

F E B R U A R Y 2 0 1 5

# Vashon Presbyterian Church

Vashon Island, Washington 98070

To Worship God in all we do, centered in Jesus Christ,  
moved by the Holy Spirit

## February 2015 Newsletter

### Mission Resource Task Force

The Mission Resource Task Force met again after Worship Jan 25th to continue work on seeking a partner or partners to make better use of the new building's unused space while sharing the financial burden of our mortgage and maintenance. Task force members present were Elder Diana Lilje, Elder Kate Smith, Elder Jacq Skeffington, Kathy Olsen, John Potter and Billie Christiansen.

The task force continued partnership discussions around information from the Presbytery of Seattle that a long term partnership could not be formed with a "for profit" corporation. Such a partnership would jeopardize the church's non profit status.

Status of The Appreciative Enquiry followed. The Appreciative Enquiry is being conducted to determine common threads for Session to clarify a vision of the future of VPC around which to generate interest in a capital campaign. The congregation will be updated with weekly "Minutes for Mission" during Worship about the Enquiry as some members have not yet been interviewed or even contacted. Additional discussion set out a timeline and guidelines for collating the results and presenting our recommendation to Session for their decision on whether or not to go forward with a capital campaign. We anticipate presenting that recommendation to Session in March and that a Congregational Conversation will follow (perhaps in April) regarding Session's decision and related plans. Jacq Skeffington



### **Important Dates!**

Feb 9<sup>th</sup> - 15<sup>th</sup>

Pastor Dan will be on Vacation

Feb 15<sup>th</sup>

Guest Preacher George Everett

Feb 18<sup>th</sup>

Ash Wednesday Service 7 PM

Feb 20<sup>th</sup>

VPC Book Club 6:30

Dan's Message...

**Lent, A Season to Discover God's Grace and Power**

*'He said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for power is made perfect in weakness." So, I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may dwell in me.'* – Paul, 2 Corinthians 12:9

It is yet midwinter but all nature shines forth in bright greens and blues. Just like all the locals (Go Hawks!). It seems hard to believe that we'll soon be gathering again on Ash Wednesday to hear Christ's call to "take up your cross and follow me", culminating with Holy week's somber reflection on the cross and love of Jesus Christ.

And between those two gatherings we have forty days to...what? Not eat chocolate? Question: What does fasting **do**? For us? For God? For anyone? To outsiders, our Lent fasting may look like a crash diet for a spiritual swimsuit contest Easter Sunday! If Lent is truly about practicing a better life, why stop after forty days? Perhaps these are questions you, too, have had about Lent, but were too polite to ask.

Don't feel alone. The Protestant Reformers, not particularly known for their politeness, were asking these questions five-hundred years ago. They came to differing conclusions about what Lenten practices could do for a Christian, but were unanimous on what they *can't* do: earn God's love.

"God so loved the world that He gave his Only-Begotten Son..." God **so** loved, loves, gave and gives, to the whole world: enemies, sinners, lost sheep and found ones. Love is God's first and final attitude toward us that we won't change by giving up chocolate. The word we have for this un-earnable love is 'grace': "We love because he first loved us" (1 John 4:19).

Lent's potential lies in "*We* love..." We can't make ourselves God's beloved if God has already loved and *so* loves us, but we can become God's be-lovers, and co-lovers. That is our calling (John 13:34). So what if we approach Lent as this regular opportunity to converse about ways we can become more like Jesus by practicing spiritual disciplines of *loving* that eventually become habit?

(By the way, the upcoming small-group book study that our new Journey elder, Diana Lilje is writing about in this newsletter is just such an opportunity!)

It is hard work to change bad habits into good ones. A commitment to a regular discipline of spiritual practice (silence, prayer, fasting) may reveal weaknesses of sloth, fear, or pride within ourselves that we wouldn't become aware of otherwise. That struggle, Paul tells us, is precisely where God's grace and power become known.

We don't save ourselves through spiritual work. The work throws us upon the saving power of God's grace. I like how Dallas Willard puts it: "Grace is not incompatible with effort. It is incompatible with earning."

To imitate the One who loved us first, loved us from the Cross, and loves us now and to the end is always to feast upon the grace and power of God. Perfected in our weakness, shining in our love. With you by the Grace, Dan



## Journey/Invitation

### Team News

Elder Diana Lilje

#### Areas of Responsibility:

Bible study, Christian formation (all ages), new members and discipleship, evangelism and invitation.

**Journey Team** Are you interested in learning more about or enhancing your Christian walk? The Journey Teams is seeking members to investigate and plan educational opportunities for both adults and children. You may have been in church recently when we were blessed by the presence of multiple children. We need to provide childcare during worship and education for these little ones. And our adults need nurturing also. We'd like to start up another adult education class before worship on Sundays. All who are interested are invited to let Diana Lilje know or drop by our next meeting, Sunday, February 15 after coffee hour.

