

THE VALLEY

WINTER 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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Community News

• MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

- **Sunday, November 16 - Pastor Sheila Sheldon, CRE, preaching at 9:30 AM**
- Fridays in the Valley (pages 5, 10)
 - **SUNDAY**, December 7 @ 7 PM | Above Average Tuba Quartet
 - Friday, January 9 @ 7 PM | Artu Duo
 - Friday, February 13 @ 7 PM | Momoko Tanno (soprano) w. Joseph Hagedorn (lute/guitar)
- **Valley Brew Crew | Saturday, November 15 | 1:00 - 6:00 PM (page 5)**
- Valley Craft & Connect | Saturday, November 21 | 10 AM - 2 PM (page 5)
- **Valley Thanksgiving Potluck | Thursday, November 27 | 12:00 pm (page 5)**
 - Sign up in the Fellowship Hall or call the Valley Office
- Valley Office will be closed on November 27 and 28 in observation of Thanksgiving
- **Advent in the Valley begins on Sunday, November 30 (see page 6 for all the details!)**
- **Valley Christmas Dinner | Sunday, December 7 | 5:30 PM (page 3)**
 - **Catered Meal - \$25/adult, Kids (10&under) - FREE (\$60 max for families)**
 - **Reserve your tickets here:** <https://forms.gle/ASqBKSpyM4DWMRrF7>
 - **RSVP in the Fellowship Hall or call the Valley Office**

• MISSION OPPORTUNITIES

- There are many ways to serve our community this Advent season (page 7)
 - It's time to start bringing in toys for the PRISM Holiday Toy Shoppe! The Julie Tree will be up beginning on November 23.
- Fill the Truck - John's Confirmation Project | Saturday, November 15 | 10:00 AM-4:00 PM
 - Sign up here: <https://forms.gle/8vfi1ohmQ9eNLuA58>
- Bridging Dresser Build | Saturday, November 15 | 9:00 AM-12:00 PM (page 5)
- **Land Acknowledgement updates (page 9)**
 - **Learn about the community events that took place in the month of October!**
- NEEDED Meals on Wheels Drivers call the Church Office if you can volunteer.

A LETTER FROM THE PASTOR

NOVEMBER 2025

Dear Valley,

November is a patchwork quilt of a month, made up of multiple seasons that hold deep, important meaning. It begins with Stewardship for the first two weeks, moves into Thanksgiving in the middle of the month, and wraps up with our call to the annual observance of Advent. At times it feels like spiritual whiplash, like you don't know how to feel. Generous? Thankful? Hopeful? Why not all three?

As disparate as these seasonal moods may seem, I seem to be feeling all of these moods at once as I think about my time at Valley, and perhaps some of you feel that as well. As most of you know by now from emails that were sent out earlier this month, I will be stepping down from my role at Valley at the end of the year to make way for new things God is doing in all of our midst. The PNC is concluding their work discerning Valley's next pastor, and I have heard the call to the next chapter in my spiritual journey as I continue to guide both individuals and communities through seasons of change.



Rev. Jim Cochrane

I cannot sufficiently express my gratitude for this community that welcomed me from Day One. You had every reason to meet me with skepticism and frustration, but I was instead welcomed with the same joy and enthusiasm I have come to know as distinctly "Valley." The generosity with which Valley doles out its love makes me hopeful then: hopeful that the same generosity that greeted me will be heaped onto the pastor who will see this congregation into its next chapter, and that they will steward that love so it can be given to the entire community that surrounds Valley.



Jim Rock (Dakota) leads the Time with Young Worshippers on Indigenous People's Sunday (Oct 12)

I am grateful to have had the opportunity to watch this community celebrate its past while also looking forward to its future. I have watched this congregation transform into a new iteration of itself through building projects, self-reflection, and commitment to championing God's love in the world, so I am hopeful that this transformation will keep all our eyes and hearts open to the power God's love can have in making change in the world. May this openness to new avenues for doing God's work lead Valley into its future and guide its steps.

