


The Messenger

Valley Community Presbyterian Church April 2021

Sundays at Valley

Online worship at 10:00 a.m.

Visit <https://www.facebook.com/ValleyCommunityPresbyterian/> and click videos on the left side.

April

- 4** Easter Sunday
10:00 a.m. Worship
Communion
One Great Hour of Sharing
- 11** Second Sunday of Easter
- 18** Third Sunday of Easter
Dining for Women, 11:30 a.m.
- 25** Fourth Sunday of Easter

May

- 2** Communion
Fifth Sunday of Easter



In-Person Worship on Sundays

We are pleased to announce that Session has approved in-person Sunday worship for a maximum of 40 people each week. We will continue to livestream our Sunday worship. Each week congregants can reserve a seat by registering for that Sunday's worship service. Registration will open each Tuesday at noon. The registration link will be included in that Tuesday's e-blast. The congregation can register either via SignUpGenius or calling the church office. Sign ups are first come, first served. Social distancing will be maintained and masks covering the nose and mouth will be required the entire time the congregants are in the church building. Entrance into the church building on Sunday morning will only be at the East parking lot door from 9:30-10:00 a.m. with the doors locking at 10:00 a.m. For those needing wheelchair seating, it must be requested at the time of registration by adding a comment to your online registration, or by mentioning it when calling.



April 1 and 2 - Way of the Cross

You are invited to experience our Way of the Cross in-person this year. This interactive display in our sanctuary allows you to walk Christ's final journey. Please use the following link to sign up for reserved entry times between 1:00 and 5:00 p.m. on April 1, Maundy Thursday, or April 2, Good Friday:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0C49ABAF2BA4FDC61-wayofthe>

You may also view our virtual Way of the Cross, which allows you to "walk" the same stations set up in our sanctuary. The video is available here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UcjjE3slpkg>

April 4 - Easter Day

Livestream service, 10:00 a.m. For the Easter service, 60 people will be allowed in attendance. Here is the sign up link for worship Easter Sunday: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0C49ABAF2BA4FDC61-inperson1>

Living into the “Big Tent” Ethos in a Divided Society



Rev. Jeff Binder

Make no bones about it; it’s hard what we are trying to do. In an ultra polarized, divided, black/white culture, the Christian Church is called to seek to be something altogether unique—I call this the “Big Tent” church. People with all sorts of identities, agendas, and ideologies are called to come together united by one person: Jesus Christ. Sure, we may not vote the same, or look the same, or think the same, but we are all welcome as brothers and sisters in Christ.

This was really hard to do back in the biblical times of Jesus, and it is really hard to do here today! How often have we heard messages within Christian communities (let alone popular culture) that tried to make life’s experiences so black and white? The reality is that our lived experiences are more often than not various shades of gray; we are more complex than bumper stickers or hashtags. And the reality is the same for Christians seeking to follow Jesus in faithful ways. We are not all passionate about international mission. We are not all crazy about organ music. We are not all political activists. When we live into the Big Tent ethos, we embrace the fact that we are each so unique in wonderful ways, and we are united and celebrated for our uniqueness.

I read a brief devotion a while back from Richard Rohr, who is a Franciscan priest and founder of the *Center for Action and Contemplation*. In the midst of the heat of our nation’s most recent civil unrests, he wrote about his own sense of call as a Christian. I’ll include it on page 4 of this newsletter, as I hope it brings perspective to what we are being called to as Valley Community today. Richard Rohr represents just one aspect of a beautifully diverse witness to Christ in our world. What other perspectives should we be celebrating in our Big Tent these days? How are you being called to express Christ’s love for the world in your beautifully unique way? As always, I welcome conversation as we continue to listen for God’s call in our communal life together.



