

COMMUNITY CHURCH *of the Verdes*

December 21, 2025



ORDER OF WORSHIP

Time for Centering

“O Little Town of Bethlehem” was written in 1868 by Phillips Brooks, an Episcopal priest who was deeply shaped by a Christmas Eve visit to Bethlehem several years earlier. Walking the narrow streets and worshiping near the place traditionally believed to be Jesus’ birth, Brooks was struck not by grandeur, but by the quiet holiness of the moment. That memory stayed with him and later became the text of this beloved hymn, originally written for the children of his congregation.

The hymn draws our attention to the humility of Bethlehem and to the mystery of the Incarnation — God entering the world not in power or spectacle, but in silence and love. Its words remind us that the promise of Christmas is not only a past event, but a present invitation: that in stillness, humility, and open hearts, “the dear Christ enters in.”

Order of Worship

Prelude

Welcome & Announcements

Introit

Blessing "Peace"

(Dengler)

Lighting of the Advent Wreath

Let us pray together: (unison)

Teach us to love, O Lord. May we always remember to put you first as we follow Christ's footsteps, that we may know your love and show it in our lives. As we prepare for our celebration of Jesus' birth, also fill our hearts with love for the world, that all may know your love and the one whom you have sent, your son, our Savior. Amen.

**Hymn of Praise*

The First Noel

#151

Call to Confession

Prayer of Confession (spoken in unison)

Emmanuel, You love us, but we do not love You fully. You call, but we do not listen. In these hectic days, we easily become wrapped in our own concerns, we rush by those in need, and miss the sounds of heaven rejoicing. We are lost in a fever of busyness that has separated us from You. Confront us with our sin that we may repent and receive the forgiveness that carries us home to You. Amen.

Silent Confession

Prayer Response

Hear Our Prayer, O Lord

#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

***Congregational Response** *O Come, Let Us Adore Him* #148
*O come, let us adore Him, O come, let us adore Him, O come let us adore Him,
Christ the Lord.*

***Passing of the Peace**

Call to Offering

Offertory *Go, Tell It on the Mountain* (arr. Helvey)

***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 Luke 2: 8-14

⁸ Now in that same region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. ⁹ Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. ¹⁰ But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid, for see, I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: ¹¹ to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. ¹² This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger." ¹³ And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, ¹⁴ "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors!"

Leader: *The Word of the Lord.*

People: ***Thanks be to God.***

Anthem *Peace, Peace, Peace with O Come, O Come, Emmanuel* (arr. Kingsmore)

Sermon "Songs of the Season: O Little Town of Bethlehem"

Time of Reflection

<i>*Closing Hymn</i>	<i>O Little Town of Bethlehem</i>	<i>#144</i>
<i>Charge and Benediction</i>		
<i>*Closing Response</i>	<i>One Candle Is Lit (Verse 4)</i>	<i>#128</i>
<i>*Postlude</i>		

Music for today's worship includes:

Prelude: O Come, All Ye Faithful *with* O Come, Little Children (arr. Torrants), Jesu Bambino (arr. Wolaver), Adore (arr. Clydesdale)

Time of Reflection: It Came upon the Midnight Clear (arr. Kingsmore)

Postlude: While Shepherds Watched Their Flocks #154

Trio: Debby Wojtas, Sara Bruton, Jeffrey Stevens

Volunteers assisting with worship today:

Communion Table: Pat Strachan

Badge Table: Frank and Lori Bennett

Fellowship: Glenda Hage, Terri Meyers and Sandy Palmer

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

Lector: Darrel Brenner

Tellers: Judy Sevier and Marilyn Perry

Ushers: Bucky & Suzanne Disel

Advent Readers: Fred & Jody Anschutz

Road Signs: Ric Doerflinger

Ever thought about Becoming a Stephen Minister?

Community Church of the Verdes will be training another class of Stephen Ministers on January 12—January 23, 2026. Stephen Ministers work alongside our pastors to care, encourage, and provide emotional and spiritual support to people who are going through a difficult time, such as grief, hospitalization, terminal illness, relocation, chronic illness, or loneliness. If you have gifts for caring, encouragement, and listening, please begin to prayerfully consider whether you might want to be a part of this exciting ministry. If you think you might be interested, talk with one of our Stephen Ministry Leaders:

Donna Angiolillo, Debbie Etcheson, Glenda Hage, John Pasnau or Danny and Judy Villanueva.





