeting 1:30 Inquisitors Class: The History of Christianity  Ron Erickson, James Montgomery, Gary Yanamura	15
Mission Lunch Prep Exercise Class and Meal Christmas	20 12:00 Longest Night Service 1:00 Alzheimer's Caregivers 1:00 GV Genealogical Society 2:15 Valley Ringers Rehearsal 3:45 Choir Rehearsal  De Etta Haynes	21 CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED 9:00 Parkinson's Exercise 10:00 Chair Exercise Class 10:00 Parkinson's Board Meeting 1:30 Inquisitors Class: The History of Christianity  Judy Aguayo	22  Jeannie Moore, Carol Peeler
Exercise Class	27 8:00 Session Meeting 2:15 Valley Ringers Rehearsal 3:45 Choir Rehearsal  Peggy Klap	28 CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED 9:00 Parkinson's Exercise 10:00 Chair Exercise Class  Joy Johnson, Bette Stevenson	29  Christina Baxter, Mary Lou Browne, Carol Gutenkunst



Don't get freaked out as this isn't likely to result in your bank accounts being savaged (unless you fully participate and make some big errors in judgement), but there is a scam happening on Facebook that I want you to be aware of because every time I personally see it directed at me, the identity of people from this congregation are the ones being used. Several friends on my Facebook feed have mentioned that it's happening to them so this particular scam seems to have seen a burst of activity just recently across all demographics. However, in my personal experience, I'm only seeing it happen with friends from Green Valley, and I'm willing to bet our Green Valley demographic is targeted more often than others.

Here is what happens: Someone goes on your Facebook profile and copies your profile photo to their computer, and they also note your name and birthdate. Then, they use that information to create a fake profile pretending to be you. They are NOT hacking into your account, they are merely taking publicly available information to create a completely separate account that pretends to be you. Then, they look at your list of friends and attempt to add those same people as friends to this fake profile. This is what I keep seeing in my own Facebook account- new friend requests from VPC people who are already my friend. Since the targeted people recognize your name and picture, they usually accept without a thought. At this point, what happens next is mostly speculation (though I have seen it happen with hacked accounts). The fake person may start a conversation with you (private message) asking how you are doing, etc., but will eventually tell you about an "opportunity" and invite you to share in it, or they might tell you about some trouble they are having and ask you to help. This is when the red flags should start appearing in abundance, and you should unfriend that person.

There are legitimate reasons why someone might choose to create a new or second profile, so it's not always a scam. However, that would be the exception, not the rule. Here is how you can avoid falling for it when it is a scam: When you get a friend request - and especially if it's someone who is already your friend - go look at the profile. Are there any posts, especially going back over time, or is the account new and void of posts from the person themselves? If it shows posts from the person that go back over time, it's probably legit. If not, I would not add them until/unless you can verify with them that they have a new account and asked you to be their friend. I've even been known to send them a private message and ask them a trick question that only they would know the answer to (like, "What committee do you serve on at VPC?" or, "What did we chat about after worship last week?"). Just make sure the answers to your question can't be found on their profile because the scammer just might look. You can always give the person a call and ask if they sent you a friend request, too.

What if you have already added people that you now think might be fake? Go look at the profiles, and if you are in doubt, either unfriend them or talk to the person directly and ask if they friended you. If you compare two profiles you should be able to tell which one is real and which is not based on the content.

What if your profile has been duplicated and someone is pretending to be you? You can search Facebook for your name and see if your name, along with your photo (or no photo), shows up more than once. If you see more than one, remember one is yours, but then make sure any others really are a fake duplicate rather than someone who happens to share your same name. Look at the other profile closely - are they using your birthdate and/or photos? If so, you can report it to Facebook as someone pretending to be you. I did this recently and it turned out to be an account I must have created at some point long ago with a different email than I normally use, because I received an email at that account saying that my Facebook profile had been flagged and was going to be shut down unless I responded to verify it was real. Since I didn't even remember I had that account, I let them close it down, but it was nice to see how Facebook handles reports of fake accounts.

