

Mission Committee Valley Presbyterian Church

Meeting Minutes

February 14, 2023

8:45a.m. Room 1

Bible study/reflections - Let There Be Peace on Earth, and Let it Begin with Me Ed Storey

In the church service, there is a lot of good music. In addition to the choir, and instrumental music, we sing several hymns. There is, however, only one we sing every week. I'm not sure when we first began weekly renditions of this hymn. It is especially important because of what we are being told, not occasionally, but every week. The words begin with "Let there be peace on Earth." This is a nice message that most of us would support. The next five words are a little tougher. I can see 3 levels of our interaction. Let it begin with me, might be to make us aware. Beyond that, we could even be a participant. The message is asking us to do more than either of these. We are called to be a *leader*! That is to involve ourselves in actively working for peace on the Earth. Leaders don't wait for someone to tell them what to do. If each of us took this to heart enough to try to do something tangible for peace on earth; we collectively might make an impact.

Our own Mission Committee supports many who are living out *Let it begin with me*. The Lovetts in Muslim countries brave physical danger to follow God's direction. Voice of Martyrs focuses sharing Bibles to Muslims. Both organizations know of those who have been arrested following their faith. The Rices in the Upper Nile region are also in a dangerous part of Africa. I do not intend to leave anyone out. These are a few of many examples. As each of us plans our activities, we could do worse than remember this hymn.

9:03 a.m. Call to order/Prayer

Ed Storey

In Attendance: Doug Clark, Les Walter, Kay Brouwer, Ed Storey, Ann Ball, Pastor Craig, Kylene Joplin, Reed Olson, Mary Horn, Jim Fitzpatrick and George Curtis. **Absent:** Carol Stephens, Judy Aguayo, Patty Bright, Steve Larson, Kara Fitzpatrick, Pat Nau and Lillian Richardson

Announcements- Prayers for Members- Retirement of Larry Craft noted and prayers given for Pat Nau with her battle with ALS.

Mission Meeting- Minutes of December 13, 2022, Approved

- Kay Brouwer asked that Doug send out a copy of previous minutes after all corrections are made. He will do that in the future.

Financial Report: Mission Budget Review- January 2023- Contingency Fund of \$875.93

Doug Clark

Mission Reports/Comments- Round Table

Amado-GV Food Bank

Kylene Joplin/ Carol Stephens

- Latest for delivery is 64 pounds, money disbursed is \$568 each for the Amado and GV Food Bank. We have received the financial statements for the food bank for their fiscal year ending last June showing that they are fiscally sound and have good control of their disbursements.

Posada Community Service

Doug Clark reported.

- ***A dementia-friendly community for everyone Is Green Valley ready?*** As older adults move toward the age of retirement, more and more people find themselves facing Alzheimer's and other forms of dementia. In 2022, the Alzheimer's Association reported that approximately 6.5

million people were living with Alzheimer's, the main cause of dementia. Dementia-friendly communities are growing, and many states are initiating the idea as their citizens age. In 2020, Pima Council on Aging was selected as one of the 12 organizations in the nation to receive funding for a three-year program to improve dementia-specialized support for people living with Alzheimer's Disease and related dementias and their caregivers, with a special focus on those living alone and underserved populations. PCOA's three-year, one-million-dollar award has been funding various community initiatives to increase an understanding of Alzheimer's and related dementias. La Posada Community Services, with help from Dementia Capable Southern Arizona through PCOA, started its own Memory Café held one Saturday each month at the La Posada Community Center. PCOA describes a Memory Café as "a welcoming place for those experiencing memory loss, their friends, family and caregivers." Anyone is invited to come and socialize with others in a supportive and entertaining environment at no cost.

Casa Vida Nueva para Niños

Reed Olson

- On Saturday, Feb 11, 2023, The Mission Committee had a mission breakfast at VPC featuring Casa Vida Nueva para Niños with two directors of Casa Vida Nueva para Niños and their 3 children. 138 tickets were sold with over 120 attendees. Donations at the breakfast totaled \$7,722. RISE received \$4,110; CVN received \$3,612. Many thanks to all who helped make this event a total success with special thanks to Steve for all he does behind the scenes. Along with Pastor Craig, senior pastor from Desert Hills Lutheran Church, and New Life Church of God were also in attendance, making this a wonderful ecumenical meeting.

