

Connect, Grow & Go

To Glorify God as a Disciple-Making Outpost of Kingdom Life



*Merry Christmas
from Venice
Presbyterian
Church*

Here's What's Going on at VPC in December 2021

Our Vision in Action

To Glorify God As A Disciple-Making Outpost Of Kingdom Life

Church Leadership Session

Teaching Elders

Christopher Romig
Carolyn Wilson

Clerk of Session

Laurie Wright

Bob Allen
Nick Clemmer
Susie Gottschalk
Tom Hoffman
Judith Holmes
Sheryl Morford
Carlene Painter
Jamal Sarikoki
Carolyn Stephens
Jim Weeks

Board of Trustees

Bob Allen (*Chair*)
Fred Francis
Jim Fullerton
Richard Gilbert
Mary Gregory

Nominating Committee

Stan Cupery
Susie Gottschalk
Bill Morgan
Lois Schmoie
Donna Wainright
Kathy Wood

Bob Allen (*Session Rep*)
Tom Hoffman (*Session Rep*)

Board member contact information is available through the Realm app via your phone or signing in to www.onrealm.org

VPC Staff

SENIOR PASTOR

Rev. Chris Romig
cromig@venicepres.org

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Chris O'Brien
cobrien@venicepres.org

PASTOR OF CONNECTION & OUTREACH

Rev. Carolyn Wilson
cwilson@venicepres.org

DIRECTOR OF ADMINISTRATON

Cherie Loomis
cloomis@venicepres.org

DIRECTOR OF COMMUNICATIONS

Kelly Wensley
kwensley@venicepres.org

FINANCIAL ACCOUNTANT

Barb McElfresh
bmcelfresh@venicepres.org

FACILITY MANAGER

Nick Clemmer
nclemmer@venicepres.org

BOOKKEEPER

Megan Lechlitner
mlechlitner@venicepres.org

FACILITY & A/V

Gary Youngberg
gyoungberg@venicepres.org

A/V MANAGER

Alec Ronald
aronald@venicepres.org

INTERIM CHOIR DIRECTOR

Ken Cox
kcox@venicepres.org

Church Info

OFFICE HOURS

Mon through Thurs
9 am - 4 pm
Friday, 9 am - 12 pm

WORSHIP SERVICE

Sunday, 10 am

ONLINE SERVICES

www.venicepres.org

[Facebook](#)

[YouTube](#)

[Podcast](#)

STEPHEN MINISTRY

DROP-IN CENTER

Mon through Thurs
10 am - 1 pm, Room 11
Friday, 10 am - 12 pm

Easy Ways to Give

GIVE ONLINE: Click the "Give Now" option on the top right corner of our website.

GIVE FROM THE APP:

download the REALMCONNECT App from your phone's App store and give easily on your phone.

ELECTRONIC FUNDS TRANSFER (EFT):

Automatically withdraw your gift from your checking account each month. Contact church office.

GIVING BOXES are mounted on the wall by exit doors in the church to receive your gifts.

CASH AND CHECK: We gratefully accept cash and checks in the mail or dropped off at the office.

Dear Church Family,

It is an honor and privilege to share with you that all documents that need to be submitted to the State of Florida reflecting the changes to the Articles of Incorporation for Realty Holdings, Inc. and Venice Presbyterian Church Foundation, Inc. have been notarized and are in the process of being filed. This is a historic time for VPC because these documents clarify the corporations, protect VPC from litigation, and create a Foundation that will bless the community at large. The first distribution from the Foundation to Habitat for Humanity happened at the Annual Meeting. We continue to discuss the Faith Built house Habitat will build using these funds. We will share with you the ways you can be involved in not only the build but the ground breaking. Right now you can be praying for the family that will soon occupy their new home. Glory be to God for this opportunity.

Since the Annual Meeting I've had questions as to how to give to the Foundation. If that is a desire in your heart, please make a check out to Venice Presbyterian Church Foundation. We will get it to the investment firm for deposit. Please know the church general fund is still extremely important. Your offering to the general fund allows us to continue doing God's work. Gifts to the

Foundation would hopefully be a gift above and beyond what you give to the church. This could be a legacy of your love for God and the community.


You also heard the announcement about the dollar-for-dollar match campaign in church November 22. It is incredible to have a donor who would fund this type of opportunity two years in a row! Praise be to God from whom all blessings flow.

Some of the plans for this dollar for dollar match are to enhance the landscaping of the property, replace the flat roofs of the Church House and Administration Building which are leaking and old. We also plan to paint the Church House and add new signage to the campus at the street level.

Your gifts from last year replaced the elevator in the Administration Building, sealed and painted the parking lot, painted the curb stops, replaced the roof on the Administration Building, and replaced the carpet in the chapel to name a few of the much needed projects of the church.

