



## RVF FAMILY NEWSLETTER

1st Quarter • 2021



# RVF

## FAMILY NEWS

### STAFF

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Courtney Zimmerman

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Stephanie Gotzman  
Allie Harrington  
Jennifer Platt  
Stephanie Campbell  
Jessica Combs  
Karen Brewster

### MISSION COUNCIL

Courtney Zimmerman  
Ron Ashpole  
Kelly Harrington  
Suzzane Pech  
Sarah Carlyle



## INTRODUCTION

At RVF we're always looking for ways to effectively communicate to the congregation what God is doing in our church. Currently we do that through our website, the church app, email lists, announcements, and social media. Sometimes, however, a short announcement or Facebook post isn't sufficient. In light of this, we have compiled a family newsletter to give our ministry leaders a little more space to share what God is doing at RVF.

## MISSION STATEMENT

We are a fellowship of believers whose desire is to be a Faithful Presence and a Prophetic Witness to Jesus and His kingdom in our neighborhoods and the world.

## CONTACT US

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# PASTOR'S LETTER



*Pastor Kenner Gotzman*

In Genesis chapter one we read that on the fourth day of creation God placed the sun and the moon in the sky. When we think of the sun and the moon, our minds automatically go to the light they give us and the time of day they appear to us—morning and evening. As I read the account this week of Genesis, verse 14 also points out that the sun and the moon are for “signs and for seasons, and for days and years....” We have morning and evening, days and weeks, months and years. There is a rhythm to creation—a rhythm we are created for and invited to participate in. Within these rhythms we experience the “regularities of spring birth, summer growth, autumn harvest, and winter sleep” (Peterson 68).

One of the most challenging things this past year has been the interruption, or complete loss of, our cultural rhythms. Our weekly cadence of work, school, and church has been consistently inconsistent. Our seasonal rhythms of sporting events, concerts, and vacations have been postponed or canceled. The last year has felt like an extended season of “winter sleep,” leaving a longing for “spring birth.”

Yet in spite of all that has transpired with our cultural rhythms, the rhythms of creation continue. This week as I walked through our neighborhood, the air was a little warmer, the sun a little brighter, the colors a little more vibrant—“spring birth” is upon us! Solomon himself rejoiced in this cycle of creation when he wrote, “...for behold, the winter is past; the rain is over and gone. The flowers appear on the earth, the time of singing has come, and the voice of the turtledove is heard in our land.” (Song of Solomon

2:11-12). Spring brings us a sense of relief and optimism: relief from the long, cold winter as the sun stays up a little longer each day; and optimism of what the future may hold as the blossoms on the trees begin to burst forth.

As we celebrated the resurrection of Jesus this past weekend, I felt many of the same things spring brings: relief and optimism. New creation is dawning, Christ is risen, and His Spirit has been given. New life is breaking into the world, into our neighborhoods, and into our church. As we worshipped through food and fellowship, song and Scripture, there was relief in being together once more. We could sense the light at the end of a very long winter. There was a feeling of optimism as we saw the seeds of new life birth forth in the waters of baptism.

As we enter into the creation rhythm of spring, it is our prayer that you too would have a feeling of relief and a sense of optimism for the future. Each season has its purpose in creation, in the church, and in our individual lives, but this spring may we rejoice in the beauty of what this seasons brings us! May the sun shine a little warmer and the air smell a little sweeter as we worship Jesus and look forward to “summer growth” and the “fall harvest” in our lives, in our church, and in the world.

Grace and Peace,

# BLESSING & OPPORTUNITY



*Michael Combs*

**They will give a testimony of Your great goodness  
and will joyfully sing of Your righteousness.  
Psalm 145:7**

Our Father's generosity has been seen in abundance through his people at RVF in the 1st quarter of 2021. Even with a 10% increase in budget year over year, our actual offerings have come in at 144% of our projected offerings. If you combine that with our spending, which only reached 95% of our planned budget, we came in with a **\$76,000 surplus**. As the scripture above says, we find ourselves praising God for his continued provision for his church and the neighborhood we serve!

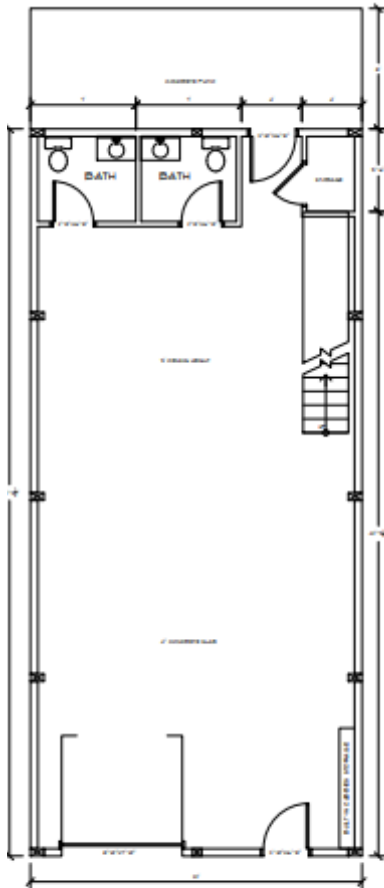
2021 - 1st Quarter Financials  
*Budgeted Offerings:* \$154,400  
*Actual Offerings:* \$223,192  
*Budgeted Expenses:* \$154,400  
*Actual Expenses:* \$146,955  
*Net:* \$76,237

