

Reflections

from
the
Valley

Valley Presbyterian Church
Newsletter

Volume 32, Number 6

July-August 2013



When I Am Among the Trees

by Mary Oliver

When I am among the trees,
especially the willows and the honey locust,
equally the beech, the oaks and the pines,
they give off such hints of gladness.
I would almost say that they save me, and daily.

I am so distant from the hope of myself,
in which I have goodness, and discernment,
and never hurry through the world
but walk slowly, and bow often.

Around me the trees stir in their leaves
and call out, "Stay awhile."
The light flows from their branches.

And they call again, "It's simple," they say,
"and you too have come
into the world to do this, to go easy, to be filled
with light, and to shine."

July Worship Notes

August Worship Notes

August 4 Eighteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time -
Communion by Intinction
Hosea 11:1-11 Colossians 3:1-11
Psalm 107:1-9, 43 Luke 12:13-21

August 11 Nineteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time
Isaiah 1:1, 10-20 Hebrews 11:1-3, 8-16
Psalm 50:1-8, 22-23 Luke 12:32-40

August 18 Twentieth Sunday in Ordinary Time
Isaiah 5:1-7 Hebrews 11:29-12:2
Psalm 80:1-2, 8-19 Luke 12:49-56

August 25 Twenty-first Sunday in Ordinary Time -
Missionary Nancy Collins
Jeremiah 1:4-10 Hebrews 12:18-29
Psalm 71:1-6 Luke 13:10-17

Worship Committee

Once again we have assumed the summer configuration in the sanctuary. As Rev. Adele so aptly described it, we are in the Ordinary Time of the church year which has green as the parament colors. In the same manner we will be gazing upon the green of our natural surroundings during the service, thus reinforcing the awareness of Ordinary Time, which is not marked by a specific season.

Summer is also a time for restoration, relaxation, and renewal. Just as we in our family lives get away and share different experiences, the church will be doing the same thing. During the month of July, we will be enlisting the services of guest preachers, and during August we will highlight the musical talents of others in our congregation as well as a guest pianist.

September will find us once again ready for the start of a new school year and all the programs that are therein entailed. The sanctuary will resume its fall seating arrangement, and the choir will begin practice on September 1 and be in place for services on September 8.

An invitation was issued in church on June 23 to anyone who would be interested in joining the worship committee. Please feel free to call or email Lynn Harrison with any questions or interest in joining.

In the meantime, enjoy the summer and all that it holds, but think on the challenges that Rev. Adele has presented to us in her sermons over the last weeks. Reflect and give thanks for all the gifts of God.

Peace,

Lynn Harrison
Worship

Session Notes

June was another exciting month for Valley with many changes. Once again we are blessed with new members joining the Valley family but, on a different note, we say goodbye to some very special people. Valley welcomed Scott Ewing, Michael Sarkodie and Constance Sciglimpaglia into membership on June 9th. Jessica, Kyle and Leila McGough were with us for only a short period of time but contributed significantly to Valley and will be a great asset to their next church.

The departure of Terri Baker is another major loss for Valley and a great find for another church. There is not enough room in this newsletter to list all she has done for Valley and to show her our appreciation. A founding member (Member #3 on Valley's register of members), member of the building design committee, choir member, worship committee member, the person responsible for the banners, vestments and decorations... the list goes on and on but all centers on being a faithful servant of our Lord and to his church at Valley. Goodbye and God Bless.

In the near future, Session will be focusing more on long term planning and questions such as; where is God leading us to grow as a church and how is God calling us to serve the community? Session will continue to rely on and support the good work of the various committees to take charge of their areas.

A lot of work has now been completed to clean up Valley's property thanks to a generous gift from a previous member. As is true with any house, there is always more to be done and what has been done needs to be maintained. The B&G committee is always looking for volunteers to help with the chores "around the house".

June also included a number of celebrations of appreciation for the many people that make Valley what it is. Valley recognized the contribution of its teachers, choirs, the Director of Music, the students, the graduating senior, fathers... another list that goes on and on. Valley may have a relatively small membership but they are actively engaged.

We hope you all have a wonderful summer, filled with many blessings.



