

D E C E M B E R 2 0 1 6

Vashon Presbyterian Church

Vashon Island, Washington 98070

Listening to God, embracing all, living in joy



December 2016

Advent and Christmas

Town Christmas Tree Lighting

Right Here at VPC!

Saturday, December 3rd 5 PM

Hanging of the Greens

Our Traditional Decorating Party
Plus Potluck!

Sunday, December 4th, After Worship

Mary Magdalene Giving Tree

Give gifts and shoes (via gift tags)

Deadline is Sunday, December 11th

Book Club Christmas Gathering

Supper, Gift Book Exchange

Friday, December 16th 6:30 PM

Congregational Meeting - Officer Elections

Sunday, December 18th after worship

Special Buffet Coffee Hour

Sunday, December 18th after worship

Christmas Eve Service

A Christmas Eve Celebration

Saturday, 24th 7 PM-VPC

Christmas Day Ecumenical Service

Sunday, 25th 10 AM at VPC

Congregational Meeting to Elect Elders and Deacons

December 18, 2016 after worship

Pastor Nominating Committee (PNC) Update

Eliana Maxim, Associate Executive Presbyter of Seattle Presbytery, met with the PNC (Jordan Browning, Brownie Carver, Larry Commeree, Diana Lilje, Elizabeth Loveness, Claudia Ross Weston and Bob Spangler) at its Nov. 7 meeting. As our link to the Presbytery's Committee on Ministry (COM), Eliana gave us clear direction, guidance and encouragement as we set out to fill the charge given to the PNC by the congregation.

The PNC met several times through the month to draft our Ministry Information Form (MIF), a multi-page document used by our denomination for publicizing a congregation's search for leadership. We anticipate having the final draft ready for session's review at their Wed, Dec 14 meeting. Also, we have asked for time at our Congregation Meeting on Dec 18 to update everyone face to face.

Keep us in your prayers. And please feel free to interact with PNC members along the way.

Cold Weather Alert for the Homeless

Members of our congregation are asked to drop off blankets at Vashon United Methodist Church, which has offered to set up a temporary overnight shelter if necessary. If you can assist in this humanitarian effort, please contact Vashon United Methodist Church at 463-9804.

Advent Dreams and Visions

Last night I had the strangest dream. Inexplicably, I found myself walking casually through the White House. People nodded and smiled. A landscape shift and I was sitting casually in the personal quarters of President and Michele Obama. Both were present. The girls were there too. We were laughing. I looked around the room. There was a casual cluster of comfortable chairs for conversation, a kitchen sink (but no kitchen), a bed, a welcoming table with snacks and fruit. It seemed we had known each other for years. I had the sense that time was important but wasn't sure why. A woman appeared who told me I needed to go right away or I would miss my plane. "Oh", I said, "that's right, I need to go home. Is it too late?" "Yes", she said, "the plane is gone. You will have to walk." "But I live in Washington", I protested. "That's OK", said President Obama. "Here are some boots." I awoke.

Advent is a time for dreams and for visions, carrying deep meaning – and sometimes bearing the Word of God to us. The prophet Isaiah's vision of the Peaceful Kingdom has empowered Christians for centuries to center their lives on the justice and mercy of God (Isaiah 11: 1-10). Zechariah's dream relays the import of his soon to be born son, John the Baptist. The angel Gabriel visits Mary in a dream, assuring her of God's part in the birth of her son, Jesus. People see visions and dream dreams and by the power of God's Spirit, and the world is transformed.

Will my dream transform the world? Hardly. But it already is having an effect on me. During this time of Advent, as we contemplate the coming of Christ into our world and our lives once again, I am aware that I have yet a long journey ahead of me, as we all do as a church and a nation. I know I am being called to let go of the past, strap on my metaphorical boots, center my life on the values of God, and with trust in God to guide me, begin the journey toward home. Join me anyone?

