
UPCOMING EVENTS

We hope you will join us for the special events planned for the months ahead that are highlighted below. Let the joy of this season inspire you to begin a time of discovery and learning this coming year.

Winter Fest

Get rid of the winter “blahs” on January 29, 4:00–6:00 p.m. at the Village Church Winter Fest! There will be food and fun games and activities for all ages. For more information on this all-church event, contact Community Life, 913.671.2334.

Visiting Scholar: Brian McLaren

Presbyterian Women of Village Church welcome author, activist and public theologian Brian McLaren as the next Visiting Scholar on Friday, March 9, and Saturday, March 10. He will speak on “A New Kind of Christianity.” McLaren’s book by the same title has become one of the pivotal texts for what is increasingly called “Emergence Christianity.” For more information and to register, visit villagepres.org, and click on the Quick Link labeled “Visiting Scholar.”

Branching Out — A Small Group Ministry for Young Adults

Village Church believes in the power of a small group — a place where you can know and be known without the name tags, a community of friends in which you can explore your faith. We have small groups for young singles and young married couples, both with or without children. This winter, Pastor Jarrett McLaughlin will lead a study based on Rob Bell’s book *Love Wins* with help from Pastors Tom Are and Meg Peery McLaughlin. Branching Out small groups meet every other week for a total of four meetings, beginning in February (Dates TBA). For more information or to join a “Branching Out” small group, contact Jarrett McLaughlin, 913.671.2328 or jarrett.mclaughlin@villagepres.org.

Already Time to Register Your Children for Summer

Village Church has many opportunities for your children to grow with us this summer. Our summer brochure of options will be available in mid-February and will include Vacation Bible School, field trips, Kids’ Day Out, day camp, music camp, Creations by Kids summer camp (six weeks of morning and afternoon sessions), plus summer day care at the Village Church Child and Family Development Center. Call the Children’s Ministry Office, 913.671.2359, to receive this mailing. Registration for members is February 27, 8:00 a.m.–12 :00 p.m., and community registration is March 5, 8:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m.

For more information about these and other programs at Village Church, visit villagepres.org, or call 913.262.4200.



CHRISTMAS DAY

December 25, 2011 • 9:30 a.m.

ABOUT TODAY’S SERVICE

It was a great thing for God to make the creature, but not so great as for the Creator to become a creature.

—Jonathan Edwards, *History of Redemption*

Christmas Sunday

Prelude

A Medley of Carols
Mark Ball, organist

Call to Worship

And the Word became flesh. It is a Word like no other word:

It is a Word of grace, a Word of hope and life.

It is a Word that speaks the very heart of God.

The Word full of grace and truth became flesh.

The Word like no other word became flesh like all flesh

and dwelt among us.

And dwells among us.

The Word came down to dwell with us

and lifts us that we may dwell with God.

O come, let us adore him.

Candle Lighting

Sarah Kimsey, Edith Showalter (9:30)

* Hymn, No. 22

Angels From the Realms of Glory
tune: REGENT SQUARE

* Unison Prayer

Rev. Dwight Tawney

**Most gracious God,
surely the angels are singing,
for Christ is born.**

**he is born of woman, as is every child,
yet, born of your power as was no other child.**

**Surely the angels are still singing,
for the light shines in the darkness
and joy is proclaimed to all people,
and there is good news for all your children.**

UPCOMING SERMON SERIES

The Church: We Are Not What We Used to Be: New Life in the Wilderness

Change. It is all around us and taking place a breakneck speed. We are in the midst of a communication revolution that rivals the days following the invention of the printing press. Global religions that once lived only in foreign lands now spot not only major cities but small towns in America. The mainline protestant church, that once held a place of moral suasion in the country, has forfeited the moral authority and often seems to stand on the sidelines. Some are saying that religious life is experiencing change unlike anything we have known since the Reformation.

What does it mean to be the church in our time and in our context?

What are the most important things Christians need to do?

What does the world need most from us now?

Come and find out beginning next Sunday, January 1, as Rev. Tom Are begins a new sermon series, The Church: We Are Not What We Used to Be: New Life in the Wilderness.

