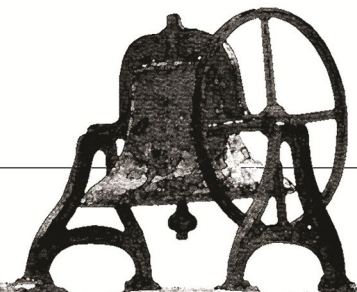


Jan—Feb 2026  
Winter issue

*Valmont*

# VINTAGE



CELEBRATING *164 years* OF GOD’S FAITHFULNESS!



## Valmont Community Presbyterian Church



**Teddie McConnell**  
Bridge Pastor

January-February Vintage Article

Here we are in the cold, dark season between Christmas and Lent. Life goes on, and winter weather presents its challenges.

I think that’s part of why the fourth century church put the celebration of Christmas into December instead of the spring. Technically, shepherds wouldn’t have been watching over their flocks by night except in the spring time when the lambs had just been born and were small and vulnerable. But Christmas also replaces

a pagan celebration of the winter solstice, the shortest day of the year when the days begin to lengthen again. For the pagans, it was a reminder of hope. I do like our version far better.

February brings in Valentine’s Day, which was originally a way for the early church to replace a pagan Roman celebration with one that honors two martyred saints named Valentine who served other Christians during the fourth century. It didn’t become associated with romantic love until about a thousand years later.

And yet, God invites us to remember that His love doesn’t go underground like a sleeping tulip bulb. It isn’t arbitrary or changeable like a holiday added to the calendar.

God’s love is always present, always there whether times are easy or hard, sunny or dark. Although these celebrations began for other reasons, they continue to keep us aware of the ideal of LOVE as a true reflection of God’s character and as an example to us of how we should treat others, sharing our blessings and our compassion. God’s love is beyond our understanding, sending a Son to die for our transgressions and rise again to bring us eternal life.

As a church, you may have felt like God was far away after Eric left. You had a variety of pulpit supply

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preachers for quite some time. Then, six months ago, I came on as your bridge pastor. We’ve had to get used to each other. I’ve done my best to be here consistently and be a conduit for God’s love as you ask God to show you your future. I won’t ever tell you what I think you should do, because that is your job to discern with the help of prayer and effort. But I will show you love, because that is the nature of my job and the nature of our Savior.

Blessings,

Blessings, Pastor  
Teddie





# Pig Roasts and Potlucks



## Wacky Chocolate Cake

From the Kitchen of Sylva Meyer—Deb's mom



Sift together:

- ◆ 3 cups Flour                      \* 2 cups sugar                      \* 6 tbs cocoa                      \* 2 tsp soda                      \* 1 tsp salt

Add to dry ingredients:

- ◆ 3/4 cups oil                      \* 2 tbs vinegar                      \* 2 tsp vanilla                      \* 2 cups of cold water

Mix well. Bake in 9 x 13 pan for 30 minutes or on a 10 1/2 x 15 1/2 cookie sheet for 15 mins. at 350 degrees.



## German Pancakes from Peggy's kitchen

- ◆ 6 eggs                      \* 1 c milk                      \* 1 c flour                      \* 1/4 tsp salt
- ◆ 4 Tbsp butter                      \* 1 1/2 tsp vanilla

In a blender, mix all ingredients together, line rectangle cake pan with parchment paper. Pour in mixture. Bake at 400 for 20-22 minutes. To serve, top with jams, jellies, or applesauce.



## Music for the Winter

This Christmas season was a wonderful success for our church music ministry. Through meaningful anthems, congregational singing, and special services, the choir helped create an atmosphere of celebration, reflection, and joy throughout Advent and Christmas. None of this would have been possible without the commitment and dedication of our current choir members, whose time, preparation, and willingness to serve made this season truly special.

A special and heartfelt thank you goes to Stella Pradeau, whose work in preparation and leadership was truly irreplaceable. Her organization, musicianship, and care for the choir played a huge role in the success of our Christmas services. We were also honored on Christmas Eve to have Walton Lott join us for service in Stella's absence, and we are deeply grateful for his time and musical support.

