

The Vision

Volume 15, Issue 8

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

August 2022

Food for the Body & Soul: Perfect, Perfectionism, & Going on to Perfection

By Pastor Ann

What do Methodists have in common with Mary Poppins? A fascination with perfection.

Mary Poppins is, rather famously, practically perfect in every way. United Methodist ministers are to be striving to get there. When we are ordained, we are asked a series of questions, and for most of the questions only one answer is acceptable, yes. Those questions include:

Are you going on to perfection?

Do you expect to be made perfect in this life?

And we all giggle a bit under our breath on that one. And it's not just the church. People are often swept up in the pursuit of perfection. Do you remember when Nadia scored a perfect 10? They didn't even have a scoreboard that could show that score, because it seemed so out of reach. And it captured us all. In sports the “perfect” achieves mythic status: bowling a 300; a hole in one (golf doesn't even have a goal of a “perfect” score of 18); the Triple Crown in horse racing, with only 13 horses in history winning all three; a perfect game in baseball, last achieved in the majors ten years ago this month on August 15, 2012, by the Seattle Mariners.

My husband, Fyn, strives for perfection in his cooking, tweaking a recipe over and over again until someone says, in the case of his Golden Spiced Curry Lentils, “stop messing with it. It's perfect. It's Indian food for Southern Indians by Southern Indians.” (No, my husband is not Indian, he just loves Indian food and, indeed, most international cuisines.)

Martin Luther famously taught that it was through God's grace alone, and not anything a human being did

on their own behalf, that people could be justified and forgiven of their sins. John Wesley believed in grace, as described by Luther, but also that people could achieve perfection in this life and should strive to do so. Wesley described it as, “...that habitual disposition of the soul which, in the sacred writings, is termed holiness; and which directly implies being cleansed

from sin, 'from all filthiness both of flesh and spirit'; and, by consequence, being endued with those virtues which were in Christ Jesus; being so 'renewed in the image of our mind,' as to be 'perfect as our Father in heaven is perfect' (A Plain Account of Christian Perfectionism, p. 12)”. To achieve this, Wesley described specific practices and disciplines,



including meeting regularly together so fellow Methodists could hold each other accountable. If you have not done so, you might want to read the original rules John Wesley wrote for the Methodist Societies. It's an interesting read. They can basically be grouped into three main categories: do no harm, do good, and stay in love with God. They were then broken down into specifics. For example, do no harm included things like: no drunkenness or buying or selling of spirituous liquors; no buying or selling goods that have not paid the duty (tax evasion); no wearing of gold or expensive clothes; no singing songs, reading books, or entertainment that did not “tend to the knowledge or love of God”. (Wesley would not approve of most of what is on tv.) Wesley also had 12 rules for preachers (including such things as “never be triflingly employed,” and “tell everyone for Christian living (including such things as fasting 2 days a week and waking at 4 or 5 am to read scripture and pray). In short, he had lots of rules he thought would guide us to perfection. (Continued on page 2)

Food for the Body & Soul: Perfect, Perfectionism, & Going on to Perfection, continued

But the search for perfection can be a terribly unhealthy thing, notwithstanding the church's obsession with it. We all fall short. We fall short of our expectations for ourselves, and others' expectations for us. Requiring perfection of ourselves or others can lead to stress, burn-out, and anxiety. Perfectionists can be very hard to get along with. And perfectionism is often associated with an "all or nothing" mentality that can lead to procrastination, fear of risk-taking, and low self-esteem. Counter-intuitively, perfectionism does not, in fact, improve one's productivity or performance.

And holding each other accountable can look a lot like judgment, and quickly devolve into judgement even if someone meant well to begin with. And judging others is about as far from perfection as we can get, given that Jesus told people over and over again NOT to judge. We do well to remember, "all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God." (Romans 3:23) I read about a pastor who would ask people who wanted to join the church, "what will you do when the church lets you down?" She wanted to be sure that people joining the church were not just committing to be faithful as long as everything was perfect, but also when the church fell short. Because churches are made up of people and people always fall short. Expecting perfection is a recipe for pain.

It is far healthier that we accept our faults, even as we strive to do better. Discipline, not unlike that which Wesley taught, can help us do better, but it is not a given or a cure-all. And while we can ask others to help us be accountable, which can help us overcome bad habits and negative patterns, we should be very cautious about finding fault when we haven't been asked. We do far more good by accepting and loving people just as they are.