Village University School of Theology Spring 2012

The spring 2012 School of Theology course, The Church Ain't What It Used to Be: Confessions From a Pastor, will be taught by Rev. Tom Are, Jr., on Tuesdays, February 7 and 21, March 6 and 20, April 3 and 17 and May 1 and 15, 6:30–8:00 p.m. in Room 124. Change in how we practice our faith is a constant; however, some suggest that American Protestantism is facing more change than we have seen since the protestant reformation 500 years ago. What is contributing to the change, and more importantly, what is the way forward? What will Christianity look like in 20 years? The answer to these questions will shape the vitality of congregations for the next generation. This course will explore ways Christians and congregations need to think anew about the old story. Call Marianne, 913.671.2333, to enroll. This course is free, but space is limited!

January 1 Worship Schedule

9:30 a.m., Sanctuary

The Gathering will meet at 11:00 a.m. in Friendship Hall.

Regular Worship Service Times Resume January 8

8:00, 9:30, 11:00 a.m., Sanctuary; The Gathering, 10:45 a.m. in Friendship Hall

DAILY BIBLE READINGS

(Week of December 25, 2011)

Monday — *John 13:20–35*

A question: Why did the disciples did not understand Judas' actions? One statement is very clear — Jesus Christ is a clear line of communication between God and human beings. Jesus is the most complete revelation of God that human beings have or ever will know — that is the Christian faith. In the words of a 1960s hymn, "They will know we are Christians by our love."

Tuesday — *Matthew 18:1–14*

Here are some of the strongest commands of Jesus to carry out a ministry to those who may not have as much as Christ's followers do — not only in activities such as food pantries or medical missions to foreign countries, but also an educational ministry. Whether it be teaching a child from the urban core to read up to their grade level, or teach people in less developed country how to irrigate fields and grow crops or teach good hygiene/medical/health practices in the poorest nations of the world, these are all a part of being a follower of Christ.

Wednesday — *John 7:37–52*

The religious leaders tried everything to discredit Jesus. "Officers" were sent to bring in Jesus — arrest him — but they were so overwhelmed by Jesus' teaching/preaching that they returned empty handed. One of their number, Nicodemus, points out that the basic law requires a hearing before an arrest. The religious authorities do not argue this point, but continue on their argument that because the Messiah is supposed to come from Bethlehem and, to their knowledge, Jesus is not from Bethlehem, his preaching and teaching is blasphemy. Little did they know.

Thursday — *John 7:53–8:11*

This is a fairly well-known story that has led to a popular aphorism: "He who is without sin, cast the first stone." Biblical scholars have debated exactly where to place this story in the Gospel narratives, yet the story should be a reminder to all who follow the Christ. Being without sin — perfection — is not attainable within human existence. "All the perfect people can leave," has been the invitation from the preacher to the congregation. No one has left. Jesus invited those without sin to cast the first stone, and they all left.

Friday — *John 8:12–19*

This passage of the Gospel story can remind 21st century Christians how an electric light bulb functions. It is placed in a lamp. The lamp is plugged into the power source and the switch is turned on. But if the plug is not energized with electricity from the generator, there will be no light. The Christian can go through all the motions of being a Christian, but if they are not plugged into the power source — God — no light will shine forth for the world to see.

Saturday — *John 16:23b–30*

"In the name of Jesus Christ..." ends most prayers by Christians. First there is the recognition that the prayers offered find their origin in belief that Jesus was the Messiah and is the Christ. Second, it is a reminder that there is no barrier between the Christian and their God. Third, it should not be forgotten that just because this "tag line" is used, God does not always answer prayers with "Yes."

