

Reflections

from
the
Valley

Valley Presbyterian Church
Newsletter

Volume 35, Number 8

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The deeper our faith,
the more doubt we must endure;
the deeper our hope,
the more prone we are to despair;
the deeper our love,
the more pain its loss will bring:
these are a few of the paradoxes
we must hold as human beings.
If we refuse to hold them
in the hopes of living
without doubt, despair, and pain,
we also find ourselves living
without faith, hope, and love.

— Parker J. Palmer

Painting, “Beyond the Depths” based on Psalm 65, Lisle Gwynn Garrity 2016

Leading Causes of Life



During October, we'll continue our worship series entitled "Leading Causes of Life". Led by Rev. Adele, we'll focus on the ways in which we say "yes" to life in Christ offers us the opportunity to see the assets that create possibility and that create new ways of flourishing together in this world.

We Do, We Live: Agency

10/2/16

"...Do this in remembrance of me."

-- Luke 22:19b

Agency is about doing, even if it is just doing only what we can do in this moment—which

doesn't feel like much sometimes. When our purpose joins with our doing, then we have found our "calling." Before he dies, Jesus invites his followers to no longer be servants, but friends who understand they must carry on his actions in the world. They are to become agents of change and possibility. Instead of focusing on problems, we focus on the assets of our community, our friends in Christ, and what is possible.

Generations of Love: Blessing

10/9/16

"From the fullness of his grace we have all received one blessing after another."

-- John 1:16

Blessing is not just a nice thing to say, it is "generative" of life. It is what we do that creates more and more life within ourselves and others and it has been going on for, well... "generations." Blessing is about opening to the channels of love that have been flowing before we came into this world and will flow after we leave it. We are part of a long river of life-giving actions of generosity, kindness, hospitality and humor. We will have blessed another when we can answer "yes" to the question, "Have I helped them to be fully alive?"

Not Just Wishful Thinking: Hope

10/16/16

"Be strong and take heart, all you who hope in the LORD."

-- Psalm 31:24

Humans have the capacity to imagine the future, drawing us together to take risks and face dangers because hope moves us forward. Hope held and spoken in community is not just wishful thinking, it is a bold announcement and celebration of a future in God.

Let Your Life Be about Life

10/23/16

“I pray also that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints, and his incomparably great power for us who believe.”

-- *Ephesians 1:18-19*

From death to life, from fear to blessing, from despair to hope... this is what we have been about in this series. In this final worship experience we will hear reflections on the “Leading Causes of Life” that we have witnessed and small or big ways in which we have refocused in order to let our lives be about life. We will pray for these life-giving practices to “go viral”—infecting our communities so that there is more connection, more meaning, more action, more blessing and more hope.

Notes from the Choir Room

Our Adult Choir and Handbell Ensemble are gearing up for the fall season, and new voices and ringers are always welcome. If you've always wanted to try singing or ringing - now would be a perfect time as the choirs learn their new music for the coming year.



The Adult Choir warms up on Sunday mornings at 9 am and rehearses following worship from 11:30 am to 12:45 pm. The Handbell Ensemble rehearses most Thursday evenings at 7:30 pm. Contact Max Vladimiroff if you're interested in learning more!

During October our choirs will offer the following selections:

- October 2nd “In Remembrance” – Buryl Red
- October 9th “Blessing” – Natalie Sleeth
- October 16th “Be Strong in the Lord” – Thomas Matthews
- October 23rd “How Lovely Is Your Dwelling” – Felix Mendelssohn, arr. Ronald A. Nelson
- October 30th The Handbell Ensemble will offer: “Simple Gifts” – Kevin Chesney



Calendar

Sun, Oct 2 nd	CHASM – Trip to EMPOWER (11:30 am to 4:30 pm)
Wed, Oct 5 th	Deacons’ Meeting – 6:30 pm
Sat, Oct 8 th	Men’s Breakfast – “My Place” – Newtown – 9 am
Sat, Oct 15 th	Diebold Family Cancer Center – Walk Run – at Harrybrooke Park in New Milford – 5K run at 8:30 am and 3K walk – 9 am
Sun, Oct 16 th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · GAP – Trip to CornMaze at Castle Hill Farm – 11:30 am to 1 pm · Mom’s Meet – 11:30 am (Childcare provided) · Blessing of the Animals – 2 pm – Organized and led by CHASM
Tue, Oct 18 th	Session Meeting – 7 pm
Wed, Oct 19 th	Pumpkin Potluck – 5:30 pm to 7 pm
Fri, Oct 21 st	November Newsletter – DEADLINE
Sun, Oct 23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Dorothy Day Sandwich Prep following worship · Registration deadline for this year’s “Rake & Bake” – held on Nov 12
Mon, Oct 24 th	Deadline for submissions for Veterans’ Honor Roll
Sat, Oct 29 th	Parents’ Night Out – 5:30 pm to 7:30 pm

Looking Ahead:

Fall Cleanup: (November 5th – Rain Date – Nov19th)

Please “Save the Date” and support the B&G Committee as we clean up God’s and our Home at Valley.