Sometimes, a Facebook profile actually gets hacked and the hacker will start to talk to that person's friends in a private message. This happened to me with my uncle's account. I rarely hear *(continued next page)*

from him so that was odd in itself, but when he started to talk to me about an opportunity I knew it was not really him. Since it came from an account I knew was truly his, I let my uncle know his account had been hacked so he could go in and change his password. Changing the password will block the hacker from access and solve the problem in that case.

Again, the risks aren't huge as long as you use common sense and don't send money or give out personal information over messages, so don't be afraid of Facebook overall. Be aware, be skeptical, and stay safe.



Submitted by Mary Horn - Mission Committee Liaison to Youth on Their Own

Spread the Warmth



Let's spread some **CHRISTMAS CHEER** to homeless youth in our area this **CHRISTMAS!** YOTO is asking for donations of \$25 Gift Cards from Walmart or Target and/or a new plush throw or blanket. There will be a table awaiting your donations in Fellowship Hall after the services on Sunday, December 2 and Sunday, December 9. Hope to see you there! Questions? Please call or email Mary Horn, Mission Committee Liaison to Youth on Their Own (520-282-1390 or mmhorn@me.com).

Offering Envelopes

Offering envelopes for the year 2019 will be delivered to the church office by late December. Please stop by and pick up your envelopes for the entire year of 2019! No envelopes for 2019 will be mailed. You must stop by the office and pick them up. Thank you.

Operation Christmas Child

Submitted by Janice Potter

I am happy to report that 80 shoe boxes were filled for children around the world.

Thank you all who gave your time to do this, and also thank you for your promptness in returning the boxes. They are on their way! Keep up the prayers!

Welcome, New Members



Joe and Leslie Bruce

Geneva Halliday

Linda Kucera



James and Sue Luhring

Thomas Spurlock

Session Notes from November

Submitted by Charlie Ashton, Clerk of Session

- Received the following as members: Joe and Lesley Bruce, Geneva Halliday, Lind Kucera, Jim and Sue Luhring, and Tom Spurlock.
- Approved celebrating Employee Appreciation Day on December 4, 2018.
- Approved a new media policy for Valley Presbyterian's external communications.
- Received a report that the Nominating Committee is scheduling interviews for the Pastor Nominating Committee.



News of Note

By Joel Pierce



Thank you to all who attended and raised their voices in song at our annual Music Ministry Sunday. What a wonderful and uplifting service! More like it will be planned in the future. If you're interested in knowing the ins and outs of our music ministry, please attend my class following the special Advent service on December 12 at 5:00 p.m. in the Spiritual Life Center.

I am excited to announce the first two recipients of our Music in the Valley Scholarship. Todd Wachsman, a DMA candidate in choral conducting will receive one of the awards, and Jeremy Meeker-Hackett, an undergraduate in Music Education will receive the other. Both will offer music in our Sunday morning worship services, as well as our final Music in the Valley Series concert on April 5.

Upcoming Concerts at Valley Presbyterian:

Green Valley Community Chorus
Monday, December 10 (7:00 p.m.)
Tuesday, December 11 (2:30 p.m.)

Sanctuary Choir (only one performance!)
Friday, February 8
6:00 p.m.

Nino Bakradze (award winning pianist)
Friday, January 25
6:00 p.m.

The Tucson Arizona Boys Chorus
Friday, March 8
6:00 p.m.



A Parting Gift

This Tree of Life was given by Rev. Dr. Linda Lloyd to honor and thank Valley Presbyterian Church in October of 2018. (Placed in the office for all to see!)

St. Andrew's Children's Clinic

Submitted by Kay Brouwer - Mission Committee Liaison to St. Andrews Children's Clinic

St. Andrew's Children's Clinic is one of our church's vibrant missions. Our mission committee budgets financial help for the clinic as well as many other mission projects. In addition, funds are given from the Patio Sale and from individual donations at worship services and Mission Breakfasts. The clinic does not get any government money, so it must count on the generosity of many churches and individuals to complete their services to children from Mexico. Find out more about St. Andrew's Children's Clinic by visiting the church website, www.valleypresbyterian.net, and clicking on the Mission tab, or go to the clinic website, www.standrewsclinic.org. Videos on both these sites show how St. Andrew's Children's Clinic helps suffering children and families receive God's blessings.