Compañeros en Misión

Judy Aguayo

- Report by Doug: Judy sent financial report for month. Showed they are well on their way to reaching the amount needed for their building project.

Crossroad Nogales Mission

Les Walter

- Crossroads was started 25+ years ago. It is migrating over to being run by local people, with other outside people advising on the outside. We are not involved in the day-to-day activities – it is their mission. The transition to "local" people is mostly Spanish speaking.
- We have started collecting donations for the Easter Dinner, April 1, 2023, at Nogales Crossroads Mission. VPC is collecting hams and green beans for their home cooked Easter meal. If you would like to donate for their Easter meal or volunteer to help serve and clean up. Visit the Crossroads table in the Fellowship Hall on Sundays after the worship service. Currently Les has money for 9 hams. Goal is 20 hams and then will use additional monies for the meal's trimmings.

General Mission Support

Ed Storey

- We talked about different beliefs and how they differ around the world. Pam Dave Lovett are in a part of the world where Muslim-Christian conflict occurs. Voice of the Martyrs is also carrying Bibles to Muslim areas.
- When people segregate themselves into Christian villages can make a good target for extremist groups.
- Ukrainian Refugees in Romania who fled the fighting in Ukraine have settled in Romania because it was close. Romania is a poor country to begin with and the language is different. Among other agencies, Oxfam has helped provide a safe, clean environment, as well assistance in finding employment. We hear a lot about the fighting, but there are many civilians suffering as well. Moldova and Poland are two other countries, adjacent to Ukraine who have also taken in refugees and need help.

Hands of a Friend

Pat Nau/Kara Fitzpatrick

- The breakfast was a great success, 65 tickets sold and \$1402 was raised.
- Sales at the Dazees thrift store have been good. If anyone in the church has gently used clothing to donate, it is greatly appreciated by the ladies at Hands of a Friend.
- A new security system at Genesis House has been installed, and they were able to raise funds for that system. In addition, the additional funds needed for the roof should be available from fund raising efforts occurring this month and next month. Additional needs are two new sets of washers and driers to replace the aging washer/dryers. When replacing the security system, it was discovered the main gate will need to be replaced. They thought the gate would close properly when the new security system was installed, but this did not happen. The entire gate will need to be replaced at a cost of \$3700. Reed Olson moved and was seconded by Ed Storey to donate \$500 from our Contingency Fund toward a new gate. After discussion this was approved unanimously. Reed Olson asked that this be announced in an Eblast stating Mission Committee was donating \$500 from mission fund and suggesting VPC members could contribute as pass-through giving.

Mission at Large

Ann Ball

Report included in Homeless Packets Project-winter 2023.

Mission Quilts

Patti Bright

- Eighteen girls were plugging along making quilts today. As there aren't as many machine sewers this season, we are not getting as many quilts made this year. I have put off making deliveries, until we have a few more completed.
- We had our Pot-luck luncheon and group picture taken at our last month quilting session, which the girls always enjoy.

Operation Mobilization (Pam and Dave Lovett)

Doug Clark

- We are still working with the underground churches in Iran to help them stand during persecution and political turmoil. Many believers are still sharing the Gospel even as they pray for peace and freedom in their country. We continue to translate and print key books for discipleship and leadership training for the underground churches. We have put them into PDF and audio formats on the web, social media, and now flash drives and SD cards. We recently produced 20,000 SD cards that have audio teaching messages, books, scriptures, Jesus film and other resources. Please pray as we work to have these moved slowly into Iran to help local believers. Blessings. Pam and Dave Lovett

PCUSA Seminary Support- Replaced by Young Adult Volunteer (YAV) program – see notes below.

Presbyterian Campus Ministry

George Curtis

PCM Planning for 2023 in process:

- Minimum Requirements for continuing PCM:
 - o Full time pastor
 - o Funding
 - o Active Board
 - o Communication with congregations
- Four tasks' forces assigned in order of priority:
 - o What are we doing?
 - Balance Mission/Ministry in PCM. Define what we mean by each team and what they should look like in practice.
 - Develop and communicate our PCM "story" and how that informs our programs.