We worship in God's house. Your gifts help us maintain that house and we are grateful.

November first thru the third we were able to host a Transforming Church Retreat for Session. This was a virtual retreat based



on the Transforming Center that Pastor Chris, Pastor Carolyn, Jamal and I attended and finished this year. It was a time of growth both spiritually and relationally as we brought a group of people together who now know each other better, know God more deeply, and are better equipped to help move VPC forward in this season of ministry. One Session member shared "this was a life changing experience", another felt more capable of making decisions that would "glorify God and transform hearts for Christ". We are in an exciting season of ministry at VPC and the opportunity to attend this retreat enhanced the leadership in ways words cannot describe. This was made possible by a gift for leadership training received through a designed gift.

There are many exciting things happening at VPC. I hope you take the time to read this publication and use it to its fullest. We are here to glorify God as a disciple-making outpost of kingdom life. Praise God for the ways He blesses His church.

Grace and Peace,

Chris O'Brien



Care & Compassion Ministry

Stephen Ministry Cares

The Holiday Season is upon us. For many, Thanksgiving and Christmas are joyous and festive. But, there are also many who find this time of year the most difficult to navigate. Sadness about those we have lost, times gone by never to return, fears and uncertainties become heightened by others' joy unable to be shared, and the effort of putting on a false face.

Please know that VPC's Stephen Ministry is available to you all year long. There are trained Stephen Ministers ready to talk with you when you need private, confidential time with someone who can listen, respond, care. Give us a call at 941-488-2258 or come by our Drop-in Center in Room 11 weekdays 10-1:00, Fridays 10-12:00.



Grief Support Group*

GriefShare is a special weekly seminar and support group designed to help rebuild lives after losing a loved one. It provides Comfort, Answers and Hope. Our group is led by caring people who have experienced grief and want to help you through the difficult days ahead. We know it hurts and we want to help. Contact us today.

Women's GriefShare

Tuesdays 9:30 am - 11:30 am
October 13 - January 4
VPC Room 8

Contact Mary Gregory, 716-984-3613
*Men may contact Nick Clemmer
267-218-5609

Will you consider becoming a GriefShare leader?

The Lord has a desire to take our difficult experiences, turn them and use them for His glory. This is seen in the experience of the Apostle Paul: "Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we have received from God." (2 Corinthians 1:3-4). Please contact Pastor Carolyn, cwilson@venicepres.org, if you are interested in learning more.



Worship Ministry

Christmas Services

Traditional Candlelight Christmas Eve Service

December 24 - 4 pm

Our 4pm service will feature a Christmas message, traditional Christmas carols, and musical offerings by the Chancel Choir and organist Ann Stephenson Moe. The service will conclude with the singing of Silent Night by candlelight, followed by the rousing proclamation of "Joy to the World!"

Jazz Candlelight Christmas Eve Service

December 24 – 6 pm

Our 6pm service will feature a Christmas message and Christmas carols accompanied by the VPC Jazz Ensemble, arranged and directed by Mike Treni. This service will also conclude with singing Silent Night by candlelight, followed by a jubilant jazz rendition of "Joy to the World!"

Both services will be live-streamed and posted on YouTube.

IN ADDITION, WE ARE ALSO OFFERING

The afternoon before Christmas Eve

Outdoor Christmas Service with Communion

December 23 – 4 pm

If other plans don't allow you to attend worship on Christmas Eve, or if you prefer gathering in open-air space, we welcome you to attend the December 23 Outdoor Christmas Service. We began offering this service last year, and it was a deeply meaningful time of celebrating the hope of Christmas in the beauty of God's creation. This informal service will feature a Christmas message, Christmas carols led by an acapella chorus, and the sacrament of communion. We will conclude by lighting candles and singing Silent Night as the evening shadows begin to fall. Worshipers are invited to bring their own lawn chairs, and we will gather around the church patio.

