


The Messenger

Valley Community Presbyterian Church December 2021

Sundays at Valley

In-person worship at 10:00 a.m. and online at <https://www.facebook.com/ValleyCommunityPresbyterian/>

Click videos on the left side.

December

5 Second Sunday of Advent
Communion
Advent Fair, 2:00 p.m.

12 Third Sunday of Advent
Christmas Pageant, 10:00 a.m.

19 Fourth Sunday of Advent
Cents-Ability Offering
Together Women Rise,
11:30 a.m.
Christmas Concert, 3:00 p.m.

26 First Sunday of Christmas

January

2 Second Sunday of Christmas
Communion



ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS AT VALLEY

Advent means coming. During this first season of the Church year, we anticipate the coming of Christ into the world and the coming of Christ into our lives. Advent is a season of Holy waiting; waiting for God's peace to come to earth... waiting for the light of Christ to shine... waiting for the shepherds, the angels, and the Christ child.

Advent lasts for four Sundays, leading up to Christmas Day. During our Advent worship, we prepare the way for our hearts and minds to receive God's greatest gift to us, the birth of his Son. We light the Advent candles, one more each week, as we remember God's promises to us for Hope, Love, Joy and Peace. We hear the prophets' words of warning and promise, and we listen with wonder for the miraculous Gospel story leading to Christ's birth. During this Holy season, we prepare to celebrate the coming of Emanuel, God-with-us!

Sunday, November 28 - First Sunday of Advent

We begin Advent with symbols of the season displayed in the sanctuary. The first candle of Advent symbolizing Hope will be lit.

Saturday, December 4 - The Christmas Tree will be erected and decorated on the front lawn.

Sunday, December 5 - Second Sunday of Advent

The second candle of Advent symbolizing Peace will be lit. The Advent Fair will be held in Davis Hall/Gym from 2:00-4:00 p.m.

Sunday, December 12 - Third Sunday of Advent

The third candle of Advent symbolizing Joy will be lit. The Christmas Pageant will be presented during 10:00 a.m. worship. Children will dramatize the coming and birth of Jesus and the Armonia Choir will sing.

Sunday, December 19 - Fourth Sunday of Advent

The fourth candle of Advent symbolizing Love will be lit. A Christmas Concert featuring Thomas Rheingans and soloists will be held at 3:00 p.m. We are encouraged to invite friends and family to the concert.

Friday, December 24 - Christmas Eve at 8:00 p.m.

The Christ candle will be lit. A candlelight service celebrating the birth of Jesus Christ will be held at 8:00 p.m. with the Sanctuary and Armonia Choirs participating.

Our Christmas celebration continues with services on Sunday, December 26 and Sunday, January 2, 2022.

A Note from Pastor Robin Garvin



The Rev. Robin Garvin

including two years as the Director of Youth Ministries at Valley (1983-1985)! I've served five congregations in Washington and Oregon in both installed and interim pastoral positions. For the last seven years I have served as the Pastor of Discipleship of Lake Grove Presbyterian Church.

My husband, Roger, is a family physician on the faculty of Oregon Health and Science University. We were married at Valley in 1984. We have one adult daughter, Erica, and son-in-law, Josh, who live in Atlanta. In my free time, I enjoy walking my dog, Penny, hiking, cooking, reading, traveling, and watching college basketball. I am a diehard Gonzaga Bulldog fan!

I look forward to getting settled in and sharing this Advent season with you. I maintain regular office hours each week, and you are always welcome to stop by and say hello. I am eager to know each of you by name!

Joyfully in Christ,

Pastor Robin Garvin

THE MESSENGER

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NEWSLETTER STAFF:
ANGELA GRAHAM

PLEASE SUBMIT ARTICLES VIA E-MAIL BY
DECEMBER 20 FOR THE JANUARY ISSUE:
angie@valleycommunity.org

THE NEWSLETTER STAFF RETAINS
PERMISSION TO MODIFY SUBMISSIONS
FOR CLARITY, SPACE, CONTENT AND
STYLE.

December Birthdays

Bob Archibald
Wade Askew
Claire Bedsaul
Karssa Beutler
Steve Bird
Sarah Blair
Kjel Carlson
Marilyn Connell
Deborah DuFresne
Polly Dye

Jenny Pratt Hale
Charlene Hegdahl
Bob Hinson
Steve Levine
Hannah Nolen
Mark Rodman
Donna Russell
Linda Sanderman
Silvia Smart
Kerry Viestenz

Happy birthday to all those born in December! If we missed you, please contact the church office at 503.292.3537 or info@valleycommunity.org and let us know.



