

COMMUNITY CHURCH *of the Verdes*

September 14, 2025



ORDER OF WORSHIP

Time for Centering

This morning, we begin a new sermon series on a collection of psalms known as the Psalms of Ascent. These psalms—120 through 134—were pilgrim songs, sung by Israel as they made their way up to Jerusalem for the great feasts. They are sometimes called “songs for the road,” and they are perfectly suited for us as disciples of Jesus, because the Christian life is itself a journey. Discipleship is not about arriving all at once, but about walking with God step by step, learning to trust Him across all the varied terrain of life. These psalms give voice to the whole range of what that journey feels like—the joy and anticipation, but also the weariness, the longing, and the struggles along the way. They remind us that God meets us not only in the temple or on the mountaintop, but also in the valleys, in the ordinary days, and even in the places of deep distress.

Our series through these psalms will take us on this journey together, tracing the path of discipleship as it unfolds in song. And it all begins with Psalm 120. This first psalm of ascent doesn't begin with celebration or arrival, but with lament. It doesn't open with shouts of joy or praise, but with an acknowledgment of disillusionment. The psalmist cries out from a place of trouble, surrounded by lies and conflict. That's where discipleship always starts—by facing the truth about where we really are and lifting our cry to the Lord. Before we can ascend, we must first acknowledge our need for God's rescue. Psalm 120 reminds us that the journey of faith begins in honesty and dependence, and it sets our feet on the path that leads us upward, closer to God and to His peace.

Jesus echoes this same invitation in Matthew 11:28–30:

“Are you tired? Worn out? Burned out on religion? Come to me. Get away with me and you'll recover your life. I'll show you how to take a real rest. Walk with me and work with me—watch how I do it. Learn the unforced rhythms of grace. I won't lay anything heavy or ill-fitting on you. Keep company with me and you'll learn to live freely and lightly.” (The Message)

Order of Worship

Prelude

Welcome & Announcements

Introit

Spirit of Comfort

(Nolan)

**Call to Worship*

Pastor: In our distress, we call to the Lord.

People: And He hears us!

Pastor: We come from places of conflict and weariness,

People: Seeking God's peace and presence.

Pastor: The Lord is our refuge and our deliverer.

People: He is faithful and full of mercy.

Pastor: Come, pilgrims of faith,

People: Let us lift our eyes to the God who call us on the journey.

All: Together, we worship the Lord who hears, rescues, and leads us!

**Hymn of Praise*

I've Got Peace Like a River

#530

Call to Confession

Prayer of Confession

Gracious God, on Whom we rely for life and its meaning: We confess that we have sinned against you by abandoning hope, by failing to hear and accept your promises, by relying on ourselves to be both the source and the object of our faith. Forgive us, we pray. Open once more our hearts to your mercy, our minds to your promise, and our hands to the work you call us to do for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

Silent Confession

**Please stand as you are able*

#306

Hear our prayer, O Lord, hear our prayer, O Lord, incline thine ear to us, and grant us thy peace, Amen.

Assurance of Pardon

Gloria Patri

#35

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost; as it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

**Passing of the Peace*

Call to Offering

Offertory

Father of Light

(Courtney)

**Doxology*

Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow

#46

*Praise God from whom all blessings flow; Praise Him, all creatures here below;
Praise Him above, ye heavenly host: Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Amen.*

**Prayer of Dedication*

Pastoral Prayer and Lord's Prayer

Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory, forever. Amen.

Scripture

Psalm 120

¹ In my distress I cry to the LORD, that he may answer me: ² “Deliver me, O LORD, from lying lips, from a deceitful tongue.” ³ What shall be given to you? And what more shall be done to you, you deceitful tongue? ⁴ A warrior’s sharp arrows, with glowing coals of the broom tree! ⁵ Woe is me, that I am an alien in Meshech, that I must live among the tents of Kedar. ⁶ Too long have I had my dwelling among those who hate peace. ⁷ I am for peace, but when I speak, they are for war.

