



*Our Valley Voice*  
*January*  
*2021*



electronic copies are available on our website:  
[www.valleypresbyterian.net](http://www.valleypresbyterian.net)

# OUR MISSION

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

The principles we will follow to accomplish this are:

- Worship that glorifies God.
- Growing our faith in love, hope and the peace of Christ.
  - Caring for the children of God.
- Reaching out to the community and the world.
  - Seeking an attitude of servant-hood.

## **Valley Presbyterian Church**

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Green Valley, AZ 85622

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vpc-office@valleypres.net

www.valleypresbyterian.net

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

### **Pastors**

**Rev. Dr. Craig Lindsey,**

Pastor/Head of Staff

**Rev. Diane Christopher,**

Pastor of Discipleship

**Rev. Joe Hawkins,**

Pastor Emeritus

### **Sunday Worship**

**Traditional Service of Worship**

**9:30 a.m.**

**Online and In person.**

### **Taizé Service**

**1st Wednesday of the Month**

**5pm Online**

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## Staff

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## Patio Sale News – January 2021 by Eloise Fredrickson

“Are we having the Patio Sale?” That is the question I hear most often, and it is the question that is occupying the minds of the Amigos. To be honest, we don’t know.

Early in December, we had a meeting of department heads to discuss the possibility of having a sale, answer any questions, and hear comments from these important players in the sale. Dick Christensen and I talked about our experience visiting The White Elephant, who are conducting sales each day and have developed practices and protocols to make the experience safe while still doing what they are organized to do. We, too, take our obligation to carry on the tradition of holding this yearly sale and raising funds for our Mission Committee.

As a result of the department heads meeting, we formed a committee who volunteered to get together and discuss all the options and possibilities that could lead to a sale . We don’t know when, we don’t know how, and we don’t know what it will look like, but we have an intense desire to hold this sale in some form. Stay tuned!



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## **Rev. Dr. Craig Lindsey, Pastor, Head of Staff**



This Christmas is different. Knowing since Ash Wednesday, that this Christmas would be different, we considered what we as a church could do. I searched for Live Camels and Sheep to have a Living Nativity for people to drive through. We considered whether to cancel Christmas! We had planned to sing outdoors and light candles outdoors prior to worship, this we cancelled as too risky. The final decision of the Session, supporting the Worship Committee and Pastors, is that we allow those wanting to worship together in the Sanctuary to follow our protocols. However, instead of concluding our worship of the Christ child's birth with singing Silent Night, that we begin worship in darkness with the Christ Candle bringing light into our sanctuary. Right now, our reality is a world in chaos/darkness, plagued by an invisible evil that took more lives yesterday than the day before, than any day prior all year. BUT still Christ comes, still God enters in to offer us love. Nothing can stop the love of God in Christ Jesus, not even this virus. This is not a Rudolph or Frosty-kind of message, but the true meaning of Christmas, that when we are most afraid, lost, depressed, GOD will not leave us, but enters in because God loves us.

### **PASSING OF THE TORCH**

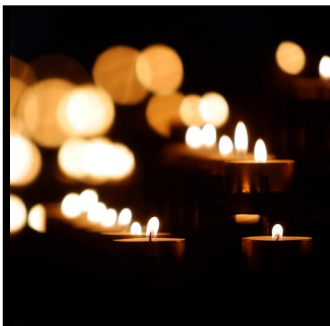
December 20<sup>th</sup>, we Ordained and Installed our Elders and Deacons, whose terms begin January 01, 2021. We thank those completing their service of leadership of our church. Those who accepted responsibility late in 2016, and have guided us through all the difficult decisions we faced as a church during the Interim. Thank you for your wisdom and commitments, but most of all for your faith in God and all of us.



## FROM THE PASTOR con't

### ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING JANUARY 31, 2021

Once each year, the congregation receive written and verbal reports from the Session and Deacons and all the Committees of the church, describing what they have done. At this meeting we also vote as a congregation what Terms of Call to pay our installed pastors. This meeting will take place immediately following Sunday Morning Worship of God in the Sanctuary (10:30am). Please join us.



