

What to Expect When You're Expecting (a PIPE ORGAN)

by Dr. Elisa Bickers, FAGO

There are three very important distinctions between having a child and installing a pipe organ: 1. Growing a baby takes less time, not as many committees, and requires input from fewer people; 2. Having a baby is significantly less expensive, one hopes, than installing a pipe organ; 3. Installing a pipe organ is significantly less painful than having a baby. But there are some similarities between these processes, as well.

I remember my pregnancy quite clearly... the months of preparation, reading, praying, hoping, worrying. Trips to the doctor for check-ups. Sleepless nights caused by an overactive imagination. Frantic "nesting" as the blessed event became imminent. Was everything ready? Did we have all we would need? There were so many details to consider in preparation for the arrival of a being who we knew nothing about, but knew we'd love endlessly.

And then, in early May, she came. Her induction was postponed by a day so that her over zealous mother could attend just one more pipe organ committee meeting.

Our new pipe organ has had a gestation, as well. The pipe organ committee had already been meeting for several months by the time I started work at Village on Nov. 1, 2009. There we sat together, faithfully meeting every two weeks. We did our research. We did our reading. We traveled all over. We prayed, hoped and worried about making the best decision for our beloved church family.

As the building of our organ took place in Chattanooga, the Sanctuary at Village Pres underwent



its own renovation - we were "nesting" in preparation for our new instrument and the possibilities she would bring with her. Several of us from the committee have been to the builders' shop to visit the organ in her infant stages - listening to pipes, discussing the merits of one console layout over another, and, most recently, being present for the very first sweet sounds to emerge from her. Now the organ has almost grown up, and is getting ready to leave the Hickory Valley nest and head west. I know we are all eager for her arrival.

Friends, we have done our work; and we have done it well. And we have chosen truly excellent partners for this most momentous addition to our church life. In late August, I attended the Open House for our organ at the Richards, Fowkes & Co. shop in Chattanooga, Tennessee. The point of such an event is to welcome folks from the community, the relatives of the organ builders, and organists and organ enthusiasts from near and far to come and celebrate the newest member of the pipe organ family.

The Open House was on Sunday, Aug. 21, but I arrived on Saturday evening, and went straight from the airport to the shop. My stomach was in my throat. There were several builders working, making finishing touches to our instrument and cleaning up their work stations for the big day. I greeted each one by name,

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but my heart wasn't completely in it. "TAKE ME TO THE ORGAN," I said. "I NEED TO PLAY THE ORGAN."

I drew in my breath as I walked to Opus 22, the organ towering over my head like a great, wise angel. She was stunning. The builders had put seven of our 85 ranks in the organ for the Open House, and two of the three manuals had functioning action.

This was more than enough for me to get a sense for how it would feel to play the instrument, and how she would sound. The stop action was not yet electrified, so changing the sounds required climbing inside the instrument (oh, darn!) and moving a solenoid with your hand to permit the air to reach the pipes.

I barely had my faculties in order when I slid onto the bench, so overwhelmed was I with the potential of this moment of truth. I placed my hands above the Great, and played. And this angel, so large in stature, whispered the most elegant of lullabies. The rank that was selected was the 4' flute, a set of pipes that speak one octave above the note that is played. Its sound was round and whole, comfortable and cushioning, electrifying and buoyant - all at once! I'm the kind of organist that tests first the 4' flute - in my experience, it belies the essence of the rest of the instrument. And this flute? It is perfect.

It seems like that would have been an appropriate moment to offer a prayer of thanksgiving, or cry, or jump up and hug somebody. Instead, I asked "What else have we got in there?" And I proceeded to play and listen to several more flute stops, as well as a string and three principals. Each was distinct, but married so beautifully with the other. Even though the keyboard action was barely polished, and the pipes only pre-voiced, the ranks were smooth among themselves, and practically in tune! The speech of the pipes had personality; the keys had pluck. And most importantly, this instrument had warmth, breath and life. My heart rate slowed to a gentle thub-thub as I released from anticipation and exhaled into enjoyment.

After dinner with several of the organ builders, as well as our talented acoustician, Dana Kirkegaard (who had driven from Chicago to attend the Open House), I went back to the shop, and had the place to myself for a while before turning in for the night. Angel-organ and I got back to it. I played twentieth-century music on the Great's smoky strings, and a fiery eighteenth-century

spielfugue on the spritely Swell 8' flute. When you put them all together, the sounds harmoniously swam around each other like fish in the sea. Colorful, musical fish.

The next day was the Open House. More than 100 guests came through the shop - an all-time high for



Me with the organ builders. L-R: Patrick Spiesser, Dana Kirkegaard (acoustician); Ralph Richards, Bruce Fowkes. Bottom: John Brown (shop manager).

this firm. I played the organ on and off for three hours, and held children on my lap as I introduced them to what must have seemed like a pretty intimidating monster of a machine. They smiled as we played *Jingle Bells* and *Mary Had a Little Lamb* together, and they stared wide-eyed when they heard more "grown up" music from my fingers. All afternoon long, I heard, "You must be so excited!" and "What a blessing this will be to your congregation!" I couldn't agree more.

The feeling of pride that I sensed from our guests was unmistakable - they were

delighted with this local product, and honored to know the people who have given their hearts and souls to it for many years. And they were excited to meet me - to know one of the people who would take

good care of their family members and this Angel-organ for the weeks, and indeed years, to come.

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To quote a fine pastor, we belong to one another. They are in my hearts, and I am in theirs.

On Sunday night, we all slept the sleep of the satisfied, and woke up to a Monday morning that continued the countdown to the installation of the organ. The builders have a lot of work yet to do, and we at the church have more to do to prepare for their arrival. But the partnership continues in excitement and anticipation of the next and final phase of this enormous project.

