



## Meneilly Visiting Scholar Lisa Sharon Harper March 5 & 6

The Meneilly Visiting Scholar Committee has announced that Lisa Sharon Harper will be our 2021 Visiting Scholar. Her presentations on "Post Election Faith and Politics" will be offered in a Zoom webinar starting at 7 p.m. Friday, March 5, and 9 a.m. Saturday, March 6. There is no cost to participate.

One of Lisa Sharon Harper's cherished beliefs is "Everything wrong really can be made right." In fact, this is the subtitle of her book, "The Very Good Gospel" (2016). With a forward by Walter Brueggemann, the book reminds us that God calls us to recognize and cultivate God's image in all of creation—to restore every broken relationship in our world, our communities, and our own lives.

Ms. Harper's timely topic, "Post Election Faith and Politics," will consist of three presentations: "Four Words That Change Everything;" "The Call to Beloved Community," and "How to Repair What Race Broke in the World." This program will be interactive and presented online, with the same Friday night and Saturday morning format of previous programs.

Dedicated to bridging divides and building the beloved community, Ms. Harper is founder and president of FreedomRoad.us, a consulting group seeking to foster common understanding and commitment. She is a fervent advocate of Shalom—that every person is made in the image of God and to diminish the value and ability of any person is to diminish the image of God.

Ms. Harper holds a Master's Degree in Human Rights from Columbia University. She is a columnist at Sojourners Magazine and an Auburn Theological Seminary Senior Fellow. Previously she served as chief church engagement officer for Sojourners, and is an author, activist, speaker, blogger and podcaster. In addition to "The Very Good Gospel," Ms. Harper co-authored: "Evangelical Does Not Equal Republican...or Democrat" (2008), "Left, Right & Christ: Evangelical Faith in Politics" (2011); "Forgive Us: Confessions of a Compromised Faith" (2014), and contributed to "Still Evangelical? Insiders Reconsider Political, Social, and Theological Meaning" (2018). Her newest book, "Fortune: My Journey to Understand How Race Broke My Family and the World—and How to Repair It All," is scheduled for release in December 2021.

More details to come on how to watch her lectures on [www.villagepres.org/visiting-scholar](http://www.villagepres.org/visiting-scholar). Email [laura.hobbs@villagepres.org](mailto:laura.hobbs@villagepres.org) for more information.



### Session Update

At the Jan. 4 Session meeting held by Zoom, Rev. Tom Are outlined the budget process for this year. A Budget Task Force would meet on Jan. 20. Session members would be asked to approve the 2021 budget at its Feb. 1 meeting. The budget will be shared with the congregation by mail.

Rev. Are told Session that we are looking for people to serve on an Associate Pastor Nominating Committee to begin the search for a new site pastor at Village on Antioch (VOA). The appointment of the APNC requires a congregational vote, which will be conducted by mail-in ballot. Meanwhile, a job description is in development for an interim site pastor at VOA.

In anticipation of the church reopening sometime in 2021, Session will convene a lay person/staff task force (which will include medical professionals) to guide us on when and how to reopen. At the time the Good News went to print (Jan. 26), the Session's suspension of on-site worship was set to expire after Jan. 31, 2021. Session will vote on whether to extend on-site worship suspension at its Feb. 1 meeting. Session has been reassessing the suspension of on-site worship in three-month increments. Decisions are based on COVID infection rates in Johnson County.

MISSION

**Village Church Responds to Greater Community Food Needs Due to COVID**

Village Church Food Pantry Director Susan Webb gives us an update on 2020: "We at the Village Food Pantry are looking forward to the New Year, knowing that we met the challenges of 2020 in our mission work. Since June, we have been blessed to offer full grocery carts to each household using outdoor curbside distribution. Through snow, rain and summer heat, we plan to continue offering this assistance in 2021.