In Christ,

Pastor Jeff Binder



THE MESSENGER

VALLEY COMMUNITY PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH
8060 SW BRENTWOOD ST.
PORTLAND, OR 97225-2355

503.292.3537
FAX 503.292.4272
valleycommunity.org
Email: mail@valleycommunity.org

PASTOR
JEFF BINDER

NEWSLETTER STAFF:
ANGELA GRAHAM

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

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

April Birthdays

Bruce Armstrong
Hayden Bach
Cathy Bernhard
Jeff Binder
Neil Blair
Lily Anne Boyle
Dana Collins
Lee Cundiff
Virginia Dockrell
Helen Green
Dane Green
Bob Hayes

Richard Hegdahl
Wendy Jenkins
Joyce Jenkins
Grady Killian
Kelsey Killian
Ian Luehr-Sele
Pat McClean
Kay Phillips
Shannon Pratt
John Purcell
Janae Pyle
Bonnie Reeder

Cheryl Rees
Eleanor Romanaggi
Dan Rueff
Scott Russell
Tracy Sailors
Karen Sandberg
Renn Sanderman
Corri Sanders
Hayley Sherman
DeWitt Sherwood
Jason Simenson
Eloise Zwald

Happy birthday to all those born in April! 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

Collective action for global gender equality

There is a new name on the block! Dining for Women has transformed into Together Women Rise! This was revealed at a very special International Women's Day national meeting and has been several years in the making.

The mission of Dining for Women has always been to support women and girls in underserved areas around the world. Dining

for Women has always been a collective giving circle to meet the grant requests of 5013Cs chosen with specific goals for a specific program. This will not change with our new name! Instead it will RISE!

Together Women Rise is about women and allies coming together all over the world, from all backgrounds and communities, to achieve global gender equality.

Together is front and center because our community is strong: gathering *together* in our chapters and working *together* with our grantees, lies at the root of our impact. **Women**, because global gender equality is our guiding star; **Rise**, because we envision a world where all women and girls around the world can reach their full potential and become powerful agents of change to build a stronger, more sustainable, and peaceful world.

April is also special month for our Valley chapter. We started exactly nine years ago this month! This is very exciting! It is our nine year anniversary!!!!

Even through this year of not being able to physically meet around the table to enjoy our potluck lunches as we learn about the featured grantee, we have continued to meet consistently on Zoom and have continued to learn, support and enjoy each other's company.

Please join us on Sunday, April 18 to celebrate our anniversary and to learn about Noora Heath in India. The specific program is Maternal, Newborn, and Child Health Care Companion Program.

Noora Health excels in strengthening health care services, advocating for policy change, and strengthening provider capacities in low resource settings. The Companion Care Program capitalizes on the untapped potential of extended family members to provide post discharge care that maximizes health outcomes. Their model is sustainable, allows for the continuity of care, and enables institutions to build capacity over time and better serve their constituents.

Our Valley chapter of Together Women Rise meets on the third Sunday of each month at 11:30 a.m. after worship. If you would like to be included in the evite invitation, please share your contact information with Ruthann Marquis.

Easter Egg Drive-Thru Event - Saturday, April 3, 1:00-3:00 pm

On **Saturday, April 3 from 1:00-3:00 p.m.**, we are planning our free event for the community. During the event, as families drive through, the kids take part in I-Spying for all the Golden Easter Eggs hidden in their viewing sight and done from the safety of their own family's vehicles. Lots of plastic filled Easter eggs in pre-wrapped cellophane bags are provided for their canopy stops along the way. A surprise Easter bag at the last canopy stop will be given to all children participating in trying to find our hidden Golden Eggs on site. Questions? Contact Donna Carlson at 503.442.9551 (phone or text) or call the church office at 503.292.3537 or email donna@valleycommunity.org.

[Click here for the drive-thru event flyer.](#)



Thank you for sending your check for **\$36.50** for the
2021 Per Capita (for wider church expenses) for each Valley member.

