

THE VALLEY

JANUARY 2025 NEWSLETTER



Valley Community Presbyterian Church

OPEN HEARTS • OPEN MINDS • OPENING LIVES TO GOD

3100 Lilac Dr. N
Golden Valley, MN 55422



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Cover Photo: On the Fourth Sunday in Advent we celebrated LOVE with the baptism of Briella! Surrounded by family and friends, she was welcomed into the Valley family. (Dec. 22, 2024)

Community News

• MARK YOUR CALENDAR

- Valley Office will be closed on January 1 (New Year's Day) and January 20 (MLK Jr. Day)
- **Fridays in the Valley (pages 5, 6, 10)**
 - Friday, January 10 @ 7 PM | The Boston Imposters ft. Alex Nishibun
- **Snow Camp at Clearwater Forest | Friday, January 10 - Sunday, January 12 (page 6)**
- Craft & Connect | Saturday, January 11 - 10:00 AM - 2:00 PM (potluck lunch at 12 PM (page 5)
- **Rev. Jim Cook preaching! | Sunday, January 19**
- Valley Brew Crew | Saturday, January 25 | 1 - 6 PM (page 10)
- **Ordination and installation of new Church Officers | Sunday, January 26**
- **Annual Meeting | Sunday, February 2 (page 10)**
- Youth Cookie Sale | Sunday, February 9 (pages 8, 10)
- **Clearwater Chrysalis | February 21 - 23 (page 7)**
- Couples' Retreat at Clearwater Forest | February 28 - March 2
 - Visit <https://clearwaterforest.org/retreats/adult-retreats/> to learn more and register

2025
OFFERING
ENVELOPES
PICK UP AT
CHURCH

• MISSION OPPORTUNITIES

- PTCA Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Event | Saturday, January 18 (page 6)
- **Habitat for Humanity Work Day - January 20 | 8:30 AM - 3:30 PM (pages 5, 7)**
 - Sign up in the Fellowship Hall, contact Andrew Pitan with questions
- **Indigenous Justice updates (page 9)** (formerly Land Acknowledgement)
 - Many upcoming opportunities to engage with this work out in the community!
- **Earth Care Updates (page 9)**
- NEEDED Meals on Wheels Drivers - call the Church Office if you can volunteer

A LETTER FROM THE PASTOR

JANUARY 2025

Dear Valley,

I write to you today in the afterglow of countless Christmas festivities: pageants, dinners, Toy Shop, and worship services galore! My heart is filled with joy every year when the expectant hope of Advent gives way to the realization of Emmanuel as God walks among us here on earth. Joy and excitement abound – Joy to the world!

But there is also always a bit of uncertainty as Christmas Day fades and the new year approaches. We all wonder, what lies in store for me this coming year? What blessings are waiting for me around the corner? Or, more fearfully, what new challenges await me? When that ecstatic Christmas joy is tempered by the stinging reality of returning to work, we do what we can to carry the knowledge that God loves back to our lives so it can give us strength for the year ahead. As followers of Christ, we can do that with our hands. The poem "The Work of Christmas" by Howard Thurman captures this this sentiment perfectly.



Rev. Jim Cochrane



Christmas Eve worship at Valley Community, singing Christmas hymns by candlelight.

When the song of the angels is stilled
 when the star in the sky is gone
 when the kings and princes are home
 when the shepherds are back with their flocks
 the work of Christmas begins:
 to find the lost
 to heal the broken
 to feed the hungry
 to release the prisoner
 to rebuild the nations
 to bring peace among the people
 to make music in the heart.

When we remember that God came to earth as an infant, we also remember that Christ's appearance came with a challenge: to care for those who need it and to love all people so they might see the wonder of God for themselves. It gives me great joy then to see Valley stepping in to do the work of Christmas by supporting groups like Habitat for Humanity, like we will be doing on our annual build day on January 20th, or by uplifting communities that stand in protest against hopelessness by hosting our Fridays in the Valley concert to benefit the Northside Healing Space on Friday, January 10th. I hope you will find a couple of opportunities to join in the work of Christmas by coming to one of our myriad events coming up this month, and that you'll join your hearts together in worship throughout January.