The Happiest Presbyterians on the Block

I should preface this section on organ installation with the following: installing an organ is like playing a real-life game of Tetris, except that it's Tetris *upside-down, sideways, and backwards*, and in three dimensions, and no two parts are shaped the same, and it's not color-coded. AND the pieces combine to weigh 16 tons (that's not an exaggeration).

Our organ will arrive in three truckloads, each a week apart, and the organ builders will arrive in shifts, as well. Several Village Church members have generously offered housing for the organ builders and gilder, who will stay between one and four weeks, depending on his or her role in the installation. The builders will work six to seven days a week, for eight to 10 hours each day.

Truck #1 will arrive the weekend of Sept. 11, and with it will come two organ builders whose main responsibility is to refurbish the largest pipes that are currently in our Welcome Center basement. They will also install the giant bellows system that will provide the wind for our pipe organ.

Truck #2 arrives the following weekend, with about eight more organ builders. This shipment has the components of the exterior and interior case, as well as some pipes. This weekend marks the beginning of the "main" installation. The front of our chancel will look as it does now on Sept. 18, and by the following Sunday should be transformed, or at least partially transformed,



Organ draw knobs



Inside the organ

by the slow and steady rising of our instrument (see above: upside down Tetris). Following morning worship on Sept. 18, we will unload this truck through the new Welcome Center doors, and take its entire contents to the Sanctuary.

Anyone from the congregation and community is invited (and needed!!) to help in this process. There will be some pieces that require stronger backs, and others that can be carried by the light-weights among us. The organ builders and I will determine who carries what, and we ask you to respect our instructions for the good of the instrument and the health of our people. So come to church, go grab lunch and your moving clothes, and come be a part of this historic day! Or come unload in the afternoon, and stick around for the Gathering service at 5 p.m. in Friendship Hall. Children are welcome to help unload, and if you need someone to watch your younger child while you do the heavy lifting, child care will be offered from 4-6 p.m. Call 913-671-2322 to make a child care reservation.

Truck #3 arrives the following weekend, and this truck carries most of the pipes for Opus 22. The majority of this load will go to the basement of the Welcome Center. The pipes will be put in the instrument as the voicing and tuning of the organ progresses, following the installation.

We will have church services in the Sanctuary as usual on all of these Sundays. During the weekdays and Saturdays, however, the Sanctuary must be treated like a construction zone, which means that only those directly related to the installation of the organ can come

inside. This is both for the sake of safety and for the sake of efficiency. However, all are welcome to observe the goings-on from our balcony - and we hope you will! Witnessing the putting-together of so many small, large, heavy and delicate parts is probably the best way to fully appreciate and understand how complicated and amazing the pipe organ is, and why it takes such a skilled team to create one.

Following the main installation is the voicing of the organ. Every single pipe (there are about 3,700) needs to be fitted to the organ and to our room. The pipes are

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made in the shop and pre-voiced, so they look right and sound almost right already. The trick is the room. It doesn't make sense to make an organ pipe sound perfect in a shop in Chattanooga - it needs to sound perfect in its home, here in our Sanctuary. (acoustics are everything.) So the builders save the final voicing process for once they are here. This will take approximately nine months. Two voicers will essentially take up residence here in Prairie Village, and will work on our organ every chance they get. Every hour that the Sanctuary is available for voicing is an hour closer to having a completed instrument. Church services, memorials, weddings and a select few other events will still take place in our Sanctuary. However, the more they voice, the sooner our instrument will be finished and the *real* fun can begin. That doesn't mean we have to wait nine months to finally hear Opus 22. As each rank is completed, I will play it during worship. This allows the congregation to hear the progress, and also lets the voicers listen to the pipes in a room that is full of people.

The voicing process is a complicated one. The organ is made up of 58 ranks. A rank is a set of pipes (58 pipes for the manual ranks; 30 for the pedal) that look and sound the same, but go higher and lower in pitch. There are ranks that sound like flutes, trumpets, string instruments and many others. Each rank is made to sound distinct from another, but each pipe within that rank must sound like its comrades. Within a rank, the pipes must be of equal volume (or correctly



Voicing the organ



Voicing tools



This is what my daughter Isabel did upon discovering this huge picture of Village's new organ. She knows what Mama has been working on.

progressive), speech (how it sounds at the very beginning of its sound), timbre and personality. But that's not even the most important part! After all of that is complete, the next question is how the rank works with other ranks. The builders may spend several days getting one rank just right, and then the next week work on another rank, only to find that changes need to be made in the first one to help it play nicely with the second one. Voicing, therefore, is a fluid and ongoing process.

The voicers have an impressive number of odd tools that they use to make alterations, but their very best tools are their ears. They and I will work together to determine best sound for our room, for our singing congregation and choir, for our organist, for our culture. And they know how to gently coax each metal or wooden pipe into making just that sound.

It Takes a Village to Raise [a Pipe Organ]

Of course you know that this pipe organ wasn't built only by talented craftsmen in Tennessee. Village Church had a vision for this long before we identified our organ builders. The members of the Pipe Organ Committee began this "lifestyle" seven years ago; and the Sanctuary committee followed shortly thereafter. Our hard-working committee members, staff and clergy, acoustician, organ consultant, architect, contractor and organ builders have worked tirelessly and faithfully for a very long time - and we encouraged one another when we felt exhausted. The congregation's spiritual and financial support of this project has been second to none. Our work together has paid off.

I'm endlessly excited for you to meet our new instrument, and for us to love it together. It is my fervent prayer that you will find it as exhilarating and inspiring as I do. ✨

Food Pantry

PEANUT BUTTER SUNDAY, the third food drive of 2016 for the Food Pantry, is Sunday, Sept. 18. Peanut butter is a staple in the diet of all of the Pantry's clients. Peanut butter is protein, easy for all ages to use, does not need refrigeration; and it TASTES GOOD! Please start stocking up at the grocery store sales – 1 lb. or 2 lb. jars, creamy or crunchy - and bring several to church on Sept. 18. They will fly out of the Pantry.