**Surely the angels are singing
for the glory of heaven has pushed into time
and the redemption of the whole creation can be seen.
Your redemption can be seen in a child who breathed life
that we might breath your Spirit.
Let our voices join with the angels,
for there is no end to your love. Amen.**

* Response of Praise (Hymn, No. 28, st. 1)

Good Christian Friends, Rejoice

*Good Christian friends, rejoice with heart, and soul, and voice;
Give ye heed to what we say: Jesus Christ is born today!
Ox and ass before him bow, and He is in the manger now.
Christ is born today! Christ is born today!*

* Passing of the Peace

Welcome and the Ritual of Friendship

The Promise

Luke 1:26–28
Dr. Cynthia Holder Rich

Hymn, No. 16

The Angel Gabriel From Heaven Came
tune: GABRIEL'S MESSAGE

(st. 1: All Sing; st. 2: Tenors and Basses; st 3: Altos and Sopranos; st. 4: All Sing)

The Birth

Luke 2:1–7
Rev. Jay McKell

Hymn, No. 25

Away in a Manger
tune: MUELLER

The Shepherds

Luke 2:8–20
Rev. Jarrett McLaughlin

Hymn, No. 37

Infant Holy, Infant Lowly
tune: POLISH CAROL

The Magi

Matthew 2:1–12
Rev. Dwight Tawney

Hymn, No. 56 (st. 3, 5, 6)

The First Nowell
tune: NOWELL

Christmas Story

Rev. Tom Are, Jr.

"Hampy Williams' Search for Baby Jesus"

Hymn

O Holy Night

O holy night! The stars are brightly shining,
It is the night of our dear Saviour's birth.
Long lay the world in sin and error pining,
'Til He appear'd and the soul felt its worth.
A thrill of hope the weary world rejoices,
For yonder breaks a new and glorious morn.
Fall on your knees! O hear the angels' voices!
O night divine, O night when Christ was born;
O night divine, O night, O night Divine.

Truly He taught us to love one another;
His law is love and His gospel is peace.
Chains shall He break for the slave is our brother;
And in His name all oppression shall cease.
Sweet hymns of joy in grateful chorus raise we,
Let all within us praise His holy name.
Christ is the Lord! O praise His Name forever,
His power and glory evermore proclaim.
His power and glory evermore proclaim.

Worship With Tithes and Offerings

Offertory

* Prayer of Dedication, Hymn No. 53 (st. 3)

What Child Is This
tune: GREENSLEEVES

*So bring Him incense, gold and myrrh; come, one and all, to own Him.
The King of kings salvation brings; let loving hearts enfold Him.
This, this is Christ the King, whom shepherds guard and angels sing;
Haste, haste to bring Him laud, the Babe, the Son of Mary!*

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

WORSHIP BAGS are available for children to use as tools in worship. At the end of the worship service, please return the bags to the baskets in the narthex. Thank you.

CHRISTMAS SCHEDULE: There is no church school today to allow families to worship together. There is child care for children through age 4. Broadly graded classes will be offered on January 1.

PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN

MISSION SEWING: The Mission Sewing Room will be closed during the month of December and will resume again on Tuesday, January 3, 2012. Mission Sewing continues to need crocheted afghans for cancer patients. These afghans are large, 48" x 48" or 48" x 60". If you are looking for a worthwhile place to make donations, we are very low on yarn for making these items. For more information, call Edie Hultman, 913.432.3515.

WOMEN WITH SPIRIT BOOK EXCHANGE AND BRUNCH: Join WWS (women 25 to 45ish) on Friday morning, January 20, 9:30–11:30 a.m., for our annual Book Brunch. Please bring a wrapped new or gently used book to exchange. We'll have a great time discussing our favorites, and everyone will go home with a book to enjoy in 2012! A lovely brunch will be served in the Small Dining Room, and the cost is \$8 (to be paid that morning). Reservations for this event are important. Please RSVP to Martha Mann, msingletonmann@gmail.com or 913.432.5001. Contact Marjean or Pam, 913.671.2322, by January 12 to make child care reservations.

