

# The Vision

Volume 17, Issue 8

“For the VISION is for the days yet to come.” *Daniel 10:14*

August 2024

## WHAT I DID ON MY RENEWAL LEAVE

By Rev. Ann Lyter     Much like students asked to write about their summer at the start of a new school year, it seems appropriate to write about what I did on my leave at this, the start of a new appointment year. What I did most during my leave was rest and renew. In fact, I did more resting than I intended. Just a week into my leave, while re-landscaping part of my backyard, I suffered an eye injury that ultimately made it largely impossible to read, swim, or even, for a time, tolerate summer light. But the procedures seem to be a success and I’m hoping my reading will continue to improve, especially as I get a new prescription next month.

While I didn’t read as much as I had hoped, what I did read was insightful and I want to share some of what I learned. After learning of a colleague who has undertaken training in “3 Practices for Crossing the Difference Divide,” I was curious. I read the book by Jim Henderson and Jim Hancock. It is deceptively simple and could change everything in our civic and communal life. The three practices are:

- ◇ I will be unusually interested in others.
- ◇ I will stay in the room with difference.
- ◇ I will stop comparing my best with your worst.

So simple and so profound. Can you imagine if, instead of being sure someone is wrong or stupid or misled, we asked “**why** do you think that?” Imagine the conversation that might follow someone asking, “I’m curious to know why you think...?” And, of course the person then listens to the answer to understand, NOT to respond.

While I was reading about this approach, I was reminded of the story of Daryl Davis. Mr. Davis is a black musician who has made friends with numerous Klu Klux Klan members, over 200 of whom gave up their robes. It all started with a white man coming up and complimenting Mr. Davis on his music and saying how surprised he was that a black man could play like Jerry Lee Lewis. Mr. Davis responded that Jerry Lee Lewis

learned from the same place he did, black blues and boogie-woogie piano players. The man was shocked because he had never heard of black musicians. In turn, Mr. Davis was shocked, but importantly, he was curious: how had he never heard of black musicians or black music? The man answered that he had never spoken with a black person before. From Mr. Davis’s own story:

“Well, now I’m getting curious. I’m trying to figure out, now how is it that in my 25 years on the face of this earth that I have sat down, literally, with thousands of white people, had a beverage, a meal, a conversation or anybody else, and this guy is 15 to 20 years older than me and he’s never sat down with a black guy before and had a drink. I said, ‘How is that? Why?’”<sup>1</sup>

And the answer was that the white man was a member of the Klan. That was the start of Mr. Davis befriending Klan members. If being curious rather than judgmental can overcome overt racism, just imagine what it could do in other situations.

Mr. Davis did another important thing—he didn’t walk away. Sadly in our culture today, too many walk away at the first sign of difference. Doing so is even heralded as the right thing to do, to avoid brainwashing or indoctrination, or whatever catchword is in fashion for refusing to hear or be present with people who disagree. But if people in the church, or in families, or in houses of government could stay in the room, stay in relationship and in conversation despite differences, we might indeed live up to our values of community, loving like Jesus, caring for others, and even our national ideals of freedom and liberty.

The third practice is to stop comparing our best with the other’s worst. And we see that all the time.

⇒ “Republicans only care about rich people, money and self-interest. But Democrats care about the less fortunate, the oppressed, and

## What I Did... continued

the common good, (and the least of these, and the earth).”

⇒ “Democrats only care about getting things for free and having hard working people pay for it. Republicans protect hardworking families and traditional values (like morality, and decency, and sharing the good news).”

Too many people would cheer one statement and want me hanged for the other. But on the upside, at least everyone would agree on something—my hanging.

In reality, neither statement is true. Remember logic lessons in school, anything in the absolute it is likely false. Yet, many will cheer one statement and boo the other and never acknowledge that they are equally misleading, if not downright false.

A church is, at its most fundamental, a diverse community. We do not all think alike. We do not all live alike. We do not all vote alike. Yet, if we are to love one another as God has loved us, we need to learn to live in, and even into, our diversity. After all, God loves us in our diversity. In this way, we can be a model for the rest of society on how to live together, valuing each other, valuing diversity, and working together for a better world.

