May the season find you surrounded by the blessings of peace, the beauty of hope, the spirit of love and the comfort of faith.
Sisters in Christ,

Advent invites us to pause in silence to understand a presence.

Actually, each day of the year we are continually waiting and wondering, and yet, during this season those moments are heightened. God’s greatest gift is about to be presented to us and for us.

Theologian Frederick Beuchner states, “The extraordinary thing that is about to happen is matched only by the extraordinary moment just before it happens. Advent is the name of the moment.”

Friends, be patient, walk slowly with God this Advent Season, and open your eyes to the glory He provides, and rejoice in the birth of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

During this Christmas may you and yours be blessed with the spirit of the season, which is PEACE, the gladness of the season, which is HOPE, and the heart of the season which is LOVE.

With hope and joy, Lexa and Becky
Women With Spirit

Join us for one of our favorite events of the year - the Women With Spirit Book Swap! Simply wrap one of your favorite books (new or used) to swap for another’s good read.

In the spirit of giving, please consider also bringing a gently used or new book (not wrapped) for a child at Operation Breakthrough, ages 3-13.

Cost is $7 per person. For questions and to RSVP, shelbykrumm@yahoo.com.

Child care is available with advance reservation, contact Pam at 913-617-7381 or pam.southerland@villagepres.org by January 2.

Three keys to more abundant living:
- caring about others,
- daring for others,
- sharing with others.

William Arthur Ward

PW Spring Retreat
April 24 - 25
Speaker
The Rev. Dee Cooper
Interim Executive Presbyter
Heartland Presbytery

to be held at
Heartland Presbyterian Camp

Save the date!
Look for more details in the January Messenger.
Circle 4: Embracing Our Community

Circle 4 has partnered with students and teachers from Gordon Parks Elementary, a KCMO charter school serving at-risk urban core students, for three years. We’ve collected supplies, filled wish lists, and hosted classroom parties.

On October 31, we shared fall fun with the 4th graders, whom we’ve known since they were in 2nd grade, cherishing every minute as we created masterpieces with candy corn, chased spiders with straws, and “bobbed” for doughnuts on strings.

The real story is that we have received more gifts in return from these beautiful, resilient little warriors... at the top of the list are the gigantic hugs!

Making a difference, one child at a time.

Star Family Information

Return your Star Family gifts to the Operation Breakthrough truck on Sunday, December 8, from 9 am until noon. The truck will be parked at the far end of the south lot. Truck Elves will help you with the drop-off!

If you are looking for opportunities to give, we are still collecting donations for food for the families. Your donation of $30 will feed a family of four, and $60 will feed a family of six or more. Checks are payable to Village Presbyterian Church with “Star Families” in memo.

Thank you so much!

Marilyn Borel, Ann Colston, and Cindy Whitham
rmborel@sbcglobal.net
Shine Brightly

A blessing for The Rev. Sally Wright for her day of Questioning in Heartland Presbytery, written by Lexa Carr.

Stand tall, dear friend, and be authentic. Everything you need, your courage, your intelligence, and His love, is already within you.

You are a child of God.

Your Journey has brought you to us, to Village. We see the passion and emotion you display for this congregation and could not be happier for this day and those to come.

We are loaning all our love and strength to you today knowing that God has your mind and hands in His. Soak it in. May His presence and His strength flood you and your heart with overwhelming peace.

"Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord has dawned upon you."

Isaiah 60:1
Community Table

It’s not what is under the tree that matters... it’s who is gathered around it.

Peace

PW Advent Celebration
Advent: A Holy Invitation

Celebration of Faithful Women Saturday, March 21
PW Spring Retreat April 24 & 25
VOA Spring Luncheon Saturday, April 18

Make a reservation for the January 14 Lunch Between the Circles at your December circle meeting. Lunch is served beginning at 11:30, with a cost of $6 per person. Vegetarian and gluten-free meals are available if requested when you make your reservation. Reservation deadline is January 1.

Contact Leslie Conrad, 913-341-2734 or conradleslie@aol.com for questions. Child care is available, contact Pam at pam.southerland@villagepres.org.

VOA Fellowship Dinner
December Break Join us January 27!