We are not fans of hoarding money at RVF, so we are praying for wisdom as we make plans for the excess. One of the convictions we still have is to continue to set aside money for the purchase of a permanent home here in West Medford. As Kenner mentioned recently, the Ivy Street Chapel will soon be placed on the market, and we are in a very good financial position because of the generosity God has given this church.

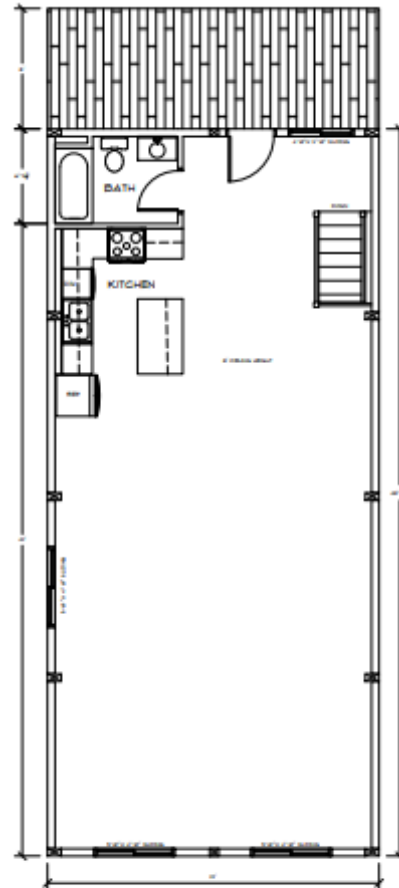
There are also other opportunities to use these extra funds to expand the kingdom in the neighborhood. One of those ways is partnering with Helping Hands International and their 2021 Southern Oregon Makeover Project. This year their project is very close to our hearts. The plan is to build a two-story After School Annex/Ministry Center for Westside Compassionate Ministries. This new annex will provide additional space for Ben, Tara, and their faithful volunteers to continue tutoring and Bible teaching programs for the kids at Washington Elementary and give the Heideggers use of the Yellow House as just their space, which is very well deserved and needed! The cost of the project is approximately \$150,000. Helping Hands has begun a giving campaign to raise \$100,000 in 100 days to complete this project. If you'd like to volunteer on the project, head to [www.helpinghandsinternational.com/volunteer](http://www.helpinghandsinternational.com/volunteer); and if you'd like to give financially, head to [www.helpinghandsinternational.com/donate](http://www.helpinghandsinternational.com/donate) and direct it to the Southern Oregon Makeover. Thank you for an incredibly generous quarter. We ask that you'll continue to give faithfully and pray that as Elders and leaders of the church we will use it wisely to the Glory of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

# PRAYER POINTS FOR WESTSIDE REMODEL

- Provision for the project
- Volunteers to help reduce costs
- Continued favor with Washington Elementary



1 FIRST FLOOR PLAN



2 SECOND FLOOR PLAN



# EXCITING FUTURE

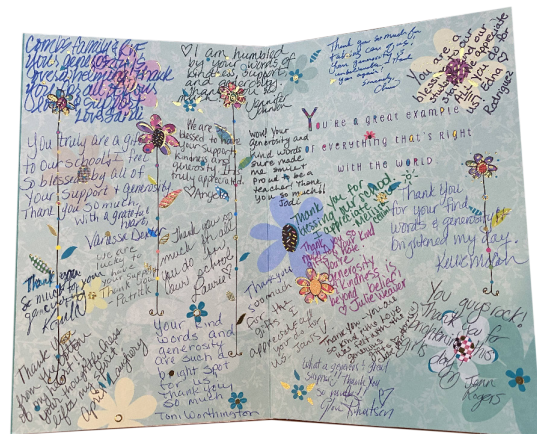
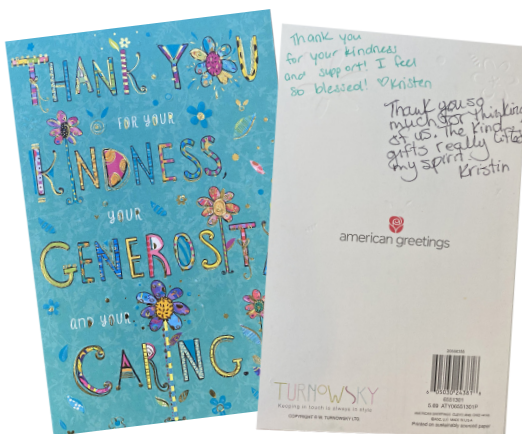


