

The Vision

Volume 17, Issue 9

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

September 2024

The Season of Creation 2024 “First Fruits and Fig Trees: To Hope and Act with Creation” By Rev. Ann Lyter

The beautiful, biblical law of first fruits is that they belong to God. First fruits are to be gathered in joy and gratitude. They are given freely and joyfully, as an expression of God’s plenty. And that they are shared by the community. These are the principles that underlying the Season of Creation worship series we will be enjoying this September.

As prepared by the United Methodist Church Creation Justice Movement Worship Team, this worship series will focus on the image of a fig tree. Using the fig tree, we explore biblical stories and teaching, both hopeful and challenging, to better understand the abundance of God and God’s desire that we share in it together. As we reach for hope and take action on the climate crisis, we choose to learn from and through the fig tree. There is fruitfulness for all.

The fig tree travels through the Bible’s first stories, through the Psalms and the Prophets and into the Gospels. When we get to the Gospels, the highest attention is paid to the life of Jesus, with the stories there shaped to help the people of the time understand the trouble that was unfolding in Judea, the hard times to come for the Judeans, the destruction of Jerusalem, and the new life promised in Jesus Christ.

This series calls on us to remember that a flourishing community requires flourishing earth. This flourishing is evident when the celebration of abundant fruit and harvest includes the whole community. I remember as a child when people would gather for giant “ramp” dinners. Ramps are a kind of wild leek that grew in western Pennsylvania and when the ramps were in



season, people would gather in the volunteer firehall for big dinners to celebrate this abundance of free food from God’s creation. (As an aside, my mother never let us attend because she contended that people who ate ramps always smelled for days afterwards as the oniony essence leaked from their pores!) Many areas of the country have similar traditions like the Garlic Festival in Gilroy, the Maine Lobster Festival, the Boysenberry Festival in Buena Vista, CA, and so many more.

But climate change, industrial waste, and pollution threatens the abundance of God’s creation. Drought reduces crop production. Wildfires threaten forests. Environmental pollutants can cause health problems like respiratory diseases, heart disease, and some types of cancer. People with low incomes are more likely to live in polluted areas and have unsafe drinking water, like Flint, which is still suffering from the impact of unsafe water.

We are called by scripture to be stewards of God’s creation, not just as individuals but as a society too. God created this world and when we disrespect creation, we are disrespecting God. So join me in learning what God expected from us in the area of creation care, and how we can be good stewards.

September Study Series: Season of Creation



When the General Conference of The United Methodist Church met last spring, the GC made news, mostly on the issue of LGBTQIA inclusion, as well as the new spirit of cooperation and being guided by God’s Spirit that was felt by many of the delegates. What may not have hit your newsfeed was the Creation Justice legislation that passed.

We will take 5 weeks and look different pieces of legislation that passed. We will have the opportunity to share our own stories, along with our own concerns and even fears. And we will look at ways we can be part of the solution, rather than add to the problem.

The class will meet on Wednesdays, beginning September 4. Materials will be provided and it is helpful if you sign up ahead of time so we can be sure to have enough copies. We will meet in the newly renovated library at 4 pm (except the night of the spaghetti dinner—location TBD).

Creation Justice Legislation
at
General Conference 2024

Study Guide

Written & Edited by
Rev. Richenda Fairhurst



Are you artistic? Organized? Helpful? —Do you have a heart of worship for God? We need YOU to join the worship team and help bring worship to life. Worship includes words of liturgy, songs and music, prayers, visual arts, video, and physical actions. A worship team will meet the second Monday of each month at 10 am in Pastor Ann’s office. Beginning 9/9. Join us!



September Sunday Services—9:30 AM

SEPTEMBER 1

Pastor Ann
“Abundance”
John 1:44-50;
Haggai 2:18-19

SEPTEMBER 8

Pastor Ann
“Repentance”
Luke 21:29-33;
Jeremiah 24:1-10

SEPTEMBER 15

Pastor Ann
“Restoration”
Mark 11:12-14
and Micah 4:3-4

SEPTEMBER 22

Pastor Ann
“Trust”
Matthew 21:18-22;
24:32-35
and Joel 2:21-24

SEPTEMBER 29

Pastor Ann
“Flourishing”
Luke 13:6-9;
Zechariah 3:7-10

Including Blessing
of the Pets

Wednesday Online Meditations—10 AM

SEPTEMBER 4

Pastor Ann
“Abundance”

SEPTEMBER 11

Pastor Ann
“Repentance”

SEPTEMBER 18

Pastor Ann
“Restoration”

SEPTEMBER 25

Pastor Ann
“Trust”

OCTOBER 2

Pastor Ann
“Flourishing”

These meditations will be based on the Devotional Study Guide that accompanies our worship series. Copies of the Guide can be obtained through the church office.

