

THE OLIVE BRANCH

West Valley Presbyterian Church



April 2021 Newsletter

Welcome Back for Easter!

On April 4, 2021, with indoor preparations in place, WVPC members were able to reserve a pew for our beautiful indoor Easter service!

The energy was wonderful, even while wearing masks, to hear our voices joined together in song.

We are so grateful to be able to gather again. How appropriate to celebrate our Saviour!



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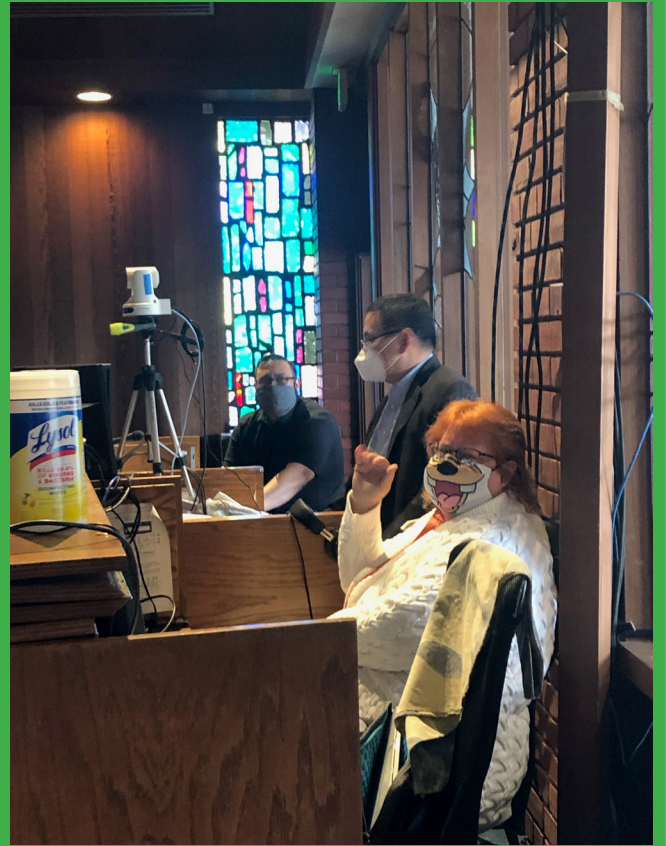
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Easter Sunday

9:30 am Indoor Service. Behind the scenes media crew: Janet on camera, Theresa on Pro Presenter (graphics), Glenn on Switcher, Frank on Audio. (Not seen: Dave on Streaming, Greg on set-up, Lanette on camera.)

11 am Outdoor Service. Beautiful Resurrection Flower Cross tradition, of members inserting flowers. Using the top of the stairs as the platform, family groups sit six feet apart below.



Children's Easter Party!

Even with social distancing, Terri Dias is finding fun ways to celebrate the Holidays.

They began their Easter party with cookie decorating. Then a dramatic reading of the story of Holy Week.

To follow along, each child was given an egg carton with eggs, full of surprises: The first egg contained a palm branch representing Palm Sunday. The second a washcloth, symbolizing Jesus washing the disciple's feet. The third, a coin for Judas' betrayal. The fourth, a cup and cracker for the Last Supper. The fifth, praying hands and a flower symbolizing Gethsemane. The sixth a cross. The seventh, dice for the soldier's gambling away Jesus' clothes. The eighth, a spear for the piercing that proved his death. The ninth, linen for the burial cloths. The tenth, a stone for the covered tomb. The eleventh an angel, for the angel that proclaimed, "He is risen!" The twelfth, an empty egg, because the tomb is now empty.

Afterwards, they play games, like the egg/spoon challenge, cross craft, and finally an Easter Egg Hunt. Many thanks to Alan and the youth who stuffed and hid the eggs and helped with set-up and clean-up, and Miss Monica who helped with prep and teaching.

Was there an age limit on this party? It sounds like fun!



COVID Wisdom from Our Kids

Terri and her young student Gabriel were discussing being a light in a dark world. When you have Jesus in your heart, His love shines out, which helps others find Jesus too. Gabriel said, "Oh, I get it! **Jesus is like a love virus** -- when you get it, you could give it to others... and they could give it to others. And pretty soon, it would go all around the world!"

