



Our Valley Voice
August
2020



Courtesy of Joyce Lambert

electronic copies are available on our website:
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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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

Taize Service
1st Wednesday of the Month
5:00 p.m. Online

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Taize Worship

Wednesday, August 5

5 p.m. online

In such tumultuous times as these, we invite you to our Taize worship to hear about God's promises through beautiful music, scriptures, candles and quietness. Let it calm and feed your soul. You can find the Taize worship service on our website: valleypresbyterian.net on Wednesday, August 5.

Staff

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NEWS FROM THE VPC LIBRARY

If new reading ideas are needed, the following books were mentioned as “isolation reads” by various members of our Valley Readers group. * indicates that the book is available in our church library.

The Book of Longings.

The Book of Lost Friends.

The Gown. *(FIC ROB)

Lady in Waiting: My Extraordinary Life in the Shadow of the Crown.

Little Fires Everywhere. *(FIC NG)

A Long Petal of the Sea. *(FIC ALL)

Magic Hour. *(FIC HAN)

The Night Watchman.

The Secret Keeper.

The Shadow King. *(FIC MEN)

The Shadow of the Wind. *(FIC RUI)

The Splendid and the Vile. *(940.54 LAR)

Things in Jars.

Rev. Dr. Craig Lindsey

Head of Staff



FROM THE PASTOR

We are literally “living in expectation, hoping for a time of redemption and resurrection!” We have memories of the past, singing together, smiling, sharing meals in fellowship, doing mission service. Presently, we live individually in isolation, masked and separate, afraid to touch, hug or visit together, unable to do as much. We envision a not distant future, when we can go about our routine, without feeling we are the Hot Spot of the world’s attention. When we can worship God, even if wearing masks, sitting separately, trying to not have our temperature go up, at least smiling at one another behind our masks, our eyes crinkling with joy. We

forsee a future, hopefully just after Christmas, believing in a new year, when we live GOD with us, and we with one another. Somehow, isolation, social distancing feels like punishment, children being sent to our rooms, grounded, and we have not been bad. This summer, as we worship in our homes and distances, we have been reading together through the Foundational Stories of Faith. I recall first learning these as a child, but like rereading Alice in Wonderland, what seemed Children’s beginner stories have far deeper meanings as adults. The two recurrent messages I am hearing in these texts are: 1) God declaring to Abram and Sarai, and every subsequent generation “I will be with you and you shall be my people.” When we feel wounded and angry, we sometimes want to abandon hope, give up on God, give up believing, but this does not make God cease to exist. God still loves us. God cares for us, even when we feel far distant and alone. 2) God’s initial instruction to Moses is that the people be allowed to go worship. The underlying struggle with Pharaoh was whether the people would worship the man Pharaoh as a god, or whether the Pharaoh would trust the people and trust God, to allow people freedom to go worship. Pharaoh’s heart was hardened, as time after time, Moses came before the government commanding “Let my people go!” In isolation, with gnats and frogs, meteors and plagues, we can feel “lost” but integral to these stories is that while at times cut-off from family and foundations, we are never lost to God. I long to worship with you soon. *Pastor Craig Lindsey*

BUTTERFLY OFFERING

Thank you to everyone who gathered on Sunday, July 5th to release a dozen Painted Lady butterflies. What none of us anticipated, was just how wonderful and reassuring it was to see one another after so many months! Wearing masks and staying socially distanced from one another, we prayed together beneath the Solar Panels, then released the Butterflies as a living sacrificial offering to carry our hopes and dreams and prayers to God on the wind. For those interested in their own Butterfly Release for a Memorial or other special occasion, we found these through the internet, ordering them from Swallowtail Farms. We probably should have video recorded for the “Out-Takes” Pastor Lindsey trying to coax and recapture butterflies into individual envelopes and a special container for release.

WORSHIP PLANNING

July 26	Genesis 29:15-30	Leah and Rachel	
August 2	Genesis 32: 22-31	Jacob Wrestling	Communion
August 9	Genesis 37: 1-4 12-28	Joseph and His Brothers	
August 16	Genesis 45: 1-15	Joseph's Revelation	
August 23	Exodus 1: 8 – 2:10	Moses in the Mosses	
August 30	Exodus 3: 1-15	The Burning Bush	
September 6	Pastor Diane Preaching		

SLOW STEADY ILLUMINATION

A year ago, the Building and Grounds Committee were discussing possibilities of a new electronic sign that would be attractive and like advertising or a website drive people to want to come to church. In January, we heard overwhelming support from our congregation. Researching further, we found an affordable sign that could replace our banners and plastic swing sign. We contracted with an ironworker to create brackets for mounting this. Suddenly, we learned that the State and County have ordinances against all light-up signs especially because we are beneath the observatory atop the mountains. Trying to make accommodations, we offered to only light the sign during daylight hours, respecting the darkness needed for the observatory to see the stars. In order to get permission to mount this sign, we first needed a variance from the Green Valley Council and HOAs, which we received July 9th. With that “conditional endorsement” we were able to make an application for a Building Code Variance to the County and State. We hope that this will be granted in mid-August, permitting VPC to add this sign to the Driveway Marquee at our East Fountain entrance. The expressed goal is to not have anything garish or neon. To create a sign that provides legible information, encouraging visitors to want to get out of their homes and off the roads to come into the Church to worship God and share in fellowship. As you talk with your neighbors and neighbors of the Church, please encourage that we are trying to be good neighbors by following all the rules and seeking permissions rather than having to apologize later on.