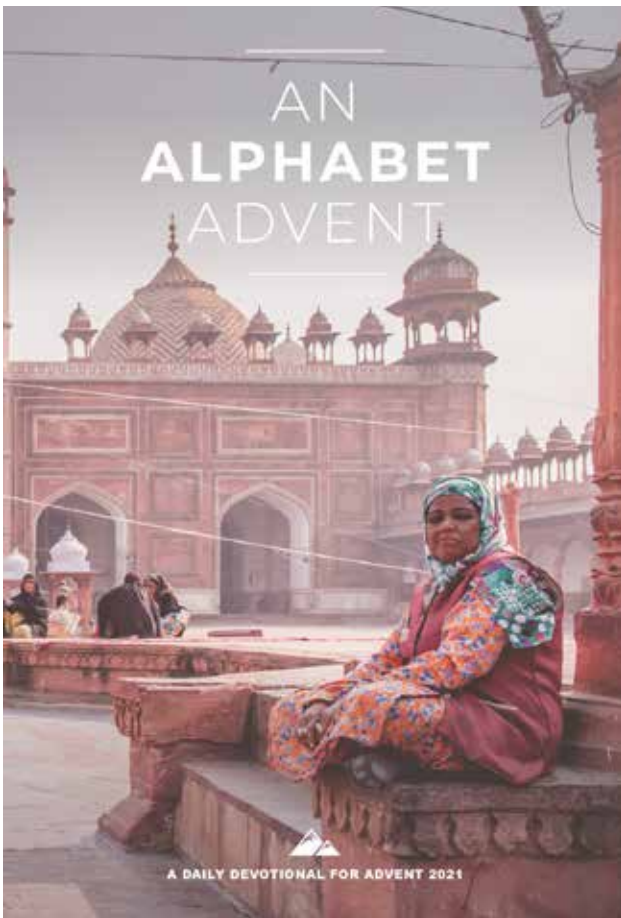
The day after Christmas

Sunday Worship

December 26 – 10 am

We will gather again on the Lord's Day for worship on the day after Christmas – with one service at 10 am. Pastor Chris will offer a Christmas-themed message, and we will continue singing the carols of the season in our beautifully decorated sanctuary.

We encourage you to save this page for easy reference.



Advent Devotional

Each year, Frontier Fellowship publishes an Advent Devotional, featuring hope-inspiring stories of courageous Christians around the world. The full devotional is available for free download on-line – or, if you prefer, you can also sign up to receive daily devotionals by email.

Frontier Fellowship is a missions organization (founded by Presbyterians) that supports Christians in the sharing of the Good News of Jesus in areas around the globe where Christianity is least represented. The Executive Director of Frontier Fellowship, Richard Haney, preached at VPC on November 14.

www.frontierfellowship.com/media/advent-devotional-2021

Two Services Begin Sunday, January 9

During this transitional time in our music ministry, we will be offering two complementing styles of worship services – both traditional in many ways, but with some stylistic differences. Both services will feature the same message and the same basic outline.

9 AM – Reflective, contemplative worship – This service will be a simple and sacred time of worship, inviting worshippers to a spirit of quiet reflection in our candle-lit sanctuary. We will sing traditional hymns (generally accompanied by piano), and meditative music will be offered by instrumentalists.

11 AM – Classic traditional worship – This service will generally include more music, led by choir and the majestic pipe organ. The pastors will typically wear robes, and worship will include more liturgy.

Welcome Ken Cox!

Get to know VPC's New Interim Choir Director

I was born in Lansing, Michigan and spent most of my growing up years in the Chicago suburb of Lombard, Illinois. My wife, Cindy, and I met in seventh grade math class. We both graduated from Wheaton College, getting married a week before we received our diplomas. Cindy taught grade school while I completed a Masters degree in music at Indiana University. Then we both enjoyed travelling for about 20 years as I was blessed with opportunities to sing with opera companies and symphony orchestras around the world. That was enough constant travel for me though, and I was happy to accept a position at the University of Denver Lamont School of Music. I served as the director of the opera theater program and chair of the vocal arts department for 19 years before retiring and moving to Venice. My choral work has been as choirmaster at the Cherry Creek Presbyterian Church in Denver and continuing as the choir director at the Congregational Summer Assembly just north of Frankfort, Michigan. Both of these groups have inspired me in my walk of faith, raising up songs of praise to God.

A few summers ago I had two different friends recommend Venice to me with

euphoric looks on their faces. This led us to spend my sabbatical in Venice and we loved what we saw. We bought a house in Pelican Pointe and are so happy to be here! On one of our first Sundays in town we visited Venice Presbyterian and knew immediately that we had found our new church home. The outstanding preaching of Pastor Chris and the beautiful music that Jamal organized brought us back each week with open and thankful hearts.

I am so looking forward to working with the choir as their interim director. What a great group of people! It's my hope that I can use my vocal experience to help them continue to grow in their singing. May we draw even closer together as fellow believers in Christ as we lead in worship.

In Him,
Ken Cox



Christmas Poinsettias donations

In memory or honor of loved ones begins November 21 - December 12. Look for envelopes in the pews. This is a great way to adorn the chapel while keeping the memory of loved ones alive during the Christmas season.

Music Ministry

Experience the Inspiring and Talented Ken Medema

Legally blind Christian musician Ken Medema's passion for music began at the tender age of five while playing on his mother's piano. Born in Grand Rapids Michigan in 1942, he grew up during a time when blindness was not widely accepted. Children shunned the young Medema for being different, and he spent much of his childhood alone seeking solace in music.

Medema started professional musical instruction when he was eight. Through the careful instruction of his teacher, young Medema was able to use Braille music sheets and his memory to learn the classics. He was encouraged to be innovative with his music style and his musical talent flourished. In 1969 Medema received a Master's Degree in Music Therapy from Michigan State University.

