



GOOD NEWS

The Village Church *Good News* is published monthly (September-May) for all members and friends of the Village Presbyterian Church. Readers are encouraged to submit article ideas to The Department of Communications, 6641 Mission Road, Prairie Village, KS 66208, or call 913-671-2375 or email laura.davis@villagepres.org.

Introducing a New Look and Communications Positioning for Village Church

Did you notice the new logo at the top of the Good News? We're giving you a sneak peek of the new Village Church brand identity that we will be launching Sunday, Nov. 7.

Two years ago, a Marketing & Communications Committee was formed to help the staff create a plan for updating and streamlining church communications across all three campuses. This included all the groups, programs and events the church offers its members and the greater community. The committee recommended that the church look at updating its brand identity system to create a new single brand that could be used across everything we do—with particular consideration for young adults, families and youth.



Kathy Collins

Village enlisted Kathy Collins, a long-time church member, brand strategist and marketing consultant, to lead pastors, staff, Session delegates and church members through a series of visioning exercises to define the strategic direction for this effort.

"As with all great brands, Village must stay fresh and relevant in how we represent ourselves to our many audiences," said Kathy Collins. "Our current branding was introduced 11 years ago. The logo was inspired by the iconic window that was once a focal point in the Village on Mission Sanctuary. That window is no longer visible due to the renovation of the Sanctuary and it doesn't have any relevance to the congregation at Village on Antioch."

"Today, there is an opportunity and a need to evolve the brand to better serve the changing demands of the church," Kathy continued. "Village now serves its community in three different brick-and-mortar locations and, even more significantly, in the homes of anyone who wants to join online."

The discovery process began in fall of 2020. Through two Zoom workshops, one-on-ones, and small-group interviews, we spoke with 25 pastors, ministry directors, Session delegates, church members and frequent visitors. We explored sources of pride around Village, strengths, opportunities and hopes for the future. Questions that were considered: What really makes Village unique to today's audiences? How can we do a better job showing who we are as a church to people who don't know us?

Five pillars were identified for what is compelling and ownable for Village Church:

- **Strength of Pulpit and Music** – The legacy of Dr. Bob Meneilly, Rev. Tom Are, Rev. Dr. Rodger Nishioka, the caliber and diversity of pastors and staff, sermon strength, relevance, timeliness, teaching, learning, rejoicing through music, the breadth and depth of worship experiences.
- **Accepting of All** – The next generation of "all are welcome here," LGBTQ+, ethnicity, diversity, actions (not words), younger audiences, past faith experience. We don't have to be like-minded. How far can the arms of Village reach?
- **24/7 Community of Care/Family** – When you need us, no matter what you are going through, you are not alone. We will come to you. We value relationships.
- **Mission and Service** – We matter in the community and in the world. We always have. We have never hesitated to do what's right for those who need us the most.
- **Taking a Stand and Social Justice** – Proactively taking action. Doing the right thing. Global/environmental action.

INTRODUCING THE NEW VILLAGE BRAND

The new brand purpose statement came from this work. Kathy told Session, "Our purpose statement should capture why we exist and what we believe. It should be a higher-level belief statement that gives us something to work toward and guides the actions of the organization."

One statement rose to the top that all felt truly captured the spirit of Village: **We're with you. Wherever you are.**

Kathy explained, "'Wherever you are' is a powerful thought. It is incarnational. It's non-judgmental. It's not political. It's inclusive and invitational. It values independent, non-conformist thinking. It's unifying and tolerant. It suggests equity and equality. Wherever you are in your faith journey, your knowledge of the Bible, however you identify, wherever you are physically, Village is with you, wherever you are."



Megan Stephens
Willoughby Design

Once the brand purpose statement was approved by Session to guide the design exploration, Kansas City brand design firm, Willoughby Design, was engaged to develop the new brand identity system and creative framework.

