

Practice the Pause:

Jesus' Contemplative Practice, New Brain Science & Your Spiritual Life

In a recent sermon, I said, “If we want to change the world, it starts with our being changed within.”

My summer reading includes a book that promotes a spiritual practice that *can* change us within. I’m eager to share with you the wisdom in Caroline Oakes’ book *Practice the Pause: Jesus’ Contemplative Practice, New Brain Science, and What It Means to Be Fully Human*.

Life in Christ is, or can be, more than believing in Jesus and doing good for others. While religious belief and ethical action have great value, they can leave untouched the wounded, reactive, inner parts of us that need to be transformed. Many of us are stuck in stress-induced patterns of behavior that limit our peace of mind and cause difficulties in our relationships. **But there’s hope.** *Practice the Pause* is a book that offers hope by 1) exploring the contemplative way Jesus prayed, 2) connecting contemplative prayer with new knowledge about the human brain, and 3) promoting simple ways that we can be changed by simply, silently returning to the presence of God each day—as Jesus did.

Are you interested in practicing the pause with me? I hope so. On all five Thursdays in August, from 4:00 to 5:30 pm at Mountain Shadows Presbyterian Church, I will facilitate *Practice the Pause* gatherings. These gatherings will include **conversation about Caroline Oakes’ book, and time for contemplative practice:** Jesus’ simple, silent way of being prayerfully present to God, which we all can practice.

Here’s what to do: get the book, and show up on Thursdays in August at 4:00. You can buy *Practice the Pause* from Amazon, Barnes & Noble, Bookshop.org, Target, Indiebound.org and other retailers. Audio and electronic versions are available. **Books will not be available for purchase at church, so please take the initiative to acquire a copy of *Practice the Pause* for yourself.** It might lead you to be changed within, by God.

Yours in hope,

Pastor Rachel Srubas

Beverly Johnston
Co-ModeratorKaren Koopmans
Co-Moderator

Edrice Ivory



Jeff Mague



Zenda Saraydarin



Chuck Sherman



Connie Wortman

“Ministry of Compassion Witness and Prayer”

Deacon of the Month – Jeff Mague

Ahh, after the fireworks of Independence Day, the fun times of summer continue to keep us busy as we try to get in a few more activities until Fall arrives. Let's see, we started the summer with Memorial Day. Most of us older folks have learned to appreciate this holiday a little more each year. But wait, there are several more “special days” of summer. Let's see, there's Juneteenth, Father's Day, American Family Day, Native American Day, Navajo Code Talkers Day for Arizona, and finally, marking the “end” of summer, Labor Day. Many Americans celebrate these and other special weekends with a picnic, hiking, or some family activity. You just can't beat hamburgers, hot dogs, fried chicken, and potato salad on the summer holidays.

It's great to spend time with the family during these opportunities, but be sure to invite another wherever you go—the Holy Spirit. I believe the Spirit of God is with each of us all day, every day, but by specifically inviting the Spirit to join us, we remember to give thanks for our blessings a little more often, and sometimes we remember to be a little kinder to those around us. You may have felt the Spirit tapping on your shoulder from time to time to remind you to do the right thing; I know I have. But the Spirit also wants us to reach out to others who need a little help or support. There are so many opportunities to affect the lives of others in a positive way. One fantastic way to do this is to take your grand kids out for a volunteer activity at least once a year. It will become something they will cherish as they mature themselves, and perhaps pass along the tradition to their own progeny. Just remember to invite the Holy Spirit with you. By the way, the Spirit prefers ketchup and mustard on their hot dogs.

The Role of Deacons: Spiritual Care and Compassion

The ministry of deacons is one of care and compassion through listening, prayer, and faithful companionship. Deacons are a caring network dedicated to connecting with members and friends of Mountain Shadows Presbyterian Church (MSPC). Deacons provide emotional and spiritual support, and they may also share news and information about things going on at the church with the members of their mini-parish.

Deacon Ministry—Cont'd

Every member and friend (regular attender) of Mountain Shadows Presbyterian Church is part of a **mini-parish** assigned to one of our seven deacons who are trained to provide faithful care. Deacons pray for and contact members of their mini-parish regularly. Phone calls, cards, emails, Sunday chats, and visits are some of the ways deacons stay in touch.

Parishioners are encouraged to reach out to their deacons if they have a prayer request or situation they want to share. When a need is shared with a deacon, the deacon may ask permission to share with the pastors so they can also pray, and when appropriate, offer support and referrals to the person who expressed the need.