Online Giving Platform Change Begins September 9



We are excited to announce that Velda Rose UMC is upgrading our giving

platform to better serve our congregation and community. As part of this upgrade, **beginning September 9**, we are transitioning from our current giving platform to the new Servant Keeper Online Giving Platform.

With our previous online giving provider, Velda Rose UMC needlessly lost thousands of dollars a year in intended donations. By making the switch to Servant Keeper Online Giving, those gifts will stay with our church, and be used for ministry. It will also make it much easier for people to join us in giving as an act of worship.

Signing up for Servant Keeper Online Giving is easy and user-friendly. Whether you'd like to make a one-time gift or set up a recurring gift,

Servant Keeper Online Giving allows you to give to any fund/s that you choose!

- ◆ Simply go to the "Connect" tab at veldarose.org and select "Give".
- ◆ Click on the "Give" button to access our new Servant Keeper Online Giving form.
- ◆ Follow the instructions on the screen to create your account or log in if you already have a Servant Keeper account.

For givers using our previous online giving platform, the final giving cutoff will be October 15. After that date, all online giving on the previous giving platform will be cancelled.

If you are transitioning from our old platform to the Servant Keeper Online Giving platform, please contact Jessica at officeadmin@veldarose.org or 480-832-2111 once you've signed up so she can cancel your giving on the previous platform. Questions? Feel free to reach out to Jessica at the church office.

VRUMC's Annual Church Conference is October 6



Velda Rose UMC will hold its annual Church Conference to address all matters required by the Book of Discipline on October 6 following worship and a potluck brunch. Brunch will be held in the renovated Library immediately following worship with the Conference set to start at 11:30 am. All are welcome and all members have vote.

Coming This Fall: Revelation— Wednesday 4 PM Study

The book of Revelation is, perhaps, the most mystifying and disturbing book in the Bible—or so many people think. Hollywood has certainly done a good job in convincing us an apocalypse of total destruction is imminent. Add to this the "Left Behind" series and it certainly seems like the end of the world is just around the corner. Except, this is all a relatively recent interpretation,

from the 1800s. And it's not what the Bible says. Join us this fall as we look at the book intended as a message of good news to churches that being persecuted by the Roman empire. We will be working with two books, *Upside Down Apocalypse* and *Revelation for Everyone*. You can order one or both of the books on your own, or through the church office.

United Women in Faith

**RESPONSE MAGAZINE pages 28-29 JULY/
AUG 2024 EDITION**



This is for all you Star Trek Fans. In the section of the response magazine named “Our Readers Write”. The following article was written by Christine E. Woods. Christine writes about the last Star Trek movie #5. It contains the famous words of Captain Kirk. “Why does God need a

Starship?” The new character in the last Star Trek Movie is Spock’s brother. The story is about mind melding. Christine’s essay talks about difficult memories. How do we overcome painful memories and go on with life? Do we ask for the pain to be taken away, or do we need the pain? Her conclusion is that we can’t live without pain and suffering, but we can take comfort knowing that God is with us in suffering. Can sorrow be turned into joy? If you are like me, pain is now a common event in our lives. Read the response magazine for a unique discussion about painful memories. And of course, enjoy the Star Trek memories.

“OUT TO LUNCH BUNCH” OPEN TO ALL WOMEN.

When: Friday, September 13, 2024
Time: 11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m.
Where: Red Lobster
6149 E. Southern Ave.
Mesa, AZ 85206

RESERVATIONS REQUIRED:

Contact Hostess: Karen Butler
Sponsored by Billie Larime, Membership Chair
for United Women in Faith

**EAST DISTRICT
CELEBRATION ON
OCTOBER 5TH, 2024**



United
Women
in Faith

We are asking the women attending the Annual Celebration on Saturday, October 5th at N. Scottsdale UMC for donations of spices. These spices will be donated to the food pantry at 1st Mesa UMC. The Donation Box will be at N. Scottsdale UMC.

