


The Messenger

Valley Community Presbyterian Church January 2022

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.

January

2 Epiphany Sunday
Communion

9 Baptism of the Lord
New Member Class,
11:30 a.m.

16 Cents-Ability Offering
Together Women Rise,
11:30 a.m.

23

30

February

6 Communion



Valley Welcomes the Ahmadzai Family

On December 9, 2021, our team was notified at 10:00 a.m. that an Afghan family of eight was arriving at the Portland Airport in three hours. They were coming from a military base in New Mexico where they had been living since August 24. Very quickly, we mobilized our team to buy groceries, order a meal of traditional Afghan foods, procure car seats, and drive to meet them at the airport with no time to spare! Debbie Purcell, Karen Yakymi, Glenys Craig, and Kylie Cole met the family at PDX. We were thrilled to see their excitement and happiness as they jumped up and down and said, “we are home.” The Ahmadzai family consists of Dad, Fawad, and seven beautiful and well-behaved children. The children are Yousof (13 years, a boy), Zulaikha (12 years, a girl), Wahab (10 years, a boy), Tawab (7 years, a boy), Malali (5 years, a girl who prefers to be called “Bahar”), Sudaf (3 years, a girl), and Fatima (16 months, a girl).

The mother of the children died giving birth to Fatima in Afghanistan. Fawad worked as an armed guard at the US Embassy at the Kabul Airport, protecting US workers. When the Taliban took over, he had to escape with his family, leaving behind his home, all his possessions plus his extended family.

During the first 10 days, many Valley families, friends, and neighbors have stepped up to help. Janae Pyle brought treats and played with the kids along with Karen. Claudia and Wade Askew brought more treats. We verified that Fawad and the three older children have been immunized against COVID and tested the remainder of the family—all were negative. (It is still important to wear masks if you are visiting the house). We took Fawad to the Cricket store to get his cell phone activated.

John Purcell drove Fawad and the two older boys around the neighborhood to locate grocery stores, schools, playgrounds, and parks, and took him shopping for clothes. Several families from the preschool donated new clothing, strollers, a booster seat, books, and toys. Karen and Zulaikha had fun holding up clothing to see which items fit which child.

Carol Powers brought puzzles and played with the children. Frank was called in and saved the day with a toilet plunger. Carol walked with Fawad to Fred Meyer and showed him the store layout and how the aisles and item prices are marked. They shopped for groceries and she helped him navigate the checkout process, including using his gift cards. She also showed him how to operate the pedestrian signals to safely walk across a busy street. Carol spent many hours shopping and successfully found shoes to fit Fawad’s feet, which are not a standard US size.

Karen and Debbie each made several visits and took the kids to play in the Valley gym and preschool playground. Pastor Robin contacted First Pres. in Newberg concerning their ministry that distributes restored bicycles to the needy—John and Jenny Hale committed to take the older kids to Newberg soon to get bicycles, helmets, and locks. David Marquis arranged an emergency visit by a plumber for a burst water pipe.

Continued on page 4.

Beginning the New Year with Prayer



The Rev. Robin Garvin

As you enter my office at Valley one of the first items that catches your eye is a small statue of a woman kneeling with her hands open in an obvious posture of prayer. The statue was a gift given to me by a close friend thirty-one years ago on the day of my ordination to the ministry of Word and Sacrament. People often ask me about the identity of the woman...is she Mary? Hannah? Sarah? My answer is always the same...I don't know, but I want to be like her. This anonymous praying woman has accompanied me to each of the six churches I have served through the years. As I move into each new office, I always am careful to position her so she is the first thing I see as I enter my office each day. She has become my constant visual reminder that my first and most important work each day as a follower of Jesus and as a pastor is prayer.

During 2022 we will be working together to prepare for the future of Valley church and the eventual call of a new pastor to help lead into that good future that God has in store for our congregation. This is important work...so important that it seems fitting at the beginning of this new year to commit ourselves, and this work, in prayer each day of 2022. Here is the prayer I invite us to offer at the beginning of each day in 2022: "Lord Jesus, thank you for being with us today. Open our eyes to see you as we go about our day and give us ears to hear how you might be inviting us to participate with you in building your kingdom around us. We trust you for today and for the good future you are preparing for our beloved church. Amen."

Will you join me in prayer?