Needs that involve transportation, household chores, errands, caregiving, issues of personal safety, serious medical concerns, and mental health concerns are beyond the agreed-on scope of deacons' ministries. In these situations, deacons have a list of resources that may be of assistance; also, deacons can offer emotional and spiritual support and care. All congregants and deacons are encouraged to practice healthy boundaries and discernment when providing support. While a deacon may not be able to fulfill a request that exceeds the deacons' agreed-on role of spiritual care for others, no one is forbidden to help another congregant when a need is shared and help is requested.

Remember you have a deacon to support you when you want someone to pray, to talk to, or to share with pastors the joys to celebrate and the burdens and griefs that are not meant to be borne alone. If you are not sure who is your deacon, please contact the church to get that information. Thank you.

GATHERING

WORSHIP & MUSIC



'Tis a New Season for Singing, Ringing & Instrumenting!'

Yes! I made up a “new” word, it is a verb – instrumenting! We all know the definition – we just needed the new word! And I needed another rhyming word!

It is a new season for Mountain Shadows' Handbell, Choral Choirs, and instrumentalists! **You** are invited to join us! **PLEASE** contact me for more information.

2nd Annual Handbell Workshop! *Please mark your calendars!*

Tuesdays – September 17, 24, October 1, 8 in Room 2/3

11:00-11:30 How to Ring and Brush up Your Technique

11:30-12:15 Learning New Pieces

October 13th @ the 10 am service, the Handbell Choir will play all the pieces learned during the workshop! Emerging Ringers, Accomplished Ringers, Sight Ringers, all are welcome to this workshop!

Continued

Worship & Music — CONTINUED

On Thursday, September 5th from 2:45 pm — 4:00 pm, Mountain Shadows Choir & Instrumental Ensemble begin their formal rehearsals in the Sanctuary! The Choir will begin at 2:45 pm with the instrumentalists joining the rehearsal at 3:45 pm.

September 8th officially begins our formal Music Ministry Season during the 10:00 am service.

My October article will include information regarding the Tahoe Music Conference I attended July 28th. Thank you for your generosity in providing for my continuing education!

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Choir Rehearsals: Begin Thursday September 5th from 2:45-4:00 pm in the sanctuary.

Instrumental Rehearsals: Scheduled with Music Director

Handbell Choir & Newbies: WORKSHOP Tuesdays Sept. 17, 24, Oct 1, 8 in Rm 2/3, 11:00 am -12:15 pm

PLEASE call, text, or send me an email if you would like more information about joining our Music Ministry! **WE NEED YOU!** 520-982-2437 bcdame@comcast.net

Fresh Flowers: A Temporary Pause



Until later this fall, fresh floral arrangements will not be scheduled through our church office. However, those who wish to bring a floral arrangement suitable for display on a Sunday morning may do so (preferably after alerting the church office). Thank you for your flexibility and understanding.

People Among Us Are Grieving

The sorrow of those who mourn matters to God and matters to God's people of Mountain Shadows Presbyterian Church. We surround with our prayers...

- Steven Cupo and Dan Engeljohn, on the death of Steven's father, Everard;
- Roberta Davila and Gary Coard, on the death of Roberta's son, Wilson;
- Susan Harden and family, on the death of Susan's husband Pat;
- Linda Walka and family, on the death of her brother-in-law, our church member Wayne Butler.

If we have inadvertently omitted anyone from this list of those who mourn a loved one, please accept our sincere apology and let us know of our omission so we can correct it. We are also sensitive to the reality that the anniversary of a loved one's death can be a tough time for survivors. Let us all be gentle with each other.

Remembering Wayne Butler. On Sunday, November 10th (the eve of Veterans' Day), our 10:00 a.m. worship service will include a remembrance of Mountain Shadows Church member and military veteran Wayne Butler, who lived to be over 100 years of age.

Grief is rarely brief. It is a personal process that Mountain Shadows member Deb Brandt, a Certified Grief Support Practitioner, understands well. **Individuals may contact Deb to seek grief support through watershedmomentscoaching.com.**

Continued

Plans are underway for Deb Brandt to facilitate a series we're calling Grief 102 at Mountain Shadows Church in November. We want to provide support for anyone who is grieving, especially around the winter holidays. Please watch for further announcements about this program. Whether or not you attended Grief 101 in May, you'll be welcome to participate in Grief 102.

Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted. –Matthew 5:4

SAFETY, PREPAREDNESS & HEALTH

The Safety, Preparedness, Health (SPH) Team received an email from AZ Homeland Security May 24, 2024, acknowledging their receipt of our USDHS/FEMA grant application. All grant applications were reviewed and forwarded by AZ Homeland Security to USDHS/FEMA for their review and final determination. FEMA projects the announcement of grant awards sometime around August 23, 2024.

