



— JOIN US FOR VILLAGE CHURCH HISTORY AS WE —
RETURN TO THE SANCTUARY
SUNDAY, DECEMBER 13

The plan is to return to our beautifully renovated Village Sanctuary for worship services on Sunday, Dec. 13. Check our website villagepres.org for confirmation on the date. You helped make this renovation possible. We want you to be there to share in the excitement of our first worship service back in the Sanctuary.

Come see how architectural renderings have come to life. Additional parking will be available in the north parking lot. The small north elevator will be available for handicap accessibility. We'll also be offering shuttle service from the Blue Moose/Missouri Bank parking lot from 8:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m., dropping off and picking up at the west entrance of the church.

About the Design

From Project Architect Brian Rathsam, Mantel Teter Architects:

The Village Church Sanctuary maintains its classical style, but with updates such as columns, pilasters and a varied color palette. The Village Sanctuary/Organ/Welcome Center committee wanted to keep a neutral feel in the Sanctuary but give it an updated look. A warm, blue-grey was chosen for the majority of walls with a classic Alabaster that was selected for the trim work and organ casing. The intent was to make the organ stand out in the room but provide an appealing backdrop for services, weddings, funerals and the many other events that are held in this space.

Look above you and you'll be in awe of the 120 ceiling coffers. The design and construction team worked diligently through roughly 12 iterations for the ceiling coffer design, spanning the course of several months, before deciding on the system that has been installed. Closely spaced wood ceiling framing provides the necessary structural backbone for the coffered ceiling, and helps to provide a monolithic system to support the 1 ¼" thick solid plaster coffers, and multiple layered sheetrock coffer beams. Additional steel reinforcing of the original steel roof trusses was required to support the massive weight of the ceiling.

The ceiling coffers vastly improve the acoustics of the room by giving sound from the organ and choir more surfaces off which to reflect, projecting it the full length of the Sanctuary nave. The mass and rigidity of the coffers is designed to maintain the sound of the organ within the Sanctuary itself, in order that energy is not lost through lightweight materials. Fully grouted 12" thick concrete block walls surround the organ case and chancel, and similarly reflect the sound of the organ and choir to the congregation. Every surface within the Sanctuary was carefully studied and a design solution developed in order to provide the best acoustical performance possible.

Continued

The new digital audio visual system includes a screen that drops down from the ceiling to enhance worship and other presentations and concerts. We'll also have new microphones and speakers. The AV system and Sanctuary acoustics are designed to emphasize the spoken word as well as music.

Something Old, Something New

You'll notice all new chancel furniture and a new chancel floor. Direct accessibility to the new chancel floor is possible via a new ramp on the east side of the Sanctuary. Two rows of movable chairs are provided at the front of the Sanctuary, providing flexibility for larger productions that may need additional floor space.

Over 60 old pews return the first week of December after months in storage. Many of the more worn pews will be refinished prior to installation. The original wood cross will be hung prominently in the center of the chancel.

The choral risers and chancel furniture arrive Dec. 7. The Steinway concert grand piano and the harpsichord will be moved into the Sanctuary on Dec. 10 and tuned on Dec. 11. Elders will help put 750 hymnals back in the pews and Advent decorations go up Saturday, Dec. 12.



Removal of the cross in April 2015.

A Project with Challenges

This was a very complex project from both a design and construction perspective. Much of the existing building was constructed in the 1950's and earlier, so little information was known from the original drawings. During construction, this is what we call architectural archeology; having to slowly uncover bits and pieces of information about the building as areas are being demolished for the new renovation. Many changes had to be made based on the actual conditions of what we uncovered.

In addition, 18 drilled piers needed to be dug in the existing Sanctuary basement to support the massive weight of the organ (13 tons!) as well as the solid block walls that surround the chancel.

The Welcome Center will be completed in January. The new organ is scheduled to arrive in March. The voicing of the 3,700 pipes will take up to nine months, but the organ will be available for limited use during worship services in the spring.

