

# Plumblíne

Orangewood Presbyterian Church

February 2022

## Pastor Page's Pastor's Page

I used to be a high ropes course instructor. Then I was certified to train instructors. Instructors were usually surprised to find out how many soft skills there were to the job. The hard skills were obvious: How to set up the course; how to do a safety check on the course; how to tie a bowline on a bite; how to rescue someone who has an emergency 40 feet up in a tree. The soft skills were just as important – how to make the event not just a time to have fun in the trees, but an experience of personal and group growth.

High ropes courses operate on perceived danger. Most people's brains flash danger signals walking across a balance beam forty feet in the air. That is perceived danger. In actuality, the danger was carefully managed to be quite low. You can't fall more than about two feet. The main tool you are working with for growth of the participants is fear. Then you can make connections between where they are letting fear hold them back in their real lives.

With two kinds of people you run in to problems getting this to work – people with no fear and people with too much fear. The person with no fear can literally run through the course, and might even try to make a competition out of it (I did it faster than you did!). With this person, you have to do something to increase the difficulty – make them do the course with a blindfold on, and assign another member of their group to be their guide or tie one hand behind their back and get them on the course one-handed.

The person with too much fear won't even get on the course. With this person, you have to get the group involved in encouraging them. There is, however, a really thin line between encouragement and peer pressure. It is possible for a group to literally love someone onto the course. Sometimes they can love someone all the way through the course. Sometimes they can only love them five steps up the ladder, but their love can make it a spiritual experience.

*Perfect love casts out fear.* (1 John 4:18) It is possible to have too little fear. Some things are frightening, and it keeps us healthy to be afraid of them. It is also possible to have too much fear – we often let fear hold us back from doing things that are good for us! In this case, God's love transforms all, and the way God's love is often expressed to us is through God's people.

Fear has been a daily companion for all of us during the pandemic. Some fear is helpful – it keeps us safe! Sometimes we have had too little fear and done foolish things. Sometimes we have had too much fear and that has led us into something else that is unhealthy – isolating from the world. It's really hard to know where the sweet spot is of healthy fear. We are all figuring that out with God's help and most especially with God's love as we experience it in each other.

I am thankful for God's love . . . expressed to me through you!

Perfect love casts out fear!

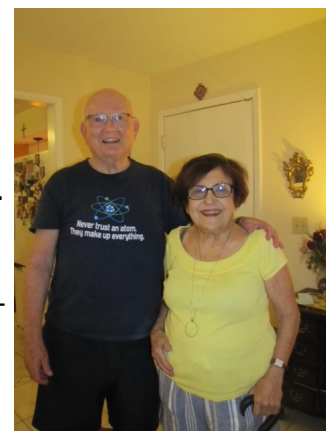
Ken

## DUET – Partners in Health and Aging

Shortly after retiring I was looking for more volunteer opportunities. One day in 2003 at Orangewood, Wilma Edwards invited me to become a volunteer at DUET, as she had. I decided to try several of the many ways to volunteer there. After deciding that computer assistance or help with grocery shopping was not rewarding, I turned to providing transportation to medical appointments for home-bound adults. In talking with my transportation partners, I soon learned of the inadequacies of alternatives to the free DUET transportation: Phoenix Dial-a-ride, taxis, and public transportation. I also quickly learned the joys of meeting new friends and helping them. In the 17 years since I started with DUET I have found several significant friends. The best and longest DUET friendship was with Olive Sussman, a sweet little Jewish lady who suffered from (wet) Macular Degeneration. Olive was nearly blind and really wanted help so she could stay in her comfortable condo. I started with medical transportation, but soon found Olive needed help with many things like helping with opening mail and paying bills. I soon became a factotum for Olive, doing DUET volunteer jobs, but I became her trusted friend who helped her with many things beyond what DUET allowed. As a result, I was able to keep Olive in her beloved condo for five years longer than she would have been able to do. I also helped her when she had to move to a lovely group home in Scottsdale. She and I were truly partners for about 7 years until she died in 2010. Since then, I have driven many people to medical appointments. Some of them are repeat partners that I have had the pleasure to know for up to four years. No one has become the close friend I had with Olive, but a current lady is becoming that kind of partner. This lady is Arlette Khouzam, a little French lady (born in Grenoble), who I have been driving for four years now. Arlette also suffers from Macular Degeneration and will soon be totally blind. She still lives in her house in North Phoenix and wants to stay there as long as possible. I have begun providing extra help to Arlette beyond DUET volunteering. The sum of all my DUET volunteering and the friendships that have resulted have been rewarding.