As we look to Advent and our expectant hope of God's inbreaking into our world in the form of an infant child, I look forward to giving thanks to God for the incredible community I have been able to be part of these last two years, and I hope you will join me in that celebration. From Advent Dinners to the Christmas Pageant to PRISM's Holiday Toy Shoppe to candle-lighting on Christmas Eve, we have much to be thankful for.

Peace to You,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'JDH'.

Community members gathered for the Third Annual Hāhā Wakpádan Water Blessing at West Medicine Lake Park. Photo by [Tj Turner](#) (Oct 13)



AN UPDATE FROM PASTORAL NOMINATING COMMITTEE

The PNC is excited to announce that we have narrowed down the pool of pastoral candidates to two finalists and have conducted in-person interviews with both of them. The next steps are a meeting with the Committee on Ministry (COM) and Presbytery, scheduled to happen in late November. As we finalize our discernment, and if the Presbytery concurs with the call, Session will call a full congregational meeting where the congregation will hear a sermon by the nominee and conduct a vote during the congregational meeting. We will provide updates to the congregation as we continue through the process and learn more details. Please continue to pray for the PNC, the candidates, and for Valley as we continue to get closer to choosing our next Head Pastor.

Valley Connects- October 2025

FALL FESTIVAL 2025



INDIGENOUS PEOPLE'S SUNDAY



TRUNK OR TREAT FOR PRISM





Fridays in the Valley Presents:

ABOVE AVERAGE TUBA QUARTET

SUNDAY, December 7, 2025 | 7:00 PM

FREE-WILL OFFERINGS BENEFIT
PRISM HOLIDAY TOY SHOPPE

 Valley Community



5th grade & under

Parents' Night Out!


FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 21
6:00-8:30 PM

LET'S GLOW

\$5 PER CHILD

Kids 5th grade and under ENJOY a night of fun with Valley friends! We're having a glow party! Dinner, glow tag, dance party and more!
Mom and Dad enjoy a night out!

**Sign up in the Fellowship Hall,
Click here or scan the QR code!**



BRIDGING DRESSER BUILD
12864 HWY 55, PLYMOUTH, MN 55441

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 15
9:00 AM - 12:00 PM

10 volunteers needed.
Dress comfortably in clothes you can get dirty.
Close-toed shoes required.

SIGN UP IN FELLOWSHIP HALL
CONTACT ANDREW PITAN WITH QUESTIONS
VISIT BRIDGING.ORG TO LEARN MORE ABOUT BRIDGING



Valley Brew Crew

SATURDAY, NOV 15 | 1:00-6:00 PM

THE GOSLINGA'S HOUSE
REFERENCE YOUR DIRECTORY

IT'S VALLEY BREW CREW TIME!
Come hang out with Valley friends and try some Blue Ribbon-winning craft beverages!

POTLUCK
Have an appetizer or side dish recipe you need to test out? We make great guinea pigs!
Beverages of all kinds | Kids Always Welcome

CONTACT JAY PERRY FOR DETAILS



Valley Craft & Connect

Craft & Connect is for anyone who enjoys a day crafting, working on a puzzle or just chatting with friends. **This month we invite you to bring your young crafters with you! We'll have a fun craft just for them.**

So, catch up on a project, start something new or come see what others are working on for inspiration!

Bring a dish to share for lunch at 12 PM.

SATURDAY,
NOVEMBER 22, 2025
10 AM - 2:00 PM
LUNCH AT 12 PM




YOU'RE INVITED!

TO VALLEY'S
THANKSGIVING POTLUCK

Thursday, Nov. 27th
at 12:00 PM

We are hosting a Thanksgiving Potluck for those looking for a place to gather for the holiday. Come to Valley, share a delicious meal & gratitude for our Valley family. There is a sheet in Fellowship Hall to sign up for what you will bring and how many from your family will be joining you.

SIGN UP IN FELLOWSHIP HALL OR CALL THE OFFICE.