The Long Awaited Return

From Ryan Warman, Pearce Construction Project Manager:

"This has been a great project. The ceiling was long hard work. We had an average of 25-30 guys a day working in the Sanctuary throughout the renovation. There's been a lot of collaboration with subcontractors. The outcome is amazing. I think the congregation will agree that it's an unbelievably beautiful addition to the church."

From Jim Borthwick, Chair of the Sanctuary/Organ/Welcome Center Committee:

"We've been working on this so long I'm almost a bit surprised to be talking about our first worship service back in the Sanctuary. At the same time, I am deeply satisfied to think that it's finally going to happen before Christmas—the culmination of our efforts are going to be partially realized Dec. 13 and fully realized when we install the organ. It's a great feeling!"

From Rev. Tom Are, Jr., Senior Pastor:

"Worship always happens in a place. For us that place is the Sanctuary. Beginning Dec. 13 we will return to our place of worship. The ceiling, the sound system, the chancel, the pulpit, and soon enough the organ will all be new. But what will be the same is the joy we know in singing, *Holy, Holy, Holy*, and the comfort we know in singing, *Abide with Me*. We will feel again the peace that comes with singing, *Silent Night* or *Jesus Christ is Risen Today*. We will hear again and again that trusted Word that stands forever. This is an historic day for Village Church as we gather in a room rebuilt for the purpose of meeting the same God we have always met in God's Sanctuary."

Here's the Church...and Here's the NEW Village Steeple!

Pearce Construction crews began work installing the new 8,000 pound Village steeple at 8:30 a.m. Thursday, Nov. 12. They were playing "Beat the Clock" because their permit with the City of Prairie Village to shut down one lane of Mission Road expired at 2:30 p.m. They had scheduled the steeple installation to avoid drop-off and pick-up times at Prairie School across the street.

First came the installation of the steeple base. Four connecting sides were assembled on site. A crew on the ground got inside the base. A crew wearing safety harnesses waited at the top of the steeple tower to catch and position the steeple base. A few finishing trim pieces were added and caulked. Then came the signal to the Belger crane operator to fire up the hydraulics and lift "Up, Up and Away!" One man on the ground held tight to a tethering line attached to the base as it was lifted to make sure it didn't careen into the brick steeple tower on the way up.

Next came the steeple itself, also requiring the attachment of four connecting pieces at the bottom. A class of Village Church preschoolers, Village staff, church members, local neighbors and pedestrians came out to witness the big moment when the steeple was hoisted and lowered onto place. It took approximately five minutes from the time it left the ground before the steeple got positioned into its new home. When it finally did, preschoolers jumped for joy and shouted "Yay!" Pearce Construction crews finished the job with just 20 minutes to spare before their 2:30 p.m. deadline.

Bystanders commented that the new steeple appeared taller than the old steeple. Project architect Brian Rathsam of Mantel Teter Architects tells us that the new steeple stands 99 feet from the ground up – which is the same height as our old Village steeple. Brian explains "99 feet tall was grandfathered in with the city for permitting- so we designed the new steeple for the same height. The new steeple appears taller because of its



Taken by drone.



closer proximity to Mission Road. The old spire was actually taller from the brick tower up. Our new brick steeple tower is 10 feet taller than the old one." The new steeple is made of prefinished aluminum, which will require less maintenance.

The Village steeple was manufactured by Campbellsville Company in Campbellsville, Ky. They are the oldest and largest steeple company in the U.S. They also made the steeple atop the John Gano Memorial Chapel at William Jewell College in Liberty, Mo. and Lenexa Baptist Church. In addition to steeples, the company makes cupolas, columns, domes and clock towers for courthouses and universities.

Dave Manning of Campbellsville Company said, "We first started talking with Mantel Teter about the Village steeple project in July of 2013. When Pearce was hired as the contractor, we began talking with them. The order was placed in December of last year. After a few months of drafting, we started fabricating in June. It took five months to complete and 10 hours to drive 600 miles on two wide load trailers to deliver."

Our steeple was spotted spending Wednesday night in the Metcalf South Shopping Center parking lot before final delivery Thursday morning to its new home, Village Presbyterian Church.



