

# The Vision

Volume 15, Issue 6

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

June 2022

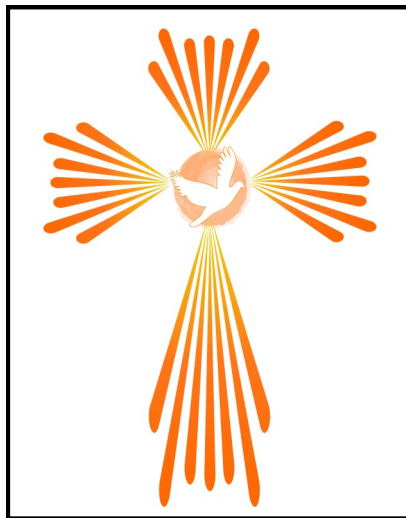
## How Does the Spirit Move? By Pastor Larry

Pentecost Sunday will soon be upon us. It commemorates what we think of as the “birthday of the church.” It is not an accident that this great “harvest” of souls should occur at the Feast of Pentecost, or Weeks. It marked the end of the celebration of the spring harvest, a cycle that began at Passover. Every devout Israelite family would praise God during this time for his grace and bounty. For Jewish Christians, the coming of the Holy Spirit at this time would take on special significance. Pentecost was all about God taking the initiative to enter more fully into our lives.

There is truly an undeniable mystery in this event. You may recall that Jesus said the Spirit “blows wherever it wishes,” like the wind (John 3:8). The Spirit is unpredictable! The Spirit filled Elizabeth, Mary, and Zechariah with song (Luke 1). The Spirit overshadowed Mary (Luke 1:35); descended like a dove on Jesus at his baptism (Luke 3:22); led Jesus into the wilderness (Luke 4:1); and came upon Jesus to proclaim good news, release, recovery of sight, and liberation respectively to the poor, the captives, the blind, and the oppressed (Luke 4:18). Amber Essick said, “We don’t make sense of the Spirit; it makes sense of us.” In an unpredictable, but not arbitrary fashion, the Holy Spirit made sense of the purposes of God in the lives of these and many other individuals.

As the early church took shape, the Spirit led in creative and unexpected twists and turns, often counter-intuitive and quite startling! The fact is that the early church had a lot to sort out! Take for example, the issue of baptism. Two baptisms were recognized. One was of water, which was linked to repentance and becoming a Christian, and the other,

of the Holy Spirit, which was tied to being empowered to live the Christian life. Over the long history of the church, the connection between water baptism and “Spirit” baptism has been recognized, but in differing ways and degrees by varying traditions within Christianity.



These two baptisms made sense to very first “Hebrew” Jewish Christians who were baptized and had experienced Pentecost. Yet what happens when these baptisms intersect in an alien world that is filled with mistrust and hatred? We learn about that in the dramatic events in Acts 8.

It all begins, just as Jesus had directed, when Philip goes to Samaria to preach the Gospel (Acts 8:5). Remember that Philip is a “Hellenist,” a man of Jewish descent, but who grew up outside the land of Israel. He speaks Greek and was raised in Hellenistic (Greek) culture. The “Hebrews,” like Peter, James, and John, are “local” Jews, born and raised in Galilee or Judea. They speak Aramaic and prefer the Hebrew Old Testament. There are times when the “Hellenist” Jews and the “Hebrew” Jews don’t get along. Yet it is the Hellenist Jews that preach the Gospel in Samaria.

Whichever Jew one was, Hellenist or Hebrew, did not erase the hatred between the Jews and the Samaritans. The Jews consider the Samaritans half-breeds (because of intermarriage), and heretics, because they worship at their own temple on Mount Gerizim. Phillip, nonetheless, goes to the Samaritans and converts a number of them to Christ. Even Simon, a well-known magician who commands a large following, is amazed at the *(Continued on page 2)*

## How Does the Spirit Move? continued

wonders and signs done in the name of Jesus. We are told that he “also believed” (Acts 8:13), is baptized, and begins to follow Phillip.

Then we are told something else that is very interesting. Acts 8:14-17 says this: “Now when the apostles at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had accepted the word of God, they sent Peter and John to them. The two went down and prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit (for as yet the Spirit had not come upon any of them; they had only been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus). Then Peter and John laid their hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit.” The effect was so dramatic that Simon tried to buy this power, the power of the Spirit, from the apostles, for which he is severely rebuked by Peter. The Spirit of God was not for sale to the highest bidder.



