

Plumbline

ORANGEWOOD PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

January 2023

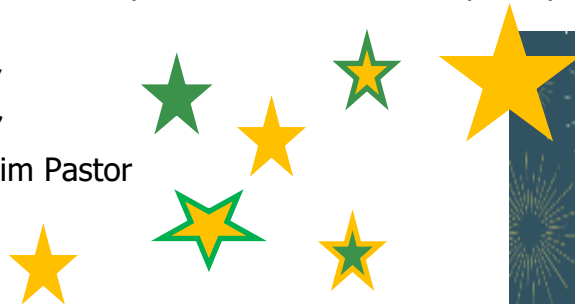
My niece Mary has a t-shirt that gives the year 2020 a half-star rating out of five stars and says, "very bad, would not recommend." 2020 was the year Mary was meant to graduate from college—which she did do, but remotely and without her friends. A lot of us encountered situations we could not have anticipated and did things differently from what we expected that year. Most of us were only too happy to say good-bye to 2020!

Now it's three years later. And we've discovered that the changes continue and multiply. Who could have predicted three years ago the events that have transpired since then? We live in a different world from what we knew just three short years ago. For many of us, our personal lives have changed significantly as well. It's been a challenging year for our congregation with multiple changes in staff and changes still to come.

But there is good news! While we cannot know what the coming year may bring, we have a hope that will not fail us. Ralph Abernathy is credited as having said, "I don't know what the future may hold, but I know who holds the future." Indeed, we do know who holds the future. We can trust that God's mercies are new every morning, that Jesus will continue to build his church, and that the Holy Spirit will empower and enliven us for the days that lie ahead.

As I look back over 2023, among my blessings has been the time I've spent at OPC as your gap interim pastor. We have faced some struggles together, for sure. But God has blessed OPC with faithful and dedicated leaders, a talented and caring staff, and the promise of a new interim pastor who will shepherd OPC into its future. Thank you for the support and friendship you all have extended to me while I have been with you. I will keep you all in my prayers, that "the God of hope will fill you with all joy and peace and believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope." (Romans 15:13). May God bless you and keep you in the new year and in the next steps of your journey together.

Blessings,
Mary
Gap Interim Pastor



Join in Celebrating Our January Birthdays

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

January 1: Ed Edwards
January 1: Nancy Lewis-Lynch
January 1: Bhan Ruot
January 3: Susie Harris
January 4: Joanne Sullivan

January 6: Meghan Tauber
January 8: Gail Lind
January 25: Bob Wells
January 28: Dylan Swartz



Recognition

On December 7, Addi Case was elected by the Presbytery of Grand Canyon as its Young Adult Advisory Delegate (YAAD) to the 226th General Assembly (GA) in Salt Lake City to be held June 29 through July 4, 2024.

YAADs are members of PC(USA) churches, aged 18-23, who receive training on the issues being considered by the GA and advise the voting commissioners from the perspective of the younger members of our church. Attending GA is also a wonderful opportunity to get to know other young Presbyterians from across the country. Travel, meals, and accommodations for GA are fully funded from the per capita apportionments received from our congregations. Our presbytery has elected the Rev. Jose Olaguez (teaching elder) and Selena Keesecker (ruling elder) as our voting delegates, and they will be joining Addi in Salt Lake City for GA.



Addi & proud Granny
Janet Spangler

On a recent Sunday morning, Piecemakers, Sally Haskins and Luci Sherwood, with help from their hubbies, laid out a colorful display of the quilts they have created in the past year. The quilts will be donated to *Arizona Blankets 4 Kids* who channels them through first responders, social workers, and emergency personnel to help comfort a child in crisis.

Sally and Luci welcome donations of cotton fabric—most any size will work. They can also use cotton sheets and cotton dresses that may not be suitable for donating. In addition, Luci welcomes bits of yarn—she weaves small strands into the knitted caps she makes for infants and children.



Interim Pastor Update

As you know, the Rev. Dr. Sue Marie Baskette will be soon joining Orangewood as our Interim Pastor. Here are a few additional tidbits about her:

She prefers being called Sue Marie.

She is relocating to Phoenix and hopes to find housing where she can bike to Orangewood along the canal.

She loves the outdoors, biking and hiking.

She plays handbells and looks forward to joining the Orangepealers.

The search committee was impressed with her gentle nature, compassion, and active listening.

Details of the transition are still being worked out, but we'll let you know. We do know that Pastor Mary's last Sunday in the pulpit is January 28th.