Each year, Valley seeks the support of its family to come help clean the building and grounds, in preparation for the coming winter. Leaves need to be raked, gardens need to be cleared, windows need to be washed, the kitchen needs to be cleaned – a number of tasks that can be easily completed by many caring hands.

There are two, Valley organized “clean-ups” each year and we can use your help. Please consider volunteering and coming on **November 5th at 9:00 AM** to help us get our home in order for the coming winter.



Session Notes

At our meeting on September, Rev. Adele challenged us to articulate in six words or less why we are here and why Valley is important to us so that we can share this with others.

We continued our discussion of finance and stewardship shifts that we plan to make as a result of the workshop led by Rev. Charles Barton. More detailed information about those shifts will be coming shortly. We welcomed and elected Jon Birdsall as our new Valley Treasurer and offer heartfelt thanks to Jeff Henriques who has faithfully served in this role for the past 8 years. Jon and Jeff will work together over the next few months before Jon takes over fully early in 2017.

David Green and Allison Gianazza have been researching options for online giving and provided a report. Again, more information about this will be forthcoming as plans are formalized. Sandy Zuvanich will continue to publicize and organize zip code groups to enhance Valley's visibility in the many communities we represent. Cheryl Freeston provided an update on the Staff Relations Team (formerly the Personnel Committee). Johanna Johns Jung and Kim Downs have recently joined this team, which also includes Cheryl and Jeff Henriques. Upcoming staff reviews and goal setting will be part of this team's work.

Cheryl Freeston, Clerk of Session

Blessing of the Animals - Sunday, October 16th at 2 PM

Please join us on Sunday, October 16th at 2 PM for the "Blessing of the Animals." Everyone is welcome - so encourage your friends and neighbors to join us for this fun, informal service to celebrate our special animal family members. Following the service, we'll have refreshments for our animal guests and their human friends! Please consider bringing pet food or pet supplies which will be donated to our local animal shelters. Looking forward to seeing you then!!



Betsy Birdsall - for CHASM

Mission

First, a big thank you to all of you who are helping our Refugee family! Whether it is babysitting, tutoring or providing transportation, it is of great help to this young family. It is a wonderful partnership with the Congregational Church of Brookfield.



WORLD FOOD DAY is Sunday, October 16th. To recognize this day, we have purchased a Llama from Heifer International. Name suggestion cards will be distributed on both Oct. 2nd and 9th. Please drop your card in the basket on the mission shelf. The Mission Committee will choose three names, and you will vote by bringing in canned and other non-perishable food items (no glass please). There will be three boxes; simply put your food items in the box that has your favorite name on it. All the items will be taken to one of the local food banks that we support.

THE VETERANS HONOR ROLL TREE is providing some interesting stories. The deadline for submissions is **OCT. 24TH** since it will involve quite a bit of preparation. The Honor Roll will be displayed on November 6th and 13th (the Sundays before and after Veterans Day, Nov. 11th.) Mission Committee will provide the coffee hour. You do not have to provide a photo but if you have one, they will be separately displayed on an adjacent table. If you'd like to help with this project, please speak with Georgiann Sutor, Tammy Thomas or Judy Cunningham.

THE TREE OF HOPE for Ann's Place Festival of Trees will be a separate project, and we have a new tree this year. The colors will be silver and white. To date, we have some 25 organizations that provide hope for the tree. If you have a suggestion for an organization or would like to either help with the decorations or decorating the tree, please speak to Georgiann Sutor, Tammy Thomas or Judy Cunningham. The deadline for suggesting organizations for the tree is **OCT. 15TH**. The deadline for delivery of this tree for Ann's Place Festival of the Trees is **NOV. 1ST**.

UNICEF BOXES: This year we will make a change in the distribution of the boxes. Rather than asking the children of our congregation to trick or treat, we will make the boxes available the first Sunday in October and ask that families put spare change in them during October, and bring them to church the Sunday after Halloween.

