

# Plumbline

ORANGEWOOD PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

December 2020

## Pastor Page's Pastor's Page

I'm proud of our congregation. The Congregational Town Hall that we had last week was a difficult conversation, but I was pleased that we were able to have it with love and respect. That isn't the norm in our nation right now, and it isn't always the norm in the capital "C" Church. Thanks be to God that we are all working hard to make it the norm at Orangewood. We don't expect a church with no disagreements, but we do work hard to work our disagreements out as Christians. Good job!

At the same time, I suspect that people who are more frustrated with our relationship with our African Fellowship were afraid/reluctant to speak because more upbeat views were shared first. I understand if that is how people felt, but I'm also sad that they felt that way. I am really striving to cultivate a community where we can talk about anything in love.

So, what can you do if you felt hesitant to share your views. You can call or email our multi-cultural team with your concerns. I can't share the whole team yet, because it is not finalized, but it will be facilitated by Ron Carmichael, so he is your best contact. They are looking for input, so yours will be welcome no matter where you are coming from.

We have intentionally set up the team so that I am not on it. As the pastor, I'm supposed to do the spiritual leadership. It isn't a good use of my time to liaison on issues of facility use, scheduling and the van. As the pastor I am also supposed to have the fault of erring on the side of grace. The multi-cultural team will let me be a lover of souls and a preacher. They will invite me to participate with them when there is an issue that needs the input of the pastor.

The Town Hall meeting was a good step, and I think we did it well. Let's not stop there, however. Let's keep the communication going!

May God be with you!



## Advent Services

December is around the corner and wanted to make sure you have our important Advent and Christmas dates in your calendar. We are currently in Phase II of our reopening plan so things could change depending on COVID 19 statistics in our state. Check our website, [orangewood.church](http://orangewood.church) before you head out.

*Sunday, 29 November - First Sunday in Advent.* Regular service at 10:30 am online.

*Sunday 06 December - Second Sunday in Advent and Communion Sunday.* Online at 10:30 am.

*Sunday 13 December - Third Sunday in Advent.* Service of **Lessons and Carols** welcoming in the Christmas season. Special music, readings and Christmas carols. Online at 10:30 am.

*Sunday 20 December - Annual Moravian Love Feast, beginning at 13:00.* We will do this outdoors but hopefully have some seating in Page Hall.

*Thursday 24 December, Christmas Eve* - We are planning an outdoor service at 5:30 pm, which will occur on the green in front of the Wright Center and between our education buildings. We hope to have some fire pits, etc., and would ask everyone to bring a chair and dress warmly rather than formally. "Silent Night" at sunset. Should be beautiful.

*Sunday 27 December* - Regular online service at 10:30 am.

Get these dates in your calendar and keep checking the website.



## Join in Celebrating Our December Birthdays

Wish them a happy birthday with a card, email, phone call or prayer.

- December 1: Luci Sherwood
- December 4: Jikhara Williams, Ethan Swartz
- December 6: Errol Zimmerman
- December 8: Brent Upson
- December 9: Logan Johnston, Nida Luna
- December 10: Sue Morton, Ali Widener
- December 11: Uwimana Deborha
- December 13: Joe Witte, Keith Jendricks
- December 15: Sally Niblock, Venant Vyamungu
- December 16: David Haskins
- December 19: Ginny Livingston
- December 20: Megan Dixon
- December 26: Addison Case, Sabrina Case, Eleanor Hiser
- December 27: Carole Foster, Tina Seideman
- December 30: Mary Turkal
- December 31: Hedy Martin





## Advent Devotion

Brad Munroe, Presbytery Pastor, has prepared Advent devotionals using the familiar words of Isaiah. Daily excerpts will be posted on the OPC Facebook page, but here is a link to the whole file:



<https://pbygrandcanyon.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/Fifth-Gospel-Small-Print.pdf>

## Orangewood Alternative Giving 2020

November 22 – December 13

Our plans for Alternative Giving this year have shifted now that the congregation is not meeting in-person. We will have kiosks in the parking lot on December 6 and December 13 for Heifer International and Honduras Projects. You can also contribute to either one of these by sending a check to OPC or donating through the OPC website. Just be sure to indicate where you want your donation to be used by entering "Heifer", "Honduras Building Supplies" or "Honduras Scholarships" on the memo line of your check or in the online donation area.