Medema began recording albums for Word and Shawnee Press in 1973, and in 1985 founded an independent recording company in Grandville Michigan. He called his new company Brier Patch Music.

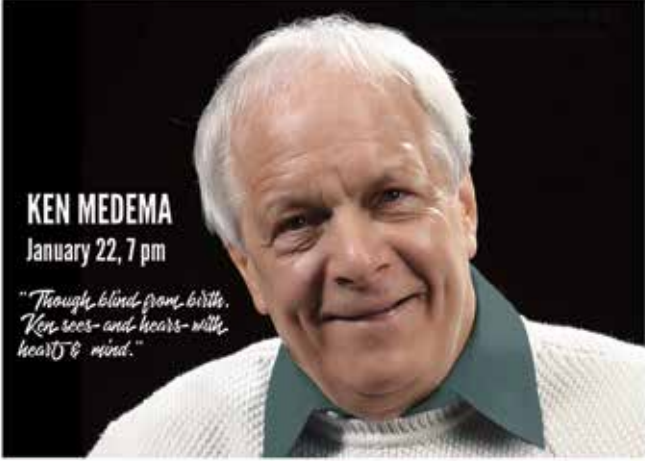
By 2002 Medema had produced several albums, and presented thousands of piano and voice performances all over North America, Australia, Africa and Europe. ~ Diana Moes VandeHoef

2021
2022

VCCS

EVERYTHING
IS NEW AGAIN

VENICE COMMUNITY CONCERT SERIES™



KEN MEDEMA
January 22, 7 pm

*"Though blind from birth,
Ken sees- and hears- with
heart & mind."*

*Upcoming
Concerts-*

DEPUE BROTHERS
February 18, 7 pm

ROMIG FAMILY
March 5, 7 pm

Tickets- only \$25

available online at www.VeniceCommunityConcertSeries.com
or Venice Presbyterian Church's office, Monday - Thursday, 10AM - 3PM
*A ministry of Venice Presbyterian Church

825 THE RIALTO, VENICE, FLORIDA 34285 941-488-2258 WWW.VENICECOMMUNITYCONCERTSERIES.COM

A Sweet Story of Friendship and Ministry

Doris Heydt, a member of Venice Presbyterian Church, has had a long-standing ministry of reading to people who are unable to read for themselves, such as people in nursing homes, hospitals and retirement centers. Thanks to Pastor Carolyn, Doris was introduced to Donna Smith, also a member, who had recently suffered a stroke and lost her sight. Jane Clemmer reached out to both women so she could share their story and convey how Christ is working in our church. This is a short synopsis of their relationship as told to Jane.

I (Jane) called Doris on Tuesday and had a terrific convo with her! She is awesome and totally with it! 90 years old and as bright as a bubble!

Doris's story:

She spoke with Pastor Carolyn back in 2017 and that is how this started Carolyn hooked her up with Donna who had had a stroke. They started meeting 2x/week for an hour each time. They would sit side-by-side and Doris would read to Donna. Reader's Digest publishes short stories and they started with this as their connection point . Since then there has been a whole series of historical novels written by Bill O'Reilly that they have enjoyed with each other. Then Covid hit and they had to stop meeting in person. Now they connect by phone for at least an hour/2 times a week. They haven't seen each other since Covid but are still connecting! Doris and Donna both live alone so they love each other's company. She has been a member of the choir at VPC for years and turned 90 on Thanksgiving Day. Doris has been dealing with health issues since 2016 and was really ill last year but has recouped! This year she is appreciating so much that the Lord has given her another



year and she is enjoying it. At the end of our conversation she said *"if I can make anybody happy, I'm willing to do anything for them"*.

Donna's story:

(once we got into the rhythm of our conversation she was very verbal ... it was fun)

She is living in a facility full-time as a result of a stroke which resulted in her losing complete function of her left side. She doesn't have many friends/visitors so Doris is a special connection - a new friend from God. I asked why *"reading"* was special for her and she said ... *"because I'm blind"*. They connect every Monday and Thursday for at least an hour. Donna used to usher at VPC years ago. I asked if she was being well cared for and she said, *"GOD is providing very, very well for me ... my needs - not wants/wishes - but all my needs"*.



Both the ladies asked me to *"come by and visit"*. :)

Jane Clemmer

Family Ministry

Buddy Break Schedule, 2021-22 (from 10am-1pm)

Dec. 18 Feb.19 Apr. 16 June 18
Jan. 15 Mar. 19 May 21

Families with children with special needs contact
Bobbie Gilbert at richbobbiegil@comcast.net.
Volunteers contact Flora Hughes, hugjf@yahoo.com

Save the Date
Children's Church will
begin again on Jan 9.
Details to follow.