This is what Jesus did when he had dinner at Zacchaeus's house, when he told the Samaritan woman about living water, and when he refused to condemn the woman caught in adultery. He loved and accepted them first, and then in response to his love, they changed.

We are not perfect. I am not perfect. I will make mistakes. But I will attempt to love you all and to give you grace. I hope you will do the same with me. But for those who are still desiring perfection, I'm including my husband's Golden Spiced Lentil Curry recipe—declared perfection by two grandmothers from Southern India.



Golden Spiced Lentil Curry

Vegan, gluten-free, grain-free, nut-free, refined sugar-free, soy-free

YIELDS ABOUT 7 CUPS

Ingredients:

- 1 1/2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- 2 cups (280 grams) diced onion (1 medium/large)
- 4 large garlic cloves, minced
- 2 teaspoons ground turmeric
- 2 teaspoons ground cumin
- 1/2 teaspoon Vietnamese or similar bold cinnamon (double if using common cinnamon)
- 1/2 teaspoon ground cardamom
- 1 (15-ounce/398 mL) can diced fire roasted tomatoes, with juices – this will leave black flecks and flakes in the soup but the flavor is worth it – use regular diced tomatoes if desired
- 1 (15-ounce/398 mL) can full-fat coconut milk – NOT low fat
- 3/4 cup (140 grams) uncooked red lentils, rinsed and drained
- 3 1/2 cups (875 mL) low-sodium vegetable broth
- 1/2 teaspoon fine sea salt, or to taste
- Freshly ground black pepper, lots - to taste
- About 10 curry leaves (optional - if you can find them)
- Red pepper flakes or cayenne pepper, (a few dashes) to taste (for a kick of heat!)
- 1 (5-ounce/140-gram) package baby spinach (or kale or chard)
- 3 or 4 teaspoons fresh lime juice, or more to taste

Directions:

1. In a large pot, add the oil, onion, and garlic. Add a pinch of salt, stir, and sauté over medium heat for 4 to 5 minutes until the onion softens.
2. Stir in the turmeric, cumin, cinnamon, curry leaves, and cardamom until combined. Continue cooking for about 1 minute, until fragrant.
3. Add the diced tomatoes (with juices), entire can of coconut milk, red lentils, broth, salt, and plenty of pepper. Add red pepper flakes or cayenne, if desired, to taste. Stir to combine. Increase heat to high and bring to a low boil.
4. Once it boils, reduce the heat to medium-high, and simmer, uncovered, for about 18 to 22 minutes, until the lentils are fluffy and tender.
5. Turn off the heat and stir in the spinach until wilted. Add the lime juice to taste. Taste and add more salt and pepper, if desired. Ladle into bowls and serve with toasted bread and lime wedges.

~from the Kitchen of Fyn

**SUNDAY
SERVICES**
9:30 AM
IN-PERSON & ONLINE

August 7

In-person & Online at 9:30 AM

Our Call as Disciples

James 1:17-27

Pastor Ann

August 21

In-person & Online at 9:30 AM

What Does the Lord Require?

James 2:14-26; Matthew 7:15-27

Pastor Ann

August 14

In-person & Online at 9:30 AM

Active Faith, Constant Love

James 2:1-10-17

Pastor Ann

August 28

In-person & Online at 9:30 AM

The Perils of Speech

James 3:1-12

Pastor Ann

Find more information on the new sermon series,
Doers of the Word: The Book of James
starting August 7, on page 5

**WEDNESDAY
ONLINE
SERVICES**

Wednesday Mornings Online at 10:00 AM

James in the Suburbs: A Disorderly Parable of the Epistle of James

James in the Suburbs: A Disorderly Parable of the Epistle of James, by April Love-Fordham takes a detailed and introspective look at how the Book of James, if taken seriously, can change and deepen our faith. And, if we live out its teachings, it will change our witness to the world.

August 3 at 10:00 AM

August 24 at 10:00 AM

August 10 at 10:00 AM

August 31 at 10:00 AM

August 17 at 10:00 AM

Pre-recorded



Most denominations have their statements of belief, the Creeds that define their church tradition and define the collective beliefs common to most branches of Christianity. The United Methodist Church also has statements of doctrinal beliefs and articles of religion that clearly spell out the theological beliefs of the church. However, those doctrinal statements don't do a lot to inform the beliefs of the average person who attends a church and sits in a pew.