When it comes down to it, the work of Christmas is loving every other person just as we have first been loved. There is nothing we can do to deserve it, but we can certainly show our gratitude by passing it on.

In Christ,



Sue Ruby treated everyone in attendance at the 2024 Valley Holiday Dinner to a festive piano concert. A huge thank you to Sue for always sharing her gifts with us!

Join us for
 worship!

Sundays
 at 9:30 AM
 or anytime on our
 YouTube Channel

We are worshipping in-person and via live-stream.

WORSHIP SERVICE OVERVIEW

- Prelude begins at 9:25 AM | Worship at 9:30 AM, followed by coffee and treats in Fellowship Hall.
- The Family Room located in the Sunshine Room is always available with a TV to watch the service for parents whose little ones need a break.
- Activity Bags and Children's Bulletins are available in the Narthex. The Sunshine Room provides Sunday School for children 3-3rd grade and childcare for all ages during Adult Education classes.

Valley Connects - December 2024



CHRISTMAS PAGEANT 2024



CHRISTMAS EVE



VALLEY HANDBELLS FT. TAIKO DRUMS





Fridays in the Valley Presents:

the Boston Imposters
ft. Alex Nishibun

Friday, January 10, 2025 | 7:00 PM

FREE-WILL OFFERINGS BENEFIT
NORTHSIDE HEALING SPACE

 Valley Community

2025 CONFIRMATION CLASS GRADES 9 & 10

BEGINS MARCH 2, 2025


Contact Sheila to learn more and sign up!
sheila.sheldon@valleychurch.net

NEW! **Bible Study**

2nd Thursday of the month at 10 AM in the library.

Join Rev. Rebecca Tollefson for *Let Justice Roll Down*, a wonderful Bible Study focused on creation justice. Come to one or come to them all.

DATES: 1/9/25, 2/13/25, 3/13/25 & 4/10/25



SNOW CAMP 2025
Snow Flakes in His Hands

GRADES 3RD - 12TH \$175 per camper (youth and adult)

Clearwater Forest Snow Camp 2025
16595 Crooked Lake Rd
Deerwood, MN 56444

January 10-12
Hallett Dining Hall
7-8 PM Drop Off
3-4 PM Pick Up

Email Sheila or Mariah for a special coupon code to save \$50!

Habitat for Humanity
MONDAY, JANUARY 20, 2025: MLK JR. DAY



12 VOLUNTEERS NEEDED
8:30 AM - 3:30 PM
The project is a rehab home in Edina, MN
Sign up in the Fellowship Hall
contact **Andrew Pitan** or **Valley** with questions

Craft & Connect

Valley Craft Club has a new name! **Craft & Connect** is for anyone who enjoys a day crafting, working on a puzzle or just chatting with friends.

Come catch up on a project, start something new or come see what others are working on for inspiration! There will be craft supplies, puzzles & cribbage boards available. Come for the fellowship and stay for the fun!

Bring a dish to share for lunch at 12 PM.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 11, 2025
10 AM - 2:00 PM
LUNCH AT 12 PM






IT MAY BE WINTER,

BUT VALLEY WILL NOT BE HIBERNATING!

Valley Choir in 2025!

DATE: WEDNESDAY, 1/8 | TIME: 7:00 PM

We are looking forward to having the Valley Choir singing during worship twice each month. The choir will rehearse on select Wednesdays at 7:00PM for worship the following Sunday and at 8:30AM on Sunday morning. Participants are welcome to join weekly as they are able. **The next rehearsal date is January 8 at 7:00 pm and the choir will sing during worship on Sunday the 12th!**

Bible Study with Rev. Rebecca Tollefson

DATE: THURSDAY, 1/9 | TIME: 10:00 AM

Join Rev. Rebecca Tollefson for *Let Justice Roll Down*, a wonderful Bible Study focused on creation justice. Come to one or come to them all. The group will meet the 2nd Thursday of the month at 10 AM in the library.