For more information about what per capita is, and how it helps, go to:

oga.pcusa.org/percapita



Participating in Movements for Justice

Richard Rohr, from [The Center for Action and Contemplation](#)

I think there are three basic levels of social ministry, and none is better than the other. I believe all are the movement of the Holy Spirit within us for the sake of others. I like to imagine a river flooding out of control—symbolizing the circumstances and injustices that bring about suffering—overflowing its banks and sweeping those in its path off their feet.

At the first level, we rescue drowning people from the swollen river, dealing with the immediate social problem right in front of us: someone hungry comes to our door and we offer them some food, or invite them inside. These are hands-on, social service ministries, like the familiar soup kitchen or food pantry. Such works will always look rather generous, Christian, charitable, and they tend to be admired, if not always imitated.

At the second level, there are ministries that help people not to fall into the swollen river in the first place, or show them how to survive despite falling in. In general, these are the ministries of education and healing. Most of the religious orders in the Catholic Church in the last three hundred years went in that direction, filling the world with schools, hospitals, and social service ministries that empowered people and gave them new visions and possibilities for their lives.

Finally, on the third level, some ministries build and maintain a dam to stop the river from flooding in the first place. This is the work of social activism and advocacy, critique of systems, organizing, speeches, boycotts, protests, and resistance against all forms of systemic injustice and deceit. It is the gift of a few, but a much-needed gift that we only recently began to learn and practice. It seeks systemic change and not just individual conversion.

I don't think most people feel called to activism; I myself don't. It was initially humiliating to admit this, and I lost the trust and admiration of some friends and supporters. Yet as we come to know our own soul gift more clearly, we almost always have to let go of certain "gifts" so we can do our one or two things well and with integrity. I believe that if we can do one or two things wholeheartedly in our life, that is all God expects.

The important thing is that *we all should be doing something for the rest of the world!* We have to pay back, particularly those of us born into privilege and comfort. We also must respect and support the other two levels, even if we cannot do them. Avoid all comparisons about better or lesser, more committed or less committed; those are all ego games. Let's just use our different gifts to create a unity in the work of service (Ephesians 4:12–13), and back one another up, without criticism or competition. Only in our peaceful, mutual honoring do we show forth the glory of God.

Valley Music Ministry News

Valley's story has always had music at its center and music has always served as a valued element in the worship here as evidenced by the employment of extremely talented musicians. While this will never change, those who lead in this area within our church will soon transition into other opportunities and life changes. Our beloved David Jimerson announced his retirement some time ago and so a Music Task Force was formed to revision the future direction of our music program. After months of conversation, investigation and analysis of data gathered from the Vital Congregations survey, the group presented to session the recommendation that Valley move to a blended music model which incorporates both traditional and contemporary music in a modern format. This recommendation was approved and supported by an increased music budget and the hiring of the gifted Thomas Rheingans to take the lead as Director of Music Ministry beginning April 5.

Thomas comes to us as an accomplished musician in his own right having produced several musical recordings (Apple Music and Amazon) as well as writing and publishing a music education book ([pianozen.com](#)) in addition to creating, directing and producing the Encore Concert Series ([encoreumc.com](#)). Thomas has also served as the music director for two other churches enabling congregants to appreciate the breadth and depth of musical styles within worship. Thomas has also been an integral part of the Valley community through his involvement in past musicals and Youth Sundays where he has been at the keyboard. His connections with the music world in the region will also bring new faces to Valley as he builds the program. We are looking forward to a true team approach within our music life at church as Thomas and Amy work together to bring a fresh new perspective to us and to build our reputation as a premier musical church in Portland. Welcome Thomas!

While change brings promise and hope, it also brings some goodbyes. We are fortunate to have Bob Hinson as a Valley member so we know we will continue to see him worship with us and possibly even hear him play occasionally. Our soloists Raoul Bellis-Squires, Aaron Lange, Eoghan McDowell, and Luke Smith have all been loyal and reliable in providing us with beautiful music during this time when having a choir was impossible. We will be forever grateful for their service to Valley and God during a pandemic that has made us cling to familiar beauty even more than before. We will find ways to honor and thank each one when it is safe to gather as a full community once again.