KITCHEN RENOVATIONS

The Chief Cooks and Bottle Washers have long desired a fresh look for the Church Kitchen. Jim Luhning and Rick Nau installed a new Hot Water Heater; Skip Berry repurposed an oversized Metal Cookie Sheet as a cover for this, connecting the countertops and sinks; while not replacing the wood cabinets our Church Custodians have stripped and repainted all of them a brighter color. Everything is fresh and clean, and disinfected for when we are able to share in fellowship.

Rev. Diane Christopher

Associate Pastor of Discipleship

A Mask: To be or not.....?

As I write this, the big issue seems to be the wearing of a mask. Do we wear them or not? It has become a hot topic of debate and tempers.

This week the Governor of Georgia has mandated that the wearing of a mask cannot be regulated.



Diane with her mask made out of recycled water bottles.

The mayor of Atlanta is defying the Governor of Georgia stating that masks must be mandated if they are to gain any control over the virus. The governor is now suing Atlanta.

Many big name retail companies are now requiring masks to be worn in their stores: Target, Walmart, Best Buy, to name a few.

To wear a mask or not? There are good arguments on both sides of the issue.

Those who do not want to wear a mask say it is their right to make their own decision. Some say the masks do not protect us as much as we think. Masks are a pain to wear – they are hot, it is difficult to breathe, they become dirty and germmy as we handle them and try to keep them on our noses. Some people get headaches when they wear them too long.

The reason we are told to wear a mask is to contain the spread of COVID-19 which travels through droplets that come from our mouth. (By the way, on a little side note, does anyone know why the virus is called COVID-19? See answer below.)

Here at the church, we wear masks. When we are alone in our office, we take them off. But as soon as someone steps into our office or if we leave our office, the mask goes on. If you come to the church at 8 a.m. on Wednesday mornings during our staff meeting, you will find the staff spread throughout the reception area wearing masks.

Pastor Diane con't

This article is not to tell you whether you should wear a mask or not. That decision is up to you, but I do want to tell you why I wear a mask. I wear a mask because of my faith.

I think about the 10 Commandments. The first 4 commandments are about how we treat God. Jesus summed up the first 4 commands by saying, "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind" (Matthew 22:37).

The rest of the commandments (6 of them, the majority) are about how we treat others. Jesus summed them up this way: "Love your neighbor as yourself" (Matthew 22:39).

I wear a mask because I love my neighbor as myself.

I think about the New Testament, particularly Paul's letters. It is largely about how we treat each other in the name of Christ and to put other people's interests first. Here are a few good examples:

We who are strong have an obligation to bear with the failings of the weak, and not to please ourselves. (Romans 15:1)

Do nothing from rivalry or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others. (Philippians 2:3-4)

Let no one seek his own good, but the good of his neighbor. (I Corinthians 10:24)

When you see me wearing my mask, it says that I care for you, I want to keep you safe, that I am looking out for your interest over mine.

Maybe you found this to be true: when I first began wearing a mask, I felt conspicuous, silly. As I have gotten used to it, I feel safer behind that mask.

If you find wearing a mask difficult, try to make some fun out of it. I make an effort to match my mask with the day's outfit. I even have a mask that is made out of recycled water bottles. Several of you have made masks with pipe cleaners, which help keep the mask on the nose (yes, the kid's classroom is being raided). Our custodian, Joe, now proudly wears a Seahawks mask and makes sure I don't forget it.

Pastor Diane con't

My friends, these are trying times as we daily make decisions that we never had to consider before. If you are trying to decide whether to wear a mask or not, I hope this little article will help. All in all, love your neighbor as yourself.

We miss you, *Pastor Diane*

Why is the virus called COVID-19? Here is your answer:

CO – stands for corona

VI – stands for virus

D – stands for disease

19 – the year the virus first appeared

Pray Like Jesus **Rediscovering the Lord's Prayer**

Tuesdays at 10 a.m. on Zoom
August 25 – September 29

The Lord's Prayer is one of the most famous prayers in the world. Based on the book *Pray Like Jesus* by Don Underwood, Pastor Diane and Linda Norman will bring the wonders of this lovely prayer to life.

Due to the pandemic, class will be on Zoom with limited class size. As a result, we will be taking registrations. Contact Pastor Diane at the church office to register (625-5023) or email her at dianechristopher@valleypres.net.