Spring dates: 1/9/25, 2/13/25, 3/13/25 & 4/10/25

Fridays in the Valley Concert

DATE: FRIDAY, 1/10 | TIME: 7:00 PM

Join us for the January Fridays in the Valley concert benefitting Northside Healing Space with the musical group The Boston Imposters featuring Alex Nishibun. It will be a delightful evening of music for a great cause. We hope to see you there! Free-will offering benefits Northside Healing Space.

Bell Choir Practice Resumes!

DATE: TUESDAY, 1/7 | TIME: 6:30 PM

Have you ever considered trying your hand at bell ringing? What's stopping you? The Valley Ringers love to share and teach others how to ring! Ringers and non-ingers ages 10 & up are welcome. The Bell Choir rehearses every Tuesday at 6:30 PM. **The next rehearsal date is January 7 at 6:30 pm.**

Clearwater Snow Camp

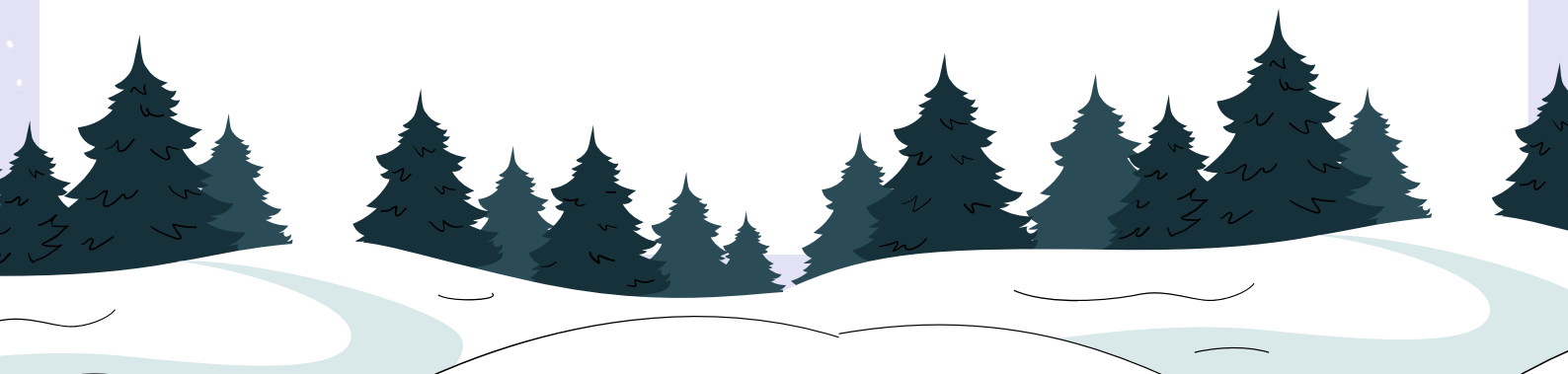
DATE: FRIDAY 1/10 - SUNDAY 1/12

Snow Camp is a great time to get up North and have fun with your friends while doing meaningful bible study and exploring what Clearwater has to offer in the snow! Spots for adult chaperones are full but you still have a little bit of time to register your 3rd - 12th grader/s. Visit <https://clearwaterforest.org/retreats/youth-retreats/> to learn more and register.

Dr. King and the Ongoing March Toward Justice

DATE: SATURDAY, 1/18 | TIME: 9:30 AM - 12:00 PM

The presbytery invites you to a collaborative event for the 2025 Martin Luther King Jr., Holiday hosted by the presbytery and multiple PTCA area congregations. We're looking forward to a rich conversation about the continuing significance of Dr. King's words. Hosted at Westminster Presbyterian Church.



**Rev. Jim Cook
preaching on
January 19!**

Habitat for Humanity Work Day

DATE: MONDAY, 1/20 | TIME: 8:30 AM - 3:30 PM

Join other Valley members for the annual Habitat for Humanity Work Day in honor of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. This year the home is a rehab home in Edina, MN, which will differ from a new-build like the group has worked in the past. No skills are needed aside from a willingness to work hard and try new things. Sign up in the Fellowship Hall and reach out to Andrew Pitan with questions.

