

S E P T E M B E R 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

September 2015 Newsletter

Thank You Pastor Dan

On September 6, 2015 VPC will have a going away dinner for Rev Houston and his family. Appetizers at 5 pm in the Great Hall. The doors of the Social Hall will open at 6 pm for dinner. The appetizers, salad and sides are all potluck. For those who have not RSVP'd yet, please call the church office by September 3. Find a yummy recipe for an appetizer, side dish or salad and join us as we express our appreciation and say goodbye to Rev Houston and family.

Transition Team Report

We are almost finished with the interview portion of our transition assignment. By the end of August we will have spoken with five candidates. We have been very pleased with the interviews and the ideas that have been presented. The team hopes to make a decision very soon. Please continue to pray for the team of Brownie Carver, Elizabeth Loveness, Larry Commeree, Al and Claudia Ross-Weston, Kathy Olsen, and John Potter.

VBS - Lots of Fun For The Little Ones at VPC

VBS was a lively success at VPC this year. We hosted the program for preschool age youth. Many thanks and congratulations to all who helped bring these young people out for fun and hearing the Word.

September Dates!

**Farewell Dinner
For the Houstons
Sept 6**

**Guest Speaker
Adam Wells
Sept 13**

**VPC Book Club
Sept 19**

**Guest Speaker
Rev Eliana Maxim
Sept 20**



Pastor Dan's Message...

Shine

"You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. ¹⁵ Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. ¹⁶ In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven." Matthew 5:14-15

My last monthly letter to VPC! How many has it been over these past nine years? A hundred or so? I am so grateful to God for the call to be your pastor and brother in Christ in that time. Much has changed in the world since we Houstons arrived here in 2006. Changes that seemed unimaginable back then are now part of our daily "wallpaper". Our fair isle has witnessed a continued decline in religious and service club membership, accelerating economic gentrification, and increased numbers of non-Caucasian neighbors. Navigating a changed environment can leave a person feeling in the dark. That's just as true for those who are just moving here and are waking up to the challenges of island life. An early wake-up call for our family was the storm of December 2006.

Remember that one? We went *many* days without power, well water, or heat, all in the darkest weeks of the year. At first it was fun, just like camping. And do we like to camp! But many days of cold and darkness whittled us down to a state of grimness alike to a Siberian gulag memoir.

The light in our darkness – literally– was the hospitality we received from you, our dear VPC friends and family who still had power and who generously offered us warm table fellowship, warm showers, and dry firewood to tide us through long nights. (In the years that followed, it seemed you always shined brightest in crisis.)

Mutual vulnerability allow us to connect on a deeper level and to be light to one another in a dark time. It happened as folks reached out to and did not hide their needs from each other. There were others, I now understand, who rode out the storm of 2006 alone – isolated by circumstances of poverty, age, health, or mental and emotional health. Or maybe pride. Island living attracts strong-willed, independence-loving people who, if their lights go out, will make their own light as long as their fuel holds out.

In the Sermon on the Mount which I've been preaching these last few months, Jesus tells his disciples, "You are the salt of the earth... You are the light of the world." That's a breathtaking declaration if only we imagine how that audience must have appeared! They would not have looked the part of rugged individualists, but rather like the simple peasants they were. To *them* Jesus declared, "**You** are the light of the world"! It couldn't have been anything but shocking. But the truth of that declaration derives from the shocking story of the Declarer, the good news of which we proclaim: that "Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ is coming again". Amen!

My prayer for you, my brothers and sisters in Christ of the VPC family, is that you embrace your shocking identity declared by Jesus Christ by visibly obeying his great commands and audibly proclaiming the good news of his birth, life, death and resurrection life among your island neighbors, whose reactions will be mixed.

Our community desperately needs a countercultural of *God-dependent and mutually interdependent* people who live out a vulnerable hospitality as followers of Jesus. People who *won't hide* their needs from others or from others in need, and who aren't embarrassed to share their faith. People who love God and neighbor enough to feel their hurt and be open to their sorrows, and joys. Such is the way of the cross, "the narrow path that leads to life" (Matthew 7:13-14)– not just life for the church, but for those whom Jesus Christ has appointed us to bring the message and the life of Jesus Christ – his love and power.