Leader: *The Word of the Lord.*

People: *Thanks be to God.*

Anthem

Peace

(arr. Nichols)

Sermon "The Longing for Peace"

Time of Reflection

**Closing Hymn* *It Is Well with My Soul* #561

**Charge and Benediction*

**Closing Response* *Peace Go with You* (Nolan)

**Postlude*

Music for today's worship includes:

Prelude: I Love to Tell the Story (Fischer), Praise, My Soul, the King of Heaven (Goss), Lord, Listen to Your Children (arr. Schrader)

Time of Reflection: Wonderful Peace (Cooper)

Postlude: The Love of God (Lehman)

Trio: Debby Wojtas, Sara Bruton, Jeffrey Stevens

Volunteers assisting with worship today:

Communion Table: Elaine Betsch

Fellowship: Charla Smith and Tom Reinarts

Flower Committee: Sharon Severson, Diane Spang, Jennifer Ristau, Linda Paulos

Lector: Nancy Sheppard

Tellers: Judy Sevier and Tom Spaeth

Ushers: Denny & Terri Meyers

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Welcome members and guests! If you are visiting for the first time, please stop by our badge table for a welcome gift. Visit our website www.verdefaith.org for additional information. **Please complete the Fellowship Pad** at the end of each pew; pass it along, and back. **Fellowship is held following worship** in Founders Hall.

Attendance at last Sunday's service was 91; 350 joined online.

Today's flowers were donated by: Kathie Sankey: In memory of her dad Hal Higgs.

Stephen Ministers are trained, ready to listen, care, encourage, pray, and help through a crisis or difficult time. Contact one of our Leaders, Donna Angiolillo, Glenda Hage, Debbie Etcheson, John Pasnau, Dan or Judy Villanueva.

In need of prayers for you, your family, or friends? Contact Joan Brunner at 480-471-7274, or Pastor Steve with requests, or if you would like to serve on the team.

AA meetings are held weekly on Mondays at 8:00 am in the library.

PAL (Parents of Addicted Loved Ones) meetings are held every other Tuesday at 6:30 pm in the library. Questions? Contact Greg & Weezy Smith at lift5800@gmail.com.
Meetings have concluded for the season.

Spiritual Theme in Literature

The Spiritual Themes in Literature book discussion will be led by Winnie Leathers and will begin on Thursday, December 11. Watch for more details in late September.

Explore our new website at verdefaith.org

Here are its many benefits:

Livestream of the Sunday Service and the Sermon Archive so everyone can hear the Word of God

Weekly Announcements including Attendance, Mission Drives, Ministries and Finance

Calendar that comes alive with detailed information, photos and graphics to highlight all of our activities

Registration for events such as concerts and retreats including ticket payments

COMING SOON:

Photo Directory access to help members easily identify each other and their church connections

Online Giving in a simple, secure way so anyone can provide critical support for our Operation and Mission Outreach. If you know someone who might be interested in joining the church, invite them to hear Pastor Steve's inspirational sermons and encourage them to explore the new website.

The website will engage and educate them about our Worship, Mission Outreach, Prayer, Counseling, Education programs, Music, our beautiful campus, and much more.

This is one way we will grow and nourish our church in Christ's name. Amen!



NEW WEBSITE LAUNCHED!

Mission Drives: The Mission Committee is grateful to everyone who donated to our Monthly Mission Drives for various charities during the season. We will continue to collect food for the Extended Hands Food Bank and FHCMA Food Closet throughout the summer.



MISSIONS



Lunch making and delivery for Justa Center: The third Thursday of the month at 9:00am.



FHCMA Food Closet: toothpaste, canned fruit, Saltine, and Ritz crackers.



Extended Hands Food Bank: non-perishable food items.



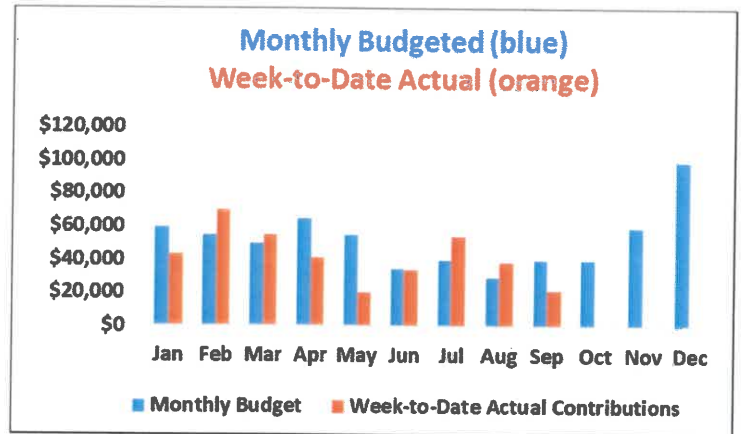
Pad Project Ministry: *will resume in the Fall.*

Prayer Shawl Ministry: *will resume in the Fall.*

OPERATING FUND

YTD Actual contributions
through September 7 were
\$381,544

YTD Budgeted contributions
through September 7 were
\$400,000



Thank you for your continuing support!