It is my hope that we will be able to bring training on these practices to Velda Rose UMC so we, in turn, can help train others. In the meantime, as we come into what can feel like a **mean time**, let us take on some practices of our own:

♥ Let us all endeavor to be curious about **why** someone feels or thinks or votes the way they do.

♥ Let us seek information from multiple sources and not rely on just one source of “news” (so much of which is not true), including fact-checking even those we agree with. At a minimum, let’s do so before we insist we are right. (This site has several different sources to use for fact-checking. <https://my.lwv.org/michigan/copper-country/reliable-sources-fact-checking>)

♥ Let us refrain from comparing our (or our candidate’s) best to someone else’s worst.

♥ And let us remember that Jesus calls on us to love: love God, love our neighbor, and even love our enemies.

<https://www.npr.org/2017/08/20/544861933/how-one-man-convinced-200-ku-klux-klan-members-to-give-up-their-ropes>

## August Sunday Services—Joy and Laughter

### AUGUST 4

Pastor Chan  
“The Joy of Your Salvation”  
2 Samuel 11:26-12:13a;  
Psalm 19:8; 51:12  
9:30 AM

### AUGUST 11

Guest Preacher:  
Rev. Mark Lansberry  
“God’s Laughter”  
Genesis 18:1-15, 21:1-7  
9:30 AM



### AUGUST 18

Pastor Ann  
“How Else Do You Explain Jonah?”  
Selected Passages  
from Jonah  
9:30 AM

### AUGUST 25

Pastor Ann  
“Holy Humor Sunday”  
Psalm 126:1-3;  
John 20:24-29  
9:30 AM

This excerpt is from Atul Gawande's book "Being Mortal: Medicine and What Matters in the End". Dr. Bill Thomas served as the medical director at Chase Memorial Nursing Home. A man named L lost his wife, whom he had been married to for 60 years. He nearly lost hope and was involved in

a car accident, possibly as an attempted suicide. Dr. Thomas observed L's condition: "I wondered how this man had survived at all. Events of the past three months had shattered this world. He had lost his wife, his home, his freedom, and perhaps worst of

all, his sense that his continued existence meant something. The joy of life was gone for him." (*Being Mortal*, 124) Despite antidepressants and the efforts of the staff, L's condition continued to deteriorate. He stopped walking, remained in bed all day, and even refused to eat.

Thomas initiated a project involving various animals and plants at the nursing home. He asked L if he would like to raise a pair of finches. With his characteristic indifference, L agreed, seemingly aware that he would soon leave this world. However, not long after, a change began to occur in L. He began to change his position in bed to better observe the creatures. He started asking the staff about what his birds liked and how they were doing lately. Although they were small creatures, the finches rescued him from giving up on life, adding spontaneity to his monotonous daily life,

and prompting him to care for another being who needed him.

Three months later, L returned home. He was an example of the projects Dr. Thomas conducted at the nursing home, which involved

taking care of dogs, cats, birds, plants, and even having the nursing home and an elementary school within the same fence. Through this project, the actual intake of medication for the elderly decreased by more than half, and they lived longer. Thomas discovered that even elderly

people with severe dementia, when in a lively environment, found a reason to live. They realized the true value of living a human life with meaning, joy, and gratitude. It's not just about living longer or taking less medicine; it's about truly living as a human being.

After 20 years of ministry, a pastor fell into despair and hopelessness. The parishioners left, and the church building was in danger of being foreclosed on by the bank. He decided to resign. During this time, he participated in a 4-night, 5-day Spiritual Formation retreat. While walking the path with the heart of a failure, he saw a cactus burned black from the roots. But as he looked up carefully, he saw new shoots growing from the top. It seemed dead but was alive. He accepted it as a message from God and was able to overcome despair. Life flows to life.





# United Women in Faith

## VELDA ROSE READING PROGRAM: *CARVED IN EBONY* by Jasmine Holmes.



This is a book of inspiration from the lives of ten black women of faith. The ten women highlighted are a shining beacon of devotion in a world that did not value their lives. They worked to change laws, built schools, spoke to thousands, and shared the Gospel around the world. We may not be

familiar with their names, but their stories can teach us much about what it means to be modern women of faith. I really enjoyed reading this book. I hope you do too.

