

## Her Heart Beats for Families

Village Church welcomes Brooke Latas as the new director of Children & Family Ministry. Erica Brune, chair of the Associate Pastor Nominating Committee charged with finding either an associate pastor or director of Children and Family Ministry, shared with Session March 4, "Brooke was our unanimous choice for recommendation. Brooke said in her interview, 'My heart beats for families.' That was certainly our impression." Michelle O'Neill, also on the APNC, said, "I couldn't be more thrilled about Brooke on the team at Village Church and what's ahead in Children and Family ministry. She is uniquely gifted to do this work."



Brooke comes to us after working for six years in children's ministry at Heartland Community Church in Olathe. While in that role, Brooke managed 100 volunteers who staffed the classrooms, which were filled with over 650 children each Sunday, from infants through sixth grade. While at Heartland, she also wrote content, taught and preached.

Brooke grew up a Methodist in Gladstone, Missouri, graduating from North Kansas City High School. She received her Bachelor of Science in Art Education from Kansas State University where she was an Academic All-American on the Kansas State Tennis Team.

After graduating from K-State, Brooke was an art teacher as well as a tennis coach, a basketball coach and a Young Life leader at Lee's Summit North High School.

"Because it was a brand-new school, I had the amazing opportunity to build a tennis program from the ground up," said Brooke. "I loved teaching and coaching, but ultimately, I cherished the opportunity to encourage high school kids to become good human beings."

Brooke is a wife and mother and has many friends here at Village. Rev. Dr. Rodger Nishioka said, "When you meet Brooke, two things will quickly become evident. First, she has a deep and abiding faith in Jesus Christ and second, she has a deep and abiding love for children and families. Further, she understands the power and gifts of the church. I am eager to see how God will ignite our ministry with children and their families through Brooke's ministry among us."

"I grew up in a family that loved being together," shared Brooke. "I still am very close with both my brothers and their families, as well as my parents. My kids know they are my heart and soul and I love hanging out with them. My parents felt the same way when I was growing up. 'Family as our number one priority' was modeled well for me when I was a kid."

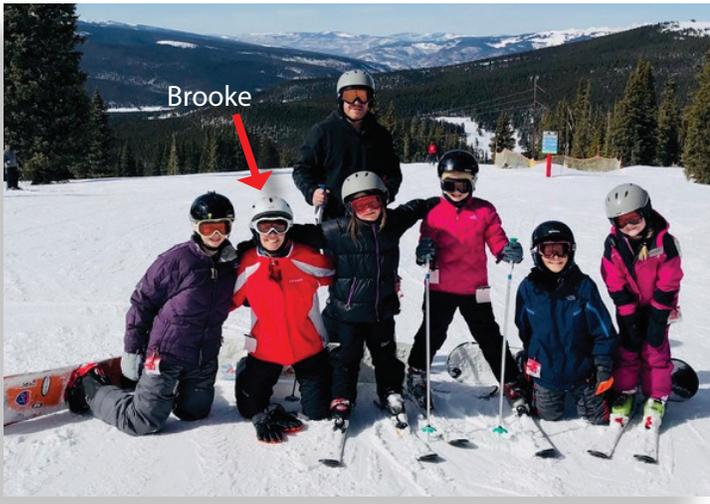
Brooke and her kids love to play outside. "We all snowboard and we absolutely love the mountains. We just got back from snowboarding in Colorado over spring break. We also love to play basketball and tennis together, as well as ride electric scooters, bikes and skateboards."



**Brooke joins Kate Ruecker and Kenyon Vrooman in the Children & Family Ministry office.**

**Continued**

## WELCOME BROOKE LATAS



When Brooke is not playing with her kids, she's an active volunteer in her community. She volunteers with a local breast cancer charity called Bra Couture KC and enjoys volunteering at her kids' elementary school. She also spent many years coaching their basketball teams and leading their Girl Scout troops.

Brooke loves that Village Church named its Children's Ministry program Children & Family Ministry. "There is something about tapping into families, especially in ministry, that I'm really excited about in this job. The hours that we have in kids' lives as teachers, pastors, church staff and volunteers is miniscule compared to what their parents have. The idea of walking alongside families in ways that encourages their faith to take root – not only for the kids, but also for the parents – is something I'm really looking

forward to figuring out how to do well. We want to discern tangible ways to create a seamless transition between what kids are learning and experiencing on Sundays and how they are experiencing their school days. When faith conversations spill over into our lives beyond Sundays and begin to influence our thought processes and decisions throughout the week, we're on a different playing field."

Brooke is also a writer and author. She spent the past year writing a manuscript in collaboration with Mindy Corporon, whose dad and son were killed in the 2014 religious hate crime at the Jewish Community Center in Overland Park. "Mindy is a powerful woman of faith who works tirelessly to honor her lost loved ones. I am grateful for the opportunity to help her tell her courageous and deeply inspiring story. She is doing everything she can to infuse our city (and our world) with more love and less hate. I have deep admiration and respect for Mindy, and she has become a dear friend."

