

Jan/Feb 2014

Valmont VINTAGE

CELEBRATING *150 years* OF GOD'S FAITHFULNESS!

Valmont Community Presbyterian Church



Pastor Brad

A Pastoral Message from Brad Gustafson:

It has been a genuine privilege to be invited to preach and worship in the midst of Valmont Community Presbyterian Church throughout this Advent and Christmas season. I want to personally thank you sincerely for your warm hospitality to me, and for the spirit of Christ's devotion to faithfulness so evident in your community of faith. We were so recently strangers; and we have become by the mystery of his gift, friends!

In the course of trying to bring us a word of life from the ancient Scriptures, I have told you a few stories this month

from my own past. I have done this with the purpose of helping us each find a way to locate the gospel story in our own lives - for this is where God has come to be with us - not just in Bethlehem, but in Boulder, too!

In literary circles, they talk of the back and forth relationship between 'rhetoric' and 'dialectic'; the former being a focus on the word, the proclamation, the written or spoken text, with the latter being a focus on the reader, the hearers, the ones who together experience and interpret that text. Both rhetoric and dialectic contain the truth. The Word is preached; it is also then heard and applied and wrestled with and ultimately understood. Like communion bread, no one is fed until it is broken apart and handed around, eaten and digested. Jesus did not say, "Take, comprehend, then explain." He said, "Take, eat."

When you think about it, our Christian walk is filled with the interplay between these two. We hear something said as true; then we question it, parse the way it was said, challenge it with other equally powerful assertions, and finally, perhaps, find together a new revelation of mystery and faith amidst the fraying ends of what we used to be certain was

absolutely true. Like manna from heaven, we get only a taste of banquets to come; but if we are together, it is enough for today.

Christmas is a time to stop and be still, and know that we are in the presence of mystery. And in the Greatest Story Ever Told, we are reminded every year that mystery turns up where we least expect it. So where do you least expect it? This year, for the first time in more than twelve years, my wife, Sally, and I sat in the pews on Christmas Eve, cramming ourselves in among more than 700 other candle-holding seekers and worshippers in a downtown Denver sanctuary, gathered around the age-old rhetoric of good news (Continued on page 3)

Ask a friend to join you.
You Have A Friend At Valmont!

Sunday School: 9am
Worship Service: 10:30

3262 N. 61st Street,
Boulder
(61st Street & Valmont Road)

303-442-2135
www.ValmontChurch.org

Bulletin Board

Elders:

Shirley Crowe *Don Lewis*
Tony London *Ella Travis*

Clerk of Session: *Joyce Glazer*

Deacons:

Judy Holmes *Anne Harris-Cross*
Cindy Sexton

Treasurer: *Ruth Lewis*

Church Administrator: *Ella Travis*

Choir/Worship Leader: *TBD*

Accompanist: *Denise Pelusch*

CALENDAR

January 20—Martin Luther King Jr Day.

February 12—Lincoln's Birthday

February 14—Valentine's Day

February 17—President's Day

February 22—Washington's Birthday



Weekly Activities

Every Sunday: Iglesia meets 3:00-5:00 pm

Every Tuesday: Women's Association meets
 Second Tuesday at 10 am

Art group meets 4th Tuesday at 9:30 am

Iglesia meets 7-9 pm

Choir practice at 7 pm

Every Wednesday:
 Yoga Class 9 am

Tremble Clef Choir 11am

Session, third Wednesday at 5:30 pm

Every Thursday: Iglesia meets 7-9 pm

Parkinson's yoga group 11:30-2:pm

Every Friday – Valmont Victors 8-10 pm

DEACONS' NEWS BOX

Caring Basket:

*January—Baby food for the Round
 Pantry.*

February—To Be Determined.





(continued from page 1—Pastor Brad)

and tidings of great joy delivered to all the people.

But the unexpected time came a day later, the real silence of the night, when my wife and I drove out into the cold night air of Loveland, Colorado at 5:30 pm of Christmas Day, in search of an evening meal. Our every favorite hangout was closed, our every source of normal sustenance barricaded not against the stranger but against us, our every familiar restaurant's window mat shuttered against our cold like an inn-keeper's door. Yet this was the holy night. This was the unexpected time when the rhetoric entered into our dialectic, the bread of hope was broken into the pieces of longing, that God became Emmanuel, with us.

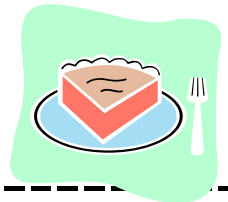


Sally and I finally found the only place open, an out of the way Mexican restaurant that welcomed us in with open arms, with every member of the wait staff wearing a T-shirt that said, "Merry Christmas." We ate and then returned home to that other holy silence around a television yule-tide log, a classic movie and the whispered shout of silence from the Mormon Tabernacle Choir.