### Taizé Worship

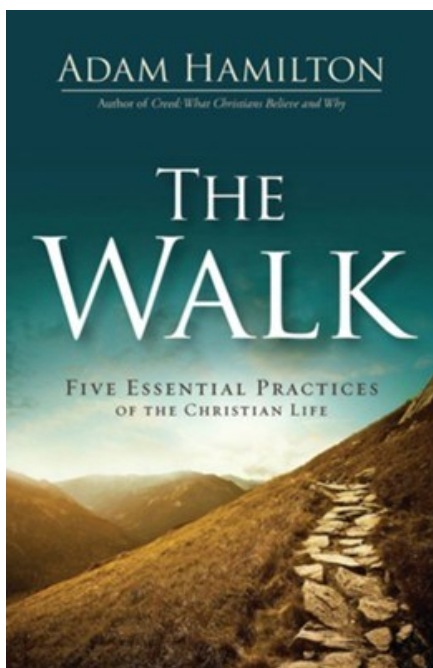
Wednesday, January 6, 5 p.m. online

In the Advent Taizé worship services, we focused on the names of Jesus used in the Gospels. On this first Taizé service after Christmas on January 6, the day is called "Epiphany of the Lord." We remember the day the magi visited the Christ child, and they worshipped him. At this service, we focus on the name Lord.

Taizé worship is a beautiful worship service in candlelight with scripture, prayer and music. It can be viewed on our church website ([valleypres.net](http://valleypres.net)) by 5 p.m. on Wednesday, January 6.

## The Walk:

**Five Essential Practices of the Christian Life**  
**Mondays starting January 11 on Zoom at 1:00 p.m.**



As we continue to wait out this pandemic, it is a great time to practice a life of walking with Christ in our everyday life. Adam Hamilton in his book *The Walk* leads us through five essential spiritual practices rooted in Jesus' own walk with God. These five practices are worship and prayer, study, serve, give, and share.

Rev. Barb Streng and Pastor Diane will lead us through this 6-week class on Zoom. Contact Pastor Diane for any questions and to register for the class ([pastordiane@valleypres.net](mailto:pastordiane@valleypres.net); 625-5023). Books can be purchased for \$12 from Pastor Diane in the church office.

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## **Diane Christopher: Pastor of Discipleship**

I decided to buy a memento for the year 2020. I purchased the pictured T-Shirt: a reminder that 2020 was crummy (and a little reminder that I like football). As I write this, the first vaccine is now being distributed all across the country. A reminder from my T-shirt: this virus will pass.



I like the fact that we can delineate years. We can shove 2020 aside and hope for a better year in 2021. So what will 2021 bring? A girl can dream, right? Of course, I want the virus to be eradicated. I want to hug someone. I want to see my parents. I want to see people's smiles without that mask. I want to sing in church. I want to eat at a restaurant and shop in person without having to be careful. I want to hold hands while praying. I want the return of all these simple pleasures that I will never take for granted again.

I pray we will be better people. I pray we will be more compassionate, give more grace, show more patience, demonstrate great love, be faithful and kind, grow deeper in our love for God. I pray the joy of the Lord will be our strength. I pray we will abound in the work of the Lord. And through it all, I pray others will come to know the love of God through our example and witness.

I pray the light of God will penetrate the darkness in this world. I pray God's will be done on earth as it is in heaven. I pray God will do a new thing in our lives, in our country and in our world.

This is my wish list for the year 2021. What is yours?

All my love,

*Pastor Diane*



## FROM PAGE TO SCREEN

The following books and their film adaptations are all available in the VPC Library

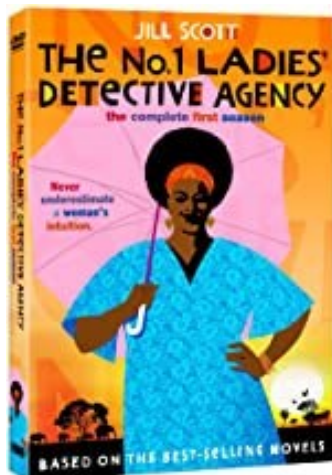
### NON-FICTION

*90 Minutes in Heaven*  
*The Hiding Place*  
*The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks*  
*Just Mercy*  
*Marley and Me*  
*Oranges and Sunshine*  
*Same Kind of Different As Me*  
*Tuesdays with Morrie*  
*Unbroken*