- Who are we doing it with?
 - Possible partnership Paths:
 - Solitary unit (80k)
 - PCM/DOC/UCC pilot program (33k)
 - ELCA “Foster” program (40k) – they do weekly studies/meetings, we do mission.
 - PCM/YAV collaboration (40k)
 - Combination of #2 and #4
 - Priorities in Partnership
 - Maintain Presbyterian identity (Need to identify what this means: Title? Reformed doctrine?)
 - Control our money.
 - Mission partners: Who are they?
 - Congregation Partners: What is our approach? Revisit connections with Northmister and St. Andrews Churches who have previously distance themselves from PCM?
- Who will do this work for PCM?
 - Need full-time director; how to fund? What is the skill set that accomplishes the answers in Control Planning?
 - Full time pastor
 - Active Board
- How do we fund it?
Results of planning task force to be completed in one month.

Bob and Kristi Rice (PCUSA missionaries)

Doug Clark

- Continuing with their weekly blogs.

Reality check –

Twice per week Susan comes to clean our apartment. Susan does not speak English, so we are wonderfully obliged to practice and speak the local Juba Arabic with her – Susan has become one of our many, patient and gracious language teachers. We sometimes refer to Susan as our “Reality Check” here in South Sudan. Her life belies and represents the suffering of so many, yet “Susan mashi hal,” Susan pushes along. Having given birth to 10 children, only a few remain, most having died because of disease or due to the violence and trauma which continues to inflict this land. Last year Susan's sixteen-year-old son was shot and killed in broad daylight at a birthday party. Susan's grief was immeasurable, and her willingness to forgive divine. Within our first few months of being here, I was targeted and overtaken by “toronto,” thieves who travel by motorcycle and swipe possessions “Bob, do not condemn them for what they have done...have compassion, they are acting out of their own desperation.” On another occasion, Kristi and I bemoaned the fact that rats continued to invade our apartment at night, eating into our bananas and causing general havoc. When we informed Susan about our “rat problem,” she sympathized, but responded with this rejoinder – “Ah, you have rats, that means you have food. You are blessed to have food!” She later told us that in many homes, rats come and nibble at people's toes at night because there is no food. Most recently, since we arrived back in Juba almost three weeks ago, we rejoiced to see Susan glowing! After months of melancholy since the death of her son, Susan seemed to have regained a sense of hope and joy. Yet again, the challenges of this country would land themselves square on her shoulders. One day last week Susan confided to Kristi that in the afternoon she would go across town to Jebel to pick up the three children of her late brother and sister-in-law, taking them home to care for, to feed and send to school. The following week Susan would report to me that previously she had taken in another three children from the same brother and that of his first wife after the first wife had died and her brother and his second wife were unwilling to

care for them. It seems that HIV/AIDS had wiped out at least two of the parents, leaving behind a retinue of orphans. Susan said when she thinks about the needs of her household, it is too much, she is overwhelmed. "But I put God first," she says smiling, "and have faith that He will provide." What can one say when confronted with the life of Susan? What words of comfort or encouragement can one provide? I am left speechless and dumbfounded by Susan's witness of resilience and faith. Could I endure what Susan has endured and keep going? I do not know. What Kristi and I do know, however, is that Susan is our "Reality Check." She is our inspiration.
Bob and Kristi

- Pastor Craig talked about Sudan film that is available concerning eye surgeries in Sudan that he can present if the committee wants it. We will plan a viewing in the future.

St Andrews Children's Clinic

Kay Brouwer

- Laura Romero reports that the February 2 Clinic was busy and successful. There were 47 children who came with family members. The departments offering services were Orthopedics, Prosthetics, Pediatrics, Speech and Audiology. Laura thinks that about the same number of children will be treated the first Thursday in March (next clinic Mar 2.)
- On February 2, Diana Ward, the office manager, met with Les Walter to discuss the installation of a television. The St. Andrews' staff want it installed at the front of the main room, above windows to an interior room. This location will enable children and families to walk past the viewing area without much disruption. Les will get help and will try to put the television in that area. Hopefully, it will be available for children to watch during the March clinic.
- Kay took wonderful collection of winter caps, mittens, scarves, and blankets made by the Creative Hands of Valley Presbyterian Church. A total of 154 separate items were much appreciated by the St. Andrews' Clinic Children. There is still work to do to get the new building remodeled for running of the clinic. Progress is slow but is coming along. Laura is very grateful to the Valley Presbyterian Church for our prayers and support through many years.