It's in God's hands. I want to give special thanks to the SPH Team Bill Grimm, Joy Lewis, Theresa Ashton, Vic Saraydarian; during the final moments of preparing the grant application, Dan Engeljohn and Gay Russell stepped up with their expertise. We had lots of active support, positive thoughts and prayers from our members. Trust me, we could have done it without the village!

Therese Griffin, Co-Moderator & Elder



Presbyteries de Cristo & Grand Canyon's Big Event: *Good News by Another Route*

Saturday, August 24, 2024

Mission de Sol Presbyterian Church, Tempe, AZ

Can We Talk (Listen, Share, and Care)?

By Presbytery Pastor Brad Munroe

What can we learn from *risking another way, another route*? How can we learn from each other to build bridges of loving relationship with those near and far? This year's Big Event invites you to engage the dialogue about how we can celebrate discovering new ways to connect with God, each other, and our communities. It's about people, folks!

Eu – angelion is the Greek word for “evangelism.” Literally, this compound word means “good” – “news” (*angelion* is the word that means “messenger” and gets translated as “angel.”) We need to be “good angels” as we share the love of Jesus. Is this *your* understanding of the Good News? What is your definition of the Good News?

Sharing the Good News is about showing up in loving ways, listening, creating space, advocating for justice and joy, and, yes, learning to invite people to dance the God-rhythms of the God-life. Let's begin to learn and grow toward an invitational spirit—together!

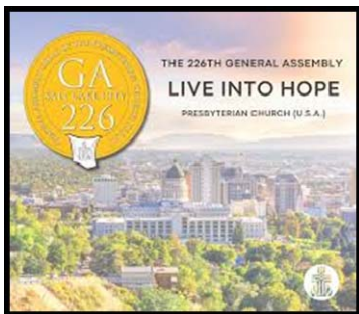
Continued

Learning - cont'd

Join your fellow Presbyterians as we hear a keynote presentation from Dr. Vince Bantu of Fuller Theological Seminary on what we can learn from the Church of the Global South. In addition to Dr. Bantu's presentation, there will be eight workshops (four taking place in the morning, four taking place in the afternoon). The Big Event will be held at Mission del Sol Presbyterian Church in Tempe on Saturday, August 24 from 9:00 – 2:00. To learn more, visit <https://www.azpresbyteries.org/> and/or email Mica Bissinger at pby.rec.office@gmail.com

Presbyterian Church (USA) General Assembly 226: Your Per Capita Offerings at Work!

Recently, the 226th General Assembly of our national church met in Salt Lake City. Commissioners and advisory delegates discerned where Christ is calling the Presbyterian Church (USA). Mountain Shadows members' per capita offerings helped offset expenses for commissioners and advisory delegates. Your generosity supported those called to serve our church at the national level. Thank you!



GIVING



Christian Generosity

Y'all **Come to the Table**. Jesus prepared for everyone a welcome table, inviting the hungry, the infirm, the sick, the naked, the rich and the poor, and anyone who might be considered an outcast or undesirable. Do we accept His invitation? It is easy to dismiss the call by citing limited resources, limited time to volunteer or other reasons to avoid the Banquet; but We, Members of MSPC and Believers, have dismissed ALL excuses as Christians who value generosity and service because,

“God will generously provide all you need.

Then you will always have everything you need and plenty left over to share with others.”

—(2 Corinthians 9:8)

WOW! With that promise, who could refuse the invitation to the Banquet Table? We, as members of the MSPC Family, already participate in the Banquet with “Christian Generosity,” with service in a myriad of ministries: Ministry of compassion and Prayers by the Deacons, Ministry of Music with singers and instrumentalists, Ministry of Facilities-Safety- Preparedness, Mission Ministry, Ministry of Human Resources, and many others. We have also invited to the table other important ministries, such as: Interfaith Community Services with our food drives and Casa Alitas with our outreach to neighbors in need of nourishment, shelter, clothing, and care. And there's more! Please read on...

Continued

CHRISTIAN GENEROSITY: COME TO THE TABLE, continued

In addition to the many ministries I've mentioned, enormous financial contributions from our members include tithes, donations and annual stewardship pledges. Christian generosity not only sustains our Church, but also assures that the Lord's Banquet Table abounds with "good things for others."

