

# THE VISION

A NEWSLETTER OF WOOD VILLAGE BAPTIST CHURCH

## FROM THE PASTOR

### A Longing for What Can Be

There is a way to live the life that we all long for. It is no secret that Jesus offers exactly this kind of life, the “abundant life” that He speaks of in John 15. He came so that we could have life, in abundance. A life full of meaning and peace.

But this kind of life is impossible if we try to live it on our own. Jesus says that we must live “in” Him to have this kind of life. To draw our purpose, sustenance and direction from Him as the branch does from the vine. We cannot really

live apart from Him.

In answer to this, Jesus has given us Himself and each other. In John 17, Jesus prays that we would be “one” with each other

as we are with Him. We need each other. We need prayer, guidance, teaching, mercy and encouragement. We need to be loved and we need to love. We also need to sacrifice for others, to give, to forgive, and to be less so that others can be more.

This is the abundant life. This is what Life Groups can offer. I know, because I have experienced this kind of

abundant life.

I pray this April that you will take a step

*Join a Life Group  
for an abundant life!*

of faith and join a Life Group. And I pray this March as we train Life Group leaders that some of you will consider shepherding a group of brothers and sisters.

So don’t try to go it alone. You can’t do it alone.

Life Group Leaders Training:

Monday evenings  
March 6-27

Life Groups Begin:  
April 18

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# OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD

by Jennifer Miles

As a mom of young children years ago, I appreciated that participating in Operation Christmas Child gave me a wonderful venue for teaching my daughters the principle of giving and praying for others in impoverished areas of the world. Life as a mother of young children is filled with worrying about the everyday chores and challenges directly in front of you and your children. It's often difficult to stop and remember that there are others in the world who do not take water, food, or toys for granted. That one of the biggest challenges of their day isn't getting their children to pick all of their toys up at the end of the day so that they can safely navigate their way to bed without injuring themselves on that errant soccer ball or Lego.

Honestly, I really gave to this venture with the same attitude as I did the canned food drive at Thanksgiving, or the UNICEF walk around your neighborhood, or the PTA fundraiser for getting new books in the school library. I felt good about contributing to worthy causes and for using all of these endeavors to teach my children to be generous to others in need.

It wasn't until going on a mission trip to Ecuador that I realized how much I was really missing the true purpose of Operation Christmas Child. It

wasn't a great tool to teach my children the value of giving. It wasn't so I could enjoy the thought of giving a toy to a poor child who didn't have any. It wasn't so I could walk away feeling generous, productive, and yes, proud, that I had helped the program out. I had missed the most important reason for participating in Operation Christmas Child. My heart hadn't understood the true intent of putting a box together even though my body went through the proper motions.

In Ecuador, our church and Mustard Seed, led by Pastor Leo and Lulu Calva, ran a VBS in a small village. The carrot for attending? A gift box from Operation Christmas Child. Watching the children come daily, walking through the games, crafts, and Bible lessons, I realized that I had not properly taught my own heart let alone



my children the value of giving. I had, unknowingly, given for selfish intent. I felt good about doing good.

When I filled the boxes in the past, I prayed for the gospel to be spread but I mostly enjoyed the challenge of fitting many items into a small space and the teaching moment for my daughters. From now on, when I fill a box, I will do it with a changed heart. I will pour prayer over the box thanking God that He gave me the gift of salvation 23 years ago and I will thank Him in advance for all of the faithful people who will touch this box after me. I will continue to pray for the delivery of this box until it reaches the hands of a young child who truly needs this gift. Inside will be the greatest gift of all - the chance to hear the good news of Jesus and accept His salvation.

This last Christmas, our church sent 99 filled boxes along with 3 large boxes filled with personal items and toys. I'm constantly amazed by the faithfulness of our church community. Please continue to pray for the boxes we sent. All 99 of these boxes will be worth all of the time, effort, and finances if even one child or parent accepts the "good news!"

A special thank you to Katelyn Vestal for making this possible. She did a wonderful job leading this venture!

# CHESS FOR SUCCESS

by Pastor Tom Miles

WVBC has partnered with Chess for Success in an after-school program on Tuesdays and Wednesdays from 4:00-5:00pm. The program is designed for grades 1-6.

Why are we doing this?

Their Vision: Chess for Success provides youth of all backgrounds and abilities a powerful framework for success in

school and life.

Their Mission: To help children develop skills for success in school and life through learning chess.

There is a critical need in our neighborhood to help parents and schools equip kids with skills for life. We believe this program meets a critical need, and it is fun!

For over a decade, WVBC has implemented after-

school programs to meet the needs of kids and parents. These are very challenging times for kids, and offering a program that develops skill and character and is also fun can be a powerful ministry.

Please consider volunteering two hours a week to this ministry. Please invite your kids or grandkids to participate.



ABOVE: Norman Abel oversees the program with Ed Anderson and Eldridge Fantroy, Program Operations Director.