Orangewood is one of eight faith communities that contribute to the DUET budget. Orangewood is involved with DUET in several ways that benefit both organizations. Several members of Orangewood have been volunteers with DUET (I wish more Orangewood people would volunteer). I personally have driven Orangewood members to medical appointments. Orangewood hosts a yearly DUET volunteer orientation meeting. I believe that DUET is a very good organization to be a part of the Orangewood Mission Committee budget.

David Haskins



## Facilities Updated Projects

- \* Roofing replacement planned for February. Trying to schedule the North Ed building over the spring break to avoid disruption.
- \* Solar install in March-April. parts on order and permit in progress.
- \* Office water damage. Carpet is able to be repaired, drywall and paint completed. New molding install beginning Jan 17.
- \* City of Phx generated new address for manse as 7509 n 10th st. Will now be able to set water meter. Expect 60-day process.
- \* Bob working on page hall locks on return. Preschool also asked to repair lock on North Ed classroom.
- \* Joe installing new mic on sanctuary podium.
- \* Working on placement and design of the handrail requested by worship for the Sanctuary steps.

Facilities Committee Brent Upson, Pam White, Greg Harris, Bob Jenson, Terry Frost, Bob Wells, Joseph Miller

## Orangewood Senior Advances to Flinn Semifinals

Three Sunnyslope High School seniors have advanced to the semifinalist interviews for the Flinn Scholarship. One of them is Orangewood's own Sheena Kroodsma. These seniors were among 80 semifinalists selected from a total of nearly 1,100 applications across Arizona.

Approximately 40 finalists will be selected from this group to interview in March with a selection committee that will choose the 20 students for the Flinn Scholarship, which includes funding for tuition, housing, meals, and study abroad, is valued at more than 120,000.

## OPC Spotlight on DUET

Your OPC Missions Committee continues to keep you aware of our Mission Partners. This month we focus on DUET a 501(C)(3) charity, dedicated to helping grandparents raising grandchildren; supporting family caregivers; providing compassionate volunteers for home-bound adults and training faith community nurses to serve the health needs of communities of faith.

Orangewood's David Haskins is a DUET Volunteer helping homebound. Ron and Pat Carmichael found great support from DUET on their journey with Alzheimer's. Anyone in our congregation should not hesitate in using their services. Just call them at 602-274-5022.

The more you know about their compassionate services, the more you will appreciate what they do in our community. They would appreciate your financial contributions. However, they would truly love to have you volunteer your time. Their vision is to "Create a community where every person ages with compassion, dignity and hope."

Your OPC Missions committee supports them, and we encourage each of you to personally support them with your time and treasure. They are located at : DUET 10000 North 31st Avenue, Suite D200, Phoenix, Arizona 85051.... 602-274-5022....duet Az.org

## Solar System for OPC

At its November meeting your Session voted to fund the installment of solar panels on the Orangewood campus. This decision makes good economic sense, but more importantly the decision is grounded in our theology. Genesis 1:28 tells us that God entrusted us with the care of God's creation.

*And God blessed them. And God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth."*

God's blessing comes with accountability, however. Many of Jesus' parables point to this aspect of stewardship. After all, remember Psalm 24:1 -

***"The earth and everything in it, the world and its inhabitants, belong to the Lord."***

As stewards of God's creation, installing solar panels will show our commitment to sustainability by reducing Orangewood's carbon emissions by over 90%. As stewards of the finances of the church, the solar system will pay for itself in 6-7 years while the life of the system is 30 years.