Please consider these other funds open to special giving in your estate planning...

Legacy Endowment Fund – current balance \$366,320

The purpose of the Endowment Fund is to expand and enrich the mission of the congregation, to initiate new ministries or significantly change the scope of existing ministries. No more than 5% of the three year average fund assets may be distributed in any one year.

Memorial Garden Fund – current balance \$480,296

The purpose of the Memorial Garden Fund is to provide for the perpetual operation and maintenance of the Memorial Garden. Established in 1990, the Memorial Garden provides a resting place for the interment of the ashes of loved ones. It is open to current and former members and residents of Rio and Tonto Verde.

Scholarship Fund – current balance \$15,148

The Scholarship Fund promotes scholarships among young people involved in institutions we support through Mission giving. Recipients are chosen from applicants who are demonstrating academic excellence, commitment, and service in or to one of the following non-profit institutions or community: Fellowship of Christian Athletes (FCA), NPH (formerly Friends of the Orphans), Sunshine Acres. The Scholarship Fund's sole support is contributions from our members. Donors cannot be related to recipients.

Did you know?... If you are age 70 1/2 or older, you can make a gift from your IRA to support the church. It will not add to your federal taxable income; It counts toward your required minimum distribution, and allows you to experience a tax benefit, even if you do not itemize deductions. You should discuss any such gifts, before making them, with your financial advisor.

The church is very appreciative of gifts from trusts, foundations, and stocks. Occasionally, these gifts are received with no indication of who the donor is. So that we may properly recognize and record the gift, we ask that you either notify the church office or have your financial representative document the donor {and intent} when it is sent to us.

WEEKLY CALENDAR

Monday, September 15

8:00am AA Meeting (Library)

Tuesday, September 16

No activities scheduled

Wednesday, September 17

4:00pm Trio Rehearsal (Sanctuary)

Thursday, September 18

9:00am Justa Center Sandwich Making (Founders Hall)

Friday, September 19

No activities scheduled

Saturday, September 20

No activities scheduled

Sunday, September 21

8:30am Worship Service (Sanctuary)

9:30am Fellowship (Founders Hall)

10:00am St. Dominic (Sanctuary)

2025-2026

Schedule of Events



Nov. 17	4 pm	Speaker - Mike Bussey
Nov. 17	5 pm	Annual Fall Dinner
Jan. 16	7 pm	Concert - Scott Keo Big Band Show <i>(Michael Bublé Tribute Artist)</i>
Jan. 26	4 pm	Speaker - Steve Swensen, MD
Jan. 31	9 am	Men's Retreat—Speaker Pastor Joel Johnson
Feb. 2	4 pm	Speaker - Kim Humphrey
Feb. 20	7pm	Concert—Yachtzilla <i>(Hits from the 60's & 70's)</i>
Feb. 23	4 pm	Speaker—Babs Plunkett
Mar. 8	4 pm	Speaker - Amy Hazel
Mar. 13	7 pm	Concert - Crystal Starks <i>(Celebrating Legendary Women Artists)</i>
Mar. 16	4 pm	Speaker - Kerry Sanders

***All Events are in the Sanctuary**

****Lectures are free**

I've Got Peace Like a River

530

1. I've got peace like a riv - er, I've got peace like a
 2. I've got joy like a foun- tain, I've got joy like a
 3. I've got love like an o- cean, I've got love like an

riv - er, I've got peace like a riv - er in my
 foun- tain, I've got joy like a foun- tain in my
 o - cean, I've got love like an o- cean in my