Books can be purchased for \$10 in the church office, or you can order your own online.

FINANCE

Snippets from the Church Treasurer

Donald Brooks – dx38@cox.net – 520-399-3959

GOOD NEWS / BAD NEWS / GOOD NEWS. GOOD NEWS - At the beginning of the year I was thrilled that we were able to propose a balanced budget to Session and the Congregation for the first time in many years. This was no small feat. The recommendations of Journey Ahead Group (JAG) were instituted, organizational structure and operational practices were changed which reduced spending. Thanks to the JAG members and the many other committees involved. **BAD NEWS** - Then came COVID-19 and all of its effects and we had no idea how it would impact the church's functions and finances, but we suspected it certainly wouldn't help. **GOOD NEWS** – We were able to navigate the Small Business Administration's (SBA) Paycheck Protection Program application process gauntlet, and we received a "forgivable loan" that will cover about two months of our staff's wages.

MORE GOOD NEWS - Then the unexpected happened, the Congregation stepped up and your gifts have surpassed our budget projections for 9 out of the last 11 weeks. So, at the end of this year's 28th Week we are only \$38,292 behind our budgeted projections. Last year our Budget to Actuals through week #28 were behind by \$38,120. So, we are pretty much on track with last year. Thanks ever so much to those who have contributed in these difficult times.

SOLAR POWER SYSTEM STATUS. As of May 31, 2020, the system has been producing power for two full years. Based on Tucson Electric Power's (TEP) power supply charges, surcharges, taxes and assessments and our usage, having the Solar System has saved the church \$12,991.48 in electrical energy costs during these past two years. See chart below.

The solar system has produced beyond the estimated production by 7.97%. Currently, we have 11,477.6 kWh in the power escrow account with TEP. This will help during these next two months of high-power consumption.

The church has an option to purchase the Solar System from Technology Credit Corporation (TCC) at the end of the 60th month of our lease contract, for \$100,097. Recently, Session approved a motion to start a campaign to request funds from the Congregation. Finance has established a Designated Giving Account for the Solar System purchase. Currently the balance is \$2,862. If every church member, who has not yet contributed, were to make a designated contribution of \$73.50 / year, for the next three years, the system would be paid for by July 2023. If anyone has questions about this, please don't hesitate to contact me. I will attempt to provide a comprehensive answer.

If you would like to participate in this cost-saving endeavor for the future of Valley Presbyterian Church, please note Solar System Campaign with your donation. Remember, every dollar is important.

Billing Period	Power Costs		Savings	
	w/o Solar	w/ Solar	Year	Cum to Date
June 2018 Thru May 2019	\$ 23,199.91	\$ 16,963.80	\$ 6,236.11	\$ 6,236.11
June 2019 Thru May 2020	\$ 24,682.43	\$ 17,927.06	\$ 6,755.37	\$ 12,991.48

Capital Campaign for Solar System

For two years, about 87.5% of our church's power requirements have been met through a contract with Technology Credit Corporation (TCC) using the solar power system they installed in our parking lot. Total savings compared with what we would have paid to Tucson Electric Power during the first twenty-two months of operation amounted to \$11,075.72.

We have a great opportunity to purchase our solar system beginning in May 2023. Ownership would save the church approximately \$14,500 in yearly utility costs after paying for maintenance, annual inspection, and insurance.

The total purchase price is \$100,780. With the expected annual utility savings, the return on our investment (ROI) is about 6.9 years.

The Session approved a Capital Campaign for the purchase of our solar system. We have 36 months to accumulate the funds needed to convert from the TCC contract to a full purchase of the equipment. A special account was established for the Campaign and already has received generous contributions of \$2,500 from congregation members. You will be hearing about the progress of our solar system campaign in the coming months.

Juanita Anderson Green, 08/01

Wanda Myers, 08/03

Thomas Erickson, 08/03

Edgar Truitt, 08/05 **

Christine Erickson, 08/05

Mikayla Szabo, 08/06

Geneva Lemman, 08/07

Joyce Green, 08/08

Lois Macfarlane, 08/09

Sheila Kepler, 08/09

Roger Fisher, 08/09

Mike Brouwer, 08/10

Parker Long, 08/12

Richard Horn, 08/12

John Ireland, 08/13

Victor Valade, 08/13

Grace Martin, 08/14

John Marchica, 08/15

Kay Davison, 08/17

Carol Wilking, 08/17

Patti Messerschmidt, 08/17

SPECIAL BIRTHDAY MILESTONES!