Amen Gabriel!



Nerf Wars!

How do you socially distance and still have fun? Alan Rowe set up some Nerf Wargames for our Youth.

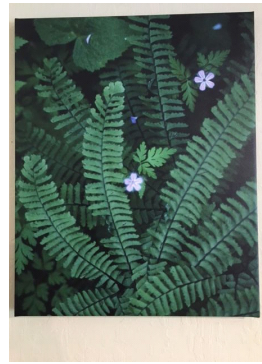


February Crafts Boutique

The WVPC Crafts Boutique sale on February 6th was friendly, socially-distanced event. There were many handmade items for Valentines Day and for year-round occasions. Janet Shaw donated a lovely nature scene which was a beautiful photo specially printed on canvas. It sold quickly. Theresa Shafer contributed hand painted, yard art Valentines Day stones. Cynthia Blank contributed handmade Valentines Day jewelry and handmade Valentines Day cards, as well as, cards for most other year-round occasions.

The sale went well considering it was a small sale during times of COVID. The combined sales and donation came to \$120. The Boutique would like to thank all of the people who came to the sale and especially those who made purchases.

We would also like to thank Sandy Franger, Sandy Todd, Cynthia Blank and Janet Shaw for helping coordinate the sale.



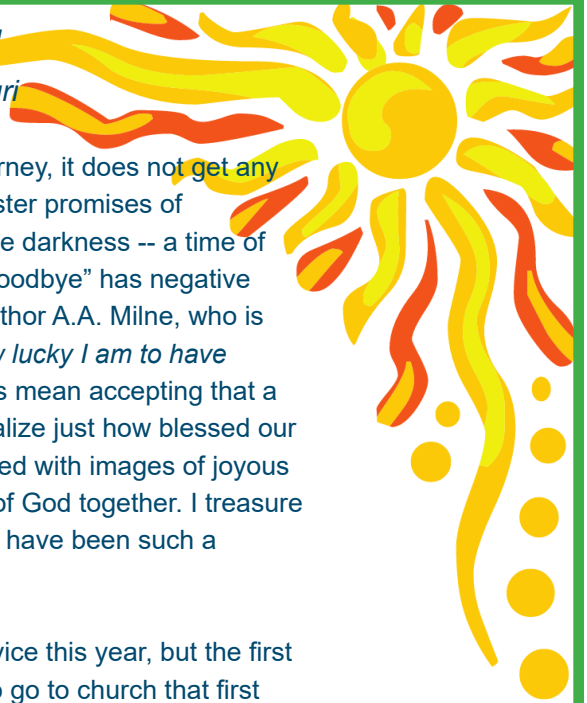
Valentines for Seniors

The Belmont Village Seniors and WVPC would like to thank Terri, Miss Monica, Ethan, Chloe, Kim and her parents, Rhiannon and Judy McDowell, Madison Rowe and her mom for making and delivering over 47 Valentines for Seniors!



Til we meet again!

by Pastor Sung Chung of Onnuri

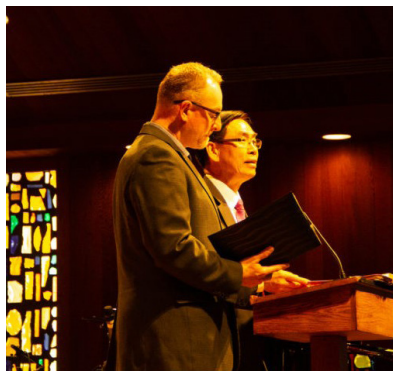


Goodbyes are rarely easy. Although it's an unavoidable part of the journey, it does not get any easier with practice. Even when we're surrounded by the powerful Easter promises of resurrection, parting always feels like a moment trapped in inescapable darkness -- a time of confusion for some and intense grief for others. And while the word "goodbye" has negative emotional connotations, there is a more positive way to perceive it. Author A.A. Milne, who is perhaps best known for his work, "Winnie-the-Pooh" once wrote: *"How lucky I am to have something that makes saying goodbye so hard."* Saying goodbye does mean accepting that a part of our life is now over. Yet, it also provides us with a chance to realize just how blessed our lives have been. My Easter Sunday memories with West Valley are filled with images of joyous meals, praising God in different languages, and listening to the Word of God together. I treasure these memories and I am grateful for the time we spend together. You have been such a blessing in my life.