School has started; and the Clothes Closet is accepting school clothing - boys and girls, all sizes, clean and gently used. The Closet is also accepting kitchen items - small utensils, dishes, glasses, silverware, pots and pans.



Struggling in the Land of Opportunity

From 6-8 p.m. on Tuesday, Oct. 11, in Friendship Hall, Village Presbyterian Church presents "Struggling in the Land of Opportunity," a dinner and forum focusing on the struggles that impoverished families face every day here in Kansas City! Operation Breakthrough CEO Mary Esselman will moderate a dialogue featuring parents from Operation Breakthrough, Mothers in Charge and Amethyst Place.

Tickets are \$13 per person. Reserve your space by Friday, Sept. 30. For reservations, contact Carolyn Eakins at carolyneakins@gmail.com or 913-732-2292 or register online at www.villagepres.org. Child care will be available. Attendees are asked to bring a package of diapers for a donation at the door.



Village Service Night Sunday, Oct. 9

Join Village Church from 6:30-7:30 p.m. on Sunday, Oct. 9, to help pack hygiene kits to be sent to areas of need served by Heart to Heart International, assemble sack lunches for City Union Mission, create fleece blankets for Hillcrest Transitional Housing and help the Dominican Republic Medical Partnership prepare for upcoming mission trips. Worship together at The Gathering at 5 p.m. and stay after to serve our community here and abroad.



All ages are welcome. No special skills needed. Food is provided to all who participate. Childcare is available. Call 913-671-2352 or email pam.southerland@villagepres.org by Oct. 2 to reserve.

Contact Deborah White in the Mission Office at 913-671-2369 or deborah.white@villagepres.org for more information.

Weekly Wednesday Church Dinners All Are Welcome!

Wednesday church dinners will start up at 5:15 p.m. Chef Emily prepares a full, hot buffet with salad bar for \$7, salad bar & dessert for \$6. And children age 3-10, \$3. Children under 3 are free. The menu is posted on the Village Church website, in the Sunday bulletins and the *Good News*.

Reservations are required by noon every Monday. Just call Liz at 913-671-2359, email liz.middleton@villagepres.org or go to <http://www.villagepres.org/wednesday-dinners.html>. We hope you'll take a night off from cooking each week and join us!

September Menus:

Sept. 14 – Chicken fajitas, vegetable fajitas, flour and corn tortillas, Mexican rice, beans

Sept. 21 – Roast pork (GF), mashed potatoes (GF), Brussels sprouts, tomato pie

Sept. 28 – Roasted chicken (GF), wild rice pilaf (V & GF), sweet potato casserole (V & GF)



Core Connections gets a New Name

This fall, Core Connections will return under a new name: Village Connect. The format will be similar with video presentations by Rev. Tom Are, Jr. and a study guide, but the presentation will be improved.

Village Connect is an opportunity for you to have conversations with friends about things that matter to you in your faith and life.

This year's curriculum is called "What I Love About This Gospel: Reading Through Mark."

If you are not yet part of a Village Connect group, contact Cindy Wilcox at 913-671-2331 or cindy.wilcox@villagepres.org so that you can participate in this meaningful experience.



Fall Food Truck Festival 5-7 p.m. Sunday, Oct. 2 North Parking Lot

You loved our first Fall Food Truck Festival last year, so we're doing it again this October in the north parking lot. This community event for all ages is sponsored by the Connectional Ministries Committee, 913-671-2331.

Bring your family and lawn chairs, sit under the big white tent, enjoy live music by the Prairie Earth Ensemble and choose from five gourmet Food Trucks, including mac n' cheese, BBQ, burgers, pizza, tacos, salads & cupcakes.

Food cost is on your own. Please park in the Prairie School parking lot or in the south church parking lot. In case of inclement weather, food trucks will park in the south parking lot and we'll eat in Friendship Hall. We hope you will join us!



“And Thou, America!” • A Patriotic Concert of Celebration
4 p.m. Sunday, Nov. 6 • Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts

Tickets are free. Beginning Sept. 12, tickets may be reserved through the Kauffman Center, either online at <http://www.kauffmancenter.org/> or by calling their box office at 816-994-7222.

“And Thou, America” is a concert of celebration. The concert features music and poetry of great American Artists such as Whitman, Frost, Copland, Bernstein and Howard Hanson. There’ll even be opportunity for the audience to sing along!

Performers include the Village Chamber Choir, Lawrence High School, Lawrence Free State High School and Kearney High School choirs and the Kansas City Wind Symphony, a member ensemble of the Village Church Arts Alliance.

There will be a retiring offering taken to support the wonderful work of Kansas City Youth Ambassadors.



Morning Stars Time Change

Morning Stars children’s choir will now meet from 10:30-11 a.m. Sunday mornings and will perform regularly during worship throughout the year. Rehearsals begin Sunday, Sept. 11. Grades K-2 will meet with Patti Fishel in Rooms 307/309 and grades 3-6 will meet with Jenny Hull in Room 305.

This year, ALL Sunday School students grades 4-6 will have the opportunity to sing with interim director of music, Ryan Main, during Sunday School in the months of September and October, ending with a combined performance in worship!



NEW SERMON SERIES STARTS SEPT. 11

“Love Your Neighbor and Other Spiritual Truths”

When Europe was falling apart in the 1940’s, Dietrich Bonhoeffer wrote a little book called *Life Together*. It was an exploration of the fundamental “neighborly” or communal aspect of Christian faith. Sometimes we say that the love of Christ shows up in our hearts. A better way to say that is the love of Christ shows up in our relationships. We are part of many communities: family, church family, national community... the list goes on. Paying attention to this fundamental truth of Christian faith is what gives our faith energy and hope. But, because people are people, it is also why we need to time and again remind ourselves that Jesus calls us to love our neighbor.

