

The Messenger

Valley Community Presbyterian Church

February 2024

Sundays at Valley

In-person worship at 10:00 a.m. or online at:

<https://www.facebook.com/ValleyCommunityPresbyterian/>

Click videos on the left side.

February

4 Communion
 “The Rise of the Nones”
 workshop, 11:30 a.m.
 Intergenerational Bell Choir

11 Second Sunday for Children and Youth
 Intergenerational Bell Choir

18 Cents-Ability Offering
 Together Women Rise,
 11:30 a.m.
 Intergenerational Bell Choir

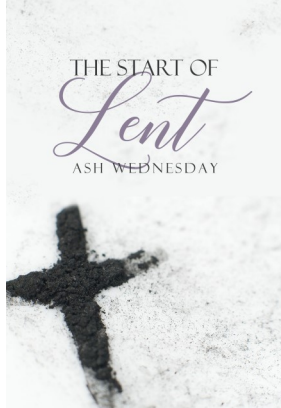
25 Intergenerational Bell Choir

March

3 Communion



Ash Wednesday Worship Service



February 14, 2024 – 4:00 p.m.

The season of Lent begins on Ash Wednesday. **We will gather in the sanctuary at 4:00 p.m. on Ash Wednesday, February 14, for a special worship service.** The scripture readings, music, and message for this first day of Lent focuses on repentance...acknowledging the ways we fall short of God’s best for us and hearing once again of God’s redeeming love for us in Jesus Christ. Those who wish may receive a cross of ashes on their foreheads as a sign of their mortality and a sign of repentance. Please join us for this meaningful time of worship.

Introducing the Gospel of Luke

Wednesday, February 21 at 10:30 a.m. and 7:00 p.m.

Join with Valley friends on Wednesday, February 21 as Pastor Robin offers a one-hour introduction to the Gospel of Luke. This introduction will be offered in-person at 10:30 a.m. in the Office Conference Room or online at 7:00 p.m. **Online participants can find the Zoom link and an outline of the introduction on the church website, www.valleycommunity.org.**

Don’t miss this meaningful way to participate in our current sermon series, *Four Gospels: One Jesus!*



Four Gospels: One Jesus Sermon Series

February Sunday Worship Themes

February 4:	The Parable of the Growing Seed	Mark 4:26-29
February 11:	The Rich Young Man	Mark 10:17-31
February 18:	Simeon’s Song	Luke 2:21-35
February 25:	Jesus with Martha and Mary	Luke 10:38-42

Cultivating a community of followers who embody Jesus’ message of grace and love for all people.

Poems and Prayers for Lent 2024



The Rev. Robin Garvin

Finally, I invited my new friend, and I am inviting you, to join me in a daily Lenten practice that has been very meaningful to me over the years. Each day during Lent, I reflect on a Lenten-themed poem and a prayer. I find this to be a rich way to draw near to God each day. This year, I am going to post a Lenten-themed poem and prayer every day on our church website (www.valleycommunity.org) from Ash Wednesday to Easter. Won't you join me in this meaningful practice as we prepare our hearts together to celebrate the wonder of the risen Christ on Easter morning?

Joyfully in Christ,

Robin R. Garvin



P.S. Here is a sample of a lovely poem and prayer for the beginning of Lent:

A Lenten Prayer

Fast from judging others; feast on the Christ within them.
Fast from an emphasis on difference; feast on the unity of life.
Fast from apparent darkness; feast on the reality of light.
Fast from thoughts of illness; feast on the healing power of God.

Fast from words that pollute; feast on phrases that purify.
Fast from discontent; feast on gratitude.
Fast from anger; feast on patience.
Fast from pessimism; feast on optimism.

Continued on page 4

THE MESSENGER

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valleycommunity.org
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NEWSLETTER STAFF:
ANGELA GRAHAM

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

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

February Birthdays

Sharon Baker	Norm Jacox
Grace Baker	Jeffrey Keim
Richard Bryant	Barbara King
Mary Collins	Kristina Kurtz
Judy David-Hope	Debbie Purcell
David Derting	Bill Rea
Ariel Derting	Antonio Rinella
Diana Domingo-Forasté	Don Sowers
Joy Eaton	Stuart Young
Marjorie Grootendorst	

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



Together Women Rise



The Together Women Rise at Valley meeting on February 18 will be a *double* meeting. Since inclement weather prevented us from meeting in January, we will be covering two organizations at our February meeting that are part of Rise's Transformation Partnerships. These partnerships are designed to make the **biggest** impact on achieving global gender equality by addressing the root causes of gender inequality.

