

Minutes from the VPC Mission Committee Meeting

March 14, 2023 in Room 5 from 8:45 – 10:40

Members Present: Doug Clark, Pastor Craig Lindsey, Deb Jones, Steve Larson, George Curtis, Kylene Joplin, Carol Stephens, Ann Ball, Kay Brouwer, George Curtis, Reed Olson, Ed Storey, Mary Horn.

Members Absent: Jim Fitzpatrick, Kara Fitzpatrick, Les Walter, Pat Nau, Judy Aguayo, Lillian Richardson

Devotional: Ambassador

Paul, a Roman citizen and soon to be under arrest, was aware of the law and its politics. He understood what was to be an Ambassador yet in his writings he only used this word twice. In 55AD, 2 Corinthians 5:20 (Living Bible) ²⁰We are Christ's ambassadors. God is using us to speak to you: we beg you, as though Christ himself were here pleading with you, receive the love he offers you—be reconciled to God. This statement is Christian's proud privilege and most terrifying responsibility This statement is our walking papers. The second usage by Paul in 66AD. while in arrest, wrote of being an ambassador for Christ. Ephesians 6:19-20 NIV) ¹⁹ Pray also for me, that whenever I speak, words may be given me so that I will fearlessly make known the mystery of the gospel,²⁰for which I am an ambassador in chains. Pray that I may declare it fearlessly, as I should. The office that Paul claims as his one glory and his one task is being an ambassador for Christ. The word ambassador in Strong's Concordance (4243) is *presbeuo* defined as elderly, mature, an established statesman (diplomat) who is authorized to speak as an emissary.

Using William Barclay's commentary, Barclay describes the use of ambassador in the times of Christ. Roman provinces were divided into two types. One was under the direct control of the senate, the other under the direct control of the Emperor. The distinction was made on this basis--provinces which were peaceful and had no troops in them were senatorial provinces; provinces which were turbulent and had troops stationed in them were imperial provinces. In the imperial provinces, the man who administered the province on behalf of the Emperor, was the *presbeuo*, the ambassador. An ambassador has a direct communication from and to the Emperor. Paul regarded believers and himself as having direct communication to Jesus Christ for the work of the Church. We are His ambassador as we go to God in prayer, practice in His presence, worship, join in fellowship and serve others as God directs us.

But *presbeuo* ([G4246](#)) has another interesting meaning. When the Roman senate decided that a country has become a peaceful province they sent to it ten *presbeuo*, that is, envoys, of their own number, who, along with the victorious general, arranged the terms of peace with the vanquished people, determined the boundaries of the new province, drew up a constitution for its new administration, and then returned to submit what they had done for ratification by the senate. They were the men responsible for bringing others into the family of the Roman Empire. Paul thinks of himself and believers as men and women who brings to others to God, whereby they can become citizens of His kingdom and members of His family. We too have that responsibility and it takes many forms. Look again at 2 Corinthians 5:20 (Living Bible) ²⁰We are Christ's ambassadors. God is using us to speak to you: we beg you, as though Christ himself were here pleading with you, receive the love he offers you—be reconciled to God. As Christ's ambassador we speak for Christ to accept His love and be reconciled to God.

As an ambassador we live in a foreign land, the world, which speaks a different language and doesn't understand our words. Being reconciled- a changed relationship to God, has no meaning to those who follow the world's way of life. Likewise, justice- receiving what we deserve, mercy- not receiving all we deserve, and grace- receiving what we don't deserve are foreign concepts. Propitiation, adoption, sanctification, justification, faith, belief, and even love is not understood. We are in the world, not of the world and sent to the world like an ambassador to explain and teach God's plan for fellowship with Him. As a role model we not only to speak and teach Christ but also demonstrate Christ by our actions. Paul describing Christian order 1Corinthians 11:1 (Amplified Bible) 11 Imitate me, just as I imitate Christ and Ephesians 5:1 (Amplified Bible) Therefore become imitators of God [copy Him and follow His example], as well-beloved children [imitate their father]. Here is the Christian's proud privilege and most terrifying responsibility. As we interact with the world our thought put into action is "What Would Jesus Do". By our every word and action, we can make men think more-or-less of Christ, his Church and of God.

QUESTION: How do you demonstrate being an Ambassador for God?

PRAYER:

9:00 Call to Order and Prayer by Steve Larson

Announcements: Prayers for members' Pat Nau and Les Walter with medical needs. Prayers for families at the passing of Dave Tompkins and Mark Horton. Prayers for Margaret Moore in her final days. We welcome Deb Jones as our representee for Posada Life Community Service.

Approval of Minutes: February 14 minutes were approved and submitted to the VPC session.

Financial Report: The February 2023 Mission Budget was presented. \$110,100.00 is the original budget. We've received no news about the recent Patio Sale. The Contingency Funds are at \$1,758.93.