Together Women Rise



Together Women Rise at Valley will end the year on Zoom. We will meet on Sunday December 19 at 11:30 a.m. to enjoy each other's company on the screen and to learn about this month's featured grantee. Our presenter will take us to Rwanda to begin to understand what young women in that country are confronted with and how Komera is making a difference.

In the local language *komera* means strong and courageous. The non-profit organization, Komera, was founded in 2007 by Margaret Butler, a former primary school teacher and former professional runner, who spent one year living in a remote village in Rwanda. She saw the inequities present and did something about it.

Komera was established in partnership with a local team of social workers who knew and understood the issues that young women were facing. Education was an imperative, but furthermore, they knew that more was needed in order to truly see young women develop into female leaders. Since 2007, Komera has established Rwandan leadership with a focus on holistic care for adolescent girls and their families. This means girls receive healthcare, economic and advocacy training, and community support in addition to education.

The main goals of the program that Together Women Rise is supporting are to provide a pathway out of poverty for both teen mothers and vulnerable adolescent girls. Interventions are designed to transform their futures through education on sexual reproductive health and women's rights, access to family planning and resources, and working to change negative stereotypes that limit women from reaching their full potential.

Join us on Sunday December 19 at 11:30 a.m. to learn more and to see how Together Women Rise helps change the life of girls and women around the world one at a time. Contact Ruthann Marquis for more information.

Valley's Advent Fair



Get ready to get your Christmas on at this year's Advent Fair on Sunday December 5 from 2:00-4:00 p.m. in the afternoon. The Fellowship Ministry team has planned several kid friendly

activities to start everyone's preparation for this special upcoming holiday.

Masks will be required and work areas will be well spaced to allow for safe distancing. Please remember there will be no food or drink allowed on church property, so there will be no food or drink offered at this event.

As a way to help others during this season of giving there will be a collection site in Davis Hall/ Gym for nonperishable food items for the Food Pantry at St. Matthews Church.

In addition to fun activities there will also be gifts raffled off throughout the Advent Fair and a fun treat for everyone to take home to help them remember the reason for this season: the birth of our Savior, Jesus Christ!

Children's Ministry Activity Bags



Children's Ministry Elder, Bev Hubbard, with some of the activity bags.

Children's Ministries surprises choirs with activity bags!

The children involved in the Cherub and Melodia choirs were surprised at the end of their rehearsal the week before Thanksgiving with an activity bag from Children's Ministries. The activities included simple crafts as well as manipulatives and helps for family discussions. Because there was no school during Thanksgiving week, it was hoped that the bags would be helpful in engaging the children to think about the blessings they have and all the things to be grateful for.



Thank you for sending your check for **\$36.50** for the **2021 Per Capita** for each Valley member.

The **2022 Per Capita** will be **\$39.00** for each Valley member.

For more information about what per capita is

and how it helps, go to:

oga.pcusa.org/percapita



Mission Endowment Committee Awards Fall 2021 Grants

The Mission Endowment Committee has awarded five grants totaling \$12,850 for Fall 2021. These were approved by Valley's Session in November. The grants support housing, education, medical needs, and social services here in the Portland area and around the world.

- ◆ **Valley Community Presbyterian Church, Afghan Refugee Housing - \$4,200**
This grant will help cover the revenue lost by not renting the house that we're providing for an Afghan refugee family. Please see the article elsewhere in this issue that contains a full description of this project.
- ◆ **Janus Youth Services - \$1,850**
Support the Yellow Brick Road Program which provides first aid and hygiene items for runaway and homeless street youth in the Portland metro area.
- ◆ **YWCA of Greater Portland, Domestic Violence Services - \$1,900**
Work with survivors of domestic violence to secure affordable housing and provide other services so that they can become self-sufficient.
- ◆ **Willamette West Habitat for Humanity - \$2,400**
Support continued construction of homes for low income families in the Denney Gardens Neighborhood.
- ◆ **Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon: Second Home - \$2,500**
Provide funding for a triannual staff strategic planning retreat at Menucha. Second Home's core mission is to provide stable housing for unaccompanied students.