Joyfully in Christ,

Pastor Robin Garvin

A NEW YEAR & NEW OPPORTUNITIES

THE MESSENGER

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NEWSLETTER STAFF:
ANGELA GRAHAM

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

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

January Birthdays

Len Anderson
Sarah Boyle
Jacqueline Bridges
Duncan Brown
Will Browning
Dane Carlson
Glenys Craig
Andy Dee
Rev. Chuck Falconer
Jan Falconer

Martha Gazeley
Eben Jenkins
Don Kelly
Carson Kopetz
David Lee
Geri Mitchell
Andrea Murdoch
Dan Murphy
Marah Murphy
James Price

Taylor Rawlings
Thomas Rheingans
Jim Sandberg
Kimberlee Scott
Kerrie Standlee
Fan Standlee
Chad Teed
Joyce Thomas
Macy Vermillion

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



Together Women Rise



Happy New Year from Valley's Together Women Rise chapter! 2021 was a stellar year of helping to support gender equality and to give a hand up to women and girls in underserved areas around the world. The countries where the Together Women Rise grant recipients are working are: Burkina Faso, Bangladesh, Zimbabwe, India, Uganda, Guatemala, Cameroon, Dominican

Republic, Sierra Leone, Kenya, Nepal, and Rwanda.

After an extensive application process these nonprofits received grant money between the amounts of \$25,000-\$35,000 to carry on the specific program that they proposed. Some were new programs. Some were an expansion of services or locations. All impacted thousands of women and girls and their families either directly or indirectly.

Together Women Rise, thanks to the generous members in chapters all over our country, also was able to give sustaining grants to previous featured grantees that have done outstanding work and have applied for sustained funding. The countries where these nonprofits are working are: Togo, Vietnam, Tanzania, Uganda, Senegal, Malawi, Jordan, Rwanda, Guatemala, Afghanistan and Nepal. These organizations received \$75,000 spread out over three years to continue their important work.

Valley's Together Women Rise (formerly known as Dining for Women) meets on the third Sunday of every month. This coming April we will have been doing so for **10 years!** We used to meet after worship to share a potluck lunch and then hear about the featured grantee. And, that has changed during this pandemic to a remote meeting on Zoom. **What has not changed** is that each and every meeting is informative, inspiring and enlightening. The amazing work of nonprofits is revealed and supported by the donations by Valley's members and those of the over 400 other chapters across our country.

Please consider making a New Year's Resolution to join us! Our next meeting will be Sunday, January 16 at 11:30 a.m. on Zoom. If you would like to be included in the evite invitation, please contact Ruthann Marquis.

Valley Book Group

The Valley Book Group will be meeting on Friday, January 28, 2022, at 10:00 a.m. in the Fireside Room or via Zoom.

Our January meeting traditionally gives members a chance to select books that will be read in the new year. During the past several months, Pat Bryant and Kathy Ems have been compiling a list of recommended books provided by members. The list of these books along with a brief description of each of them will be available to members of the group so that they can vote on the ones they would like to read for discussion in the coming months.

If you have not attended in the past, but would like to join us and learn more about the books under consideration, contact Laura Sanders to have your name added to the contact list. If you are already on the Book Group email list and cannot attend in person, you will receive further information about how to attend the Zoom meeting.

Library Corner



Valley's Library has many resources that can be useful in your own Bible study. One, *Biblical Archeology Review*, is a periodical written by practicing archeologists. Learning about the archeology and geography of Israel and surrounding countries can deepen our understanding of biblical stories.

One article in a recent issue discusses the story of Joseph in Egypt from Genesis, Egyptian documents, and archeological findings from Avaris, a city in the east Nile delta. (It's Tell ed Dab'a if you want to find it on Google Maps.) Excavations there show artifacts, architecture, and burial practices that are Palestinian, not Egyptian. The article's conclusion is "We can sum up all this Egyptian history in a sentence or two: A group of people who originated in Canaan became rulers in Egypt, but later wound up back in Canaan, chased by the Egyptian army." So, at a high level, the biblical and Egyptian stories are the same. Even if you don't have time for a whole article, just spending a few minutes looking at photos and reading captions can be interesting. This issue shows some beautiful mosaics from the Church of the Glorious Martyr, a fifth century pilgrimage site near Jerusalem.