MISSION REPORTS/COMMENTS – Round Table

Update Reminder: Each person with an assigned Mission area should contact agency or Missionary on a regular monthly basis for update and activity. If able or unable to attend our meeting, please submit written update for committee and minutes.

Amado-GV Food Bank – Kylene Joplin reported poundage 18 and \$ 922.76 (461.38 for each - Green Valley and Amado.)

Casa Vida Nueva para Niños – Reed Olson is trying to coordinate a St Andrews Children's Clinic visit for one of the children. She has a trauma injury to her forehead that needs surgical repair. The Home for Children needs to have the Mexican Government approve of her transportation across the border. This is taking time. SACC will make the appointment for the child at a future clinic once the paperwork is authorized.

Compañeros en Misión – Judy Aguayo sent no report.

Crossroads Mission, Nogales, Arizona – Les sent a report that Easter at Crossroads (April 1) will have 20 hams and an expected attendance of 150. If there are monies remaining, other items such as mashed potatoes will be purchased. Easter candy for the kids is planned. 4-6 volunteers will be going down for serving in the kitchen.

We received a letter from Alejandra Martinez who reported increased marketing and improved fund raising. The letter entitled LIVES YOU TOUCH THIS MONTH notes facts like 640 nights of lodging, more than 2,638 meals for hungry men, women, and children, 855 families receiving food baskets. There were many referrals to other agencies as groups work together to help needy people in the Nogales area.

Posada Community Services – Doug introduced Deb Jones, again, letting her know that Regina Ford will be her contact.

Celebrating our Centenarians

Life expectancy is up as people are living longer than ever before, thanks to a number of factors including improvements in health science and technology. The nation's population is growing older with more people living to 100 than in decades past. There were 89,739 centenarians living in the United States in 2021, nearly twice as many as there were 20 years ago, according to data from the Population Division of the United Nations. Currently, one in 5,000 people in the U.S. are centenarians, or people who are 100 or older.

Key Facts

- The number of people living to 100 has doubled since the 1990s; however, research suggests that most people do not want to live this long.
- The will to live to an advanced age depends heavily on a person's values and perceived health status.
- The older and healthier the person is, the more they desire longevity.
- Top reasons for wanting to live a long life are curiosity, simple enjoyment, and maximizing time with friends and family.

Come celebrate with fellow centenarians!

La Posada Community Services wishes to honor those centenarians living in the Greater Green Valley area on May, 12, 2023 with a Centenarian Celebration sponsored by La Posada at Park Centre. Guests will be treated to brunch at the La Posada Community Center where we will celebrate our local centenarians' resilience, wisdom and contributions.

The Centenarian Celebration Committee is currently seeking out those members of our community who were born in 1923 and before to be a part of this event. Centenarians will be interviewed and photographed in April to be included in a celebratory booklet which will be presented to each of them at the brunch.

To be a part of this celebration, please call Ellen March at 520-393-6840 or email emarch@casagv.org. To get started, please have ready the celebrant's name and date of birth as well as your contact information for a follow-up interview.

General Mission Support – Ed Storey will talk more about our new Young Adult Volunteers Program later today.

Hands of a Friend – Kara Fitzpatrick reports that Hands of a Friend and the Genesis House shelter would like to thank the congregation and the church for the additional funding last month! Your gifts covered the cost of the 2 new washer and dryer units that have been delivered to Genesis House! They appreciate everything we do! Thank you from the Hands of a Friend staff and residents!

DaZee's continues to have good sales and is still in need of donations. Your donations provide funding for Genesis House basics! This includes household items: personal hygiene items, cleaning supplies, etc.

DaZee's is located at 231 West Dual Road, Suite D, Green Valley

There are four ways if you wish to contribute to Hands of a Friend:

1. Stop by the church office with a check. Write Hands of a Friend on the memo section of your check or on the donation envelope.
2. Hands of a Friend is a 501(c)3 Non-Profit that receives no governmental financial support and an Arizona Charitable Tax Credit Organization.
3. Donate gently used or new clothing to Dazee's.
4. Volunteer at DaZee's.
5. Shop Dazee's for great buys and meet the friendly, helpful staff.

Hands of a Friend truly appreciates all that Valley Presbyterian does for Hands of a Friend, DaZee's and the Genesis House Shelter.

You can also visit the Hands of a Friend website for information at <https://handsofafriend.org/> and <https://dazees.org/>.

This mission committee recommends that the above information be printed in the next Valley Voice. Kay will ask Kara to do that.

Christmas Boxes - Ann Ball reposted that all boxes have been delivered throughout the world. She hopes to get complete numbers places soon and will report in April.

Mission Quilts –Patti Bright sent no report.