Orangewood Presbyterian Women

Thanks for the Socks

At their Christmas Coffee Presbyterian Women collected 122 pairs of socks for men, women and children for Nourish Phoenix. If you have more new, sturdy socks to donate please add them to the collection boxes outside of Page Hall any Sunday.

Calendar Alert

Here is a date to put into your new 2024 calendars—**Saturday, February 3** at 11:00 in Page Hall: Potluck luncheon with a program that spotlights women in our congregation who are environmentally aware as they reuse/re purpose yarns, fabrics, papers, old toys, and much more.

Bible Study

The Mary/Martha Bible Study Circle starts 2024 by meeting on Tuesday, January 23rd at 1:00 in Room 11 with this month's focus on the passages in Luke that focus on **Mary and Martha**. This is an invitation to begin 2024 with the women of Orangewood exploring the scripture in the books of Luke and Acts.



Gratitude

Thank you to Mary and Chuck for the wondrous Lessons and Carols and Christmas Eve services. The variety and quality of the musical offerings was outstanding—violin, cello, and piano, guitar, handbells, the So. Sudanese choir, and the combined voices from the Orangewood and Westminster choirs. The readings and candle lighting from the young children added a nostalgic touch. Pastor Mary's portrayal of the Virgin Mary telling her story will remain in our hearts forever. If you weren't able to attend one or more of the services or would like a replay, they can be accessed through the Orangewood Presbyterian Facebook page or via the OPC website. *Barbara Digges*

I am grateful to the members of the Interim Pastor Search Committee, Judy Proffitt, Dirk Oosterwyk, Joseph Lavi, and Cathy Witte, for their assistance on the committee in watching online sermons, helping with interviews, and their input to choose an interim pastor. I would also like to thank Pastor Mary for her advice that kept the committee 'on track' when we weren't sure what the next steps should be. I could not have done this without the support of this wonderful committee. Thank you all, *Becky Cederquist*

Congregational Life thanks all for their contributions and participation in our recent events:

The **Presbytery** meeting held at Orangewood
The **Thanksgiving meal**
Sanctuary Christmas decorations

Christmas tree decorations
OPC **Christmas Card** prep
Successful **Immerse Bible Study**, Part 1
SAGES fellowship

We're looking forward to your participation in our future events:

Taking down the tree and ornaments; undecorating the sanctuary
Part 2 of the **Immerse Bible Study** in January
SAGES luncheons and programs

Judy Proffitt

Many thanks to those good folks who contribute to producing the Plumblines each month—our Pastor, for a monthly message, committee and group reps for your timely and informative reports, those who take and submit photos of OPC events, those who recognize an accomplishment that should be shared with OPC, the shared tidbits or stories that make the Plumblines personal and relevant, Becky Cederquist for her proofreading, and Kristi Parot and Judy Proffitt for sending out the Plumblines via e-mail and snail mail. *Barbara Digges*

Sages

The December Sages guests were greeted with colorful table centerpieces, created by Jeanne Matt. A few teddy bears from her collection added to the festivity. The delicious meal of chili and cornbread was prepared and served by Jackie Collier and Freda Norman (Welcome back, Freda!!)



Entertainment was a presentation of Christmas songs from the Creative Bridges Cooperative Preschool students. Before they took the stage, every Sages guest was presented with a handmade painted Christmas bell, made from a small flower pot. The dots on the bell are the child's fingerprint! Words can't do justice to the creative headwear, solemnity, and smiles—but the pictures below tell the story.

The SAGES thank Pam Watts and all of the teachers and assistants at the school for preparing and coaching the children for this memorable show!

Our January gathering is Tuesday, January 9th. Plan to arrive by 11:15. Luncheon with dessert is \$4.00. Our January program will be a representative from the Area Agency on Aging who will work with us on Balance and Avoiding Falls.



Advent Services Lessons & Carols Christmas Eve



Service Events

Christmas Card Writing, Caroling at the Beatitudes, Wrapping Angel Tree Gifts, Assembling Care Kits for the Unsheltered, Serving Pancakes at Grace Lutheran



Christmas cards, ready to go.



The Carolers visited with Suzanne Norling and Jan Upson and sang for diners in the Bistro, including Sandy and Terry Frost, Judy and Dan Lippman.



These skilled gift wrappers could probably get a job in Santa's workshop!



An assembly line was the way to go to bag 200 Care Kits.



In addition to the Care Kits from OPC, the unsheltered folks dining at Grace Lutheran also received slippers that had been donated by another agency.