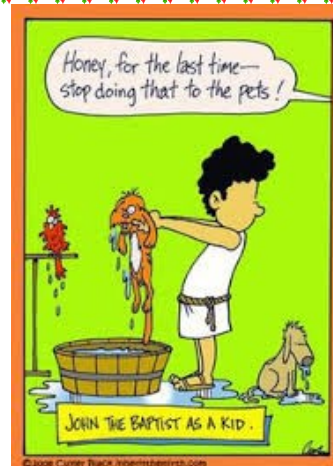
As we look ahead, the choir continues to rehearse on Wednesday evenings from 6:15–7:45 pm, and we would love to welcome new voices. We are especially in need of basses and sopranos, though singers of all experience levels are encouraged to join. Whether you are a seasoned choral singer or simply enjoy making music in a welcoming and supportive environment, there is a place for you in our choir.

Additionally, we are gauging interest in expanding our handbell choir. If you are interested or would like more information, please reach out directly at [jack.johnharless00@gmail.com](mailto:jack.johnharless00@gmail.com). We look forward to continuing to grow and strengthen our music ministry together in the coming season.

Jack



# Join the Choir and sing a joyful song onto the Lord!



## Women's Association

Our Open House Christmas Craft Day brought together members of our congregation and several guests to enjoy sharing their creations. Pastor Teddie demonstrated using Diamond Dots or tiny multicolored plastic dots to make crosses or other shapes reflecting symbols of our faith. She wears her beautiful creations as earrings and necklaces. Interested? She has a flyer with directions and examples of the finished product.

Cheryl and Ruth T shared their skills of crafting with felt. Bright colors, soft, puffy Christmas creations brought lots of wonder to their displays. But Cheryl commented that she now has oodles of felt. How about an Open House Valentine or Easter Craft Day? More fun?

Linda brought a Scandinavian picture craft made from thin strips of colorful paper, carefully rolled into shapes. The delicate picture in a shadowbox frame makes a lovely gift.

Deb G and her sister, Cindy, brought baked gingerbread houses and wreath shaped cookies to be decorated. Cindy demonstrated how to apply the special red, green, and white icing used by professional bakers. I decorated a cookie resembling a beautiful wreath. Deb had finished her toilet paper roll design resembling a snowflake. Amazing!

Anne brought her lovely knitting for display. She demonstrated French knitting in case we had a need for a children's activity. She had constructed a homemade French loom by which to hand knit an cord that holds a bendable filament to make holiday shapes. Sadly, no children.

I demonstrated quilling. I made place cards with holiday designs using tiny strips of colorful paper. And I invited a friend, Juliett, who I had met at crafting events. She demonstrated how to transform kitchen tea towels into masterpieces with your computer.

A high point of the afternoon was sharing it with runners who needed a rest stop. They recharged on our cookies and holiday bread brought by Juliett.

Submitted by Peggy



## Head in the Stars —submitted by Scott

On October 12<sup>th</sup>, the Valmont Observatory Group held a successful observing event, after four previous cloud-outs. Celestial highlights included The Double Cluster in Perseus, Dumbbell Nebula, Andromeda Galaxy, M13 Globular Cluster and other deep-sky objects. The evening concluded with a beautiful view of Saturn. Our video telescope and the 11" Travis telescope operated flawlessly during the event.

### Hercules

One of the major objectives of the Observatory is having the ability to quickly set up for a viewing event. The preparation of the dome and setting up the video telescope was completed in less than 30 minutes. Alignment of the primary telescope was achieved in about 5 minutes. The “Go-To” computer control centered celestial objects every time.

Stay informed with our activities through our website, [www.ValmontObservatory.com](http://www.ValmontObservatory.com)

Fireworks Galaxy =>



## Music Ministry



Jack performing “Oh Holly Night”

### Choir

The choir sang:

