

Shepherd's Voice

September 2021



Thank You !

Dear Shepherd of the Valley Family,

Thank you for helping us go to church camp at Mingus Mountain! It was our first camp experience and week away from home.

We had such a great time. We learned archery and we loved trying to hit the big targets. Cyril enjoyed playing a game called disk golf and Liam really liked to play gaga ball.

During the day we prayed at the ramada, and we ate meals together at the cafeteria.

We also got to go on a zip line for the first time!

Every day we got to learn new Bible lessons and every night we went to the building called The Point where we would worship together.

We are so thankful for all of your help in getting us to this camp. We had so much fun and couldn't have gone without you. We love you so much and our glad you're our church family.

Sincerely,

Cyril & Liam Bratt

Happy Birthday

Jackson McDonald 9/1
Vonnie Miller 9/5
Joyce Seaver 9/15
Vernon Jackson 9/22

Trina Smith 9/1
Loland Hayes 9/6
Marilyn Moore 9/15
Lilly Belle Lange 9/25

Lori Olson 9/3
Noah Hawkins 9/14
Mavis Jenkins 9/18

Happy Anniversary

Karen and Al Bajalis 9/14

Janice and Larry Coleman 9/28



News Item

Our church may have the opportunity to rent space on Friday evenings to an Independent Christian Fellowship congregation. The congregation of (East) Indian families has grown the past 10 years to about 20 families. After 18 months of online services, they are looking to return to in person worship and fellowship. The Friday service would be at 8 pm, followed by a fellowship time and meal for approximately 30 people in Fellowship Hall. On holidays (Christmas and Easter) attendance may be 50! While open to everyone, they see their primary mission as outreach to other Indian families that have not heard the Good News of Jesus.

Our District Superintendent Javier Olivares, along with myself and a few Board members have viewed some of the online services to ensure the Bible teachings are in alignment with the Methodist doctrine. At a meeting August 12th, their congregation leaders and oversight pastor, Brian Gandy, were given a tour of the campus, received information on our room use rules, insurance requirements, pricing, and current Covid 19 policies. Sanctuary use for the worship time, with masks and social distancing, might be considered. If you have any questions or concerns about the possibility of this rental, please contact me! We want to make sure all of us have concerns addressed before any decisions need to be made.

Yours in Christ,

Pastor Janet Culbertson

	July2021	Jan-July2021
Expense	\$6,761.59	\$50,841.16
Income	\$19,527.96	\$60,869.19
Total	\$12,766.37	\$10,028.03



Comment: Higher income in July due to a one-time donation by a church member.
Budget thermometer will be updated quarterly.

“I’m A Theologian???”

Dear Friends,

I’ve started another Course of Study class, Theological Heritage 1. I usually try to write something a little more lighthearted for our newsletter, but this month I’ve modified one of my papers, so it is very academic. I hope you enjoy this basic introduction to theology and how we might apply it as we look toward the future.

“Truly I tell you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will never enter it” (Luke 18:17). Theology begins with faith. Anyone who has ever asked the existential questions: Why am I here? Is there a God? What happens when someone dies? is a theologian. (Grenz and Olson p. 13). Christian theology acknowledges that, yes, there is a God and seeks to understand how we are to respond. This faith is a matter of the heart. All people, even children or persons with low cognitive abilities can have faith. It is that faith that fills us with the desire to know more about who God is and how to relate to God. Twelfth century monk, Anselm of Canterbury is credited with defining theology as “faith seeking understanding.”

It is because one loves God and believes in their heart, that they seek to understand as much as possible with their mind. (Gonzalez and Maldonado Perez pp.17-18).

There is a range of theological reflection from “folk theology” to “academic theology.” On one end of the spectrum, folk theology champions blind faith and rejects any critical reflection. On the other end is academic theology that is highly contemplative and is largely disconnected from the real world. Grenz and Olson chart and define these theological reflections. (pp. 28-35). These two extremes are of little value, but the three reflections in between can be useful. “Lay theology” is a quantum leap up from folk theology. “Lay theology” gives ordinary Christians a chance to examine both their hearts and minds in a serious attempt to understand who God is and how to respond. This is where most Christians are on the spectrum.

“Ministerial theology” involves ministers and lay leaders who engage in further study and biblical interpretation. “Professional theologians” are those whose vocation is to critically examine texts. They serve and teach lay and ministerial theologians in occupations such as author and professor.

We are all theologians somewhere on that spectrum. I’ve determined that I am reflecting close to the “ministerial theology” level, but I revert back to “lay theology” at times.