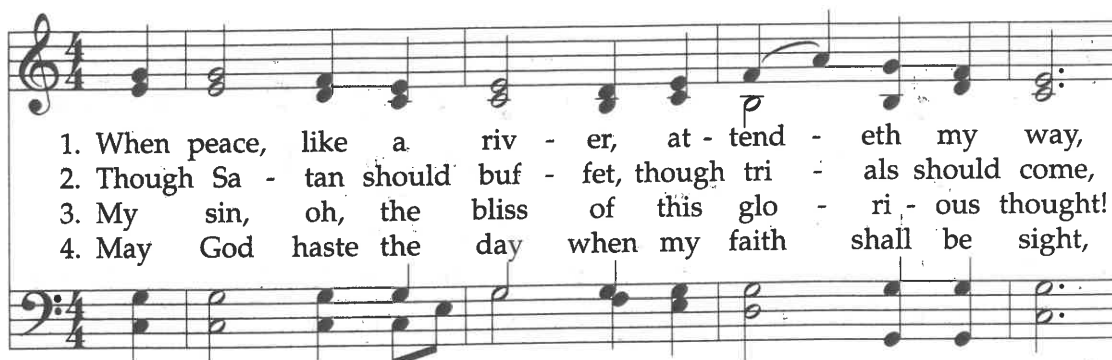
soul. I've got riv - er in my soul.
 soul. I've got foun- tain in my soul.
 soul. I've got o- cean in my soul.