What is all this teaching us about the Holy Spirit? In particular, why had the Spirit not come upon the believers at Samaria? Did Philip not recite the proper Trinitarian formula? If there was a “formula” to recite it would have been just as magical as Simon believed it to be, and therefore something that could be owned. Perhaps those whom Philip led to Jesus experienced their new-found faith at an intellectual level, and only later did Peter and John open their hearts to the deeper life through the indwelling of the Spirit. Yet perhaps there is another reason.

When Peter brought the message of Pentecost to the Samaritans, they needed to recognize that the plan of salvation had come through the Jews. The Jews, however, had to also accept the truth that the same salvation they had been given had also been given to the Samaritans. In the midst of the great hatred between the two groups, God revealed to

both that they could and would come together into one church.

The reception of the gift of the Spirit by the Samaritans through the Jews was a sign of potential healing between these age-old enemies. Later, in Acts 10, Peter would preach to the Gentiles, another age-old enemy of the Jews. They, too, would believe and immediately received the gift of the Spirit, and do so *without* the laying on of hands. Here, the Jews witness again that salvation has crossed ethnic and racial barriers. What is important to understand is that the Holy Spirit was the unifying factor that would bring Jews, Samaritans, and Gentiles into a new body!

The process of living into the Christian life is not the same for every person or group. It unfolds in a dynamic, often unforeseen process, rather than in a single, isolated event or short-lived experience. The Spirit of God meets us where we are at and when we are ready. There are no formulas, recipes, or blueprints that God follows. The important question is: “Do I desire to have the Spirit of God disciple and empower me in my faith journey?” Now we are talking about stoking the fire in the oven!

William D. Hendricks, in *Exit Interviews* (Chicago: Moody, 1993), says “There is a splendid moment in the movie *Jurassic Park*, when world-class paleontologist Allen Grant, who has devoted his life to the study of dinosaurs, suddenly comes face-to-face with real live prehistoric creatures. He falls to the ground, dumbstruck. The reason is obvious.

It is one thing to piece together an informed but nonetheless imperfect image of dinosaurs by picking through fossils and bones. But to encounter an actual dinosaur - well, there (*Continued on page 10*)

# June's Services and Meditations

## **June 5: PENTECOST SUNDAY**

**In-person & Online at 9:30 AM**

*How Badly Do I Want the Spirit?*

Acts 2:1-13, 8:14-17; Luke 3:15-17,  
21-22

Pastor Larry

SUNDAY  
SERVICES  
9:30 AM  
IN-PERSON & ONLINE

## **June 19: FATHER'S DAY**

**In-person & Online at 9:30 AM**

*Faith, and a Man Called Dad*

John 4:43-54

Pastor Daniel

## **June 12**

**In-person & Online at 9:30 AM**

*Endurance Produces Character*

Psalm 8 & Romans 5:1-5

Pastor Daniel

## **June 26: GRADUATION SUNDAY**

**In-person & Online at 9:30 AM**

*If Your Hand Is On the Plow... Then Don't*

1 Kings 19 & Luke 9:51-62

Pastor Daniel

## **June 1 at 10:00 AM**

*What's the Rush?*

Acts 2:1-6

Pastors Larry and Daniel

WEDNESDAY  
ONLINE  
SERVICES

## **June 22 at 10:00 AM**

*No, I Will Not Leave!*

Psalm 77 & 2 Kings 2

Pastor Daniel

## **June 8 at 10:00 AM**

*Does Not Wisdom Call?*

Proverbs 8:1-4, 22-31

Pastor Daniel

## **June 29 at 10:00 AM**

*How Much For a Cure of Leprosy?*

Psalm 30 & 2 Kings 5

Pastor Daniel

## **June 15 at 10:00 AM**

*The Gerasenes Asked Jesus to Leave*

Psalm 42 & Luke 8:26-39

Pastor Daniel



Whenever I am driving on the road and see those personalized plates, I am tempted to translate their meaning. I recently saw a message posted on a marquee sign that read *Take the first step and the next will appear*. This message seemed to resonate with me. I may not know what lies further down the path, but I will take each obvious first step and wait for the next step to appear, for I know that God will show me the next step.