Food Pantry

Thanksgiving is behind us and the Village Church Food Pantry is thinking of the cold, wintry days ahead and how grateful our clients are for a warm lunch or dinner. Knowing that, the Pantry is requesting donations of “hearty” soups and pasta to go with the spaghetti sauce we already have in stock. The hearty soups are so nutritious and easy to prepare, and are items that we can’t purchase from Harvesters. With coupons that are always in the papers, you can purchase a couple of cans of hearty soups when they’re on sale and bring them to church with each visit.

The Clothes Closet, in keeping with the chilly weather, is requesting warm blankets and winter coats of all sizes. Always needed are large and X-large sized clothing.

Your donations keep this valuable mission in business!

Deck the Village Trees with Hats and Mittens

The Village Church tradition of the Hat and Mitten Trees returns for the holiday season. From Dec. 6-25, come decorate our Christmas trees with hats and mittens to give to families served by the Village Church Food Pantry. You will find the trees located outside the Children’s Library on the second floor and at the south entrance to the church. Contact Deborah White, director of mission, at 913-671-2369 or deborah.white@villagepres.org with any questions.

Diapers in December

Village children will be collecting diapers throughout December to give to the Village Food Pantry. Did you know an adequate supply of diapers can cost over \$100 per month? Many parents are already struggling to pay for rent and food and cannot afford the high cost of an adequate supply of diapers. In poor and low-income families, a baby can spend a day or longer in one diaper, leading to potential health and abuse risks.

DRMP Gift Cards, Coffee, and Chocolate: Gifts that Give Twice!

On Sunday, Dec. 13 and Sunday, Dec. 20, the Dominican Republic Medical Partnership of Village Church is offering honor gift cards, Santo Domingo Coffee and Equal Exchange dark chocolate bars in Friendship Hall. For a \$10 donation, you may receive two dark chocolate bars in flavors of your choice, a 1 lb. bag of Dominican coffee or an “honor gift” card that you may share with someone in whose honor you make the donation. Proceeds benefit DRMP Child Health Promotion, a program that empowers children living in the poor sugar cane communities of the DR to live healthier lives.

Thanksgiving Basket Packing

Young families worked Saturday afternoon, Nov. 14, to put 200 baskets together for Food Pantry families this Thanksgiving. The kids pulled wagons around the pallets of food and filled bags with Thanksgiving items. The moms double checked the inventory of each sack and the dads hauled them off to storage. Everyone had a job and it was very efficient.

The Food Pantry distributed a total of 680 Thanksgiving baskets to 450 families from Nov. 18-23.



Joy Offering, Dec. 20

The proceeds from the Joy/Christmas Project offering are designated to either Joy or Project and if no designation is made, the amount is divided equally between the two. Joy offers support to retired church workers and eight Presbyterian schools and colleges. The Christmas Project provides assistance to local social service agencies who help others with holiday and emergency assistance needs. Envelopes for this offering have been placed in the Friendship Folders on each aisle.

Community Outreach Grant Process for 2016

The end of the fiscal year marks the approach of a new grant cycle at Village Church. Beginning Jan. 1, 2016, the Mission Committee will begin accepting applications for Village Mission funds. The deadline for applications is March 31. The focus areas for community outreach grants are as follows:

- Hunger
- Homelessness
- Childhood Education

This year, the committee is making a slight change to the process. Each year for the next three years, one of the focus areas will be limited to one large grant rather than multiple grants. In 2016, that focus area is hunger, and applicants will be evaluated for a grant of approximately \$20,000. The remaining two focus areas of homelessness and childhood education will offer multiple smaller grants in the range of \$2,000 to \$5,000 to a variety of nonprofits. This change allows Village Church to have a more substantial impact on one organization each year in addition to our Signature Mission grant award. It will incubate new and creative ideas while also continuing to maintain connections

with multiple worthwhile Kansas City nonprofits and to spread the Village message broadly. An organization selected for the one large grant will not be considered for a grant in the subsequent year.