Willoughby was tasked with developing a new master brand identity system that was simple, authentic, memorable, and inclusive of all audiences the church serves. Village Church member Megan Stephens, managing principal and co-owner of Willoughby Design, advised, "The new brand identity system needs to be flexible and over-arching enough to serve as the master brand for all locations, ministries, programs and events. By creating consistency across all communications big and small, it will be easier to consolidate marketing efforts and grow broader brand recognition over time."

This creative process was completed in collaboration with three working groups: the Village Church In-House Marketing Team, a Village Church Brand Steering Committee and the Village Church Leadership Team. Willoughby initially presented six design explorations. Two final directions were tested in focus group settings with 63 individuals. Those included members, non-members, White, Hispanic, Black and LGBTQ, ranging in age from 9-83. Sixty percent of all respondents preferred the selected concept over the other finalist being considered. Eighty-two percent of respondents under the age of 40 preferred the selected concept.

On Aug. 2, Megan Stephens shared with Session Willoughby's recommendation for the brand identity system that will represent the next chapter in the life of Village Church. Megan recalled, "The power of the heart as a popular symbol for the greater Kansas City area was brought up early on in our meetings with the Marketing & Communications Committee. In interviews, love living at the core of everything at Village was an ongoing theme. The idea of a heart kept resonating on multiple levels. The 'V' for Village naturally makes the perfect center for a heart and the new logo came together from there. One single line forms a simple, easy-to-navigate path into the center and back out."



Session unanimously approved the new brand identity. Some of their comments, "It makes me so happy!" "Beautiful!" "Great work!" Once the big idea received Session's blessing, Willoughby created a brand standards guide with input from the Village Marketing & Communications team on further refinements. We will begin rolling out the new brand with the congregation and community on Sunday, Nov. 7. The integration throughout the entire church and all three locations will take place over the next year.

"I am super proud of the work we have done together," said Kathy. "I was confident Megan and the Willoughby team would bring a level of sophistication to this project that we would love. I think this new brand system will serve Village well today and in the future."

We leave you with our brand story that you will also see in our communications: Village Church is a thoughtful and inclusive family of faith where all are invited, all are accepted, and all are loved. Many paths bring us together. Many stories, many choices. Wherever you are in your journey, your life stage, your faith... We're with you. Wherever you are.

A Conversation with Rev. Tom Are About His New Book

Rev. Tom Are's new book is hot off the press. Laura Davis talked with Tom about writing his first book, "Joy Even on Your Worst Days: Wisdom from Philipppians."

Laura: How did the idea for the book come about?

Tom: I did a sermon series on Philipppians in 2012. It was the first time that I had really walked through Paul's letter with that kind of detail. I was fascinated by Paul's joy in this letter from prison. I asked myself, "Paul, how do you do that?" Joy is not really my go-to. I'm a happy guy, but joy is different from happiness. It's deeper. So I was intrigued by that sermon series. Then two years ago, I returned to it for the Village Connect Small Group Ministries series. I had some encouragement from Rodger. He said, "You really need to make this a book."

Laura: How long did it take you to write the book?

Tom: I started on it last year. I went to Austin Seminary and spent a week studying and working on it. That was February of 2020. I really wrote it all during the pandemic. COVID was hard for people. It's still hard for people. We had national crises emerge during that time. My dad died while I was writing the book. What started as a personal interest, a curiosity—how can Paul be so joyful when his life had to be awful—evolved into wanting him to become my teacher. I want to be more like that. That spiritual desire is what gave me this book.

Laura: Was writing a book something you have dreamed of doing?

Tom: Oh no. I don't think of myself as a writer. The written word is very different than the spoken word. I'm a speaker. I'm a talker. It took some discipline and reflection to figure out how to write. What I hope I've done is to keep what feels like the vibrancy of human conversation in the written form.