ADVENT 2025 SCHEDULE

Sunday, Nov. 30		9:30 AM	1st Sunday of Advent Worship with communion
			<i>Hanging of the Greens following worship!</i>
Sunday, Dec. 7		9:30 AM	2nd Sunday of Advent
		5:30 PM	All-Church Christmas Dinner
		7:00 PM	Fridays in the Valley Tuba Christmas Concert
Sunday, Dec. 14		9:30 AM	3rd Sunday of Advent Christmas Pageant Sunday
Sunday, Dec. 21		9:15 AM	4th Sunday of Advent Christmas Music Sunday
		11:00 AM	Christmas Cookie Exchange
			Sign up in the Fellowship Hall or contact Katie Decker
		4:30 PM	Longest Night Service Soup supper to follow
Wednes., Dec. 24		4:30 PM	Christmas Eve Family Service (music starts at 4:15 pm)
		9:30 PM	Christmas Eve Candlelight Service with communion

POINSETTIAS

We need your help to decorate the Sanctuary with our beloved Poinsettia Tree! Poinsettias cost \$13 each. Order a plant for the tree or designate that your plant be given to a homebound Valley member. You may take your plant home after the Christmas Eve Service. **All orders are due by Sunday, November 30.** Order forms are available in the Narthex and Fellowship Hall, or call the church office to order.

2025 CHRISTMAS PAGEANT

The VCPC 2025 Christmas Pageant will debut on Sunday, December 14th during worship! Join us for worship on **Sunday, December 14 at 9:30 AM** to see our Valley kids and youth tell the Christmas Story as only kids can. We are looking forward to getting Valley kids of all ages involved again this year! There are speaking and non-speaking parts, so all ages and skill-levels are welcome. Please email Mariah at Mariah.messer@valleychurch.net if you have any questions. **Rehearsals** will be held on Saturday, December 6th (2 PM - kids with speaking parts, 3 PM - full cast) AND Saturday, December 13th (3 - 4:30 PM - full cast).

LONGEST NIGHT SERVICE

The holidays are a time to celebrate and think back fondly on years past, which can be both heartwarming and difficult for those who have lost loved ones. For that reason, Valley will be holding a Longest Night service on **Sunday, December 21st at 4:30pm**. It will be a service of music and scripture as we remember those we love and name the mixed emotions that come with the season. Light soup supper to follow.

Advent in the Valley



Christmas Services

LIVE-STREAM & IN-PERSON

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 24, 2025

4:30 PM Christmas Eve Family Service (music starts at 4:15 pm)

9:30 PM Christmas Eve Candlelight Service with communion

Christmas in the Valley



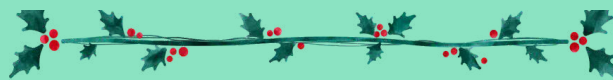
PRISM TOY SHOPPE



The **PRISM Holiday Toy Shoppe** will be held at Valley again this year and we could not be more excited! The Holiday Toy Shoppe provides families and guardians with the opportunity to "shop" for new gifts for each of their children. While you are doing your holiday shopping, please keep PRISM kids in mind! Here's a list of popular gifts:

- ACTION FIGURES
- TODDLER TOYS
- SPORTS ATTIRE
- TEEN GIFTS (HEADPHONES, GAMING KEYBOARDS, HAIR TOOLS, SLIPPERS)
- BLANKETS
- GIFT CARDS (AMAZON, TARGET, VISA)
- NERF TOYS
- LEGOS
- GAMES

ALTERNATIVE GIFT CATALOG



This year, as every year, we invite you to consider the **VCPC Alternative Gift Catalog** when beginning your holiday shopping. Donations will be made on the behalf of your gift recipient to one of our community partners. You will then receive a card and informative insert to give to them, telling them about the organization. It's a gift that can have a powerful ripple effect throughout our community and our world.

Stop by the table in the Fellowship Hall in the coming weeks to learn more.

Valley Education Corner

Faith Formation Update: Sunday School for kids ages 3-3rd grade continues. Natalie is in the Sunshine Room on Sunday mornings to lead Sunday School activities. She does need helpers so please consider lending a hand. Sign up in Fellowship Hall to be a Sunday School Helper!

