

VALLEY VOICE

Volume 16, Issue 5

March 15, 2011

THE CONNECT EXPERIENCE (BY RICK BUTLER)



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BVCC's new worship experience, Connect, has completed its first two months. Offered the 2nd and 4th Sundays of each month the service is at 5 PM.

Connect is visually oriented, highly participatory, multi-experiential worship. The setting of the sanctuary is different than at 9:30 AM worship. Softer lighting, multiple prayer stations, no pulpit, continual use of the visuals screen set a different tone for worship.

Ranging over the Sundays from 15 to 25 participants Connect offers a worship experience for those seeking a more participatory style. The planning team meets regularly and evaluates the experiences as well as planning upcoming ones. In addition the team works on ways to reach the target audience of young adults seeking encouragement about their spiritual journeys.

Join Connect on the 2nd or 4th Sunday if you'd like to experience first-hand what this is like.

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Lent





(BY AARON JAMISON)

Check out the blogs and discussions on the Blue Valley Christian Church website and Facebook pages:

Recent BVCC blog articles include:

- Medical Play Dolls
- Becoming Reacquainted with Jesus
- Prayer for Young Adults
- Because I said So!
- Is Prayer Enough?

The recent "Join the Discussion" questions include:

- How do you understand the Holy Ghost or Holy Spirit?
- What about being Christian makes you smile?
- Where is God in a pluralistic world?
- Do you read Song of Songs as a literal expression of passionate love between a man and a woman or as an allegory for divine love?
- Do you believe in a literal Hell?

Aaron Jamison, BVCC Website and Facebook Site Coordinator has set up a new shortcut URL for those who visit the BVCC Facebook site regularly.

Check out <http://www.facebook.com/bluevcc>.



Worship Style Offers New Way to Focus on Relationship with God (BY RICK BUTLER)

The liturgical season of Lent (beginning with Ash Wednesday and concluding with Saturday of Holy week) carries a tradition of increased awareness of our spirituality. Christians are encouraged to either “give up” something or “take on” something that centers their focus more richly on their relationship with God.

This year, worship during Lent is a communal “taking on” of centering ourselves more fully in God. Worship will be a weaving together of our traditional style with a Taize worship experience. Taize, an ecumenical Christian monastic order located in France, practices worship that includes meditative singing (a verse sung several times), prayer, and silence. There will be a period of 5-10 minutes of silence during which we will individually focus on a printed guide. Following the period of silence there will be opportunity to reflect together on our experiences.

We hope this different style of worship will enhance our spiritual journeys throughout Lent.

The Little Wagon that Could (with our help)

(By Rick Butler)

Many know of the red wagon in BVCC’s main hall. It is the “food wagon.”

Each month the wagon is the receptacle for our food items (as well as cleaning supplies, household items, and personal hygiene items). There are some who bring donations each week; others bring items occasionally.

The contents of the wagon journey to different agencies at the end of every month. One month it might be the Salvation Army. Another month the food pantry at Barry Christian Church or the kosher food pantry sponsored by a local Jewish agency or the KC Rescue Mission.

Sunday, February 27, in a reflection during worship on Jesus’ words in Matthew 6:24-34 a challenge was issued. The passage is a reminder that God provides gift after gift after gift to the point that we can let go of constant worry and anxiety; we can be carefree disciples.

Aware of our worries about BVCC and its future a challenge was issued for us to provide 3000 items by the end of 2011. That would mean that we would place in the red wagon an average of 300 items each month through December. (continued on page 4)

(continued from page 3) **The Little Wagon that Could (With Your Help)**

And, as we place items in the wagon they will represent our letting go of our worry and anxiety: trusting God's presence with us; trusting God's leading us, transforming us into more faithful followers of the Christ.

The wagon is now at the front of the sanctuary. It can fulfill this challenge by our trusting God more deeply. Please bring your items. Take them out of the sacks and put them in the wagon.

3000 worries transformed into items of care for others

MEDICAL PLAY DOLLS

(BY NANCY BOYER)

This year we are going to repeat a successful mission from last year. I am hoping we can sew at least 50 medical play dolls' for the Children's Mercy Hospital. These dolls help children in the hospital to understand his/her emotions during a stressful and sometimes scary time.

Anyone who is interested in working with this mission can meet on Sunday, March 26th in the education wing to help. There are 4 ways to help. 1) You can work at the church sewing and stuffing the dolls. 2) You can take a kit(s) home to assemble the dolls at home. 3) You can take home a pattern and assemble the dolls from scratch. 4) You can donate money or materials to help offset the cost for this mission.

Please call me if you have any questions at 913.681.6905. You can also email me at boyerbungalow@yahoo.com. Thank you all for your help.

LANDSCAPE VOLUNTEERS STILL NEEDED



There are a few openings remaining for those interested in taking on the mission of caring for the landscaped areas located around the church building for the 2011 growing season. Volunteers may work at their own pace and time schedule, and nurture the grounds with their own tools or with the available tools found in the garden shed.

Sign up sheets are located in the Gathering area. Call or email the church if you are unable to get by to sign up in person. Thank you to all the individuals and families who have already signed up. We look forward to seeing the fruits of your love and labor.