Friends are like family to Brooke. She was deeply grateful for friends and family in 2017 when she endured one of the most difficult seasons of her life, a breast cancer diagnosis. During the following year and a half, Brooke had three surgeries and chemo. "I had several friends who were by my side constantly. Between my family and my friends, they rallied to get me to countless doctor's appointments, chemo infusions, appointments to get shots and blood work, etc. They'd show up with balloons and gifts and hats for me to wear. They'd be wearing goofy stuff just to make me laugh. My friends are also very close to my kids and provided support for them. That's another thing I look forward to exploring in the realm of Children & Family Ministry. How do we lock arms as communities of families – in order to encourage and support each other? What does it look like to surround ourselves with people who are embedded in the trenches with us?"

"Today's culture, propelled by social media, encourages us to live seemingly perfect lives on the outside. And although we feel like our phones are keeping us connected, the data has determined the inverse to be true. The loneliness epidemic is at an all-time high. It's alarming. We must be courageous enough to connect below the surface, but it requires being willing to expose our flaws and imperfections. It seems like our churches should be the safest places for us to unravel the perfection and invite each other into our real lives."

Brooke understands how her hard times have been especially hard on her children. "My kids have lived through some pretty daunting challenges in their little lives. Sometimes, as parents, we feel like we are failing them. But thankfully, what I've experienced with my kids is that their character is different because of some of the stuff we've had to walk through, one of them being cancer. During that season when our family battled breast cancer, my kids lived a year and a half with a very different mom than they were accustomed to. I didn't look like myself. I had no hair. I had no energy. And we were all scared. And we had to figure out where God was in that. That's a hard and complex theological concept to wrap our heads and hearts around as adults, so no doubt it's incredibly difficult for kids. But we wrestled through it openly together. And it feels like those tough seasons have shaped their faith journeys to be truly their own. They've had to lean in and cling to God a little more than most kids their age. Many years ago, I began praying for 'resilient kids of character.' When you get to know them, I think you'll say, 'Yep, I think God is answering those prayers.'"

**Continued**

Brooke says she is excited to do authentic life with people at Village Church. "If we're honest, life is hard. Being able to walk through life together and learn from one another and lean on each other is one of the most beautiful parts of it. I'm not here to have all the answers. But I look forward to walking with people through the good and the bad - asking questions and praying, listening and wrestling alongside them. The reality is, we're all battling something. And we all need support. I feel deeply grateful to embark on this new adventure at Village. This church is filled with the kindest, warmest, most welcoming folks. I'm truly honored to be on board."

## Children's Summer Camps

There are still some openings in our Creations by Kids (CbK) summer camps. Contact Debbie Smith, CbK Summer Camp director, with questions at [debbie.smith@villagepres.org](mailto:debbie.smith@villagepres.org) or 913-671-2379. **Vacation Bible School** registration will be online beginning May 13. Get details and registration forms for all the Children & Family Ministry summer offerings at [villagepres.org/summercamp2019](http://villagepres.org/summercamp2019).

## Village on Mission Preschool Enrollment

Village on Mission Preschool is currently enrolling for the 2019-2020 school year. We have space available in our three-year-old program for children who will be three on or before Sept. 1, 2019. Please contact Sarah McKee for more information at [sarah.mckee@villagepres.org](mailto:sarah.mckee@villagepres.org) or 913-671-2338.

## Kids Day Out

We still have some openings for our Village Kids Day Out program for children ages 2 yrs.-3 yrs. from 9:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m. on Thursdays. Our program runs from Sept. 5, 2019 through May 14, 2020. Your child will be cared for in a safe, nurturing and fun environment. Tuition is \$125 a month plus a one-time registration fee of \$50. Call Marjean at 913-671-2322 or Pam at 913-671-2352 for more information.

## Palm Sunday, April 14

Everyone loves watching children process into the Sanctuary waving palm branches. Please have Preschool and Kids' Kingdom children arrive 20 minutes early to Sunday school classes on this day. Look for an email from Children & Family Ministry with more details.

Once again, the palms used in the Palm Parade are from Eco-Palms. Eco-Palms uses palms that are sustainably harvested and fairly-traded. The cost of the palms directly benefits the communities where they are harvested. This means young girls can go to school, women can find work and support their families and communities are strengthened. It is just a small step we are making toward an environmentally and socially responsible celebration.

## Upcoming Family Worship Sundays

There will be no Sunday school for Preschoolers and Kids' Kingdom (K-6) on Easter Sunday. This gives our volunteer teachers a time to worship with family. Child care will be available for infants through 4 years old. Regular Sunday school will resume on April 28.

## Share the Good News-Volunteer to Teach

Make a difference in the life of a child here at Village. Volunteer to teach in the Preschool or Kids' Kingdom (grades K-6) Sunday school. Sharing the good news of our faith story by creating ongoing relationships with the children of the church is a rich and rewarding experience. Call 913-671-2350 to learn more.