As we move forward, keep your eyes and ears open for new sounds, new opportunities and new faces as we step into a future we hope you will all support wholeheartedly by bringing friends and family to hear exceptional musical experiences in our sanctuary.

Valley Youth Group News

Spring has SPRUNG!

Youth Group is starting to meet in person again!

APRIL Dates

- ◆ April 22 is Earth Day, so our theme this month is **Taking Care of the Earth!**
- ◆ April 11, 1:00-2:30 p.m.
- ◆ April 17, 1:00-2:30 p.m.
- ◆ April 25, 1:00-2:30 p.m.

Service Project- Recycling Event April 17 in Valley lower parking lot 9:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m.

MAY Dates

- ◆ May 2, 1:00-2:30 p.m.
- ◆ May 16, 1:00-2:30 p.m.
- ◆ May 25, 1:00-2:30 p.m.

Other important Youth events:

- ◆ Graduate Sunday, May 16
- ◆ Confirmation Sunday, May 23



PLANT SALE

SPRING IS HERE!

Time to think about flowers and gardening. Valley's Youth are once again selling vegetable and tomato starts for your garden as well as geraniums, floral planters, and hanging baskets provided by New Leaf Greenhouse. [Information on items are available here.](#) Orders and payments are due by April 6, 2021. Plants will be available for pickup at church on Saturday, May 1, in time for Mother's Day!

Orders can be emailed to Wendy Jenkins at www.wendy@gmail.com. You may also order online at: <https://valley-268303.square.site/> or by check made out to VCPC with "Plant Sale" in the memo line and mailed to the church office. Thank you for supporting our youth!



Valley Youth assembling Easter goodie bags for the Easter Egg Drive-Thru Event. See page 3 for more information.

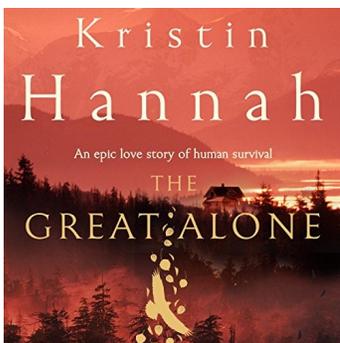
On March 11 the Sound of Bells Could be Heard All Around!

Valley Community Presbyterian Church joined over 400 other groups hosting events in almost 50 countries with the support of 230 high ranking religious leaders and 130 religious groups that represent over 100 million people. Those that rang bells helped sound the alarm and raise awareness of the timely need for climate action.

Valley rang its bells for one minute at 11:00 a.m. that Thursday morning. Four Valley members rang bells in front of the church. Others in the neighborhood rang their bells in synchrony to our church bells. Here is a video produced by GreenFaith of global participation that day: <https://fb.watch/4lTNDBeNqM/>



Valley Book Group



As they have done since the COVID shutdown, the Valley Book Group will be meeting via Zoom on the fourth Friday of the month. On April 23, the meeting will be held at 10:00 to discuss The Great Alone, written by Kristin Hannah. This novel is a survival story, both about surviving in the unforgiving Alaskan wilderness and about growing up with an abusive and volatile father. Hannah paints a vivid and memorable image of a family and a community making a life and surviving out in the wilderness. The small community she depicts is sparse, but vibrant, providing warmth and softening the edges of the harsh Alaskan landscape. If you have not attended in the past, but would like to join us for the discussion, 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.

Valley Notes

Opportunities

One Great Hour of Sharing Offering will be collected on Easter Sunday, April 4. A OGHS envelope has been mailed to the congregation to make it easier to mail in your offering. The OGHS funds the Presbyterian Hunger Fund, Presbyterian Disaster Assistance, and Self-Development of People. Please give as generously as possible and help make a difference in the world!