Project grants submitted should also meet the following criteria:

- Be local in nature (metropolitan Kansas City)
- Be associated with an organization with 501(c)3 status
- Not duplicate services already provided in the same area
- Demonstrate potentially significant impact/outcomes
- Demonstrate cost effectiveness

The community outreach grant application form for 2016 is now available on the Village Church website under "Mission." We are also looking for ideas for a Signature Mission for the coming year. If you have any questions about the grant process or Signature Mission ideas, contact Deborah White in the Mission Office at 913-671-2369 or deborah.white@villagepres.org.

ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION COMMITTEE

Lights out? Christmas Lights Recycling in December

During the month of December and the first two weeks in January, the Environmental Action Committee will be partnering with Southeast Enterprises to recycle Christmas lights. Please bring your old or broken Christmas lights to church and place them in the barrel inside the south entrance of Village. Christmas Lights Recycling is a metro-wide project sponsored by Southeast Enterprises and its community partners, who collected over 40,000 pounds of holiday lights last year. This year their goal is 60,000 pounds. In addition to keeping lights out of the landfill, this recycling project has the benefit of providing challenging work for over 170 employees with intellectual and developmental disabilities. They remove the light receptacles from the wire and then separate and recycle each component.

Drop off locations include over 165 businesses, banks, schools, recycling centers, and a few churches. For the third year in a row, Village Church joins the list of churches. If you have questions, call Gary Tegtmeier at 913-362-8596.



2015 Village Church Advent Season Activities

Remembrance Service - 5 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 6, in Friendship Hall

Join us for a special service where we thank God for our loved ones who are deeply missed, when we give voice to the grief that lingers and the love that will never let go. This service includes prayers, beautiful music, time for reflection, candle lighting and the proclamation of God's holy, Christmas promise: that there is a light in this world that the darkness will never, ever overcome. If your loved one passed away during 2015 and Village Church was informed, his or her name will be included in the program.

Christmas Dinner - 5:30 p.m. Wednesday, Dec. 9, in Friendship Hall

Come enjoy a wonderful holiday meal – appetizers, carved roast beef, shrimp & grits, delicious side dishes and assorted cakes and cheesecakes for dessert all prepared by Chef Emily and her kitchen team. Cost is \$7 a person, \$3 for age 10 & under. Please stay for the Christmas Carol Sing at 6:45 p.m. Reservations are requested at stacy.fischer@villagepres.org or 913-671-2334.

The Christmas Carol Sing – 6:45 p.m. Wednesday, Dec. 9, in Friendship Hall

Come enjoy this program that includes holiday favorites, and some Christmas "Swing" along with traditional Christmas Carols for everyone to sing. Invite your friends and family. Admission is free. Call 913-671-2334 for more info.

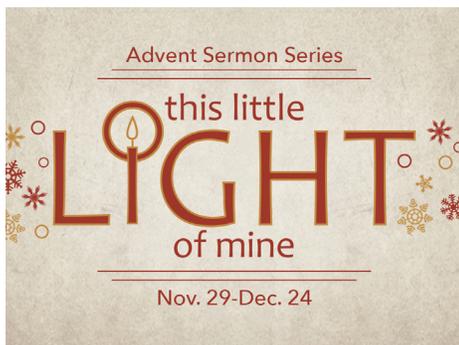
VCCFDC Christmas Sing & Pancake Dinner with Santa - 5 p.m. Friday, Dec. 11, in Friendship Hall

Come see our little ones from the Village Church Child & Family Development Center present their version of the nativity at 5 p.m. in Friendship Hall. VCCFDC will host its first "Pancake Dinner with Santa" immediately following the performance. Enjoy an all-you-can-eat pancakes by Chris Cakes. Tickets are \$10 for adults, \$8 for children age 2 and up. Children under 2 eat free. Get your child's picture taken with Santa. Contact Peggy Tingle at 913-671-2311 or email peggy.tingle@villagepres.org for tickets. Proceeds from the pancake dinner with Santa will help pay for new playground equipment for the VCCFDC.