With Prayers, A. T. (Vic) Saraydarian

*Each of you must give as you have made up your mind, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver—2 Corinthians 9:7
...a thought from the Legacy Ministry*

TENDING

FINANCIAL SUMMARY

Below is a financial summary of the Operating Budget showing the most recent month, year-to-date results, the year-to-date budget, and the prior year-to-date results. Please **contact Church Treasurer Judy Mague** if you have any questions.

| Monthly Financial Report - Operating Budget | | | | |
|--|----------------------------------|---|--|---|
| June 2024 | ----- June Actual | 2024 Year-to-Date Actual | ----- Year-to-Date Budget | 2023 Year-to-Date Actual |
| Regular Offerings | \$ 15,194 | \$ 138,582 | \$ 141,819 | \$ 139,983 |
| Other Income | | 5,585 | | 18,650 |
| Total Income | \$ 15,458 | \$ 144,167 | \$ 142,500 | \$ 158,633 |
| Total Expense | \$ 23,347 | \$ 144,896 | \$ 143,549 | \$ 133,766 |
| Income less Expense | \$ (7,889) | \$ (729) | \$ (1,049) | \$ 24,867 |

Judy Mague, Treasurer

FACILITIES

Update – What's Being Fixed?



Pest Control – Finally Completed Critter Control company remove at least 12 pack-rat nests from our property, as well as a rattlesnake. A non-toxic packrat repellent spray will continue to be applied around church buildings. Also, flashing was installed or replaced under the Sanctuary and Office buildings to prevent critters from living under the buildings.

Continued

Facilities-Cont'd

Septic Tank Gross Septic & Drain bi-annual service was performed in July.

Golder Fire Department Annual Inspection Completed/Passed

Catalina Well & Pump A pipe that burst behind the pumphouse was repaired.

Everybody Loves Raymond Tree Service and **We-Do Landscaping**

These two companies provided services by cleaning up the parking lot and weed-whacking the dirt road and pumphouse area.

Twin Lakes HVAC

We currently have four HAVAC units that are over twenty years old. Through good maintenance, they are still working. However, because of age and poor efficiency they need to be replaced. A plan to replace them over the next several years is being developed.

UV Air Purifiers

Three purifiers were installed during the pandemic: two in the Sanctuary and one in the Office building. What are the benefits? UV lights help keep your indoor air quality top-notch and extend the lifespan of the HVAC system by preventing build-up from accumulating.

Therese Griffin, Facilities Moderator & Elder

MISSION

Mission Ministry Team: Paul Butler, Dan Engeljohn, Eleanor Geiger, Susan Harden, Kathy Moyer, Suzanne Pennington –Moderator, Suzie Phelps, Jeff States, Karen States

*Christ has no body but yours,
No hands, no feet on earth but yours,
Yours are the eyes with which he looks
Compassion on this world,
Yours are the feet with which he walks to do good,
Yours are the hands, with which he blesses all the world.
Yours are the hands, yours are the feet,
Yours are the eyes, you are his body.
Christ has no body now but yours,
No hands, no feet on earth but yours,
Yours are the eyes with which he looks compassion on this world.
Christ has no body now on earth but yours.*

Saint Teresa of Avila wrote this well-loved poem in 1500's. It is an emphatic call to action and vivid reminder that love is more than a feeling. (My apologies for the *Boston* hit song that is now stuck in your head!) Try this instead -

Continued

*In this world of news
I've found nothing new
I've found nothing pure
Maybe I'm just idealistic to assume that truth
Could be fact and form
That love could be a verb
Maybe I'm just a little misinformed...*

Those are some of the lyrics from the 2006 song “Let Your Love Be Strong” by Jon Foreman of *Switchfoot*. Our current “world of news” feels twisted, dark and hopeless. But we have different news to offer the world. We have the good news – make that the best news! - of the radical and revolutionary love of Jesus the Christ, light of the world. So, we go out with our hands, feet, eyes, and bodies, and shine our lights as we ...

- Plan, cook and serve meals, chop veggies, make peanut butter and jelly sandwiches, and wash dishes at Cross Streets Community.
- Gather clothing from sales, thrift shops, and our closets for our brothers and sisters served by Casa Alitas Migrant Center, Bridge Prison Ministry, and Cross Streets Community.
- Sew little dresses and shorts for our children in Africa.
- Shop for groceries for food pantries at IMPACT of Southern Arizona, Interfaith Community Services and Tri-Community Food Bank.
- Donate money to our church and additional charities so that others can do Christ’s work.

Keep being idealistic. Keep demonstrating that love *is* a verb. Keep being the Body of Christ.