- ◆ Peace, Peace, Silent Night
- ◆ O Come, O Come, Emmanuel
- ◆ Ukulula

during the Christmas Eve Service



The bells played in the Christmas Eve service and are planning to ring at Easter

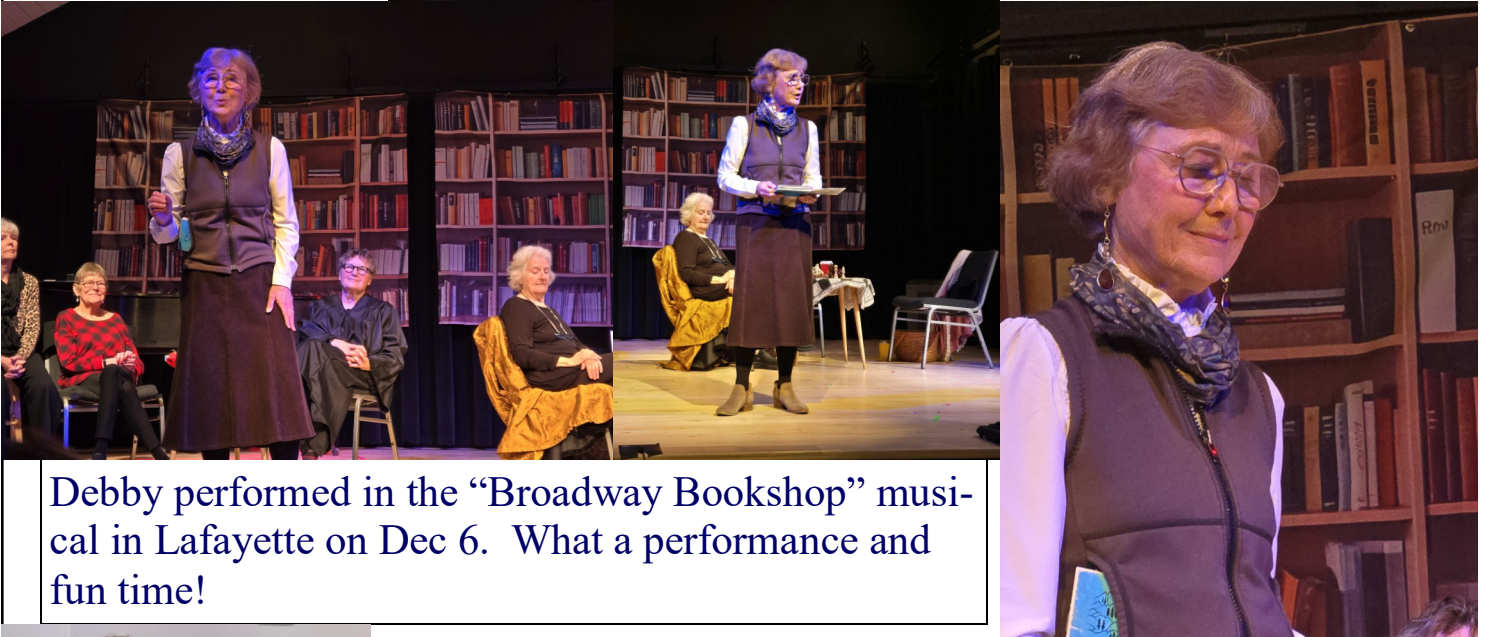


Mike and Debbie’s grandkids sang with the choir



## Music at Belfour

Stella played the drums and the piano for the Belfour Singers Choir. Big choir, big audience and great program.



Debby performed in the “Broadway Bookshop” musical in Lafayette on Dec 6. What a performance and fun time!



Wonderful music from Sophie Stubbs



## The Deacons' Corner—Submitted by Debby G.

Happy New Year!

Let us start by recognizing and thanking Debby Clem for her energy, her kindness and her commitment to serving our congregation - knowing she will continue caring about each and every member as she did so faithfully as a deacon. And then, of course it's our pleasure to welcome Kathy McMullan as our new deacon. Our first meeting of the year will be held on Monday, January 26th at 9:30. Please don't hesitate to contact one of us if there is a congregational concern that we need to know about, and as always, we are open to any ideas for congregational care.



There were several people willing to give rides to the Christmas Eve service, and we appreciate that. It turned out none were needed, but thank you so much to all who volunteered. The My Story project continues with Marilyn Howard's story in this issue of the Vintage. We will also continue collecting food for Round Pantry - your contributions are so appreciated.

Psalms 100:1-3 is wonderful passage about worshipping and praising the Lord. We are so thankful for all the committed people of our church. As we begin the New Year, we pray that we will reflect on all God has done for us in 2025 and will do in 2026, as we continue to uphold one-another; giving all praise and glory to our Lord Jesus Christ.