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| Sept. 11 | It is Not Good That the Human is Alone |
| Sept. 18 | We Keep Bumping Into All Those Other Followers of Jesus |
| Sept. 25 | For Once, It’s All About You |
| Oct. 2 | Don’t Be A Goat |
| Oct. 9 | Blind Spots |
| Oct. 16 | A More Perfect Union |

We return to our regular Sanctuary worship schedule on Sunday, Sept. 11, with the addition of the 8 a.m. worship service. We will also return to a live radio broadcast at 8 a.m. Sundays on 1660 AM.

Dr. Elisa Bickers, DMA, FAGO
Our Brilliant Village Virtuoso

Elisa grew up in Clinton, Maryland – just outside of Washington DC. She was eight when she first started playing piano. Her introduction to the organ came when she was 12. “My mother saw a flyer for a piano competition for 7th grade to high school students to win a free year of organ lessons through the Potomac Organ Institute. I was among the handful chosen that year. I started playing for church services around that same time.”

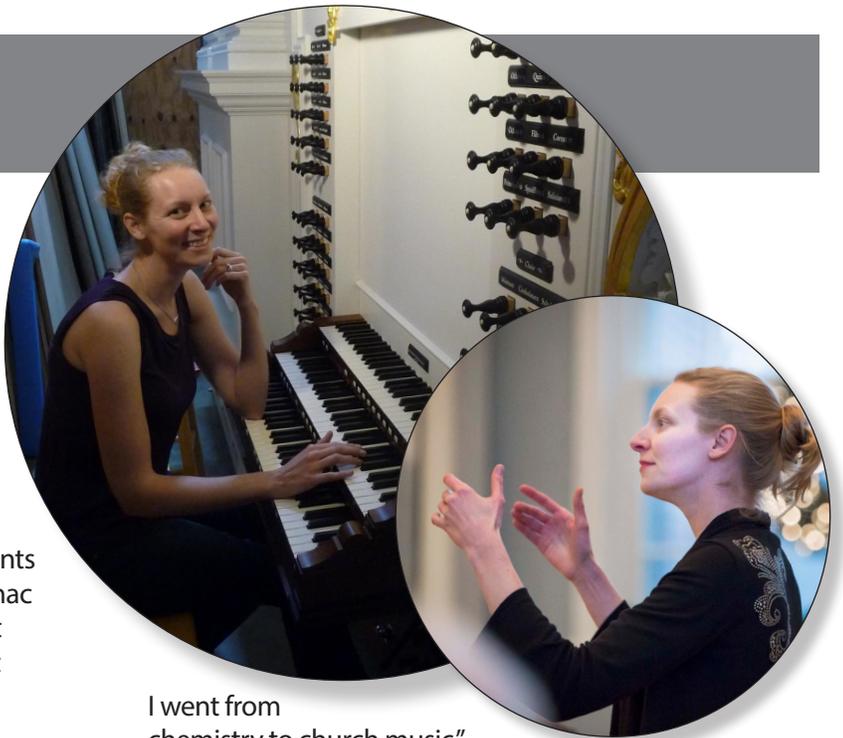
A Multi-Talented Musician

Elisa doesn't just play the organ. She also plays harpsichord, piano, oboe, clarinet and English horn. “The organ is my favorite instrument to play and the oboe is my second favorite. I love the intimacy of having it right there with you, which is the opposite of the organ where things are happening 25 feet away from you.”

Elisa went straight through from kindergarten to a doctorate. She has degrees in church music and organ performance from Texas Christian University and the University of Kansas. It took a while before she realized she was destined to be a professional musician.

“When I was looking at colleges, I looked at them as potential music majors as well as potential science majors, because my other true love in life was working with wild animals. I trained hawks and eagles and owls as a volunteer at a nature center for many years and I thought maybe I'd do that instead. I applied to Texas Christian University, auditioned for the piano program and they didn't accept me. But I went to that school anyway because it's a great school and I wanted a change from Maryland. When I got there, I was a chemistry major officially, but I was taking marching band and orchestra and wind symphony and piano lessons and oboe lessons and one chemistry course. I had music everywhere, but I wasn't a music major.

One day I knocked on the organ professor's door and introduced myself. At that time, it had been several years since I had taken organ but I had continued playing for my church. I hadn't really thought of it as a profession. And he said, 'Why don't you come back and play for me next week.' I came back and played for him the next week and he said, 'If you'll switch your major, I'll give you a good scholarship. You've got a real future in this.' So in my sophomore year,



I went from chemistry to church music.”

“Over those years I was substituting for every kind of church you could imagine - Catholic, Jewish services as well as learning my craft at the school. I didn't take a permanent church job until I started my master's.”

Music connected her with her husband, Robert. “His college roommate and I played in a Baptist praise band together. And so when the college roommate got married, we met at the wedding. We've been married for 10 years now.”

A Uniquely Skilled Organist

Elisa worked for an organ builder when she was getting her master's. “There's an organ shop called the Ross King Organ Company and this was the firm that took care of the organs at Texas Christian University. One time he told a couple of us organ students that he needed some part-time help and I got the job. It was the smartest thing I ever did. It opened my eyes to the instrument I was playing. I had no idea how it worked before.”

When I got to KU for my doctorate - most of my teaching assistantship was curating the organs at that school because of having worked for Ross King Organ Company. And it's been invaluable to our process that I am aware of the challenges in the organ building process, questions and the relationship between organ builder and client. Having been on that side better prepared me to be on this side.”