Have you read the book *Cathedral: The Story of its Construction*? The author David Macaulay takes us back in time to the year 1252 in the fictional French village of Chutreaux where the people decide to build the "longest,

widest, highest and most beautiful cathedral in all of France". A time when an entire community, using ingeniously simple tools, could create something so strong and beautiful that it might stand forever. Imagine hoisting stone, timber, bronze bells, glass, sculptures, and carvings 160 feet or more above the ground. Building a cathedral whose vaulted spaces mimic the curve of the sky. David Macaulay brings the process to life, and in doing so he also animates a long-ago culture.

Some churches have a culture. Other churches are a culture. But culture exists in every church. Where culture is found, so are symbols. Some denominations have more formal symbols than others. Even in a church that intentionally minimizes symbols, they still exist. Choir robes, high-end technology, dim lights, the pulpit. Pastors who neglect symbols will not understand the church culture as well as they should. Pastors who take the time to understand symbols will best know how to reinforce the good elements of church culture.

Symbols maintain balance. Strip away all the symbols, and the church can potentially become flavorless. Churches with too many symbols become confusing bastions of rigid traditionalism. Symbols can become idols. Stained glass is beautiful. It tells a story, even the history of the church. But the glass itself can become more important than the story it tells. When the *what* of the church symbol becomes more important than the *why* of its meaning, the congregation is likely guilty of worshiping an idol. Symbols are powerful. They add richness to routine. They inspire hope and arouse emotions more quickly than reasoning. Symbols elevate the "why" above the "what." Symbols reinforce culture and they can recast history.

Symbols in your church will act as lenses through which people understand the past. As you enter the East lobby of our Sanctuary, on the far East wall there are portraits of those pastors who have previously served at Velda Rose UMC. Each portrait represents an era of church history and its culture. These symbols help retell the church story and of course, we now know that a new portrait will be added to that wall.

The message posted on that marquee sign read *Take the first step and the next will appear*. Velda Rose UMC, we may not know what lies further down the path, but we will take each obvious first step and wait for the next step to appear, for I know that God will show us the next step. I hope that each step we take in life is taken with the comfort that God will lead us toward His plan. Even if we take the scenic route and not the most direct route, eventually we will reach His planned destination.



**"MUSIC IS A MELODY THAT CAN TOUCH OUR HEARTS AND CONNECT US WITH MEMORIES."**

- LESLIE SOBAMPO

As he shared his story, we were both moved to tears.

He went his way and I entered the sanctuary. I shared with Robert what had just happened and our hearts were touched.

A couple of years ago, I went to Velda Rose on a Saturday afternoon to rehearse a song with Robert Richter, our organist. As I approached the sanctuary, a man, probably in his 30's, walked by me. I asked him if he needed something. He proceeded to tell me this story.

He was from the Midwest, but had recently come to Arizona to figure some things out in his life. He was able to come to a point where he felt he could return home. By chance, he was walking through our campus on his way to getting a ride to the airport. He could hear the sounds of Robert playing the organ as he passed by the sanctuary doors. It brought the memories of his youth to mind—the hymns he heard in Church, the truths he had been taught.

At that moment, he said the Holy Spirit spoke to him, telling him he was on the right path. It brought him to tears.

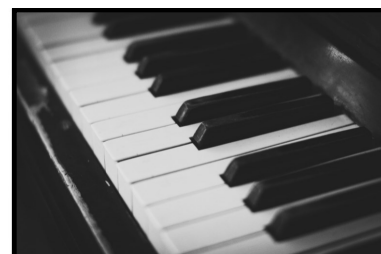
Music reaches into our souls, leaving memories that stay with us the rest of our lives. Music is truly one of God's greatest gifts to His children.

As your Music Ministry Team, it is our hope and prayer that the music we perform will strengthen your faith, comfort your heart and bring you closer to Jesus Christ.