If you were to ask someone... why do you go to church? Often times the most common response would be - *as Christians we're supposed to go to church*. However, when the Christian experience becomes an obligation rather than a response from the

heart, many people choose not to take part in that activity. Ask the question again and the response may be - *our family has been attending church for generations*. At Velda Rose UMC, we are blessed to have generations of families worshipping as part of our community. We are blessed to have members who have been here for decades! But you are not a Christian just because you're born into a Christian home. Being a follower of Jesus is a conscious choice rather than a cultural inheritance. The social life of fellowship in the church is a bonus to church attendance, not a substitute for spiritual motivations.

Henri Nouwen, Dutch Catholic priest and writer, said, "We cannot change the world by a new plan, project, or idea. We cannot even change other people by our convictions, stories, advice and proposals, but we can offer a space where people are encouraged to disarm themselves, lay aside their occupations and pre-occupations and listen with attention and care to the voices speaking in their center." And change is complex. There are stops and starts, failures and successes. Just as we don't control when and how the leaves change colors, the work of change in Christian community is fundamentally the work of the Holy Spirit. It happens by an act of God's grace, sometimes in spite of our efforts.

As Christians, whether it's a hymn of a praise song, we tend to sing our theology. For a lot of Christians, our personal convictions about the faith are often not expressed in articles of religion but in beloved hymns. The songs that express the beliefs we hold dear, or the songs that influence our beliefs will likely be the ones we gravitate towards the most.

For example, the hymn *Amazing Grace* is one of the more popular songs we like to sing in many of our congregations. Time and time again, throughout the years and as we get older, singing this hymn realigns our focus. This shows how important grace is to our collective beliefs, and as United Methodists this makes sense. The United Methodist tradition has long put an emphasis on grace. Our understanding of grace begins with God's love for us when we are lost and blind, and continues through our lives as God's grace moves us to Christian perfection... This introduces us to the diversity that God created in people. There is amazing diversity in our physical appearance, cultural heritage, and way of understanding the world. The more diverse we are, the more capable we are as a church to reach a greater amount of people. We can use the gifts, passions and interests we have to connect the saving gospel of God's love with certain people the way that no one else can.

Episcopal Bishop Michael Curry speaks about biblical love as he quotes Rev. Martin Luther King Jr., who said "*When we learn to love as God loves this will be like humankind discovering fire again – as if for the first time.*" (Continued on page 5)

New Sermon Series: Doers of the Word: The Book of James

Beginning on August 7, we will focus on the Book of James in worship and on our lives as Christian Disciples.

This worship series is not based on the Wednesday book study, *James in the Suburbs*, but will compliment it. To build on this connection, you are invited to participate in the Wednesday book study and to join Pastor Ann and Pastor Daniel after the online study for Coffee, Tea and Conversation.

We will discuss the book, the study AND the sermon from the Sunday before. You can even come and attend the recording of the online study, if you want and be our “live studio audience.” We anticipate gathering after the online study at around 10:45 am in the Library. Bring your questions, your comments, and your own insights into James and what it means to live as a Christian.



In Summertime, There Is Change continued



Everyone can share the Gospel. Everyone can invite someone to church. Everyone can use their hands and feet, their hearts and voices, to proclaim God’s love and God’s grace to a world that needs to hear it. The work of the Holy Spirit is fundamental for change to occur in a congregation. Yes, there will be starts and stops but it happens by an act of God’s grace – in spite of our efforts. As we discern what God intends for us to be as a community of faithful followers, remember that we can be a sign of hope, a sign of what can be, a promise of a better world in the light of God's redemptive grace.

So, as a follower of Jesus, where do you see new ministry opportunities? Where would you like to serve? What ways can you imagine reaching out to our community and the world?