For registration to attend and carpool information contact Billie Larime at 480-655-7069.

CLOSING PRAYER FROM MISSION U VIRTUAL CLASS ON JULY 20, 2024

God of Creation, we are called to be a community for all people. Thank you, God, for being a light to the world, not a king, but my closest kin. You are like a Mother Eagle and all seeing to those that will attend to your scriptures. Help us to always remember your ways when we attempt to build a faith community for everyone. Always be with us, waiting anxiously for us to come to our senses, as you are a loving and patient Father. In this time of division and strife, give us wisdom and strength to live a life promoting unity and harmony. AMEN

**Thank You, UWF and
Velda Rose Foundation**



**A Special “Thank You” to
Velda Rose UWF and the
Velda Rose Foundation for
supporting our Food Pantry
with an extra donation to
see us through the end of the year.**

United Methodist Men



PRODUCE GIVEAWAY: Our produce redistribution project has been suspended for the summer season. We expect to resume our monthly giveaways in November. Exact dates will be publicized in the Sunday bulletins, the Food Pantry, and church bulletin board.

SPAGHETTI DINNER, 18 SEP: 5 PM, in the Library. Menu will include pasta, meat and meatless marinara sauce, tossed salad with choice of dressing, garlic toast, assorted pies for dessert, and iced tea and lemonade. Cost is \$5 and tickets will be sold in the coffee service area of the sanctuary.



MEMORIAL PATIO: The renovation project was completed on 27 June and 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.

UWF RUMMAGE SALE, 24-26 Oct: The men's group conducts the food and beverage



concession in conjunction with the semi-annual rummage sale. This is a unique opportunity to share your time and talent

in support of a fun community project. If you're interested in joining us, contact Tim Most at the Mission Building for more details.

MONTHLY MEETING: The next UMMM business meeting will be 9 Sep, 1130-1300, in the Library.

ALUMINUM CAN RECYCLING: Volunteers worked two Saturdays in August preparing donated cans for transport to the recycling collection point. Our goal is to gain sufficient funds from can redemption to finance another year's worth of produce giveaways.



The aluminum can recycling collection center is on the north side of campus, near the Rummage building.

VRUMC Food Pantry



As we gather together in fellowship on and off the church campus this summer, let us remember the

power of compassion and generosity. Our food pantry serves as a beacon of hope for those in need, providing nourishment and sustenance to families facing difficult times. Your contribution, no matter how small, can make a significant impact. Whether it's a can of soup or a box of granola bars, your gift helps us extend love and care to our neighbors.



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. Cash donations may be placed with the Sunday offerings, brought or

mailed to the church office, or made at veldarose.org. You may also use the QR code.

Our Food Pantry's current needs are:

- ◆ Can openers
- ◆ Spaghetti noodles and sauce
- ◆ Spam & Vienna sausages
- ◆ Canned chicken & 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)



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 can help, contact the church office.

Let us continue to embody the spirit of selflessness and kindness. Your support ensures that no one goes hungry, and every meal shared becomes a testament to our shared humanity. Thank you for being a part of this vital ministry.

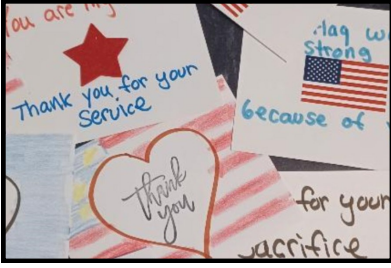
The Rummage Sale is Coming!!!



This fall's United Women in Faith Rummage sale is on October 24, 25 and 26. If you plan to donate items or are hoping to schedule a pick up, now's the time to do it! The Rummage building receives donations Monday through Friday from 7 AM to 10 AM (excepting holidays).

Look for additional information (including departments still seeking October sale volunteers) in next month's *Vision*.

Thanking Our National Guard: 9/11 Arizona Interfaith Movement



As we remember the tragedy of 9/11, the Arizona Interfaith Movement, in partnership with the Arizona Coalition for

Military Families, is inviting the community to show appreciation to our Military for their service to our country with "Thank You" cards.

