



The Valley Voice

VALLEY CHRISTIAN CHURCH
(DISCIPLES OF CHRIST)

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NO. 1

COFFEE AND A STORY

2021 is only a few days old, but there is already so much newness here among us! We have new life to give thanks to God for, in the form of Whitney and Tim’s newborn son James, as well as the potential for widespread vaccinations against covid-19 that we have been waiting for, and that will finally permit us to safely restart in-person worship after many months of worshipping together on Zoom.

We have already taken on a lot of newness together in 2020—Valley is a new congregation to me, and I am a new minister to Valley, and even though I have been your minister for a few months now, I know that I may still represent an unknown quantity to you simply because of our inability to have many of the in-person events that would traditionally allow you to get to know me and my family better. My fervent hope is that these circumstances begin to change as 2021 progresses.

Because we each have experienced so much newness, I would invite you to be gentle with yourselves with any New Year’s resolutions you may be making for yourselves. I do not at all seek to temper anyone’s ambitions here, but only to lessen anyone’s feeling of obligation to try on some massive lifestyle change simply because the culture around this point of our calendar dictates that we should.

Rather, I would invite you to be steadfast—in your measures to keep yourselves and those around you safe, in your love for one another and for yourselves, and most of all in your faith in God, who is made known to us through Jesus Christ. I will be preaching on His baptism this upcoming Sunday, followed by a special Martin Luther King Jr. weekend message and then Laity Sunday, and it is my prayer that the ways in which we bring the Word to you this January will aid you in that goal.

As we exit the Christmas season and begin to look ahead to our first Lent and Easter together, may that steadfastness see us through whatever 2021 may have on tap for each of us, and may God watch over and bless each step of that journey we take together. It is a blessing to walk into 2021 as your minister.

Christ’s and yours, Pastor Eric

UPDATED OFFICE HOURS

Going into 2021, I am adjusting my stated office hours to add a couple more hours, which will better reflect what our week-to-week rhythm as pastor and congregation has grown into. My new office hours are Monday – Thursday, 9:30 am – noon, Wednesday and Thursday afternoons will be specifically blocked for preaching and teaching preparation, and Friday and Saturday will continue to be my days off. As ever, these

will not be the only hours I am at the church office, and there may be circumstances that take me away from scheduled office hours on a given day. But you will most consistently find me at the church office on those mornings if you need to call and ask me if my refrigerator is running! ~Pastor Eric

LIBRARY NEWS

There are several new books available on the desk in our library including:

- Jesus vs. Caesar - For People Serving the Wrong God, Joerg Rieger
- Holy Envy, Finding God in the Faith of Others, Barbara Brown Taylor
- Rediscover Jesus, An Invitation, Matthew Kelly
- Becoming a Just Church, Cultivating Communities of God’s Shalom, Adam Gustine
- Forgiveness, Finding Peace Through Letting Go, Adam Hamilton
- Fear of the Other, No Fear in Love, William Willimon

Many other good books are available on the shelves. To check out a book, please complete an entry on the yellow sheet located on the desk for each book you want. Happy Reading!