Joy to the World

BUDDY BREAK CHRISTMAS PAGEANT

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 11, 2021 AT 12:00 noon in the sanctuary

Join us as we celebrate the birth of Christ with this beautiful pageant performed by the Buddy Break kids. Enjoy caroling and a stunning performance. Followed with treats, gifts and Santa in the Glass House. *All are welcome!*





Library Update

A huge thank you to these volunteers who have helped with the transformation of the library space. Jane Clemmer has organized the following volunteers in all the work that has been done so far.

Molly Manning
Diane Daughtery
Nancy Buffalini
Marge Caprive
Beth Tieman

June Hauck
Joanne Francks
Sheila Cunningham
Peg Moffett
Dennis Mock

Linda Cholakis
Paula Carlson
Chris Tieman
Nick Clemmer

We have tested out and been successful using technology for hybrid meeting situations with groups in the library.

Buddy Break and MOPS again have access to books, videos, and a children's play area.

The next phases of the library transformation will be:

- Organization of the books and reference materials so they are easily accessed for group and individual study.
- Set up of computer reference stations
- Library hours will be determined and open for the congregation and public
- Bibles and study books will be available for purchase for studies and groups

We are looking at January to reopen the library two to three days a week.

The library will have for purchase Bibles, Bible study resources, etc. The original book store items are no longer available.

What a wonderful, positive, and exciting change in our library.

The library has been a wonderful ministry piece at VPC and will continue to be.

Donate your unwanted (gently used) Christmas decorations NOW!



Please bring your donations to the Family Promise Office on our campus, (Formally the Family Life Center). We are collecting decorations to share with our less fortunate families. Thank you for helping make their Christmas bright.

Kathy Wood
VPC's Mission Committee Liaison for Family Promise

Group Schedule

All are welcome to participate.

MONDAY

Holy Yoga

WHEN: Meets weekly, 9:00-9:45 am
WHERE: Fellowship Hall
WHAT: participants exercise their bodies, minds and souls to better serve God's will.
WHO: Everyone is welcome
CONTACT: Led by David Hill, davehill@hotmail.com or (309) 825-6650

Monday Night Men's Bible Study

WHEN: Meets weekly, 6-7:00 pm
WHERE: Glass House
WHAT: Discussions on the current sermon series
WHO: All men are welcome
CONTACT: Alan Penick, adpenick@comcast.net or (941) 480-9053

Monday Night Women's Bible Study

WHEN: Meets weekly, 6-7:15 pm
WHERE: Room 9
WHAT: Currently using the Disciple Fast Track series, an in-depth study of the Old and New Testaments.
WHO: Open to all women
CONTACT: Pastor Carolyn Wilson, cwilson@venice-pres.org, (941) 488-2258

Knit One, Pray Too

WHEN: Meets weekly, noon - 1:00 pm. **No meeting on December 27**
WHERE: Room 9
WHO: All women are welcome
CONTACT: Peg Moffet



TUESDAY

Men's Bible Study

BEGINS: Nov 2 - May 31,
WHEN: Meets weekly, 9-10 am
WHERE: Glass House
WHAT: Study will be Paul's Epistles
WHO: All men are welcome
CONTACT: Dick Edmunds, kcid1961@gmail.com or (941) 488-8949

Nomads

BEGINS: Jan 11 - Apr 12,
WHEN: Meets weekly, 9:30-11 am
WHERE: TBD
WHAT: a book study using Christian Character by Andrea Sterk and Peter Scazzero
WHO: All women
CONTACT: Anna Marie Brummett, amdrbrum@gmail.com, (847) 309-8005 or Karen Langlais, kolanglais@verizon.net, (978) 500-7571

Elizabeth Circle Bible Study

BEGINS: Oct 5 - May 3
WHEN: Monthly, 1st Tuesday, 11 am-12:30 pm
WHERE: VPC Patio
WHAT: Study will be Pastor Chris' book on The Beatitudes.
WHO: All women welcome
CONTACT: Niki Steitz, nsteitz33@comcast.net or (941) 493-7628

Dorcas Bible Study

BEGINS: Oct 19- May17
WHEN: Meets monthly on the 3rd Tuesday, 10 am- 12 pm
WHERE: Fellowship Hall
WHAT: Study will be Pastor Chris' book on The Beatitudes.
WHO: All women are welcome
CONTACT: Beth Tieman, bethtmn@comcast.net or (941) 564-6304 or Connie Householder, connie1282@cs.com or (941) 882-3469

Women's Tuesday Fellowship

WHEN: Meets weekly, 7-9:30 pm
WHERE: Room 6
WHO: All women are welcome
CONTACT: Kim Jason, kljason@comcast.net or (941) 806-9804



Tuesday Bible Study

WHEN: Meets weekly on Tuesday, 10:15-11:30
WHERE: Room 9
WHAT: The Disciple Fast Track series is an in-depth study of the Old and New Testaments.
WHO: Everyone is welcome
CONTACT: Led by Pastor Carolyn Wilson, cwilson@venicepres.org, (941) 488-2258

WEDNESDAY

Coloring Crew

WHEN: Meets weekly, noon - 1:00 PM
WHERE: Library
WHAT: Fellowship & Coloring
WHO: Everyone welcome
CONTACT: Jennie Chaplin, jchaplin9@gmail.com or (941) 716-0388

We welcome anyone interested in joining us in an hour of creative coloring and conversation. Bring your favorite coloring book, or use something from our book stash! Bring a snack to nibble while we color, laugh and chat together.