Operation Mobilization – Dave and Pam reported that they are currently in Florida, but had been in Turkey and Sri Lanka involved in the work of teaching leaders to reach out to the least reached peoples in those countries. After a short visit to Wisconsin, they will go to Cyprus to attend the OM (Operation Mobilisation) International Conference. They will be networking with OM people to hear what they have to say and give encouragement to them.

GOOD NEWS FROM BAGLADESH - An astounding fact that excites us: 79% of Bangladesh's 169 million people are internet users. That is 112 million! Our response—build a team to post videos and share the good news on Facebook, YouTube, and Instagram. Our plan: direct users to an offline source where they can ask for a Bible and hear the gospel. Because tens of thousands more have no internet access, we plan to distribute SD cards loaded with 40 gospel videos and audio. In five districts we have already distributed 500 SD cards! Our intention is to meet those recipients, so please pray that God will open hearts to listen to God's invitation to salvation.

Pam and Dave send prayers and well wishes.

Presbyterian Campus Ministry – George Curtis told us that Judy Aguayo was to go to the last board meeting, but she's not here today. George will contact board members to find out what was discussed, especially about plans for the future. He'll present the information at our April meeting.

Bob and Kristi Rice (PCUSA missionaries) – Into (a) maelstrom of fear, uncertainty, and violence, has entered messages of healing, peace, justice, and reconciliation. These messages were most recently brought... for the first time in five hundred years, an ecumenical peace pilgrimage was made by Catholic, Anglican and Protestant leaders to South Sudan. Pope Francis, Archbishop of Canterbury Justin Welby, and Moderator of the Church of Scotland Rev. Iain Greenshields responded to an invitation to come to South Sudan after South Sudanese political and ecclesial leaders visited the Vatican in 2018. To have participated in this historic event

last week was an amazing privilege and an unforgettable blessing for Bob and Kristi Rice and many other Christian leaders. The Presbyterian Church of South Sudan and the South Sudan Presbyterian Evangelical Church hosted a reception and worship service for the members and leaders from different denominational bodies. It was a joyous occasion with almost sixteen thousand in attendance, including Spirit inspired worship through song and messages about unity, love, and our shared history and hopes for our shared future. To our surprise, Kristi and I were included with the ecclesial leadership community, both from South Sudan and abroad on the stage where the Pope and others led us in an ecumenical prayer and worship service. Both Saturday night and Sunday morning, it is reported that between fifty and seventy thousand people were present. When asked about the Pope's visit, the aged and wizened bishop said, in characteristic African proverbial fashion, "The Pope's visit is like a bee which came to us, stung us, and has now left us. We trust and pray that the 'itch of peace' left by his sting will remain."

St. Andrew's Children's Clinic – Laura Romero, the executive director, said that about 40 children with volunteers and staff participated in the Clinic on March 2. There was a lovely snow fall that day. The children were delighted, but it made for a wet, cold clinic. Most departments provided services. More space needs to be arranged so that all departments can function well. The clinic had hoped to get more space by taking over adjacent area of the building. The county decided to let Pima Community College have that space. There is a large room at the back of the clinic which might be re-modeled to accommodate clinic service.

Donors have been very generous. One donor provided warm breakfast sandwiches from McDonalds for all the children, many volunteers and families. Juice was provided by the Clinic. Donors also contributed floor mats for the Physical Therapy department to use. The Rotary Clubs have been very supportive of the Clinic with donations. A lady who loves to bake brought cookies for everyone. She plans to continue her joy of baking for the benefit of St. Andrews' Clinic.

VPC is in the process of donating a large screen TV for the children to watch as they wait for appointments. Les Walter will get this installed whenever his ankle injury heals. A temporary kitchen is available with a large refrigerator and microwave. A more adequate kitchen is needed.

At present, Laura feels they must limit services to 50 children. The children are vulnerable and must be protected from infections and diseases. The current space is congested, so numbers must be limited for the safety of the children. In the past, the Clinic was able to serve 250 children on the first Thursdays. That number is not possible now. The clinic is proceeding slowly but surely, and safely. It will be different than it was at the St. Andrew's Church, but it will be successful to meet the needs of many children.

This committee asked if Laura's staff has considered having more Clinics. The effort and complications involved in bringing children and volunteers to this clinic probably makes that impossible. With limited space for clinic services, has she considered the possibility of asking departments to alternate months? The committee asked when/how will the name of the clinic be changed. Reed asked about how the children are being transported from the border to the clinic. Kay will talk with Laura about these items and report in April.

The need for money, prayers and support continues. VPC has been very generous and helpful. The Clinic sends us their sincere thanks for all we do.