Written by Billie Larime

## “OUT TO LUNCH BUNCH”: IS OPEN TO ALL WOMEN.

When: Friday Aug. 9, 2024  
Time: 11:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m.  
Where: China City Super Buffet  
2235 S. Power Road,  
Mesa, AZ 85209

RESERVATIONS REQUIRED: Contact Carolyn Parker or the church office.

Sponsored by Billie Larime, Membership Chair for United Women in Faith.

Last month’s article included numbers 6-10 of the Top Ten Reasons to be a United Women in Faith member. Here are the final 5 of the **TOP TEN REASONS TO BE A UNITED WOMEN IN FAITH MEMBER:**

**#5 IMPORTANCE:** What United Women in Faith does is important. It is 800,000 women working to improve the lives of women and

children around the world. It is \$20 million that goes to this goal in over 100 countries around the world. Just read *response magazine* to learn about the stories that impact people. As United Methodists we support disaster relief through UMCOR. We help local groups and people in a variety of ways. We make a difference.



United  
Women  
in Faith

**#4 TO KNOW GOD:** There are many organizations that do wonderful work, but in United Women in Faith our purpose is driven by our desire to know God and to have Christ at the center of what we do.

**#3 GRACE:** United Women in Faith women know that what we try and accomplish is because we were first loved and there is nothing, we can do to earn this grace. We care because we have no choice but to recognize this gift and share it with others.

**#2 DIVERSE:** In this time of divisiveness, we as United Women in Faith need to remember that we don’t all think alike. But as John Wesley wrote, “Though we cannot think alike, may we not love alike? May we not be of one heart, though we are not of one opinion? Without all doubt, we may. Herein all the children of God may unite, notwithstanding these smaller differences.”

**#1 LOVE:** We will remember that we are LOVE IN ACTION AND ARE THE FEET AND HANDS OF CHRIST IN THE WORLD.

**SUBMITTED BY BILLIE LARIME,  
SUMMER PRESIDENT**

# United Methodist Men



**PRODUCE GIVEAWAY CANCELLED:** Due to lack of products, produce giveaways have been suspended until November.

**MONTHLY MEETING:** The next UMMM business meeting will be 5 August, 1130-1300, in the Library.

**ICE CREAM SOCIAL**



**ICE CREAM SOCIAL:** Our next social will be on 14 August, 6-8 PM, in the Library.

**MEMORIAL PATIO RENOVATION:** The renovation project was completed on 27 June and a rededication prayer was offered during our 4<sup>th</sup> of July celebration. A schematic of the memorial is on display in the coffee service area of the sanctuary. If you would like to commemorate a loved one or create a loving tribute with a memorial brick, contact the church office for an order form.



VRUMC Memorial Patio

**THE UNITED METHODIST MEN TAKE YOUR ALUMINUM CANS,** recycle and turn them into cash, and use that cash for ministry, like fresh produce boxes for families struggling to have enough food. The collection center is on the



July 4th's Weenie Roast

north side of campus, near the Rummage building.

**SEPTEMBER SPAGHETTI DINNER:** Mark your calendars for an evening of delicious food and great company at our upcoming Spaghetti



Dinner! This event is the perfect opportunity to enjoy a hearty meal and socialize with friends and neighbors.

**Date:** September 18  
**Time:** 5-7 pm  
**Location:** Library

Choose between a rich, meaty sauce or a flavorful meatless option to suit your preference.

Indulge in a variety of homemade pies, lovingly prepared by our talented bakers.

Tickets will be available for purchase starting Sunday, September 1.

## Support Velda Rose UMC with Kroger Community Rewards



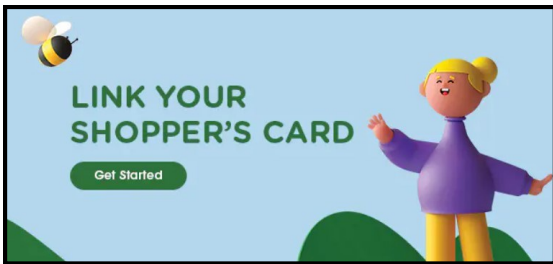
The Kroger Community Rewards program makes fundraising easy by

donating to local organizations based on the shopping you do every day. By linking your Kroger Shopper's Card to Velda Rose UMC, you can effortlessly support VRUMC with every purchase you make at Kroger. No extra cost to you – just shop as usual!