## YOUTH by Patrick Vestal

It has been a privilege for me to be at WVBC for the past year. As you all know, we have gotten a lot done in the Youth Center. We've also done a lot of teaching and discipling and had a bunch of fun, too.

Every Sunday morning we have "Bacon All Things New." We eat breakfast and have a conversation about the Scriptures and our faith. We took all of last year to learn about Luke/Acts, focusing on five main themes that Luke develops throughout those books. We started this fall by looking at worship songs, new and old. We learned about the origin and theology of some hymns, teaching the students that if Jesus followers have worshipped with these words for hundreds of years, there is value in us using them, too. We talked about the theology of new songs and the emphasis of reflecting on Biblical truths in our corporate worship. Now, we're taking a

deep dive into the book of Philippians and learning about how to read Paul's writing along the way.

On Wednesdays, we spent a number of weeks in a series called "Be Abstract." The focus was on looking at several of the different abstract nouns that we are called to live out as Jesus followers and the fact that if we're living it out, the world will look at us as if we're abstract. More recently, I have been teaching on the Church. What is the Church (1 Peter 2:1-14)? What is our role as the Church (Eph. 4:1-16)? Then, what is WVBC doing to join the mission of the global Church. We're taking a few weeks to talk about love, sex

and dating. On February 16, we're turning up the heat (literally) by having some students attempt a hot wings challenge, and having our "Love Panel," where we interview a few married couples to get their insight on Christian marriage well lived.

February 4-6 we are joining with three other youth groups to have a retreat at Camp Jonah. Our focus for the weekend is from Matthew 13 and Jesus' parables. We're taking precautions to be COVID sensitive, but I'm really excited for the students to be able to get away together and enjoy some time out in the snow.



## WORSHIP NEWS by Zeke Goodrick

This last Christmas season was a blast for our worship teams. We kicked off December with another "Awaken" Worship Night. We brought in a special guest, Adriana Ek-Canche from New Heights Church, to help us lead worship in Spanish. It was an upbeat night of great music and worship! The Christmas Eve service was filled with traditional songs and Scripture readings telling of the promised Messiah from Isaiah and Luke.

We started a new tradition with caroling the neighborhood! When I was

a kid we used to go caroling around the neighborhood. It was a mile uphill both ways and in terrible weather, and I was grateful. We had a brave few join us this year but we



had fun! Even Logan (Pastor Tom and Jennifer's grandson) came along. Ironically, as we were walking up a hill in Wood Village Green, we happened to be singing "Go Tell it on

the Mountain." We made it back, a little out of breath and with very little frostbite. Next year we may float the date to follow the best weather, but in Oregon rain is as good as sunshine!

## MEN'S MINISTRY by Craig Crandall

I know many of you men have been praying and wondering when the men of WVBC would get back together for regular times of fellowship, learning, serving and supporting. The time is NOW!!

Many of you also know that over the past two years, the focus of so many of our men in leadership turned to the attention of the broader vision, ministry and leadership needs of our church during a period of dramatic change, while simultaneously confronting the early and ongoing uncertainties posed by Covid.

WE'RE GRATEFUL TO GOD

for His protection, vision and amazing provision, and the progress He has enabled in these past 24 months, answering our needs in so many key areas.

Like you, I'm more than ready to see the men get back together to reignite our Men's Ministry in 2022. I'm so looking forward in the coming months to serving with you, reaching out, and growing together. We will aim for an offsite Men's Retreat sometime this fall – stay tuned!

Please add the morning of Feb. 12 to your calendar for our first opportunity to reconnect

as men in 2022! Whether you're a football fan or not, our "Super Bowl Breakfast" will be a great opportunity to reconnect with your brothers in Christ and to make some NEW friends. We'll take time to learn MORE ABOUT each other and to get your input on our future ministry actions. And we'll partake in some low-key-but-fun activity together.

Joining me on our Men's Ministry Team for 2022: Danny Bejan, Ken Davais, Reggie Wardle, Bert Welton and Chris Wright. Our thanks to them for serving us in this way!

Brothers, I look forward to seeing you Feb. 12 @t 8:30am!

# CHILDREN'S MINISTRIES

by Vera Hallman

The past months have been filled with wonderful activities for children. We had our Parents Night Out Craft Night where we had about 15 kids come and make crafts for gifts for family members. Children had an opportunity to build relationships with each other through games and activities. Also our Children's Christmas singing was a great success. The kids worked hard practicing for their performance and enjoyed dressing up and being a

part of the main service, especially when they got to hand candy canes out to everyone afterwards!

Another thing we did was work on Scripture memorization for the Sunday morning lessons. As the kids memorized one of the three verses, they could recite them to earn a raffle entry for a big stuffed Christmas moose!

The last month we have had about 24 children between our three open rooms, which is about double the amount when

I started working here. We are still looking for people to volunteer on a once-a-month basis, as one of my goals is to open a toddler room in the near future for little kids that need a transition between the nursery and upstairs in the preschool room. Please consider investing in our children for one short hour-and-a-half commitment once a month on a Sunday morning! So excited for what 2022 has in store for our children!