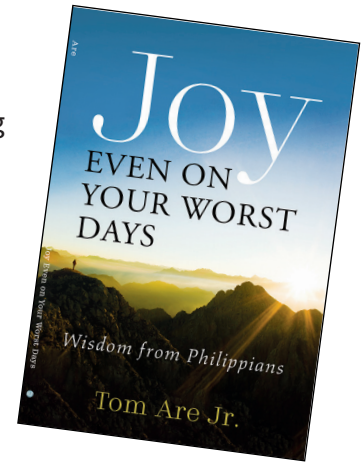
Laura: Do you see yourself writing any more books in the future?

Tom: I'll have to see if this book matters to anybody. It's mattered to me. I'm actually more joyful because of the exercise of walking through this. I've just done the Village Connect on parables. I might be able to turn that into a book. We will see.

Laura: How did you feel when your book arrived in the mail?

Tom: It was kind of weird and humbling, too. I like books. I have a lot of books. It was kind of weird to see this reach the final stage, and then I thought, "Gosh, I hope it makes sense." It's a little bit like a sermon. They're never finished. You just stop and say, "This is what I've got today. Tomorrow I might have something different to offer or might see it differently. But this is what I've got today." The book is a little more intense because I had longer to reflect and live with it. There are a lot of stories that I've included of people who have been my teachers; some of them this congregation is going to know.

In the book acknowledgments, Tom writes of Village Presbyterian Church, "I have learned more about the church and about ministry in the 17 years we have spent together than in the rest of my life."



There will be two opportunities to hear more about the book. The first in a Zoom conversation that will occur at 4 p.m. on Tuesday, Nov. 16. Register by emailing laura.hobbs@villagepres.org. A second opportunity will occur at Village on Mission at 5 p.m. on Wednesday, Dec. 8. At both events, Rev. Dr. Rodger Nishioka will interview Tom. The Dec. 8 in-person event will be followed by a book signing.

Books are available for a suggested donation of \$15. Fifty percent of net proceeds benefit the Village Church Endowment Trust. Copies are with Marsha Hansen (913-671-2342 or marsha.hansen@villagepres.org). You may also order books online at bookstore.villagepres.org.

UPCOMING SERMON SERIES

Christian DNA

A Series on Faith, Hope and Love

Over the generations there have been seemingly endless volumes written to describe the Christian life. What does it mean to trust a life to Christ? What does such a life look like? More importantly, how do we describe the community that seeks to follow Christ? It's a complicated question and there is no single simple answer, but Paul boils it down to three words: faith, hope and love. However we describe Christianity, the DNA of the church is faith, hope and love. Rev. Tom Are preaches each Sunday.

Nov. 7	The Work Generated By Faith
Nov. 14	The Labor That Grows Out of Love
Nov. 21	Steadfast Endurance Empowered by Hope

VILLAGE STAFF UPDATES

A New Role for Jenna Soltys in Youth Ministry and Assisting with Young Adult Ministry

Jenna Soltys, who served for five years as associate director of youth ministry, has transitioned to the role of youth coordinator. "Youth Ministry at Village is so important to me," said Jenna. "As a former Village youth myself, Village is where I learned my value in God's eyes and where I learned to view others' gifts, quirks, and personalities through that lens instead of my own. I was mentored by many directors, interns and volunteers when I was a student in this place. When I was offered the position as associate director, I quite literally cried."

Jenna says she now finds herself in a place where that call hasn't changed, but the way she feels called to serve has. "For the past several months I've begun to consider what the future holds for me. While I love my job and have been so honored to serve in this leadership role for almost five years, I'm also feeling the pull back to the admin/details/marketing side of things," explains Jenna. "The open coordinator role allows me to explore that while continuing to serve in an area of the church that I am so passionate about."

In her new role, Jenna will also support Rev. Hallie Hottle in young adult ministry ten hours a week. Jenna will continue serving in a hybrid capacity as we search for a new associate director of youth ministry. She'll be attending youth group regularly and other activities as needed. "In January, we'll assess if that should continue based on how the search process for a new associate director is going," adds Jenna.