Monthly Prayer for Churches



- Central UMC, Phoenix
- North Scottsdale UMC
- Crossroads UMC, Phoenix
- Scottsdale UMC

United Women in Faith



United
Women
in Faith

**RESPONSE (the
magazine of
women in mission)
MAY/JUNE 2022 by
Mary Killgrove**

The article on page 37 “Women Rise, and be Unbent” reminds us to be unbent and free of timidity, to stand up straight and let God’s glory touch your face. 2 Timothy 1:7, 9 reads “For the Spirit God gave us does not make us timid, but gives us power, love and self-discipline. He has saved us and called us to a holy life—not because of anything we have done but because of his own purpose and grace.” We, the women of United Women in Faith, should not let others limit us in any way. We are reminded that if God has called us, then God has prepared the way. God will open doors when we need them to be open. Every resource we need to be successful will be provided by God. God will do so exceedingly and abundantly. All we have to do is be prepared to serve and to lead, to sing and to teach. Bishop LaTrelle Easterling, from the Baltimore-Washington Conference of The United Methodist Church, tells us to “Rise, and continue to dream God-sized dreams. Rise, and continue to believe that with God all things are possible. Rise, and do what you’ve been called to do. Rise, and serve the living God. Women, rise and go forth.”

UWF READING PROGRAM by Billie Larime 2021-2022

Women Rise Up by Katey Zeh. This book contains Sacred Stories of Resistance for Today’s Revolution and can be found in the Fitch Library Velda Rose UMC on the United Women in Faith bookshelves (West Wall). Spiritual Growth Section.

Seldom do women write for women. This was a wonderful Biblical journey through the famous and not so famous women of the Bible that speak to us today and in the past. We seldom get to hear about these spiritual women and how they survived. This is an excellent book with a call to Social Action with new insights for modern women. The best

commentary on Women’s Rights I have ever read.

WHAT A BLESSING! The FIRST IN-PERSON MISSION u SINCE 2019 by Billie Larime, Assistant Dean of Mission u

Last year we held 4 Virtual Mission u Studies. This year, 2022, we held two Mission u events (one in-person and one virtual event). The study for 2022 was “Who Can We Be Together”, a Mission u Biblical Exploration of Luke 13 written by Candace Simpson. I want to share with you how excited the women of the Desert Southwest Conference felt to see each other after two years of only Zoom. Following are the comments of evaluation made after the in-person event: Great, Uplifted, Organized, Energized, Challenged, Inspired, Informed, Entertained, Part of a Community, Encouraged, and Grateful.

The two study leaders: Pastor Christine Jones (recently assigned to Spirit of Hope UMC of Peoria) and Pastor Rula Colvin (from Red Mountain UMC of Mesa) were evaluated by the attendees as: Knowledgeable, Humorous, Insightful, Good Teachers, Study Materials Great, Encouraged Conversations, Biblical Study applied to current events, Interactive with multi-media and crafts.

We enjoyed the Social Action speakers Hilde Frazee on “Our Environment” and Maria Hase (Deaconess) on “Racial Justice”. Hands on activities were presented by Bev Secrist “Coloring Quilt Squares” and “Peace Rocks Meditation” by Lois Downin. It takes a Godly Community of ladies to prepare and host such a program and that existed at Red Mountain UMC and among the members of United Women in Faith that served during Mission u.

CLOSING REMARKS by Gracie Campbell, president of DSC United Women in Faith

“What does **Turn It Up** mean? To embolden your faith, actively engaged in justice for all, get to know your many sisters in faith for the glory of God. While “our long-standing Purpose, which has not changed, we created a new mission statement.....to better (Continued on page 7)



My parents were fine musicians who devoted their lives to serving the church with their God given gifts. By their example, I learned at an early age that music presented in a church setting was not a performance;

rather, it was an expression of praise, an opportunity to share one's testimony about sacred truths and feelings about Deity. Many times I saw how music prepared the hearts of the members to receive the words of the Sermon.

I am humbly grateful to be able to carry on their legacy at Velda Rose. It is wonderful to have staff musicians who feel the same ~ Robert Richter, Rachelle Starr, our Men's Vocal Ensemble and our guest soloists. We all appreciate the great support we have received from many of you.

These quotes express our feelings:

"Rather than relying on my skills, the musical ability of my band or the technical expertise of our production team, I want to learn to rely on the leading of the Holy Spirit. Only then will our churches come alive in worship."

— Tim Hughes

'GOD IS TO BE PRAISED WITH THE VOICE. AND THE HEART SHOULD GO THEREWITH IN HOLY EXULTATION.'