SUGGESTED READINGS FOR ADVENT & CHRISTMAS

The VPC Library has a wide group of books designed to make holiday preparations and celebrations more meaningful. Books for the season can be found on the tables in the library or on the red Advent book cart.

Here are a few suggestions from members of the Library Committee.

101 things Jesus has done for you. Jessica Inman. (232 In6) What better time is there than the Christmas season for you to reflect on the many, many ways Jesus has affected your life. This book is a collection of scriptures, quotes, and meditations which will guide your thoughts during the Advent and Christmas seasons.

Amazing peace: a Christmas poem. Maya Angelou. (811.6 An4) This tiny, but beautiful, book consists of the poem read by Ms. Angelou at the lighting of the National Christmas Tree in Washington, D.C. on December 1, 2005. Out of our fears and doubts, Christmas season and the joy of Christ's birth arrive with a sense of peace for the world and its many religions. A favorite line reads, "It is Christmas time, a halting of hate time. On this platform of peace we can create a language to translate to ourselves and to each other."

Every valley: Advent with the Scriptures of Handel's Messiah. (242 Ev2) These memorable words can easily be heard in both countless Christmas choirs and recorded concerts. The Scriptures Handel set to music in this most beloved oratorio tell a powerful story, the story of God's promised one from his birth, death, resurrection and final victory. This book will provide inspiration for the holiday season with forty insightful meditations.

God is in the small stuff at Christmas. Bruce Bickel. (242 B47) Want to really experience Christmas this year? Join the author for an inspiring look at the joyous season of Jesus' birth. Featuring the characters and places, symbols and celebrations, and thoughts and feelings of the Christmas season, this book combines the best features of a devotional with the traditional appeal of an Advent book. You will find new inspiration for celebrating the wonder of Jesus' birth.

In the bleak midwinter: 40 meditations and prayers for Advent and Christmas. Herbert Brokering. (242 B78) This beautiful, gentle book of seasonal devotions takes its inspiration from Christina Georgina Rossetti's beautiful poem of the same name. The meditations weave together the images from the poem, creating a meaningful view of Christmas.

A keepsake Christmas. Alice Gray. 394.21 G79) This delightful book is filled with thoughtful ways to observe Advent and prepare for Christmas. Six sections highlight different things to do while getting ready for Christ's birthday: 1. Welcoming Christmas; 2. Spreading the Joy; 3. Keeping Christmas; 4. Giving Gifts; 5. Decking the Halls; and 6. Finding Room. Spiritual passages, phrases from Christmas carols and beautiful photographs lead the reader through the Advent Season. There are even recipes for special foods to share with those we love. It is a book to savor and enjoy as one prepares to receive the greatest of Christmas gifts, Jesus' birth.

The whisper of Christmas: reflections for Advent and Christmas. Joe E. Pannel, Jr. (242 P33) Often, words of inspiration come to us as a whisper and sometimes, we do not hear them. This book of reflections for the Advent and Christmas season takes us through the season quietly with gentle reminders of the true meaning of this season. Written by a pastor, it seeks to bring us through a time that often bombards us with the noise and the busy-ness of our lives. Sit down and read the passage for the day. Take the time to be quiet; prepare yourself to face the hustle and bustle with calm in your heart.

The women of Christmas: experience the season afresh with Elizabeth, Mary, and Anna. Liz Curtis Higgs. (232.92 H53) When we think of the women of Christmas we always think of Mary and Elizabeth, but we should not forget Anna. In *The Women of Christmas* by Liz Curtis Higgs we get to look into the hearts and lives of these inspiring women. Their stories encourage us to look at our own lives and our relationship with the Messiah. This is a busy season, but I consider this book a "must read." It puts all the holiday preparation in perspective.