~ Mary Ellen Loose  
Director of Music Arts

~ Robert Richter,  
Organist

~ Rachele Starr  
Song Leader, Soloist



**"A SONG WILL OUTLIVE ALL SERMONS IN THE MEMORY."** - HENRY GILES

## Monthly Prayer for Churches



- Bishop & Staff of the Desert Southwest Conference
- Chaplains, Counselors, and Staff of the East District
- Staff and Churches of the West District

# United Women in Faith



United  
Women  
in Faith

**READING  
PROGRAM FOR  
2022 by Billie  
Larime**

*Before We Were Yours (A Novel) by Lisa Wingate*

This book was a very entertaining story about a real-life scandal in which Georgia Tann, director of a Memphis-based adoption organization, kidnapped and sold poor children to wealthy families all over the country. The fictional story tells of a young girl growing up with her siblings on her Mississippi River shanty boat in the 1930's. The young siblings, five in number, were separated and sold to families that believed that they were orphaned children. You will be saddened when reading the story of the children's separation from their parents and their continuous search for each other in adulthood. You can hope that this will never happen again in America.

**RESPONSE (the magazine of women in mission)  
March/April issue p. 8-10 by Billie Larime**

This Bible Study is suited for individual use or for group discussions. The study is based on John 20:1-18, about Mary Magdalene coming to the tomb and seeing that the stone had been removed. She had witnessed the crucifixion of our Lord and now believed his body had been removed from the tomb. Crying, she looked into the tomb and saw two angels in white where the body of Jesus had been lying. After she recognized Jesus, she was told by Jesus to tell the disciples what she had seen. And we like Mary, are called to share that good news to all.

**MISSION U IN-PERSON STUDY TO BE HELD AT RED  
MOUNTAIN UMC**

All women are invited to attend either an in-person Mission u at Red Mountain UMC in Mesa on June 24 & 25 or attend a Virtual Mission u on July 22 and

23<sup>rd</sup>. Our own Rev. Rula Colvin will be one of the Study Leaders this year. If you are interested in either Mission u program, Billie Larime, Assistant Dean for 2022 will assist you in registration and receiving a Scholarship to attend. Call her and leave a message.

**STATEMENT FROM THE BISHOP AND CABINET  
DESERT SOUTHWEST CONFERENCE**

"As United Methodists, we believe we are stronger together. Our diversity is a gift from God, one we have not yet fully claimed. We need not fear our differences. Instead, we believe we are called to embrace our differences in a way that models what unity in Christ looks like. We believe that unity does not require uniformity. If the pandemic has taught us anything, it has taught us how much we need one another.

Washed in the waters of our baptism, as United Methodists we will walk in our commitment to love one another in grace-filled ways. We will be liberal, evangelical, progressive, traditionalist, middle of the road, conservative, centrist, or something else and together we will continue to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world."

**WORDS OF WISDOM FROM RUTH DALES our East  
District President, United Women in Faith.**

I have hope that "rebranding" the United Methodist Women means that we will become stronger because we reach more women who want to be the change that is needed to preserve God's creation.

I have hope that "justice for all" becomes a reality.

I have hope that each of us will find joy in our lives as faithful followers of Christ working to bring healing to our hurting communities far and near.

May 10, 2022

Jeff Ferm  
Velda Rose United Methodist Church  
5540 E Main St.  
Mesa, AZ 85205

Dear Jeff, Members and Friends of Velda Rose United Methodist Church:

Greetings in the name of the Risen One. This is a time in the Christian year that shapes our faith in powerful ways, calling us to remember who we are as the people of God, and reminding us how we are to live.

You have received word that your senior pastor, the Rev. Dr. Larry Norris, will be ending his appointment June 30, 2022. It is not easy to hear this word, yet we celebrate with Rev. Norris and pray for him as he takes this new step of faith. I want to share with you the news that after prayerful discussion Bishop Grant J. Hagiya intends to appoint the Rev. Ann Lyter as the next senior pastor at Velda Rose UMC.

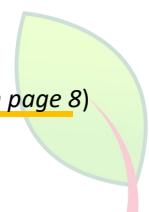
Rev. Lyter brings many gifts to this appointment. She has a passion for the power of worship and a love for preaching. Rev. Lyter also brings gifts of administration and organization, as well as the ability to work with complex situations to produce over-all greater church vitality. Her leadership style is strong and collaborative.

We know that during these days of change you will rely on your faith and God's presence at every turn. Every transition brings with it the seeds of hope and potential. As you prepare to welcome Rev. Lyter we know you will be in prayer for her, and for the future of Velda Rose UMC. God has much ministry for you to do. God's spirit will be with you in this new day.