The coronavirus outbreak has forced us to cancel our joint Easter service this year, but the first Easter looks somewhat familiar. In fact, the disciples didn't even get to go to church that first Easter. Just like most of us are retreating to the inside of our homes because what is going on outside and all around is dangerous and terrifying, the disciples spent the very first Easter cuddling inside a blanket after the death of Jesus. But during the last supper when the disciples feared losing Him, Jesus said this: *"I will take you to myself...so that where I am you also may be."* (John 14:3)

There is no image more reassuring than home. It is there that Jesus awaits us: *"in my Father's house there are many dwelling places."* Christ is going to bring all of us into His house. So, our destination is the same. Our home will not be different. My house will be your house and together we will dwell under the same shadow of Christ's throne. This is our comfort in this season of farewell. It may not make the moment easier, but it does sanctify the moment. And I want to leave you with the timeless poem called, "Our God, Our Help" by Issac Watts:

*Our God, our help in ages past,
Our hope for years to come,
Our shelter from the stormy blast,
And our eternal home:
Under the shadow of thy throne
Thy saints have dwelt secure;
Sufficient is Thine arm alone,
And our defense is sure.*





Todd Misfeldt Reelected

Delegates from the ECO Bluewater Presbytery congregations met via online conferencing on Saturday, February 27. The meeting was well-attended by over forty Pastors, Associates, Commissioners (Church Elders) and Guests. The Presbytery is focusing on publishing policies to guide the congregations, in the form of "Ministry Partnership Team" (MPT) and "Presbytery Operations" manuals, which cover the necessary topics of church governance. Elections for the 2021 governing council were also held. Scott Palmbush, of Menlo Church, was elected as Moderator and Todd Misfeldt was reelected as Stated Clerk. For more information about the member congregations, the council, and the working teams please see the bluewaterpresbytery.com website.

- *Frank Lemmon*

Scout Sunday

The following Scouts participated in our recent indoor recorded Service and outdoor Saturday Service. Vishnu read scripture, while Sarath presented a COVID Memorial. Larry and Dave presented the Troop Charter. Bhargav presented a COVID Memorial and Anav read scripture.





Thank You Tom Mancebo

By Judy Keever

<< Here, we celebrate Tom as he moves out of the home he purchased with his wife in 1960, and relocates to Amarillo Texas, to be closer to family. (Frank Lemmon, Jeff Stanish, Morgan Murray, and Parker Wiley also pictured.)

Tom Mancebo....Tom and Lorraine Mancebo.... lots of kids...solid Christian family. Those are immediate thoughts when Tom's name comes up. I have known Tom and his late wife Lorraine for 50+ years. He is a most caring, prayerful, gentle man who lives his faith every day! I met with the prayer group for a couple years at 6:30 every Wednesday morning to pray for the requests on the yellow cards. It was a special time and just as Tom cared for his family, and especially Lorraine as she fought her battle with cancer, he took care of other people with the same assurance of being heard by his Savior. I just heard that Tom is planning to leave us and move to Texas..So I went on a 'woman on the

street' (actually the computer) quest to find out how folks from WV feel about Tom. It's unanimous! We're going to feel a big loss without him here with us.

Here's part of what I discovered:

From **Donna Hulsker**:

"When I think of Tom Mancebo, I think of his warm friendly smile. My father, Carroll McCune, said Tom was a fine Christian man. Tom and Lorraine came to WVPC in 1960. Tom shared with me that in the early years there wasn't money to clean the Sunday School carpets, so they decided to do the cleaning themselves on a monthly basis. Carroll helped with purchasing cleaning supplies. Tom said he worked with Carroll many times including on the Buildings and Grounds committee when the sanctuary was being built; and the Brown Bag program. He also attended the weekly Men's breakfast. Tom will be dearly missed. We wish him well in Texas.