Valley Assistance Services (report by Doug)

Steve Larson

- Empty bowls event Saturday 18 February 2023, from 10:00-1:30. Bowls are available with carryout soups. Tickets are \$25. There will be a raffle, silent auction, and specialty bowls.

Youth On Their Own

Mary Horn

- YOTO expects to move into their "forever home" at 2525 N. Country Club Road in June/July 2023. They have been delayed by necessary mold and asbestos abatement which is more common in older buildings. They are feeling that this time will be less disruptive to the students than the February/March time frame. They will plan a ribbon cutting celebration in the Fall.
- February 19, 2023, the 3rd Sunday of the month will be COLLECTION SUNDAY for Youth on Their Own's Mini Mall. Items requested for the next several months will be: Canned Chicken and Ramen Noodles. Last month Mary took 4 large grocery sacks to YOTO.
- Inspirational Card Makers met January 25 and completed 175 cards – a combination of ladies working at home and together that day. Dick and I delivered the cards and the (4 grocery bags) generous Mini Mall contributions from the congregation to YOTO on January 30. Our next Inspirational Card Making session will be Wednesday, February 22 from 1 – 3:30 in Classroom 5
- YOTO students now receive their monthly stipend in a new way: a reloadable Master Card. This works better for the students than a check. The kids have asked if they could still receive the inspirational cards. Our cards will now be included with the Mini Mall shopping that each student has access to.

Recording Secretary

Co-chair

Member at large

Jim Fitzpatrick

Ed Storey

Lillian Richardson

Mission Breakfast

January 14,2023- Hands of a Friend- Results 60 tickets sold/ \$1402

February 11/2023-RISE/Casa Vida Nueva- Results 138 ticket sold. \$7,722 donated.

March 25, 2023- Nogales Crossroads Mission

November 18,2023- YAV program

Noisy Offering- 2022 5th Sunday of month for 2022-2023

January 29,2023- Rise/Casa Vida Nueva-Reed Olson-Results \$601.36

April 30,2023 Youth On Their Own-Mary Horn

July 30,2023 Posada Life Community Services

October 29,2023 Presbyterian Campus Ministry-George Curtis

December 30, 2023

Presbyterian Giving- One Great Hour of Sharing (April 3, 2023) Pastor Diane and Ed Storey will arrange publicity.

Resuming Lunches at Crossroad Nogales is still on hold.

Mission Sunday January 15, 2023, plans for service/Mission Outreach 2023 booklet/service options -final comments. No changes planned.

Mary Horn asked that mission representatives update the VPC website, click on mission and see if it needs updating. Doug asked mission representatives to report back next month. If you have changes, please send to Dick Horn, rrrhorn@mac.com, and he will update the website.

Homeless packets project-winter 2023

- Ann Ball, Ed Storey and Mary Horn met February 7th to continue planning for the upcoming Snack Sack Project. Collection Sundays will be: February 19 and 26, and March 5 and 12. The Assembling of the Bags will be after our Mission Meeting on Tuesday, March 14. Display of bags to the congregation and the opportunity to take bags to offer to the homeless will be Sunday, March 19. Eblasts, bulletin announcements, flyers at the welcome desks, and an article in the February and March newsletters will support our publicity for the event.
- List for Sacks for the Homeless in our area:
 - o Beef Jerky
 - o Packets of peanuts or tree nuts
 - o Granola or cereal bars
 - o Fruit cups or applesauce
 - o Peanut butter or cheese cracker packets
 - o Rice Krispie treats or cookies
 - o Individual packets of powdered Gatorade
 - o Plastic spoons from fast food restaurants
 - o Individually packed wet wipes or tissue packets
 - o CASH IS ALWAYS NEEDED FOR OTHER ITEMS

Voice articles- 4 or more / month- September (11) October (12) November (12) December (9) January (9) February (10). Articles due 17 February for next Valley Voice.