### FICTION

*Big Stone Gap*  
*The Book Thief*  
*Cry the Beloved Country*  
*Fried Green Tomatoes at the Whistle Stop Cafe*  
*The Light Between Oceans*  
*A Man Called Ove*  
*The No. 1 Ladies' Detective Agency*  
*Plainsong*  
*A River Ran Through It*  
*Sarah's Key*  
*The Secret Life of Bees*  
*Still Alice*  
*To Kill a Mockingbird*  
*Wonder*





## Valley Readers

### **Selected Books Recommended by Valley Readers**

Members of Valley Readers submitted a list of recommended books that they had read during the Pandemic in lieu of the November meeting. Below is a selection from the books that were recommended.

We hope you'll see some titles that you might be interested in reading. An asterisk denotes that the book is available in the church library.



There will not be a meeting of Valley Readers in January.

*A Long Petal of the Sea*, by Isabel Allende

*The Storyteller's Secret*, by Sejal Badani.

*Superheavy: Making and Breaking the Periodic Table*, by Kit Chapman (nonfiction)

*The Lions of 5<sup>th</sup> Ave.*\*, by Fiona Davis

*The Memory Keeper's Daughter*\*, by Kim Edwards

*The Night Watchman*, by Louise Erdrich

*The Wonder Boy of Whistle Stop: A Novel*\*, by Fannie Flagg

*EAGER: The Surprising Secret Life of Beavers*, by Ben Goldfarb (nonfiction)

*A Perfect Red*, by Amy Butler Greenfield (nonfiction)

*What Angels Fear: A Sebastian St. Cyr Mystery*, by C. S. Harris

*Waking Up White*\*, by Debbie Irving

*Little Fires Everywhere*\*, by Celeste Ng

*When We Believed in Mermaids*, by Barbara O'Neal

*The Thursday Murder Club: A Novel*\*, by Richard Osman

*Just Mercy*\*, by Bryan Stevenson

*Singapore Sapphire*, by A. M. Stuart

*The Nickel Boys*\* by Colson Whitehead

\*Available in Valley Presbyterian Library

## **Birthdays for January, 2021**

Robert Williams		01/01
Kylene Joplin		01/02
Marya Dalrymple	**	01/05
Jan Schoeben		01/05
Glenn Steinacker		01/05
Quentin Gessner	**	01/07
Dorothy Sauder	*	01/07
William D. McKinley		01/07
Dale Honermann		01/07
Thomas Spurlock		01/09
Leonard Defendorf		01/10
Bruce Nylund		01/12
Charles Anderson		01/13
Billie Youngblut	**	01/14
George Pike		01/14
Margaret Moore		01/16
Martha Ashton		01/17
James M Van Valen		01/17
Terry Hopper		01/18
Connie Snow		01/19
Lee Neuman		01/21
Vicki Chvala		01/21
Jennifer Yanamura		01/21
Judy Clark		01/23
Lucille Lee	**	01/24

# **SPECIAL BIRTHDAY MILESTONES!**

## **Happy 90th Birthday!**

*Dorothy Sauder & Geraldine Appleton*



Carolyn Blomeke		01/25
Mary Ann Root		01/25
Mark Horton		01/25
Linda Freeman		01/25
Thomas Dierken		01/25
Marie Valade		01/25
Carol LeClair	**	01/27
Geraldine Appleton	*	01/27
Barbara Platte		01/27
Nancy Thies		01/28
John W. Green		01/28
Michael Schoeben		01/29
Judith Christensen		01/30
Cheryl Stepp		01/30
Joanna Miller		01/31
Marita Ramsay		01/31

\* indicates turning 90  
\*\* indicate age in their 90's





## **A Letter from Bob and Kristi Rice, serving in South Sudan**

Advent Greetings to you!

We think about how Christmas is usually celebrated in South Sudan. Choirs hold special Christmas carol celebrations. Churches raise money for special projects to help the vulnerable in their communities. Special church services on Christmas day often include baptisms, dramas, and small gifts for the children. This year, as all of us modify our plans and traditions, we take the opportunity to refocus on the miracle of the incarnation.



We celebrated with members of a youth choir in Juba after their Christmas Carol concert in 2017.