Beginning Sunday, 9/1, we will have a card "signing station" in the Sanctuary. There will also be a station at the UMM Spaghetti Dinner on Wednesday, 9/18.

The cards should contain uplifting messages that reflect love, appreciation and gratitude for our military. Personalize each card with stickers,

hearts, flags, drawings, coloring etc. (Please use 4" x 6" plain or colored index cards, no envelopes please.)

A few examples include:

- * "You are our Country's Hero."
- * "We are grateful for your sacrifice in behalf of our country and praying for your well being."
- * "We appreciate your service on this day and every day."
- * "Thank you for your commitment to our country's safety. Your sacrifice is greatly appreciated."
- * "Thank you for blessing our nation. Your bravery and strength do not go unnoticed."

Drop off your completed index cards in the drop box on Sunday mornings, or at the church office by 9/23.

United Women in Faith Stocking Project 2024

Although it is only September, we are collecting items for our Christmas Stocking Project all year long.

Christmas will be here sooner than you think. We are gathering more items to fill 500 hand painted stockings for children at 4 local schools. As you travel, please save those unused lotions, shampoos, conditioners and soaps. When you go to the dentist, please ask for extra toothpaste and toothbrushes. McDonald's happy meal toys are great for stocking stuffers. We appreciate your support to make less fortunate little children have a merrier Christmas.

Our lists includes items we still need. (We have enough crayons right now).

- ◆ Toothpaste and toothbrushes
- ◆ Small toys for stockings
- ◆ Cereal bars (We try to supply 5 bars per stocking)
- ◆ Travel size lotions, shampoos, conditioners and soaps

- ◆ Small stuffed animals (beanie baby size)
 - ◆ Coloring Books
 - ◆ Individually wrapped candies (no chocolate)
 - ◆ Cash donation to cover the cost of items
- still needed to fill all the 500 stockings



It may sound like a lot, but we also have some support from the Woman of Faith budget, but all you can do does help us.

If you have questions, please contact Arlene Oisten at 517-256-3747. Items can be left at the United Women in Faith rummage building during the week, marked for the Christmas Stocking Project.

The Green Team: Recycle, Recycle, Recycle!

It can be mind boggling these days. So much information, so many websites to peruse, so many choices... Where does a person begin? Maybe we can help a little bit by supplying you with a few places to go to find resources and places to take recyclables that won't go into or fit into your curbside recycle can.

First let's start with earth911.com. This site is amazing. Not only does it have a wealth of information about recycling but there is a place where you can type in your zip code and what you need to recycle and they will show you where you can take it. Most places will have web sites so you can gather information from them as to exact location and most will have a phone number so you can call with any questions.

Then there is Earthday.org. This is full of lots of information about recycling and a wealth of information on the environment. You can spend hours and hours on this site. Everything is so fascinating. By the time I read even a few articles on recycling, the oceans and the forests I had really learned a lot. And I totally agree with

them... "Let's make every day Earth Day".

To further our education lets try TerraCycle.com. When you visit this site you will learn all about programs sponsored by retails and manufacturers where you can box your used up articles like pop cans, bathroom toiletries, kitchen small appliances etc., etc. The list goes on and on. (Thank you Jessica for introducing us to this site.)

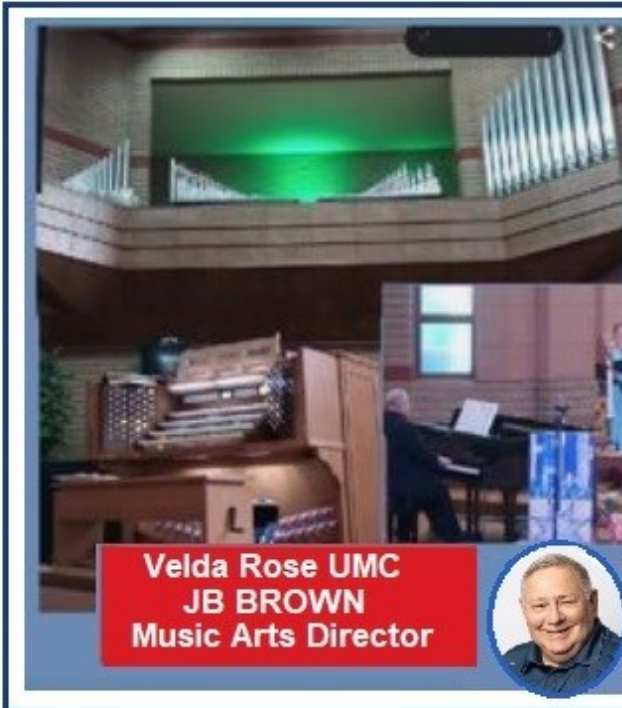
Let's not forget our tried and true friend plasticfilmrecycling.org. On this site they will tell you what can go into the recycle bins that you see in all of the local grocery stores. Make sure the plastic you put in is clean and dry.