Session Notes

Session held a called meeting on December 2, 2023, for the purpose of approving the appointment of an Interim Pastor and to set specific goals for planning the future of OPC.

- Session had approved an email motion recommending Addi Case to attend general Assembly in July 2024. The approval was forwarded to Presbytery who voted to approve the OPC recommendation on December 6th.
- Session approved the appointment of reverend Dr. Sue Marie Baskette to be interim pastor of OPC for a period of 2 years beginning February 1, 2024. The annual salary will be \$75,000 per year plus Board of Pensions benefits not to exceed \$33,000, a flex vouchered expense account of \$3,500 and relocation allowance of \$3,500 vouchered expenses, four weeks' vacation time and continuing education leave of seven days. The duties and responsibilities of the interim pastor include working with the session and the congregation to build trust and confidence in communications, assist in establishing plans for the future and focus of the OAF, as well as administrative duties and participation with OPC committees.
- Session thanked the Interim Pastor Nominating Committee for its work and requested that the committee invite the candidate to get acquainted.
- Session discussed goals and proposals for the future of OPC and established groups to work on specific areas. Reports to be given at the January session meeting.
 - ◆ Group 1: work on a proposal for a contemporary service that is a combination of OPC and OAF with focus on music; Jackson Nduwimama, Phebe Packer, Brent Upson, Christina Suarez
 - ◆ Group 2: meet with preschool to uncover needs of young families; Pam Watts, Louise Sedgewick, Pastor (Gap Interim, Interim), and preschool parents.
 - ◆ Group 3: work on a proposal for parish nurse function/counseling function for the elderly; Christina Suarez, Becky Cederquist, Ron Carmichael, Phebe Packer, Joseph Lavi.

The next Stated Session Meeting will be on Saturday, January 20th 2024, at 1 pm by Zoom meeting and/or in person, Choir Room.

“Music to my ears”.....the common expression we use when we hear good news about something in which we hold an interest. Today I am happy to share with you a literal interpretation of this expression in the form of a video from Honduras. The video was taken in the summer of 2023 in San Juan Planes, a small town in the municipality of Trinidad in the western mountains of the country. Presbyterian groups have worked there for many years, building houses, holding medical clinics, working on water systems and offering assistance in establishing eye care facilities.

Now the community has come together to start a music school. The current array of instruments includes keyboards, guitars, drums and violins. The community hopes to expand the number and variety of instruments. Donations of used instruments are welcome. Contact Phebe Packer at phebepacker@gmail.com if you can help. Meanwhile, use ctrl + click on the link below and enjoy the video – the quiet motions of the conductor, the faces of the participants – all are included in the “music to my ears”.

[Music School video #2 - 2023.MOV - OneDrive](#)

Mission Committee

As we conclude another successful year of ministering to those in need, your Mission Committee extends its sincere gratitude to the congregation for your support. Following are just a few of the many projects and programs your financial and in-kind donations, and equally important your volunteer efforts, have made possible over the last twelve months:

- Nourish Phoenix – In addition to the weekly donations of clothing and other items on their wish list deposited in the blue bins outside Page Hall, you contributed 395 pounds of nonperishable food and other essential items to the Spring food drive, brought men's crew socks and other items to the Undie Sunday drive over Labor Day weekend, and supported their clients throughout the year with your volunteer efforts.
- Honduras – Two successful fundraising efforts in the spring made it possible for us to embark on a new community housing project in Dulce Nombre in July, and you also supported our efforts with purchases of supplies for our medical clinic during the trip.
- Angel Tree – This program of Prison Fellowship is an opportunity to provide children of incarcerated parents with Christmas gifts on behalf of the parent. With your purchases this year, we were able to make Christmas a little merrier for nearly fifty children. Again, this year, a huge thank you to Addi Case for coordinating this program for OPC!
- Using the supplies you purchased, our volunteers assembled 200 care kits for the Unsheltered at one of our Advent Worship Service Events in December. Each kit included a blanket, a pair of warm socks, toothbrush, toothpaste and other essential hygiene items, and a granola bar. Many of the kits were distributed to clients at Grace Lutheran's pancake breakfast the following Sunday, and others were made available to OPC members to give to the unsheltered we see on the streets as we are driving around.
- Alternative Giving – As the Plumblines goes to press, \$4,405 has been donated for this year's Alternative Giving options, including **\$2,520 for scholarships** to help students in **Honduras** continue their education, **\$1,270 for Heifer International**, and **\$615 from the Presbyterian Giving Catalog**.