Members of the Mission Endowment Committee are Jan Bellis-Squires, Ernie Bootsma, Donna Carlson, Bob Hayes, Pam Kessinger, and Carol Powers (Chair). Janet Adkins is the Mission Committee liaison.

Christmas Joy Offering



Our Christmas service will include a denominational special offering, received once a year, in response to the great gift that we've all been given in the person of the Christ child. The Christmas Joy Offering brings us together to open doors of relief and opportunity, and to relationships that are part of God's story, a part of God's perfect Gift to us.

Half of the Christmas Joy Offering enables the PCUSA Board of Pensions to support the Assistance Program and Emergency Assistance Grants. The Assistance Program helps give stability in retirement for church workers, including pastors, who have served in lower-paying positions, sometimes as Mission workers, with an income supplement. The Emergency Assistance Grant program helps church employees, including pastors, cope with emergencies such as health crises and gaps in employment.

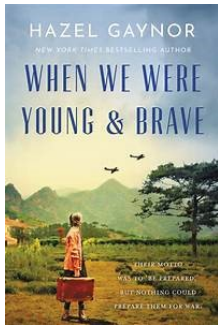
The other half of the Offering helps support three denominational educational institutions. Stillman College, in Tuscaloosa, Alabama, is a historically black liberal arts college founded in 1876 by a Presbyterian pastor in Tuscaloosa. Menaul School, in Albuquerque, New Mexico, is a faith-based, independent co-educational college prep school for grades 6-12. Eighty-four percent of the students identify as racially or ethnically diverse. The Presbyterian Pan-American School in Kingsville, Texas, is a Christian college prep school that educates and empowers young adults for leadership in the global community. It was established to educate Mexican boys, but has attracted students from a number of countries.



It is time to start thinking about the 2022 Soup Kitchen service. VCPC provides a meal the third Thursday of the month to men at the Bud Clark Commons in Portland. We are looking for someone or a group to provide the meal starting January 2022. Individuals/groups can now prepare the food in the church kitchen to deliver downtown. Contact Mary Kay Rodman at mkrodman@comcast.net if you are able to help out. Valley has partnered with Portland's Transition Projects for thirty-one years, let's keep the tradition alive!



Valley Book Group to Meet December 10



The Valley Book Group traditionally avoids the holidays by combining the November and December meetings. We will be meeting on December 10 in the Fireside Room at 10:00 a.m. Both Zoom and in-person options will be available. The book being discussed is When We Were Young and Brave by Hazel Gaynor. This novel tells a story of courage and strength and the heroic spirit in each of us. It takes place in China during WWII and is inspired by true events surrounding the Japanese Army's internment of teachers and children from a British-run missionary school. If you have not attended in the past but would like to join us in the discussion of this uplifting novel based on real life experience, contact Laura Sanders to have your name added to the list. If you are already on the Book Group email list, you will receive further information about how to attend the Zoom meeting.

Calling All Cookie Bakers!



The Valley Youth are selling cookie platters as a fundraiser and they are requesting your help. Donations of homemade cookies are needed to fill the platters. One batch of cookies would be great (or more if you would like!). Cookies will need to be at the church kitchen by Saturday, December 18 at noon. Thank you!

Stewardship 2022 Update



Thank you to all who have said *"Count me in"* with their pledge to Valley for 2022. We are grateful for your timely answer to our request for your support as Session continues planning for a busy 2022 for new pastoral positions and programs. For those who have not yet responded, the Stewardship Committee prayerfully requests your quick response.

You should have received your pledge card in the mail. Please mail in your pledge card, bring it to church, or call the church office to share your pledge commitment. We seek your timely support through a pledge to Valley to reach our 2022 goal of \$350,000 in pledges. We can meet this goal with a 5% increase in commitment for those who pledged this year, and a 10% increase in the number of returned pledges, bringing us back to 2019 and 2020 levels.

We are over halfway to our target, but have not heard back from many of you yet. If you have any questions, contact the 2022 Stewardship Committee: Eben Jenkins, Frank Powers, and John Purcell.

Thank you for your commitment to help Valley Community Presbyterian Church continue to serve as a beacon of God's love for the community and the world.

CHRISTMAS CONCERT

Sunday, December 19
3:00 p.m. in the Sanctuary

Thomas Rheingans, Siena Hertafeld, and special guests will provide a fun selection of holiday music including jazz, pop, contemporary Christian, and classical.