Happy recycling everyone!!!



Stephanie's brain is exploding!
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Notes from the Music Department by JB Brown



**Velda Rose UMC
JB BROWN
Music Arts Director**



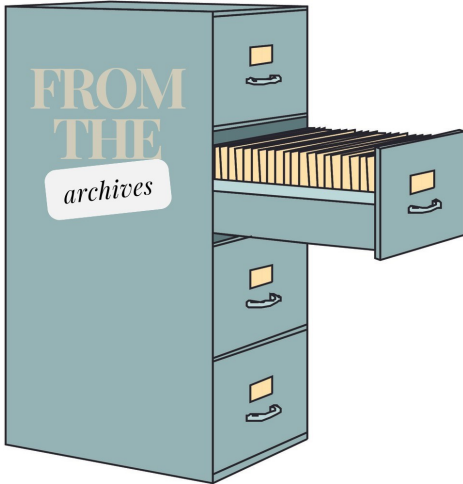
NOTES from the Music Department

Well, here we are again, coming up on a new choir year, and the exciting fall & winter liturgical seasons that include Thanksgiving and Christmas ! The choir will grow by at least 3 new members - We're excited to have a new member; "A.B."

who is a percussionist (drummer) and will also sing with the choir when not playing drums. Many thanks to our guest performers this summer; vocalists David Siedschlag and Virgil Schatz. We were also delighted to have Les

Taylor perform on his harmonicas. Rehearsals begin Wednesday, October 16th, 6:30pm and continue at that time each week. Anyone can join the choir but we especially need soprano and bass singers.

From the Archives: Fitch Library



In celebration of Velda Rose UMC's 60th anniversary, we are sharing history from the archives in *The Vision* newsletters. Continuing from the July *Vision*:

After the new Sanctuary and other construction were completed in 1988, the Fitch Mall was no longer needed as an extended Narthex functioning as a "holding area" for folks waiting for the next service to begin on Sunday mornings.

The church library had been housed in one of two homes in the area south of Martin Hall. They were raised to make room for the new Sanctuary. The "lead" librarian, Esther Ayers, saw the empty Fitch Mall as an opportunity. They moved into the Fitch Mall, now known as Fitch Library. Under the leadership of Esther,

they created a library of which to be very proud. Her all-volunteer staff consisted of 25 people.

In 1990, the church library applied to the Church and Synagogue Library Association for the Outstanding Congregational Library Award. The Director of Mesa Public Libraries, Herschel Anderson, wrote the following in support of the nomination:

January 26, 1990, My letter is written in support of the nomination of the library at VRUMC for your 1990 ...Award. This congregational library is the envy of most Mesa congregations. It is as well organized as is our public library, has a community service-oriented staff, and provides well maintained collections of books to its congregation, and more importantly, to its surrounding community...Their attitudes toward real library service enable me to claim for them and to point them out as the best congregational library in Arizona. I know of no better one and refer persons of all faiths to them when those persons want to know how to do it right. Sincerely, Herschel Anderson.