Questions? kellythomason61@att.net

PW Advent Celebration
Advent: A Holy Invitation

The Rev. Sarah Are
Tuesday, December 3
5:30 pm
Village on Mission

Reservations are required.
Questions? Nancy Cantril, 913-638-8049 or nancy.cantril@gmail.com

Presbyterian Women Purpose

Forgiven and freed by God in Jesus Christ, and empowered by the Holy Spirit, we commit ourselves:

* To nurture our faith through prayer and Bible Study
* To support the mission of the church worldwide
* to work for justice and peace
* to build an inclusive, caring community of women that strengthens the Presbyterian Church (USA) and witnesses to the promises of God’s Kingdom
It is Well With My Soul
by the Rev. Sally Wright

If you spend much time around people who work in a “helping” profession, it won’t be too long until you hear the word “self-care.” And once you hear this word, it seems to pop-up everywhere... almost to the point of being like static on the radio. At least that is how I have experienced the word “self-care.” That is, until a few months ago.

I went to a workshop entitled Building Resilient Faith Communities put on by the Center for Trauma Informed Innovation at Truman Medical Center. They placed the act of self-care into a life-long practice of building resiliency and grit. Who wouldn’t want a life that you could bounce back from things that knock you down. I know I do.

At this workshop, I discovered a quote that changed my whole view of self-care. This quote shattered all of my previous learning about self-care and put it in the much larger context of life-long habits. Brianna Wiest, who is an America writer, editor, author and speaker, best known for her prolific work on emotional intelligence says, “True self-care is not salt-baths and chocolate cake. It is making the choice to build a life you don’t need to regularly escape from.”

The moment I read this, you could hear my brain exploding with clarity and understanding - almost literally.

Let’s quickly talk about two parts of your brain. Your brain stem – way at the back, bottom of your skull is always scanning for threats. It is the oldest evolutionary part of your brain. Your brain stem is where your body is making the decisions to Fight, Flight, or Freeze. Your prefrontal cortex – the part right behind your forehead, is the youngest evolutionary part of your brain. This is where thinking, rational, logic thought, and learning happen. When your prefrontal cortex is engaged, you might be thinking “What can I learn?” Whereas, when your brainstem is running the show, you might be thinking, “Am I safe?” And you are going to react without any thought – it will just happen. For example, when a bear is running at you, you don’t want to stand there and analyze the softness of the bears’ fur (like if you were stuck in your prefrontal cortex). Your brain stem would have already made the decision to run away.

This is great – if you are living in the wilderness trying to eke out a living on the plain. But most of us reading this are not doing that. We live in and around Johnson County, KS. Yet, our brain stems still respond to stressors like chronic stresses of our over-scheduled lives, relationships, shared corporate trauma (i.e. mass shootings or 9/11/01) and more.

What does this have to do with self-care? Self-care is the set of actions that will calm down our brain stem and allows us to move back into the pre-frontal cortex. Self-care is the practice of telling our brain that we are not under threat. Self-care is the constant exercise of building resilience in our lives.

How do you do that? I am glad you asked. For me, I find that regular, healthy food is a way I can keep my body from thinking I am under threat. I also use naps, meditation and prayer, time with trusted friends, talks with my momma and a piece of chocolate from time-to-time.

As we move into this holiday season, consider the suggestions in the “Two-Minute Refresh” for you to practice moving your brain from a state of high alert to a state of wonder. If this is something that seems far beyond your reach, set up a meeting with me. Let’s talk.
Presbyterian women from the PW Board gathered with five new Village Church members at Rebecca Seyferth’s home on November 10th. The event provided an opportunity for new members to learn more about Village Church, meet other new members, and members of the PW board.

New Village Church members attending were: Elsa Aguilar, Jean Hartley, Mary Hunkeler, Sarah Thomas and Julie Welsh.

Look for information for our next PW new member gathering to be held in April. For more information, please contact Ann DeFeo at annddefeo@gmail.com.

Mission Sewing
No sewing in December!

Mission Sewing is on a break the month of December. We will be returning Tuesday, January 7 and/or Thursday, January 9.

Tuesdays: Cheryl Brady, cba50@mindspring.com or 816-589-5013 or Anna Staton 913-669-6743 or staton.anna@yahoo.com.

Thursdays: Nancy Cantril, 913-638-8049 or nancy.cantril@gmail.com or Dee Gound, 913-961-7473 or dkgound@kc.rr.com.
Reflections on Refreshing Your Wonder
Finding Joy in the “Hustle and Bustle!”