Consideration for Young Adult Volunteer (YAV) program to replace PCUSA seminary support. Doug Clark moved that Young Adult Volunteer (YAV) program replace PCUSA seminary support as a one of our 15 mission agencies. Kay Brouwer seconded. After discussion, the motion was approved unanimously.

Quarterly money will be held until fall with expected funding of \$5,000 for a YAV student. Information on the YAV program follows the adjournment portion of these minutes.

At next new members class Kay Brouwer will present information on the mission programs and opportunities for involvement.

New Business

Mission Yearbook is available for information and prayer.

<https://www.pcusa.org/news/2016/1/4/presbyterian-mission-yearbook-available-exclusivel/>

Ann Ball talked about Green Valley foundation. They fund Member Assistance Program for GVR. If there are smaller Green Valley charities that could use assistance, talk to Ann with information available.

Prayer/ Adjourn-----Meeting adjourned at 1040. Next meeting is March 14, 2023, at 8:45 a.m. Room 1 with Zoom option.

Young Adult Volunteer February 14, 2023

YAV is an ecumenical, faith-based year of service for young people (ages 19-30) in sites across the United States and around the world. YAV volunteers accompany local agencies working to address root causes of poverty and reconciliation. Alongside this work, volunteers explore the meaning of their Christian faith and accountability to their neighbors in the community with peers and mentors. The YAV year occurs from August to August. YAV office locally is in the Southside Presbyterian Church. We have been asked to share funding with Southside Presbyterian Church to provide a \$10,000 stipend to a YAVS volunteer (\$5000 contribution per church). I have added background information on Southside Presbyterian Church's worker program, Borderland Ministry, and current YAVS workers.

Southside Worker Center Sanctuary on the Street Corner

About seventeen years ago, I unexpectedly found myself working on a project at my church Southside Presbyterian Church. Southside is a multi-cultural congregation that was founded in 1906 as a mission to serve the urban tribal members of the Tohono O'odham Nation living in the downtown Tucson area. In the 1960's the church was active in the Civil Rights movement and in the 1980's the church provided sanctuary for Central Americans fleeing to the United States to escape torture and oppression.

Then in the early 2000's there was a change in our barrio. We began to be inundated with a large flow of migrant day laborers seeking work. There had been a change in the federal border policy that appeared to produce an unintended consequence of drawing more migrants across the U.S.-Mexico Border and into Southern Arizona.

Since the 1920's the corner of 10th Avenue and 23rd Street where our church is located had been a site for day laborers seeking work. Growers from local farms and employers from the different building trade companies came to the corner to hire workers. Then overnight we seemed to be in the midst of an overwhelming situation. Conflict emerged between the workers and barrio residents. In response to residents' complaints police began to "crack down" on the day laborers calling for back up from the U.S. Border Patrol. Tensions mounted to a boiling point.

The church called meetings bringing together church members, barrio residents, city officials, police and workers to seek solutions. What was identified was the need for a day labor center so that workers could

have a safe space to wait for work and to negotiate a fair wage with potential employers. What was needed was a sanctuary on the corner.

Sanctuary, we often think of sanctuary as a holy or sacred place. Here we were talking about a black-top parking lot where employers in their rumbling trucks could drive in to meet workers to hire. We are now in our sixteenth year of operation, even Covid did not stop the worker center. Who knew that a place of safety and peace could be found in a small piece of real estate. So, every day, Monday through Saturday workers gather on the corner. What began as a small gathering of church folk and day laborers under a mesquite tree in the church parking lot has evolved into the Southside Worker Center that is organized as a collective of workers, community volunteers and two part time staff.

The center provides a job matching service where employers who are either residents or companies come to connect with job seekers. The workers have a background in landscaping, the building trades, and domestic house cleaning. In addition to the job matching service the center runs a leadership academy, provides advocacy for fair wages, and assists with processing wage theft complaints. The center has a working relationship with the University of Arizona [Law School](#) Worker Rights clinic that provides legal assistance to the workers. The center serves as an internship site for Arizona State University social work students who provide the workers with information/linkage to community services.