Ordinary Time

Well, here we are. Advent, Christmas, Epiphany, Lent and Easter are all behind us. We've walked together from the mountain top of Christ's birth, to the valley of death, and back up again to the pinnacle of the Resurrection. We have seen the colors of the church change from purple to white to celebration to purple to white to red, a rainbow of color as we pass from one important season to the next. And now all of that is over, and all that we can see stretching ahead of us is a sea of green.



"The season after Pentecost" is often also called "Ordinary Time." Rather than meaning "common" or "mundane," this term comes from the word "ordinal," which simply means "counted time," because we number the Sundays from here on out in order from the First Sunday after Pentecost, all the way up to the Last Sunday after Pentecost, twenty-seven Sundays in all (and thirty-three Sundays of Ordinary Time, since we also count the period between Epiphany and Lent). In some ways, it might be right to think of this time as common or mundane, because this is the usual time in the church, the time that is not marked by a constant stream of high points and low points, but is instead the normal, day-in, day-out life of the church. This time is a time to grapple with the nuts and bolts of our faith, just being exactly where we are, and trying to live our faith in that moment.

Traditionally the liturgical color for this season of "Ordinary Time" has been green, and it is a fitting choice. Green has long been associated with new life and growth. Even in Hebrew in the Old Testament, the same word for the color "green" also means "young." It serves to remind us that it is in the midst of ordinary time that we are given the opportunity to grow. So it is particularly fitting that we have reoriented the sanctuary to look out upon the lush new growth of God's beautiful creation. It is a time to feed and water our faith with chances for education and personal study. It is a time to weed and prune our faith, cutting off the parts that may be dead and leaving them behind. And growing can be tough, so it's good we have most of the church year in which to do it.

"Ordinary Time" is also profound theological statement. It is a reminder of the presence of God in and through the most mundane and ordinary seasons of our lives. God is not only on the mountaintop or in the valley, but walking alongside each of us when the flat road stretches interminably into the horizon. It is a reminder that when God came and lived among us in the person of Jesus Christ, he experienced the same ordinary reality that we all experience. And that God, in Christ, offered us the opportunity to transform the most ordinary, mundane experiences into extraordinary events infused with the presence of God. God is there, present in the midst of the ordinary, just waiting for us to recognize it.

May we all be blessed in this season of growing!

Welcome New Members!

We extend the warmest welcome to each of our new members who were received on June 9th. It is a pleasure to introduce them to you via our monthly newsletter.

Scott Ewing was born in Washington DC and lived in northern VA, but also, as a boy lived in Panama. He is a graduate of the University of Oklahoma with a degree in engineering. He was a petroleum engineer for Esso - a job which took him all over the world. He has a great love for classical music and has played the viola in orchestras in the past. Scott and his wife Barbara (Bobbi) had a son and two daughters and have been blessed with 4 grandchildren. After Scott retired from Esso and moved to the state of Washington, he was very active in his Presbyterian church where he taught adult ed courses, however, a year ago he relocated to CT to be close to his family. We are so pleased and honored that he has chosen to become a member of Valley.

Michael Sarkodie-Addo was born in Ghana, West Africa and is a third generation Presbyterian from the Church in Ghana. He came to the U.S. twelve years ago to attend college, where he obtained his Bachelor of Science degree. Michael is living in Southbury where he is the caregiver for Scott. Prior to coming to CT, he was in Philadelphia, PA where his wife and three children (ages 4 ½, 2 ½ and 1 ½) are currently living. He hopes to bring them to this area in the very near future where they will all be part of our church family. We welcome you Michael, and look forward to having your entire family join us at Valley.

Connie Sciglimpaglia is a longtime resident of CT. She was born in Greenwich and grew up in neighboring Byram, CT. Throughout her school years she was active in the school orchestra and had parts in various plays. She has been singing from the time she was 16, and was performing at a night club where she met her future husband, a professional musician, who was playing his tenor sax. They married and had two sons and two daughters. We are so happy Connie has found and made Valley her church home.





OUTREACH COMMITTEE

The Outreach Committee is planning new “pew pads” for the fall to allow more space for information, i.e., home address, phone number and email address.

An Inquirer/New Member class was held on Thursday, June 6th. Dinner was served for fifteen persons who attended: six inquirers, four session members plus Rev. Adele, and three members of the Outreach Committee. Dan Cunningham was a great help to the committee by helping in the kitchen.