From **Marva Prow**:

"Tom and I taught 4th grade Sunday school together. I remember that it was his idea to show how the Red Sea could be divided. We brought in cake pans and had a fan that divided the water and the toy soldiers went through. I mean really! It was the best memory to teach with him! We did it for a couple years. I also remember that Tom and his wife prayed at each row in church before the service began. I remember that Tom often was on prayer teams to pray for people after the service. Tom (or Tom and Lorraine) were at every adult Sunday class that I attended. We went often. Sending love to Tom and best wishes on this new life change for him."

From **Roger Prow**:

"We have also known Tom for some 50 years. He was always ready to volunteer for whatever projects, committees, or help in general was needed at the WVPC. He was one of us who have spent many years early every Thursday morning at Men's breakfast. He presided over the meetings for many years and he even helped fix breakfast some mornings when the cook didn't show up. We all appreciated Tom's insight into the topics under discussion. He is a devout Christian, a wonderful friend, and will be missed by so many of us."

From **Art Pasquelli**:

"I remember Tom from many years back when the church had work crews that volunteered their time to cut the lawns, trim bushes and keep the church spruced up. We worked side by side many times. He was a very hard worker. He will be missed."



Hello from Texas

Hello to our West Valley family from Austin, Texas!

We have arrived safely and are getting settled into the daily routines of helping Allie with her three and a half year old daughter and three and a half month old son. We are daily busy with the waking of children, dressing Harley for preschool, packing lunches, doing laundry, dishes, grocery shopping, helping with yard work, cooking dinners, reading stories, coloring Easter eggs, and all the other things parents do these days!

We can't believe our luck. This is the hottest seller's real estate market in the nation right now, and lo and behold, we bid on a house literally the day after we arrived in Austin, closed the sale this week, and will start moving in next Wednesday! We bought in the Austin Hill country of Hays County Oaks 2, next to horse trails, ostriches in adjacent yards, young goats next door, and enough room for us to raise chickens, a large vegetable garden, and more. We are living "off the grid" a bit with our own propane tank, septic system, and sweet water well. We have PODS arriving this week, and movers to help unpack and move us in already scheduled.

We have been visiting neighborhood churches, and have had invitations to lunches after church and Bible studies already. We're trying to determine which one we like best, but we are not in a hurry to decide.

Thanks for all the prayers and well wishes you have sent our way, we feel very very blessed.

Mary and Nick Pound

2021-04-09 GrX Update

Over the past few weeks, members of the WVPC Engagement Team have had two meetings with key leaders from GrX Covenant Church, including Pastor Scott Loo. Since shelter-in-place began, GrX has been exclusively online – worshipping via Facebook Live and fellowshiping via Zoom. Because of that, these face-to-face meetings were a significant move forward. Pastor Scott shared with the group that it was the first time he had seen some members of his church in person since the pandemic began.

These meetings have been a valuable way to develop rapport, understand different perspectives and expectations, and develop a timeline for the transition. The WVPC Team is now meeting weekly to work out this timeline. While property matters are understandably top-of-mind for many members, the team is currently focused on creating a clear pathway for West Valley members to:

- Get to know more about GrX,
- Celebrate the life and legacy of our church,
- Create space for grieving the end of the West Valley era, and
- Ensure that no one gets forgotten or left behind.

While COVID restrictions still play a role in transition planning, if case numbers continue to drop and the county allows for increased attendance for indoor events then GrX may begin holding worship services on the West Valley campus by midsummer. In the meantime, Pastor Scott has invited West Valley members to:

- Gather online with GrX Sundays at 10:30 am;
- Join the In the Word Bible Study at 11:45 am; and
- Sign up on the XFlash email list.

Go to GrX.org to learn more.

West Valley elder Terri Dias and GrX elder Virginia Chen have also organized a Women's Afternoon Hangout on May 1. To find out more, go to WVPC.org and look under the Ministries tab.

The Engagement Team is:

Mike Clark
Terri Dias
Brenda & Doug Gips
Donna Perry
Dan Yuen
with staff support from Pastor Morgan



Join the Great Exchange Church's weekly email xFlash at: <http://grx.org>
And watch the Livestream at 10:30 am Sundays: <http://grx.org/live-stream>