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: Monday's at 1:00pm

Prayer Shawl Ministry: 2nd Friday of the month @ 9:00am

December Mission Drive Harvest Compassion Center

This month, we are collecting items for **Harvest Compassion Center**. They support the underserved in Phoenix in Christ's name with respect and compassion by providing food, clothing, and hygiene items.

Please help by donating:

- **Ramen**
- **Cereal**
- **Toilet paper**



Items can be placed in the Blue Bin in the Narthex or in the church office doorway.

NEW: For easy Amazon ordering, contact Nancy Lowe at 203-395-9872 or ntart94@gmail.com Thank you!

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 207; 165 joined online.

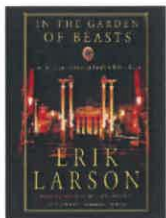
Today's flowers were donated by: Sharon & Rog Severson: In celebration of their birthdays.

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 8:00am 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 will start again in December.*



SPIRITUAL THEME IN LITERATURE

The Spiritual Theme in Literature book discussion will be led by Winnie Leathers. The Book Club meets the second Thursday of each month in the library. The book for **December** is In The Garden of Beasts by Erik Larson.

January—*The Henna Artist* by Alka Joshi; **February**—*The Midnight Library* by Matt Haig; **March**—*American Dirt* by Jeanine Cummins; **April**—*Crying in H Mart* by Michelle Zauner; **May**—*Before We Were Yours* by Lisa Wingate.

All are welcome.



BIBLE STUDY WITH ED CARPENTER

Thursday Bible study with Ed Carpenter will be in Founders' Hall at 7:30am and 4:00pm. Both sessions are covering the same material. The subject will be the Gospel of John. All are welcome.

FROM THE NOMINATING COMMITTEE...

Dear Members of the Church of the Verdes,

We are excited to share that several Trustee positions are now open for nomination, and we invite you to consider whether this is your moment to step forward in service.

We are currently seeking nominees for the following Trustee roles:

- **Education**
- **Finance**
- **Fellowship**
- **Facilities**

If you feel inspired to apply your gifts, or know someone whose leadership would strengthen our community, we encourage you to volunteer your name or submit a nomination.

Thank you for considering this important opportunity to help shape the future of our church.

Warm regards,

The Nominating Committee

Church of the Verdes

OPERATING FUND

YTD Actual contributions
through December 14 were
\$591,254

YTD Budgeted contributions
through December 14 were
\$605,000



Support CCV Ministries & Missions with Online Giving

Thank you for your continuing support!

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

Legacy Endowment Fund – current balance \$381,952

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 \$482,645

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 \$23,653

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, December 22

8:00am AA Meeting (Library)

1:00 PAD Project (Sunday School Room)

Tuesday, December 23

No activities scheduled

Wednesday, December 24

Christmas Eve—Office closed

7:00pm Candlelight Christmas Eve Service (Sanctuary)

Thursday, December 25

Christmas Day—Office Closed

Friday, December 26

Office Closed

Saturday, December 27

No activities scheduled

Sunday, December 28

8:30am Worship Service (Sanctuary)

9:30am Fellowship (Founders Hall)

10:00am St. Dominic (Sanctuary)

11:00am St. Dominic Fellowship (Founders Hall)