As VPC (and Vashon) face big changes in coming months and years, my prayer is that you abide in the grace and truth of Jesus Christ who does not change (Hebrews 13:8), and find "out of the box" ways to shine forth his grace and truth to a culture in constant flux. Our ministry in the new millennium is to be found outside our home turf: in assisting secular non-profits' good works, hanging around in the coffee shops and community gardens and art walks of our neighborhoods and critically, breaking bread around our kitchen tables. This is where the people are, seeking some glimmer in their darkness.

For a short while Americans looked for light in boxes (buildings) on Sunday mornings and Wednesday evenings. A short while. "Out of your box!", says Jesus. "**You** are the light of the world!" The church was never meant for a box, but to stand "out there", shining vulnerably into the world, "that they might see your good works (and hear your good news) and give thanks to your Father who is in heaven."

You have shined the love and truth of Jesus Christ profoundly into our lives these past nine years, particularly when you showed everyday kindness to us with loving words and greetings in the store aisles or out on the street, and in your praying for us. Thank-you. As we continue in our baptismal calling of being Christ's ambassadors in our neighborhood, I'm glad to have some good months remaining on Vashon with you to greet you out there, my beloved brothers and sisters in Christ, and to see you shine. You have my gratitude, my prayers and my affection always.

In Christ, Dan

Purposeful Service Team News

Area of Responsibility:

Scholarship, Mary Magdalene weekend,
IFCH dinners, mission partner relations

The Heindsman Scholarship of \$1,800.00 was awarded to Kelsey Bernheisel in worship Aug 30th. We continue to be grateful to the Heidsmann family for the endowment created by Ted and Virginia and we wish Kelsey all good things as she continues her studies of Radiologic Technology at Bellevue College.

VPC will be responsible for the IFCH meal 9/24.
There is a sign up sheet in the East Room.

Worship with the women of Mary's Place in Ober Park on Aug 16th was again incredibly inspiring. For more info see the related article by Beverly. A couple of passers by asked "What's going on here?" Wouldn't it be wonderful if they asked that in front of VPC one day? How would you answer?

Jacq Skeffington

THANKS TO ALL FOR A GREAT PICNIC AT OBER PARK

A big thank you to the many folks who worked so hard to make our worship and picnic with the women of Mary's Place such a wonderful experience. We have received a thank you note from Pastor Monica (see bulletin board in East Room) indicating the women enjoyed it so very much.

Working with the other churches and worshipping as one in the spirit, as we did, really added to the experience for me.

I look forward to many more chances to be with these women in the years to come. Thank you all for your generosity in financing this event and giving of your time and talents. "Well done, good and faithful servants".

Beverly Skeffington

Hospitality/Fellowship Team News

Area of Responsibility:

Hospitality, Fellowship

Going Away Dinner On September 6, 2015 VPC will have a going away dinner for Rev Houston & family. Appetizers @ 5:pm in the Great Hall. The doors of the Social Hall will open @ 6:pm for dinner. The appetizers, salad & sides are all potluck. If you want to donate toward a gift for the Houstons please contact Barb Huff. For those who have not RSVP'd yet, please call the church office by 9/3/15. Find a yummy recipe for an appetizer, side dish or salad & join us as we say good bye to Rev Houston & family.

Book Club Book Club meets at the Skeffington's home on Friday September 18th at 6:30 to discuss The Book of Forgiving by Desmond Tutu. It will be a potluck. Everyone welcome.

Kate Smith

Journey/Invitation Team News

Area of Responsibility:

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

A fall adult education class is due to start on September 13. This class will be held at 9 AM Sunday mornings and run for 6 weeks. We will be viewing a video of sessions entitled "*Do the Right Thing*" which explores the ethical and moral breakdown that is assaulting our culture from all sides. Hopefully your thinking about ethics and morality will be challenged and deeply enriched.

Diana Lilje

Worship Team News

Area of Responsibility:

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

Sunday September 6th will be Rev. Dan Houston's final sermon. We will greatly miss this wonderful pastor and his family. We wish Dan God's speed in finding his next call.