## **Bob and Kristi Rice** con't

.As the disciple John says, "The Word of Life appeared right before our eyes; we saw it happen! And now we're telling you in most sober prose that what we witnessed was, incredibly, this: The infinite Life of God himself took shape before us." (1 John 1:2, The Message Version) We pray that God gives you a sense of wonder and peace as we celebrate again our God becoming human to be with us and restore relationship with us. We join you in praying for healing and peace in our world. This year we have been reminded again of our brokenness and the life and freedom that our Savior gives. May God's life be full in you and give you hope and joy this season.

We wish that we could see and visit with each of you in person to wish you a Merry Christmas! We depend on your prayers and partnership in this ministry in South Sudan. Thank you, and please keep praying for God's people in South Sudan as they proclaim the life and salvation of God and pray for us as we serve with them.

With joy,

*Bob and Kristi*



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## **Pam & Dave L**

Pam and Dave L are well but still limited to Zoom meetings and are unable to travel to Pakistan, Bangladesh, Iran, and now North India to reach the least reached people. They send greetings and regrets they will also not be able to visit Valley Presbyterian Church as we had planned this January. We hope to reschedule next year for Mission Breakfast and Mission Sunday. We are in their prayers for our health and growth in Christ and they covet our prayers for their mission, health, and family. A focus on their mission field follows.

The region of Muslim South Asia is made up of North India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh. Joshua Project reports that these countries are three of the top nations with the highest number of unreached people groups in the world and have, on average, one full-time Christian worker for every 500,000 Muslims. It is projected that by 2030, India will be the nation with the largest number of Muslims in the World. OM's goal is to launch fresh church planning initiatives that will be led by national workers, which would be self-sustainable



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## St. Andrews Children's Clinic

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### Virtual Christmas Concert

Submitted by Kay Brouwer

Over forty years ago, seven mothers and their children with cerebral palsy gathered at a home in Nogales, Sonora, Mexico in search of opportunities for their children to receive the best medical treatment. That small gathering became what is known today as St. Andrew's Children's Clinic in Nogales, Arizona, which provides no-cost medical attention to over 250 Mexican children on the first Thursday of every month, except July. With over 40 volunteers, including doctors, medical professionals, and administrative support, the Clinic's mission is to help children receive the medical attention they are unable to find in their home country and support them to achieve a healthy, successful future.

This year has been difficult for the Clinic. Due to the risks of COVID-19, they held their last Clinic in March. Like most people and organizations, they have had to start thinking "out of the box" and find creative ways to keep providing services. Through telemedicine and virtual presentations, they have continued to connect with donors and help patients receive care and continue with their medical treatments.

Even through all the difficulties this year has brought, they wanted to come together to celebrate their children, honor their donors, and support their beloved Clinic. This is why they invited us and other friends to their first-ever Virtual Christmas Concert on December 13, 2020. St. Andrew's Children's Clinic was proud to present about 12



children served by the clinic who sang for an afternoon of holiday music and cheer. At the end a guitarist and singer performed Spanish songs plus "Snow is Falling all Around" and "We Wish You a Merry Christmas." Much love and joy were expressed by performers and the audience.

(Picture from earlier event)



# Crossroads Mission, Nogales AZ

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Submitted by Joan Bolin

On December 3, 2020, via a phone call, I spoke with Ben Wenke, Co-Director of Crossroads Mission, and received the following information: First off, Ben said he had some heart problems the day after Thanksgiving that lasted for 3 days. He wasn't able to do much of anything. Ben and Bert Wenke (his wife) are the founders of Crossroads Mission, which opened May 24, 1994. What amazing work they have done in these years! The Mission remains open during this year of the coronavirus. One of the women's transitional houses had to close because one of the ladies living there got COVID-19 from shopping at a store in Nogales. She and her baby are now staying at a house next door to the transitional house until such time as the transitional house is completely sanitized from roof to floor before it can reopen.

The Mission served 150 Thanksgiving dinners this year. Due to the coronavirus and the U.S.-Mexico border being closed, this total is about half what is usually served. The Nogales Chief of Police was there at the dinner and said he was excited that the local people who were in need of food got a wonderful dinner. Also, the Nogales International Newspaper had a story in their newspaper about the Thanksgiving dinner event.

Good news, over-and-above what food was served at the Thanksgiving dinner, a donation of Thanksgiving food, worth \$6,000, was given to the Mission by the Nogales' Safeway store. This food was packaged so each recipient got a frozen turkey, mashed potatoes, gravy, stuffing and cranberry sauce.