This concert is free and open to the public!



Freewill offerings to benefit Valley's music program.



Bring your family, friends, and neighbors to this festive musical celebration!



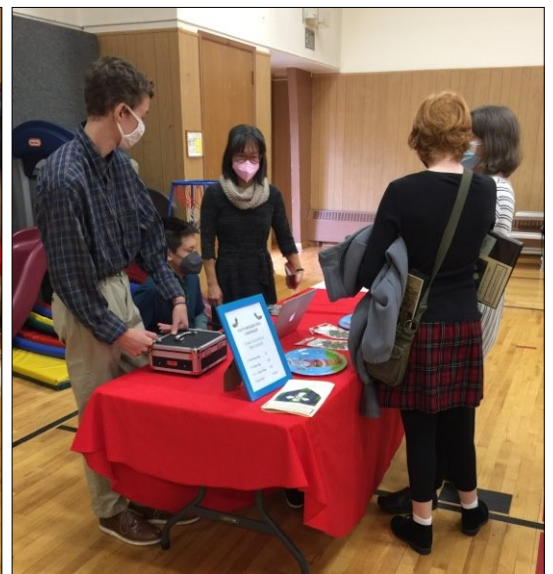
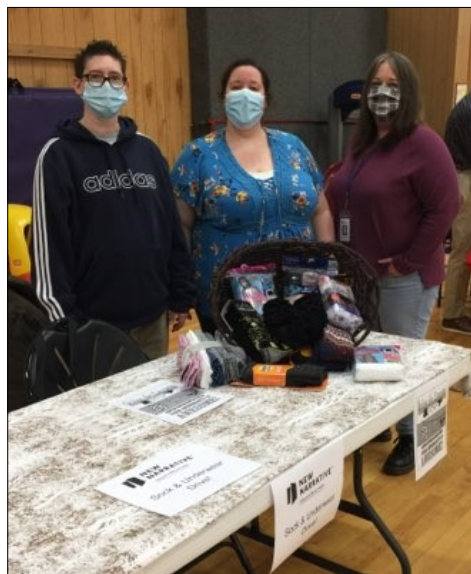
Valley Youth will have cookie platters for sale afterwards. Funds will go towards Valley's Youth Program.



Mission Market 2021



Without you, it wouldn't have been the success it was! Thank you for believing in and supporting the different missions we showcased on November 14. Each organization gathered several hundred dollars to support and help carry on their ministry. There is still time to bring new socks or underwear for New Narratives (Luke Dorf) or warm winter outerwear for Union Gospel Mission's Operation overcoat... items are being collected in our bins. Open Arms will be back on December 12 with more creches and angels, as will Equal Exchange with coffee/tea, EVO and chocolates. And another BIG thanks to Ann Johnson and her dancers. Enjoy the pictures. Thanks again from your Mission Committee.



Valley's Sanctuary House

Thanks to the generosity of our Valley community, neighbors and friends, the cupboards are stocked, furniture is in its place and the beds are made with warm blankets. We are ready to welcome a family that needs a home! See last month's Messenger issue explaining how Valley's Sanctuary House will help a refugee family.



Valley Scrapbook

“The Fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.”
Galatians 5:22-23 NRSV

Original designs by Jini De Vries

Painted in the Southeast hallway in 2013 by Rebecca Chancellor, Laurel Cluthe, Cheryl Hoffbeck and Kay Hope-Gold under Jini’s assistance and supervision.

Photographed in 2021 by Chuck Falconer, and edited for printing by Anne Searce.



Jini De Vries’ Fruits of the Spirit now on permanent display.



Brighter and more efficient LED lights installed throughout the chancel and sanctuary.



Upgraded LED lamp post lights with independent sensors and AC outlets.



Ann Johnson and Highland dancers at this year’s Mission Market.

Extra Styrofoam Collection December 30



Valley’s Earth Care team will host a **special extra Styrofoam collection** after Christmas on December 30 from 10:00-11:30 a.m. in Valley’s East parking lot. This will be a most excellent way for your family and neighbors to recycle the polystyrene packaging from gifts and gadgets AND prevent it from going into the landfill in Arlington, Oregon.