Suzanne Pennington, Elder & Mission Ministry Monitor

ANNOUNCEMENTS



**Mountain Shadows’
Summer office hours are:**

**Monday through Thursday
9:00 am to 1:00 pm.
Closed Fridays**



**Submissions for the October 2024 Oracle
are due Monday, Sept 16th. Email your
submissions to mspcoffice@gmail.com.**

Please limit your articles to 300 words or

Interested in Volunteering?




Our ministries are always looking for volunteers. If you are interested in

joining one of these ministries contact the Ministry Moderator listed in the attached table. Their numbers and email are listed in the church directory.

| Ministry | Moderator |
|------------------------------|--|
| Christian Hospitality | Ginny Durand |
| Communications | Dan Engeljohn, contact person |
| Facilities | Therese Griffin |
| Finance | Clair Brooks |
| Security/Preparedness/Health | Co-Moderators Joy Lewis, Therese Griffin |
| Mission/Outreach | Suzanne Pennington |
| Personnel | Paul Butler |
| Shepherding | Karen Thomas |
| Stewardship | Vic Saraydarian |



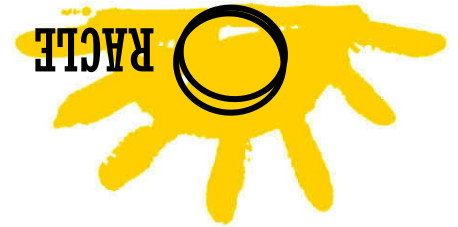
August 2024

| Sun | Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat |
|--|-----|-----|-----|--|---------------------|-----|
|  <p>Mountain Shadows Church's Summer Hours: Monday through Thursday 9:00 am to 1:00 pm. Closed Fridays</p> | | | | 1 4:00– Practicing the Pause | 2 Office Closed | 3 |
| 4 10:00 Communion In-person/ Zoom Worship | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 4:00– Practicing the Pause | 9 Office Closed | 10 |
| 11 10:00 In-person/Zoom Worship | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 4:00– Practicing the Pause | 16 Office Closed | 17 |
| 18 10:00 In-person/ Zoom Worship | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 4:00– Practicing the Pause | 23 Office Closed | 24 |
| 25 10:00 In-person/Zoom Worship | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 4:00– Practicing the Pause | 30 Office Closed | 31 |



SEPTEMBER 2024

| Sun | Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat |
|---|-----------------------------|--|-------------------------------|--|---|-----|
| <p>1</p> <p>10:00 Communion In-person/ Zoom Worship</p> | 2 | 3 | 4 | <p>5</p> <p>2:45 Choir Rehearsal</p> | 6 | 7 |
| <p>8</p> <p>10:00 In-person/Zoom Worship</p> | 9 | 10 | 11 | <p>12</p> <p>10:00 Finance/ Stewardship 2:45 Choir Rehearsal</p> | 13 | 14 |
| <p>15</p> <p>10:00 In-person/ Zoom Worship</p> | <p>16</p> <p>Oracle Due</p> | <p>17</p> <p>10:30 Handbell Rehearsal</p> | 18 | <p>19</p> <p>2:45 Choir Rehearsal</p> | <p>20</p> <p>12:30 - Deacons' Mtg</p> | 21 |
| <p>22</p> <p>10:00 In-person/Zoom Worship</p> | 23 | <p>24</p> <p>10:30— Handbell Rehearsal</p> | <p>25</p> <p>1:00 Session</p> | <p>26</p> <p>2:45 Choir Rehearsal</p> | 27 | 28 |
| <p>29</p> <p>10:00 In-person/Zoom Worship</p> | 30 | | |  | <p>Mountain Shadows Church's Hours: Monday through Friday 9:00 am to 1:00 pm.</p> | |



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Email: MountainShadowsOffice@gmail.com
Website: www.mountainshadowschurch.org

Centered in Christ, Caring for Community



Office Hours:
Mornings
Monday - Friday
Rev. Rachel M. Srubas, Pastor
(520) 664-6970
Charmaine Piane Dame, Director of Music
Judy Leonard, Office Manager
(520) 825-7858



SUNDAY WORSHIP SCHEDULE

Sunday Worship Services

10:00a.m.

Fellowship and Refreshments

11:15a.m.

Mission Statement

Mountain Shadows Presbyterian Church, a congregation of the Presbyterian Church (USA), is a Christ-centered fellowship, called to live a disciples of Jesus Christ as we care for our community and our world.

We strive to share the good news of the Gospel with each other and the surrounding communities, and to interact with love and grace with all of God's creation.