In closing, let me share with you the words from one of my favorite hymns. ***"This is the Day of New Beginnings,"*** by Brian Wren:

*This is a day of new beginnings, time to  
remember and move on, time to believe  
what love is bringing, laying to rest the  
pain that's gone.*

(Continued on page 8)



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Cell Phone: 623.521.5253

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cholly@dscumc.org  
Office: 602.798.8239

*Christ is alive, and goes before us to show  
and share what love can do.  
This is a day of new beginnings; our God is  
making all things new.*

Bishop Grant and all of us on the appointive cabinet pray for you during this time of change. We envision a vital and growing ministry through you, the people, and leaders of Velda Rose UMC. Know always that God is with you.

Blessings and peace be with you.

*Susan*

N. Susan Brims  
East District Superintendent

CC: Bishop Grant J. Hagiya, Rev. Dr. Larry Norris, Rev. Ann Lyter

## United Methodist Men



The General Commission on United Methodist Men is introducing a “modern way” of doing men’s ministry. Launching a new program and brand, **“United Men’s Ministry”** and is an innovative

online resource. The goal is to help churches launch, grow, and sustain effective men’s ministry.

Our Velda Rose United Methodist Men will now be renamed to Velda Rose United Men’s Ministry.

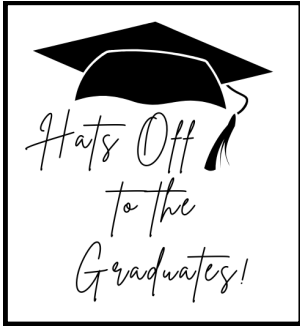
As we receive more information on this, we will keep the church informed.

Our normal monthly meeting in Moore Hall has been changed to the Wild Berry Diner, and the time is now 8:30 A.M. for breakfast. We will keep this location and hours of meeting till the fall or otherwise notified. **ALL MEN ARE INVITED.**

Bruce D. Williams  
President  
Velda Rose United Men’s Ministry



# Graduation Sunday

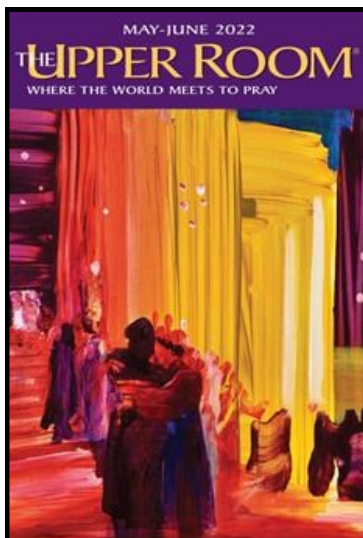


On Sunday, June 26 we would like to recognize all graduates within our congregation, as well as their families. This includes those who have graduated from Junior High, Senior High, College, and other institutions.

Please call the church office at 480-832-2111 or email Jessica at [officeadmin@veldarose.org](mailto:officeadmin@veldarose.org) church and indicate the name of the graduate, the name of the school of the school, program, and the degree. **Please send us this information by Friday, June 17.**

We look forward to recognizing you on Graduation Sunday, June 26th, and sharing your milestone with the Velda Rose UMC family.

## May-June Upper Room



The May-June 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

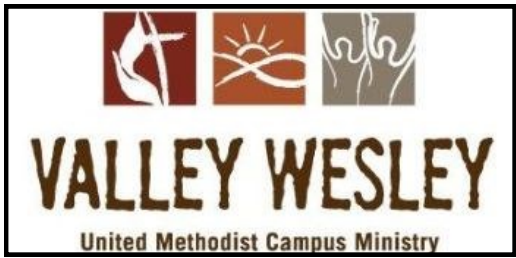
The Food Pantry at Velda Rose UMC provides non-perishable food to those who come seeking assistance. If you can donate some of the following items, we would greatly appreciate it:



- \* Peanut Butter
- \* Jelly
- \* Canned Chicken
- \* Canned Tuna
- \* Boxes of Cereal
- \* Mashed Potatoes
- \* Mixed Vegetables
- \* Spaghetti

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

## Work Day Opportunities with The Wesley Foundation



Hello East District!