## Baptisms

Future baptism dates are May 12 and July 21. To register your child for a future baptism date, visit [www.villagepres.org/baptisms](http://www.villagepres.org/baptisms). Call the Children and Family Ministry office at 913-671-2350 with any questions.

## LENTEN SERMON SERIES

### Lenten Sermon Series: Character Is Always Chosen

In these weeks that lead us, once again, to the celebration of the resurrection of Jesus Christ, we will reflect on who we are called to be as we take our own journey toward the fullness of resurrection. "Who we are called to be" is the point of this sermon series. In his book, "The Road to Character," David Brooks says, "Most of us have clearer strategies for how to achieve career success than we do for how to develop a profound character." There is wisdom in Brook's remarks, as character is not something that just happens; character is always chosen. Physical growth happens naturally. Spiritual growth requires discipline, intention and choice. We will reflect on some of the strategies for choosing character in this sermon series.

April 7 Character Requires Hope

April 14 Palm Sunday: Humility May be Out of Style, but Not for Us

April 21 Easter: The Possibility of Getting it Right

## HOLY WEEK WORSHIP SERVICES

**Palm Sunday** – Children's Palm Parade at the 9:30 a.m. service (both campuses)

**Maundy Thursday, April 18** – 6 p.m. in Friendship Hall. We'll worship around the table like our early disciples; 7 p.m. traditional service in the Village Church on Mission Sanctuary

**Good Friday, April 19** – 7 p.m. at Village on Mission & Village on Antioch

**Easter Sunday, April 21 – Village on Mission:** Traditional worship services at 8, 9:30 and 11:15 a.m. in the Sanctuary. There will be an additional 9:30 a.m. service in Friendship Hall with Rev. Dr. Rodger Nishioka preaching. The Gathering (alternative worship) is at 5 p.m. in Friendship Hall.

**Village on Antioch:** traditional worship at 9:30 a.m., followed by an indoor Easter Egg Hunt

Village Church on Mission will provide free shuttle bus service from 8:45 a.m.-12:45 p.m. Easter morning. Buses will pick up at the Blue Moose parking lot at the Shops of Prairie Village and drop off at the west entrance of the church.

There is no Children's Sunday School at Village on Mission Easter morning. Child care will be available for infants up to 3 years old for all Holy Week services.

## MISSION

### Food Pantry & Clothes Closet

April is here - which means that the Clothes Closet is now accepting spring and summer clothing - all sizes - clean and gently used. As you update your warm weather wardrobes, please remember the Closet's clients. The Food Pantry is asking for canned tuna and canned chicken in April for its clients. Please bring a can of chicken or tuna with you each Sunday - the Pantry has plenty of shelf space. Your donations make this mission the success that it is!

### Mark Your Calendars! Canned Fruit Sunday is May 5

Our Village Food Pantry families each get at least one can of fruit each month. Please be generous with your donations on Canned Fruit Sunday, May 5. Donation drop-off boxes are at the north and south main entrances of the church and the north entrance near the crib room.

## Answering Our Call to “Be the Church” in the D.R.

By Julie Foster

It started at the 2017 Celebration Dominicana, the annual fundraiser for the DRMP. My dear friend Patty Zender and I were moved by DRMP’s purposeful work and decided that we would attempt to “Be the Church” together in the D.R. And now, for the past two years, we’ve been a part of their January team, which provides orthopedic surgery and medical care in the



bateyes (communities of Haitian sugarcane plantation workers and their families). Out of the 34 total participants, six were Village Church members: Ginny and Dr. Scott Beall, Joy Biard, Pete Tatman, Patty and me. Making it extra special was that this was Joy’s first DRMP trip!

Each morning our batey team loaded the bus with supplies and drove into the sugarcane groves to different bateyes. We could see Haitian workers cutting sugarcane with machetes, their overseers on horseback watching them from a distance, and teams of oxen pulling carts full of cane to a weighing station. Once we arrived at the batey, we set up work stations in the church or school. There was no electricity or water, yet windows allowed light, and a soft breeze floated through the room.

Three American physicians and pediatric nurse practitioner worked alongside a Dominican physician and dentist. Because of limited access to healthy foods, hypertension is widespread. An outreach program working closely with the DRMP, Light a Candle, provides medication for and monitors blood pressure carefully.

Patty and I gave deworming medication to children and adults. We worked with our interpreter to determine age and administered the medication accordingly. The children flocked to our station to take their medication where they could also jump rope and play games.

From the words of King Solomon, “In the day of prosperity be joyful, in the day of adversity consider.” The people of the Dominican Republic are faced with adversity every day. They are strong, they are resilient, and they are filled with abundant joy... may they continue to prosper.