Necrology Sunday & Annual Meeting

DATE: SUNDAY, 2/2 | TIME: 9:30 - 11:30 AM

Mark your calendar for Sunday, February 2 when we will come together to honor those we lost in 2024. Their legacies live on and we will celebrate as Valley family. Following worship will be the 2024 Annual Congregational Meeting to take a look back at the past year and ahead to the year to come.

Clearwater Couple's Retreat

DATE: FRIDAY 2/28 - SUNDAY 3/2

It will be spring at Clearwater, but is your marriage also in the season of spring? Come to Clearwater Forest to enjoy a meaningful weekend learning about the four seasons of marriage and how your marriage can thrive in any season! There will be time for couples to be together on their own as well as time for large-group activities. Visit <https://clearwaterforest.org/retreats/adult-retreats/> to learn more and register.

Liberty Invite-A-Friend Sunday

DATE: SUNDAY, 1/26 | TIME: 11:00 AM

Mark your calendars for Liberty's Invite-A-Friend service on January 26th! We hope you and your loved ones will join our friends at Liberty for this special service! Worship at Valley ends at 10:30 AM, so you can make it to Liberty in plenty of time.

Where: Liberty Community Church
3700 Bryant Ave N, Minneapolis, MN 55412

Clearwater Chrysalis

DATE: FRIDAY 2/21 - SUNDAY 2/23

The theme this year is "Claiming Your God-Given Woman Wisdom" and will feature Guest Speaker Rev. Chris Bellefeuille. Clearwater Chrysalis is a balanced, faith-building program of Clearwater Forest, welcoming adult women from all Christian traditions. Visit

<https://clearwaterforest.org/clearwater-chrysalis/> to learn more and register.

SAVE THE DATE!

Y.E.S. Tea

DATE: SATURDAY, MARCH 22

It seems far away, but March will be here before we know it! The 2025 Youth Education Scholarship (Y.E.S.) Tea will be held on March 22, 2025. Mark your calendars and, table hosts, start planning your themes! Please talk to or email Sheila Sheldon if you are interested in hosting a table this year! (Sheila.Sheldon@valleychurch.net)

Valley Education Corner

Faith Formation Update: Sunday School for kids ages 3-3rd grade is ongoing. Natalie Peña-Gallegos is in the Sunshine Room on Sunday mornings to lead Sunday School activities. She does need helpers so please consider lending a hand. [CLICK HERE](#) to sign up in Breeze to be a Sunday School Helper!

TEAMS & Youth Baking Day!

Katie Decker is going to lead a baking day starting from **2:00 - 5:00 PM on Saturday, February 8th**. We will taste-test a few of the treats and save the rest for the Youth Cookie Sale on February 9th. See you there!



Valley Youth Cookie Sale
Valley Youth and the Cookie Queen are at it again. Mark your calendar for Sunday, February 9th (**one day only!**) to stock up on treats and support youth programs.



TEAMS kids got to make slime before taking a break for winter! It's always a crowd-pleaser.

Adult Education

Plans for the spring schedule are underway. A complete course list with class descriptions will be available in the February Newsletter.

Classes will resume on March 2, 2025 and will meet in the Cornerstone Room at 11:00 AM unless otherwise noted.



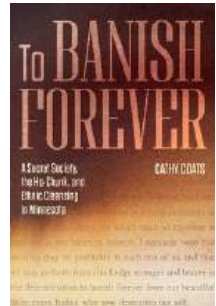
2024 YOUTH & TEAMS CHRISTMAS PARTY



Land Acknowledgement Task Force



More than 60 people attended the Ho-Chunk history presentation. (Credit: Mariah Messer)



Left: Book cover for the event on November 14; Right: Cathy Coats and Robert Pilot listening to cultural advisor Bradley Blackhawk. (Credit: Jim Elert)

A new name for a new year! In January 2025, the Land Acknowledgment Task Force is updating its name to the **Indigenous Justice Task Force**. This change reflects Valley’s efforts to expand beyond land acknowledgment towards making sustained commitments that support Indigenous priorities.