Advent Sermon Series

This Little Light of Mine



John begins the Gospel this way, The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it. It is an honest confession of the hope we witness in the one who rested in manger straw. He is light; but there is darkness as well. His light shines not only before us, but through us. Given the pervasiveness of what John would call darkness in the world, our light can seem pretty small. But this little light is enough. That is our honest confession of hope. This Advent series will offer reflections on the power of God's light in our lives. If you need a little hope these days, you will want to be with us in worship. Check www.villagepres.org for more details.

Christmas Eve Worship Services in the Sanctuary - 5 p.m. Family Worship with the Family Christmas Pageant; 7 & 9 p.m. Traditional Candlelight Service; 11 p.m. Traditional Candlelight Communion Service.

15th Annual Tidings of Joy Concert - 3 and 6 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 20, in the Sanctuary

A beloved tradition in our community, "Tidings of Joy, A Celebration of the Season's Most Beautiful Music," will be presented by the Village Choir, Alegría and the Village Chamber Choir, with guest artists Barnaby Bright. The program includes favorite carols for choir and orchestra – and the audience gets to sing along!

The 'major work' of the concert is one of the most popular pieces of choral music, *Gloria*, by Antonio Vivaldi (the composer of the famous *Four Seasons*).

Tidings of Joy is free and open to the public.

This year's Tidings of Joy retiring offering will go to

the Thwake Village Partnership, a ministry of partnership with Village Church, the Heartland Presbytery and the people of Thwake, Kenya. Each year, members from around the Heartland Presbytery travel to Thwake Village to assist with creating a better quality of life

for the villagers. The Thwake Village Partnership has helped the people of Thwake, Kenya build schools, water wells, a Presbyterian church, a health clinic, and most recently, a Children's Home for young girls. Under the direction of Rev. Dr. David Nzioka; Village members John Hall, Scott Stanley, and Linda Alley, and other churches in the Heartland; the Thwake Village Partnership is making a real difference in the lives of our brothers and sisters in Kenya.



Organ Builders Need a Temporary Home

Remember how Mary and Joseph had to scrounge around for a place to deliver the wee baby Jesus, because there was no room at the inn? Well, come early 2016, there will be about 15 organ builders coming to Kansas City to deliver our (not so) wee baby pipe organ, and they will need a place to stay,



too! Do you have an empty nest, or a mother-in-law apartment, or a spare bedroom and would be willing to share such a space with the church during our organ installation? We will need to house the

builders for spans of time ranging from one week to one month, and you don't have to agree to a whole month!

If this sounds like something you could do, please contact Elisa Bickers (elisa.bickers@villagepres.org, 913- 671-2339).

**2nd Thursday Recital
12:15 p.m. Thursday, Dec. 10
Soprano Jayne Siemens**



Join us at 12:15 p.m. Thursday, Dec. 10, in the Village Chapel, when soprano Jayne Siemens will perform "Christmas Laments & Celebrations" accompanied by Mark Ball on piano.

Jayne first garnered attention at age five as the best squirrel in the Wichita Children's Theater improvisational class where she also made her professional stage debut in fourth grade as Little Boy Blue with actress Helen Hayes. She discovered her singing voice that same year, which led to the Interlochen Academy of the Arts in high school, a scholarship to the University of Michigan and a master's degree in opera from the Guildhall School of Music & Drama in London where she was a Fulbright Scholar. She performed leading roles at the Lyric Opera of Chicago.

Jayne has sung with the Greater Miami Opera, Bern Switzerland Stadtheater and the South Bank Theater in London.

Christmas Poinsettia Memorials

A poinsettia that decorates the church this Advent season may be purchased in memory of a loved one. Make your check (\$10) payable to Village Church, clearly printing the memorial name with your donation. Send to the church, Attn: Janice Gill, by Tuesday, Dec. 15.

Help Deliver a Poinsettia

On Sunday, Dec. 13, poinsettias will line the hallway near the Receptionist area at the south entrance where you may pick up cards with names and addresses of people who would greatly appreciate the gift of a poinsettia.