Once you link your Card to VRUMC, all you have to do is shop at Kroger and swipe your Shopper's Card. Here's how it works:

### 1. Create a digital account.

A digital account is needed to participate in Kroger Community Rewards. If you already have a digital account, simply link your Shopper's Card to your account so that all transactions apply toward the organization you choose.



### 2. Link your Card to Velda Rose UMC.

Selecting the organization that you wish to support is as simple as updating the Kroger Community Rewards selection on your digital account.



<https://www.kroger.com/i/community/community-rewards>



1. Sign in to your digital account.
2. Search for your organization.
3. Enter the name or NPO number of the organization you wish to support.
4. Select the appropriate organization from the list and click "Save".

Your selected organization will also display in the Kroger Community Rewards section of your account. If you need to review or revisit your organization, you can always do so under your Account details.

### 3. Velda Rose UMC earns.

Any transactions moving forward using the Shopper's Card number associated with your digital account will be applied to the program, at no added cost to you. Kroger donates annually to participating organizations based on your percentage of spending as it relates to the total spending associated with all participating Kroger Community Rewards organizations.

## New Online Giving Platform Starting September 9



For over 9 years, VRUMC has used Servant Keeper as our church management database. Beginning September 9, we will also

use Servant Keeper for our online giving. With Servant Keeper's online giving platform, you can...

- Give online, on your phone, or by text.
- Give one time gifts and/or recurring gifts.
- View and print contribution statements at any time!

Additional information coming soon to your mailboxes, inboxes, and the September *Vision*.





# WORSHIP & STUDY



## A Peek Into the Future

### SEPT.—SEASON OF CREATION

September brings the Season of Creation. The Season of Creation began as an ecumenical movement to encourage care for the earth, all its people and its creatures. The theme for 2024 is: “To Hope and Act with Creation.” Romans 8:22 says: “We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time.” This passage pictures the earth as a mother, groaning as in childbirth. The times we live in show that we are not relating to the Earth as a gift from our Creator, but rather as a resource to be used.



How can Mother Earth look after us if we do not look after her? Creation is groaning because of our selfishness and the unsustainable actions that harm her. Along with Mother Earth, humans and all creatures cry out because of the consequences of our destructive actions causing climate crisis, loss of biodiversity, and human suffering, as well as Creation’s suffering. And yet, there is hope and the expectation for a better future. (Rom 8:23-25) Hope is an instrument enabling us to overcome the natural law of decay. Hope is given to us by God as a protection and guard against futility. Only through hope we may realize the gift of freedom in fullness. Freedom to act not only to achieve enjoyment and prosperity but in which we are free and responsible. Freedom and responsibility enable us to make the world a better place.

*And yet there is hope and the expectation for a better future.*

### OCT.-NOV.—THE BOOK OF REVELATION

As we move deeper into fall, our movement toward God’s gift of hope continues. We will turn our attention to a book of the Bible that many find confusing, disturbing, and even a source of horror. Revelation, sometimes called the Revelation of John or the Apocalypse of John is one of the most misunderstood, misinterpreted and maligned books of the Bible. Much of what we think we know about this book comes from Hollywood misinterpretations and popular fictional novels. Yet, scholars tell us it is a book of hope.

So what does the last book in the Bible really say, especially when we look at it through the lenses of Jesus’ teachings and commandments on love, and the context in which it was written and intended to be read? What did the early believers understand the book to mean? How have our

forerunners in the faith understood this book? And perhaps, most importantly, how does it apply to us and our walk now, almost 2000 years after it was written, as people who follow the Lamb of God? We have much to learn.

Did you know, for example, that the word “apocalypse” did not originally mean destruction or the end of the world? Instead, “apocalypse” originally meant “to reveal or disclose” or “an otherworldly journey”—like John’s journey into heaven to see the Divine and that which defies earthly description.



### WEDNESDAY AFTERNOON (4 PM) STUDY WITH PASTOR ANN—RESUMES 9/4

**September: Creation Justice Legislation at General Conference 2024** We will learn about how General Conference responded to issues of Creation Justice, what scripture teaches, and how we can be part of bringing justice to creation. This class will run from 9/4-10/2 and materials will be provided.