The motion passed by Session authorized the Finance Committee to contract for a solar power installation in an amount not to exceed \$278,221. In addition, the motion approved the formation of an LLC with Solar Electric Freedom. This agreement will allow Solar Electric Freedom to apply for a tax rebate, 80% of which they will pass on to Orangewood by reducing the price of the system they propose. The system will be 196 solar panels, each producing 445 watts of electricity, to be installed on the south side of the North Education Building, the east side of Page Hall, and the west side of the Wright Center. Before installing the panels, these roofs will be replaced to match the 30-year warranty of the solar panels. Brent is coordinating with the preschool on the timing for the roof work in the education building. He says that some "banging on the roof" may be present during some weekdays but that is the only disruption he anticipates during the roof work.

The solar panel project is being funded out of current church resources and your contributions will be welcomed. You can make a lasting legacy in reducing OPC's energy costs and improving the environment – just use the notation "solar project" on your donation.

Work on the roofs and installation of the panels are scheduled to take place this spring. As we make our way through the ongoing pandemic, we can find hope as we witness the progress of this important project. Many thanks to Brent Upton, Bob Wells, and Pete Ladigo for their work in defining this project and getting it going!

## Mark your calendars for the All-Church Picnic

The All-Church Picnic will be **March 13** on the patio right after service. The service that day will be a combined service in the Sanctuary, led by our African Community. We know you will enjoy this special service, which will include some joyful music and prayer. Both of these events are a wonderful opportunity to celebrate our unity as well as our diversity. (Earplugs will be made available.)

After the service we will enjoy hot dogs and chips provided by hospitality and supplemented by your contributions of salads and desserts. Special activities are planned for kids and adults.

## The Epiphany and The Baptism of the Lord

Dr. Laurence Stookey, author of "CALENDAR", concluded his discussion of the Christmas season with a summary statement about the birth of Jesus. He urged us to give "careful consideration" - - - "to content that plumbs the depths of the New Testament proclamation about the nativity of Jesus. Only in this way will we move beyond a preoccupation with a sweet baby in a crib (or Santa Claus) to ask the basic question: 'Who is this that was born in Bethlehem and is headed toward death in Jerusalem?'"

Dr. Stookey then answers his own question. "It is this very issue of identity that the Epiphany has come to signify. Among Roman Catholics and Protestants, the Epiphany (that is, 'the manifestation' or 'the appearance') has for centuries been observed on January 6 at the close of the Twelve Days (*of Christmas*). Its observance had primarily to do with the arrival of the Magi. In the Eastern churches, on the other hand, January 6 has come to be celebrated primarily as the baptism of Jesus and his first miracle at Cana.

In recent decades several factors have combined to alter actual practice in the West. (1) It is no longer practical to have a large celebration on January 6 when this date falls on a weekday. (2) Popular Piety has collapsed into one event Luke's account of the arrival of the shepherds at the stable after hearing an angelic announcement and Matthew's report of the arrival of the Magi at a house after seeing a star. In contrast to earlier depictions, which kept these separated, modern crèches and Christmas illustrations show everyone together at a manger. Indeed, we take this quite for granted until in vain we search art museum walls hunting for a painting that shows shepherds and Magi together. (3) The West has seen great wisdom in the Eastern emphasis on the Baptism of the Lord at this season, in contrast to the basic liturgical neglect of the baptism in the West except as related to the Temptation of Jesus at the beginning of Lent.

Therefore in recent decades many Western churches have altered the historical calendar as follows: The Baptism of the Lord is to be commemorated on the Sunday following January 6 (anytime from January 7 to 13). Except when January 6 falls on Sunday, the arrival of the Magi is to be commemorated on the Sunday prior to January 6.

But what common thread is there between Christmas Day, the Epiphany, and the Baptism of the Lord? Summed up in one word: Identification. The Coming of the Magi and the Baptism of Jesus help us to identify who it is that is born in Bethlehem and thus enable us to get past 'the cute baby' approach that so vitiates the deep meaning of the incarnation and prevents us from appreciating the great exchange of divinity and humanity."