**Special birthday greetings to Ed Truitt (8/5)
as he celebrates his 90th birthday this month.**

Bruce Garnett, 08/18

Calvin Danhof, 08/18

William Campbell, 08/19

Gwen Lamb, 08/20

Linda Mutimer, 08/20

Clayton Messelt, 08/21

George Curtis, 08/21

Joan Briggs, 08/22

Elizabeth Haynes, 08/22

Carol Collins, 08/22

Steven Larson, 08/23

Gayle Tompkins, 08/23

Martha Jenkins, 08/24

Daniel Wilking, 08/24

Mike Yoder, 08/24

Donna Richards, 08/25

Keith Adrian, 08/26

Bob Lillie, 08/27

Jane Lovat, 08/28

Jean Messelt, 08/29

Willis Campbell, 08/30

H. Larry Sharp, 08/31

Presbytery de Cristo invites you to participate in the

2020 Matthew 25 Offering in a COVID-19 world

to provide aid to our Presbyterian border ministries
Frontera de Cristo and Compañeros en Misión

*as they serve our sisters and brothers in Christ through the CAME Migrant Assistance Center
in Agua Prieta and the Compañeros en Misión Migrant Ministry in Nogales*

Three Ways to Donate

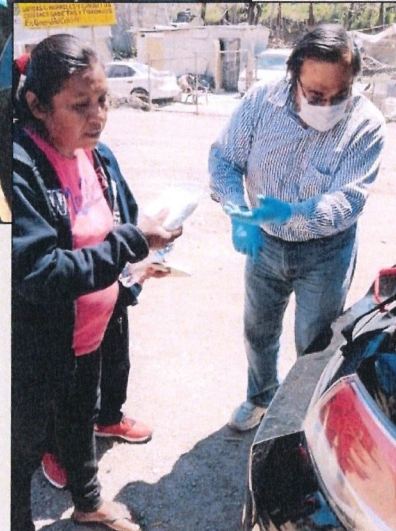
MONETARY CONTRIBUTIONS FOR FOOD: Cash donations enable the ministry leaders to feed their clients. They serve hundreds of people each week. Please make your check payable to either Frontera de Cristo or Compañeros en Misión, and note "Matthew 25 Offering" on your check.

PERSONAL HYGIENE ITEMS:

- Face masks
- Hand soap (liquid and bar soap)
- Sunscreen
- Deodorant
- Toothpaste
- Feminine hygiene products
- Disposable diapers (sizes 3, 4, and 5)
- Baby wipes
- New socks for all ages

CLEANING ITEMS:

- Laundry detergent
- Bleach
- All-purpose cleaner (Pinol, PineSol, or Fabuloso)
- Liquid dishwashing soap
- Clorox or Lysol wipes



Bring your donations to your church office July 15–August 9

They will be taken to Agua Prieta and Nogales for the August 22nd virtual Presbytery meeting, "The Big Event."

"for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me." —Matthew 25:35-36



Casa Vida Nueva para Niño's, A.C. Home for Children (Orphanage) Submitted by Reed Olsen

To the world you may be one person, but to a child, you are the world.

MX is basically locked down – just like the USA. The children are out of school with no idea on what they will be doing in the fall when school is supposed to start. I haven't been down to visit since last October due to the border unrest and now the virus. What a mess. I talked to Julio from New Life Church of God recently and asked for an update. The children are all doing well and are staying healthy. They are not planning on going anywhere this summer. There are no new children.

Last year they build an in ground swimming pool from generous donations. With their new water well, they can fill the pool at almost no cost to them. The pool is a main focus for the children during this time period of no travel and social distancing.



Some high school age children are continuing their summer education through a virtual learning coach. The ones that have graduated from high school have not decided what they will be doing in the fall because of the virus restrictions. They are going through the same challenging decisions as our children in the US.



Good news is the upstairs (bedrooms, bathroom – boys / girls, and the new common area) is finished. All of this was accomplished due to generous support from people like you - “thank you.” Visits have been stopped until we all feel it's safe again to travel.

If you would still like to help during this time, you can continue donating to support their overall operations through VPC by requesting your donations go to the orphanage, or you can donate to the children's educational funding through VPC requesting your donations go to RISE Scholastic Achievements. For more on this mission please visit VPC web site, Missions, Casa Vida Nueva para Niños <https://www.valleypresbyterian.net/mission.html> or visit RISE Scholastic Achievements web site: www.risesa.org.

Email Blasts Update

As many of you know, we send out email blasts almost every day. However, we are aware that some of you have signed up for the email blasts, received them for a while, and then they stopped for you.

We believe we have resolved the issue. However, if you are still not getting email blasts, we ask you to sign up again on our website: valleypresbyterian.net. Click on “News and Events,” and go to “E-Blasts.” You can also read the emails blasts on our website: valleypresbyterian.net

Reminder: you can watch our worship services on our website as well.

St. Andrews Children's Clinic

Submitted by Kay Brouwer

A quote from the Clinic's Executive Director, Laura Romero: "This week has really made an impact on me. With all that has been going around our world and having to come to terms with adapting to a new way of life, I have been questioning the future of our Clinic. Since our lockdown we have all been in constant fear of the unknown, but this past week has made me realize that we must move on and continue with our passion in our mission: helping children." Certainly, this is more proof that St. Andrew's Children's Clinic deserves our support!