While Elisa was getting her doctorate, she worked at First United Methodist in Lawrence. It was during this time that she started teaching at Washburn University. And then, opportunity knocked at Village.

Continued

Her Road to Village

"Stephan Casurella, who was principal organist before me, was one of my classmates at KU. He was nearing the end of his degree when he auditioned for another job in Cincinnati and got it. And when he accepted that job he took me to lunch and said, 'You need to come to Village. This is your kind of church. You're their kind of organist.' He got me in touch with Mark Ball and I was interviewed by a formal committee. I've been at Village since Nov. 1, 2009.

We've been working on the new pipe organ since the very first week I got here. Jim Borthwick jokes around that, 'It's not a committee, it's a lifestyle choice.' They gave me a lovely shower when I was pregnant with my daughter, Isabel. We've gotten to know each other very well doing this."

On Becoming The Best of the Best

This past June, Elisa became a Fellow of the American Guild of Organists (AGO). It's the highest level of certification the guild offers, and involves a very intense exam. Only a select few organists ever achieve this level of proficiency. In fact, the only other Fellow in the Kansas City area is Jan Kraybill, who has served as our consultant for the organ building project.

"It was actually a very inopportune time to prepare for a big exam. You need to practice a lot. When we took the old organ out Easter Sunday of 2015, I thought, 'What am I going to play? How am I going to continue to be a good organist for this brand new instrument to come?' I almost immediately got in touch with the AGO because they've got all these certification levels and you have to take some of them in a certain order. The Fellow is the highest. You can't just take the Fellow. You have to get the Associate first. And so I signed up to take the Associate exam two months after our organ left because I was worried that I was going to forget how to play. I needed a reason to get myself to Southminster to practice.

And then I had thought that the organ would be here by the time I would even consider taking the Fellow exam. And then it kept getting delayed and I just thought, 'Well... there's no time like the present.' I'm not going to want to prepare for it while doing all the administrative stuff of scheduling and bookkeeping for the new organ. And it was another great reason to go elsewhere and practice.

In some ways, it was the craziest decision ever to do a huge exam without the ideal conditions to practice, but it also provided me an escape to put the non-artistic stuff down and go and make music."



The National Convention of the American Guild of Organists is going to take place in Kansas City in 2018. Elisa was asked to lead the committee for new music. "We've commissioned 13 composers from around the world to do brand new pieces that will be premiered here. They range from a smaller set of works that we've asked to be written for the intermediate organist all the way up to a concerto by a very well-known French composer. Village will definitely host at least one concert showcasing our new pipe organ."

On Completion of the New Organ

The new Village pipe organ arrives later this month. Once installed, it will take nine months to voice. When it's finally voiced and tuned, and the organ builders declare, "It's done!" Elisa will have been working for Village for almost eight years.

"This will have been at the center of my job here. If it all comes together the way that we're confident that it will, when I play the organ for the first time after that, I think it will be probably one of the best moments of my life – just behind the birth of my child and my wedding day."

What She Loves About Her Job

"In this job, I get to be a jazz musician and a gospel musician as well as doing the highest and oldest arts. I love that I get to work with professionals and with amateurs and that I get to teach. In one week I'll direct the handbell choir and the young adult choir and accompany three others. I play on occasion with the Kansas City Symphony and also with the Bach Aria Soloists. I like being a jack of all trades. I get to work really hard at being good at all of those things."

Elisa also loves this congregation. "These folks immediately became my family. For a big church – it sure doesn't feel like a big church, in terms of people knowing each other. I love them. I love when they sing. I'm so grateful that we've found our home here. All the certification I did was to be the best musician I could be for them when we had the best organ coming. I want them to be proud and I want them to feel inspired every time they hear my music."



New Growing Through Grief Series Starts Sept. 14

Grieving the death of a loved one is one of life's most difficult journeys. The Care and Counseling department wants to support our members and anyone grieving by offering a five-week class, Growing Through Grief. The next series will be from 5-6:15 p.m. every Wednesday, Sept. 14-Oct. 12. Join us to learn more about the grieving process, meet others who understand your struggles, and be reminded that God is with us through even the hardest of moments. The classes include helpful (optional) reading from *Understanding Your Grief – Ten Essential Touchstones for Finding Hope and Healing Your Heart*, by Alan D. Wolfelt, Ph.D. The series is offered at no cost and includes your own copy of the book. Contact Linda Alley at linda.alley@villagepres.org or 913-671-2327 for more information or to register.

Looking for a New Job or Career Opportunity?

The Job Search Counseling Center can help you find your next business position. Come and learn the best approach to finding a job in today's changing market. Class is at 6:30 p.m. on Monday, Sept. 26, in Room 316. If you are interested in attending, please contact Linda Alley at linda.alley@villagepres.org or 913-671-2327.

The Classic Citizen Celebration is This Month

Our annual Classic Citizen Celebration is Thursday, Sept. 22. If you are 75 or more years young, then you are a Village Church Classic Citizen and we want you to come and celebrate! Join us from 1:30-3:30 p.m. on Thursday, Sept. 22, in Friendship Hall. You'll hear the latest Village news from Rev. Tom Are, Jr. There will also be entertainment and delicious food and drinks. Need a ride? Let us know – a ride to and from the church is available upon request. If you would like to come, please call Linda Alley at 913-671-2327 or linda.alley@villagepres.org.

Congregational Meeting Sept. 18

The Session has called a Congregational Meeting for Sunday, Sept. 18. This meeting will take place in the Sanctuary, immediately following the 11 a.m. worship service. The purpose of the meeting is to elect new church officers for the positions of elder, elder/trustee and deacon. At-large members of the Nominating Committee will also be elected. Ordination of new church officers will take place in early January 2017.