More good news, there was a \$5,000 gift from an unnamed donor which was used for a new transmission in the Mission's food van. This van is used to pick up food donated to the Mission, and for food the Mission buys from Costco.

The Mission's Christmas ham dinner will be held on December 19, 2020.



Ben and Bert Wenke at the Thanksgiving dinner.



## INSPIRATIONAL CARD MAKING



**COME JOIN US!!!** Our next "in person" meeting to make inspirational cards for Youth on Their Own students will be Wednesday, January 27 in room 5 at church from 2:00 – 3:45. A SPECIAL THANK YOU to ladies who have been making many cards at home during the Covid pandemic.



Submitted by Mary Horn,  
Mission Committee Liaison to YOTO



## **Casa Vida Nueva para Niños** **(children's home)** Submitted by Reed Olson

All 48 orphaned children at Casa Vida Nueva para Niños are healthy and the older ones are attending school – mostly from the Home. 8 new laptop computers were donated from RISE Scholastic Achievements, and are now being used for distant learning. Their Christmas was wonderful this year with the help of a VPC consolidated check from the congregation – thank you all for helping. All 2021 trips to visit the children are postpone until the virus is contained.



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### **Caring for those in our congregation:** **Congregational Care** **Faith & Health/Parish Nurse** **News January 2021**



Many of our classes are still on hold as the COVID-19 Pandemic continues.  
We will continue to update you with more information.



Congregational Care is creating ways for our church to continue its care to others and to address the needs we are seeing. Connections, during this time, are also essential for those to receive socialization and to know others care. Keep communications with friends, neighbors, and family during this time. Please let us know any concerns or needs that we may be able to help with.

Keeping active, during this time of COVID, helps to stay positive and healthy. As soon as we are safe and vaccines are distributed for COVID, we will be looking at new exercise programs here at VPC.



Sugar is the world's oldest ingredient, on every table and in every stocking at Christmas time. There is even sugar in Ketchup. Sugar not only has been linked to diseases and illnesses such as Diabetes, it also might cause wrinkles and increase the aging process – time for me to stop eating candy.



## Valley Assistance Services



3950 S. Camino del Heroe  
Green Valley, Arizona 85614  
Chris Erickson, RN, Executive Director

520-625-5966  
[www.valleyassistanceservices.org](http://www.valleyassistanceservices.org)

As we begin a new year, we take stock of the things for which we are thankful. Reviewing this past year, Valley Assistance Services (VAS) wishes to thank all who have helped carry out our mission in this very difficult time, namely helping seniors, families and individuals remain safe and independent through a combination of social services and community health programs. The COVID-19 Pandemic has hit our community particularly hard. The loss of jobs, reduction in work hours and increase in prices of basic commodities have adversely affected many families in our area, and have been especially devastating to people who were already living paycheck to paycheck.

As difficult as the financial hardships have been for our clients, the social and emotional stresses caused by the pandemic have been equally destructive to their well-being. The need for social distancing has been very isolating for many seniors and disabled persons. We are genuinely thankful for all the members of Valley Presbyterian Church and all that they have done, but the needs continue to outstrip our resources.

What gifts can you give to the less fortunate in our community this Holiday Season?

**Volunteer:** of particular need are people with experience and expertise in financial matters, drivers to transport clients to essential appointments and handypersons to do light maintenance in clients' homes.

**Donate gift bag items:** personal hygiene items, small gifts, work puzzle books, Sudoku books, large print books, writing utensils and notebooks, non-perishable food, etc.

**Become a Sustaining partner:** set up auto-pay through your bank, or authorize a monthly charge on your debit or credit card. No amount is too small.

**Donate to the VAS Diaper bank:** diapers and personal hygiene items are not covered under most state benefits. Donate these items to VAS to be passed on to our clients in need.

**Donate money:** The financial assistance program at VAS has seen an increase of over 1000% in the number of clients since the pandemic started in March. Many clients have not paid their rent/mortgage and utilities since March. It is taking more money than ever to stabilize a family in need. VAS is a Qualifying Charitable Organization for Arizona tax credit purposes. Also, all taxpayers can claim a special \$300 deduction on their Federal return this year due to the pandemic, even if they only take the standard deduction.