Don't forget to fill out your Valley Kids Stewardship Commitment Card and bring it to church!



This card is an opportunity to talk to your young people about Stewardship and why we pledge to contribute our times, talents, and treasures to Valley. Monthly giving envelope packs for Valley Kids are available in the Narthex.



Valley kids in TEAMS used styrofoam sheets and ink to make stamped prints! Thanks to Rachel H. for leading this awesome activity!

Youth & Teams

11/16 | 5:30-7 PM Regular Programs
11/23 | 5:30-7 PM Regular Programs
11/30 | 5:30-7 PM End of Fall Programs Party!!
12/7 | 5:30-7 PM Christmas Dinner (more info pgs 3, 10)
1/9 - 1/11 | SNOW CAMP! ([CLICK HERE to register now!](#))

*scholarships are available! Email Sheila with Q's

Adult Education Schedule

November 16 | Janet Triplett

Learn about what Janet experienced and learned while on the Road Scholar Civil Rights Tour in March of 2025!

November 23 | Coffee, Conversations & Connections

If you missed this special Adult Ed back in September, you'll want to be sure you do not miss this one. Come and learn about your Valley friends!

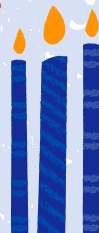
- Adult Ed classes will take place at 11:00 AM. Coffee and pastries welcome!
- Classes will be held in the Cornerstone Room, unless otherwise noted.
- Classes will be recorded and available on YouTube as we are able.
- Full class descriptions available in Sept Newsletter and [online here](#).

Seeing the faces of Valley's youngest members and their families makes the Advent season truly special. Please reach out to Sheila or Mariah if you are able to donate your time and talents.

LITTLE CANDLE LIGHTERS NEEDED

If you and your family would be interested in reading the dedication and lighting a candle during an Advent worship service or on Christmas Eve, please contact Sheila at Sheila.sheldon@valleychurch.net

Lighting the Advent candles is a great way to get our youngest members involved in worship.



2025 CHRISTMAS PAGEANT

The VCPC 2025 Christmas Pageant will debut on Sunday, December 14th during worship!

We are looking forward to getting Valley kids of all ages involved this year again! If you know your family would like to participate, please email Mariah at

Mariah.messer@valleychurch.net



Land Acknowledgement Task Force

Wow! What a great month! Valley and its community partners enjoyed a busy October with many big events:



Attendees visit the various partner tables following the Water Blessing. (Photo credit: [TJ Turner](#))



Attendees visit the various partner tables following the Water Blessing. (Photo credit: [TJ Turner](#))

- On **Indigenous Peoples' Sunday**, the congregation enjoyed special music from Jim Rock (Dakota). He also led a memorable Children's Sermon about the bison and Bible stories.
- On October 13, Valley co-sponsored the **Third Annual Ĥahá Wakpádan Water Blessing**. More than 130 people attended and opened their hearts and minds to heartfelt words from Indigenous youth with the Native nonprofit Dream of Wild Health, cultural advisor Jim Rock (Dakota), water protector Roxanne Gould (Anishinaabe), and many others. Check out the media coverage from the [Sun Post](#) and [WCCO](#).
- On October 18, The Loppet hosted its second **Ĥahá Wakpádan Loopet Loppet**. This vibrant day featured race events, hiking, and Indigenous food and a vendor market. It also hosted the photography exhibit "[Native Voices: Stories from Ĥahá Wakpádan](#)," which is open until November 30. By supporting the event, Valley is helping to improve the visibility of Indigenous communities in spaces where they've often been overlooked.
- On November 11, **Mission Possible** added a line item of \$300 to its budget for the Indigenous Justice Task Force to utilize in 2026. This is the first step towards incorporating a steady, long-term commitment to Native communities into Valley's budget.