They are working from home since they are considered a non-essential clinic. They will discontinue clinics at least through June and might be closed through August, too. They have never had clinics in July. Changes must be made to find a different way to serve the children. Departments may be functioning in separate months.

Laura plans to start Cleft Lip/Cleft Palate services on a small scale. This means screening about 40 children and, in October, taking 20 of those for surgery at CIMA Hospital in Hermosillo, Mexico. Fund-raising is under way. Children's Surgery International (CSI) volunteers from Minneapolis have said they will provide necessary services. Laura and the St. Andrew's Staff have been deciding the protocol which will be needed when the Clinic resumes services. Certainly, there will be necessary protective equipment provided. Children and families will come in much smaller numbers. Only one or two department clinics will be offered on the first Thursday of each month. However, the St. Andrew's Children's Clinic is committed to resuming its care for suffering children and families in Mexico who are in desperate need of St. Andrew's help. Through communication with the Border Patrol, Laura has been assured families with appointments will be permitted to cross into the United States on Clinic days. St. Andrew's Children's Clinic needs and deserves our prayers, support and funding. In May, the Valley Presbyterian Church Mission Committee gave \$1,000 of its Emergency Funds to help the clinic as it restructures for the future. Laura expressed sincere thanks for the generous donation from our church.



Companeros En Mision

THE WORK GOES – COMPANEROS EN MISION

Reverend Jorje Pazos, Pastor for three Presbyterian churches in Mexico has been busy serving his flock in Mexico by conducting video services similar to the way we have been Doing.

Sunday services with communion, Sunday School Classes, Wednesday evening prayer Meetings, and Saturday Women's meetings on Facebook.

They have also been serving food and drinks 3 or 4 times a week to a group of migrants who gather together. Lately, only 10 or 15 will gather together, so they go looking for others who are washing cars, or looking for other ways to get help. They have handed out many face coverings so they will be allowed to enter places to purchase food.

Please pray for these Border Presbyterian churches and Reverend Pazos and his helpers Who are certainly doing the work of Jesus Christ.

Submitted by Judy Aguayo, Co-Advisor



Crossroads Mission, Nogales AZ

Submitted by Joan Bolin

I've talked with Bert Wenke (co-director) concerning Ben Wenke (co-director) medical condition. Ben had shoulder surgery about 4 months ago and has since been back in the hospital because of breathing problems. (Nothing to do with COVID-19 virus). He is doing better as of the middle of July.

-The Mission people there at Crossroads are still working on the newest donated 4-bedroom women's transitional house and property. A new roof was put on and a fence was built surrounding the property.

-A new accountant has been hired for Crossroads Mission.

-Because of the COVID-19 virus pandemic no one from Valley Presbyterian Church has gone down to Crossroads Mission to prepare lunch since the middle of March 2020.

-Crossroads Mission personnel are still handing out bags of food twice a day for the people that come to the Mission for help. The donated vegetables they receive at the Mission are being cleaned and prepared for freezing, which they will use in soups and stews later this year when the kitchen facility is fully open.

Mission

More Blog Readers Wanted

By Doug Clark

More Bloggers wanted (15 and counting) Note #15 blogger

A blogger 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 blogging the real life story of Bob and Kristi Rice who share on a weekly basis the story of God working in their life.

Remembering Refugees

The large church building held more than one thousand people, squeezed together on narrow wooden benches. There were five large choirs, and each sang enthusiastically, with impressive cohesion and choreography. There were also several pastors, as this congregation formed when several smaller congregations merged when they found themselves transplanted into the Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) Camp. We remember that first visit well – it was electrifying and moving to have so many people packed into the church building and also to know that despite their joyful worship, each of them had experienced significant trauma and upheaval. After the service, the church leaders led the way, weaving through the maze of white tents, to the home of Pastor James. We sat together with some of the elders and pastors, listening and trying to understand a piece of their life. Deacons brought in large platters with heaping bowls of wal-wal, fish soup, lentils and kisra. We were amazed and humbled – this was the first congregation in Juba to feed us a meal after Sunday worship, and we knew that this hospitality was a sacrificial gift.

Pastor James shared that he is often called to help counsel people who are experiencing trauma or abuse in the camp. With so many people crowded into small spaces without good sanitation facilities or land for them to cultivate, over the course of years health, relationships, and work ethic begin to decline. The church is an important source of hope, connection, and strength, and perhaps this is one reason that the worship and prayers feel especially powerful in the camp. Many of the current residents fled to this camp near Juba in 2016 during a horrific period of attacks on the Nuer people. The situation in the city has improved, and many people leave the camp during the day for work or school, but do not yet feel safe enough to live outside the camp. The trauma and fear that they have experienced is significant, and we know that several conditions will have to be met for most of the people to be able to return to normal lives outside the camp. The years that this drags on, however, means that children are growing up inside the camp, and some of our colleagues have lamented that this means they are not learning the skills such as farming, building houses, or caring for cattle that they would be learning in their villages – which of course adds another set of challenges for the country in navigating a new way forward.