Mission Committee Contact: Steve Larson

## **Being Presbyterian – Why Committees?**

Linda Freeman

During 2021 I will be sharing monthly articles celebrating my experiences of being a Presbyterian. Since so many of our members here at Valley do not have a background in our denomination, I thought my writings could help explain a few things about why we are organized the way we are and how I thank God for lessons I am learning because of our polity.

This month – *Committees*. Session (the major decision-making body of a congregation) is divided into committees. Presbytery is divided into committees. Synod – well, you get the idea. It is at the committee level where the real work of the church gets done. Any member of the church can be on a church's committee – I was on my first church committee in High School.

So, why do we have this structure? It flows from the basic concept that *every person's opinion has value*. Each person's voice on a committee is of equal weight. Pastor's opinions are not more important than anyone else's. Decisions are based on the will of the majority, but only after we hear from the minority positions.

Yes, this means that decision making can be ponderous and slow and complicated. But I am frequently learning valuable discipleship lessons because of working through committees:

I'm constantly learning something new – and I've been doing this for 50 years!

Very few decisions are so time sensitive that I cannot take time to listen to another.

I am regularly being humbled. I come up with a great idea, and then it is pointed-out that I have overlooked a key factor. The best decisions are made when more than one person has input.

I must figure out how best to articulate my position; sharing why I think this way. And this means tying it to, however obliquely, a basic Christian concept.

I encourage you to appreciate the work of our church committees. It is a valuable way we can develop our discipleship.



## Women's Ministries

There will not be a Gathering lunch in January. Consult Circle leaders for meeting plans for each Circle. Pastor Diane posts a video presentation of each month's lesson and this can be found by going to the Women's Ministries video link on the main webpage of the church. The Women's Ministries' link is next to the link for video church services.



Please consider making a donation to Women's Ministries for our Offering and Thank Offering in lieu of what you would be giving at the Gathering and/or Circle. A proportion of the offering and the entire Thank Offering goes to Presbyterian Women for various projects across the nation and world. Checks should be made to Women's Ministries and can be dropped off at the church or mailed to Gee-Gee Smith, P. O. Box 4709, Tubac, AZ 85646. Please note what the check is for in the memo space.

If you are saving plastic bottle caps for us please note that we don't accept container lids, only caps from prescription, water, or juice bottles. And please **DO NOT BRING ANY MORE BOTTLE CAPS TO CHURCH** at this time.



Since no one can enter MX due to the Covid virus, no one can take the bottle caps to the ministry turning them in for money for cancer breast exams. Martha's garage is FULL of garbage bags for bottle caps. Once the restrictions at the border are lifted, we will resume collecting them.

*Women's Ministries Bulletin Board in Fellowship Hall*





Network of Caring (NOC) started in 1979 to enable members and visitors to become better acquainted with other members of the congregation through phone calls, letters, or emails, and by meeting together in small neighborhood groups. NOC has grown in its ministry as the church and community have grown and changed. We endeavor to minister to and with each other; to share in joyous occasions and to respond in times of need; to care for and about each other in a significant and meaningful way.

God has truly blessed this caring ministry.

NOC is needed now more than ever during this time of the COVID Pandemic. We may not be able to meet in small groups in person, but phone calls, letters and emails are essential. Neighborhood Contacts are continuing to make calls and letting those know we care for them. During the Holidays, this connection of caring is very important as many memories can affect us at this time.

Philippians 2:4 Everyone should look out not only for his own interests but also for the interests of others

If you are interested in participating in NOC as an Area Leader or Neighborhood Contact, please call Jean Hein 520-625-1489.

Thank you to all those who make calls, and contacts, and those in this ministry: the Area Leaders as well as the Neighborhood Contacts. Have a safe and blessed New Year.

The next meeting of the NOC Leadership team will be held January 5<sup>th</sup> at 11 AM.

Luke 6:31 Treat others the same way you want them to treat you



## Stephen Ministry

### Stephen Ministries Care Notes

CareNotes are inspirational booklets on a variety of topics to help individuals heal mind, body and spirit. These are available on the rack on the near fountain door. Help yourself to a topic that might help you or a friend or neighbor. There are booklets about grief, dealing with illness, surviving a crisis or tragedy, even when a family pet dies!