- CHARLES SPURGEON

"When you use music to worship you are not attempting to entertain."

— Cliff Richard

~Mary Ellen Loose, Music Arts Director

~Robert Richter, Organist

~Rachelle Starr, Song Leader & Soloist

United Women in Faith, continued



United
Women
in Faith

describe our goal to new women."

Our Mission—To connect and nurture women through Christian spiritual formation, leadership development, creative fellowship and education so that they can inspire, influence, and impact local and global communications."

Celebrating Holy Communion—All Are Invited, Even Those Worshipping at Home



It is the practice at Velda Rose UMC to celebrate Holy Communion on the first Sunday of each month. It is also our practice, as United Methodists, to welcome everyone to the table because it is Christ's table, not ours. For those who worship at home, or who are unable to join us in worship on Sunday, August 7th, we have several options:

- Gather your own elements, bread and grape juice (or wine), and take Communion with us during worship while watching from home.
- Use the pre-packaged communion elements that are available from the church. You can arrange to pick them up or contact the church office and we will see that you get them. Then, you can take Communion with us during worship while watching from home.

For those who are homebound and unable to join us for worship online, please contact the church office and we will arrange for communion to be brought to you.

Could You Benefit From a Coach?

The first question is, what do we mean by “coach” or “coaching?” We often associate coaching with athletics and sports teams. But this is about a life coach, or a professional coach. While there are similarities between the two, both kinds of coaches want you to do your best and will give you guidance to help you achieve a goal. But a life coach sees their client holistically and encourages the coachee to bring their whole person to each coaching session. Coaching is limited by the client's goals, not by a defined athletic activity.

Why would anyone want to hire a coach? Coaching has proven benefits. Coaching helps people increase their self-awareness and communication skills, become more resilient with less likelihood of burnout, become healthier and less stressed with better work-life balance, improve business performance, and set and achieve goals. Corporate executives regularly engage coaches to help them advance their careers. Anyone facing or seeking a life change, even if that change is voluntary and anticipated like retirement, can find coaching helpful in developing and implementing a successful plan to move forward.

Where can you get more information about coaching? Pastor Ann is a trained coach and would love to talk with anyone who thinks they might benefit from coaching. There is no cost to church members and while she does charge non-members, there are scholarships available. She believes cost should not prevent anyone from seeing a coach.

If you are interested in being coached by Pastor Ann, contact the church office via email at officeadmin@veldarose.org or call 480-832-2111 to make an appointment.

Velda Rose To Offer Grief Recovery Group

Almost everyone you know is grieving—chances are YOU are grieving. Grief is the normal reaction to loss, any kind of loss. Losses come in various shapes and sizes: the death of spouse, or family member, or friend, or pet; the loss of a job, even through retirement; the loss of a home or a lifestyle; the loss of a pastor or church home; and the list can go on. There are more than 40 life experiences that can result in loss. Over the past two years that we have dealing with COVID-19, we have lost our sense of security and our normal patterns of activities, in addition to the family, friends or possibly our own health that COVID-19 has taken from us.

Loss is cumulative, and so is unresolved grief. That grief looks different for different people and even different at different times. A person who is grieving may have trouble focusing, memory problems, problems sleeping, over-eating or loss of appetite, be short tempered, and so on. People who are grieving are also more likely to have health problems and reduced immune responses. While grief is normal, unresolved grief can linger and will continue to

GRIEF RECOVERY GROUP

STARTING SEPTEMBER 6
TUESDAYS AT 10:30 AM
IN MADSEN PARLOR

LED BY: REV. GARY McDONOUGH,
RETIRED MINISTER &
CERTIFIED GRIEF RECOVERY SPECIALIST

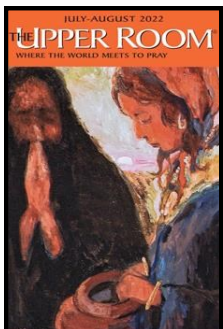
COST: \$50 FOR 8 SESSIONS & THE BOOK

interfere with engaging in life and experiencing joy again until it is resolved.

We can recover from grief. While we never “get over” the loss of a loved one, we will always remember and miss them, we can recover from grief, so the emotional pain lessens and we are not prevented from living and enjoying life. But we are rarely taught how to grieve and even less likely to know how to recover.