ANGEL TREE: The two organizations where we usually provide gifts for families are being contacted. We project two families from each organization this year. The tree will go up for the "angel wishes" information on NOV 15TH with gifts due back by DEC 4TH.

I continue to be thankful for the Mission Committee members and their faithfulness!

Judy Cunningham, chair

Finance & Stewardship

The financial highlight for August was the receipt of \$10,000 of special offerings, which puts us ahead of our full year budgeted amount. This will help offset the loss of income from Phoenix Learning's decision to leave Valley.

We are operating with a projected shortfall for the year, roughly in line with our expectations reflected in the budget.

Jeff Henriques, Treasurer

November
NewsLetter
DEADLINE

Friday, October 21st

Email articles to: valleypresct@gmail.com

Director of Family Ministries



Our *All Church Picnic* and open registration for Sunday School, Confirmation, GAP, and CHASM went smoothly thanks to the many people pulling together to help organize. Thank you to each and every one of you who brought an item to supply our Taco Bar...it was delicious! I would definitely do a Taco Bar again.



Community Service: A huge shout out to all our congregants who volunteered to make dinner for our resident teachers. We made sure that on our teachers' first day of school with children, they came home to a prepared meal. Here are a few quotes about this service:

"The first day always seems long, and you never sleep well the night before, so it was great to have a meal waiting when I came home, especially the nice spread Tammy T. brought over!" Mike

"I was overwhelmed with the generosity of having a meal prepared for me for the first day of school. I was running around like crazy and to have something that we could eat for several days-including dessert-was amazing! I feel so blessed and thankful!" Cory

Support your Team/Church Family:

You may notice an enormous homemade calendar under the mailboxes in the narthex! If you haven't noticed...please take a minute to check it out. This calendar is to organize the many activities our youth partake in outside of the church (or adults if you have activities you'd like supported). This will enable you to see what, where, and when our children are participating in activities and possibly go support them. My kids saw the calendar being prepped in our dining room, and were so excited thinking about WHO from our church might come watch them play/run/perform. I wasn't sure until that very moment that this idea was worth it! :)



Pumpkin Potluck

It's Pumpkin season in its full force. We are not carving our pumpkins just yet, but we are eating them! I don't think there's another vegetable (or fruit?) that is this versatile. I mean from savory dishes to desserts and to home decor and frightening children - this is one amazing food. Please join us for a PUMPKIN POTLUCK on **Wednesday, October 19** from **5:30-7:00**. Please bring your favorite pumpkin dish to share, wear orange, bring a friend or two, and be ready to get to know one another a bit better. Sign up in the narthex.



Saturday, October 29 (5:30pm-7:30pm)

HALLOWEEN IS COMING SOON,
SO GRAB YOUR MASK OR YOUR BROOM.
VALLEY PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH WILL BE YOUR HOST,
COME DRESSED AS YOURSELF, A WITCH OR A GHOST!

THERE WILL BE FOOD, DRINK AND WITCH'S BREW,
NOW ALL WE NEED IS YOU!

JOIN US FOR OUR
PARENTS' NIGHT OUT FUNDRAISER
DONATIONS ACCEPTED, BUT NOT EXPECTED.
100% WILL GO TO OUR CHASM YOUTH

This is an event that usually gets a lot of children as it is a need in our community. We have several parents of young children without family around to step in and relieve or offer a break. Valley would like to offer those hard working parents a night to relax and spend quality time together as a couple. I WILL need help! We will be doing crafts, trick or treating in our amazing Sunday School space, going on a scavenger hunt, eating, and exhausting our charges! This is wonderful opportunity for multigenerational socialization!!! Sign up with me please if you'd like to help and sign up in the narthex if you have a wee one you'd like to participate.

Coming in November: "Traditions Dinner"

Date: TBA



According to Wikipedia....a **tradition** is a belief or behavior passed down within a group or society with symbolic meaning or special significance with origins in the past. During the holidays, we often have certain things we always do, or traditions. Most families probably have traditions that take place throughout the year, but especially the holiday traditions seem to stick in our memories.

Research shows that these traditions are **important** in building strong family relationships between generations. I think building strong relationships at church is important as well. Let's **SHARE** our traditions with our church "family" and bond over similarities or differences. You just might go home with a new tradition for your family. Please contact me, if you have a *tradition* you'd like to talk about and would be willing to "tell your story". **ALL** are encouraged to share (kids too). I'm excited about the possibilities this event offers.