For example, we’re already planning a busy 2025:

- In January, Valley and community partners are applying for a Heritage Partnership Program grant. This will help to build community collaborations and identify next steps for **planning interpretive signage** along the creek. Interpretive signage is one of the priorities that was identified with input from cultural advisors.
- In January, Valley has been invited to submit a grant proposal to the Mississippi Watershed Management Organization. This project will hire an Indigenous photographer, Cassandra Roy, to **photograph the creek in all 4 seasons**. This effort will help to build Valley’s relationships with Native artists and create images that tell the story of Hāhā Wakpádaŋ / Bassett Creek through an Indigenous lens.

- On Sunday January 12 at 9:00am, Crystal Boyd will present about how to get started with land acknowledgment work during the Adult Education hour at **Valley of Peace Lutheran Church**. Please feel free to attend and meet our neighbors down the road!
- On Tuesday January 14 at 7:00pm, Crystal Boyd will present about efforts to honor Hāhā Wakpádaŋ for the **New Hope Citizen Advisory Committee** in New Hope City Hall. Open to members of the public.
- Further ahead, the Task Force is working with Valley’s Endowment Committee to explore many other educational opportunities for 2025. Please mark your calendars for the **Third Annual Hāhā Wakpádaŋ Water Blessing** on Monday October 14 and another **Hāhā Wakpádaŋ 5K** on Saturday October 18!

If you have any questions or would like to join the task force, please contact Jennifer Biggs. We’d love to see you at our monthly meetings!

Finally, we celebrated a great end to 2024. On November 14, more than 60 people attended the **Ho-Chunk history presentation** at Theodore Wirth Park. Cultural advisor Bradley Blackhawk (Ho-Chunk) joined author Cathy Coats and radio host Robert Pilot (Ho-Chunk) to educate the crowd about the often-ignored history of Ho-Chunk people. To learn more, visit Birchbark Books or your local library to pick up Coats’s book, [“To Banish Forever: A Secret Society and Ho-Chunk Removal in Minnesota.”](#)

Earth Care Corner

Minnesota Interfaith Power and Light (MnIPL) helped Valley install solar power and is a recipient of gifts through Valley’s Alternative Gift Catalog. The MnIPL goal is to “respond to climate change by bringing Minnesota’s faith community together and by providing opportunities for congregations to join the growing climate justice movement.”

Because climate change affects Black and Native populations disproportionately, MnIPL has a **Black and Native Advisory Table** guiding MnIPL towards climate justice for all.

A recent Valley Endowment Fund donation supports compensation for Table members, respecting their time and expertise. The donation also supports Valley’s goal of encouraging Black and Native leadership.



THANK YOU, ENDOWMENT!



- LOOKING AHEAD - FRIDAYS IN THE VALLEY

FRIDAY, January 10 | 7:00 pm
The Boston Imposters
FRIDAY, February 14 | 7:00 pm
Lauren Senden & Mindy
Eschedor
FRIDAY, March 14 | 7:00 pm
Boom Island String Quartet
FRIDAY, April 11 | 7:00 pm
The Bernstein Players
FRIDAY, May 9 | 7:00 pm
Slipjig
SUNDAY, June 8 | 7:00 pm
Dolce Winds

FREE-WILL OFFERINGS BENEFIT
LOCAL COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS



Valley Brew Crew

SATURDAY, JAN 25 | 1:00-6:00 PM

Hosted by VCPC!

Let Jay know if there are
certain styles or brews that
you'd like to try to clone.



If you would like to be added to
the email list or have questions about
Brew Crew, Jay Perry is who you need to
talk to!

CONTACT JAY PERRY FOR DETAILS:
See Directory or Breeze for contact information

SUNDAY, JANUARY 26, 2025

INSTALLATION & ORDINATION

of New Church Officers
and Pastoral Nominating
Committee During
Worship



2024 ANNUAL MEETING AFTER WORSHIP

SUNDAY
FEBRUARY 2, 2025
MEETING WILL BE LIVESTREAMED.
VOTING WILL TAKE PLACE IN PERSON ONLY.



 Valley Community

**2025
PER CAPITA
\$40.00**

Your per capita supports the
larger church to do their
ministry in the world.