Over 130 people gathered for the Second Annual Ĥahá Wakpádan Water Blessing. (Photo credit: [TJ Turner](#))



Indigenous youth and staff with the Native nonprofit Dream of Wild Health address the crowd. (Photo credit: [TJ Turner](#))



Attendees touch Medicine Lake as part of the Water Blessing (Photo credit: [TJ Turner](#))

To learn more about the **photographer** who documented the Third Annual Ĥahá Wakpádan Water Blessing, click on their name or visit their website:

- Tj Turner (White Earth Band of Ojibwe): https://tjturnerpictures.com/?page_id=451

For **Thanksgiving**, read up on Indigenous history and consider incorporating Indigenous foods like wild rice and maple syrup. Steven Peters, [a Wampanoag Tribe spokesman](#), shares his views about how many Americans gather for a traditional turkey meal:

"My ancestors had 4 harvest festivals throughout the year. Gathering with family, enjoying our company, sharing our blessings, and giving thanks for all that we have is a good thing. I say have more thanksgiving events throughout the year. I also ask that you take a moment in that day to remember what happened to my people and the history as it was recorded and not the narrative that we had been given in the history books."

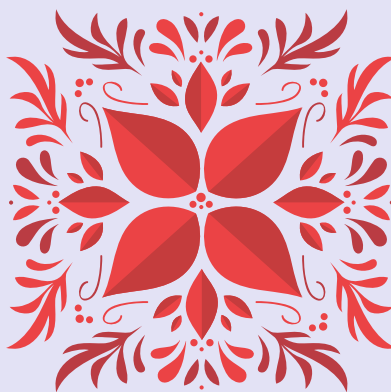


- LOOKING AHEAD - FRIDAYS IN THE VALLEY

FRIDAY, January 9 | 7:00 pm
Artu Duo
FRIDAY, February 13 | 7:00 pm
Momoko Tanno, soprano with
Joseph Hagedorn, lute/guitar
FRIDAY, March 13 | 7:00 pm
Pazzaluna Chamber Players
FRIDAY, April 10 | 7:00 pm
Solerna Wind Quintet
FRIDAY, May 8 | 7:00 pm
The Paper Clips
FRIDAY, June 12 | 7:00 pm
The Marimba Bullies

FREE-WILL OFFERINGS BENEFIT
LOCAL COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS

POINSETTIA SALE



**'Tis the season
to decorate our
Sanctuary**

Order forms in
the Narthex and
Fellowship Hall

**CALL THE OFFICE OR SIGN
UP IN FELLOWSHIP HALL
ORDER BY NOV. 30**



Hanging of the Greens

**Sunday, November 30
following worship**

'TIS THE SEASON TO DECORATE OUR VALLEY!



Save the Date!

**CHRISTMAS DINNER
SUNDAY, DEC. 7
5:30 PM**

**TICKETS:
\$25 FOR ADULTS
KIDS EAT FREE!**

We will be joining together on
December 7 at 5:30 p.m. for socializing
followed by dinner and a the Tuba
Christmas Fridays in the Valley concert
at 7:00 p.m. **Tickets available in
Fellowship Hall or [CLICK HERE!](#)**

Cookie Exchange

 **Sunday,
December 21
11:00 am
Fellowship Hall**

**Bake 6+ dozen of your favorite
cookie(s) and bring them to
Fellowship Hall for the big swap!**



Mark your calendar now - keep an eye
out for sign-up information coming soon.

Longest Night Service

The holidays are a time to celebrate and think
back fondly on years past, which can be both
heartwarming and difficult for those who have
lost loved ones. For that reason, Valley will be
holding a **Longest Night service** on **Sunday,
December 21st at 4:30 pm.**

It will be a service of music and scripture as
we remember those we love and name the
mixed emotions that come with the season.

Soup Supper to follow.