You can also visit the following websites to shop for alternative gifts:

**Heifer International:** <https://fundraise.heifer.org/OrangewoodPresbyterian> This website has all the animals listed and everything you donate gets credited to Orangewood.

**Colores del Pueblo:** Artisan cooperative in Latin America, primarily Guatemala, empowering women, children, and the economically disadvantaged to gain some control over their lives through the sale of fair trade handicrafts and textiles. Online shopping only at [www.coloresdelpueblo.org](http://www.coloresdelpueblo.org)

**WHEAT Fair Trade Store:** Fair trade gifts and crafts from around the world. Although WHEAT will not be on the patio this year, they are a short drive away at 4000 North 7<sup>th</sup> Street. You can shop there or shop online and use their drive-through pickup at the WHEAT store or have online delivery. Their catalog is being updated currently and you can shop online through the website at [www.hungerhurts.org/shop](http://www.hungerhurts.org/shop)

**Medical Benevolence Foundation:** Endorsed by PC/USA, this foundation provides critical health services for women and children, nursing schools and scholarships, and spiritual ministry in a mission to "heal lives by building sustainable medical ministries in developing countries." You can view recordings at [www.medicalmission.org/media](http://www.medicalmission.org/media) or on the MBF Facebook page. They hold monthly prayer phone calls the second Wednesday of the month at 12:30 pm CST (Call 605-468-8036, access code 150935. Donations can be made online at [www.medicalmission.org](http://www.medicalmission.org).

## Piecemakers Quilts

The Piecemakers found when we tried to donate our quilts in April that no one was accepting donations at that time. Things have eased some and we were finally able to donate about 35 quilts to sick, abused and traumatized children through AZBlankets4Kids and Project Linus.



## **Congregational Life Committee November Notes**

**Growth Groups.** Dennis Daniel and Ron Carmichael are holding a Small Group meeting on Sundays. Phebe Packer will try to start a weekday group on Tuesday mornings.

### **Parish Life**

SAGES. Bob Orf reported that the SAGES team will revisit holding SAGES meetings in January.

Spooky Movie Night, Friday, October 30. Very few people attended this event. The committee discussed holding future events in Page Hall and the idea of planning events in terms of age groups. We will revisit the possibilities after Christmas.

Equipment for Parking Lot Movies. Expenditure of the approved funding is on hold.

Website review. The committee agreed that content updates are needed in several areas of the "Ministries" section of our webpage and discussed the idea of forming a content task force to address immediate improvements and ongoing content updates. Jikhara volunteered to help with the webpage. The committee briefly discussed facilities such as web forums and Greg Harris will send some links for churches who are operating these.

### **Adult Education**

Thursday Bible Study with Ken Page. The study of Luke continues with about 15 people attending each week. The committee will investigate adding a Zoom book study in January.

Advent Devotions on Isaiah. The devotions will be posted daily on Facebook by Gloria Olsen and she will be the moderator for daily comments/discussion. The devotions are scheduled for Dec. 1–24. Pam will make paper copies of the devotion, to be sent to the list of people who receive the weekly sermons in paper form.

Devotions booklets. The booklets have been ordered and should arrive any day.

### **Keeping in Touch**

Project for isolated members of our congregation. The gifts are ready and will be mailed out by the end of November.

Ken Page has established regular hours on Thursday for calls from congregation members and has sent an invitation to the congregation. Phebe has assembled a list of resources to publish in the upcoming Plumblines.

### **New Business**

Ken reported that the Worship Committee is planning an outdoor Christmas Eve service and asked if the Hospitality Team can provide refreshments.

## **Update on Honduras**

We are happy to report that both Gustavo and Eluterio have recovered from COVID and are doing well. You may recall that Gustavo is the manager of the Hotel Buena Vista who assists us with our scholarship program. Since most of Copan has been closed due to the pandemic, including the hotel, Gustavo has worked tirelessly to purchase and distribute food for countless people in the area. Eluterio has assisted in the food distribution to outlying communities and continues to work with the communities who have worked on building houses or are making plans to do so when they are able. The country is still under lockdown, which makes work difficult. In addition, two hurricanes have moved through Honduras in the last few weeks with torrential rain. Ways to make contributions for Honduras are given elsewhere in this newsletter, but most importantly, please continue to pray for our sisters and brothers as they face these many difficulties.

## Navajo Project

When it comes to Mission, there is no equal to the OPC team. We and our Presbyterian friends assembled, palletted and shipped 1200 boxes of food to our neighbors on the Navajo and Tohono O'odham Reservations on November 20.