Electric Cars at Village!

Local electric car enthusiasts will display their vehicles (including a Tesla!), answer questions and get you revved up to consider whether an electric car would fit into your lifestyle. Cruise through the South parking lot from 4:30-8:30 p.m. Wednesday, Sept. 14 (and enjoy the weekly dinner while you're there?). The Environmental Action Committee sponsors this annual event during National Drive Electric Week. Contact Al Pugsley at apphs58@yahoo.com for more information.



Village Earthcare

Want to reduce your carbon footprint? To offset the carbon produced by three hours of television, recycle one aluminum can. Binge watching? Recycle the whole six pack.



Amazing Graces Fall Gathering 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, Sept. 21

Please join us for the Amazing Graces Fall Gathering from 6:30-8:30 p.m. Wednesday, Sept. 21, at the Home of Sherry Forsee, 4943 Central, Kansas City, Mo. Mary Carol Garrity of Nell Hills will be our speaker. Wine, hors d'oeuvres and desserts will be served. Space is limited to 70. Your \$10 check to "Presbyterian Women of Village Church" is your reservation. Please mail by Sept. 14 to Kathy Collins, 4716 W. 86th Street, Prairie Village, KS 66207.



Operation Breakthrough Reading Program Orientation

Our small but mighty donor, Vera Thomas, asked her guests to bring books, instead of presents, to donate to Operation Breakthrough Reading for her two-year birthday. What a great idea! Presbyterian Women's Operation Breakthrough Reading Program resumes from 9:30-11 a.m. Wednesdays, Sept. 21-Oct. 26. Orientation coffee and speaker will be at 9 a.m. Wednesday, Sept. 21. Men and women volunteers and donated books are needed for this worthwhile project. Contact Cindy Whitham at ciwhitham@aol.com or 913-262-3062 if you have questions. Call Pam at 913-671-2352 or email pam.southerland@villagepres.org to make a child care reservation by the Wednesday prior to the day you plan to volunteer.

WOW Lunch at Lidia's and Streetcar Ride

All ladies are most welcome to join Women of Wisdom (WOW) as we open the fall season with a noon lunch at the popular Lidia's Restaurant, 101 West 22nd St. in KC's Crossroads Arts District, followed by a Streetcar ride, followed by a Streetcar ride, on Tuesday, Sept. 20. Located at 101 West 22nd St. in KC's Crossroads Arts District.

Following lunch, those who would like can take the free KC Streetcar for its two-mile run through the heart of downtown. Or, if you prefer, you can enjoy historic Union Station while others are on the 22-minute Streetcar run.

Complimentary transportation will be provided via a commercial van that Rev. Diane Quaintance has graciously agreed to drive. The van accommodates a maximum of 14, and those ladies will be dropped off at the door of Lidia's and at the streetcar stop. If you prefer to carpool, there is ample parking in front of Lidia's, as well as metered parking in front of Union Station. (Parking on the east side of Union Station is closest to the Streetcar stop.)

The van will leave from the church's north parking lot promptly at 11:30 a.m., and will return by approximately 3 p.m. RSVP by Sunday, Sept. 18, to Diane Lee at 913-432-4321, or dianelee@att.net.

Page Turners Meeting Sept. 27

Page Turners book group meets the fourth Tuesday of every month in Room 127 at 9:30 a.m. On Tuesday, Sept. 27, Greg Winsor of the Johnson County Library will be our guest. He will present a list of books for our consideration for the coming year. All interested readers are encouraged to hear Greg's presentation, profiles of many "good reads." Always, visitors and new members are welcome.

Seeking PW Honorary Life Member Nominations

On April 8, 2017, Presbyterian Women of Village Church will celebrate and honor the gifts and talents of women in our church at the Celebration of Faithful Women Event. If you would like to nominate a woman you know who:

- supports the mission of the church
- nurtures your faith
- works for peace and justice
- promotes an inclusive community through service and leadership

Contact Jennifer Sawyer at jrsawyer1947@gmail.com or 913-488-6370. Nominations will be accepted through Oct. 15.

AARP 55 Alive Driving Class will be held from 10 a.m.-3 p.m. on Thursday and Friday, Oct. 13 and 14, in Room 127. The cost is \$15 if you are an AARP member; \$20 for non-members, payable to AARP. Bring a brown bag lunch or eat out. To enroll, please call Marianne, 913-671-2333.

Upcoming Village U Classes Include:



Gabriel’s Revelation - In 2008, scholars reported on a new archaeological discovery near the Dead Sea — a three-foot high stone tablet inscribed with 87 lines of Hebrew text, composed just before the time of Jesus. The tablet describes a suffering messiah and contains a revelation of the archangel Gabriel, known from the Book of Daniel and the Gospel of Luke. The controversial text has led to a renewed examination of Jewish and Christian understandings of the Messiah. This class will explore the controversy that one scholar has claimed “might shake our basic view of Christianity.” Rev. Dwight Tawney, instructor. 6:30-8 p.m. Wednesdays, Sept. 14-28. Room 127.

Especially for Women - *Becoming Wise: An Inquiry into the Mystery and Art of Living* by Krista Tippett - Peabody Award winning broadcaster and National Humanities Medalist Krista Tippett has interviewed the most extraordinary voices examining the great questions of meaning for our time: scientists in a variety of fields; theologians from an array of faiths; poets, activists and many others. In *Becoming Wise*, Tippett distills the insights she has gleaned from this luminous conversation . . . and the enduring question of what it means to be human. All women are welcome in this class that enjoys lively discussion. Newcomers are especially welcome. Rev. Diane Quaintance, instructor. 9:30-11 a.m. Fridays, Sept. 9 - Dec. 16, Room 132.