Stop by! Check it out!



Thank you for sending your check for **\$39.00** for the
2022 Per Capita for each Valley member.

For more information about what per capita is

and how it helps, go to:

oga.pcusa.org/percapita



Welcome Ahmadzai Family (cont. from page 1)

Chelsea and Adam Redmond, preschool parents, cooked up and delivered a home-made Afghan meal to the family and they were thrilled! Chelsea also took Fawad and three children at a time on multiple trips to the library. Chelsea put a great deal of thought and energy into creating lists of potential Christmas gifts for the family. She partnered with Ruthann Marquis in coordinating the involvement of both the preschool and the congregation in supplying those gifts. Chelsea brought her children to the gym and joined Debbie in playing active games with the kids.

Sally Rasmussen contacted the Beaverton School District to help get the kids registered for school and learn about the programs that are available to students who have a history of interrupted schooling and trauma, and programs that support non-English speakers. She and Debbie tried very hard to get registration completed before the winter break. We learned that registering and correctly placing refugee kids into school is not a simple matter and has to be coordinated with LCSNW. Sally will be the lead volunteer for all school-related issues going forward. Our goal is to support these children for success in school!

Allison Gregory and her husband, Tanner, who also live in one of the Valley rental-houses on Cedar Street, have been very supportive. They went shopping for clothing items for Fawad and the children, funded by a generous donation from one of Allison's friends.

Glenys Craig played with the children on several occasions, taught them to write their names and phone number, brought them art supplies and toys, and took them up to Raleigh Park Elementary School (where they pressed their little noses against the glass to look inside). Katie Craig went on the bus with Fawad to the Beaverton library to show him how to navigate the bus system.

The entire Ahmadzai family attended the Christmas concert on December 19. David and Ruthann cooked and shared a dinner with them afterwards.

There is a core group of leaders who will coordinate volunteer efforts for this family: Debbie Purcell, Karen Yakymi, Carol Powers, Sally Rasmussen, Glenys Craig, and Ruthann Marquis. One of them may be reaching out to you to ask for your help! If you need more information, email Debbie at j-dpurcell@comcast.net.

We are blessed to be able to participate in the resettlement of this lovely Afghan family. Thanks be to God for all of you who are stepping up to help. (With all the people stepping up, we may have forgotten someone for which we sincerely apologize.)

Debbie Purcell and Karen Yakymi



Valley Outdoor Christmas Tree

Thank you to the Christmas Tree Team who again this year braved rain and cold to select, haul, hoist, and decorate the outdoor tree for all to enjoy.

Many thanks to:

Larry Yakymi

Ed Sanders

Frank Powers

Evan Martin

Glenys Craig

Paul DuFresne

Steve Rees

David and Turner Sanderman

and Team Graham

for their muscle power and tree trimming abilities.



Christmas Joy Offering Still Being Collected



CHRISTMAS JOY
SPECIAL OFFERINGS

On Christmas Eve, the Christmas Joy Offering was received at Presbyterian churches across our nation. This special offering commemorates the perfect gift we've all been given in Jesus, who brings God and humanity closer together. One of the names given to Jesus is Emmanuel, which means "God is with us." During these past months, many of us haven't been together in person, but we have continued to be together in spirit and in faith. God has been

with us. And through our gifts to the Christmas Joy Offering, we are together with those who need our love and support.

Fifty percent of our gifts to the Christmas Joy Offering make it possible for students to learn and grow in faith at Presbyterian-related schools and colleges equipping communities of color. Because God is with us, we see the potential of students of color who will become leaders in their communities, and we seek to come alongside them, to encourage them, to be with them.

The other fifty percent of our gifts provide assistance for current and retired church workers and their families with critical financial needs, like a pastor who was enabled to purchase a specialized scooter that allowed him to continue his ministry while living with multiple sclerosis.

It is not too late to give! Please join in supporting these vital ministries. When we all do a little, it adds up to a lot.

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.



The Ahmadzai Family opening up Christmas presents.



Valley Notes

Opportunities

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.

A New Member Class will be held at 11:30 a.m. in the Fireside Room on Sunday, January 9 to learn more about Valley Community and meet Pastor Robin. All are invited!