Psalms 100:1-3 Shout for joy to the LORD, all the earth. Worship the LORD with gladness; come before him with joyful songs. Know that the LORD is God. It is he who made us, and we are his; we are his people, the sheep of his pasture.

Your Deacons: John Olson,  
Debbie Greever  
Kathy McMullan

## Pastor Nominating Committee (PNC) - The Search Continues

January 2026

Christmas 2024 we received our first set of matches for pastors which fit our requirements. Of course we were very excited and started interviews in January 2025. So here we are a year later, January 2026! During this past year the PNC has reviewed 98 personal discernment profiles from pastors all around the country, and a few from overseas that Presbytery matched to our Mission Discernment Profile. We invited 60 to apply to our Pastor position. We interviewed all 11 pastors who accepted our invitation, one pastor three times and one pastor twice. We have one interview in the process of being scheduled and are waiting for responses from four other candidates that we have invited to apply.

As well we have posted our pastor position on job boards of eight Theological Seminaries. Session has approved funding to run an advertisement in the Presbyterian Outlook and we are staying in touch with a couple of pastors-to-be ready to accept their first call in 2026.

The PNC prays that God will send us the right candidate at the right time. We continue to keep our hearts and minds open and to listen for God's direction. Please continue to pray for the PNC and that God's choice for our next pastor will come soon.

Steven Clem  
PNC Chair

## My Story by Marilyn Howard

I was born in Youngstown, Ohio on Maundy Thursday, April 10, 1941. I joined my brother, who was 3 years older. My sister was born nearly nine years later. My first home was in a small town called Vienna. An auspicious event for my life which has been quite musically centered!

My parents met as students in Mount Union College, a Methodist-related small school in Alliance, Ohio. My dad's dad (my grandpa) taught geology there. Since my grandpa's house was on campus, I had visited MUC since I was born. When the time came for me to choose a college, of course I chose MUC, it felt like home? Since I was a music major there, I had not darkened the doors of the science building. In my senior year I thought I needed to honor my grandpa, now deceased, by taking a geology class. The "C" I received was definitely a gift from the prof, who had known my grandpa. Of course it messed up my GPA, which probably, amused my grandpa!

My dad and mom were both educators; my dad, a high-school math teacher, my mom, a high-school librarian. However my mom was a stay-at-home mom until I was in high school. My mom's parents were a Methodist minister and a high-school teacher. My future husband and I met as teachers in an elementary school in Geneva, Ohio. He continued to teach for 7 years. I quit after 7 years to be a stay-at-home mom. That didn't work out, but the long story is for another time! I have taught piano lessons since I was 16 and am blessed to still be teaching? (Don't do the math!)

When I was two years old, my family moved to Jefferson, Ohio, where I lived until I went to college. That town of 1200 folks always felt very good. Nearly all the houses were at least 100 years old, each one unique, set on lots with big trees, curb lawns of 20 feet or so, and at least 30-40 feet from neighbors. a part of me remains in that place even now. Of course we attended the Methodist church there! There was Sunday school every week and MYF for high school kids (Methodist Youth Fellowship) Sunday afternoons. My husband (whose sister was a pastor and did her divinity degree at Princeton) and I were Methodist until we moved to Colorado. My husband had decided that church wasn't going to be a part of his life; he preferred to fly fish! Since we had only one car, I chose a church close to our house, so I (and later our daughters) could easily walk to church. The Congregational Church was my home for more than twenty years. I was choir director and organist, continuing my church musician role playing for Sunday School since I was 12.

Enough history! I've lived in Broomfield since 1972. We lived in a small tract house for r11 years, then purchased this crazy octagon in 1983. I still am not sure where I am at times! I'm certain THAT doesn't surprise you!

My faith journey: I've always been a believer, growing up in a family of believers. My faith has had ups and downs, of course. I enjoy reading books by Christian scholars (Richard Foster, Philip Yancey, Bonheoffer, on and on...). Before I found VCPC, I had quit attending church because I was disappointed with the pastors, choosing scriptures to enhanced their sermons regardless of the original intent. (I was a philosophy/religion minor in college.) VCPC us certainly a literal "God send"!



### 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 [mgreever53@gmail.com](mailto:mgreever53@gmail.com) or give to **Ella** in the office.

**Publication Months: Jan (Winter), Mar (Spring), June (Summer), Sept (Fall), Nov (Christmas).**