*Billy Hague*

The first quarter of this year flew by. The generosity and flexibility of our church continues to encourage and amaze me. One of the highlights of the first quarter was being able to give gifts to all the teachers and staff at Washington Elementary. Obviously, the pandemic has hindered our ability to be in regular contact with the neighborhood; and since we could not do our normal neighborhood Easter breakfast, this was a small way to maintain contact with a group of people with whom we have worked hard to have relationship. Each staff member received a hand written note from someone within our church (shoutout to the missional communities), a gift card to Outsider Coffee, a gift card to Jose's Tacos, and a small houseplant. All this was made possible by your generosity. I have some ideas and have been praying through how we can engage the community more fully once again now that some Covid restrictions are

lifting and life is returning to the neighborhood as the weather changes and people are outside again. I am excited for what the future holds for our church in this area and excited to see how God uses all of us for His mission in West Medford. While this last year or so has been nothing what we expected, I am now more than ever convinced that there is no place that God is not. So whether we were in quarantine in our homes, or meeting in yet another new and creative way for church gatherings, or out in the community interacting with the people that we have been commissioned to love and care for, God has been there, and He will be there, and there is joy in His presence. God bless you RVF!

Love, Billy



# MORE CHANGE



*Courtney Zimmerman*

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We are so happy to be back at the Annex and Sunday morning gatherings! Though much of it still feels temporary and less than ideal, we are grateful to be “home.” Soon we will even have a new larger classroom thanks to a minor remodel project! For the meantime, classes will feel a bit squeezed; but we will make do and look forward to what is to come.

I am also looking forward to some curriculum changes to happen along with the space changes. Soon we will be able to split our K-2nd and 3rd-5th classes again, and that will allow us to move toward those curriculum shifts. Our K-2nd class will continue to cycle through the Jesus Storybook Bible, hearing the message that all stories within the Bible point to Jesus and are part of God’s great Rescue Plan to make all things new. I am in the process of putting together something different for our Preschool and 3rd-5th classes, but I will wait to share more about that when the time comes (likely the beginning of June).

Would you join me in praying for our children, that the love of the Father would be drawing them to Himself and transforming their hearts and minds through His grace and truth?

I love my role as children’s pastor, and I am also grateful for the many opportunities I have at RVF to be involved in our vision of being a faithful presence and prophetic witness within our community. Recently I reached back out to our friends at the Phoenix/Talent School District to ask how we can continue to help fire-affected families. In light of that conversation, Billy and I wrote a grant application for those who lost business tools or equipment in the fire. Our goal is to purchase items that will enable families to rebuild their businesses. If you would like to volunteer in some way for this project, please reach out to me or Billy Hague! We would love your help.

It is an honor to be part of the RVF family and a privilege to serve among you!

Warmly, Courtney





# GOOD NEWS



*Jeremy Olivera*

Lately I've been contemplating the radical, seismic impact of the kingdom of Christ's love. The beauty of the biblical narrative and its promise is literally an unfathomable inheritance freely offered to the lawless, the perverted, the people who we can often deem "pass the point of no return."

We can often say, "We are the worst of sinners," though most of us—if we are honest—feel that if a person continues to persist in bad, lustful, violent, or destructive behaviors, they may get to the point where they cross over a threshold of what is intolerable for God and drift into what we would call hopeless to be redeemed. This is something most of us probably wouldn't articulate, but it's woven into the foundations of American church life and the unspoken (or spoken) standards we grow accustomed to. Jesus actually came to blow those standards away, to lay His life down, to become an invitation to ALL humans, because ALL of us are in the same category. ALL of us are lawless, perverted, and idolatrous. ALL of us have fallen before a holy God. ALL of us need to be fully redeemed and fully transformed. ALL of us.

The good news is there is no "passing the point of no return" with Jesus. Twelve years ago, I was strung out on heroin, a thief, a liar, and someone you wouldn't want around your family—and honestly, to some, their churches. Jesus saved me when many deemed me passed the point of no return. This is the gospel, that there is a place at the table of the kingdom for anyone who has put their faith in Jesus to save them from themselves, from their own destruction. When we think God needs to help someone more than He needs to help us, we miss the point.

May our thinking this year be FOR one another in the way that we live out the radical kingdom ethic of selfless love and invitation. Let us endure with one another in love towards conforming more to the image of Christ. Allow Him to shape that image. Let us remember today that there is no other reality than that of the kingdom, and there is no other truth that will set us free.



V E R S E

May the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of him, having the eyes of your hearts enlightened, that you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints, and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power toward us who believe..."  
May the Lord bless you and keep you in 2021.