Coming in December:

December 10 "Valley Vendor Fair" (10:00-?) Start spreading the word!

Megan Christian, Director of Family Ministries

Valley's Christian Education



See the light....Be the Light!!!

Be sure your child is registered for Sunday School. There are releases for photographs we need in our files. See Megan Christian for paperwork.

Our first Sunday was awesome! We started the year with a Science themed lesson on "What is Light". The children traveled to different stations to learn

- Why the sky is blue
- How light travels
- That God created LIGHT first and saw that it was GOOD!

Congratulations to Jocelyn and Luca!! Our first students to memorize the 1st bible verse. Great job!

**"Jesus said, "I am the Light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."
*John 8:12***

Sunday School Newsletter October 2016

Memorize the following verse for the end of October...

"Let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify God in Heaven." Matthew 5:16

In our Fall curriculum, *See the light...be the light*, we will see and understand Jesus Christ as the Light of the World. Students will explore what it means to be that light themselves, to let their light shine brightly for others!

**Reminder:
Bring your bible each and every
Sunday kids!!!**



WHAT'S HAPPENING IN YOUR ZIP CODE?

As a member of Valley, I am always amazed at the many communities that comprise our family. Such variety creates opportunities to make others aware of Valley through events that take place in your town. As a member of the session, I am hoping to increase Valley's visibility through local traditions or events in your neighborhood. For example, Newtown has a Labor Day parade every year and next year we WILL have a float in the parade! Recently I've been contacted about a Rake 'n Bake, a 5k run and 3k walk (see following information about these events). My role will be to take the information, open the opportunity to all interested and establish a lead person to follow through with the details associated with the event as well as recruit others. Goal: Increase Valley's visibility and continue to add to our family of faith.



You may contact me via e-mail at paulandsandyzzzzz@sbcglobal.net, you can call our house at [203 426 9749](tel:2034269749), or you can find me on Sunday at church. I look forward to working together to build Valley's future.

Sandy Zuvanich



Join our Valley Team! Saturday, Oct 15

Join a team of Valley runners and walkers on **Saturday, October 15**, and help raise money for the Diebold Family Cancer Center at New Milford Hospital. There is a 5K run and 3K walk. The event takes place at Harrybrooke Park in New Milford, CT. Early bird registration (by October 1) is just \$25.

The 5K race starts at 8:30am (registration at 7:30am) and the 3K walk at 9am (registration at 8am). For more information and/or to register for the walk/run, please visit http://support.wchn.org/site/TR?fr_id=1120&pg=entry. If you plan on joining the Valley team, make sure you do so when you register.

If you do not wish to participate, but would like to make a donation to the cause, you can do so on the website above. Any questions? Contact Valley Team Captain Mandy Birdsall. Thanks!

Another Opportunity to Serve our Community: November 12, 2016

BROOKFIELD, CT — Peter Brady, also known as "The Handy Dandy Handyman," has announced the date for the 17th annual Rake 'n Bake. Scout troops, sports teams, youth groups, church groups and neighborhood teams are encouraged to register for the annual volunteer event in which the community helps those who can't rake their yards or fix their homes due to health or other limitations.

Each year, hundreds of volunteers come out to the fun-filled community event which includes repairing homes and/or raking the lawns of people in need followed by hot dogs at Brookfield High School.



If you or someone you know need help with raking your lawn since you may not be able to do it physically or financially, please contact PeterBrady@hdhm.org.

We are planning on forming a VPC Team to support this effort. We will provide more information on the specifics as we get them.

Registrations for the event will close at midnight on Nov. 4, 2016 to allow organizers to form the teams and do the many last minutes tasks to ensure a smooth transition into the actual Nov. 12 event. They suggest we get our registration in earlier so, if you can help, please sign up by **October 23rd**. There will be a signup sheet in the Narthex starting in October.

If you have any questions, please contact Jim Munn.



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

VALLEY PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

**21 West Whisconier Road
Brookfield, CT 06804
Telephone: (203) 775-2624**

**Pastor: The Rev. Adele Crawford
Director of Music: Max Vladimiroff
Director of Family Ministries: Megan Christian
Church Office Admin: Terri Flanagan
Pastor Emerita: The Rev. Ann Beams**

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

**ADULT STUDY, 9:00 A.M.
and
CHURCH SCHOOL 10:20 AM**

OCTOBER