Earlier that day, on the cold and frozen streets of downtown Denver, my wife had given her breakfast buffet banana, a five-dollar bill and a pilfered muffin from a neighboring hotel to a homeless man huddled prostrate over a city heating grate in the middle of the sidewalk. He raised his head from the concrete and reached to move the muffin closer to his coat. 'Merry Christmas,' he mouthed, as he sank back beneath the hearth of his momentary home. The mystery of our new kinship indeed! - Brad



Pig Roasts and Potlucks



Citrus Coconut Cream Pie from the Kitchen of Debbie Greever
Makes 1 - 10 Servings

- ♦ 2 -13.5 oz cans of unsweetened coconut milk
- ♦ 1 pkg. 4.6 oz. cook-n-serve vanilla pudding mix
- ♦ 1/4 tsp each grated lemon and lime zest
- ♦ 1 pkg 6 oz prepared shortbread crumb pie crust
- ♦ 3 Tbs sweetened flaked coconut
- * 1 1/2 tsp coconut extract
- * 1/2 tsp vanilla extract
- * 1 cup heavy cream
- * 3 Tbs confectioners' sugar
- * Lime slices & mint sprig optional

- * In heavy pot, whisk together coconut milk and pudding mix. Bring to boil over medium heat, stirring constantly, and cook until mixture is smooth and thickened about 5 minutes.
- * Remove pot from heat. Stir in 1 1/4 tsp coconut extract, 1/4 tsp vanilla extract and lemon/Lime zests. Pour into crust; smooth top. Cool slightly. Coat sheet of plastic wrap with Cooking spray and place, coated side down, over pie. Refrigerate until set, 2-3 hours.
- *Just before serving, on medium-high speed, beat cream, confectioners' sugar and remaining 1/4 twp coconut and 1/4 tsp vanilla extracts until fluffy. Remove plastic wrap from pie. Spread with whip chip cream. Sprinkle with coconut. If desired, garnish with lime slices and mint sprigs



A Little History

Selections by Don Lewis from ([The Presbyterian Historical Society](#) and the [Fellowship of Presbyterians](#) websites).

Presbyterianism is the name given to one of the groups of ecclesiastical bodies that represent the features of Protestantism emphasized by French lawyer John Calvin (1509-1564), whose writings crystallized much of the Reformed thinking that came before him. The most important standards of orthodox Presbyterianism are the Westminster Confession of Faith and Catechisms of 1647. The chief distinctive features set forth in the Westminster declarations of belief are Presbyterian church government, Calvinistic theology, and absence of prescribed forms of worship. Presbyterians trace their history to the 16th century and the Protestant Reformation.

Founding churches were as early as the 1630s and in 1706 the first Presbytery was formed. Presbyterians participated in the writing of state and national constitutions. Reformed views of God's sovereignty and of human sinfulness moved the new nation toward checks and balances and separation of powers.

In 1788, the Synod met in Philadelphia to form the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America (PCUSA). They adopted a constitution that included a form of government, a directory of worship, subscription to the Westminster Confession and the Larger and Shorter Catechisms. In 1789, the General Assembly held its first meeting in Philadelphia.



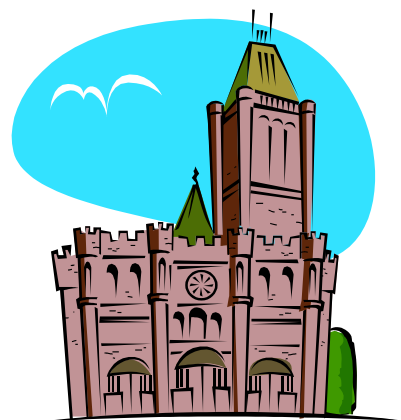
Presbyterian ministers and laity were involved in the founding of our country. For instance, Dr. Benjamin Rush (1746-1813) took a prominent role in the debate over the future of the American colonies, writing a number of articles and pamphlets. In 1780 he began to deliver lectures at the newly established University of Pennsylvania, and in 1783 joined the staff of the Pennsylvania Hospital. He was a notable figure in the establishment of a school system in the United States, and was instrumental in persuading the Presbyterians to establish Dickinson College. He was instrumental at negotiating the healing of the breach between John Adams and Thomas Jefferson.

The nineteenth century was characterized by disagreement and division over theology, governance, and reform—particularly slavery. This led to the splitting up of the Presbyterians into several separate denominations. Of course Valmont Presbyterian Church began in 1863 in the town of Valmont as the first Presbyterian Church in Colorado.