Ministers:

All members of the congregation

Staff:

Thomas L. Are, Jr., senior pastor ❖ Mark Ball, director of music ❖ Patrick Bell, director of communications ❖ Dr. Elisa Bickers, principal organist ❖ Ruth Davidson, director of children's ministry ❖ Lindsey Evans, director of middle school youth ministry ❖ Christine Germann, food pantry director ❖ Meridee Jordan, director of community life ❖ Jay McKell, interim associate pastor of pastoral care ❖ Jarrett McLaughlin, pastor of mission and young adult/family ministry ❖ Meg Peery McLaughlin, pastor of pastoral care ❖ Dr. Robert H. Meneilly, pastor emeritus ❖ Dr. Cynthia Holder Rich, executive associate for mission and ministry ❖ Matthew C. Shepard, associate director of music ❖ Molly Sirridge, director of stewardship and endowments ❖ Dwight Tawney, administrative pastor ❖ Hank Tilbury, audio/video engineer ❖ Matt Vaughan, director of high school youth ministry ❖ Cindy A. Wilcox, director of membership

YOUTH MINISTRY

SUNDAY CLASSES: All 7th–12th grade youth will not meet today due to the Christmas holiday, but we will return on January 8, 9:30 a.m. in the Youth Loft (third floor).

HIGH SCHOOL CHEER is off this week for Christmas break, but we will be back on January 8, 6:30 p.m. in the Youth Loft. Hopefully you'll be ready for our topic: Perfect Preparation!

MIDDLE SCHOOL CHEER does not meet this week due to winter break. We will return Wednesday, January 11, 6:30 p.m. in the Youth Loft with an amazing Cheer — Behold!

WINTER RETREAT is right around the corner! Equipment rental is at Adventure Sports in Shawnee. The buses will arrive at 4:30 p.m. on Friday, January 13, and we return to Village at 6:30 a.m. on Tuesday, January 17.

YOUNG ADULT MINISTRY

THE PARALLEL: A Class for Young Adults/All Parents of Children in Kids' Kingdom, Morning Stars and Preschool Church School. What does worship have to do with my life? How do I apply what I learn on Sunday to the other six days of the week? The Parallel will help you connect those dots. Each Sunday, we'll introduce and explore the same theme that will be featured in worship, but with an emphasis on putting it into practice. This class engages the Bible, theology, family life and current events. Taught by Rev. Jarrett McLaughlin at 9:40 a.m. in Room 206.

MISSION

BACKSNACK PROGRAM: Join the Young Adult Ministry of Village Church/Harvesters/Nieman Elementary and Overland Park Elementary Schools to serve those in need and keep 80 kids strong. Volunteers are needed to help pack and deliver BackSnacks once a semester. All ages are encouraged to participate. Contact Lisa Wright, 913.403.9072 or lwright29@hotmail.com.

COOK A MEAL AT CROSS-LINES: On Friday, January 13, Village Church is responsible for cooking and serving a meal at the Cross-Lines Kitchen in Kansas City, KS. We are looking for three to four volunteers to help cook, 9:30–11:30 a.m., and three to four more volunteers to help serve, 11:00 a.m.–1:30 p.m. We also need volunteers to bake two to three dozen cookies. Contact Marianne, 913.671.2333 or marianne.weber@villagepres.org, to sign up.

BAGGING GROCERIES AND ALL THAT JAZZ: Gather at the Food Pantry to pack sacks of groceries for a group of elder jazz musicians from downtown Kansas City, MO. We will meet at 9:30 a.m. and work until 11:00. **The next volunteer date is January 7.** To volunteer, visit villagepres.org, look under "Get Involved" and follow the volunteerspot.com link. For more information, call 913.671.2333.

* Hymn, No. 40 (st. 1, 4)

Joy to the World!
tune: ANTIOCH

* Benediction

* Postlude

* *All who are able may stand*

The 9:30 service is broadcast live on Radio Bach 1660 AM.

We kindly request that cell phones be turned off during worship.

Please note that additional parking is available across Mission Road in the Prairie School parking lots.

Members of the Village Emergency Response Team (V.E.R.T.) are assigned and available during each Sunday service. They are certified in CPR and in the use of the Automated External Defibrillator (AED). V.E.R.T. members can be recognized by their red name tags.