WORDS: African-American spiritual
 MUSIC: African-American spiritual

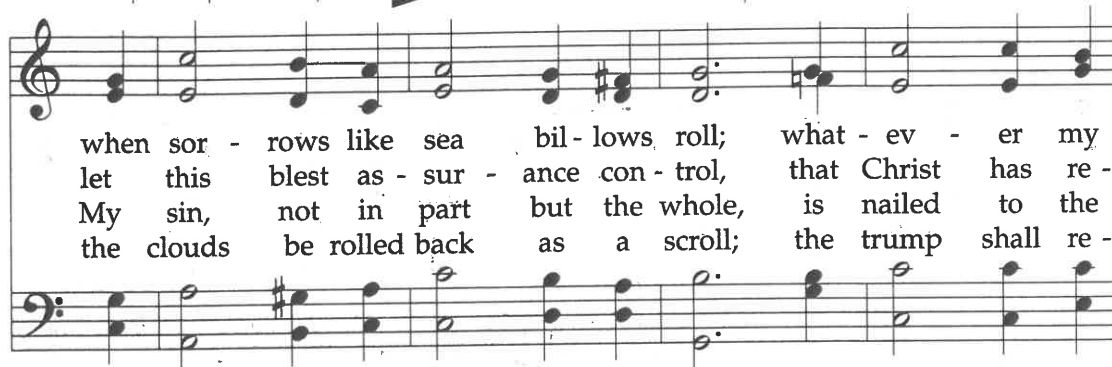
PEACE LIKE A RIVER
 77.10

It Is Well with My Soul

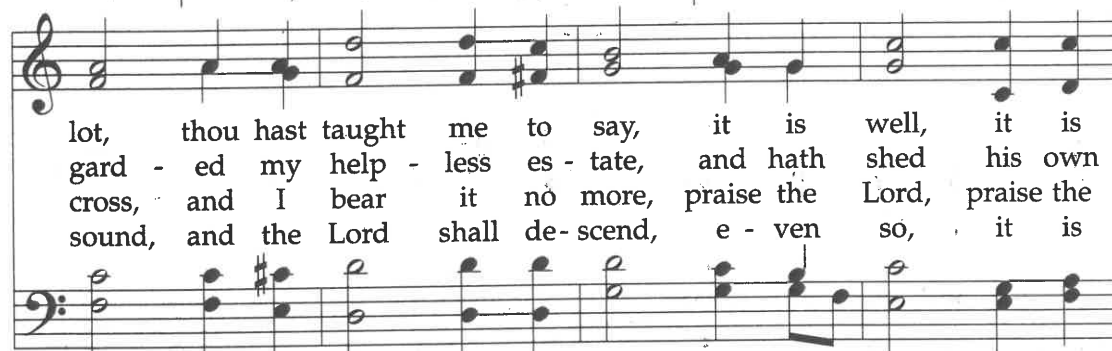
561



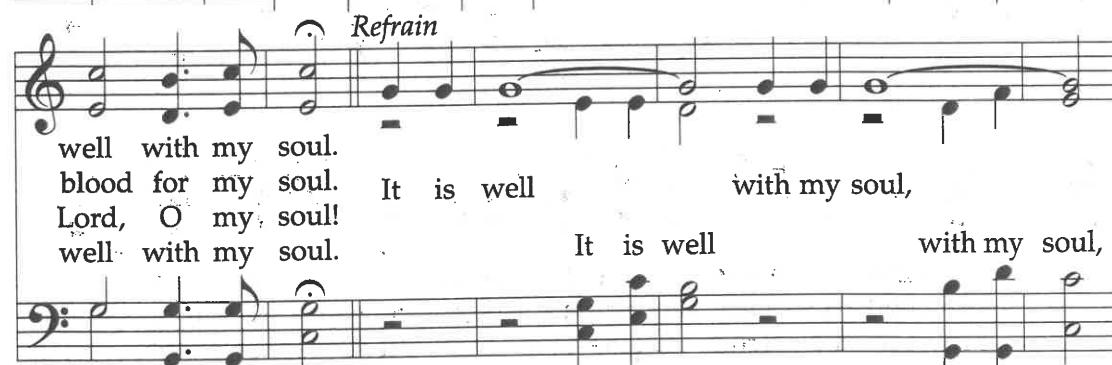
1. When peace, like a riv - er, at - tend - eth my way,
 2. Though Sa - tan should buf - fet, though tri - als should come,
 3. My sin, oh, the bliss of this glo - ri - ous thought!
 4. May God haste the day when my faith shall be sight,



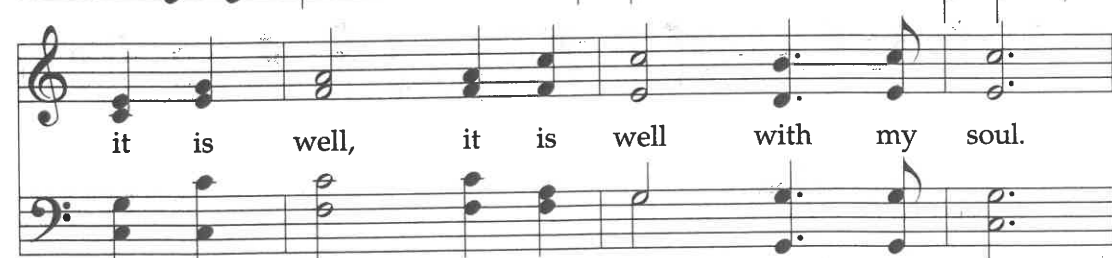
when sor - rows like sea bil - lows roll; what - ev - er my
 let this blest as - sur - ance con - trol, that Christ has re -
 My sin, not in part but the whole, is nailed to the
 the clouds be rolled back as a scroll; the trump shall re -



lot, thou hast taught me to say, it is well, it is
 gard - ed my help - less es - tate, and hath shed his own
 cross, and I bear it no more, praise the Lord, praise the
 sound, and the Lord shall de - scend, e - ven so, it is



Refrain
 well with my soul.
 blood for my soul. It is well with my soul,
 Lord, O my soul!
 well with my soul. It is well with my soul,



it is well, it is well with my soul.

WORDS: Horatio G. Spafford, 1873
 MUSIC: Philip P. Bliss, 1876

VILLE DU HAVRE
 11 8.11 9 w. refrain



Vision Statement

***To be a Christ centered church that inspires individuals to grow closer to God
and to serve others with loving and compassionate hearts.***

Faith Statement ~ The Apostles' Creed

I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth. And in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord; who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried; he descended into hell; the third day he rose again from the dead; he ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead. I believe in the Holy Ghost; the holy catholic Church; the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting. Amen.

Community Church of the Verdes

***25603 Danny Lane, Suite 1
Rio Verde, Arizona 85263***

Office Hours: Monday-Thursday 9:00am-3:00pm

Friday — 9:00am — 12:30pm

Telephone: (480) 471-7239

www.verdefaith.org

Pastor: Rev. Stephen Beard

Pastor's cell: (732)546-5332

Pastor's email: pastor@verdefaith.org

Director of Music: Tom Wojtas

Office Manager: Tami Burke

A/V Operator: Skyler Evans

Vocalists: Debby Wojtas, Jeffrey Stevens, Sara Bruton

Board of Trustees

Class of 2026

Jody Anschutz (Fellowship)

Gary Etcheson (Facilities)

Dan Larson (Finance)

Class of 2027

Karla Lalim (President)

Nancy Lowe (Mission)

Jared Reisinger (Technology)

Class of 2028

Pat Peterson (Education)

Nancy Sheppard (Worship)

Julie Peacock (Membership)



Affiliated with the International Council of Community Churches

We are a Stephen Ministry Congregation

Find us on Facebook "Community Church of the Verdes"