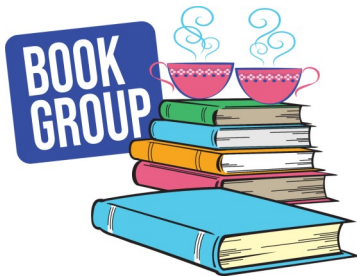
Shared Interest- Investing in Southern Africa focuses on unlocking local capital; strengthening local resources, and benefitting local people in the areas of agriculture and food security, gender equity, climate change, social enterprise, and financial technology. Shared Interest works directly with financial institutions to change how the banking system services women entrepreneurs.

Shared Interest is also championing key policy reforms that would revolutionize the way these institutions do business. It starts with addressing biases and misconceptions among bank staff and leadership that have resulted in negative experiences for women in the past. Then, it works to re-shape the approach and products offered by lenders so that future interactions will be positive, successful, and on an even footing with men.

Equality Now has a mission to achieve legal and systemic change that addresses violence and discrimination against women and girls around the world. Almost every country in the world has laws that treat women and girls as second-class citizens. It may take another 286 years to remove discriminatory laws and close prevailing gaps in legal protection for women and girls (*Source: UN Women*). Together Women Rise and Equality Now share a common belief that legal equality is critical for achieving gender equality and creating a better world for everyone.

Please join us on Sunday, February 18 at 11:30 a.m. following worship in the Fireside Room for a potluck lunch, an informative presentation on these two transformation partners and have the opportunity to donate to their grant request. If you have questions about Together Women Rise please contact Ruthann Marquis, leader of Valley's chapter.

Valley Book Group



As a result of the January 26 closure of the church due to storm damage, the Valley Book Group had to change plans for our meeting on that day. Our January meeting traditionally gives members a chance

to select books that will be read in the new year.

During the past several months, Kathy Ems has 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. The meeting for that purpose is now scheduled for February 23 at 10:00 a.m. in the Fireside Room. 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.

Lenten Devotional 2024

Tread Lightly for Lent is a daily reflection-action calendar for this upcoming Lenten season. As Valley is an Earth Care Congregation through PCUSA this is something valuable for all of us to consider this Lent. It is full of ways that we can practice more mindful behaviors. From their website (<https://www.presbyterianmission.org/resource/tread-lightly-for-lent/>):

“The Presbyterian Hunger Program strives to walk with people in moving towards sustainable choices that restore and protect all of God’s children and creation. As people of faith, we seek to “serve and preserve” God’s world. However, some of our collective choices have led to a changing global climate, which translates to warmer temperatures, rising sea-levels, and severe storms, just to name a few. To turn this tide, we must commit to treading lightly on God’s Earth. In Lent, we slow down, take time, and examine our internal spiritual lives and the way we live out our Christian faith in the world around us. Our hope is that this Lenten calendar will be the beginning of actions intended to create more mindful behaviors throughout the year.”



Thank you for sending your check for **\$45.60** for the
2024 Per Capita for each Valley member.

For more information about what per capita is and how it helps, go
to: oga.pcusa.org/percapita



“The Rise of the Nones” Workshop



Sunday, February 4, 11:30 a.m. until 1:00 p.m. in Armitage Hall.

Come on a journey with Liz Leavitt, pastor at Rose City Park Presbyterian Church and daughter of the late VCPC members Baird and Karen Smith, as we explore the increasing proportion of our neighbors who no longer identify as being any religion. (As in, Religion: None.) Sometimes called the *Spiritual But Not Religious*, these folks now represent about a third of Americans. But who are they? What do they want? Are they ever coming back to church? Based on research recently completed for her Doctor of Ministry degree, Liz will lead us through some of the historical factors that contributed to this dramatic shift in American religious life as well as some of the trends we are seeing today among these groups relevant to what they believe and practice. (Spoiler alert: Yes, they do believe and practice things!). We'll conclude with a discussion about what kinds of ministries might fruitfully collaborate with this growing group and how church life might be meaningfully enriched by such partnerships. Mark your calendars and plan on attending this rich time of conversation and learning!

Kids & Technology

We are privileged to welcome Dr. Doreen Dodgen-Magee, local psychologist and author, to Valley Thursday, February 1 at 7:00 p.m. for a workshop on kids and technology. The workshop will provide up to the day research as well as uplifting and attainable tips for moderating our tech use and enhancing our lives. Dr. Dodgen-Magee thrives on helping people understand the digital world we live in alongside the realities of its impact on our physical bodies, relationships, and sense of self.