**Small Groups** are being started again for the Lenten season. We will be reading Called by Mark Labberton, president of Fuller Theological Seminary. This is a six-week study delving into how our lives relate to the world and how we can live as followers of Jesus. Please consider being a part of this exciting study. If you were involved in the study last year you may receive a call from your previous leader or you may call the church office to indicate your interest.

### Want-Ad

Looking for a way to serve at VPC? We need an office volunteer to help with the day-to day operations of the church. It requires a commitment of only one week per month, Monday through Thursday, 10 AM to 2 PM. No particular skills are required. You will greet people, answer phones, and do some light computer work. If you think you can help, see or call Diana Lilje (463-6604).

## Mission Resource

### Team News

Elder Barb Huff

Elder Jacq Skeffington

#### Areas of Responsibility:

#### **Financials, Building and Grounds**

**Financial Stewardship:** We ended the year 2014 in the black!!!!!!

**Building and Grounds Maintenance:** The flower beds and grounds are mostly dormant these days but buds are forming on trees and rhodies. Lots of the shrubs are accessible for pruning and reshaping. If you have expertise in these areas please contact Elder Jacq Skeffington before he gets carried away again cutting things back too radically. There is a considerable "burn pile" in the south end of the parking lot already. Let's plan on a **WORKPARTY** for Saturday February 28th from 9:00 until noon. If it's nice out we'll prune and clean out the flowerbeds and burn that pile. If it's raining we'll have an "indoor" work party. Windows and doors need cleaning, light bulbs need changing, the kitchen, library, chapel and closets need cleaning and reorganizing, and some baseboards and ceiling tiles need replacing. So please, mark your calendar! It'll be fun for everyone.

The north facing sign board has been completed and will be installed soon by the tool belt group. They went "off-site" last week to put up a new section of the handrail leading to Dave Rogers house on Bunker Trail. They have a list of regular housekeeping items to keep up with like cleaning rain gutters, checking crawlspace sump pumps, checking furnace filters and on and on..... This group meets Tuesday mornings from 10:00 until noon and would love to have some more help. If interested call me at 354-8917. I usually give tool belts a call Monday nights to plan times and tools for the following day.

There are many opportunities to help the Mission Resource Team and would love to have you join us.

**Worship  
Team News**

Elder Brownie Carver

**Areas of Responsibility:**

Sacraments celebration, music program, readers, bulletin, ecumenical worship, church décor.

**Ash Wednesday Service, February 18<sup>th</sup>, 7:00 PM**

**Worship Committee** needs volunteers to be on a special team to watch over the sanctuary for special services and events. Members will monitor pulpit supplies, banners, special flowers, and other items necessary to enhance the worship service.

**Choir Schedule For February**

Rehearsal Thursday Feb 12 7 PM

Rehearsal Thursday Feb 19 7 PM

Sing in Worship Sunday Feb 22 10 AM

**Rev. George Everett** of Transnational Christian Fellowship will be sharing our message **February 15<sup>th</sup>** and taking time after worship for Q&A about the changing Ebola situation in his homeland of Liberia and the role of the church in rebuilding the region in the wake of this disaster.

**Purposeful Service  
Team News**

**Areas of Responsibility:**

Scholarship, Mary Magdalene weekend/partnership, IFCH dinners, mission partner relations.

**IFCH Meals** The next meal for which we are responsible will be Thursday, February 26. A sign-up sheet will be in the Social Hall.

**Hospitality/Fellowship  
Team News**

Elder Kate Smith

**Areas of Responsibility:**

Hospitality, Fellowship

**Next time you are at the grocery store**, please remember to pick up coffee for the church. For some reason, people like to drink either decaf or regular coffee during coffee hour. We tea drinkers are in the minority.

**If you were on H/F last year** and want to continue, please contact me so we can figure out a day/time to meet. If you would like to be on the committee please contact me and I will let you know when the meeting time/place is. We need to plan for a fun 2015!

**February Book Club** The book club will meet at Spangler's on February 20th at 6:30 PM. The selection for February is Orphan Train by Christina Baker Kline. There will be a potluck before the meeting!

**HAITI ON THE ROAD TO RECOVERY**

Most of you will recall that Haiti sustained terrible damage five years ago from an earthquake and that for several years during that time, we supported an agriculture program there as part of the 5 for 5 program.

In an article in the most recent Presbyterian Disaster Assistance relief magazine, there is reason to rejoice greatly from all the help that was sent there over the past 5 years. Health care has vastly improved, a hospital was rebuilt, tools, seeds and agricultural support has helped quality of life. In addition, some 3,425 families are living in new, earthquake resistant homes. Economic assistance was provided for disabled people (to help start businesses and to rebuild their homes). 46 schools were repaired or rebuilt. 4 eco-villages (sustainable farming communities) were constructed. New, abundant life has risen from the rubble.