Foundations: A Study in Genesis

WHEN: Meets weekly, 6:00 PM
WHERE: Sanctuary
WHAT: Bible Study, in tandem with Sunday's sermon series
WHO: Everyone welcome, no reservations required.
PRESENTER: Pastor Chris

Holy Yoga

WHEN: Meets weekly, 9:00-9:45 am
WHERE: Fellowship Hall
WHO: Everyone is welcome
CONTACT: Led by David Hill, dauehill@hotmail.com or (309) 825-6650

FRIDAY

Book Club for 2021-2022

Room 8, 1 pm

DECEMBER 1

The News of the World by Paulette Jiles

JANUARY 5

The Midnight Library by Matt Haig

FEBRUARY 2

The Four Winds by Kristin Hannah

MARCH 2

The Water is Wide by Pat Conroy

APRIL 6

The Splendid and the Vile by Erik Larson

MAY 4

The Lemon Tree by Sandy Tolan

CONTACT Mary Gregory, mgregorysmiles@gmail.com

Jennifer Speer Bible Study

Living in Light of His Coming:

7 messages of encouragement from 1 Thessalonians

When: January 12 – February 23, 10:00 – 11:00 a.m.

Where: Sanctuary and Livestreamed

"It seems the world is groaning for the return of Christ, and yet while we anticipate His coming we must also be about His work. Like the church at Thessalonica, we need encouragement while we work, worship and wait--especially when circumstances are difficult. Join us for seven weeks of encouragement as we anticipate the Lord's return and also serve Him until He comes."

Registration Now available at www.venicepres.org



Exciting news from our missionaries, Erick and Cynthia Estrada!

Their son, Dereck, is completing medical school and has been assigned by his medical school to complete his one year of residency requirement at the Clinica Salvatore helping his dad see patients. As you

know, Erick Estrada, is both a physician and a pastor, so with his son's help at the clinic, Erick has time to be involved in ministries that before he had to put on hold.

With the help of generous donors from VPC and others, a surgical unit has been started at the clinic but is on hold until monies can be raised for

completion. Erick advises that the surgical unit can be ready for use for just an additional \$30,000.

God's timing is perfect. Please pray that funds will be available soon to complete the surgical unit so that much needed surgical care can be performed using the talents and training of their son Dereck.

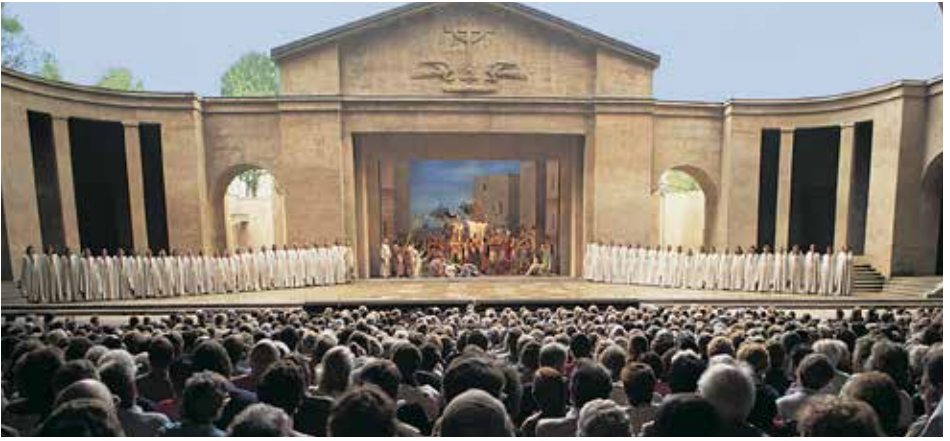
The Glass House

Volunteers & Bakers Needed

We are looking for volunteers to help on Sunday mornings making coffee, greeting people and/or bake tasty treats, if you love to being a hostess, contact Cherie Loomis at cloomis@venicepres.org

Open Sundays
10 am - 12 pm

The advertisement features a background of coffee beans with a white coffee cup on a saucer in the foreground. The text is overlaid on this background.