Congregational Care

Understanding Congregational Care

The process of reorganizing what used to be several separate entities (Pastoral Care, the Board of Deacons, and others) into a new, single entity, called Congregational Care, took about a year, but it was worth the wait! Congregational Care is one body with many parts. *The body is a unit, though it is comprised of many parts. And although its parts are many, they all form one body. So it is with Christ.* (1 Corinthians 12:12) If you want to learn more about the new structure (What is available? Which areas of ministry are involved? Who oversees what?), visit the church website, www.valleypresbyterian.net, and choose Congregational Care in the list that drops down under the Ministry tab at the top of the page.



Congregational Care

Congregational Care Updates:

Each month in the Valley Voice a few of the ministries under Congregational Care will be highlighted.

Congregation Care cares for the congregation in many ways. We are many parts, but all one body. The Board of Deacons provides oversight over the following ministries:

Sunday Fellowship
 Extended Communion
 Grief & Bereavement Ministry
 Network of Caring, Rideshare & Homebound
 Communication of Care to the Congregants
 Stephen Ministry
 Prayer Ministry, Prayer Shawls & Bears
 Facility Visitation
 Ushers, Owl Express, & Safety
 QAPI



Congregational Care

Ready to Become a Stephen Minister?

Applications due December 14, 2018, Training begins January 4, 2019

Submitted by Helen Phillips

Valley Presbyterian Church will be training another class of Stephen Ministers beginning January 4, 2019. Stephen Ministers work alongside our pastors to care, encourage, and provide emotional and spiritual support to people who are going through a difficult time, such as divorce, grief, hospitalization, unemployment, terminal illness, relocation, chronic illness, or loneliness. If you have gifts for caring, encouragement, and listening, and are interested in becoming a part of this exciting ministry, **get your application in before the December 14 deadline!** Talk with Patti Bright, 305-3275, **now** to schedule an interview. We are looking forward to a great class!



Congregational Care

Celebrating Life during the Holidays

By Parish Nurse, Chris Erickson, RN, BA, CFCN

We are all, in some way, going through something difficult, whether it be moving, a loss of loved one or friend, change in our health, change in financial status, or even change in our daily routine.

My father passed away in October 2016, and six months later my Grandmother passed away. (Four more family members passed away in a six month period.) As I traveled up to Minnesota, the long 12-hour day of flying felt exhausting, and I just couldn't feel anything. Dad was a business owner, pharmacist, and one who loved music. He put in his own advanced directives for what he wanted, so there were no argument as to what we needed to do. It was a Polka Mass. I grew up dancing and singing with my father as he played his accordion. He had his own band with his brothers by age 18. I guess I inherited that love of music since I've been a church organist since age 10. His pictures of music, hunting, family, and friends lined the halls of the church. The American flag, folded for his time as a Korean Vet, was on display. His history of being the last independent pharmacist in Duluth made headlines in the local newspaper, a whole story of his life and hard work written by a young writer at the newspaper who remembered him and wanted to write the story. How often are we writing a story? Are we sharing our story with others?

His funeral mass wasn't somber – it was totally uplifting. His story was not sad, but one of working and helping those who needed it. As we wiggled in our seats to polkas, I turned around to look at my dad's younger brother and he said, "This is incredible, this is him." We got to remember him just the way he wanted. How often can we say this?

How often in sad times, or in very difficult times, are we grateful for just celebrating life? God gives us the strength and carries us through all sorts of difficult moments. We need to celebrate our life, our gift from God, and whatever talents we have. We work through these times; we are a stronger person, and closer to God. As we go forward to Christmas, let us celebrate what we do have, what we can do, and the positive things all around us. As Peter Pan says, "To Live is an Adventure." What kind of adventure would you like to have?

Let us also celebrate those who are no longer with us and the joy they have given us and others. Join us as we celebrate life and memories on the **Longest Night Service on December 20 at noon in the Spiritual Life Center.**

May God's uplifting blessings shine on you.



Congregational Care

Medical Minute



You are what you eat? Well in this case eating cauliflower might be a good thing. A new research study is showing that the nutrients in cauliflower are being looked at for memory loss and may be helpful.