Through the Dominican Republic Medical Partnership of Village Church (DRMP), a team of 34 doctors, nurses and non-medical participants spent a week this January in La Romana, D.R. providing orthopedic surgery and medical care. For more information, please contact Lora Garrison, director of international mission, at [lora.garrison@villagepres.org](mailto:lora.garrison@villagepres.org) or 913-671-2390.

### Blood Drive at Village Church on Mission 11 a.m.-6 p.m. Tuesday, April 23

Village Church on Mission will host a blood drive from 11 a.m.-6 p.m. on Tuesday, April 23, in Rooms 132 & 133. Visit [esavealifenow.org](http://esavealifenow.org) and use sponsor code of “villagepres” to make an appointment online or stop by our registration table in Friendship Hall between 9 a.m. and noon April 7 and 14. Contact Ann Colston at 913-722-0165 or [acolston1113@gmail.com](mailto:acolston1113@gmail.com) for more information.

## One Great Hour of Sharing

For 70 years, Presbyterians have joined together in an ecumenical effort to share God's love through ministries that provide relief to those affected by disasters through Presbyterian Disaster Assistance (PDA), food for the hungry and support toward the self-development of poor and oppressed communities.

One Great Hour of Sharing has impacted communities around the world. For example, just days after Hurricane Maria made landfall in September 2017, PDA grants arrived and immediately began to help provide items such as food, water, diapers and medical supplies.

"Presbyterian Disaster Assistance steps in to provide relief in the midst of chaos," says Deborah White, Village Church director of mission. "By supporting One Great House of Sharing, one can efficiently and effectively provide emergency support where it is most needed through trained Presbyterian relief staff."

Gifts from One Great Hour of Sharing on Palm Sunday, April 14, go to the following PC(USA) ministries:

- 32% for Presbyterian Disaster Assistance working alongside communities as they recover and find hope after natural and human-caused disasters.
- 36% for Presbyterian Hunger Program supporting initiatives that create sustainable food systems and alleviate root causes of poverty.
- 32% for Self-Development of People providing resources and education to oppressed and disadvantaged communities working to overcome poverty and injustice through initiatives they own and from which they directly benefit.

Donation envelopes are available at the Village Church reception desks and in the pews.

## MUSIC MINISTRY

### **"In Paradisum" Fauré Requiem and Poulenc Organ Concerto 3 p.m. Sunday, April 7 - Village Church on Mission Sanctuary**

Please join us for our spring concert featuring the Village Chamber Choir & Orchestra and Fauré's "Requiem" with organist Dr. Elisa Bickers performing Poulenc's "Organ Concerto." Admission is free. A free-will offering will be taken for the Avenue of Life, which offers a myriad of social services in Kansas City, Kansas.

### **Second Thursday Recital April 11**

We invite you to our next Second Thursday Recital from 12:15-12:45 p.m. on Thursday, April 11, when Dr. Roseann Penner Kaufman will play the Village Church on Mission pipe organ. Dr. Kaufman is minister of music and worship for Rainbow Mennonite Church in Kansas City, Kansas. Her program will include "Praeludium" by Dietrich Buxtehude, "Andante Sostenuto" by Charles-Marie Widor, "Veni Creator Spiritus" by Philip Swanson, for which she will be joined by her husband, trombonist Mitch Kaufman, and a toccata on the tune "Now the Green Blade Riseth" by Marcel Dupré. Admission is free.

### **Kansas City Wind Symphony- "Top of the Pops" 7 p.m. Sunday, May 5 - Village on Mission Sanctuary**

This season-closing concert titled, "Top of the Pops," will feature a mix of popular style music from John Philip Sousa, John Williams, Eric Whitacre and more. Admission is free.

### Weekly Wednesday Dinners

Dine before or after your class. Salad bar opens at 5:15 p.m.; hot food buffet is open 5:30-6:30 p.m. These dinners offer an opportunity for everyone to enjoy a well-balanced, convenient meal. Full meal with salad bar & dessert is \$7. Salad bar & dessert is \$6. Children ages 4-10 are \$3 and children age 3 and under are no charge. Contact Liz Middleton (913-671-2359) or [liz.middleton@villagepres.org](mailto:liz.middleton@villagepres.org) for reservations by noon Monday.



**Menu:**

- April 10** baked potato bar, deli sandwiches
- April 17** Holy Week—Italian roast chicken, eggplant Parmesan, pasta with tomatoes, vegetable
- April 24** Easter—Drive-in night! Burgers, hot dogs, onion rings, etc.
- May 1** Morning Stars concert—Cinco de Mayo—nacho bar, chicken fajitas, veggies

### Village Golf Outings Resume 8 a.m. Tuesday, April 23

Do you like a casual golf outing? Then, these outings are for you! The monthly outings are a four- person scramble format and run April thru October. All are invited. You do not need to be a member of Village Church. The next outing is at Deer Creek on Tuesday, April 23. Tee Time is 8 a.m. RSVP by April 15 to Brad Steil at 913-469 5683 or [bradsteil@everestkc.net](mailto:bradsteil@everestkc.net).