## Christmas Joy

Each year during the Advent and Christmas season, we turn our eyes to Bethlehem and celebrate the wondrous gift of Jesus Christ, our Savior.

By giving to the Christmas Joy Offering, you honor God's gift of Jesus Christ by providing assistance to current and retired church workers in their time of need and developing our future leaders at Presbyterian-related schools and colleges equipping communities of color.

## Resources for You

The upcoming months may be particularly difficult and stressful this year due to the COVID pandemic and the restrictions placed on our ability to interact with others. Many experts recommend that each of us have a "toolkit" for dealing with our heightened emotions as we head into this period of time. Rev. Page has set aside Thursday afternoon from 2 pm to 4 pm each week to be devoted solely to your calls and we hope you will feel free to contact him. In addition, your Congregational Life Committee has put together the following list of community resources that you may contact. Remember that many support professionals now provide services by telephone and Zoom so you would not have to travel to an office unless you feel comfortable doing so.

1. **Crisis hotline. 602-222-9444.** This is a Maricopa County resource for helping people with immediate needs in time of crisis. Call this number if you are despondent and/or unsure of how to continue.
2. **211.** The 211 organization is a comprehensive source of local social services available around the clock. They can be reached by dialing or texting 211 or online at [www.211.org](http://www.211.org). Resources you can find through 211 are:
  - Supplemental food programs
  - Shelter & housing options
  - Employment & education opportunities
  - Services for veterans
  - Health care, vaccination & COVID information
  - Addiction prevention & rehabilitation
  - Re-entry help for ex-offenders
  - Support groups for individuals with mental illness or special needs
  - A safe confidential path out of physical and/or emotional domestic abuse
3. **[www.psychologytoday.com](http://www.psychologytoday.com).** This website can help you find local mental health professionals to support your needs. These services require insurance.



## **Deacons Changing to Congregational Care Team**

Your deacons have some exciting news! We will be transitioning in 2021 to a Congregational Care Team model. This structure will eventually eliminate the cluster model we are currently using and move us to a model that emphasizes connection. The main reason for this change is better care for our congregation. Anyone can serve on a care team; you don't have to sign up for a three-year commitment, you don't have to be a deacon to share your talents, and you don't have to attend meetings. But those in need in our congregation will still be cared for. The idea is that we will have teams to share the ministry of specific areas, such as calling our shut-ins, sending cards, and when we can start doing pandemic-restricted activities, delivering flowers, hospital visits, delivering prayer shawls, preparing meals for those just out of the hospital, and so on. Many of these things will have to wait until the pandemic restrictions are lifted, but some we can do now and we are working on setting up those teams. More information will be forthcoming as we develop our teams, but if you feel called to lend a hand, please contact either Dennis Daniel or Becky Cederquist, who are the current shepherds for this project.

## **Update from Jerusalem**

The Peace and Justice Network is in continuing communication with the International Peacemakers who have come to the Presbytery of Grand Canyon for the last 9 years. This update is from Nora Kort, who visited with us from Jerusalem in 2013.

### **COVID-19**

As of September 25th, Jerusalem is under strict lockdown by the Israeli Authorities. We are only allowed to move within 500-1000 feet because the number of COVID-19 victims is on the rise. Yesterday only there were 2 deaths and 713 new virus cases just in Jerusalem city, bringing the total number of the virus patients to 1744. In Israel there were 58 deaths and 6499 cases yesterday too thus bringing the total number of the virus patients to 209,635 which is relatively high compared to the population's number. There is great fear among the people and we are going into the second time of more than two weeks' lockdown. Stricter measures will be imposed if the people do not seriously observe the instructions of masking, social distancing, suspension of marriage parties, condolence visits, etc. Education mostly goes virtual these days and Zooming for official meetings. I do a lot of work from home. Our life has changed - no more of that busy social life. This has its impact on the economy and employment. Travel is also restricted, including closure of cities. Personally, I have not been in Ramallah, which is only a few kilometers away from my house, for two months.

### **Current situation with Israel and Palestine**

House demolition, arrests and settler attacks in Jerusalem and the West Bank continue on a daily basis. Annexation of lands and territory, especially in "the" Jerusalem and the Jordan Valley/Jericho, the food basket of the Palestinians continue to creep without too much publicity following the signing of the normalization pact between Israel, the Arab Emirates and Bahrain, which the Palestinians denounce. There is much resentment and bad feeling among the Palestinians as they feel they are left alone to struggle for their freedom.