Valley Assistance Services – Steve Larson told us that the "Empty Bowls" was not attended as well as it was before COVID. Possible reasons: price of tickets went up and bowls of soup were "take out" rather than enjoyed at tables inside, limiting important socializing. This important fundraiser for VAS helps the rising cost of services. More affordable housing is needed for seniors and families. There is a huge need to help members of our community.

Youth on Their Own (YOTO) – Mary Horn reported:

- 1) March 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. Generous donations are coming in each month. Our bin runneth over!
- 2) Inspirational Card Makers met February 22 and completed 82 cards – a combination of ladies working at home and together that day. Dick and I delivered the cards and the Mini Mall contributions from the congregation to YOTO on February 23. Our next Inspirational Card Making session will be Wednesday, March 22 from 1 – 3:30 in Classroom 5.

Old Business

Mission Breakfast Mission/missionaries for 2021-2022 Programs:

- March 25, 2023 – Nogales Crossroads Mission/Sign up list
- November 18, 2023 – Young Adult Volunteer Program
- January 13, 2024 – Valley Assistance Services
- February 17, 2024 – Youth On Their Own
- March 23, 2024 - ? In House Missions (missions within our church)

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

- April 30, 2023 – Youth On Their Own – Mary Horn
- July 30, 2023 – Posada Life Community Services – Deb Jones
- October 29, 2023d – Presbyterian Campus Ministry – George Curtis
- December 31 – 2023 - Compañeros en Misión

Presbyterian Giving – One Great Hour of Sharing (April 3, 2023) Pastor Diane and Ed Storey will arrange publicity. To date \$400 has been given

Crossroads Nogales Mission/Easter hams & service - \$600 has been given to cover costs of hams and other food. Contact Linda Walter if you want to help on April 1.

Crossroad Nogales Lunches – On hold until need is established.

Homeless Packets Project – We ran into CRUNCH TIME for Snack Sack Assembly and have postponed our date. This will allow us sufficient time to order needed food items plus the tee shirts and ball caps (depending on Mission Committee Input). We have decided to deliver ALL our bags to the Hospitality House of the Salvation Army in Tucson in order not to add to problems the city is experiencing with Panhandling.

Our total monies collected to date are \$562.00. Suzanne will let us know later this morning if additional monies have come in from the collection plates.

The committee discussed possible dates to assemble the bags. A motion was made by Mary and seconded by Ed to assemble bags after our Mission Meeting April 11. The motion carried. The bags will be displayed on April 16.

After a discussion on completing the Snack Sacks, Doug made a motion seconded by Kay that we complete over 200 bags and purchase more of the food and drink items requested by the Salvation Army, but do not include Tee Shirts and Ball Caps. We could send any extra monies from Snack Sack Collection to the Salvation Army toward their purchase of the tee shirts and ball caps. The motion carried.

Valley Voice articles – 4 or more/month. We had 11 in September, 12 in October, 12 in November, 9 in December, 9 in January, 10 in February and 10 in March.

Young Adult Volunteer (YAV) program plans – Ed Story has accepted leadership and will develop a presentation for the congregation. Ed reports that we have become partners with Southside Presbyterian Church in a program of Presbytery de Christo to provide \$5k of annual support, beginning in August to provide a stipend for the volunteer. James Martin is the Adult Volunteer Services Coordinator. The program initially involves providing support to a day-laborer facility at Southside Church. Here, the workers, mostly Mexican migrants gather about 6:30 and the contractors come by to make an agreement. (They generally receive \$15/hr.) The purpose is to provide some assistance with the migrants to get the forms filled out and ensure they are properly treated. We have met with James and with Josefina Ahumada of Southside. They are working to get ready for the start of the YAV program in August. There is also some legal assistance for fair payment and wage theft complaints.

New Business: none**Brainstorming:**

A Peace Film is planned for Sunday, April 23, 2023, after church.

Pastor signed up VPC for the Tucson YMCA Neighborly House of Friends as sponsor as in the past for 5 years. No funding or obligation beyond their requirement to have a sponsor.

Discussion about \$5.00 cost for Mission Breakfasts. Shall we raise it because of inflation or keep the price at \$5.00 to encourage attendance? Decision deferred.

After Patio Sale, we discussed the lack of information that all proceeds go to the Missions of our church. Next year we might have handouts, bigger signs, a banner, etc. We will develop a committee to improve communication.

The finance committee has a protocol by which money is counted and deposited. We should write an explanation of what we do with money collected and ask for approval of the finance committee or adopt their plan.

Mary Horn created a thank you card for Carmen Nyland and the Patio Sale committee. We all signed with a message.

Some reports are given in soft voices so we cannot hear well. All members are encouraged to speak loudly.

The next Mission Committee meeting will be at 8:45, April 11, 2023 in Room 5 with option of ZOOM.

Pastor Craig Lindsay gave the closing prayer and the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,
Kay Brouwer, Secretary

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