Dr. Dodgen Magee is a frequent contributor to *Psychology Today*, *The New York Times*, *Washington Post* and *Time*. The workshop is part of Valley's three year vision to invest in of next generation families so that they might flourish.

For more information, email Leslie@valleycommunity.org

Soup Kitchen Thank You



After 34 years of providing monthly meals to Doreen's Place in the Bud Clark Commons, the Mission Committee voted to discontinue this service. Transition Projects have made some changes in the meal provider program to be compliant with regulations from the Oregon Food Bank. Doreen's Place is up to capacity, requiring meals for ninety men. It has become more difficult to find church groups to provide this service. Thank you to all who have in one way or another participated in the Soup Kitchen program over the years. We hope to find another food service program we can contribute to.

Pop In Impromptu Playtime

The after Christmas letdown is hard on both kids and parents so we opened our gym on Friday morning, December 29, for an impromptu, pop-in playtime for our VCPS families. Over twenty kids tore around on scooters, tossed balls, read books, colored pictures and stacked blocks while their parents chatted or chilled out. We supplied refreshments and a welcoming space as part of our ongoing mission to come alongside next generation families with the hospitality and love of Jesus.

Our next playtime is scheduled for Friday, February 23, from 9:00 - 11:00 a.m. to give kids and parents a chance to come together following a week of no preschool due to conferences.

Poems and Prayers (cont. from page 2)

Fast from complaining; feast on appreciation.

Fast from worry; feast on trust in God's care.

Fast from unrelenting pressure; feast on unceasing prayer.

Fast from facts that depress; feast on truths that uplift.

Fast from lethargy; feast on enthusiasm.

Fast from thoughts that weaken; feast on promises that inspire.

Fast from shadows of sorrow; feast on the sunlight of serenity.

Fast from problems that overwhelm; feast on prayer that undergirds.

Fast from bitterness; feast on forgiveness.

Fast from self-concern; feast on compassion for others.

Fast from personal anxiety; feast on eternal truth.

Fast from discouragements; feast on hope.

~ William Arthur Ward

(Rev. Ward was an American author, teacher, and pastor, 1921-1994)

Prayer: Gracious God, during this season of fasting and feasting, gift us with your presence so we can be a gift to others in carrying out your work. Amen.

Facilities Projects and More

Christmas came early and stayed late for the Facilities Committee. December and January had no lack of projects to handle over a couple of very busy months.



Our original vintage drinking fountain in Davis Hall finally failed. It couldn't be repaired. Thanks to our Valley Memorial and Gifts committee we received a grant to replace it with a fountain/filler unit identical to the new one in the adjacent hall. It will be installed soon.

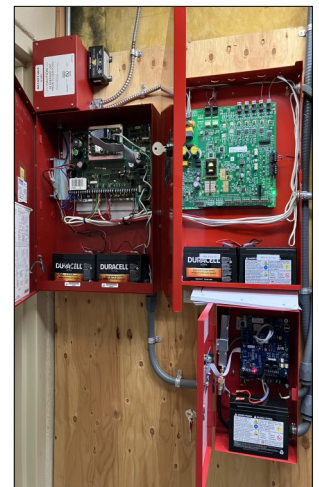
Remember the frigid sanctuary (and elsewhere) in early December? Our basement boiler Circulating Pump's gears and drive shaft "imploded". Over the decades it was routinely inspected, repaired and rebuilt too many times. A generous grant from Valley Foundation allowed us to replace the pump in time for a warm Christmas Eve.



An oak tree fell from our playground. Fortunately it landed between two of our rental houses. However, it destroyed

fencing, some roofing, siding and a window on the house. We also lost some appreciated shade in our playground. Insurance will cover everything. Fortunately our tenants were not in that room but it was a middle of the night tremor they will remember.

A mid-January neighborhood power outage and reboot resulted in a damaging power surge. This surge "fried" our fire alarm master panel. You may have heard the alert- panel beeping by the east entry door. A working fire alarm system is required for Preschool operation. A few weeks later, delayed by storm interference, we were finally able to get a new panel installed so both the church and preschool are secure. We installed a surge protector for future protection.



On January 17, AmyAnn arrived to the shocking discovery of water raining down outside the east narthex landing to the boiler room below. Furthermore, a ceiling valve in the upper kitchen cracked and flooded the kitchen. Water migrated to the lower custodial office. Water was immediately shut off and ServePro arrived to mop up. Demolition and mitigation has started by removing water-saturated flooring and ceiling tiles. All this was due to a combination of the prolonged power outage and harsh freezing weather. It could have been far worse. Again, insurance to the rescue. Thanks in advance for your patience during restoration.