The Fellowship of Presbyterians was created in 2011 to help individuals and congregations who are committed to building flourishing congregations who make disciples of Jesus Christ. In early 2012, ECO: A Covenant Order of Evangelical Presbyterians was formed. While some who have joined The Fellowship anticipate an eventual transition into ECO, the majority of Fellowship members are committed to ministry within the PC(USA) for the long haul.

Presbyterians are, first and foremost, disciples of Jesus Christ.

The term “presbyterian” merely distinguishes a part of the Body of Christ governed by elders (presbyters). Presbyterians and our elder-focused church structure have been particularly influential in the United States since before the founding of our nation. We have been leaders in government, commerce, science, and the arts; instrumental in founding hospitals, schools, and colleges; and champions of social justice built on biblical principles. Presbyterians have trained and sent missionaries to teach and model the Good News of Jesus Christ around the world. We are part of this amazing legacy.—Don Lewis



We are all pencils in the hand of God. - Mother Teresa

When you come to the end of your rope, tie a knot and hang on. - Franklin D. Roosevelt

"Take the first step in faith. You don't have to see the whole staircase, just take the first step." - Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

"The more you are motivated by love, the more fearless and free your actions will be." - Dalai Lama

Smile at each other, smile at your wife,
smile at your husband,
smile at your children,
smile at each other -- it doesn't matter who it is -
and that will help you to grow up in greater love for each other.
Mother Teresa

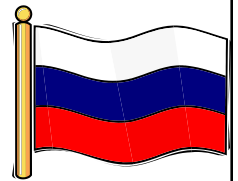


Victoria Afanasyeva

Meet Victoria Afanasyeva

What makes us who we are? What shapes our identity, way of thinking and emotions? These 2 questions are hard to answer, but nobody would disagree that, in a way, society does. Humans depend on society; we were made to live in community. Knowledge about our society doesn't come from our genes; it is something that we pass from one generation to another, something we start learning from the moment we are born. Every single individual goes through the process of understanding what our society is about and learning how to behave in a variety of situations. It is in society that we have to follow all sorts of norms and regulations, accept responsibilities and be members of different social groups.

Being raised in Russia has certainly shaped my personality, my social position and ideology. As you may guess, Russian society is slightly different from American society. I came to the US when I was 18 years old and I experienced, what people call, cultural shock. This country seemed a whole new world to me. Everything, that surrounded me, was different, especially people. People seemed to look the same, but acted differently. I had noticed that in the first couple of minutes after I stepped out the plane. People here are very friendly and smile way more often than Russians do. After living in the USA for 2 years I started analyzing American culture and trying to compare it to Russian culture. It took me a while to understand and adjust to the American way of living. I came here with a work visa and, even though I was getting paid minimal wage, I was surprised how much money I had. I can say with confidence that I would not make such money by doing the same job in Russia. The quality of life is very different. I have noticed that America has many middle class people. In Russia - there are few, but the majority of people are either rich or close to being poor. I have grown up in a family that never had a lot of money. My greatest entertainment was to go outside and play with other kids, because I did not have all kinds of nice toys and I lived in a small studio apartment with my parents. That fact made me appreciate friendship and enjoy simple things. The other observation I made is that Americans are very hardworking people, especially considering how much time off you have. I am not saying that Russians don't work a lot. As a matter of fact, some people have to work 2 or 3 jobs just to pay off living expenses.



What I am trying to say is that Russians love holidays and vacation. For instance, we get 7-10 days off for New Years and Christmas (which we celebrate on January 7th), a day off for International Women's day, 1 day for Men's day that we celebrate on February 23, Labor day is on May 1st and we get 1-2 days off also, and the list goes on. I could name at least 3 more holidays that guarantee some time off work. Besides that, vacation time is longer in Russia. I remember my dad would take 40 days of paid vacation and we went on a road trip somewhere. So, since I was a kid, I learned that if you work hard all year you deserve a good rest. I really enjoyed spending that time with my parents. Many American people I know are very busy. Kids often have babysitters because parents simply don't have enough time to watch their children. Well, it is very uncommon in Russia for kids to have a nanny. Compared with Russian women, American women are much more independent. They have a career, own a car and basically are able to provide for themselves. In my country, the things are a little different. The majority of women are stay-at-home moms, their role is to take care of the household and raise children. Some women do work, but it is often a part-time job. Most of Russian families own only one vehicle, sometimes none. Because of that, usually, only men drive. So I did not learn how to drive a car and it became an issue when I came to the USA. Everybody drives here; it was a surprise for me when I saw a 16 year-old at the front seat honking at other cars. In Russia we are not eligible to take a driving test before we turn 18. After living in America for a while, I learned that people here are more patriotic and idealistic. I was born right after Soviet Union had fallen apart. It is hard to explain how much that change affected all the people. My parents were formed by Soviet ideology, they believed in this great idea of new society, equality, utopian communism. Then, one day, they were told that everything they believed in was essentially a lie. Many people, including my parents, lost their faith. Since religion was almost **(continued on page 6)**