Come to the Receptionist Desk between worship services on Dec. 13, choose one or more cards and take the poinsettia(s) with you at the same time. The poinsettia(s) should be delivered anytime between Dec. 13 & 15. Thank you for helping us with this special gift for those who aren't able to be with us at church this holy season.



Taizé Worship Service Sunday, Dec. 13

Join us for the Taizé worship service at 5 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 13, in the Chapel. Modeled after worship from the Taizé community in France, the service includes song, silence and scripture — all experienced at a quiet, reflective pace.

Rev. Len Carrell Installed Sunday, Nov. 22

Friendship Hall was packed for the installation ceremony of Rev. Len Carrell, associate pastor in Pastoral Care. During the presentation of the gifts of office, members of the Associate Pastor Nominating Committee of Village Church presented Len his pastor's robe (a gift from Len's home church, The Brick Presbyterian Church in the City of New York), and his stole, a gift from his parents Ed and Karen Carrell.



Giving Permission

In elementary school, I had a brief but intense career as a Christmas criminal. My third grade class was scheduled for a field trip to see *The Nutcracker* at the Fox Theater in downtown Detroit. It was mere days before Christmas break, we didn't have to wear our school uniforms, and there would be hot chocolate afterward. I was nearly delirious with eight-year-old holiday anticipation. My friends and I were in agreement: this would be the Best Day Ever.

There was only one problem: I forgot to get my permission slip signed ahead of time. On the day it was due, I looked down in horror at the blank line where my mother's signature should have been. I grabbed my pen, glanced around furtively, and signed her name with a flourish. Just like that, I gave myself permission to travel with my classmates.

Unfortunately, it's not always that easy. We can't always do it for ourselves. So this Christmas season, the Pastoral Care and Counseling Department is giving you a gift: we're giving you permission.

We're giving you permission to be sad. Holidays can be tough times. Christmas carols insist that this is "the most wonderful time of the year," but for many people, that just isn't true. After all, a season that emphasizes friends and family can sharpen the ache we feel over a loved one who isn't at the table for Christmas dinner. A season full of angels singing and bells ringing can intensify the silent struggles of our hearts. So hear this: if you aren't in a celebratory place, that is okay. Whether your grief is brand new or years old, give yourself space to honor your feelings. The Light of the World is coming. Jesus isn't offended by your sadness. After all, he comes to redeem a broken world.

We're also giving you permission to be happy. This sounds a little silly, doesn't it? Who needs permission to be happy? You might be surprised. "I feel like it's not fair for me to be happy," she said. "When I find myself laughing or enjoying something, I catch myself. How can I be happy when [my husband] isn't here? It feels like being happy would mean I don't miss him anymore." This isn't an unusual comment. So often, those who are grieving feel as though any spark of joy dishonors their loss or their concern for others' pain. Know that this is not true. It's okay to find happiness. It doesn't lessen your love, your loss, or your concern. It is a reminder of the gospel truth we claim: there is a Light that no amount of darkness can overcome.

—Rev. Jenny McDevitt

Village Church Mission Sewing Is Going National

This fall, Rev. Diane Quaintance got an email from Carol Gruber, a freelance writer for *Horizons: The Magazine for Presbyterian Women*. "Carol sat next to Katherine Caputo at one of the workshops at the PW Gathering in Minneapolis last summer," said Diane. "Katherine told her about PW's mission outreach, so she wanted to find out what the mission projects were at Village. I replied that we PW's did lots of mission work and gave her a one paragraph description of two of them: Mission Sewing and Operation Breakthrough. After some discussion, she chose Mission Sewing, so I hooked her up with Mission Sewing Coordinator Edie Hultman."

Carol has spoken with Edie and Karen Stone about Mission Sewing of Village Church. In an email to both women she said, "I so enjoyed learning about the Women's Mission Sewing and the enormous amount of love that is extended by gifts you send out into the area. I'm pleased to bring this project to the attention of *Horizons* readers. Maybe they will be inspired to begin a sewing project, however large or small." Congratulations Mission Sewing of Village!