We had three persons choose to become members and they were welcomed in the June 9th worship service.

We have tentatively planned another Inquirer/New Member class in September or October.

We continue to have “repeat” as well as “new” visitors each week.

Ann Thomas, Chair

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Thank you so much for your comments and opinions regarding Announcements during worship. The Worship Committee met and reviewed the input received so far. While some folks favor passing the mic and having announcements made verbally by members of the congregation, more were in favor of printed announcements with certain items highlighted by the Elder of the Month. Some reasons folks gave for preferring printed announcements were they liked having the printed information available for later reference, others found it difficult to hear the announcements, and there were those for whom a service running longer than 60 minutes is very difficult due to scheduling conflicts with children’s activities, sports events, etc. Others of you were concerned that due to services running long that the sermon might be cut short – something that was clearly not desirable.

Based on the emails and comments received to date, the Worship Committee has decided that beginning in July announcements will be printed into the Sunday bulletin. So, if you have an announcement, please email or call the Church Office by 10 a.m. on Wednesday mornings and Terri will be sure it’s printed. If something should come up later in the week and you miss that deadline, not to worry! Simply print out your announcement (or write it legibly), and hand it to Rev. Adele or the Elder of the Month before the start of the service.

Vacation Bible School for All!

Announcing a multi-generational Vacation Bible School experience for Valley! Whether you are a young or not-so young, join us August 18-20 (Sunday through Tuesday) from 5:30-7:30 PM, as we learn together from the scriptures and think about ways of engaging our world. We'll be using the PC(USA)'s [Clean Water for All God's Children](#) (part of Living Waters for the World), a mission-focused curriculum designed to help participants experience God's love while exploring scriptures that refer particularly to God's use of water as an agent of creation, salvation, healing, blessing and health. We'll also talk about the world water situation and ways we might be able to help.

Each evening we will begin with a family-friendly dinner (5:30-6 PM) followed by different classes and activities for younger children, older children, and adults (6-7:15 PM), and concluding with a time of worship (7:15-7:30). The cost is \$5 per person to help cover dinner and supplies, with a max of \$20 per family. Extended family, friends and neighbors are welcome, too! Megan Christian will be coordinating classes for the children and Rev. Adele will be leading class for the adults.



Please let us know you're coming as soon as possible (August 2 at the VERY LATEST) by emailing Megan Christian (jaredchristian@sbcglobal.net) with your name, how many people in your family are coming, ages of any children, and leave payment in her mailbox at church. Checks may be made out to "Valley Presbyterian Church" with "VBS" in the memo. If you'd like to help out or if you need a ride to church, let us know that too. We look forward to studying together this summer!!

"Jesus Christ is Living Water for our Bodies and our Souls."



Calling All Single Seniors

The next Single Seniors Brunch will be potluck picnic style on Sunday, July 7th, 12:30 PM, at the home of Charles Lindberg who graciously offered to host this event. If you are planning on coming, please call Jill Heidel, at 203-826-7081 to make a reservation, get directions and to discuss what you plan to bring. All singles -- whether you're semi-attached or detached and of an indeterminate age -- are welcome.

Youth Mission Trip

We are very excited about our upcoming mission trip in July. Five youth and three adults will be leaving for Work Camp on July 14th after our worship service. We will return on Saturday, July 20th, and all will be in church on July 21st to reflect on the week. We are traveling to New Jersey to help with Hurricane Sandy relief. We are asking the congregation to help provide canned goods for the local food pantry in New Jersey. We will be collecting cans and/or money on three Sundays: June 30th, July 7th, and July 14th. Thanks to the congregation for all your support.

A Thank You Note ...

Dear Valley,

Thank you for recognizing ALL the teachers in the Church. Who knew there were oh-so-many of us?

I love the gift of Give Me Strength. It is just what I needed, especially at this time of year when we begin to close the door on one school year, rest a quick bit, and then prepare to gear up for the next one.

Every time I open the book, a different poem speaks to me. I especially like "To Be a Model," "Working Together," and "We are the Team." These are the prayers that I needed as we worked through this especially difficult year.