That is why Velda Rose UMC will offer a Grief Recovery Group at 10:30 a.m. on Tuesdays in Madsen Parlor beginning with September 6th. Rev. Gary McDonough, retired minister and Certified Grief Recovery Specialist will be leading the group. The cost to attend this group is \$50, which includes all 8 sessions and the book. Scholarships are available, up to the full cost of the class. For more information or to sign up, please contact the church office via email at officeadmin@veldarose.org or call 480-832-2111. If you would be interested but would need an evening meeting, let us know. If there is sufficient interest, we will also offer the Grief Recovery Group in the evening.

July-August Upper Room



The July-August 2022 Upper Rooms are available in the Sanctuary on Sunday mornings, or in the office during office hours.

If you are homebound and would like to receive the Upper Room by mail, please contact the office to be put on the mailing list.

VRUMC Food Pantry

VRUMC's Food Pantry provides non-perishable food to those seeking assistance. The current items we are in need of are:



- * Peanut Butter
- * Jelly
- * Canned Chicken
- * Spaghetti
- * Spaghetti Sauce
- * Canned Tuna

Donations can be brought to the church office, or put in the Food Pantry Baskets in front of the Sanctuary.

Thank You, Velda Rose United Women of Faith...



Thank You, Velda Rose United Women of Faith and the Rummage Sale!

What a blessing it has been to make over my office to reflect my personality, make it my own, and make it comfortable for conversation. I have created a conversation space with a new (to me) loveseat and the side chairs that were already in the office. The additions of a rug and several beautiful glass pieces and art from the Rummage Sale bring in the accent colors of blue and green. This space is now a lovely focus for my office. It was through the resources of the Rummage Sale and the generosity of the UWF who run it, that I was able to make the pastor's office my own.

I am looking forward to being in this lovely space and having conversations with members of the congregation, the community and staff. Please stop in, or better yet, make an appointment to see me when we will have time for a conversation. I can't wait to get to know you.

Thank you UWF, for making it possible for me to update the office. –Pastor Ann



Birthdays



Shannon Boysen	8/1	Florence Lawhead	8/20
Kathy Coffey	8/2	Janice Stallard	8/20
Enid Gustin	8/3	Bill Monson	8/22
Ruth Odom	8/3	Delia Gómez	8/23
Virginia Williams	8/4	Fran Loots	8/24
Lynn Twitchell	8/5	Carmen Williams	8/24
Theresa De Weerd	8/6	Angie Daggy	8/25
Lois Benson	8/7	Helen Trojahn	8/26
Donna Foust	8/7	Nancy Appel	8/28
Miriam House	8/7	James Bludorn	8/28
Gary Musselman	8/14	Peggy Ross	8/28
Marlys Carvell	8/15	Irma Traoré	8/28
Priscilla Jones	8/17	Dan Zentner	8/29
Tim Most	8/18	June Osborne	8/30
Carolyn Parker	8/19		



Anniversaries 50+ Years



Lee and Pat Nixon	8/2	Gene & Benita Clabaugh	8/25
Ron and Lynda Boysen	8/16	Al & Nancy Schubring	8/25
Joseph and Karen Oakes	8/17		
Madou and Irma Traoré	8/17		



VELDA ROSE

United Methodist Church

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

Stay connected via the church website at veldarose.org
Or on Facebook: @veldaroseumc

NON-PROFIT ORG.
U. S. Postage
PAID
Mesa, Arizona
Permit No. 63

Staff Leadership

Rev. Grant J. Hagiya, Resident Bishop
Rev. Melissa Rynders, East District Superintendent
Rev. Ann Lyter, Senior Pastor
Rev. Daniel Gómez, Associate Pastor
Ministers, Every Member of the Congregation

WORSHIP

SCHEDULE

Join us online for our midweek devotion
each Wednesday at 10:00 AM,
and 9:30 AM Sunday morning services in-person
and online at
facebook.com/veldaroseumc/
or on the church website:
veldarose.org/connect/watch/

*But be DOERS of
the word, and
not HEARERS only.
James 1:22*

NEXT ISSUE

Items considered for the
September Vision
must be submitted by
Tuesday, August 9, 2022.

Please **e-mail** Jessica at
officeadmin@veldarose.org
with your newsletter articles.