COMMUNITY CHURCH *of the* **Verdes**

Performing Arts Committee

Presents

Live Concerts

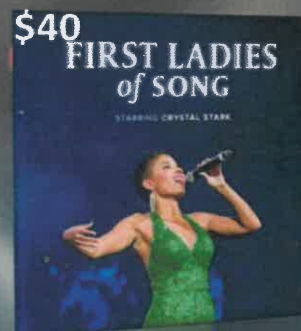
All Concerts at 7pm



Scott Keo
Michael Bublé Tribute
January 16, 2026



Yachtzilla
Classic Soft Rock
February 20, 2026



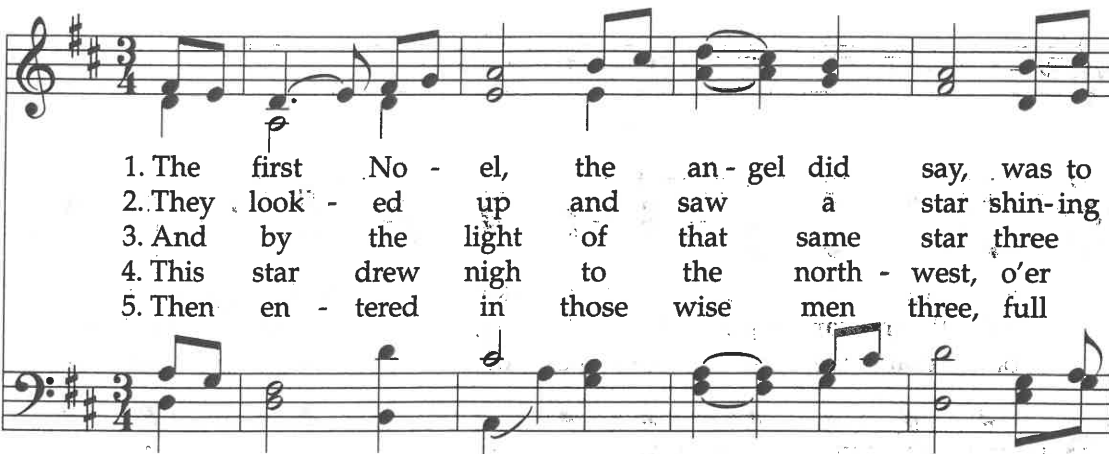
Crystal Stark
Iconic Women Artists
March 13, 2026

3—Concert
Bundle \$100

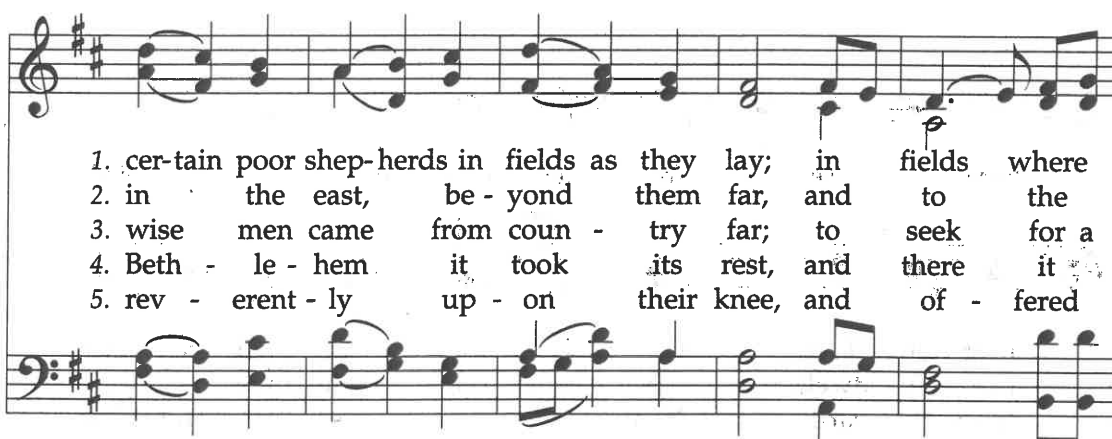
Scan for more details



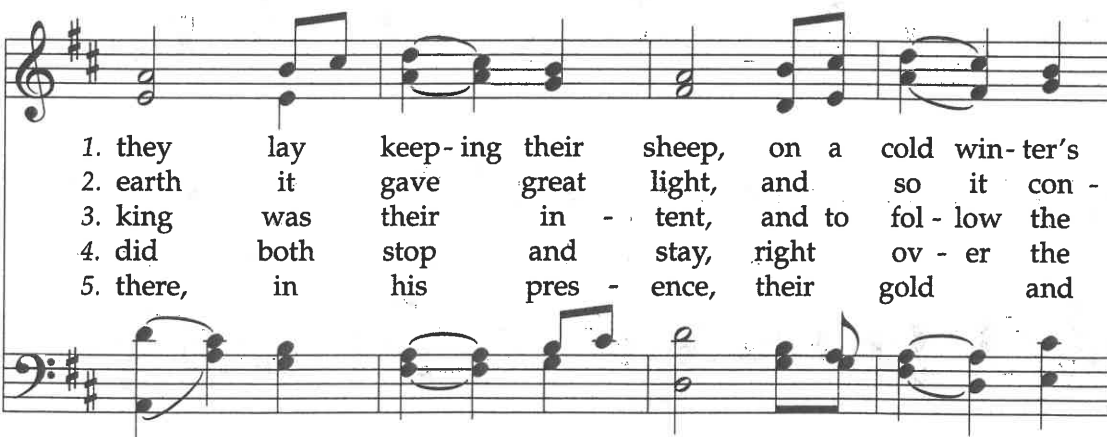
The First Noel



1. The first No - el, the an - gel did say, was to
 2. They look - ed up and saw a star shin - ing
 3. And by the light of that same star three
 4. This star drew nigh to the north - west, o'er
 5. Then en - tered in those wise men three, full