BIRTHDAYS

NOVEMBER

Monique St. John	Landon Goiffon
Evan Miller	Megan Parks
Carolina Michael	Vonnie Olson
Ryan Chancellor	Mabel Willey
Jack Halverson	Mary Dunham
Joel Larsen	Larry Melander
Sara Perry	Walter Messer
Larry Dunham	Jasmyn Swanson
Miranda Graham	Lisa Tracy
Lotti Matkovits	Hsu-hui Wang
Sue Modert	Lyn Boyd
Diane Shenk	Mary Roback
Jessica Smith	Madeline Wandmacher
Vicki Eklund	Angela Zywicki
Gary Roback	Janelle Carlson
Allison Wandmacher	Karen Chancellor
Chuck Thurston	Brad Pleimling
Everett Hagelin	

DECEMBER

John Chancellor	William Chancellor
Madeline Lund	Kurt Modert
Anders Tracy-Heinonen	Pam Magill
Andy Wandmacher	Sylvan Tracy-Heinonen
Marisol Freeberg	Melissa Novy
Betsy Malecha	Mary Rom
Aubrey Soens	Marjorie Deutsch
Brian Parks	Sheila Sheldon
Leigh Gautsche	Michael Craven
Terry Goslinga	Rory Messer
Jill Reiswig	Sharon Pleimling
Stephanie Toering-Peters	Ellen Vannucci
David Hole	Virginia Day
Naomi Tracy-Hegg	Cynthia Malinowski
Leo Kummer	Beverly Mattin
Andrew Pitan	Evan Jurgensen
Melinda Marshall	Chuck Ulmer
Sydney Kara	Heather Griffin
Jennifer Malecha	K Marshall
Nikii Minter	Dave McCunn
Janet Biggs	Theo Morrow
Jim Tarbell	Sara Schiebout
Sarah Willey	Carrie Priem
Eda Inman	



CALENDAR

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

Saturday, November 15

9:00 am Bridging Dresser Build
10:00 am PRISM Fill the Truck Confirmation Project
1:00 pm Brew Crew

Sunday, November 16

9:30 am Worship Service

11:00 am Adult Ed - Road Scholar Civil Rights Tour
5:30 pm TEAMS & Youth Group

Tuesday, November 18

11:30 am Valley Men's Luncheon
1:00 pm Bible Fellowship
6:30 pm Bell Choir Rehearsal

Thursday, November 20

10:00 am Meals on Wheels

Friday, November 21

6:00 pm Parents' Night Out

Saturday, November 22

10:00 am Craft & Connect

Sunday, November 23

9:30 am Worship Service

11:00 am Adult Ed - Coffee, Conversations & Connections
5:30 pm TEAMS & Youth Group

Monday, November 24

6:30 pm Session Meeting

Tuesday, November 25

1:00 pm Bible Fellowship
6:30 pm Bell Choir Rehearsal

Thursday, November 27 - Thanksgiving Day Office Closed

12:00 pm Thanksgiving Potluck at Valley

Friday, November 28

Office Closed - Thanksgiving Day Observed

Sunday, November 30 - Hanging of the Greens First Sunday of Advent

9:30 am Worship Service

5:30 pm TEAMS & Youth Group

Monday, December 1

11:30 am Lunch Bunch @ 50s Grill

Tuesday, December 2

1:00 pm Bible Fellowship
6:30 pm Bell Choir Rehearsal

Wednesday, December 3

7:00 pm Choir Rehearsal

Saturday, December 6

2:00 pm Pageant Rehearsal

Sunday, December 7

Second Sunday of Advent

9:30 am Worship Service

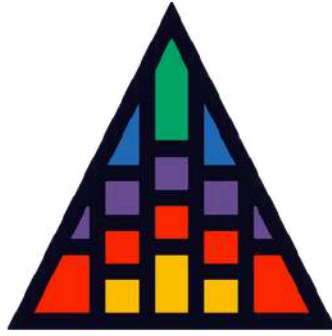
5:30 pm Christmas Dinner
7:00 pm Fridays in the Valley

Tuesday, December 9

1:00 pm Bible Fellowship
6:30 pm Bell Choir Rehearsal

Saturday, December 13

All Day - PRISM Holiday Toy Shoppe
3:00 pm Pageant 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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