First and Third Thursday Non-Perishable and Styrofoam Collection: Drop off your non-perishable food items along with your Styrofoam to be recycled on the first and third Thursday of each month from 10:00-11:30 a.m. Visit valleycommunity.org for more info.

Thank you

White Easter Dossal: The new white chancel dossal behind the cross in our sanctuary was created for the Easter Season. Thanks to Karen Sandberg and Fran Searce for their skills. They made the dossal in honor and fond memory of Jini De Vries.

Thank you to Gary Moen who erected the life-size cross on Valley's front lawn. A powerful and moving display!

Congratulations

Congratulations to Dean Bridges on being appointed as a representative from Portland to the National Zoo Teen board!

Prayers

We pray for those with health concerns in the past month:
Richard Gold, Christine Danner

We pray for those who mourn:
- Lyle Chadwick and family on the death of his wife, Judy Chadwick on February 25.
- Family and friends of Annabel Bednarz who died on March 29.

Earth Care Corner

This month I'd like to reflect on another chapter, "Health and Climate Change", from Jane Fonda's book "What Can I Do?: my path from climate despair to action". I was particularly moved by this subject because our health is so important to our well-being as individuals and as a community.

Climate change is affecting our health in many ways as gases released from burning fossil fuels pollute our air and result in a warming planet. Did you know:

- Air pollution, which is intensified by a warming climate, can cause lung cancer, heart disease, asthma, and allergies?
- The World Health Organization estimates that 93% of children younger than 15 throughout the world breathe air that is so polluted it can put their health and development at risk?
- As the earth's temperature rises, we will see an increase in the spread of infectious diseases and their carriers (which should come as no surprise given the current pandemic)?

Additionally, fracking, considered one of the most nefarious contributors to climate change, is not only affecting our atmosphere but starts its work beneath the earth's surface. There is an ecosystem of organisms that survive in the most extreme environments deep in the earth's crust. These organisms can also thrive inside the pipes and well casings of fracking operations, interfering with the flow of oil and gas. The solution? Powerful poisons which exterminate all life. The cost? Poisoning our aquifers that people rely on for drinking, cooking, and bathing. An abundance of scientific evidence demonstrates that fracking causes birth defects, childhood leukemia, heart attacks, strokes, and preterm births. What breaks my heart the most is that not only are these horrific afflictions, but it is people of color and low-income communities who are disproportionately affected by fracking and these health outcomes. It is the folks with the least power to stop the giant fossil fuel companies that are the first and hardest hit.

What can we do though?

- Take charge of your own health in every way you can! We will all need our health to continue to fight climate change and take care of our neighbors who are affected.
- Evaluate your own reliance on fossil fuels, especially natural gas, and begin making changes to reduce your footprint.
- Use your vote and make sure our elected officials are prioritizing climate justice!

As we take charge of our own health, let's take charge of climate change for the health of our selves, neighbors, and communities! Change is possible!

Julie Binder
Earth Care Team Member

THE MESSENGER



VALLEY COMMUNITY PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH
8060 SW BRENTWOOD ST.
PORTLAND, OR 97225-2355

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

TIME DATED MATERIAL

Save the Date!

Valley's Earth Care team is organizing a Community Recycling Event on **Saturday April 17 from 9:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m.** in the TriMet lot south of our church. This is our second event and bigger and better than our inaugural September 2019 event.

We have been blessed with an enthusiastic response from our community organizations and businesses who are as eager to have items recycled and reused as we are!

More complete information will be available on Valley's website as all details get confirmed. So far, we will be collecting:

- * Styrofoam and #6 plastics
- * Plastic film
- * Usable bed and bathroom linens
- * Usable furniture and household goods
- * Usable athletic shoes
- * Batteries
- * Computer and electronic related equipment
- * Returnable cans and bottles
- * Textiles, both usable and recyclable
- * Non-perishable food items.



Save the Date and spread the news!