**October/November: Revelation** In addition to Revelation, we will be using two books for this study: *Revelation for Everyone* by NT Wright (20th Anniversary ed.) and *Upside Down Apocalypse* by Jeremy Duncan. You can purchase either or both books, it is entirely up to you. This class will run from 10/9-11/20. Please register for classes with the office and indicate if you would like the church to order your book(s) for you.



# Food Waste: The Facts by The Green Team

When we scrape off our dishes after a large meal, too full to finish the remaining scraps on our plate, we rarely pause to think about the significance of our action. It seems routine to us: if we have leftover food scraps that are unfit for eating, shouldn't they be thrown in the garbage? Our routine practices,



unfortunately, make it difficult for us to conceptualize the magnitude of global food waste.

## THE PROBLEM IS WORSE THAN WE THINK!!!

According to a recent report by UNEP and the World Resources Institute (WRI) about one third of all food produced worldwide, worth around US\$1 trillion, get lost or wasted in food production and consumption systems. When this figure is converted to calories, this means that about 1 in 4 calories intended for consumption is never actually eaten. In a world full of hunger, volatile food prices, and social unrest, these statistics are more than just shocking: they are environmentally, morally and economically outrageous.

### Let's start with some basic statistics about food waste in North America...

1. Every year, consumers in industrialized countries waste almost as much food as the entire net food production of sub-Saharan Africa (222 vs. 230 million tons).
2. The amount of food lost and wasted every year is equal to more than half of the world's annual cereals crops (2.3 billion tons in 2010).
3. In the USA, organic waste is the second highest component of landfills, which are the

largest source of methane emissions.

4. In the USA, 30-40% of the food supply is wasted, equaling more than 20 pounds of food per person per month.
5. From the grower to the store. If it doesn't look perfect on the shelf, they won't display it.
6. If produce is a little wilted, bruised or over ripe they toss it. It's a consumer driven market.
7. Some states have restrictions and regulations that will not allow the grocer to give away older produce even though it is still edible.

Needless to say, the numbers are not promising. But... we as consumers can do a lot to help change the situation.

**THINK...** Be a smart shoppers and think about what you are buying and when it will be eaten. Wasting food is often a subconscious act. Become aware of how much food you throw away. Plan meals and use shopping lists. Bring your leftovers home from restaurants in reusable containers.

**EAT...** Become a more mindful eater. Eyes bigger than your stomach? Request small portions and become a leftover guru.

**SAVE...** Save your food, save your money and save the environment. Donate to food banks (*learn more about Velda Rose UMC's current food pantry needs on page 9*), and become a conscious consumer.



# VRUMC Food Pantry: A Beacon of Hope

Our food pantry serves as a beacon of hope for those in need, providing nourishment and sustenance to families facing difficult times. Most of our clients are experiencing homelessness, some in temporary housing and some “living rough.” We also see families who are having trouble affording enough food. Add to this the increased prices we have all experienced at the grocery store and it is a perfect storm that is emptying our shelves. Your contribution, no matter how small, can make a significant impact.

**To Donate:** Food donations are received at Sunday morning services and at the Food Pantry, Mondays and Thursdays from 9:30 to 11:30 am. Please be sure that the food has not expired—we do not want to provide food that may not be safe to eat. Cash donations may be placed with the Sunday offerings, brought or mailed to the church office, or made at [veldarose.org](http://veldarose.org). You may also use the QR code.

**Can you help?** Do you have a passion for feeding the hungry as Jesus calls us to do in Matthew 26? Can you encourage others to help with this important ministry? In addition to donations, we need someone to take the lead on securing additional funding or donations so we can continue to feed all who ask for food. If you

## DONATION DRIVE



can help, contact the church office.