### Art & Hors d'oeuvres

#### 5:30-7 p.m. Friday, April 26, Village Church on Mission

Enjoy artwork by artists of all ages, amateur to professional, and children from Village on Mission Preschool, Kids Day Out and the Village Church Child and Development Center. We'll have hors d'oeuvres and live jazz music by the Aaron Linscheid Trio. Admission is free. Call Connectional Ministries at 913-671-2331 for more information.



### Believing & Belonging: A Three-Part Series for New Members 6:30-8 p.m. Tuesdays, April 30-May 14

These three gatherings in Room 232 will help you...grow in your faith in Jesus Christ, meet others and discover ways to be an active participant in Village Church.

**April 30 - Session One: Building Tour & Making New Friends** - Village Presbyterian Church is 70-years-old this year. We will learn more about the story of Village Church, learn our way around the building, and meet others.

**May 7 - Session Two: Glorifying God with our Gifts** - We will identify some of our own spiritual gifts and identify ways we can share those gifts through the ministries of Village Church. We will engage in the top five spiritual practices that help persons grow as disciples of Jesus Christ.

**May 14 - Session Three: Conversation with Rev. Tom Are** - Participants will have the opportunity to share conversation with our senior pastor. Now in his 16th year at Village Church, Rev. Are brings over 30 years of experience in pastoral ministry.

RSVP to [sunni.battin@villagepres.org](mailto:sunni.battin@villagepres.org) or 913-671-2333. RSVP for free child care (seven days advance notice required) to [marjean.lindquist@villagepres.org](mailto:marjean.lindquist@villagepres.org) or 913-671-2322.



## Village Church Session Actions...

### At the March 4 meeting of the Session, the elders of the church...

- Called Ms. Brooke Latas to serve as the director of children and family ministry. She will begin her ministry at Village Church on Monday, March 18. Erica Brune, chair of the Associate Pastor Nominating Committee, made the recommendation on behalf of the committee.
- Called the Rev. Sally Wright to serve full time as interim pastor for pastoral care. Rev. Wright currently serves as the acting associate executive for the Heartland Presbytery. She will begin her ministry at Village Church on Tuesday, April 9. Stacey Janssen, chair of the Personnel Committee, made the recommendation on behalf of the Interim Pastor For Pastoral Care Task Force.
- Approved the Ministry Information Form for the associate pastor for pastoral care positions. The form, once approved by the Heartland Presbytery, will be circulated nationally. The Session also agreed to ask the congregation to elect the current Associate Pastor Nominating Committee to search for the second pastor in pastoral care.
- Approved grants from the Endowment Trust to support the Meneilly Visiting Scholar program, the Feast Spirituality Project, the Discover Your Calling Leadership project, a Stephen Ministry Continuing Education Seminar and a concert around the Gathering featuring Liz Longley.
- Received a resolution from the Village Church Social Witness and Advocacy Task Force to affirm universal background checks for all gun purchases. The Session will vote on the resolution at its next meeting. Charlotte Davison, Julie Sykes and Carol Thrane presented the resolution on behalf of the task force.
- Received a final report on repairs to the Sanctuary ceiling coffers. Of the 120 coffers, 100 needed repair. The final cost was shared among five parties including the contractor, architect, plaster subcontractor, acoustician and the church. The final cost to Village Church was around \$22,000, which was less than anticipated.
- Shared their deep appreciation for the Rev. Len Carrell for his service as associate pastor for pastoral care. Senior Pastor Tom Are, Jr., noted that the next Session meeting Len attends will be at the First Presbyterian Church of Columbia, Tennessee, and Len will be the moderator. Tom shared his own personal appreciation for Len's ministry at Village. In turn, Len expressed his gratitude and love for the Village Church family.
- Closed the meeting with prayer noting all persons on the prayer list. The next meeting of the Session will take place at the Village on Antioch campus on April 1.

**What is the Session?** The Session is the governing board of the congregation. The 29 elders are elected by the congregation. Each one serves for a three-year term. Currently the Session is comprised of 13 women and 16 men. Two of the elders are young people. The Session meets monthly except for July. The Rev. Tom Are, Jr. is moderator of the Session. Pastors and directors also attend the meetings.

### **Women of Wisdom Lunch at Thelma's Kitchen**

Come with Women of Wisdom (WOW) in the Village van for lunch at Thelma's Kitchen (3101 Troost) on Tuesday, April 30. Thelma's Kitchen is Village's Signature Mission. Soup, salad, an entrée, dessert and drink—delicious food and warm hospitality, sharing a meal as a community with neighbors from both sides of Troost. The van departs from VOM's south entrance at 11:30 a.m., returning by 2:30 p.m. RSVP by April 29 to Marvie Sneegas at [sneegi@kc.rr.com](mailto:sneegi@kc.rr.com), 913-209-9608.