1. cer - tain poor shep - herds in fields as they lay; in fields where
 2. in the east, be - yond them far, and to the
 3. wise men came from coun - try far; to seek for a
 4. Beth - le - hem it took its rest, and there it
 5. rev - erent - ly up - on their knee, and of - fered



1. they lay keep - ing their sheep, on a cold win - ter's
 2. earth it gave great light, and so it con -
 3. king was their in - tent, and to fol - low the
 4. did both stop and stay, right ov - er the
 5. there, in his pres - ence, their gold and

WORDS: Traditional English carol (17th century)
 MUSIC: Traditional English melody; desc. Healey Willan, 1926

THE FIRST NOEL
 Irr. w. refrain

Desc. used by permission of Oxford University Press

BIRTH

Descant

No - el, No - el, No -

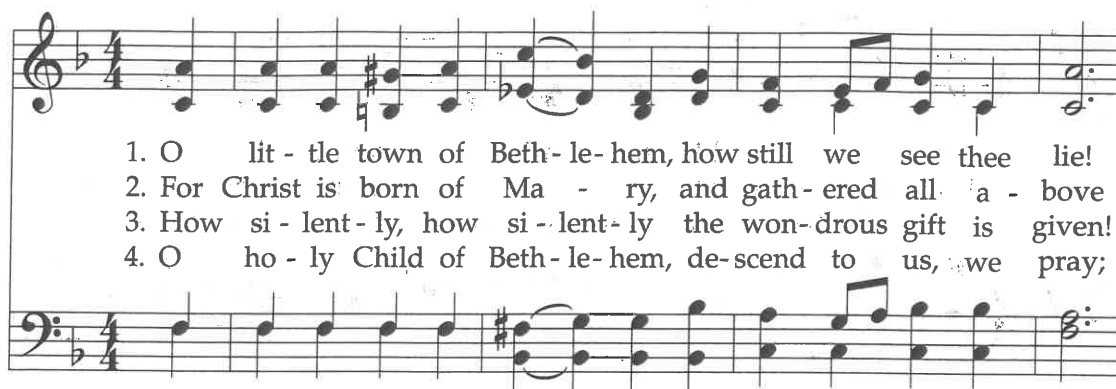
Refrain

1. night that was so deep.
 2. tin-ued both day and night.
 3. star wher - ev - er it went. No - el, No - el, No -
 4. place where Je - sus lay.
 5. myrrh and frank - in - cense.

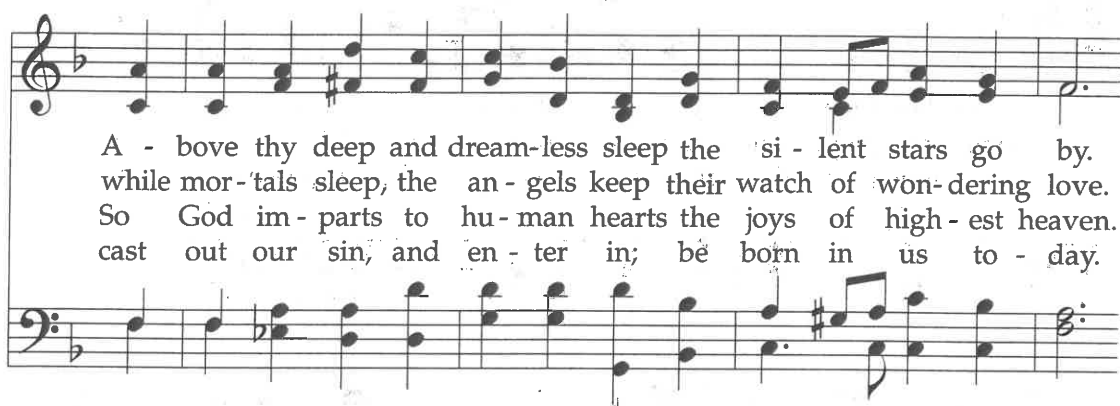
el, No - el, born is the King of Is - ra - el.

el, No - el, born is the King of Is - ra - el.