After closing last spring for COVID-19, we reorganized and were able to serve 12,338 individuals in 2020. The number of children we served on a weekly basis increased by 40% since last January and the number of seniors receiving delivered food increased by 49%. We shared food with other pantries in our community, including 12,370 pounds given to the Village on Antioch pop-up pantry. In 2020, we distributed 186.7 tons of food! We are grateful to Trader Joe's, Ranchmart Price Chopper and Harvesters for providing the bulk of our inventory through donations and purchases.



Unfortunately, to allow for 6 feet social distancing, we had to greatly reduce the total number of volunteers participating. This much smaller, but hearty crew of volunteers worked 9,566 hours last year.

In 2021, we will continue with curbside distribution, deliveries to low-income seniors and distributions to other pantries. We look forward to the day when we welcome back ALL our volunteers, reopen the Clothes Closet and return to full service inside the building.

Thank you to all who supported this mission in many ways during a difficult year. We look forward to a brighter future this year!"

**An Update on the Village on Antioch Pop-Up Food Pantry from Coordinator Laura Patton**

When the COVID-19 pandemic forced a community-wide shut-down last March, the Village on Antioch community opened a pop-up food pantry in our Fellowship Hall. In late spring, we packed bags for Olathe School District children who needed food support during the weekends – between the days they were receiving meals from school.

By summer, we were ready to begin Community Food Distributions. Between June 3 and Dec. 30, we fed about 1,116 families. The guests who most often visit our distributions live in zip codes 66062 (east Olathe), 66102 (Wyandotte Co), 66223 (Overland Park–Blue Valley School District), and 66212 (Overland Park–Shawnee Mission School District). Three of our guests have come to every distribution. On average, our guests have come to three distributions.



The VOA Coordinating Council has committed to continuing food distributions through May 2021. Our food pantry earned a \$16,000 CARES Act grant via Johnson County Government. This money will help us add gift cards to our food packages so that our guests can buy produce, dairy, eggs and meat that we are not able to provide. Although we are excited about this opportunity, we are also hopeful that the health and economic vitality of our KC community will be restored in 2021. We started our pop-up food pantry as a stop-gap measure; we would like to no longer be needed in better days ahead.

## Hillcrest Transitional Housing Apartment Linen Drive

Village Church is sponsoring a linen drive for our Village sponsored Hillcrest Transitional Housing apartment. Hillcrest provides temporary housing for homeless families, helping them become self-supporting and self-reliant in just 90 days. We need the following NEW items:

- Bed sheets/pillowcases/mattress pads: full size
- Comforters (machine washable): full size in blue shades including navy and gray shades including charcoal
- Basic standard pillows
- Bath towels (bath, hand, wash): blue shades including navy and gray shades including charcoal
- Kitchen towels, dish cloths, hotpads

Drop off your donations in the gray bins at the south entrance of Village Church between Feb. 7 and 21. Questions? Contact Deborah White in the Mission Office at 913-671-2369 or [deborah.white@villagepres.org](mailto:deborah.white@villagepres.org).

## Do You Dig Gardening?

Spring is just around the corner and it's time to start thinking about the Village Community Garden at 99th and Mission Road. Village is looking for volunteers to help plant, weed, water and harvest during 2021.

Depending upon the weather, we hope to plant some of our cooler weather crops such as spinach and lettuce beginning in March. Garden produce is donated to the Village Food Pantry for our clients.

If you would like to join the community garden team, please call Deborah White in the Mission Office at 913-671-2369 or email [deborah.white@villagepres.org](mailto:deborah.white@villagepres.org). We will then contact you as we get closer to the planting season with a sign up list of times to help.

## Village Church Mission Sewing Churns Out More Than 6,399 Items in 2020

Despite the pandemic closing down the Mission Sewing room at Village Church, the team continued its work from their machines at home during COVID. As a result, 5,714 volunteer hours resulted in more than 7,000 items donated to area nonprofits.