Cindy Wilcox Announces Retirement as Director of Connectional Ministries

Cindy Wilcox has served the Village Family since August 2005 as our director of Connectional Ministries. Rev. Tom Are wrote in his eNote, "Cindy was the first member of the Ministry Team that I hired after arriving at Village. She has served us tirelessly and always with a joyful spirit."

"Cindy shared with the Ministry Team on Oct. 11 that she plans to retire at the end of this year. She has been the contact with those who are new to our church family. She has worked with deacons, ushers and the Connectional Ministries Committee. If there was a time you had fun at Village, Cindy probably had something to do with that."

"Her retirement is well deserved. Her positive energy, deep compassion and her love for Village will leave a big hole," said Tom. "God has blessed us through Cindy's ministry, and I hope you will join me in prayer for God's blessing to rest upon her as she begins this new season in her life."

Cindy's last Sunday at Village Church on Mission is Jan. 2, 2022. We will come together as a church to express our gratitude to Cindy at 5 p.m. Thursday, Dec. 2, in Friendship Hall.



Susan Webb Announces Retirement as Director of the Village Church Food Pantry

After nine years of service to Village Church as director of the Village Church Food Pantry, Susan Webb will retire at the end of March 2022. Susan and her husband Doug are looking forward to moving closer to family in Colorado and spending more time with their young grandchildren.



"Susan and I started working together in 2013 and it has been a pleasure to serve with her as a colleague," said Deborah White, director of mission. "During her tenure, she has strengthened the Pantry operations in a myriad of ways. The Pantry finances are more solid than ever. She has built strong relationships with a team of dedicated volunteers, refined and perfected distribution processes and weathered many changes in the marketplace including supply-chain interruptions during the pandemic and alterations in food assistance and commodities programs. She possesses a knack for walking in others' shoes, putting

the client first and ensuring that the mission of loving our neighbor remains at the forefront of the Pantry's work."

Deborah added, "I am excited about this next chapter of Susan's life, and I know many will miss her leadership and presence at the Pantry."

The Food Pantry Advisory Board has begun the search for a new director of the Pantry with the hopes of having new leadership in place before Susan leaves so that cross-training can occur.

Please join us in wishing Susan a joyous retirement!



Farewell to Clare Stern-Burbano

On World Communion Sunday, Oct. 3, the spirit was alive and active as Village Church on Antioch presented young worshipers with bibles, shared in the Lord's Supper and gave thanks for the ministry of Clare Stern-Burbano. After serving two years as director of children and youth at Village on Antioch, Clare has answered a new call as youth and college minister at Grace and Holy Trinity Episcopal Cathedral in Kansas City. In August, Clare began her seminary journey as a Master of Divinity candidate at the University of Dubuque Theological Seminary in Iowa.

To the children and youth of Village on Antioch, Clare said, "You all helped me find my calling and raised me into it... I cannot thank you enough for raising me into the Christian I have become and will continue to evolve into in the coming days, weeks and years."

On her last Sunday at Village on Antioch, the congregation prayed for her and gave her gifts of a chalice, plate, stole and of course, cake.

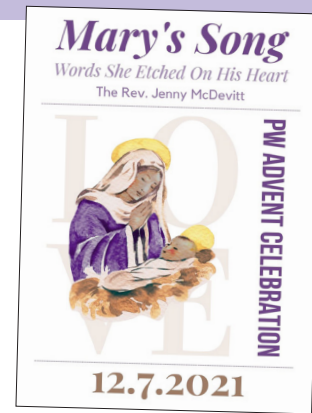
We will miss you, Clare!