WWS Ladies Tie the Knot for our Signature Mission

On Friday, Nov. 20, Women with Spirit (WWS) had a Knot and Tie blanket gathering. The blankets being assembled will go to infants and toddlers in the DeLaSalle PACES program, our Signature Mission. It was a huge success! Fourteen women participated and completed 20 blankets.

After the first of the year, this WWS group will tour and present the blankets to the DeLaSalle daycare.

Join American Public Square as it comes to Village Church for the second event in its Faith Fellowship series. We will look at the state of religious literacy in contemporary America: why we need it, why we don't have it, and what it means to be religiously literate. Rev. Brian Ellison will moderate a panel of local religious leaders discussing the issue and answering questions from the audience.

Thursday, Dec. 10, in Friendship Hall, 7:30 a.m. Breakfast, 8-9 a.m. Program

Go to www.americansquare.org or call 816-235-5067 to register. Test your own religious literacy by taking the Pew Research Center Religious Knowledge Quiz at <http://www.pewforum.org/files/2013/05/religious-knowledge-quiz-handout.pdf>.



The Spring 2016 Village U Catalog ... now available online and a few printed copies throughout the church!



Registration for Village U 2016 spring term:

- Registration begins on Monday, Dec. 7, for Village Church members
- Registration begins on Monday, Dec. 14, for the general public

Village U Highlights Spring 2016

Over 125 new opportunities for adults are coming in the Spring 2016 Village U catalog. Here are some highlights:

Sunday morning classes bring the opportunity to tap into the wisdom of an outstanding faculty: Rev. Dwight Tawney, Dr. David May, Dr. Lonnie Lee, Dr. Don Wilson, Dr. John Borden share their knowledge and passion for the Bible and history as they draw connections to our contemporary world.

Day Trips for spring include Kansas City's newly renovated Toy and Miniatures Museum, the Kansas Museum of History in Topeka, and the beautiful Powell Gardens.

Gus Breyspraak will explore *Short Stories By Jesus*, Amy-Jill Levine's popular new book on the parables. Levine, who will be the Visiting Scholar on March 4 & 5, shows how Jesus told short stories not to make his followers comfortable, but to provoke and challenge them and us.

There are two exceptional opportunities for parents of teenagers: the Ali Kemp Foundation will lead a Self-Defense for Girls and Women class, and Rev. Zach Walker will address the often difficult but extremely important topic of Sex and Sexuality in Adolescence.

Other classes to look for include a genealogy class, Piecing Your Family Puzzle Together, a moving and inspiring look at the Holocaust with Bill Tammeus and Rabbi Jacques Cukierkorn, stimulating monthly editions of Village Talk, monthly fun Singing Before Supper and dozens of opportunities to exercise, be creative and share faith and life with others.



Adult Sunday Morning Classes

9:30 a.m. - The **Faith Journey** class will be led by Judy Matthewson during the month of December. The book study will be Marcus Borg's *Convictions: How I Learned What Matters Most* where he surveys the most significant conversations and personalities that shaped his life, and presents his convictions about the faith and its role in the 21st century. Room 230.

Cloud of Witnesses - The Birth of Jesus: History and Lore

In the familiar stories of the gospels, Jesus was born in Bethlehem but was raised in Nazareth. While archaeology has shown these towns to be dramatically different from each other, they both figure prominently in the life of Jesus and the stories and legends that grew up around him. What can we really know about Jesus birth and his early days in Nazareth? We invite you to join this class, led by Rev. Dwight Tawney Dec. 6 through 20, as we journey through the history and lore of Jesus' early life. Room 127.

Growing Together class is not meeting during the month of December and will resume on Jan. 3.

The **Village Forum** class on Dec. 6, "People of Faith: Christianity in America," will focus on the story of how Christianity shaped life in the United States from the Pilgrims to the present. Discussion will be led by Gus Breyspraak and other class members. Rev. Brian Ellison will teach "Rejoice! Reflections on Four Seasonal Hymns," on Dec. 13 & 20. This is a series that looks at *O Come, O Come Emmanuel*, *Silent Night*, *O Little Town of Bethlehem* and *Hark the Herald Angels Sing*. We will discuss theology, history and feelings about each song. Room 126.