With great gratitude and love,

Lea Attanasio

Building & Grounds

Storage Discussion:

Among other Building & Grounds subject matters discussed at a meeting in June was the idea of improving the appearance of the Narthex and possibly creating additional storage. There have been comments over a period of years asking how we could create more easily accessible storage within the church. To that end, the committee kicked around a few different ideas but there was always the unresolved question of which groups would need storage and for what purpose/items.

The B&G Committee is requesting that any committee who struggles with insufficient storage space let us know the amount of space needed and an outline of what items are in need of storage. Please indicate whether the storage is permanent or temporary. If the space needed is in the style of cabinets, please specify whether the desire would be for fixed shelves or pull-out drawers or any other design to be considered. Please submit the overview via an e-mail to valleypresct@gmail.com.

After collecting feedback information over the next couple of months, the B&G will have further discussion of the information and needs collected to determine how any satisfaction of accommodating identified needs might be met. Note that at this point no designated funding for a project of any type has been identified, but the exploration of need is being conducted.

Respectfully,
Granville Reed - B&G Chair





MISSION-JULY/AUGUST, 2013

TAG SALE: SATURDAY, JULY 27, 2013, 9:30 A.M.-2 P.M.

ITEMS ACCEPTED FROM SUNDAY, JULY 21st (after service) THROUGH THURSDAY, JULY 26.

HELP NEEDED PRE-SALE: SORTING, PRICING, SET-UP TABLES (Sun. 7/21st). We work from approx. 9:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. each day w/lunch provided, DISTRIBUTING FLYERS AT VARIOUS PLACES (P.O., MARKETS, ETC), PACKING UP AFTER SALE AND/OR DELIVERING ITEMS LEFT*.

ALSO NEEDED: Please save: wrapping paper/newspapers, paper bags, Store shopping bags.

*We donate, as appropriate, items left to: Habitat ReStore, Church Thrift Shops (Danbury/Newtown) and Make a Home (Newtown).

ITEMS WE CAN NOT ACCEPT:

*toys (due to lead situation w/older ones)*cosmetics-unless new *stuffed animals (resale shops won't take)*clothes/shoes

*old electronics, tvs or computer monitors

We can take large pieces of furniture IF they can be brought on Friday, the 26th and you let us know in advance you will be bringing furniture and what type it will be. If you have questions, please see Dan or Judy Cunningham.

NOROC: (New Opportunities for Romanian Orphan Children). Before Liz and Doug Searles left, Liz gave me a wish list of some items that would help. They are: swim suits (all sizes) gently used o.k., activity aprons, and Baritone Ukeleles. Have found a Simplicity pattern for the aprons and there will be more information shortly on making them. Liz also indicated they could use, for the older children, used laptops. The committee voted to try and apply for a grant from our Presbytery's Stewardship and Mission Committee to fund this part of the wish list. Stay tuned....

At the committee's meeting, June 2nd, we also made the following contributions: * Presbytery Immigrant Ministry-\$500.00, *AmeriCares-\$500.00 (AmeriCares not only has a free clinic in Danbury but also responds with medical and personal supplies in many disasters worldwide, *Connecticut Food Bank-\$300.00 for its backpack program (Danbury is included), and a *match for the Sandy Gift Cards-\$500.00.

Many thanks to all who participated in any way for our outreach with Chapel on the Green, June 9th.

Judy Cunningham, chair

Chapel on the Green in New Haven

On June 9th Valley Presbyterian Church participated in Chapel on the Green, an outdoor worship service in New Haven aimed at serving the homeless and those who don't feel at home in a church building. After worship, about 15 folks –aged 9 to 94--helped assemble 200 sandwiches to take down that afternoon.



Then nine of us ate a quick lunch ourselves and hopped in our cars to head to New Haven for worship at 2 PM. It was a gorgeous afternoon, luckily for us, as this group meets rain, shine, sleet or snow. Rev. Adele offered a brief sermon, Angeles Pai led prayers, and Rev. Adele, Angeles and Kim Downs assisted Rev. Julie Kelsey in serving communion to all assembled.

After worship we

quickly set up tables and began passing out lunches. "Ham and cheese or PB & J?" Ham and cheese was by far the favorite. We also offered granola bars or sandwich crackers, bananas or oranges, cookies or fig newtons, and bottles of water. In less than thirty minutes all 200 lunches were gone!