### **Mission Sewing**

Mission Sewing is getting low on fabric. We need Christmas fabric, fabric in one-yard lengths in cotton and cotton blends suitable for children's dresses, large adult dresses and various shapes and sizes of pillows. Items can be dropped off at the switchboard or brought to Room 115 from 8 a.m.-3 p.m. on any Tuesday. Call Edie Hultman at 913-432-3515 for more information.

### **Congratulations Edie Hultman Named 2019 Adult Volunteer of the Year at Shawnee Mission Medical Center**

Village Church Mission Sewing coordinator Edie Hultman was selected from over 600 volunteers at Shawnee Mission Medical Center (now AdventHealth Shawnee Mission) for the honor of "2019 Adult Volunteer of the Year." Edie, a retired nurse, has volunteered over 12,000 hours at the hospital during the past 17 years. She brings the items made for the hospital by Mission Sewing to the hospital on Fridays. She has done a variety of things as a hospital volunteer, from pushing the patients back to their rooms in their beds after surgery, to serving in the surgery waiting room.

The hospital's Volunteer Services staff made a surprise visit to Mission Sewing on Tuesday, March 19, showering Edie with flowers, gifts and cupcakes for all of Mission Sewing to celebrate Edie as "Volunteer of the Year." Edie says she was blown away and overwhelmed by receiving the honor. "Edie is a delight to work with and is very humble," said Peggy Todd, manager of the hospital's Volunteer Services. "She is amazing and knows what volunteerism is all about – giving from the heart. We love and adore, Edie. We are so glad to give her this honor." Congratulations, Edie!



### **VOA PW Spring Luncheon to Recognize Mary Beveridge As Honorary Life Member**

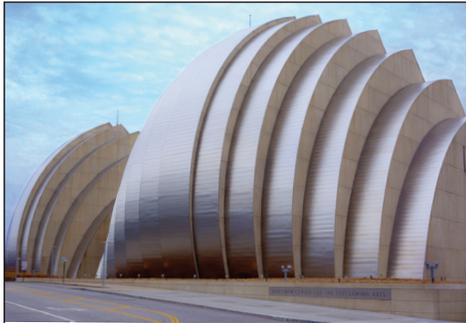
Village on Antioch Presbyterian Women will celebrate Mary Beveridge as an Honorary Life Member at a luncheon on Saturday, April 27. Cost for the VOA PW Spring Luncheon is \$12 a person. Make your reservation by contacting Laura Patton at [laura.patton@villagepres.org](mailto:laura.patton@villagepres.org) or at 913-681-8180.



Register online for Village U classes at [www.villagepres.org/village-u-community-classes](http://www.villagepres.org/village-u-community-classes)

**Upcoming Village U classes include:**

**Especially for Women** - This delightful and insightful group of women who connect faith and life, will finish the year with Bruce Feiler's "The First Love Story: Adam, Eve, and Us," a new look at how these familiar Bible characters continue to shape our deepest understanding of relationships, togetherness and social cohesion. Women of all ages are invited to join the conversation as we rediscover that even our most familiar stories still can surprise, inspire and guide us today. Led by Rev. Diane Quaintance 9:30-11 a.m. Fridays, April 5-May 24, in Room 127.



**Day Trip: Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts** – Designed by renowned architect Moshe Safdie, the Kauffman Center's most distinctive features are the Muriel McBrien Kauffman Theatre, Helzberg Hall, Brandmeyer Great Hall, its acoustical design and accessibility. Please join us for a tour, some great company and lunch at the Webster House 9:30 a.m.-2 p.m. Thursday, April 11. Cost is \$30 per person (does not include lunch). Please meet promptly on the south side of the Mission Campus at 9:30 a.m.

**Christians and Race in the 21st Century** - In the midst of apartheid in South Africa, Desmond Tutu, Anglican archbishop of Cape Town, said plainly: "If you are neutral in situations of injustice, you have chosen the side of the oppressor." Then writing from his jail cell in Birmingham, Alabama, Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., responding to criticism from apparently sympathetic and well-intentioned white clergy that the work and words of civil rights activists were "unwise and untimely," King wrote, "We will have to repent...not merely for the hateful words and actions of the bad people but for the appalling silence of the good people." Upon the election of Barack Obama, the first African-American president in the history of the United States, some hopeful persons declared that America had solved the problem of race. In the years following, it is clear it is not true.

The issue of race in America continues to perplex and confound us. Commensurate with a sermon series that Senior Pastor Tom Are, Jr. is preaching on race, these three classes taught by Rev. Dr. Rodger Nishioka, will explore the complexity of race in the United States through the Christian perspective. What does the Bible say about race? Who are we as God's people of different races? How are we called to abide with one another? How do we work together to dismantle racism today? 6:30-8 p.m. Wednesdays, May 8, 15, 22, in Rooms 132 & 133.



ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION

**Electric Car Expo  
2-5 p.m. Saturday, April 27  
South Parking Lot of Village Church on Mission**

Local electric car enthusiasts will display their all-electric and plug-in hybrid/electric vehicles, answer questions, and get you revved up to consider if an electric car would fit into your lifestyle. They will discuss how EV's are 10 times cheaper to operate and five times more efficient than gasoline vehicles, are better for the environment, reduce dependence on foreign oil, and are fun to drive. The expo is free. Bring friends. Questions? Contact Al Pugsley at [apphs58@yahoo.com](mailto:apphs58@yahoo.com).

**Rev. Dr. Rodger Nishioka on Sabbatical Leave for the Summer  
June 9-Sept. 2**



**sab·bat·i·cal**

**noun**

- 1. a period of leave granted to a university teacher or other worker for study or travel.

**adjective**

- 1. relating to a sabbatical.
- 2. of or appropriate to the sabbath.

During my 15 years of teaching at Columbia Theological Seminary, I was honored to be granted three sabbatical leaves. During one sabbatical, I was a theologian-in-residence at the Near East School of Theology in Beirut. During another, I wrote chapters as my contribution to two different books. In 2016, when I was called to serve you here at Village Church, I was in the midst of my third sabbatical. To join you in the spring, I left the sabbatical early. The Session graciously said that I could take a summer following the Rev. Tom Are’s sabbatical to complete that sabbatical. Since Tom was on sabbatical last summer, now it is my turn.

The one thing I know about sabbaticals is that they are always a gift. Per the definition, sabbaticals relate to “sabbath” which comes from the Hebrew word meaning “rest.” We talk about Sunday being the sabbath day because it was on the seventh day of creation that God rested. In academia, sabbaticals include time for rest but also for work. When I left my sabbatical early, I had two book projects I put on hold. This summer, I hope to pick up one of them and start another. I am grateful that the Westminster/John Knox Press is interested in publishing my writing. I hope to complete one manuscript on the place of young people in scripture and to start another on how adults grow in their faith. I plan to use some of you as illustrations (I will ask your permission first).

More than anything else, time is the most precious commodity these days. I am grateful for this gift of time. In addition to study and writing, I also plan to rest and visit family. In July, my brothers and I will gather in Seattle to inter our Dad’s ashes. I am preaching at the Worship and Music conferences in Montreat, North Carolina with the Rev. Jenny McDevitt, and will preach at a conference in Nova Scotia for the United Church of Canada. I am so grateful for colleagues who will pick up my responsibilities while I am away, and I look forward to seeing you in September when I return!



**Presbyterian Association of Musicians  
2019 Worship & Music Conferences at Montreat**

**Week 1: June 16-21**

**Week 2: June 23-38**

**Worship leaders are Rev. Dr. Rodger Nishioka, preacher and Rev. Jenny McDevitt, liturgist**

The Worship & Music Conferences offer a full week of worship and music for professionals, musicians, clergy, laypersons, choirs, youth groups and families. Held annually at the Montreat Conference Center in North Carolina, the Presbyterian Association of Musicians (PAM) offers two identical Worship and Music conferences each summer. Guided by the principles of Reformed worship, conferees explore opportunities for vital inter-generational worship experiences and enriching the liturgical life of the local church. Visit [www.presbysmusic.org/montreat](http://www.presbysmusic.org/montreat) to register and for more information.

### Easter Lilies Need Legs!

Every year, those who cannot physically come to the church on Easter Sunday receive a beautiful Easter lily. More than 250 Easter lilies will be taken to members all over the metro area – and we could use your help. We will be trying a new way to get the lilies delivered – it will be like our poinsettia delivery process. Come to the Welcome Center between any of the services to pick up an Easter lily, sorted by zip code areas and instructions. All but 96 Easter lilies can go anytime; those remaining 96 will need to be taken after the last service. Contact Linda Alley at 913-671-2327 or [linda.alley@villagepres.org](mailto:linda.alley@villagepres.org) if you have any questions. We look forward to seeing you and appreciate your help!

### Growing Through Grief – Next Series Begins in May

Growing Through Grief is a five-week class where those who have lost a loved one know that God is with us even through our hardest moments. Each person will receive a copy of “Understanding Your Grief – Ten Essential Touchstones for Finding Hope and Healing Your Heart,” by Alan D. Wolfelt, Ph.D. The next series is from 5:30-6:45 p.m. every Wednesday, May 8-June 5, in Room 124. There is no cost to attend, but registration is required. Contact Linda Alley at 913-671-2327 or [linda.alley@villagepres.org](mailto:linda.alley@villagepres.org) for more information or to register.