(Meet Victoria Afanasyeva continued from page 5) prohibited in USSR, people truly believed in their great leader. After the revolution in 1991, they did not know what to believe in anymore. It was tough times for Russia, times of depression and even now, after 21 years, the consequences are still noticeable. Growing up I hadn't been taught any ideology or religion. My parents were trying to figure out as much as I was. I learned common moral norms of society, what is bad and what is good, but in terms of religion I didn't know much. I was baptized, but for the most part, because many people were doing that in order to find something to protect them, something that they could put their trust on. But usually people gave up in their search and thus most of Russians do not believe in God.



Here I come to the second part of my essay. I want to describe what it means to me to be a Christian and how it's formed my understanding of our society. I am one of a few Russians who do believe in God, although before I came to the USA I did not consider myself part of any religion. Now my view on many things has changed. First, I want to explain how I see our society. People, anywhere throughout the planet, are pretty much the same. We all live similar lives. Work, home, work, maybe some entertainment on the weekend. We go to school to get a great degree so that we can be successful in life and earn a lot of money. Our society has overvalued money in a way that now it's hard to understand and get back to what really matters. We made money our little god which we give up our lives working for. But in the end, would it be worth it? It is in human nature that we never have enough. You have all the money already and now you want some more free time, or to find love or friends, etc. There is always something to complain about. So if having all the goods cannot keep us essentially happy then what can? I believe it's God. He is the only truth, an ultimate answer to our life and it doesn't matter if you believe or not, He is out there. Nowadays, we are so busy with our daily routine and problems that we don't even have time to think who we are and what we are doing here. Why so many people are afraid to die? Because they really believe that there is nothing else to this world other than things we can see and experience. That's why they are trying to get everything they can while they are still alive. Our society seems to become more and more materialistic and profit oriented, but poor spiritually. All the things we have on Earth - they die with us. But when I say die, I mean our bodies. I personally believe that what Jesus said was the truth and our souls can have eternal life. In order to receive eternal life you have to give your life on Earth away. Every opportunity in the world of God is opportunity - help if you are able to, share what you have and trust God. Search for Him, because He always has a better plan for you. One day I was talking to my friend and we saw the anthill. He asked me the question that made me wonder. He said: "Do you think they know we are here"? Their life is all about finding a good stick to bring home and maybe some food, doesn't it seem to be very similar to human lives? We live in our planet, that is pretty small compared to the size of the whole Universe, and never wonder that maybe there is more out there than what we believe to be the world.



As I said before, I grew up in a family with low income. We did not have many nice things as some of my friends did, but we were happy. My dad taught me to appreciate and love nature, to look up at the sky and be thankful for what I have. Being an international student now, I don't have a lot of extra money, but so far I have everything I need. Not having wealth doesn't mean being poor; yet what makes you poor is your desire of being rich, of having enormous amounts of money. I've met many great people and have learned many new things. Society is a huge part of everyone's life and only by communicating with each other can we learn what it is, and understand the most important aspects of our society.—Victoria

HIGHLANDS HIGHLIGHTS



Highlands – A Sanctuary for the Spirit, a School for the Mind, a Joy for the Heart and a Shelter in the Storm.

After the September flood, Highlands became an evacuation center for the Red Cross. They housed approximately 100 people for several days. The five staff members living on site did an amazing job providing food and shelter for the evacuees. Maria Shupe, Executive Director of Highlands, was on vacation in England when she received a call from the Red Cross asking if the retreat center could be used. Maria immediately made calls to staff and they opened the center. A group of seventh grade students, chaperones and staff of St Vincent DePaul Catholic School were attending an Outdoor Lab at a camp near Estes Park. At 8:30 AM, the staff was told that they needed to relocate the students and adults in case the camp lost power. They contacted the Boulder County Sheriff who directed them to Highlands. This group was also housed at Highlands until a plan was worked out to evacuate them so that they could be reunited with their families. It was an adventure they will always remember. There were several articles thanking the Highlands staff for their help and hospitality. (continued on page 7)

God is the Origin - Submitted by John Coppage

Part of rebuilding New Orleans caused residents often to be challenged with the task of tracing home titles back potentially hundreds of years. With a community rich with history stretching back over two centuries, houses have been passed along through generations of family, sometimes making it quite difficult to establish ownership. Here's a great letter an attorney wrote to the FHA on behalf of a client:

A New Orleans lawyer sought an FHA loan for a client. He was told the loan would be granted if he could prove satisfactory title to a parcel of property being offered as collateral. The title to the property dated back to 1803, which took the lawyer three months to track down. After sending the information to the FHA, he received the following reply: (Actual reply from FHA):

"Upon review of your letter adjoining your client's loan application, we note the request is supported by an Abstract of Title. While we compliment the able manner in which you have prepared and presented the application, we must point out you have only cleared title to the proposed collateral property back to 1803. Before final approval can be accorded, it will be necessary to clear the title back to its origin."



Annoyed, the lawyer responded as follows: (Actual response):

"Your letter regarding title in Case No. 189156 has been received. I note you wish to have title extended further than the 206 years covered by the present application. I was unaware any educated person in this country, particularly those working in the property area, would not know Louisiana was purchased by the United States from France in 1803, the year of origin identified in our application. For the edification of uninformed FHA bureaucrats, the title to the land prior to U.S. Ownership was obtained from France, which had acquired it by Right of Conquest from Spain. The land came into the possession of Spain by Right of Discovery made in the year 1492 by a sea captain named Christopher Columbus, who had been granted the privilege of seeking a new route to India by the Spanish monarch, Queen Isabella. The good Queen Isabella, being a pious woman and almost as careful about titles as the FHA, took the precaution of securing the blessing of the Pope before she sold her jewels to finance Columbus's expedition. Now the Pope, as I'm sure you may know, is the emissary of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, and God, it is commonly accepted, created this world. Therefore, I believe it is safe to presume God also made the part of the world called Louisiana. God; therefore, would be the owner of origin and His origins date back to before the beginning of time, the world as we know it, and the FHA. I hope you find God's original claim to be satisfactory. Now, may we have our loan?"

The loan was immediately approved.

(Highlands—continued from page 6) The annual Christmas party and silent auction was held on December 7th. \$11,500 was raised from the auction and approximately \$2,000 was received in contributions. It was a great day with lots of good food and fellowship.

Summer camp plans are under way. There will be 14 partnership day camps in addition to six weeks of residential camps. Registration is available on line at Highlandscamp.org. Camp brochures are in the rack near the front entrance. You may contact me with any questions.

Some exciting news regarding Highlands will be coming in the next few weeks. Watch your bulletin for the announcement. I hope you will keep the Highlands ministry in your prayers.

Blessings!!

Ruth Lewis

Moderator, of Highlands Camp Committee



Priorities - By Harley "Buddy" Keeter Jr.

As I was driving on the I-70 freeway thru Denver one day during 1995 I see a young man sitting under a overpass. I said to my passenger He must be trying to find himself. As we drove on we made small talk of the incident and proceeded with our journey. For some reason I could not get the incident out of my mind, it just kept popping back to me. Then the 4th of July morning, as I was in the shower, it all came together. Priorities!!! It became so clear to me that there are only three main priorities and the rest will fall in line. The three are so evident and plain if you get the first one handled the other two will follow. We as humans really can only handle one thing properly at a time anyhow. The three are, 1. Put God first., 2. Family second., 3. Your job third., and the rest will fall in line.

"God" we need solid ground to stand on, a guiding light, a rock that won't move out of righteousness and God will do all and more.

"Family" gives you all the comfort you look for, fellowship, Love, and reasons for being on earth, teaches you to be tolerant.

"Work" your work is the way you provide for human existence. But it is very important to choose the right occupation, that you are happy with, got talents for, enjoy, a satisfaction of accomplishment, from without being a slave to it.

As I think of priorities and finding yourself, and the trails and tribulations we put ourselves through, it seems we waste so much time searching for answers that are so plain, simple and easy. Your number one priority gives you all the answers, if you learn to have Faith, Trust, and Forgiveness. Submitted by Kris



I was cleaning Dads office, preparing for Him to come home from the hospital, I was dusting and I moved some books, when this fell out to me, I read it and cried! I have cleaned his office for years, but this day, I believe God placed this letter in my hands, Mom had never read it, we never knew of him writing. This was a gift from The Lord, letting us know how much Daddy loves His Lord and Savior and us! What a Blessing he has given us.—Kris



It's your Vintage

Anyone who would like to contribute articles, pictures, recipes or anecdotes, please submit by the 20th prior to publication month to **Mike Greever** via email at mgreever@prestigerealtygroup.com or give to **Ella in the office**
Publication Months: Jan, Mar, May, Jul, Sep, Nov.