ADULT MINISTRY

THE FAITH JOURNEY CLASS is currently studying *Unconditional?: The Call of Jesus to Radical Forgiveness* by Brian Zahnd. In discussing forgiveness, the author brings up ideas about whether there are limitations to forgiveness for extreme cases like the Holocaust or 9/11. Please join us and enhance our discussion with your thoughts, beliefs, and ideas. Led by Mark Stowell. Room 230.

VILLAGE UNIVERSITY is a “university inspired layout” of topical short-term courses for people wanting relevant, in-depth and balanced education on a variety of topics. Village University catalogs can now be found throughout the church. Registration for the spring term of Village University has begun. You may enroll for all courses online at villagepres.org, by e-mail (marianne.weber@villagepres.org), by calling Marianne at 913.671.2333 or in person in Room 119 at Village Church.

COMMUNITY LIFE

THE COMPUTER MINISTRY REFURBISHING TEAM is in need of donated personal computers. Please call the Community Life Office, 913.671.2334, for specifications for donations. The computers may be dropped off at our 99th and Mission Road location on Tuesdays, 6:30–8:00 p.m.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES: **Computer Ministry** is looking for teachers and computer refurbishing team members. **Meals on Wheels** substitute drivers are needed on Fridays. **Wednesday Night Dinner substitute volunteers** are needed to help set up and clean up. Call the Community Life Office, 913.671.2334, for more information on these service opportunities.



Village Church is a vibrant and exciting community of faith with many activities for all ages. If you would like more information about the life and ministries of Village Church or are interested in becoming a member, please call 913.671.2331, or visit villagepres.org.

GENERAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

WELCOME TO VILLAGE CHURCH! Please join us every week. Following worship services, coffee and lemonade are available in Rooms 232-233.

WEDNESDAY NIGHT DINNERS will resume on January 4, 2012.

FOOD PANTRY AND CLOTHES CLOSET: Requests for this week include: hearty soups, canned vegetables, all varieties of crackers, toothpaste, shampoo, conditioner and lotions. **THE CLOTHES CLOSET** continues to need household linens, men’s clothing, winter coats and footwear and small appliances. Thank you!

FACEBOOK AND TWITTER: Village Church is now part of the social media networks, Facebook and Twitter. Go to villagepres.org and click on the media icons at the top of the homepage. This is the easiest and quickest way to keep up with the happenings at VPC. Be sure to “like” us on Facebook and “follow” us on Twitter, and you will be up to date.

GLUTEN-FREE COMMUNION WAFERS will be available on the Narthex credenza for Communion on Sunday, January 1. Napkins are provided to hold the wafer until time to partake of the sacraments.

SPECIAL SERVICE: the Pastoral Care and Counseling Department invites you to A Prayer Service for Hope and Wholeness on Sunday, January 8, 4:30 p.m. in Friendship Hall. Together we will sing, pray and read Scripture. We will listen quietly when God speaks and we will support one another in the manner of Christ.

A FEW SPOTS REMAIN for the Village Church trip to England in September 2012! Imagine seeing the dreaming spires of Oxford, the charming Cotswolds, beautiful Bath and a generous time in historic London with special exhibits pertaining to Queen Elizabeth’s Jubilee year and more — all with your fellow Village Church friends! If you are interested, please contact Cindy Wilcox, cindy.wilcox@villagepres.org, or Lisa Ball, lball18@kc.rr.com. We will have a “jolly good” time!

THE SPRING 2012 SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY COURSE, *The Church Ain’t What It Used to Be: Confessions From a Pastor*, will be taught by Rev. Tom Are, Jr., on Tuesdays — February 7, 21; March 6, 20; April 3, 17; May 1, 15 — 6:30–8:00 p.m. in Room 124. Change in how we practice our faith is a constant; however, some suggest that American Protestantism is facing more change than we have seen since the protestant reformation 500 years ago. What will Christianity look like in 20 years? This course will explore ways Christians and congregations need to think anew about the old story. Call Marianne, 913.671.2333, to enroll. This course is free, but space is limited!

VISIT VILLAGEPRES.ORG for more information on the life of Village Church.