### Rev. Len Carrell Sings “So Long” to Village Presbyterian Church

Friendship Hall was packed with well-wishers on Sunday, March 17, saying goodbye to Rev. Len Carrell as associate pastor of Pastoral Care at Village Church. Len accepted a new call as the pastor and head of staff at First Presbyterian Church in Columbia, Tennessee. Len received gifts from the DRMP, Stephen Ministry, the Pastoral Care & Counseling Committee and Village Church staff. When Len was asked to share a few words, he said, “Thank you. I hold you in my heart and will carry you with me forever. You played such an important role in this journey of ministry and life itself.” He then sang the closing song from “The Carol Burnett Show, “I’m So Glad We Had this Time Together.”



Rev. Tom Are said to Len, “Remember not just us, but remember what God did in and through you while you were here. And let that carry you.” Rev. Are said in his closing prayer, “We are grateful for the laughter and for the music, for the generosity of love and big spirit, for the care, genuine and generous. Remember all these of Len Carrell. What we pray is that you rest your hand upon them as they

continue to serve you among your saints in Tennessee. Bless that ministry, that the days ahead of them be more glorious and faithful than any day of their past.”



## Rev. Sally Wright to Serve as Interim Pastor for Pastoral Care



The Rev. Sally Wright will join us in ministry as interim pastor for Pastoral Care working full time at Village Church on Mission. Many of us already know Sally in her work as the acting associate executive Presbyterian for Heartland Presbytery. She has also taught Village U classes and led sessions at our PW Spring Retreat.

Sally graduated from the Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary (2012) and has served as chaplain at the Seton Medical Center in Austin, the Heart Hospital of Austin, and as chaplain in residence at Saint Luke's Hospital in Kansas City, Missouri. She is married to the Rev. Karen Wright and together they are the parents of twin toddlers.

Sally joins Linda Alley and the Rev. Becky Chamberlain in the Pastoral Care and Counseling Office on Tuesday, April 9.



## Easter Lily Memorials

You may purchase a potted lily in memory of a loved one by sending a check for \$10 payable to Village Church and including the memorial name. Send your check to Village Church on Mission with ATTN: Janice Gill at the top. The deadline to receive checks is Friday, April 12. The list of memorials/donors will be listed in the May 1 "Good News."

## VILLAGE ON ANTIOCH

### Gun Violence in Johnson County The Community Response A Panel Discussion Hosted by Village Church on Antioch

We invite you to join us from 6:30-8 p.m. Thursday, May 9, at Village Presbyterian on Antioch for a panel discussion about "Gun Violence in Johnson County - The Community Response." The Social Justice Committee at Village on Antioch has assembled a panel of experts from the fields of law, mental health, school safety and citizen advocacy to discuss gun violence in Johnson County and what citizens can do to prevent violence and death in our community.

Panelists include JoElla Hoyer from Moms Demand Action, Judy Sherry from Grandparents Against Gun Violence and the Lock it for Love program, Dan Carney, director of safety and security for Blue Valley Schools, and Bonne Swade from Mo-Kan Suicide Awareness Survivors Support.

The panel will examine the facts of gun violence in Johnson County and begin a conversation about creating a safe, just and faithful community for the future. Rev. Tom Are, senior pastor of Village Church, will give opening remarks. There is no cost to attend. Child care will be provided. Email [kathleenpmorrow@yahoo.com](mailto:kathleenpmorrow@yahoo.com) with questions.





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## VILLAGE COMMITMENT

### Reflections from a Current Church Elder

My wife and I normally sit in the balcony at the worship service we attend on Sundays. At a recent service, I took a moment to look down to see if I could see any friends who might be worshipping that morning. My eyes fell on a close friend of my wife's sitting alone who is now a widow due to the loss of her dear husband who had passed away a few years ago . . . a row or two away sat a couple where the husband has been struggling through a serious illness over a number of months and . . . along the aisle sat a friend in a wheelchair due to a serious car accident that has left this person with a number of life challenges. It gave me a moment to reflect on how important Village Church is to all of us who may need support to deal with life's struggles.

Both our staff and volunteer members serving as Stephen Ministers are there to support and assist members who may need help with their own life's challenges. They serve with compassion and concern. I know this personally, as the church was there for our family during a serious health scare with one of our children and recent aging problems with one of my parents. In the journey of life, we all encounter struggles.

When I put my weekly contribution in the offering plate, I do so to thank God for the many blessings he has provided to me and my family . . . and to support the Church that is ever-present, helping in countless ways, supporting members during a difficult time in their life's journey.

Your Stewardship is  HEART at work. Thank you!



### 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. in Overland Park

See page 4 for Holy Week Worship Services Information

### Food Pantry & Clothes Closet Drop-Off Hours

10 a.m.–2:30 p.m. Monday-Friday

9:30–11:30 a.m. Saturday

[www.villagepres.org](http://www.villagepres.org)

### IN MEMORY

Joan "Jody" Bartlett  
Clarence "Bud" Burgess  
Gretchen Buchanan  
Donna Gaus  
Lynn Hedrick  
Gary Hylton  
John Ozburn  
William "Doug" Poyser  
Gayle Roth  
Charlotte Stevenson