World Refugee Day is June 20. We encourage you to remember with us the incredible challenge of refugees around the world. South Sudan is a country with the largest refugee crisis in Africa, with more than 1.5 million people displaced from their homes within South Sudan and more than 2 million living temporarily in camps in neighboring countries. Most of these refugees have been in camps or displaced for nearly five years. Last year nearly 200,000 voluntarily returned home as prospects for

peace in their regions improved. However, attempts to implement a new unity government in 2020 have been mired in controversy and led to [further instability](#). In May and June of this year, inter-tribal violence broke out in several places over cattle raiding and revenge killing. The Presbyterian Church of South Sudan is organizing a group of trained mediators to [assist in resolving the conflicts](#). This year also brings the added threat of the Coronavirus – some initial random tests have confirmed the presence of Covid-19 in the IDP camps near Juba, so we pray that the spread is contained.

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 and praying for our missionaries and let me know if you have joined the blog brigade by emailing me douglasclark68@me.com.



Pam & Dave Lovett

Dear Friends,

We Want to say thank you for your faithful support and prayers over the last months and years! We are living in tumultuous times and like many of you, are praying and asking the question, God what are you doing and saying to us through this whole COVID-19 crisis? We were in Thailand in February for our annual international OM leadership conference where about 400 leaders from 120 countries were coming to meet for prayer, strategy, networking and planning for how to keep bringing the Gospel to the least reached people of the world. Even in lockdown, we continue this work. Our flight home to WI stopped in Seoul, Korea so we did visit with my son and daughter in law and our new grandson WILL. Thank you again for all your prayers for us , our Missions, and our family. Yours in the Race. Dave and Pam L.

Music

Musical Congregational Prayer

Thank you for the music all around us.
Each morning we hear it from the moment we open our ears;
the low notes of wind around the eaves,
the whoosh of water as it comes from the tap,
the glug glug as it drains,
the throaty whistle of the boiling kettle,
the metallic tap of the spoon against the cup,
the jazz percussion of our feet on the steps.
The sounds of our day,
so familiar we hardly pay attention.
Thank you for the ability to hear.

Thank you for the sounds of life:
the chatter of the squirrel,
the deep purr of a cat,
the sharp call of a blue jay,
the sound of someone we love laughing.
Give us wisdom to enter this day with good sounds,
tones and pitches and words that affirm, encourage, cherish,
our sounds affecting the world in a positive way.

We pray for all who sing a sad song today;
the grieving, the lonely, the lost.
We pray especially for those who have lost their voice
and feel silenced or oppressed.
There are many singing freedom songs around our world,
and so today we pray for the safety of these singers.
Give their song the strength to convince and convert,
the power to ward off war.
There are too many war songs,
we don't want to hear another one.

Thank you for your songs, love songs, which we are invited to sing.
Thank you for all the parts you've made for the song;
soprano, alto, tenor, bass.
Thank you for the children's part and the part for middle agers,
thank you for the crazy baby descant that we all love to hear.

You are the Great Composer.
We love to be composed each day in your image,
singing your elegant score truly, clearly,
following your rhythm by heart,
finding your voice in your beautiful world.
Hearing you in the music of life.
This is our prayer. Amen.

“Copyright Carol Penner”

Thank you to all of you that have provided music during these past months. It is our goal to provide as much variety, balance of today and yesterday, and constant creative comfort.

Wes and I miss you a great deal! We look forward to the day we make music in person and are physically together once again!



PARISH NURSE

Celebrating Life in Times of Uncertainty
Aug 2020



We all in some way are going through something difficult; whether that be moving, a loss of loved one or friend, change in our health, change in financial status, or even change in our daily routine. Especially, now socially distancing and not attending those social meetings whether at church or in our own neighborhoods that we may look forward to. Ordering online, watching services online, and mask or facial coverings have become a daily normal during COVID-19.

As I am writing this, I am preparing to go into surgery tomorrow. Another set of uncertainties. Will the surgery go ok? Will they do or find something extra? Will I heal ok? The anticipation of waiting to see if you are ok is similar to what we are going through with this Pandemic. The unknowns can make us anxious, our stomach turn, and feel uneasy.

A well-known story is that of Peter Pan, flying into Never-Never Land not knowing what to expect or who is there. Peter comes across Captain Hook, but has a friend in Tinkerbell. In the story, and there are a few versions, he becomes friends with the Lost Boys and times become difficult with Captain Hook. Once he does get back home to his parents, he celebrates life as it is.