2021 VALLEY CHRISTIAN CHURCH OFFICERS

The officers were elected at the Congregational Meeting of December 13, 2020

Moderator – Andrea Clark

Vice-Moderator – John Neville

Secretary – Carol Speed

Treasurer – Terry Nunnelly

Assistant Treasurer – Peggi Zinser

Financial Secretary – Ginny Guindon

Assistant Financial Secretary – Sarah Draper

Trustee – Stewart Draper

Elders

Clarence Sellers

Ed Guindon

John Gregory

Ted Stuckenschneider

Deacons

Ginny Guindon

Carol Speed

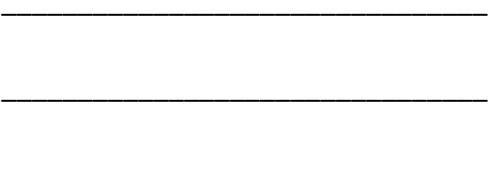
Carolyn Nunnelly

Terry Nunnelly

Linda Reeves

Sara Simon

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BUILDING VALLEY MACEDONIA HISTORY – PART ONE

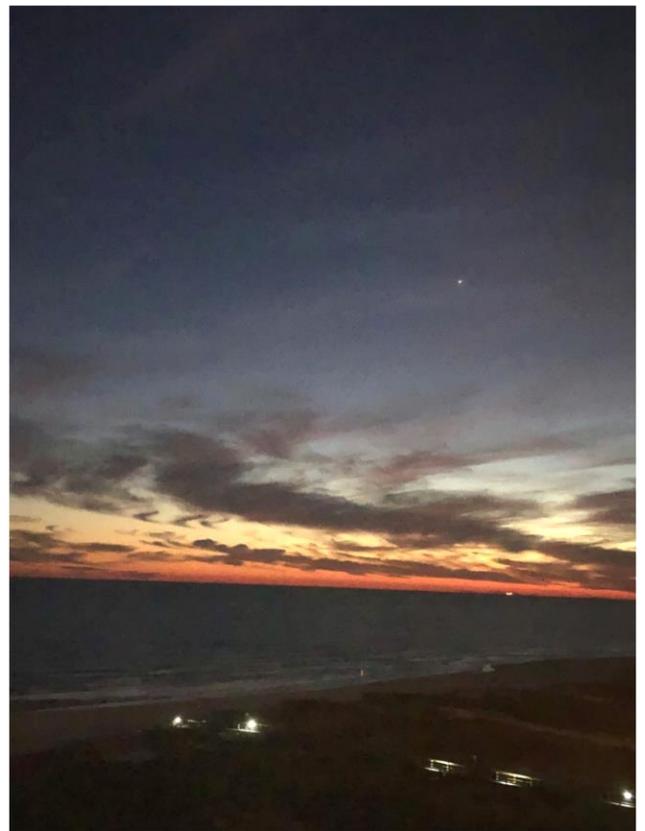
In 1993 Rev. Steve Goss, a member of Valley and Chaplain at Carraway Hospital, suggested to our Membership Department that Valley, along with Macedonia Christian Church, work together in some kind of joint activity designed to demonstrate positive race relations. The Department readily accepted his suggestion and was joined in support of this project by Rev. Rufus Lewis, pastor of Macedonia Christian Church, and Rev. Jim Clifford, pastor of Valley Christian Church. At that point we had no specific recommendation in mind, only that we wanted to form a joint ministry of the two churches to show to the community that people of different races could work together to demonstrate the love of Christ.

Our first joint meeting was purposely held at a neutral location, Carraway Hospital, and several of our early meetings continued to be held at neutral places. Attending this first meeting from Macedonia were Rufus Lewis, Pastor, Robert and Ruby Wilkes; attending from Valley were Jim Clifford, Pastor, Steve Goss, Gloria Hill and Lola Kiser. Lay members of this group, eventually named Building Valley Macedonia, were designated as a Steering Committee, with co-chairs, one from each church. Our first meeting was difficult because of anxiety, confusion about goals, misunderstandings, unfamiliarity with each other and with our different cultures. We were determined, however, to demonstrate to the community that such a project could succeed. One goal we have faithfully fulfilled was to be certain that the two churches were equal partners in every activity and project. When a meeting was held at Valley, a member from Macedonia presided and vice versa. This first meeting concluded with lunch together, plans for future meetings and a positive feeling that we understood each other much better and would succeed with God's help.

TO BE CONTINUED... Lola Kiser

CONGRATULATIONS TO TIM AND WHITNEY DEVINE

James Madison Devine was born on January 1, 2021



STAR OF WONDER 2020

Another Star of Wonder? On Tuesday, December 21, 2020 there was another star that appeared in the night sky. Planets Jupiter and Saturn appeared to the eyes on earth that they were aligned to shine as one, creating the illusion that it was one star shining brightly in the sky. However, as it was in Bethlehem when Jesus was born and the Shepherds saw a great light it was Venus and Jupiter. Both planets then and now were millions of miles apart and again appeared to be shining as one star. What a spectacular wonder to see what the shepherds saw over 2000 years ago, reminding us to also follow the star! Peggi Zinser

LIFE IN THE VALLEY

- John Neville's niece Caroline, who was pregnant and had premature labor has now safely had her baby girl, Mary. Mother and baby are doing fine.
- Andrea Clark's sister Belinda Dorrance and her husband have had COVID but Belinda has returned to work and her sister's husband is still recovering at home.
- Marilyn Ireland's daughter and son-in-law, Stephanie and Wesley Collins are expecting a baby on July 15, 2021. Evangeline will have a baby sister.
- Ginny expressed a joy that the Atcheson's created a 2021 calendar using pictures of the stain-glass windows in the Sanctuary. There are still some copies available.
- Ted Stuckenschneider is joyful that 2021 is here and is grateful for 2020 because it taught him a lot even though he is glad 2020 is over.
- Naaman Fatkins is grateful that the past year has been one of his best years and he had a very enriching experience this Christmas.
- Please call or email the office with your prayer concerns, joys or reports to include in "Life In The Valley".