Very Basic Computer Class-Daytime and Evening - The Very Basic Computer class allows students with limited computer experience to become comfortable with Microsoft Word, the Internet and email. No prior experience using a computer is required. The computers have recently been upgraded to the Windows 10 operating system. Seating is limited. These classes are free. Class limit: 12. 1-2:30 p.m. Tuesdays, Sept. 13-27; Oct. 4, or 6:30-8 p.m. Wednesdays, Sept. 14-Oct. 5, in Room 316. To register, contact Marianne Weber at 913-671-2333 or email marianne.weber@villagepres.org.

Taste of MOPS - Are you a M.O.P. (mother of a preschooler including newborns through kindergarten)? We are hosting “Taste of MOPS” for you to have an opportunity to get to know what MOPS is all about and to get excited about the start of the group in the fall. Join us for a great time of fellowship. Child care is available Bethany Ramsey, instructor. 6:30-8:30 p.m. Wednesday, Sept. 14. Room 126.

Breakfast and Bible with Your Buddies - Join our senior pastor, the Rev. Tom Are, Jr. for a morning Bible study for men. Chef Emily will prepare a hot breakfast, and Rev. Are will offer a reflection on passages from scripture. There will be time for discussion as well. Invite a friend and join the fellowship Tuesday mornings. To make a reservation for breakfast, please contact Marianne at marianne.weber@villagepres.org. Cost: \$6. Child care is not available. 7:30-8:30 a.m. Tuesdays, Sept. 20-Nov. 15. Room 228.

Human Sexuality – Just Say Know - Designed to prepare children for adolescent changes, this workshop is for children in the fourth and fifth grades. Parents and/or caregivers are invited to attend with their child. The workshop stresses God’s plan for the gift of sexuality, and communication skills between parents/caregivers and child will be emphasized, practiced, and enhanced. Rev. Karen Wagner Wright, instructor. 6:30-8:30 p.m. Wednesday, Sept. 21. Room 126.

Sabbath Yoga Wednesdays - Join us after Wednesday night dinner for a relaxing session of gentle and restorative yoga with centering prayer meditation. Please wear comfortable clothing and bring your own yoga mat. Katherine Caputo, instructor. 6:30-7:30 p.m. Wednesdays, Sept. 28-Dec. 14. Rooms 307/309/311.

Fall Adult Sunday Morning Classes Resume Sept. 11

9:30 a.m.

Cloud of Witnesses - The class welcomes Rev. Dwight Tawney who is teaching “Old Stories in A New Light.” During the past two decades, archeological excavations in Israel and Jordan have focused fresh light on some familiar biblical stories. Join us as we peer through an archeologist’s lens to gain new insights on some of these biblically-significant discoveries. Sept. 11-Oct. 23 in Room 15.

Faith Journey - This fall the class is studying the book, *Just Mercy: A Story of Justice and Redemption*, by Bryan Stevenson. This is a true story about the potential for mercy to redeem us, and a call for us to fix our broken system of justice. We will be discussing the book and how we, as Christians, can have a positive impact. Facilitated by Kathy Ray in Room 230.

Growing Together - The Growing Together class will watch the newly-released *The Gospel of Luke*. This movie is word-for-word from the bible. We will look at Jesus through the eyes of Paul’s ministry. Throughout the year, we will bring the Gospel of Luke alive from both a historical perspective and as a living application to our lives today. The Growing Together class is made up of parents and young adults who want a deeper connection to our faith. Facilitated by Lawrence Andre in Room 132.

Village Forum - The Peoples’ Book - Unlike other books of the Bible through which we hear God speaking to us, in the Psalms we are the ones who do the speaking while God is the one who listens. We say an assortment of things; we speak of thanksgiving and praise, affirmation and affection, but we find there are other words in the Psalms ... darker words ... perhaps more honest words that may surprise and perhaps frighten us ... words of grief, anger, and lament. Given the times in which we find ourselves and the life experiences we all have, it might be helpful to ponder Psalms that are familiar and Psalms that are not, for perhaps both apply to us at different times in our journeys of faith. Rev. Jay McKell will facilitate this five-week class with occasional assistance from Old Testament teacher and former Visiting Scholar, Walter Brueggemann. Sept. 11-Oct. 9 in Room 126.

10:45 a.m.

The Inquirers class will launch its fall semester study schedule reading and discussing the late Marcus Borg’s thought-provoking and inspirational book, *Convictions*. Borg, one of the world’s pre-eminent scholars of the Historical Jesus, concludes his long career with a heart-felt examination and recitation of “How I Learned What Matters Most.” Join the book review and discussion of Borg’s memories, conversions and convictions when Inquirers class resumes Sept. 11 in Room 124. Be a part of the effort to study and celebrate “what matters most” to those who seek to better understand and follow Jesus. Led by Don Wilson in Room 124.

New Hours for the Village Cup

We’ve expanded our hours in the Village Cup Coffee Shop. Since there are so many evening meetings on Monday and Wednesday nights, we’re open all day until 7:30 p.m. those two evenings. Please spread the word about our new business hours:

Sunday	8 a.m.-12:30 p.m.
Monday	8 a.m.-7:30 p.m.
Tuesday	8 a.m.-1 p.m.
Wednesday	8 a.m.-7:30 p.m.
Thursday	8 a.m.-1 p.m.
Friday	8 a.m.-noon
Saturday	Closed



We will offer cold lunches Monday through Thursday, with the addition of hot soup (October through April) on Tuesdays and Thursdays. We look forward to seeing you in the Cup.

Bier and Bible

7 p.m. Wednesdays @KC Bier Company

Every Wednesday we meet at KC Bier Co., and this fall we will work our way through the Old Testament, book by book, week by week. We do this to grow in what we know, and grow in community with one another. Zero Biblical knowledge necessary. Bring a Bible, friends, questions, sense of wonderment. We're using the NRSV Bible. Don't have one? No prob. Grab one on Amazon, or email Rev. Hallie to bring you one! All 20s and 30s welcome.