FEBRUARY 9
NARTHEX

Youth Cookie Sale

- *Cookies \$5/bag (1/2 doz)
- *Cookie Trays \$5/\$10/\$20
- *Youth Snack Mix \$5/bag
- *Assorted Valentine Baskets \$10-30

 Valley Community

CALENDAR

BIRTHDAYS

Kerrie Deef
 Alannah McCarthy
 David Kopischke
 Kurt Wheeler
 Matt Barbero
 Miranda Bangu
 Sammuel Decker
 William Gonsior
 Andrew Desarmeaux
 Janette Gove
 Gerald Kramer
 Nanette Sears
 Ashley Bi
 Karen Ripley
 Keri Wasmoen
 Samantha Schellhaas
 Joseph Sears
 Aurora Brooker
 Sullivan Goiffon
 Richard Sauter
 Ken Smith Jr.
 Andy Freeman
 Hunter Sheldon
 Roy Michael
 Adam Chancellor
 Rev. Deborah Fortel
 Tom Wasmoen
 Lois Berhow
 Jonathan Marshall
 Diane McCunn
 Cameron Smith
 Diane Cook
 Ziggy Barbero
 Sadie Macias
 Arianna Slack
 Susie Potter



Join us for coffee and donuts on Sundays following Worship in Fellowship Hall.

Wednesday, January 1

Office is closed.

Sunday, January 5

9:30 am Worship Service with communion

Monday, January 6

11:30 am Lunch Bunch @ 50's Grill

Tuesday, January 7

1:00 pm Bible Fellowship

6:30 pm Bell Choir Rehearsal

Wednesday, January 8

7:00 pm Choir Rehearsal

Thursday, January 9

10:00 am Bible Study

Friday, January 10

7:00 pm Fridays in the Valley

Friday, January 10 - Sunday, January 12

Snow Camp at Clearwater Camp

Saturday, January 11

10:00 am Craft & Connect

Sunday, January 12

9:30 am Worship Service

Tuesday, January 14

1:00 pm Bible Fellowship

6:30 pm Bell Choir Rehearsal

Wednesday, January 15

7:00 pm Choir Rehearsal

Thursday, January 16

10:00 am Meals on Wheels

Saturday, January 18

9:30 am PTCA MLK Event at Westminster Pres

Sunday, January 19

9:30 am Worship Service

Rev. Jim Cook preaching

Monday, January 20 - Rev. Dr. MLK Jr. Day

Office Closed

8:30 am - 3:30 pm Habitat for Humanity Work Day

Tuesday, January 21

11:30 am Valley Men's Luncheon

1:00 pm Bible Fellowship

6:30 pm Bell Choir Rehearsal

Thursday, January 23

10:00 am Meals on Wheels

Saturday, January 25

9:00 am Elder/Deacon Training

1:00 pm Valley Brew Crew

Sunday, January 26

9:30 am Worship Service

New Officer Ordination & Installation

Monday, January 27

6:30 pm Session Meeting

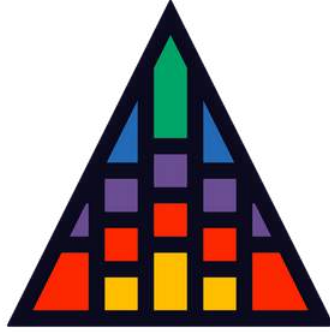
Tuesday, January 28

1:00 pm Bible Fellowship

6:30 pm Bell Choir Rehearsal

Wednesday, January 29

7:00 pm Choir Rehearsal



Valley Community

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

VCPC

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT STATEMENT

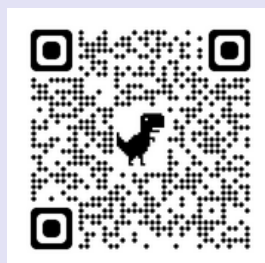
As a faith congregation opening hearts, opening minds, and opening lives to God, Valley Community Presbyterian Church (VCPC) seeks to honor the important stories and lived experiences of its members and neighbors.

VCPC sits on the ancestral and contemporary land of the Dakota people, for whom the land holds historical, spiritual, political, and cultural significance.

We acknowledge the ongoing injustices that we have committed against the Dakota people and pledge to interrupt this legacy. We will educate ourselves about Indigenous history and recognize, support, and advocate for our Native neighbors.



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