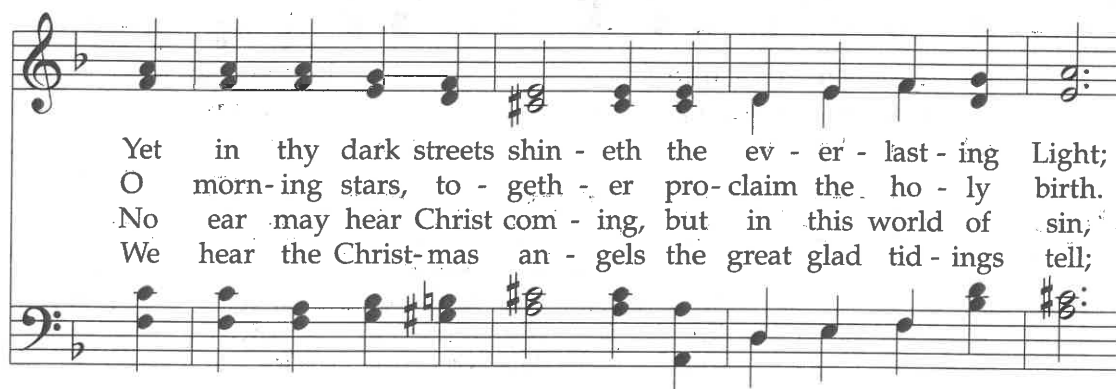
O Little Town of Bethlehem



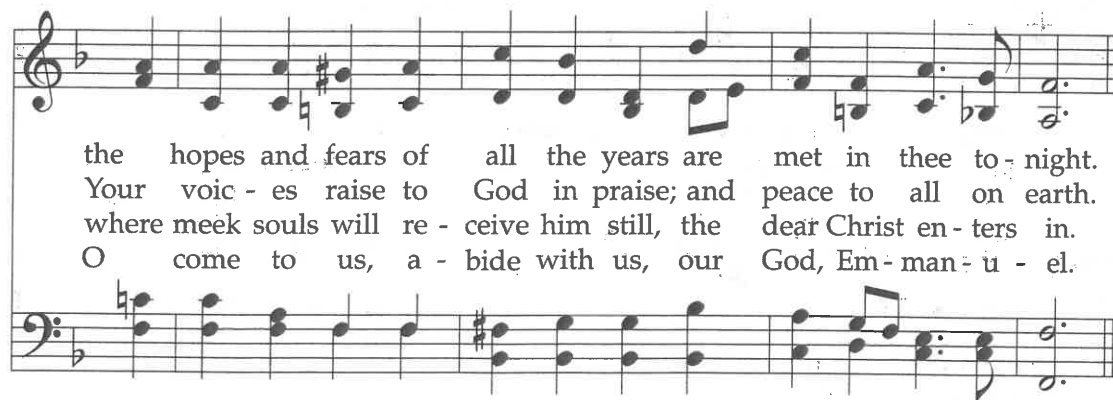
1. O lit - tle town of Beth - le - hem, how still we see thee lie!
 2. For Christ is born of Ma - ry, and gath - ered all a - bove
 3. How si - lent - ly, how si - lent - ly the won - drous gift is given!
 4. O ho - ly Child of Beth - le - hem, de - scend to us, we pray;



A - bove thy deep and dream - less sleep the si - lent stars go by.
 while mor - tals sleep, the an - gels keep their watch of won - dering love.
 So God im - parts to hu - man hearts the joys of high - est heaven.
 cast out our sin, and en - ter in; be born in us to - day.



Yet in thy dark streets shin - eth the ev - er - last - ing Light;
 O morn - ing stars, to - geth - er pro - claim the ho - ly birth.
 No ear may hear Christ com - ing, but in this world of sin,
 We hear the Christ - mas an - gels the great glad tid - ings tell;



the hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee to - night.
 Your voic - es raise to God in praise; and peace to all on earth.
 where meek souls will re - ceive him still, the dear Christ en - ters in.
 O come to us, a - bide with us, our God, Em - man - u - el.



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 Spirit, 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 living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit; 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 — 12:00pm

Telephone: (480) 471-7239

www.verdefaith.org

Pastor: Rev. Stephen Beard

Pastor's cell: (732)546-5332

Pastor's email: sbeard@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"