Each 8-page booklet offers concrete information, inspirational hope, and personal experiences with problems. They are easily mailed to a friend or family member that lives far away and needs help or encouragement.

Take one – and take heart. Give one – and give hope.

## January 2021 Valley Voice Financial Update

*(Based on Financial Data through November 2020)*

The Finance Committee met on Wednesday, December 16th to review the current financial activity through November. We continue to remain in a positive position. In the following report we have defined "Giving Support" as contributions for current operations and "Other Support" as Patio Sale Fund or other Fund transfers in support of operations, investment income, fees for services (memorials, events, concerts, etc.):

	<u>Year to Date</u>	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Variance</u>
Giving support	\$610,552	\$638,388	(\$27,836)
Per Capita support	9,740	10,900	(1,160)
Other support	<u>72,460</u>	<u>78,675</u>	<u>(6,215)</u>
Total support	692,752	727,963	(35,211)
Expenses	<u>665,846</u>	<u>710,631</u>	<u>(44,785)</u>
Net	<u>\$ 26,906</u>	<u>\$ 17,332</u>	<u>\$ 9,573</u>

This report shows that we are behind the 2020 Budget in both income and expense. So, we are actually ahead of budget and are projecting that we will add to our reserves at the end of the year. This has been a challenging year with Covid-19 affecting 75% of the year 2020 attendance and activities at Valley Pres. We are grateful for the positive position we have held onto for most of the year. We are seeing that many are still sending in their pledges and that online giving has increased significantly. To date, the 2020 pledges are 97% collected.

There is some concern regarding the generosity campaign for 2021. The 2021 pledges are lagging way behind the VPC norm at this point in the year. The Finance Committee has received all of the committee budgets to date, but we are having difficulty projecting the income for 2021 and have requested a second letter be sent to members who have not yet answered the call for 2021. Because of this we are not presenting a budget for approval to the Session in December and will hopefully have a balanced budget to submit for approval in January 2021 in time for the annual meeting on January 31, 2021. Your continued support in this effort is appreciated.

## Parish Nurse



There are so many things to write about for this Valley Voice – COVID is all around us, emotions are high because of the time of year, and stress. Look around and listen to it in our voices, watch the emotions of people’s faces and see how this year has really affected us all. What we do with this and how we handle it is up to us. We can either choose stress, being frazzled, or we can choose joy. The choice is up to us. Yes, there is always a choice. I choose Joy.

Many of us face uncertainties. We can dwell on things that may arise, maybe COVID or the Christmas Season and how to visit. There seems to be stress all around us: plans or complicated plans of the holidays (can I see my family this year) , financial concerns and disappointments (I cannot afford presents or just a few, those who have lost jobs during COVID, bills mounting), there are stomach aches (stress, eating too much, or eating poorly) , there is the Blue Christmas (a time of remembrance, of loved ones or of a loss of independence that may be associated with depression), there is social distancing and the inability to go places or celebrate, there is change of weather (a colder , drier air and allergies and sinus problems that may make us not feel well), there are illnesses and other health changes, (COVID, colds, flu, pneumonia, infections, etc.) there is dehydration (just as critical as in summer), and the weather has led to a more toned-down, browner look to nature in our community.

But it is also the most beautiful time of the year with the most glorious birth, and with that love: He washes away our uncertainties with perfect love.

Just recently, there was a prayer chain that was being created in my office. This reminded me of when I was very ill. It has been 11 years since I was on a ventilator in the hospital. As peace came over me, a gentle touch rested on my shoulder. There, I put my concerns into the hands of God. With a prayer chain over my head made by a special group of people from VPC, I talked to God, and handed Him my concerns, my worries, and my wishes. I then felt His presence. We need to remember that He is always there for us. We need to remember this in the times of uncertainties, in times of illnesses and COVID, in times of stress, during tragedy, and during the Holidays.

May you be blessed every day through all the works you do however big or small, every smile you create, every person you touch, and everything you give to others. May a renewed sense of love and peace fill your hearts in this Christmas Season and throughout the New Year of 2021. Choose Joy and show Joy to others.

Blessings,

*Chris*



## This was the Longest Night Service

The number of candles were the number of requests we had emailed to us, it was very moving.