In the late 1950's, the Desert Southwest Conference paid to build the Baker Center on Tempe First's Campus. This building was built with the intention of being a space for campus ministry. However, over the years, Tempe First UMC used this space for Urban Outreach. The Wesley Foundation then moved to various spaces

on the church campus.

For the 2022-2023 school year, Wesley is moving back in! We are excited for the ministry opportunities this building will provide. Before this can happen, the building needs some TLC. We are looking for individuals or groups who would like to assist in this work.

We are planning work days on **Saturdays, June 4, and June 18 from 8am-12pm**. The tasks for these days will primarily be painting, cleaning, and organizing a kitchen. Please share this information with persons or groups in your congregations who may be interested.

In addition, if you have groups who want to come at a different time, contact Rev. Jamie Booth at [pastorjamie@tempefirstumc.org](mailto:pastorjamie@tempefirstumc.org) and we can likely accommodate them.

**Thank you for your support of this Conference-wide ministry!**

*by Rev. Jamie Booth, Campus Pastor of ASU Wesley Foundation (via the Desert Southwest Conference website at [dsumc.org](http://dsumc.org))*

## How Does the Spirit Move? continued



can be no comparison ... For many people, spirituality amounts to picking through the artifacts of faith that survive from long ago and far away." They try to breathe life into a dead, prehistoric past!

The Spirit of God makes Jesus real in our lives. The Spirit moves our faith from relic to revival, from a history lesson about a man named Jesus to the living Christ who resides in your heart. Remember your baptism, your declaration by water and word of your entree into the Body of Christ. Yet also

remember that the Spirit of God is a river of life that moves in its own mysterious way in us and through us, unifying, empowering, leading, and nurturing.

This is good news! It is good because in a world that tries to sell happiness by illusion, even as did Simon the magician, we find in the Spirit of Jesus the real thing! We discover the fullness of our humanity and the beauty of what it means to be children of God. We find that which brings abundant life! We find eternal life that begins even now!



## Birthdays

Barbara Tucker 6/1  
 Dorothy Francis 6/2  
 Robert Blaney 6/3  
 Bill Irving 6/3  
 Tish Roberts 6/4  
 Lester Taylor 6/5  
 Lorrie Roberts 6/8  
 Jean DiCosimo 6/10  
 Paul Borneman 6/12  
 Marilyn Kunde 6/12  
 Helen Pierce 6/12  
 Tobby Baca 6/13  
 Tom Chaney 6/15

Glenda Veborg 6/15  
 Judy Melling 6/16  
 Jean Corkill 6/17  
 Joy Moses 6/17  
 Carolyn Morrow 6/18  
 Tangesi Maumatapule 6/21  
 Connie McDonough 6/21  
 Bruce Williams 6/23  
 Bev Jackson 6/24  
 Doris Christiansen 6/27  
 Mary Killgrove 6/28  
 Duane Clark 6/29



## Anniversaries

### 50+ Years

Charles & Donna Foust 6/7  
 Robert & Dorothy Lane 6/7  
 Roger & Doris Christiansen 6/8  
 Larry & Beverly Jackson 6/11  
 Boyd & Sheila Arnold 6/13  
 Eugene & June Osborne 6/18  
 Bill & Barbara Irving 6/29

### Also Celebrating

Bruce & Carmen Williams 6/1  
 Robert & Jean DiCosimo 6/13  
 James & Becky Knight 6/24  
 Larry & Debra Norris 6/24  
 Karl & Beverly Wilhelm 6/27



# VELDA ROSE

*United Methodist Church*

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Stay connected via the church website at [veldarose.org](http://veldarose.org)  
Or on Facebook: @veldaroseumc

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## Staff Leadership

Rev. Grant J. Hagiya, Resident Bishop  
Rev. N. Susan Brims, East District Superintendent  
Rev. Dr. Larry R. Norris, 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/](https://facebook.com/veldaroseumc/)  
or on the church website:  
[veldarose.org/connect/watch/](http://veldarose.org/connect/watch/)



## NEXT ISSUE

Items considered for the  
July Vision  
must be submitted by  
[Tuesday, June 14, 2022.](https://www.veldarose.org)

Please **e-mail** Jessica at  
[officeadmin@veldarose.org](mailto:officeadmin@veldarose.org)  
with your newsletter articles.