A very special thank you to the **Mission Committee** who funded the lunch fixings (just under \$200, or 95 cents per lunch), and to **Dan and Judy Cunningham** who worked hard to do all the shopping, set up the assembly line, get things into the cars, and made sure we had lunch ourselves! We couldn't have done it without you!!



Peace Cranes from Kobe, Japan

Thanks to our own Colin Harrison, the people of Sandy Hook received 1000 peace cranes, many Pikachu, cards, kind wishes and prayers from the people of Kobe, Japan. Kobe, as you may recall, was hit with a devastating earthquake in 1995. Colin was in Japan when it hit and has friends and colleagues there who were deeply affected by the event. After December 14, Colin reached out to his friends and asked if they might do something to lift the hearts of the people here. No one ever imagined what would unfold from that one email.

Several friends and colleagues in Japan set about to organize an event in Kobe for young and old alike to come and make peace cranes, Pikachu, and to write good wishes to the people of Sandy Hook. Many adults and children participated.

Then in June, Hisakazu Okamura and his wife Machiko came from Tokyo to Sandy Hook, to personally deliver the good wishes of so many in Japan. On Friday, June 7,



Okamura-san and Machiko-san, together with Pam Harmata and Lynn Harrison, Rev. Adele and Colin, helped lead a two hour class on origami for many children at The Sandy Hook Arts Center for Kids (SHACK). The SHACK was organized as a place where children could come each week and do something creative together. Center organizers said this workshop had some of the highest attendance of any of their events to date. Newtown First Selectman Pat Llodra was on hand to officially welcome our visitors and to receive the gifts of peace. Newtown Strong Therapy Dogs were also on hand,

as they always are, to offer comfort to anyone there. The event was so popular that The SHACK would like to repeat it!

On Sunday, June 9, the cranes and cards hung in our worship space as a beautiful and tangible reminder that we are not alone. They have since gone back to The SHACK.

We thank Okamura-san and Machiko-san for sharing their care and creativity with us. And thank you, Colin Harrison, for arranging such a beautiful gift!





Welcome our New Secretary!

With joy and thanksgiving Rev. Adele and the Personnel Committee announce that Terri Flanagan has agreed to be our permanent Church Secretary! Terri spent time last fall helping Gerry out in the office, and has been our Interim Secretary during this time of transition. We are delighted that Terri has agreed to stay on. She brings warmth and energy and innovation to the office, as well as her ever-engaging smile. Her new office hours are Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday from 9 AM to 3 PM. Be sure to officially welcome Terri when you see her, and say "Thanks!"



FINANCE

As we approach the halfway point of 2013, Valley's financial position remains strong. Our operating results are better than expected, and there have been no unusual expenditures. Our special offering to help tornado victims in Oklahoma raised \$750 for Presbyterian Disaster Assistance.

During June we sent our final payment to the PC(USA) on our outstanding loan, so that we have no long term debt obligations, and no more monthly payments of principal and interest. We will properly celebrate this fact during a special event in the fall.

Our new copier has been installed and is working well.

We have signed a new contract with Mitchell Oil to provide our heating oil for next winter, at what we believe is an attractive price of \$3.399 per gallon. Mitchell has been a reliable supplier to Valley for the past several years, responding promptly to service calls when needed, and their pricing has been competitive.

We encourage you to maintain pledge payments during the summer months, and thank you for all the ways you support the mission and service of our church.

Peace and blessings. Jeff Henriques, Treasurer

Bits and Pieces

**September
NewsLetter
DEADLine**

Monday, August 26th

**EMAIL ARTICLES TO:
valleypresct@gmail.com**

**Valley Presbyterian Church
21 West Whisconier Road
Brookfield, CT 06804**

VALLEY PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

**21 West Whisconier Road
Brookfield, CT 06804
Telephone: 775-2624**

**Minister: The Rev. Adele Crawford
Director of Music: Max Vladimiroff**

**WORSHIP SERVICE
SUNDAY, 10:00 A.M.**

**ADULT STUDY, 9:00 A.M.
and
CHURCH SCHOOL PROVIDED**