## **SAGES**

As all of our SAGES know, the health concerns of our community have prevented us from having our monthly meetings for some time. We are hopeful that we can once again resume our fellowship lunches, and will review the status of the health guidelines after the first of the new year. In the meantime, your Leadership Committee wishes each of you to remember past holiday seasons, and the spirit of family gatherings that have lifted our hearts. Please continue to observe the health guidelines, be cautious, and pray that we will be able to meet again soon.

## Mission Committee

November meeting—Ron Carmichael, Chair, Bernale Wright, Ken Page, Phebe Packer, Joe Miller, Gene Nix, Carol Hunter, Christina Suarez and Leeann Spangler attending

**Financial Review:** Special Meeting on Nov. 23 at 3:00 pm

### Upcoming Events:

**Angel Tree (Lisa Campbell)**—Virtual Method (donate money) for 16 children, traditional method (shop specific gifts) 25 children. Nov. 15 and 22 – the tree will be on the patio from 9-12. People are asked to return the gifts in a gift bag with tissue paper. No traditional wrapping this year. All church e-mail to be sent out.

**Rice and Beans**—226 lbs of rice and beans to Agua Fria Food and Clothing Bank. Thank you Glenn, for delivering!

**Grace Lutheran**—On hold due to COVID-19

**Desert Mission**—On hold due to COVID-19

**Habitat for Humanity**—On hold due to COVID-19

**Advent Projects**—Supplies for 200 Hygiene Kits purchased. If we stay in Phase 2, we can have 10 people gather. More details as COVID-19 numbers become more clear.

**Family Promise**—We provided food for two nights – Nov. 4 and 6.

**Rocky Point**—Bernale read a letter from Amor to OPC thanking us for our donation of \$7991 and continued support. Mexican teams are building homes. Committee expressed concerns that our OPC team will not be able to go in Feb.

**Honduras** – A hurricane just went through. Our friends Gustavo and Eluterio have recovered from COVID-19. The houses we provided roofing materials for were not damaged.

**Navajo Relief Project at ORANGEWOOD—Jobs for everyone.** Nov. 13 – 20. 3-hour shifts 9-12 and 1-4 (except Sunday). We can have teams of up to 24.

**Nov. 13**—covering the floor to protect it, moving product to the floor, boxes

**Nov. 14**—unloading trucks

**Nov. 16—19** - Making boxes for each area, shrink wrapping

**Nov. 20**—ready for pick-up.

DAVID ROTHMAN deserves GREAT THANKS. Orangewood has provided hard working crews at each of the events at other locations. Now it is our turn. COVID protocol will be followed.

Any left-over items will go to boxes for our own OPC community.

**Alternative Giving Opportunities:** Drive-through Kiosk for collecting donations – Dec. 6 and Dec. 13. Hefer Project and Honduras

**New Business:** *Discussion on the Youth.* Committee to research ideas for youth mission activities. Invite Jikhara to our next meeting.

**Church Budget:** Concerns about the church budget being short and suggestions that the mission budget go unfunded. It was the consensus of the committee that our budget represents a vital area of church life and should not be considered flexible without a hearty discussion in Session.

**Discussion for the Budget Meeting on the 23rd:** Is this the right mix of giving and a good balance of organizations and amounts, etc?

**Financial Review:** Special Meeting on Nov. 23 at 3:00 pm

**Thanks to all who make our mission here work and grow.**

**Orangewood Presbyterian Church**  
**7321 N. 10<sup>th</sup> Street**  
**Phoenix, AZ 85020**

**December**

**[www.orangewood.info](http://www.orangewood.info)**

**2020**

**Orangewood Staff**

Pastor	The Rev. Kenneth G. Page
Director of Music	Dr. Charles N. Sedgwick
Band Leader	Brady Putzke
Director of Christian Education	Jikhara Williams
Church Administrator	Pam White
Set-Up Assistants	Dylan Swartz

**Plumblin Volunteers**

Editors: Phebe Packer, and Pam White

Proof Reader: Mary Jane Gregory

Mailer: Jackie Collier

PHONE: 602-944-1508

E-MAIL: [secretary@opc.phxcoxmail.com](mailto:secretary@opc.phxcoxmail.com)

WEBPAGE: [www.orangewood.church](http://www.orangewood.church)

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