As you would expect every day at the center is a busy day but recently there was a very special morning when a woman named Maria came by to say hi and to offer words of gratitude. She said, “don’t you remember me? I was here a few years ago. When I crossed the border, I found my way to Tucson. I used to sleep in that arroyo, she said pointing down the street. You all helped me out. Gave me food and helped with finding a job. I now have a steady job, an apartment, and my papers.”

I honestly have to say that I don’t really remember Maria because there have been so many on our corner - so many who come to the corner to wait for a job. Always waiting to see what will be coming around the corner. For many it has not only been a job that they have come seeking but a new beginning. What I have learned over the years is that not only have jobs been found but also hope. For those individuals who have felt as if they were lost with no place to be they have found community on the corner. During those long days of Covid the workers formed a circle of mutual aid to help with the varied needs that were emerging.

This corner in our barrio is a special place though for those who may be rushing by in their cars may not fully recognize it. It is a place where we have come to experience God’s abundance of hope and grace on 10th and 23rd. Like Maria I am also grateful to be on that corner serving and offering sanctuary in His name.

Josefina Ahumada, CRE, Southside Worker Center

Tucson Borderlands

Greetings from the Tucson Borderlands, as you know 2022 has been a year of transition for the TBYAV program, but we are receiving this new year with gratitude and excitement for 2023! While we have no big predictions for what will happen in 2023 (Stay tuned for our December 2023 Newsletter for that one ...) we do have a lot to be grateful for and plans we are looking forward to this coming year. While I used to just receive the new year by thinking about future plans, life has taught me it is also is a good place to express gratitude. So for this newsletter we are going with gratitude because TBYAV program and the world has made it through some crazy past years. And we have to say if it was not for the board’s leadership and the support from this bigger community, we might not be as excited for



2023. But I think we can all agree that it has been Alison's leadership and visioning that has anchored the TBYAV program over these past few years. As you most of you know, Alison has now moved on from the site coordinator position, and the board has hired an interim site coordinator, which is actually now me... (James Martin, TBYAVA 14-15). I am super grateful to have this opportunity to work with our YAVs (Lisett and Eli) and dream with the board where God is leading us into this new year. But I know that we would not be this excited for 2023 if it was not for the foundational work that Alison dedicated to the TBYAV program.

It program has made it to 2023 from the commitment of Alison and this community. So I am sending un abrazo fuerte (a big hug) to Alison, our board and this community for laying the foundation for 2023. And don't forget to put April 14-16th on your calendar as we celebrate 20 years of community, vocation, young adults and justice in the Sonoran desert! We hope to see you there for the 20th Anniversary!

James Martin
Interim TBYAV Site Coordinator

Partners in Mission
Help us celebrate and support Tucson Borderlands Young Adult
Volunteers in their 20th year of border ministry

Young Adult Volunteers spend a year of service responding to poverty, violence, and injustice, while exploring how their faith demands action in the world.

The mission of the Tucson Borderlands YAV program is to transform the lives of young adults by inviting them into God's work of justice and peacemaking in the borderlands. Thus, we are focused on building relationships and community on both sides of the U.S./Mexico border to confront barriers of racism, geopolitics and xenophobia that exist in the borderlands.



We also seek to provide a multi-level response to how barriers in the borderlands particularly harm immigrant communities to help broaden the wider church's response of welcoming migrants. Therefore, we are committed to the humanitarian work of organizations and the church in the borderlands that welcomes immigrants and refugees.

We also accompany organizations and the church in the long-term work of helping

immigrants integrate into communities with respect and dignity through housing support, nutrition, community-building and employment.

Volunteers explore how God is working in their lives and the world, by taking advantage of the larger work of the church and its partners in the U.S./Mexico border to become peacemakers and advocates for the marginalized in our society.

The 18 November 23 Mission Breakfast will be with YAVS, with James (from YAVS) as the speaker. Money may be used this year from the seminary fund for partial funding beginning August 1, 2023.