JESUS AND ZACCHAEUS—MARCH 27



Family of Faith Christian Church Pastor Lisa Engelken will be providing the Children Worship at Wonder program for children in attendance at the next CONNECT worship experience on Sunday, March 27 at 5:00 PM.

Zacchaeus

Scripture: Luke 19:1-10

Parent Note: The story of Zacchaeus takes place after Jesus has decided his destiny will be fulfilled in Jerusalem. Therefore, he is on the way to the city of the temple when he passes through Jericho. The crowds gather around after Jesus and line the streets to see him. Zacchaeus was a tax collector who was a Jew who was working for the Roman government. He was not respected by many and probably had a hard time finding a place at the front. One point of interest is that Jesus did not ask for Zacchaeus to change his lifestyle. Was Zacchaeus' encounter with Jesus enough that he found the Messiah? Zacchaeus had a change of heart, repentance. Zacchaeus volunteered to give up all that he had and pay back four times that which he had cheated people out of. The Jews who had saw Jesus with Zacchaeus wondered why the Rabbi was eating with sinners and tax collectors? Jesus reminded them that the entire world is made up of the people of God. (Adapted by The Good Shepherd, P.O. Box 1754 Manchester, MO)

Review Wondering questions:

I wonder who told the people that Jesus was coming?

I wonder if Zacchaeus felt bad when no one would let him in line to see?

I wonder if it was hard to climb the tree?

Activities to Explore:

(Ages 2-6)

Climb a tree! What do you see?

Sing Jesus Loves the Little Children. A reminder that Jesus loves everyone even little children.

Adult Faith Formation Group (by Jan Harris)

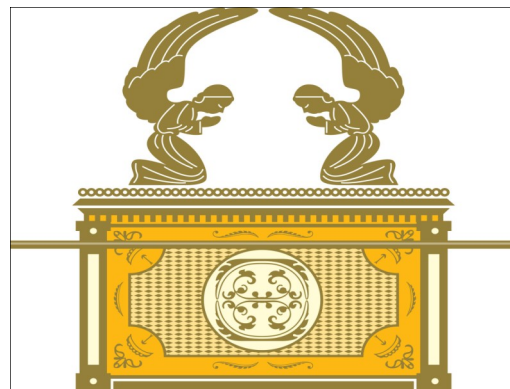
We update our computer programs regularly. Have we updated our view of Jesus recently? Could an update restart our spiritual lives and our response to God? The topic of the Adult Faith Formation Group is “Becoming Reacquainted with Jesus”.

Do you struggle with explaining to people, or yourself, why Jesus is important to your life? I do. I would like some clearer answers. I want to know Jesus better, rather than to know what a particular creed or catechism says about Jesus.

The book to be used as the basis for the discussion is Jesus for the Non-Religious: Recovering the Divine at the Heart of the Human by John Shelby Spong, a retired Bishop to the Episcopal Diocese of Newark. Spong wants us to see the mythology that developed around Jesus and why these mythological elements seemed appropriate to the gospel writers and to those who developed the Christian traditions. By removing the mythological elements, he thinks we can more clearly hear the testimonies of people whose lives were transformed by Jesus and thereby allow Jesus to have a transforming effect on our lives.

The book is available in paperback if participants want to read the book. It is not necessary to read the book to participate.

The discussion group meets in the Education Wing of the church at 10:45 AM on Sunday mornings. Everyone is welcome.



Ark of the Covenant

The ark was at the center of worship for the Israelites. It contained the stone tablets of the Ten Commandments, a pot of manna and Aaron's rod. In the Old Testament, the ark was a visible representation of God's throne, or presence, on earth, where he communed with Moses and the high priests. It also represents our earthly bodies, where the Holy Spirit dwells.



(Official seal of the Girl Scouts - website www.girlscouts.org)

There are two weeks remaining for anyone who would like to donate items to the Girl Scouts for their summer camp projects.

Girl Scout troops #899 and #995 from Shawanoe Elementary are collecting odds and ends for special craft projects which will be created during the 2011 summer camp at Camp Timberlake. Camp Timberlake is located at 8285 West 179th Street in Stilwell, KS next to the Overland Park Arboretum. This year's camp theme is "Little Camp on the Prairie".

Blue Valley Christian Church is serving as a collection point during the month of March for the two Girl Scout Troops as they accept donations for the following items to help support their summer camp craft projects:

- **Candles** - Partially used and/or scented candles are acceptable. Please note: No "Party Lite" brand candles will be acceptable as they have a different formula for their wax.
- **Dress shirts** - Think of the basic men's dress shirt. Any color or condition or size are acceptable as they will be cut up for their material.
- **100% wool sweaters** - The one the moths tried to eat, but you couldn't bear to throw away, or ones you just don't like any more. Holes and/or stains are ok.
- **100% wool yarn**
- **Men's neckties**

Any and all items may be dropped off on Sunday morning before or after worship, on the 2nd and or 4th Sunday evening of the month before or after the CONNECT Experience, or call 913-636-5926 to make an appointment for a special time to drop off your donations by the church. Donations may be placed in the middle (beige) room of the BVCC education wing. Thank you for your interest and assistance in this mission.

Don't forget to pick up a donation receipt before you leave.