Facilities Elder, David Marquis, holding the broken pipe in question.

Happy New Year!



*May the New Year
bring you blessings
in abundance of
love, joy, health,
peace and prosperity!*

*Party hats and noisemakers were
on hand to help celebrate New Year's
Eve during coffee fellowship
December 31, 2023.*



Oregon Battle of the Books



Thirty-two teams of elementary students in the third through fifth grade will converge on Valley on Saturday, March 2, for one of the OBOB regional tournaments happening across the state in the month of March.

Oregon Battle of the Books (OBOB) is a statewide voluntary reading motivation and comprehension program for students in third through twelfth grade. Students are exposed to quality literature representing a variety of literary styles and viewpoints and then

compete as a team in a game much like Jeopardy answering questions about the books they have read. The team who earns the most points at regionals will compete at the state tournament April 13.

The competition at Valley will be held from 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. and volunteers are needed as we welcome students and their families to our campus. If you are interested in learning more on how to participate as a volunteer, email leslie@valleycommunity.org



Valley Notes

Opportunities

Second Sunday for Kids: On Sunday, February 11, we invite kids age 4 through elementary school to Second Sunday where we will enjoy a pancake breakfast, songs, time to play, and a dive into what it means to talk to God in prayer. Meet Leslie and Mark Hanscom at the back of the sanctuary right before the sermon at the 10:00 a.m. service. Questions? Email Leslie@valleycommunity.org.

Join Pastor Robin in the upper office conference room at 11:30 a.m. on Sunday, February 11, to discover what it means to be part of our Presbyterian tradition and Valley Community Presbyterian Church. The structure will be one in which questions are welcomed as you consider what it means to be part of our faith tradition and our particular family of faith. Following the class, you will have an opportunity to become a member of the church if you so choose.

Notice

Valley's Session has called for the Annual Congregational Meeting to be held on Sunday, February 25 at 11:00 a.m. after the morning worship service. The meeting will be held in the sanctuary and will be live-streamed for those unable to attend in person. During this meeting, the Session will present reports along with plans for 2024, receive the financial report for 2023, and review the budget for 2024.

Congratulations

Congratulations to Patty and Naveen Balasingam on the birth of their daughter, Nadira Taylor Balasingam, on January 3. Proud grandparents are Joyce and Tye Wood.

Congratulations to Brad Noonan and Chelsea Koning on the birth of their son, Cooper Franklin Noonan, on January 9. Proud grandmothers are Julie Noonan and Sue Koning.



eco-school NETWORK

eco tips

Earth Care Corner

“Paper Towels & Napkins”

Why we care

Doing away with disposable items can be a simple and cost-effective way to reduce your impact on the environment, especially when it comes to items you use every day such as paper towels and napkins. As many as 52,000 trees per day are required to replace the number of discarded paper towels in the US. Harvesting raw materials, processing, packaging, and shipping paper towels is about twice as energy intensive as washing cloth items. And making paper products requires the use of bleaching chemicals, pollutes water, and adds to methane gas production after they are thrown in a landfill.

Simple, positive steps

Use washable products.

- Wipe hands and clean up messes with cloth towels and rags. Hang to dry, only washing as needed.
- Use dish cloths or natural sponges to wipe counter tops.
- Use cloth napkins. Designate a napkin ring for each family member to make it easy to use napkins for more than one meal.
- Buy used cloth napkins and towels, or make your own.
- If purchasing new, select organic cotton, linen, bamboo, or hemp.

Reuse.

- Keep a stash of gently used paper towels, napkins, or paper bags to use for jobs like absorbing bacon grease or wiping out a greasy skillet.

Buy recycled.

- If needed, buy unbleached paper towels made with post-consumer recycled content. “Post-consumer” means that the paper has been used by a consumer and then put out for recycling, as opposed to “recycled” which can be made from factory scraps.

If you are interested in learning how to make cloth napkins, I have a great pattern and would be happy to show you.

Ruthann Marquis, leader of Valley's Earth Care team

eco-school NETWORK

eco tips

THE MESSENGER



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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

TIME DATED MATERIAL

DEACONS' RED CROSS BLOOD DRIVE

Spring into life.

Give blood.

The Deacons' Red Cross Blood Drive will be held at
the Valley Youth House on
Wednesday, February 28, 1:30-6:30 p.m.



American
Red Cross

Contact Anne Scarce or go to the Red Cross website (redcrossblood.org) to sign up.
Up to three people may be helped with each pint of blood collected.
Please help if you can!