MMPM: Midweek Morning Prayer for Mamas

9:30 a.m. Wednesdays, Village Church Chapel

We know that the work of being a mom is unique, and wonderful, and hard. Every Wednesday morning we get together in the chapel to pray for each other, and then talk, connect and learn over coffee in the Village Cup! All 20s and 30s Mamas welcome.



VILLAGE COMMITMENT

Please Bring a New Book Sunday, Sept. 25!

This year, Village Commitment Committee committed to offering opportunities for all of us to give beyond our annual pledge. On Sunday, Sept. 25, we ask that you help Operation Breakthrough and Talk, Read, Play by donating a book.

"This is not dropping a book into a barrel going to some child somewhere. They are going to Kansas City children that Village Church volunteers serve through the Operation Breakthrough Reading Program at Village, Talk, Read, Play and Front Porch Alliance's Faxon PAL Program."

—Charlotte Davis



**Please bring a new book!
Sunday, Sept. 25**

Benefiting Operation Breakthrough and Talk, Read, Play

Books should be new and appropriate for children ages newborn to 5 years with topics including **diversity, friendship, food, nature, animal and love.**

Books will be collected at the Village Commitment table in Friendship Hall between all worship services.

We Thank You!



VILLAGE
COMMITMENT

Sunday School

By now you should have received our Fall Mailing. This packet is loaded with information about what goes on here every Sunday and during the week too! If you haven't received yours, please call the Children and Family Ministry office at 913-671-2355. Remember this Sunday, Sept. 11, begins our new year at Sunday School!

New Arrivals

Join us in welcoming these new babies to our church family. Claire Ranking Carter was born to Allison and Brandon Carter and Hattie Claire Kruse was born to Carrie and Brad Kruse. A rose will be placed on the Communion Table on Sunday, Sept. 18, to honor each of these little ones.

If you have a new addition to your family, please call the Children and Family Ministry.



Story Time

The first Tuesday of every month is just for you and your young child. We meet in the Children's library for Story Time and then enjoy time with hands-on activities and crafts. Our next Story Time will be from 9:30-11 a.m. on Tuesday, Oct. 4.



For 6th Grade

Each month, your 6th grader is invited to join us for fun and fellowship. We are planning different activities such as an early fall overnight retreat at Heartland Center, laser tag, snow tubing plus some service projects. Call the Children and Family Ministry office at 913-671-2355.

Village Church Preschool Begins

Village Church Preschool is off and running with our first classes of the new school year taking place Sept. 6 & 7. These first days are filled with precious children, enthusiastic staff, and the tender, loving emotions that surround each family's experience as together they embark on a new path of learning and discovery for their young child. It is a joy to take part!

Village Church Preschool is a NAEYC accredited early education program for 3-year old-5-year old children that operates during the school year in the east wing of the church building at 6641 Mission Road. Enrollment for the 2017-2018 school year will begin in January.



The New Village Church Child & Family Development Center Now Bustling with Children

"This is AMAZING!" commented one parent as they brought their child to the new Village Church Child and Family Development Center at 9900 Mission Road for the first time on Friday, Aug. 12. It was the same day all children moved over to the new building. The large multi-use space and meeting room on the east end of the building will be available for scheduling in January.

Demolition of the old building is expected to be completed by Sept. 20. After that, Pearce Construction will begin work on the rest of the parking lot and then the outdoor playground. Project completion (weather permitting) should be before Thanksgiving. An Open House is planned for the spring.





GOOD NEWS: Highlights for the life of your Village Church (ISSN 1542-1090) Published by the Village Presbyterian Church USA monthly 6641 Mission Road, Prairie Village, Kansas 66208-1799 Periodicals Postage paid at Kansas City MO POSTMASTER: Send address changes to GOOD NEWS: Highlights for the life of your Village Church, 6641 Mission Road, Prairie Village, KS 66208-0050

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ENDOWMENT TRUST

Estate Planning Workshop If you are interested in learning how to set up your estate plan, this workshop is for you!

At 2 p.m. on Sunday, Sept. 18, in Room 132, Stacey Janssen will present a workshop which includes reviewing the importance of estate planning documents such as Last Will and Testaments; a Testamentary or a Living Trust for the support of the family; and an explanation of Probate, Guardianship and Conservatorship.



Sponsored by Village Presbyterian Church Endowment Trust.

RSVP - Molly Sirridge, 913-671-2325, molly.sirridge@villagepres.org.

Stacey Janssen is a founding member of the Kansas Chapter of the National Academy of Elder Law Attorneys and chair of the Johnson County Probate Bench Bar Committee. She is an attorney with Dysart Taylor and a member of Village Presbyterian Church.

Please join us for the Service of Ordination for Amanda Mackey 2 p.m. Sunday, Oct. 2 • Village Church Sanctuary

Amanda is a member of Village Church and a recent graduate of Austin Theological Seminary. A reception will be held in the Welcome Center immediately following the ceremony.

VPC WORSHIP SCHEDULE SUNDAYS

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

Live Radio Broadcast
Sundays at 8 a.m. on
1660 AM KMBZ,
The Business Channel

www.villagepres.org

Food Pantry & Clothes Closet

Drop-Off Hours

10 a.m.–2:30 p.m. M-F
9:30–11:30 a.m. Saturday

IN MEMORY

Jean Allen
Vera Askren
Wilbur "Wil" Billington
Joyce Boucher
George "Bob" Gadberry
Marion Elsham
Mardel Lillard
Emma Lovelace
Judy G. McEachen
Mary Lou McKee
Loraine Nidiffer
Nancy Packard