My point being, how often in sad times or times that are difficult or stressful 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. We look forward to working through these times and for that we are a stronger person, and closer to God. As we go forward each day during these uncertain times, let us celebrate what we do have, what we can do, and all the positive things around us. As Peter Pan says, *To Live is an Adventure*. What kind of adventure would you like to do?

May God's uplifting blessings shine on you,
Chris, BA, RN, C-Parish Nurse

The VPC task force has been meeting since the beginning of COVID-19. We look forward to talking with each other on Tuesdays, to provide ways to keep those connections in the church family strong and keep those in the church family healthy. This task force helps the church family with: finding volunteers to shop for others, face coverings, and tips to encourage positivity during this time of COVID-19.

As we continue with COVID-19, please keep safe and healthy. If you are at high risk (65 years of age or older or have an existing health condition) stay home, stay safe, stay 6 feet apart from others and wear a facial covering/face mask if you need to go out.

Please keep your regular visits to healthcare providers especially if you have an underlying health condition. It is essential that during an increased time of stress that we are connected with our healthcare providers. Keep them updated if any changes occur with your health or emotional health. Health is the one thing we should not ignore. If we take care of us, we can take care of others better.



We are increasing the praying bears size to cover all those extra prayers right now! These praying bears are available in Congregational Care office and we can have them arranged to be delivered.



**Remember to drink plenty of water during these hot summer days.
Stay hydrated!**

PATIO SALE NEWS

Although COVID-19 is keeping us from picking up items from people's houses, we are still taking in items that are brought to the church, and that part of the business has been rather brisk. It requires a few of us to sort and pack items at least twice a week, and then we call in people from specific departments to pack what has accumulated for that department. Sometimes it's the book department, sometimes the clothes department, sometimes collectibles or housewares – so you see we are still getting in donations, and we are very grateful for that. As you clean out drawers, cabinets, closets, or garages, remember the Patio Sale and bring no longer needed items to the church.

The Patio Sale has been blessed to receive the donation of three cars this summer. Two of them are ready to be sold, but the third may take a little while. These donations more than make up for the lack of items picked up from homes, and no storage is necessary. Our heartfelt gratitude to those who donated the automobiles to us.



As we sort through things to put in the various departments, we always come across items that completely puzzle us. In fact, finding those things and solving the puzzle of their purpose is one of the most entertaining part of sorting. Here are pictures of one such item.

It is made of paper, is about 7 inches high, and is folded so that it stretches width-wise. What is its purpose? If you know, send your answer to eloisef@aol.com. Next month we will publish the answer and show another item.



Youth on their Own continues its policy of social distancing. For the safety of students, staff and community, YOTO's administrative offices will be closed until further notice. Current plans are that the Mini Mall will be open to students in August. The most pressing need for the Youth on Their Own organization currently is monetary contributions to their Emergency Fund to help students during this Corona-virus crisis.

If you wish to make a donation, you can send a check to our church with YOTO written in the memo section, or send your donation directly to YOTO: 1660 N. Alvernon Way, Tucson, AZ 85712. If you go to their website, yoto.org, you can also donate online.

Submitted by Mary Horn, Mission Committee Liaison to YOTO

YOTO students need your help!

In response to increased demand for our services during this time of social and economic disruption, YOTO has created an **emergency fund** for direct student aid to help us provide urgent financial assistance, basic needs supplies, and food or grocery gift cards to students who rely on our support.

Thank you for supporting youth experiencing homelessness when they need it most!



INSPIRATIONAL CARD MAKING

Our next inspirational card making event would be Wednesday, August 26 at 1PM. We would like to RE-START our gathering, but we also want to be cautious in this climate where cases of the virus continue to rise in our state. The good news is that our meeting date is at the end of the month, so that allows extra time for the spread of the virus to slow. I will plan to be in contact with our regular card makers the week of August 17th about whether it will be safe to meet. If you would like to join us, please call (520-282-1390) or email me (mmhorn@me.com)

Stephen Ministry

In March, I don't think any of us thought we would still be wearing masks, and staying home except for essential outings. As we settle in for the new normal, Stephen Ministries is re-planning how we meet for continuing education, peer supervision, training, and serving our care receivers.

At our July Leadership meeting, we outlined ways to continue using Zoom for our meetings, and looked ahead to using Zoom for our training for new Stephen Ministers if the Covid Virus continues to expand its reach into the new year.

The National Headquarters for Stephen Ministries has published all new training materials for 2020. During our Continuing Education over the coming year, we will be reviewing the new materials so that all of our Stephen Ministers will understand the changes introduced in these new materials. And we are encouraging all of our SMs to join us on Zoom no matter where you are located. You do not need to be in AZ in order to participate.

And we are available to minister to new Care Receivers. If you or a loved one need some extra support during this difficult time, we are here to serve. We can call, use programs like Skype or Zoom to visit face to face, or visit outdoors with social distancing. You can contact John Agner for the men (520-398-5107) or Peggi Briggs for the women (520-965-9203) to discuss receiving a Care Giver.