10:45 a.m.

The **Inquirers** class will begin a new study topic Dec. 6—reading and discussing author and theology professor Amy-Jill Levine's book, *Short Stories by Jesus*. On Dec. 20, a special annual commemorative study of Dr. Lindsey Pherigo's classic presentation of *The Origins of Christmas* (audio-tape presentation) will be the topic. Room 124.

New Village Little Ones

Join Children and Family Ministry in welcoming the following little ones born recently: John Richardson Fisher (Taryn and Craig Fisher, parents); Owen Alexander Nazar (Kelsey and Andrew Nazar, parents); Annabelle Rose Stephens (Sandra and Kyle Stephens, parents) and Evelyn Ann Van Bockern (Kate and Jeff Van Bockern, parents). A rose will be placed on the communion table Dec. 20 in honor of all these new little ones.



Story Time and Crafts

We gather at 9:30 a.m. the first Tuesday of the month for Story Time, finger plays, songs and movement activities in the Children’s Library and crafts in Room 203. Themes vary month to month. Email Cheryl.couch-thomas@villagepres.org or call 913-671-2355 for more information.

Club V6/ 6th Grade Fellowship

Mark your calendars for the next fellowship event for 6th grade. On Dec. 6, 6th Graders will meet for a very special “secret mission.” More information will be sent home soon. Call Cheryl at 913-671-235 for more information.

No Church School for Preschool Age Children and Elementary Age Children on Sunday, Dec. 20.

Thank You from the Village Church Preschool

From Terri Gaedert, Preschool Director

The National Association for the Education of Young Children’s (NAEYC) Annual Conference and Expo is the largest and most important early childhood education event in the world. Every year, close to 10,000 educators, policy makers and program leaders gather to discover emerging trends and research, sharpen their skill set, and network with their peers in a collaborative environment.



This year, thanks to a grant from Village Church Endowment Trust, two Village Preschool teachers attended the conference in Orlando, Florida. From Nov. 18-21, Sarah McKee and Anita Menke represented Village Preschool as they participated in a variety of workshops, listened to keynote speakers and surveyed new materials in the early education field. A week later they shared their experiences and insights with the rest of the Preschool staff as part of our Staff Development program.

We are especially grateful to Village Church for providing this learning opportunity during our Accreditation Self-Study year, as we collectively work to further our goals and provide the best learning environment possible for young hearts and minds!

Village Worship Service Radio Broadcast

Radio Broadcast Time Switches from 9:30 a.m. to 8 a.m. starting Jan. 3

Same station: 1660 AM, KMBZ, the Business Channel





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PERIODICALS POSTAGE
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The Giver that keeps **ON** Giving

Remember, through your thoughtful annual commitment pledge to Village Church, you will impact the lives of thousands who need your help!

If you still need to make your **2016 annual commitment**, consider completing your form online on our website villagepres.org

OR

you may return your commitment card to the church.

For more information, contact Molly Sirridge, 913-671-2325.



VILLAGE
COMMITMENT

VPC Service Times

Traditional — 8, 9:30, 11 a.m.
In Friendship Hall

Back in the Sanctuary on Dec. 13

The Gathering — 10:45 a.m.
In the Youth Loft/Room 333

No Gathering on Dec. 13

We will return to Friendship Hall
on Jan. 3.

Radio Broadcast

**Sundays at 9:30 a.m. on
1660 AM KMBZ,**

The Business Channel

**Broadcast time switches to
8 a.m. starting Jan. 3**

www.villagepres.org

Food Pantry & Clothes Closet

Drop-Off Hours

10 a.m.–2:30 p.m. M-F

6–7:30 p.m. Thursday night

9:30–11:30 a.m. Sat. morning

IN MEMORY

Gretchen Gill

Betty Glover

Richard “Dick” Hucke

J. Wells Hull

Corine Wise