THIS OPPORTUNITY IS ONLY OFFERED ONCE EVERY 10 YEARS!

Oberammergau Trip: Deadline fast approaching!

For several months every 10 years, hundreds of thousands of people travel to Oberammergau, Germany, to attend performances of the village's world-famous Passion Play. The hours-long play depicts the story of Jesus's life and death, with more than 2,000 of Oberammergau's 5,000-plus townspeople participating.

In 1633, the Bubonic Plague tore through Oberammergau. In just three weeks, 84 townspeople—nearly half the village's population—died. Christian locals vowed to God that, if he would spare the rest of Oberammergau's citizens from the sickness, they would perform a Passion Play every 10 years. Legend has it that plague-related deaths in Oberammergau dropped off soon after the townspeople made that pledge, and so they kept their promise.

Villagers performed the first Passion Play in 1634. It's now performed during years that end in zero, with the exception of 1934 and 1984, when the townspeople shifted the schedule to celebrate the Passion Play's 300th and 350th anniversaries, respectively. The third exception came in 2020, when the Passion Play was postponed until 2022 because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Don't miss this impactful opportunity to see the Passion Play with your church friends. Couples and single friends are encouraged to consider going on this trip.

- Brochures can be picked up at the Welcome Center
- Pastor Carolyn Wilson and Elder Tom Parlette will be the Spiritual Leaders
- The US Government requires all international travelers to be fully COVID vaccinated and tested at time of travel, no exceptions.
- The \$500 per person deposit check will need to be written in early December. We will collect and hold all applications until mid-December when the applications and deposit checks must be submitted to Treasured Escapes and Travel and Ed-Ventures.

Contact Fred & Cindy Gossman, fredandcindy89@gmail.com

Monthly Mission Partner, Family Promise

Family Promise of South County helps families with children get back on their feet.

Family Promise of South County is a faith-based, non-profit organization that enables the community to work together to address the needs of homeless children and families by providing temporary shelter, meals and comprehensive services to help them achieve lasting self-sufficiency.

Host congregations provide their facility for one week at a time—about once every three months. Families arrive at 5pm for dinner and stay overnight. During the day, kids go to daycare or school and parents go to work. On Sundays, the families move to the next host congregation site. Support congregations provide volunteer and financial support to host congregations.

Area Served

We help families with children — in Osprey, Nokomis, North Port, Venice, and Englewood — get back on their feet.

We provide shelter, meals, basic needs (*clothing, toiletries, personal items*), case management, referrals and resources. All adults meet with an Employment Consultant (*to assist in job seeking/placement*) and a Financial Counselor (*to learn better management of finances and start a savings*). We also provide them with a support system; volunteers who are there for them each day.

Each adult, once working, must disclose all income to our Case Manager who then assists them in putting anywhere from 60% to 90% of their income into a savings account. Once enough money is saved, we assist with local financial resources

for the move, and families get back into housing. (*We also assist with local resources for furniture and household items they will need.*)

How to help this mission?

Volunteer:

- Sunday Afternoon Room Set-Up
- Daily Evening Meal Providers
- Daily Evening Fellowship & Activity Hosts
- Overnight Hosts
- Sunday Morning Pack-Up
- Laundry Team

Donations are appreciated.

Contact Kathy Wood at 941-539-4604 or kathywood1221@gmail.com



Let's Celebrate!

Through the generosity of those in attendance at Pregnancy Solutions Annual Fundraising Banquet, **\$181,548.75** was raised! Thank you to everyone who makes the ministry of Pregnancy Solutions possible.



Welcome to our newest Mission Partner

Located in the heart of Venice, Florida, **The 180 House** is a place where youth can come to connect with their peers, engage in inter-generational relationships, and learn the tools to navigate through the challenges of life.

We are using board-sports and the arts as a common interest to engage and teach youth about the love of Christ. Our mission is to use community volunteers to get involved in the life of local teens and help them grow in their faith.

Bell Ringers

Don't miss out on all the fun. Join Marika and other friends from VPC and ring bells for the Salvation Army at Publix on the Island!

Use this link below or call Karen Norwood at 320.492.0612.

Go to www.venicepres.org or www.signupgenius.com/go/10c0d4ba5aa22aafc-ce9-sabellringers

Feed Local Families this Holiday with Just Your Change

Simply drop off your donation at the church using any container you choose anytime during office hours. Or you can also give online using the "GIVE NOW" button on the website or send a check to the church office. Thank you for continuing to feed the needy in our area during the pandemic.



Get to know our Scholarship Recipient: Pedro Elías Tun

Hello, my name is **Pedro Elías Tun**. I am 21 years old. I come from a humble family and live in Xaibe village in the Corozal District in Belize. My dad passed away when I was 5 years old. Fourteen people live in my house. After I finished school, I went to the Belize Adventist college. While I was working to be able to continue my study, I met Mr. Ariel Chan, who saw my need to have a job. He gave me jobs and I gradually improved myself in my studies.