It’s fun to be home in my pj’s with my family hanging out playing games, working on a puzzle or just doing nothing. ~ Shelby Krumm

My favorite way to spend sacred time in December is going to music concerts. They are exciting, calming, and inspirational. The words of the Christmas songs, when performed, remind me of the reason for the Christmas season. ~ Marvie Sneegas

Honestly, I’m not the best person to answer this question. I love the holidays, but I’m not the best at “self-care” during this time of year, except for an occasional glass of wine! ~ Carol Solenberger

I always take a day to go to my home town, which is an hour away. I go to the cemetery and “decorate” my parents graves for the holidays. This brings me peace and my memories reflect on the wonderful Christmases I spent with my family. ~ Martha Tatman

For me, joy comes early every morning while alone with God for prayer and read a meditation. That time is holy. It also comes while being in the beauty of His creation outdoors. This is therapeutic to self care, and again, always time to be grateful for Him and all that surrounds me. ~ Lexa Carr

I force myself to “hit the pause button.” Reading Psalm 18 today helped to lend me a Godly perspective on the myriad of pressing tiny tasks set before me. Setting time to spend fellowship with my Dad who is bed ridden, humbly reminds of what is important, which is to TRY to seek DWELLING and BEING in Christ instead of frenetically DOING, in other words, “praying action.” I gain much from Mother Theresa’s words... “do little things with great love.” ~ Rebecca Seyferth

I think of all the simple things that bring joy and focus on those...quiet moments, favorite decorations, music, and traditions like cookie decorating with my grandsons. ~ Kathy Ray

Spending Sabbath time each day - sitting with Him, praying or reading scripture - is vital for keeping me centered. During Advent, I try to use this time to keep me in a posture of expectant waiting. We are called to wait with joy and expectation, watching and waiting and noticing all that God is doing in our lives and in our world. Sabbath time helps me do that! ~ Susan Satterlee

I like to read favorite stories from Christmas past, a story my dad read to us every Christmas, which in turn I read to my children. This story was printed in Good Housekeeping Magazine many years ago, titled “The Miracle in Derek Texas”. It still moves me to tears... ~ Becky Anderson

A beautiful, “sacred” time that is very meaningful to me is the Service of Remembrance. We all have people from our lives that we miss terribly, sometimes more so during the holiday season. This service gives us a chance to remember those who are no longer with us. ~ Janet Bates

I love to look at old family Christmas decorations, books, and toys and remember years of warm Christmas memories and special relatives. It gives me a moment to appreciate the great love and joy the holiday season can bring. ~ Laura Langdon
Gentle Therapeutic Yoga

This is small group training that resembles physical therapy mixed with yoga. This class is wonderful for keeping you strong and pain free. Must be able to get up and down off the floor with ease. Try a free class before you commit. Must reserve your free class by TEXTING Katie Hurcomb at 913-244-5623.

Mondays and Wednesdays
Youth Loft
1:30-2:30 pm
$50 = 4 classes per month
$96 = 8 classes per month

Yamuna Body Rolling

This class focuses on self administering deep tissue massage to work out the adhesions in fascia. This is an amazing system of healing. Come see what it’s all about! TEXT Katie Hurcomb at 913-244-5623 to reserve your visit.

Mondays and Wednesdays
Youth Loft
12:30-1:30pm
$50 = 4 classes per month
$96 = 8 classes per month

PW Alive Now

Alive Now is a Bible Study for women who are early risers. We meet each Wednesday from 8:00 to 9:30 am in the Heritage Dining Room.

We study a passage of scripture and we are a support group for one another, often spending as much time sharing and caring for each other’s needs. If you would like more information, contact Judy at judycooperjc@gmail.com.

Page Turners meets the fourth Tuesday of each month at 10 a.m. at VOM in room 127. All are welcome to join in this lively discussion.

There is no Page Turners in December. For more information contact Judy Lockett at judylocket5@gmail.com or Barbara Lee at 217-891-3557 or lhlee@att.net.

Books with Spirit is going to meet some time in January (date and location TBD) to discuss Robin DiAngelo’s White Fragility. Beyond that, we will likely read Gilead for an early spring discussion, but no details yet.

Contact Laura Langdon at reelbeachy@hotmail.com for questions.

Amazing Graces Book Club will meet on December 4 at 6 pm. The discussion is about A Short Guide to A Happy Life by Anna Quindlen.

Our meeting location changes every month. Contact Sara Wallace at swallace01@gmail.com for meeting location and to be added to the email distribution list.