We pray for you as we move forward in this changed world. While isolation can feel intimidating, using this time for solitude with God can open us to a deeper relationship with God and renewed energy for serving God's people.

Blessings to each of you.

Gee-Gee Smith, Stephen Ministries Facilitator



Valley Voice Editor

I will be editing the Valley Voice for the foreseeable future, so please send all articles to me no later than the 15th of the month. During this period of separation, it is important to stay connected. Articles on spiritual growth, community activities, and mission projects are always welcome.

Blessings to you all,

Gee-Gee Smith, Valley Voice editor

tubacgee@gmail.com

2021 CHURCH OFFICER NOMINATIONS

The Valley Presbyterian Church Nominating Committee is seeking church members who will accept God's call to serve as Ruling Elders or Deacons for a 3-year term of service beginning January 1, 2021.

RULING ELDERS serve on the Session, the principal decision-making body of the church. The Session is primarily responsible for the overall mission and government of our church. In addition to attending monthly Session meetings, each Elder provides leadership for at least one of the church's committees or ministries, shares in serving communion, and assists wherever needed.

DEACONS serve on the Board of Deacons, the loving heart of the church, which has oversight of congregational care. This includes responsibility for all of the Congregational Care committees, preparing church communion, and administering to the homebound through extended communion. Deacons attend monthly meetings of the Board and provide leadership to one or more of the Congregational Care committees.

If *you feel called to serve* as a Ruling Elder or as a Deacon, please submit the Suggestion Form to the Nominating Committee. If you would like to *suggest a church member* for one of these important leadership positions, please complete the Suggestion Form and send it to the Nominating Committee.

Suggestion Forms are available in the Valley Voice, E-Blasts, and at the Welcome Desks in the Narthex. **Please submit your Nomination Forms to arrive by August 31st :**

email: vpc-office@valleypres.net
U. S. Mail: Judy Aguayo, Elder
Valley Presbyterian Church
2800 S. Camino Del Sol
Green Valley, AZ 8562

Hand delivery: Place in the drop box on the Welcome Desk in the Narthex.

2021 Church Officer Nominating Timeline:

- * August 1 - 31: Submission of Suggestion Forms to the church
- * September: Nominees will be contacted and interviewed by members of the committee. The Nomination Committee will then meet to discuss the candidates and prepare the slate of nominees to present to the congregation.
- * October: Congregational meeting to select 2021 Church Officers. The slate of nominees for Ruling Elders, Deacons and 2021 Nomination Committee will be presented. Nominations from the congregation may be received for consideration. The congregation will vote.

Thank you for supporting the leadership of VPC.

Judy Aguayo, Chairperson 760-401-4545
Gail Gesell, Elder
Peggy Babcock, Deacon
Jana Honermann, Deacon
Jeane West, Charter Member

NOMINATION PROCESS AND INFORMATION

The Nominating Committee of Valley Presbyterian Church is seeking to identify men and women to accept God's call to serve as Elders and Deacons for 3-year terms of service beginning January 1, 2021.

- **ELDERS** serve on the Session, the principal decision-making body of the church. Session is primarily responsible for the overall mission and government of the church. In addition to attending the monthly Session meeting, each elder provides leadership for one of the church's committees or ministry teams, shares in serving communion, and assists as needed.
- **DEACONS** serve on the Board of Deacons, the loving heart of the church, which has oversight of congregational care. This includes being responsible for all of the Congregational Care committees, preparing monthly church communion, and ministering to the homebound through extended communion. Deacons attend monthly meetings of the Board and participate on one, or more, of the Congregational Care Committees.

YOUR NOMINATING COMMITTEE REQUESTS SUGGESTIONS FOR THESE IMPORTANT LEADERSHIP POSITIONS.

Members should also feel encouraged to propose themselves for positions in which they would be willing to serve. Please use the Suggestion Form on the reverse side of this page.

The completed Suggestion Forms need to be returned to the Welcome Desk on Sunday, November 24, or to the church office before that date. Thank you for your response to this matter.

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**SUGGESTION FORM
FOR NOMINATIONS OF CHURCH OFFICERS**

(Please see information on back of form;
use a separate form for each suggestion.)

Since the Nominating Committee will consider many more candidates for office than there are vacancies at this time, suggestions that include thoughtful and specific comments about a member's particular fit for service will be particularly helpful to the Committee.

I suggest the Nominating Committee consider

Name _____

for nomination to become (*check one or both*)

☐ an Elder ☐ a Deacon

and draw the Committee's attention to the information below about his or her gifts, abilities, and experiences that I believe may be relevant to the discernment of God's call to service:

Personal qualities: _____

Education: _____

Church Involvement and Christian discipleship: _____

Special Interests: _____

I believe he/she is willing to serve at this time if elected (*check one*):

☐ Yes ☐ Not sure

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