Valley’s Earth Care team has been faithfully collecting Styrofoam and #6 plastics two times every month this past year and taking what has been collected to Agilyx in Tigard. This occurs on the first and third Thursdays each month between 10:00-11:30 a.m. during the same time that nonperishable food is collected for the St. Matthew’s Food Pantry.

Agilyx uses a proprietary process to break down the Styrofoam into a form to make new Styrofoam. Their commitment to recycling keeps volumes of Styrofoam out of the landfill and the environment.

SAVE THE DATE! Thursday December 30 from 10:00-11:30 a.m. in the East parking lot for Valley’s extra special post-holiday Styrofoam collection.

Valley Notes

Opportunities

Please use [smile.amazon](https://www.amazon.com) for your holiday online shopping and select Valley Church as the non-profit to receive your shopping credit. There is no cost to you!

Distance food collection the first and third Thursday of each month, 10:00 - 11:30 a.m. in the back parking lot of Valley. All non-perishable, non-expired store bought foods are being collected. Items will be delivered to the St. Matthew's Food Pantry.

Poinsettias will enhance the Sanctuary Chancel throughout the Advent season in memory and honor of our loved ones. If you wish to participate, please honor your loved one(s) with a donation of whatever amount you wish. Please note "VCPC Flower Fund" and send it to the church office by Sunday, December 19. Honorees' names will be published in the Christmas Eve bulletin. Questions? Contact angie@valleycommunity.org.

Prayers

We pray for those who mourn:

- Martha Gazeley and family on the death of Martha's father, Dick Page, on November 10. A memorial service will be held at Valley on January 14, 2022 at 1:00 p.m.

- The Rev. Robin Garvin and family on the death of Robin's father, Clark Reed, on November 16.

- Friends and family of Shannon Pratt who died on November 26. A memorial service will be held at Valley on January 6, 2022 at 1:00 p.m.

We pray for those with health concerns:

Bill Owens, Charah Leis



Earth Care Corner

Here are some new and repeat eco-friendly ideas to ponder as the holiday season swiftly creeps up on us all! As the website EarthEasy states: *Christmas doesn't have to be a burden on the planet. With a little effort and imagination, we can reduce the environmental impact of the holiday season.*

- * **Buy less.** Not all gifts have to be store bought. Shorten your shopping list both for the number of people that you are giving to and the number of gifts that you are giving. Agree to put a limit on spending and stick to it.
- * **Buy smart.** Look for locally made gifts. Shop for fair trade items. Choose gifts made from recycled materials. Give battery free gifts. Avoid toys that promote violence. Be okay with "re-gifting." If you're giving physical gifts this Christmas, choose ones that are designed to last and won't end up on the landfill in a month or a year's time.
- * **Connect with nature.** Go on a family bird count or take a nature hike. Participate in a nature restoration activity. Decorate a tree for the birds.
- * **Lower the impact of holiday lighting.** Reduce the size of the outdoor lighting displays. Use LED lights both inside and outside for Christmas tree lighting. Turn off those lights at bedtime.
- * **Choose a live tree.** They can be used for 2-3 years, especially if you purchase a small tree in a large pot and then can be planted somewhere special in your yard after that. If you are going for artificial, consider shopping for one at garage or estate sales, rather than purchase a new one.
- * **Make homemade cards.** Last year's calendar or a child's artwork are good places to start.
- * **Find alternatives to wrapping paper.** Avoid glossy foil or metallic paper: These items are NOT recyclable in your curbside bin! Reuse gift wrap whenever you can. Use tape sparingly. Use a cloth bag or even pages from the funny paper. Choose a gorgeous fabric scarf to wrap your gift in – the recipient will love you for the 2-in-1 present. Charity shops and second hand stores are a good place to shop for them.
- * **Reuse/Recycle.** This includes gift packing materials and wrap/ribbon/bows, as well as old electronics and Christmas trees. Reuse gift bags, boxes, tissue paper and ribbon kept from last Christmas. Didn't save any? Make a point to do it this year.

Merry Christmas and an Eco-Friendly New Year from Valley's Earth Care Team.



THE MESSENGER



VALLEY COMMUNITY PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH
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PORTLAND, OR 97225-2355

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

TIME DATED MATERIAL

**DEACONS'
RED CROSS BLOOD DRIVE**

Wednesday, December 15,
1:30-6:30 p.m.



Up to three people may be helped with each pint of blood collected. Please help if you can.
Contact Jim Sandberg or Karen Miller for more information.