**Presbyterian Women’s Advent Celebration 2021:
Mary’s Song—Words She Etched on His Heart**

“Mary sings the Magnificat in the presence of her cousin, Elizabeth, when they are both pregnant. It is a story of the lowly being lifted up, and the mighty being brought down. A story of the hungry being filled, and the plentiful being sent away. It is strong language, but it promises a day of strong justice. Mary sings to her cousin, but what if Mary kept singing those words? What if she sang them to Jesus over and over again?

Perhaps the Magnificat became a lullaby, words that surrounded Jesus as he drifted off to sleep throughout his childhood. Perhaps the Magnificat shaped his dreams, and thus, his dream for the world.” – Rev. Jenny McDevitt



PW is thrilled to welcome back our friend and former pastor, Rev. Jenny McDevitt, as our guest speaker for the 2021 Advent Celebration. Jenny is eager to return to Kansas City and be with us. When talking about the reunion, her exact quote was, “I love you all!” We are planning an in-person worship service in the Village on Mission Sanctuary at 6:30 p.m. on Tuesday, Dec. 7, which will be free this year but will not include a meal. The livestreamed program will include inspiring music and the sacrament of communion. A goodwill offering will be collected at registration (which begins Nov. 7), during the event or online at villagepres.org/pw. Contributions beyond our expenses will support Restoration House, a non-profit organization bringing hope and healing to survivors of human trafficking.

Face masks are required. To confirm your reservation, committee members will be at Village on Mission in Friendship Hall and in the Welcome Center and Village on Antioch Narthex on Nov. 7 and 14. Or register online at villagepres.org/pw, beginning Nov. 7. Child care will be available. Email marjean.lindquist@villagepres.org by Nov. 21 to make child care reservations.



About Rev. Jenny McDevitt

Jenny has served as senior pastor and head of staff at Shandon Presbyterian Church in Columbia, South Carolina since May 2020. Prior to that she was senior pastor at Madison Avenue Presbyterian Church in New York, New York for two years and served as pastor of pastoral care at Village Church for six years.

If you have questions about the event, contact Nancy Gatewood at nngatewood@gmail.com or 913-638-1922 or Lisa Harrison at lisa.harrison@villagepres.org or 913-317-9688.

PASTORAL CARE

Poinsettias: Honoring Loved Ones Brightens the Season for Others

Did you know that when you make a \$15 donation in memory of a loved one at Christmas, your money honors that person and brightens a homebound member’s life with a poinsettia? This year we’re delivering 300 poinsettias. Your generosity helps finance this ministry. If you’d like to commemorate your loved one and bless others, send the printed name(s) with a check for \$15 per person to Janice Gill, Village Presbyterian Church, 6641 Mission Rd., Prairie Village, KS 66208.

The Remembrance Service is Sunday, Dec. 5

The Remembrance Service is a time to share gratitude for the blessing of loved ones we miss. The service proclaims God’s holy promise: there’s a light in this world that the darkness will never overcome. The service will be at 4 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 5, in the Village on Mission Sanctuary.

If your loved one passed away during 2021 and Village Church was informed, his or her name will be included in the program. If you want to include any other name(s), contact Linda Alley at 913-671-2327 or linda.alley@villagepres.org by noon on Monday, Nov. 22.

NOVEMBER CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Nov. 7 – **Fall Back** – Set your clocks back one hour as Daylight Saving Time ends.

New Sermon Series begins **"Christian DNA: Faith, Hope & Love"**; 9:30 a.m. **3rd Grade Bibles presentation**

Nov. 9 – **Village U Class - Hosting a Zoom Meeting**, Dee Couch, 1-2:30 p.m. & 6:30-8 p.m. Room 316 and via Zoom

Nov. 10 – **Village U Class - Medieval Mothers: The Five Matriarchs of the Reformation** taught by Dr. Trenton Smith
6:30-8 p.m. Wednesday, Nov. 10, 17 and Dec. 1, 8, 15, Room 127

Village U Class - Being a Matthew 25 Church: What Can Dorothy Day Teach Us? Taught by Rev. Eric Garbison
6:30-8 p.m. Wednesday, Nov. 10, 17 & Dec. 1, 8, Room 126