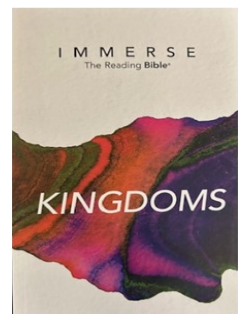
Again, a big thank you to everyone who supported Orangewood's mission efforts over the past year, whether it was with your volunteer efforts, financial support, or both. A reminder that each Sunday morning, the Mission Table on the Patio has information on many of the projects OPC participates in and includes sign-up sheets for volunteers to participate in our various activities. We are always looking for more volunteers!

Immerse Bible Study

The Immerse Bible Study will resume meeting on Sunday, January 7th at 10:45 am in Room 11. We will begin our study of the second volume of the Immerse series, "Kingdoms". At the conclusion of our first 8-week study we arrived at the point when God's people had been freed from slavery in Egypt and were about to enter the land promised to their ancestor Abraham.

In the next segment (Joshua, Judges, Ruth, and Samuel-Kings) we will read about Israel entering the land and being commissioned to be God's light to the nations. As these books begin, God's people are living under God's three earlier covenants made with Noah, Abraham and Moses. The story moves ahead with a description of the events surrounding the fourth covenant, made with David. By the end of this book, God's plan for the people of Israel appears to be greatly threatened, but God promises not to abandon David's family and kingdom. Whatever work God will yet do through Israel for the sake of the world, God will do through the royal line of David.

Everyone is invited to join the new 8-week study. Books are available on the patio for \$11.



SPOTLIGHT

Recently the Spotlight page has focused on Orangewood folks. . This time, however, we're sharing the story of an inanimate object, a large rock. HUH, you say. Read on to learn why this isn't just any ol' rock.....Many thanks to Bob Wells for his discovery, research, and writing of this article.

The Rock

In the initial days of construction on the new Simis School, a contractor dragged a large rock from the Simis campus across 10th street and deposited it in the entry way to Orangewood's parking lot. The Orangewood facilities group was not happy about this incursion, but "what the heck" it was a nice rock and it looked good there. Orangewood guessed it was only temporary and at the end of construction it would be returned to Simis. Well, that was not the case, and the rock has remained there for several years.



Recently Orangewood has undertaken some enhancement and beautification activities on our campus one of which is the cleanup of our parking lot entry way. During these activities our contractor, who had instructions to remove the rock, flipped it over. Much to all's surprise there was a plaque on the underside. It was initially not clear what the plaque said or was about but after careful inspection the words became clearer as shown in the insert.



It was obvious that this stone had meaning to the Simis School. This author decided to visit the school office and inquire if they were interested in having the stone returned. The principal responded, yes indeed. Later when asked where they would like it placed they responded in the "garden". The bobcat loader needed to move the

stone cannot get into the enclosed garden, do you have a second desire. It has been placed outside the fence at the garden on the 10th street walkway.

It appears this plaque was to memorialize the setup of the Simis Garden for student learning program.

Pursuing this topic further the name Leslie Schexnayder was looked up on the web. Found was [Garden to be dedicated to longtime volunteer | North Central News](#) from the North Central Newspaper. *Ctrl+click* to read the article.

The Discovery Is Growing Gardens at Simis (DIGGS) Program

THE DIGGS BAT HABITAT

DISCOVERY IS GROWING GARDENS AT SIMIS
MADE POSSIBLE THROUGH THE EFFORTS AND SUPPORT OF

JONATHAN LECLAIR EAGLE SCOUT, BOY SCOUT TROUP 329
MEADOW BOY SCOUT TROUP 329, SCOUTS LEADERS & PARENTS
GALEN DRAKE LANDSCAPE, ARCHITECTURE & SIMIS PARENT
LESLIE B. SCHEXNAYDER, DIGGS PROJECT, COORDINATOR & SIMIS PARENT
THE STUDENTS PARENT TEACHER & STAFF AT SIMIS SCHOOL
WHITFILL NURSERY

Breakfast Out Bunch

Want to start your day with a hearty breakfast and great company??

Then join the *Breakfast Out Bunch* for their next gathering **Thursday, January 11th @ 9 am** at the Moon Valley Café, 7th St & Thunderbird. Anita Shipley is saving a seat for **YOU!!** Contact Anita to confirm your spot: ashipley2@cox.net or 602-503-9109.

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December

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2023

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