# LAS POSADAS by Elvia Angel-Silva

For nine years, Wood Village Baptist Church has had the honor of being part of Las Posadas, a community organized event celebrating the birth of Jesus. This year's celebration was slightly different, as we had to work around the COVID-19 protocols. The event was held outside in the WVBC parking lot. Several different organizations were able to bring out a table and share an activity with families. Pastor Gabriel from Comunidad de Gracia brought his guitar, and with people from



the community, went around the neighborhood Christmas caroling. Pastor Tom had the opportunity to share God's Word with a short message about healing with between 300 to 360 people. Even though it was below 40 degrees outside, it was a great

turnout. People left with a smile, holding a container of Pozole, made by Chuy Angel and Lili Silva, to take home to eat and enjoy with their family.



# SILENT AUCTION by Connie Crandall

We were so grateful to be able to have an in-person Silent Auction this year! As usual, the Fellowship Hall was packed with beautiful items up for bid. Shoppers were able to purchase gifts for others (and for themselves!) at a fraction of retail prices.

The auction raised almost \$5,000 to be used to offset the cost of the next Women's

Retreat. The auction helps make the retreat affordable by basically cutting the cost in half.

A huge thank you to Jane Merhar and Darcy Schunke for their countless hours of work all year long. They are already getting organized for next year! Thank you to the set-up and clean-up crews, and to Craig Crandall

and Reggie Wardle for serving donuts and coffee outside in the cold to help prevent the spread of COVID-19. We hope to bring back the pancake breakfast next year!

We appreciate the many, many donations we received and the shoppers who came out to support Women's Ministries!



*ABOVE: Noah Fast shows off his purchases. We had a very generous donation of about 50 collectible die-cast cars. They were very popular with the boys and men!*

*RIGHT: Jane Merhar is always welcoming, so this sign is perfect for her! Thank you, Jane, for coordinating the Silent Auction once again!*



# WOMEN'S CHRISTMAS BRUNCH by Connie Crandall

I have to admit, having a Women's Christmas Brunch in December was one idea I was deeply regretting. Knowing how busy it gets during the holidays, it felt like it was going to be a lot of work for minimal turnout.

I was wrong..

Sometimes I forget that when God

wants something to happen, it will. He will bring it all together. And it will exceed your expectations!

Sixty-five ladies turned out to share a wonderful meal and some warm fellowship on the morning of December 18. It was obvious that women miss getting together!

Tia Collins blessed us with a devotional on the WHO of Christmas, encouraging us to dig deeper to see how Jesus is revealing Himself to us during the Christmas season.

Everyone was asked to bring a wrapped gift for a "white elephant" exchange.

With the table overflowing with gifts, we brought up 8 ladies at a time to open gifts, and then allowed the next 8 to either "steal" one from them

and all I had to do was emcee. A pretty easy gig for someone who thought it was going to be too much work. ;)



In fact, one of my favorite things about the day was walking in a couple hours before the brunch and

or open a new one. It was fun to see the variety of gifts brought and laugh with the good-hearted exchanges.

We enjoyed seeing some new faces among the long-time attenders. The room included a wide variety of ages, from grade school girls to those in their 90s.

The number of women involved in making the brunch a success was impressive. Katie Wardle led a kitchen crew of eight, Jennifer Miles captained a group of eight more for set-up and clean-up, Maria Herrera provided Spanish translation, several people brought extra gifts in case people forgot or didn't know about the gift exchange,

seeing the bustling crew working together. It was a multicultural, multi-age group of girls and women, smiling and working away, enjoying the camaraderie of serving together. It was truly beautiful.



# CRAFTS & LAUGHS

by Jennifer Miles

Paper of every size, color, and pattern was available to design



amazing cards at our Crafts and Laughs women's gathering in January. It was fun to watch 21 women creating, cutting, and gluing together beautiful card patterns while catching up with friends.

Periodically, group laughter (or collective groaning) occurred as Connie Crandall entertained the group with punny jokes. We enjoyed a wonderful peach and blueberry cobbler modeled after our amazing Tomasa Lopez' recipe in our last church cookbook.

While some of us crafters spent more time talking and eating, I know that everyone went home with either cards and paper, a full stomach, or a funny joke to add to their own repertoire. One thing we all went home with was a great memory of a fun afternoon together.



## new baby



**CECELIA ROSANNA  
ELIZABETH RICE**

Born January 12, 2022  
8lbs 2oz 20.25"  
Parents: Brendan & Mariah  
Grandparents:  
Benno & Amber Milmore

## new member



**MARK VAN METER**

December 5, 2021

## home to heaven



**CARROLL HOUSTON**

Nov 27, 1930 - Dec 17, 2021



**BILL DIRKS**

Dec 26, 1931 - Jan 16, 2022