Thank You

Youth Cookie Fundraiser a success: Thank you to all the buyers and bakers that helped make the cookie sale a huge success! There was a bountiful assortment of cookies, baked goods, and homemade goodies donated by our talented congregation that were packaged and sold by our youth. We raised over \$850 to help send our youth to Triennium this summer! Thank you all for your generous support!

St. Matthew's Food Pantry:

Thank you to all who contributed goods and prayers for these families. We collected 5,717 pounds of food. When Andrea Murdoch was dropping off the last collection for 2021, there were 18 cars waiting for food. We are making a difference, one can of beans or box of pasta at a time! Our next collection will be Thursday, January 6, 2022.

Prayers

We pray for those who mourn:

- Joy Eaton and family on the death of her niece, Charah Celeste Leis, on December 7, 2021.

We pray for those with health concerns:

Marian Romanaggi, Kerry Viestenz, Shirley Anderson

Earth Care Corner

Happy New Year and may 2022 be an Earth Friendly Year for you and yours!

Many of us start the new year with good intentions and strong resolve to build new habits. Commonly these resolutions center around health. Here are some New Year's resolutions for you to consider making for the health of our planet, which will ultimately make a difference in your health:

1. Bring your own shopping bags. Shopping with reusable bags everywhere you shop is a simple way to reduce ocean pollution while helping to prevent deforestation and reduce our world's dependence on fossil fuels. There is now a monetary incentive to avoid using a bag from the stores where you shop, as they must charge you \$.05 for it! *Resolve to bring your own reusable bags when you shop.*

2. Use a Reusable Water Bottle. Did you know that around 60 million plastic bottles end up in landfills every single day, and Americans alone send more than 38 billion water bottles to landfills every year, the equivalent of 912 million gallons of oil. That means that 1,500 plastic bottles are thrown away every second of the day. Did you know that only 9% of plastic bottles are recycled? That means the 91% are not recycled!!!!!! Even though plastic water bottles are recyclable and will each bring back \$.10 to you pocket, their manufacturing still takes tremendous resources for materials, energy and transportation. *You can resolve to prevent that by using a reusable water bottle.*

3. Bring your block Styrofoam and plastic #6 to Valley's east parking lot on the 1st and 3rd Thursdays between 10:00-11:30 a.m. each month. Valley's Earth Care team will transport those items to Agilyx in Tigard. Tell your friends and family! If you see some Styrofoam sticking out of a neighbor's garbage or recycling bin, pull it out and bring it to Valley on our collection days. *Resolve to keep Styrofoam out of the landfills.*

4. Experiment with alternate modes of transportation. If possible, try walking, biking, or taking public transportation more often to decrease your carbon footprint. Even carpooling is helpful because that's one less person on the road using fuel. *Resolve to make earth friendly choices for transportation.*

5. Use cloth napkins for all of your meals, not just at special dinners. Consider carrying one in your purse or car to use when you need it during the day. If you need one for your purse or car, ask Ruthann to make one for you! *Resolve to avoid paper napkins.*

6. Buy Secondhand. Consider purchasing more secondhand items, whether clothing, handbags, kitchenware, home decor, etc. from a thrift store or a consignment shop. These items already exist and virgin materials won't be needed to make them again if they are re-used. *Resolve to use and purchase items to give them new life.*

7. Consider Meat-less Mondays. The resource consumption that goes into meat production and the methane gas that results from the animals are heavy burdens for our planet. Did you know that approximately 1,850 gallons of water are needed to produce a single pound of beef compared to 39 gallons of water are needed to produce a pound of vegetables? *Resolve to explore Meatless Monday options and make this a new habit!*

Best wishes for the strength of your resolve this year!

Happy New Year from Valley's Earth Care Team!

THE MESSENGER



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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

TIME DATED MATERIAL

Presbyterian Disaster Assistance

In the early hours of December 11, several tornadoes ripped through multiple U.S. states, resulting in extensive damage and significant loss of life.

Presbyterian Disaster Assistance is in touch with affected presbyteries to coordinate resources and assistance. To register interest in volunteering for rebuilding efforts when they are ready, email PDA.CallCenter@pcusa.org. To support PDA response, designate gifts to DR000015. Pray that through the response of the faith community, survivors and those offering assistance will be reminded of the hope that is found in Christ.



**PRESBYTERIAN
DISASTER ASSISTANCE**

OUT OF CHAOS, HOPE