Thanks be to God.

## News from the Deacons

We can all be involved to help each other in practical ways. Deacons are currently inviting more people to join us in providing rides for our members and friends in need. There is no other island-based program to help folks get to appointments off island – and we all realize the need for specialized medical services only available off island. If you can consider offering your time and car to help with this caring support, please contact one of the deacons to learn more details. You wouldn't be expected to volunteer very often and these trips offer lots of good experiences!

The deacons are also exploring program possibilities that would offer some specific help for the challenges experienced by our island's seniors. More information will be shared soon.

If you have an idea or a request for any specific kind of activity or program the deacons could facilitate for the benefit of our members and friends, please let us know.

Your VPC deacons – Susan Commeree, Lindsay Hoffman, Michele Houston, Sue Weston and Nancy van Roessel

## Clerk's Corner

The VPC session met twice in January. A special meeting was called on January 4 to discuss whether to change the Annual Meeting date, in light of the schedule for the expected January 18<sup>th</sup> Seahawks game. It was decided to retain the January 18<sup>th</sup> date, but have a shortened service and no coffee hour. The regularly scheduled meeting was held on January 14, with all members attending. All team reports were submitted in writing, and brief discussion followed. Actions taken include approving Lindsay Hofman for ordination as a deacon, and adoption of a budget for 2015 after an account-by-account review. New business items included various appointments for 2015. Kate Smith was elected corporate president and Bob Spangler was elected corporate secretary and registered agent. Bob was also elected to be clerk of session, and Barb Huff was elected treasurer. Bev and Jacq Skeffington will serve as representatives to Presbytery, and Diana will serve as Financial Secretary. Session meeting in 2015 will be the second Monday of the month (except in February), starting at 7:15 pm. Dan was authorized to serve the sacraments, and his (and VPC's) holiday schedule will be the Presbytery schedule. Session also discussed details of the upcoming annual congregational meeting and of the retreat held on January 17

*Bob Spangler, Clerk of Session*

## Report on January Presbytery Meeting

Rev Dan Houston, Elder Kate Smith and I attended the first Presbytery meeting of 2015 held at Southminster PC, in Des Moines on Jan 20th. It was an interesting "homecoming" of sorts for Kate who grew up in that church. The food was wonderful as was the Worship and work.

After a reading of Ephesians 4:17-32, Rev Chris Pritchett delivered a meaningful sermon "The Best Way Forward" which set the tone for the rest of our meeting.

### **Actions taken:**

Seven motions to amend the constitution approved by the 221st General Assembly were presented and all passed. These included adopting the Confession of Belhar and amending W-4.9000 on marriage. Adoption of the Belhar Confession required a show of hands as the voice vote was not clear enough to determine a majority opinion. The Presbytery voted next on the marriage amendment by ballot: 111 Yes, 93 No, 2 Abstain. All other amendments passed by majority voice vote. Any amendment requires approval of 2/3 of the Presbyteries of the PCUSA in order to amend the Constitution. A copy of all amendments will be available in the East Room. Additional information on these items can be found at [www.seattlepresbytery.org/meetings/](http://www.seattlepresbytery.org/meetings/). The next presbytery meeting will be April 21th at Overlake Park PC.

In Christ's service,  
Jacq Skeffington

# Calendar

## February 2015

(all events at VPC unless otherwise stated)



### Feb

- 1 Sunday Worship Service 10 am (Communion Service)**
- 7 Bible Study 10 am**
- 8 Sunday Worship Service 10 am**
- 8 Deacons Meeting at noon**
- 15 Sunday Worship Service 10 am (Guest Speaker)**
- 15 Journey Team Meeting after coffee hour**
- 16 Session Meeting 6:30 pm**
- 18 Ash Wednesday Service 7 pm**
- 20 VPC Book Club at 6:30 pm at Spangler's**
- 21 Bible Study 10 am**
- 22 Sunday Worship Service 10 am**
- 22 Mission Resource Team Meeting after worship**
- 28 WORK PARTY 9-Noon**

### ONGOING ACTIVITIES

*Life Changing Prayer* group meets on the second and fourth Wednesdays at 10:00 am at VPC, and on the first, third and fifth Wednesdays at 10:00 am at the Vashon Community Care Center.

*Men's Breakfast and Bible Study* meets on Thursday mornings at 8 am.

*Women's informal breakfast* meets at Sporty's at 8:00 am on Wednesdays.

Please note: Dates, times and events may change after publication. Refer to the weekly e-News or Sunday bulletin for confirmation of details.