Among the many items created, the most prolific donation was facemasks. After the church closed in mid-March, Mission Sewing groups jumped into action with home sewing in April and May to produce masks to help fight the coronavirus. By the end of June, the Tuesday group had made and distributed 1,283 face coverings. An additional 144 were made for Village Church staff. The Thursday group made 154 for church and childcare staff, bringing the total to over 1,500. At 30 minutes per mask, volunteers spent an estimated 750 hours just on these face coverings.

Then the call came from Southminster Church to help with masks for the VA. With this donation, Village Sewing conservatively estimated volunteers made over 2,000 masks in total... not including masks that others quietly made on their own and distributed until they became available on commercial markets.

In addition to making facemasks, Mission Sewing knitted and crocheted winter hats, mittens, afghans and receiving blankets, completed 44 robes for youth in Avenue of Life's Unaccompanied Homeless Youth House and constructed Dream Bags for foster children in the Kansas Department for Children and Families system.

"The numbers this year do not reflect the story," shares Cheryl Brady, one of the coordinators of Mission Sewing. "We continue to function from home studios, bound by a love of sewing and a desire to be of service to those in need of our skills and products. For many in the group, having something to keep hands and minds occupied has indeed been a blessing."

If you are interested in learning more about how you could volunteer for Mission Sewing, contact Cheryl Brady at [cba50@mindspring.com](mailto:cba50@mindspring.com).

### **A Holy Reset: Rest, Receive, Rejoice Sunday, Feb. 7 (or date of your choosing)**

Join your Village Church family for an all-church retreat—from the comfort of your own home. You are invited to set aside Sunday, Feb. 7, as your household's Holy Reset day. (Or set aside part of the day, or another day that works for you.)

Led by Pastor Sally and Pastor Melanie, Sunday morning worship will focus on the Sabbath theme of holy rest. Jesus invites us, "come to me all you who are weary" (Matthew 11:28). God rested on the seventh day of creation. God even included rest in the Ten Commandments! Yet why is rest so hard for us? We will explore ways to find our rest physically and spiritually in these challenging times.

Find everything you need for the Holy Reset at [www.villagepres.org/holyreset2021](http://www.villagepres.org/holyreset2021). A simple booklet has been prepared for you, as well as sacred music playlists, videos from your pastors, readings and more. Give yourself the gift of a Holy Reset.

### **Rev. Dr. Rodger Nishioka Concludes "2020 Was My Teacher" Sermon Series**

On Sunday, Feb. 14, Rev. Dr. Rodger Nishioka will be preaching on "When God is Absent." For many of us, there were moments in 2020 when it seemed as if God was absent. That is exactly what Job wondered. Facing the loss of his family, friends, home, livelihood and honor, he asks why God has abandoned him and is absent. Together, we will explore what we do when it feels like God is no longer with us.

### **Lenten Sermon Series: The World Turned Upside Down With Rev. Tom Are - Feb. 21-April 4**

The Beatitudes launch the teaching of Jesus that describes the life that God intends, that God blesses and that God creates for us. The Beatitudes describe the blessed life. But there is little question that the blessed life depicted in the Beatitudes stands in tension with the pursuits of life defined by both ancient and modern cultures. And yet, blessed are you.

### **Ash Wednesday, Feb. 17**

Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of our Lenten journey to Easter Sunday. On Ash Wednesday, ashes that come from the burning of the palms used in the previous year's Palm Sunday celebration are imposed on the forehead or hand to remind us that not only our souls, but our bodies belong to God.

Village on Antioch will once again offer drive-thru Ash-N-Dash from 7-8 a.m. and noon-1 p.m. on Wednesday, Feb. 17. Our evening Ash Wednesday worship service will be livestreamed at [villagepres.org/online](http://villagepres.org/online) at 7 p.m. on Feb. 17.

Rev. Hallie Hottle will be preaching.