According to Gonzalez and Maldonado Perez, the purposes of theology can be understood in many ways. (pp. 10-18). Theology can help to explain reality, help to organize Christian doctrine, help to defend the faith, and provide a pathway for new believers. Perhaps it is a symptom of the time and place in which I live and minister, that leads me to focus on how I believe we should use theology as a “critique of the life and proclamation of the church.”

(Gonzalez and Maldonado Perez p.15).

I am a proponent of this type of analysis and critique. I believe we as United Methodists need to take a theological assessment of our churches so that we can identify areas where we are not proclaiming the gospel and living into our mission. Then, we can take steps to correct our shortcomings. We also need to look at theology through the lens of human reality. With Jesus as our example, we need to meet people where they are. The conflicts in our denomination, the pandemic, racism, political unrest at home, and abroad, have shaken our foundation. Just as



Karl Barth proposed a critique of the life of the church in the 20th century as the Nazis came to power (Gonzalez and Maldonado Perez p.16), we would be wise to conduct such a critique today. The church in general, must hold onto a worldly perspective.

Through my Course of Study classes and my weekly sermon preparation and preaching, I am working out my own theology as I read, study, reflect and write. I'm learning that theology must be lived in community. It is not enough for the pastor to "do" theology. Everyone is a theologian. It is my job to teach people and to foster spiritual growth. I have been preaching recently from Ephesians about building up the body and becoming a family of faith and being obedient to God's word. I'm preparing to lead the church through an assessment and visioning.

Blessings. Pastor Janet.

Life Line Screening

Life Line Screening is coming to our community for a one-day Preventive Healthcare Screening.

They go beyond regular checkups to look inside your arteries for signs of plaque build-up before you have symptoms.

**Shepherd of the Valley United Methodist Church
will host this event on
Monday, November 1, 2021**

Pre-registration is required!

Please call toll free **888-814-0416 to register** for your screening and receive a \$10 discount or visit www.LifeLineScreening.com/community-partners.

The screening is **not** covered by Medicare. Written results are sent to you within 21 days.

5 Important Screenings for \$149, (\$139 with community partner discount) a savings of \$181

-  Carotid Artery Screening (Plaque)
-  Heart Rhythm Screening (Atrial Fibrillation)
-  Abdominal Aortic Aneurysm Screening
-  Peripheral Arterial Disease Screening (PAD)
-  Osteoporosis Risk Assessment

Martha's Circle Meeting Schedule

Meetings are on Thursdays at 10:30 in Room 1.

Sept. 9 th	Sept. 23 rd	Oct. 7 th	Oct. 21 st	Nov. 4 th	Nov. 18 th	Dec. 9 th
Craft & Bake Sale on Sunday Dec. 12 th						
Dec. 16 th	Jan. 6 th	Jan. 20 th	Feb. 3 rd	Feb. 17 th	Mar. 3 rd	Mar. 17 th Apr. 7 th
Craft & Bake Sale on Sunday Apr. 10 th						
Apr. 14 th	Apr. 28 th	May 14 th season end luncheon at Virginia's				

NOTE: This is a tentative schedule, dates may change as circumstances unfold.

September 2021

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
29 Worship 10:30 am Worship On-Line Any Time	30	31	1 Office closed 1:30 pm - Prayer Group	2 12-4pm Office hours 8:00 pm Men's AA, FH	3 12-4pm Office hours 6pm Friday Fun Night	4
5 Worship 10:30 am Worship On-Line Any Time 12:30pm Nominations meeting	6	7	8 12-4pm Office hours 1:30 pm - Prayer Group	9 10:30am Martha's Circle 12-4pm Office hours 8:00 pm Men's AA, FH	10	11
12 Worship 10:30 am Worship On-Line Any Time	13	14	15 12-4pm Office hours 1:30 pm - Prayer Group	16 12-4pm Office hours 8:00 pm Men's AA, FH	17	18
19 Worship 10:30 am Worship On-Line Any Time	20	21	22 12-4pm Office hours 1:30 pm - Prayer Group, zoom	23 10:30am Martha's Circle 12-4pm Office hours 8:00 pm Men's AA, FH	24	25
26 Worship 10:30 am Worship On-Line Any Time	27	28	29 12-4 Office hours 1:30 pm - Prayer Group	30 12-4pm Office hours 8:00 pm Men's AA, FH	1	2
3	4	NOTES	<p>Masking and Social Distancing are required for any in-person event of 10 or more. We hope to see YOU soon!</p>			

Shepherd of the Valley UMC

3039 W. Cactus Rd. Phoenix AZ 85029

602-942-9288

Pastor Janet Culbertson

sov@sovumc.phxcoxmail.com

www.shepherdofthevalleyphoenix.org

Bishop Robert Hoshibata,
residing UMC

Rev. Javier Olivares,
District Superintendent