Nov. 11 – 12:15 p.m. **2nd Thursday Recital** with KC Wind Symphony members in the Village on Mission Sanctuary

Nov. 16 – **Village U Class** - Google Tools and Google Calendar led by Dee Couch, 1-2:30 p.m. & 6:30-8 p.m. in Room 316 and via Zoom

4 p.m. via Zoom – **Rev. Rodger Nishioka interviews Rev. Tom Are about his new book, "Joy Even on Your Worst Days."** Email laura.hobbs@villagepres.org to register. See page 3 for more info.

7 p.m. **Taizé** in the Village on Mission Sanctuary

Nov. 17 – **Curbside Pickup Wednesday Family Meals Thanksgiving Dinner**: roast turkey breast with gravy, cornbread dressing, green bean casserole, and dinner roll. Available for curbside pickup 4:30-5:30 p.m. Order online and get more details at villagespres.org/wednesday-family-meals.

Nov. 21 – 3 p.m. **Kansas City Wind Symphony concert** in the Village on Mission Sanctuary

Nov. 25 – **Happy Thanksgiving!**

Nov. 28 – **First Sunday of Advent** - Rev. Melanie Hardison preaching

Still Time to Sponsor a Village Food Pantry Family's Thanksgiving Meal

Turkeys and all the trimmings will be distributed to Food Pantry families Nov. 17-20. No food drive this year, but you can sponsor a family with a \$30 donation. Checks payable to "Village Church Food Pantry" may be mailed to Village Presbyterian Church, 6641 Mission Road, Prairie Village, KS 66208. Or donate online at villagepres.org/thanksgiving. Thank you for your support!

Mark Your Calendars for Advent Family Workshop

Saturday, Dec. 4 – Friendship Hall at Village on Mission

Pick Your Preferred COVID-friendly Option for Parents and Kids:

1 - Grab-n-Go Crafts to Complete at Home

2 - Friendship Hall Workshops at 1 and 2 p.m.

Reservations required for in-person workshops at villagepres.org/children-families. Call Kate Ruecker at 913-671-2350 with questions.



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WHY I GIVE

Dear Friends,

For a good portion of my life, I have felt that the Village Church has been with me wherever I am in my life. Village was with me when I was a child. Village was with me when I was married. Village was with me at my father's funeral. During COVID, Village was in my living room on my TV and my computer. My college son, Chase, once said that Village was his "home away from home." I'm truly thankful that Village is always with me.



Our values that express faith, hope, and love are what keep me going through hard times. The Village Church and the people in it can lift my spirits at times I didn't think possible.

I give to the church because of all that it has given to me and because I want to help others. I know giving is very personal choice. I also know that without your dollars, the church would not be able to survive. We would have no mission programs. We would not have our gorgeous buildings. We would have no music, no children's services, no youth programs, no building maintenance, and no way to pay our amazing staff.

From the bottom of my heart, thank you for giving to the Village Church so that we can be a community that provides faith, hope and love to others.

Sincerely,
Lauren Conderman
Chair of the Giving Committee

SUNDAY WORSHIP SCHEDULE

VILLAGE ON MISSION

Traditional – 8, 9:30 & 11 a.m.
In the Sanctuary
The Gathering – 5 p.m.
In Friendship Hall

VILLAGE ON ANTIOCH

Traditional - 9:30 a.m.
In the Sanctuary
14895 Antioch Rd.
Overland Park, Kansas

Call in to hear the previous Sunday's 9:30 a.m. Sanctuary worship service on our worship service phone line **913-203-1301**.

IN MEMORY

Ed Gaus
Joan Marshall
Thomas "T.J." Nidiffer
Norma Nivens
Arlene Raudenbush
Mark Rice
Glenda Self
Lorin Stewart
Harry Monroe "Roe" Taliaferro
Susan Wright