Guest Speakers for September are:

September 13th - Adam Wells

September 20th - Rev. Eliana Maxim, Associate Executive Presbyter for the Seattle Presbytery

27th - has not been confirmed.

Brownie Carver



The Choir from Mary's Place

Mission Resource Team News

Area of Responsibility:

Financials

Area of Responsibility:

Building and Grounds

Financial Stewardship Although we are behind budget for the year, we are hoping that additional monies from building use partners and the reduced expense of a half time interim pastor will allow us to finish the year within the proposed budget.

Barb Huff

Building and Grounds Maintenance Thanks to all who donated to or participated in the Annual Yard Sale. We received \$1,365 in donations which was added to the General Fund.

Preparations are continuing to relocate Carpe Diem Primary School. There will be a lot more activity around the building in the next weeks. Stop by VPC sometime during office hours during the week to catch the enthusiasm. School starts for Carpe Diem and Creative Preschool right after Labor Day. Volunteers will be appreciated to monitor and assist guiding traffic during the mornings of the first week of school. Anyone interested should contact Jacq Skeffington at 354-8917.

The IFCH generously paid for carpet cleaning in the Social Hall and Great Hall on August 14th. We greatly appreciate their financial assistance as well as their missional outreach. A sign up sheet for providing the next meal VPC is scheduled for (Sept 24th) is in the Social Hall.

You may have noticed a few changes in the landscaping around the church. We can use some more help tending the flowerbeds so if you'd like to "adopt" an area or bed, call Jacq Skeffington at the above number.

Jacq Skeffington

Clerk’s Corner

The VPC session held its monthly scheduled meeting on August 9, 2015. Rev. Kevin Nollette moderated the meeting, and Diana Lilje acted as clerk in Bob’s absence. After a review of the reduced Sunday offering and its adverse effect on VPC’s cash flow, it was agreed that the treasurer is authorized to use building reserve funds as a temporary source to cover monthly expenses. Brownie reported that the transition team has prepared questions to ask of interim pastor applicants. The team has received a total of seven candidate profiles. Other team reports were submitted in writing. Session voted to award the Heindsmann scholarship to Kelsey Bernheisel, who will study Radiology Technology at Bellevue College. Finally, session discussed the logistics for the going away party for the Houstons on September 6, and when to have the September session meeting in view of the need for a moderator.

Bob Spangler, Clerk of Session

Deacons Are Ready to Help You

During this time when we do not have pastoral leadership, the deacons want to assure everyone that they are more than willing and ready to help members our church family. Please feel free to call one of the deacons with any need or concern - e.g. illness, prayers, food needs. Deacons will work to provide helpful support for you in a confidential manner. If there is any need best supported by a pastor, the deacons will contact Kevin Nollette at Presbytery. He has assured us that they will provide someone to promptly help us.

Remember - don’t hesitate to contact one of the deacons if you’d like some supportive help. If you don’t get a response quickly, call one of the others!

Deacons are Sue Weston (567-4446), Nancy van Roessel (463-2965), Susan Commeree (567-5707) and Lindsay Hofman (463-5356)



**“Nothing Like a Summer Picnic”
Worship and Picnic with the
Ladies of Mary’s Place**



Calendar for September 2015

(all events at VPC unless otherwise stated)

Sept

- 5 Bible Study 9 AM
- 6 Sunday Worship Service at 10 AM Communion Service
- 6 Farewell Supper for the Houstons 5 PM
- 13 Adult Education Class 9 AM
- 13 Sunday Worship Service 10 AM
- 13 Deacons Meeting after Worship
- 18 VPC Book Club at Skeffington's 6:30 PM
- 19 Bible Study 9 AM
- 20 Adult Education Class 9 AM
- 20 Sunday Worship Service 10 AM
- 20 Session Meeting after Worship
- 27 Adult Education Class 9 AM
- 27 Sunday Worship Service 10 AM

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.

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

Bible Study meets the 1st and 3rd Saturdays.

Toolbelts work parties 10 am Tuesdays.

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