On June 5, 1990, a letter arrived to Esther from Eleanor S. Courtney (continued on page 10),

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**



- St. Matthew UMC, Mesa
- Tongan UMC, Mesa
- Velda Rose UMC
- UMC of Casa Grande
- Wesley UMC, Phoenix

From the Archives: Fitch Library, continued



Awards Chairperson, of
Beaver, Pennsylvania:

*Dear Esther, Congratulations
to you and your church library!
I am happy to inform you that
your church library has been*

*chosen to be the recipient of the Outstanding
Congregational Library Award of the Church and
Synagogue Library Association... You and your
church should be very proud that your library has
been chosen. Competition for this award has
become very intense. In His Service, Eleanor S.
Courtney, Awards Chair*

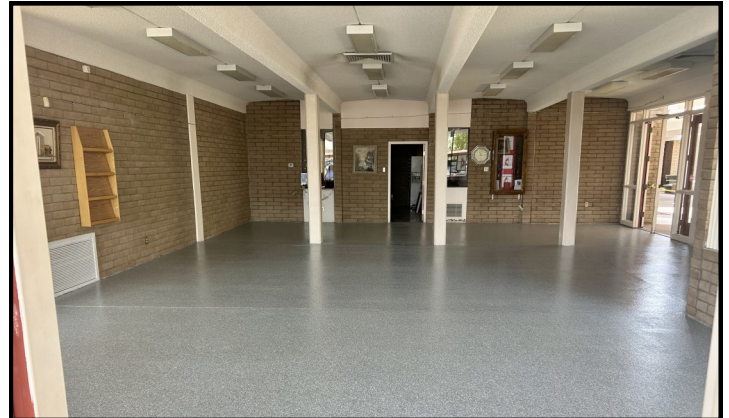
The 23rd Annual Association Conference was
July 1-3 in Baltimore MD. Esther attended and
delivered a two-minute acceptance speech. What
an honor!!

On June 15, 1990, a letter addressed to Esther
and all the Volunteers of the Velda Rose library
from the Director of the City of Mesa Public
Libraries, Herschel Anderson:

*Congratulations... You all have put a tremendous
amount of work into your library and it shows. As
just another librarian, I am proud of what you
have created and can only encourage you to keep*

*up the good work. Again, my sincerest
congratulation on winning this prestigious award.
Sincerely yours, Herschel V. Anderson*

The Fitch Library has held many uses for VRUMC
over the years. With both Moore and Martin halls
now being leased out, we recently began
transforming the Library into VRUMC's main



event space. Just a couple of weeks ago, we
installed new flooring. We look forward to
completing the work in time for the UMM
Spaghetti Dinner.

- Special thanks to Donn Larson, whose 2014 50th Jubilee
Vision articles made this Fitch Library reflection possible.

Coming Up...

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 Integration Begins

16 - Board Meeting

18 - UMM Spaghetti Dinner

29 - Blessing of the Pets 🐢

**LOOKING
AHEAD**

OCTOBER

6 - VRUMC's Annual
Conference & Potluck 🍎

15 - Servant Keeper Online
Giving Switchover Cutoff

21 - Board Meeting

24-26 - Rummage Sale

28 - All Saints Day Name
Submission Deadline



Birthdays



Micky Clark	September 01
Bob Koch	September 03
Ron Boysen	September 04
Betty Boren	September 06
Jim Kenyon	September 06
Randy Slawson	September 12
Beatrice Weaver	September 15
Jerry Pierce	September 16
Anna Bentley	September 19
Bill Miller	September 23
Virginia Klager	September 24
Bernice Lagro	September 25
Ellis Vancil	September 25
Dan White	September 25
Bob Mayhall	September 29



Anniversaries



Jerry & Helen Pierce	September 01
Gary & Rusty Barnes	September 02
Marvin & Ann Gamertsfelder	September 04
Duane & Micky Clark	September 07
Tom & Doris McMahon	September 07
Carol & Milton Zamora	September 27
Steve & Marty Oldham	September 29



VELDA ROSE

United Methodist Church

5540 East Main Street
Mesa, Arizona 85205-8720
(480) 832-2111



Office Hours: Monday — Thursday 9:00 AM to 12:00 PM
veldarose.org

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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

WORSHIP SCHEDULE

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

 Facebook at
facebook.com/veldaroseumc
and

 YouTube at [youtube.com/
@veldaroseunitedmethodistchur
ch/streams](https://youtube.com/@veldaroseunitedmethodistchurch/streams)



**UMM
Spaghetti Dinner
9/1 | 5 PM | Library**

Cost: \$5 Tickets will be
sold in the coffee
service area of
the sanctuary.



9/29 at 9:30 AM

We will conclude the
Season of Creation with a
Blessing of the Pets.

Well-behaved pets can join us in
worship, or you can bring a
picture of your pet, and all will be
blessed.