### **Deepen Your Faith and Enhance Your Lenten Journey with Our Daily Video Devotionals**

Beginning on Ash Wednesday and continuing daily through Lent up to Easter Sunday, we will offer the popular daily video devotionals. Each 2-3 minute video will focus on a scripture passage and will be led by one of our pastors, staff members or other congregational leaders. Sign up to receive these by email at [villagepres.org/subscribe](http://villagepres.org/subscribe). We'll also be posting them on our Facebook pages @VillagePres and @VillageAntioch and on our website at [www.villagepres.org/dailydevotionals2021](http://www.villagepres.org/dailydevotionals2021).



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### Second Saturday Family Fun

From 9-10 a.m. Saturday, Feb. 13, drive-thru Village on Mission's south parking lot for a "Shrove Tuesday/Valentine's Party in a bag." We will include a heart-shaped cookie cutter, pancake mix and a game idea. We will also be collecting new linens for our Village Church Hillcrest Transitional Housing apartment as our service project for February.

Find more info about the specific linens needed at [www.villagepres.org/hillcrest-transitional-housing](http://www.villagepres.org/hillcrest-transitional-housing). Thank you!



### Village Kids Day Out Program Enrollment Begins Feb. 16

We look forward to telling you all about this fun program for children ages 2-3 yrs., (2 yrs. by Dec. 1, 2021). Kids Day Out is offered from 9:30 a.m. -2:30 p.m. on Thursdays, September thru May.

Enrollment for the 2021/22 school year begins Tuesday, Feb. 16, for Village Church members, KDO Alumni siblings and Village Preschool families. Enrollment for community members begins Monday, Feb. 22. For registration forms and more information, visit [www.villagepres.org/school-year-programs](http://www.villagepres.org/school-year-programs).

Questions? Contact Marjean at 913-671-2322 or Pam at 913-671-2352.

## FEBRUARY CALENDAR OF EVENTS

**Feb. 11** – 12:15-12:45 p.m. **Second Thursday Online Recital** with Rachel Priest, soprano.

**Feb. 11-25** – 6:30-8 p.m. Thursdays **Village U Class on Zoom: Raymond Carter and Katherine Mansfield**. Register at [www.villagepres.org/village-u-community-classes](http://www.villagepres.org/village-u-community-classes)

**Feb. 13** – 9-10 a.m. **Second Saturday Family: Drive-Thru Valentine's Day Kit** - Village on Mission south parking lot

**Feb. 16** – 8 a.m. **Village on Mission Preschool enrollment** opens; 7 p.m. **Taizé Online**

**Feb. 16-March 9** – 7:30-8:30 p.m. Tuesdays, **Jazz in the Village with jazz musician Stan Kessler on Zoom**. Have you always wanted to learn more about jazz? Stan Kessler will teach you more about this vibrant genre of music. Stan welcomes people of all backgrounds to join him in learning about, listening to and discussing great jazz. Get more information and learn how to participate in the class at [www.villagepres.org/music-upcoming-events](http://www.villagepres.org/music-upcoming-events).

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## THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONTINUED SUPPORT

Everything we do is financed by your giving and an annual grant from the Endowment Trust. We are fortunate to have an Endowment, however, the sustainable annual contribution from the Endowment Trust is not sufficient to fund our activity levels – giving by every member is essential.

It's necessary to keep current with our responsibilities, support our staff during this pandemic, and find ways to be generous even though we're not physically together. We will continue to serve our congregation, community and international partners and your gifts will make that possible. Knowing that our income is impacted during the pandemic, we invite those with extra resources to consider making a special gift.



## ONLINE WORSHIP SCHEDULE

8, 9:30 and 11 a.m. Sundays  
[villagepres.org/online](http://villagepres.org/online)

The Gathering Music and Prayers  
5 p.m. Sundays  
[vpcthegathering.org](http://vpcthegathering.org)

**Call In** to hear the  
9:30 a.m. worship service  
**913-203-1301**

**Listen to Worship on 1660 AM**  
8 a.m. Sundays - a week-delayed  
radio broadcast of the  
morning worship service

## IN MEMORY

Norma Boyer  
Jean Haynes  
Judy (Schnacke) Hodes  
Bob Mullett  
Julia Thornton