Over time Mr. Ariel Chan, who is a member of the Presbyterian Church in my village, guided and advised me. He also saw the need in me to know God because I was a person who was not guided by the Holy Spirit. I was doing things that I should not do, and that God did not like. Little by little he told me to go to Mount Sinai Presbyterian Church. That is how I got to know a little more about God. It was also through Mr. Ariel Chan that I was able to have the opportunity to study in Guatemala City, for a career as a nursing

technician at Da Vinci University, and to study for a degree in biblical theology. Currently I live in the house of Dr. Erick Estrada and his wife Cynthia Chan who is the sister of Mr. Ariel Chan. That is how I had the opportunity to meet this blessed family.

They have been guiding me so that I know more about the word of God. They also looked for a person from the church where they attended to give me a baptism class and through the class, I accepted God as my Savior.

My goals are to graduate from professional nursing in kidney dialysis. I want to be able to help the poorest people who cannot obtain their medications and cannot pay the doctor's appointment. My future plan is to establish a clinic in my village to help people with low resources and to graduate from the theological seminary. I want to be a well-prepared pastor when I go back to my village so I can help in the church when the Pastor cannot give the study. I also plan to help



young people who do not know about God.

Finally, I want to ask you to help me pray for:

1. my family who lives in Belize because they do not know much about the word of God, and through that prayer I am asking for my family to accept God as their savior.
2. my studies and my health.
3. for the village where I live because many young people do not know the word of God.

Presbyterian Women

The next Presbyterian Women (PW) gathering will be on Tues., Jan. 18, 2022 at 12:30pm in Fellowship Hall. Please note the earlier time change of our gatherings; also, please bring a sack lunch and your bottled water. Our program will be Bob Sloboda from Meals on Wheels who is office manager on Fridays and is also on the board as Public Relations Manager. Chris Dowden will give the devotion.

Dorcas Circle's Bible Study meets the 3rd Tuesday of the month at 10:00am. Connie Householder & Beth Tieman are co-moderators. Elizabeth's Circle Bible Study meets the first Tuesday of the month at 11:00am on the church patio. Niki Steitz is moderator. both circles are studying Pastor Chris Romig's book on the Beatitudes (contributing writer Pastor Carolyn Wilson). Books are \$10.00 and can be purchased at church during the week or on Sundays in the narthex. Anyone interested in joining a PW Bible Study, please contact Niki Steitz at nsteits33@comcast.net or call (941) 493-7628.

God bless and keep well! Niki Steitz (pw moderator)

P.S. Please contact Niki Steitz if interested in being a PW officer or if you feel a certain lady would be a good fit. It would be a two year commitment.

Update on the Garage Sale

We will be selling **all your donations** for the "Annual Garage Sale" on Friday & Saturday March 4 & 5th 2022. **Physically large pieces, such as furniture and exercise equipment, will be sold online.** You may contact Kathy Wood to schedule an appointment for your item to be photographed & posted on Facebook's Marketplace. You're not limited to waiting till March. If you don't wish to deal with the public coming to your home to purchase the furniture piece etc, Kathy will be happy to meet the buyer on your behalf.

We have rented the Family Life Building to the Family Promise of South Sarasota County. Therefore we have lost that space to display & sell your donations for the "Annual Garage Sale". So we are getting creative!

We will display clothing, jewelry & home decor pieces in the Fellowship Hall & spilling over into Room 9, if needed. **All your other donations will be sold out of your trunk/table by you.** All proceeds will still be donated to our church missions! You may reserve a parking spot on our paved parking areas all around the church building to join the fun & comradery. The "Sale" will be from 9 am to 1 pm Friday & Saturday. It will be advertised that Friday shoppers will pay a \$5 1st day shopping fee. All Saturday shoppers will be free entry. There will specific logistics worked out so all can participate.

The Church has so many great opportunities for Bible Study & other activities, we don't want to have the whole church shut down for a complete week.

Questions: Kathy Wood at 941-539-4604 or kathywood1221@gmail.com

2021 Alternative Gift Market

O Come All Ye Faithful

**December 5 and 12 in Fellowship Hall
immediately following worship**

Enjoy cookies and refreshments after Sunday Service while you "Shop" for Christmas Gifts.

The purpose of the AGM is to raise mission awareness and knowledge about VPC's mission partners while at the same time offering alternative and meaningful gifts for people to give to family and friends. Our hope is to also increase volunteering with our local mission partners as well as heartfelt prayer for all VPC's mission partners.

The AGM offers the opportunity for our congregation to make donations for specific needs of our mission partners identified in the catalog. Donations will be acknowledged with a gift card to be used as an alternative or in addition to the material gifts traditionally given at Christmas.