### Our Food Pantry's current needs are:

- ◆ Can openers
- ◆ Spaghetti noodles & sauce
- ◆ Spam or Vienna sausages
- ◆ Canned chicken or tuna
- ◆ Mac-n-cheese
- ◆ Canned meals
- ◆ Jelly or jam and peanut butter
- ◆ Pancake mix and syrup
- ◆ Fruit or applesauce
- ◆ Pudding cups and granola bars
- ◆ Canned vegetables, diced tomatoes
- ◆ Canned fruit cocktail, pears, or peaches
- ◆ Canned pinto, black, or pork & beans
- ◆ Canned soup (tomato, chicken noodle, or beef vegetable)



## Prayer

*Prayer*

**NEED PRAYER?** Submit a prayer request using the Contact Us form on our website, or contact the church office.

**Our LOVE prayer focus:  
North Scottsdale United Methodist**



- Dayspring UMC, Tempe
- Desert Mission UMC, Scottsdale
- First UMC, Mesa
- Song of Life UMC, Queen Creek

## From the Archives: Layoffs Possible



IN CELEBRATION  
OF VELDA ROSE  
UMC'S 60TH  
ANNIVERSARY,  
we are  
sharing  
history from  
the archives  
in *The Vision*  
newsletters.

Author's note:  
We were going

to continue July's Fitch Library article in this (August) edition, but that will have to wait until September. This blurb found in the July 2013 Vision newsletter was too good not to share!

(Friendly reminder that the Rummage building is *currently* open to receive donations Monday—Friday from 7:00 to 10:00 AM. Aluminum cans can be dropped off any time at the designated drop-off area ((see page 5 of this Vision for more information)). Let's do our part to make sure the men's summer is ruined!)

### Layoffs Possible

Unemployed volunteers need work. Due to a shortage of donated metals by the congregation, we may have to lay off men who usually crush cans and sort metals for recycling. Without something to do, these men may resort to a life of leisure and comfort.

Do not let this happen. Do your part by bringing in aluminum cans to the blue container any time of day, and bring other metals to the rummage building 9:00 am - Noon, Monday through Friday. Only YOU can keep these guys from having a good time. Thank you for your support.

Originally published July 2013

## Coming Up...

### AUGUST

19 - Board meeting

### SEPTEMBER

2 - Office / Food Pantry / Rummage Closed

7 - City of Mesa's Love Your City/9/11 National Day of Service

9 - Servant Keeper Online Giving Begins

### SEPTEMBER CONTINUED

16 - Board Meeting

18 - UMM Spaghetti Dinner

### OCTOBER

6 - VRUMC's Annual Conference

15 - Previous online giving platform cutoff date

21 - Board Meeting

24-26 - Rummage Sale

LOOKING  
AHEAD



Shannon Boysen	August 01
Virg Schatz	August 01
Kathy Coffey	August 02
Enid Gustin	August 03
Virginia Williams	August 04
Lynn Twitchell	August 05
Theressa De Weerd	August 06
Lois Benson	August 07
Gary Musselman	August 14
Rusty Barnes	August 15
Tim Most	August 18
Janice Stallard	August 20
Bill Monson	August 22
Fran Loots	August 24
Nancy Appel	August 28
James Bludorn	August 28



Lee & Pat Nixon	August 2
Ron & Lynda Boysen	August 16
Al & Nancy Schubring	August 25





# VELDA ROSE

*United Methodist Church*



5540 East Main Street  
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(480) 832-2111

Office Hours: Monday – Thursday 9:00 AM to 12:00 PM

Stay connected at [veldarose.org](http://veldarose.org)  
or on Facebook at [facebook.com/veldaroseumc](https://facebook.com/veldaroseumc)

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### Staff Leadership

- Rev. Carlo A. Rapanut, Bishop
- Rev. Melissa Rynders, East District Superintendent
- Rev. Ann Lyter, Senior Pastor
- Rev. Chan Kim, Associate Pastor
- Ministers, Every Member of the Congregation

## United Methodist Men's Ice Cream Social

BUILD YOUR OWN SUNDAE!



**AUGUST 14**  
**6 PM**



**LIBRARY**



**TICKETS** ↓

Tickets available Sunday  
mornings in the Sanctuary

# WORSHIP

SCHEDULE

**Sunday Morning Service at  
9:30 AM in the Sanctuary  
or livestreamed on:**

**f Facebook** at  
[facebook.com/veldaroseumc](https://facebook.com/veldaroseumc)  
and

**▶ YouTube** at  
[@veldaroseunitedmethodistchurch/streams](https://youtube.com/@veldaroseunitedmethodistchurch/streams)