Congregational Care

Faith & Health and Parish Nurse News

Watch for many upcoming events, programs, and presentations on health starting this winter .



Blood Pressure Screenings: You may have your blood pressure taken during the week by appointment with the Parish Nurse. The next **Sunday blood pressure screening clinic** will be on December 16, due to the Holidays. Join us on this Sunday right after Worship services in the Sweet Family Room for blood pressure screening .

Movement & Exercise Classes Here at VPC:



- **Parkinson’s Support/Exercise** meets Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, 9 - 10 a.m. For more information, contact instructor Mia Cooper at 204-5264.
- **Chair Exercise** classes are on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, 10 - 11 a.m. There is a fee. For more information, contact instructor Mia Cooper at 204-5264.

Alzheimer’s Support & Education at VPC: The Alzheimer’s support group continues to meet on the first and third Thursdays of each month, from 1:00-2:30 p.m. in the Sweet Family Room. This support group helps to share feelings and concerns, and receive information. For more information, or to register, contact the Alzheimer’s Association at (520) 322-6601.



The **Faith and Health Committee** will be training on the Virtual Dementia Tour® soon, and will be able to present this in the near future.



Healing Soup Meal: Please contact the church office or Chris Erickson, Parish Nurse, if you know of someone who may need this meal.



Congregational Care

Save the Date

Congregational Care Sunday and Care Fair Sunday, January 27, 2019



Congregational Care



Join Us

Join us for the Longest Night Service, on December 20 at Noon in the Spiritual Life Center, a beautiful service of memories and celebrating life. Refreshments and goodies will be served after.



Valley Presbyterian Church

2800 S Camino Del Sol
Green Valley, AZ 85622
(520) 625-5023

vpc-office@valleypres.net
www.valleypresbyterian.net

is a member of Presbytery de Cristo
in The Synod of the Southwest,
Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

Pastors

Rev. Mark A. Medina,
Transitional Pastor
Rev. Diane Christopher,
Pastor of Discipleship
Rev. Joe Hawkins,
Pastor Emeritus

Staff

Joel Pierce,
Director of Music
Chris Erickson,
Parish Nurse

Mission Statement

*To make Christ known
through reconciliation
while communicating
respect and love to all
people.*

Sunday Worship

Traditional Service of Worship

9:30 a.m. in the VPC Sanctuary

Communion served on first Sunday of each month

December 2 Watching for the Signs of the Times on the Path

Rev. Mark A. Medina

December 9 Jesus' Path to Bethlehem

Rev. Diane Christopher

December 16 Christmas Cantata - The Christmas Story

December 23 The Joyous Announcement

Rev. Mark A. Medina

December 24 **4:00 p.m.** Around the tables: Communion

The Case of the Missing Baby

Rev. Diane Christopher

7:00 p.m. Candlelight Service

Jesus: The Birth of the Savior

Rev. Mark A. Medina

December 30 Two Boys Walk into a Church.... Rev. Diane Christopher

La Joya at La Posada

9:00 a.m. at La Joya

Communion served on the first Sunday of each month

December 2

Rev. Diane Christopher and Doug Clark

December 16

Marti Long

December 30

Helen Phillips

Taizé

**Wednesday, December 5 at 5:00 p.m.
in the Spiritual Life Center**

Presbyterian Disaster Assistance Financial Update

Presbyterian Disaster Assistance seeks your support during the fires in California. Your gifts to U.S. Wildfires <https://pma.pcusa.org/donate/make-a-gift/gift-info/DR000165/?appeal=PDA&package=WF18-Ind> will ensure that PDA has adequate resources to support the recovery. Gift of the Heart <http://pda.pcusa.org/page/kits/> kits are a hands-on way to help others, and a fun project for the Advent season; hygiene kits and school kits will especially be needed in California. Or, leave a check in the office made out to Valley Presbyterian Church with PDA Wildfires in the memo line.

Free Concert

Saturday, December 1 at 3:00 p.m. here at VPC

The Civic Orchestra of Tucson is offering a **free concert** at the date and time above. See you there.