Worship Committee

## Congregational Life

Many times during the past two years of pandemic, one, some, or even most of us have fallen into a state of fear. With so much uncertainty, sickness, just plain craziness it is sometimes difficult to hear God's voice, to feel God's presence, to live into God's promises. It is especially hard to know how to carry on the work of this committee when the congregation has hunkered down or locked down or busy learning how to zoom or working from home with children learning remotely. New problems and new situations are overwhelming us. Now it has become the comforting norm to worship while drinking your coffee in pajamas or maybe.....foregoing worship since we can't attend in person. That's the bad news, but the good news is, we have learned new stuff, we have found ways to stay in contact, we ARE gradually becoming more comfortable and more adept with technology, we continue to do mission and pray and worship our ever faithful and awesome God. We continually check on the statistics and will schedule meetings and events accordingly. We are blessed to live in the state of Arizona where the weather is beautiful this time of year. Usually we can open our doors or meet outside for larger group events. Our congregational life will go on with faith in the future. The importance of Christian fellowship and community cannot be underestimated and we will rejoice greatly when the pandemic wains.

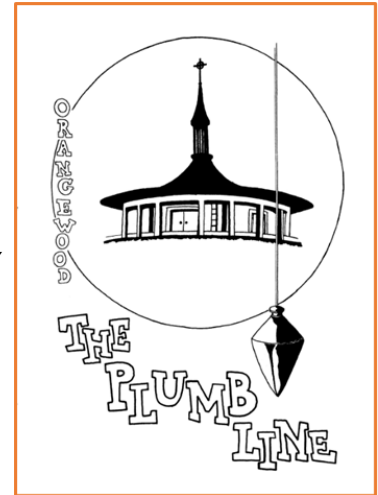
## DID YOU KNOW . . . .

that Orangewood has been publishing a monthly newsletter since November of 1956? Perhaps you also did not know that this newsletter has not always been called the "Plumbline". From the first publication until September of 1956, it was called "The Caller". These were often detailed documents of 20 or more pages.

So, at the beginning of 1970 Orangewood decided to renew its commitment to the will of God. The change was best described by Pastor Sam Lindamood Jr. in his opening remarks in the publication.

***"The occasion certainly is new -- a new year, a new decade. And we believe that new decades also demand new forms, so you are looking at one now. Our monthly paper, The Caller, has served us for so long that we think it deserves a well-earned rest. With thanks to so many who worked so hard over long years to publish it, we now retire it among the communion of the saints. Henceforth shall it rest in peace.***

***And now THE PLUMB LINE. One of the toughest jobs of the '70s will be, as always, to determine the will of God and to try to remain true to that vision. The book of Amos tells us that when Israel fell by the wayside, God set a plumb line in the midst of her. The same plumb line used to determine the "trueness" of a wall was held over against God's people to determine their "trueness". The plumb line was their time of testing and their hour of decision. Just so we hope this paper will be an instrument to help us determine our "trueness" in the decade ahead."***



And from the word of Amos verse 7:9. *However, when Amos saw the people as a whole persist in their sin, he knew that judgment could no longer be avoided. As a builder tests a wall with a plumb line to see if it is straight, so God tests Israel according to his perfect standard to see if it is morally upright. He finds that it is crooked beyond repair and must be demolished. Corrupt religion and corrupt administration have been the cause of the country's failure, and these are things upon which the judgment falls most heavily.*



The publication name was changed from The Plumb Line to The Plumblin in July of 2004. We don't know how many monthly newsletters have been published since our founding in 1953 but by calculation there have been 816 months. We have copies of 465 of the publications in our archives.

Bob Wells

## Coming Soon, the Orangewood Directory

The long awaited Orangewood membership directory will be ready in mid-February. The first issuance will be considered a "draft", to make sure we have all information current and correct—name spelling, address, phone, email (when applicable). For this edition, we will distribute via email and have a very limited supply of printed versions. We will ask for your review of your household's information. There will be a brief time to send corrections or changes to Pam in the OPC office.

The finalized Directory will be emailed and printed in mid-March, after updates are made.

One of the advantages of having the Directory created "in house" is that we can issue periodic updates to include new members and any changes to household information.

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**February**

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

**2022**

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The *Plumblin*, a monthly newsletter of Orangewood Presbyterian Church, contains helpful information for members and friends. If you would like to receive this publication via e-mail (pdf file), contact the office. Issues may also be found on our website. **The deadline for the March Plumblin is February 14.**