Blessings,
Lynn

Purposeful Service

Team News

Area of Responsibility

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

You cannot help noticing the "**Giving Tree**" in the reception room adjacent to the nursery. The "tree" is adorned with **Gift Tags** and **Shoe Tags** provided by **Mary's Place**, the Seattle based organization "Empowering Homeless Women, Children And Families To Reclaim Their Lives". **Shoe Tags** request a \$20.00 donation toward purchasing shoes on your behalf. **Toy Tags** have the name of a toy that a child at Mary's Place has asked for Christmas. Gifts will be given to homeless parents and grandparents so they in turn can give them to their children and share in the joy of giving. **Unwrapped gifts and donations** should be returned to the **VPC Office by December 11th** so that we can transport them to Mary's Place by December 13th.

Christmas Eve Offering The Christmas Eve offering will go to the Haiti Mission of Mark Hare and Jenny Brent and to the Presbyterian Disaster Relief in Haiti.

December IFCH Dinner The VPC_IFCH meal is December 22. Please sign up at coffee hour. The dinner lasts from 4:30-6:30 PM.

Elder Al Ross Weston

Hospitality/Fellowship

Team News

Area of Responsibility

Hospitality, Fellowship

Church Decorating It is Christmas time once again. The month kicks off on Saturday 12/3. **Please meet @ 10:am @ VPC** to go walk thru the woods (@ the u-cut tree farm on the highway to find the perfect tree for our church. We will also find a smaller tree for the children's tree. On Sunday 12/4 after a pot luck lunch we will hang the greens in the church & decorate the trees. Once again the star will hang in the front of the church for all to see.

On Sunday 12/11 Brownie will have an interactive service in the Social Hall. Dust up on your Christmas Trivia for coffee hour on **Sunday 12/18**.

After the **Christmas Eve** service enjoy cookies/treats before heading home. Coffee Hour on Christmas will be Cookies & Cider.

Sweet treats & fun await everyone this month. Merry Christmas.

Elder Kate Smith

Book Club Christmas Meeting Book Club will meet at the home of Barb and Jim Huff on the 16th. There will be a festive potluck at 6:30 and a white elephant book exchange to follow.

Worship

Team News

Area of Responsibility

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

Brunch at Church

On December 11th at 10:00 AM, we will have our first Brunch at Church. This will be a combination of fellowship and worship. Join us for this reflective and joyful service. If you would like to help, please call Brownie at 795-6488.

Calling all Singers

The VPC choir will present the special music on December 18th. Your voices are truly appreciated. For more information, call Brownie.

The VPC candlelight service will be held at 7:00 PM on **Christmas Eve**. We hope that you can be with us for this beautiful celebration. Music will be provided by island musicians.

The 10:00 AM **Christmas Day** service will be held at VPC. Our Methodist and Lutheran neighbors will join us for an informal, inspirational worship in carols, scriptures, and special stories. Please come and celebrate our Lord's birth.

Elder Brownie Carver

Mission Resource Team News Area of Responsibility Financials, Building and Grounds

Building and Grounds

Exterior painting of the church has come to a stop until warmer, dryer weather returns. The contractor finished painting from the front (west) door around the north, east and south sides. He then water blasted the west side and covered all exposed wood with sealer and primer but we'll have to wait for better weather and bring in a lift to tackle the bell tower and finish coat the west wall, around and above the Good Shepard window. Our Toolbelts group (which meets Tuesdays from 10-2) are having a similar problem with the railing around the ramp to the north entrance. We continue painting when weather allows. Toolbelts also replaced the timer on the spotlights back-lighting the Good Shepard window which we feel is a great asset to the community.

The Vashon Chamber of Commerce began stringing lights around the large spruce tree in front of VPC on November 29th. The Chamber provided the lights and will reimburse VPC for electricity. Matt Mathews' Tree Service donated time and equipment to string the lights. An Island wide celebratory lighting of the tree with caroling etc. is scheduled for Saturday, Dec 3rd.

Carpe Diem and Creative Preschool continue to bring joyous voices and wonderful art work to the building all week long. We continue to meet on a monthly basis for "checking-in" and planning with Carpe Diem staff and teachers. Another opportunity to interact with the families of these wonderful students will be attending Carpe Diem's "Winter Celebration" program December 15th, in the sanctuary.

On November 18th, we cleared out the desks from the social hall and set up tables and chairs for a gathering of about 130 people for a fundraising / information sharing dinner sponsored by the **Vashon Resettlement Committee**. It was wonderful seeing this space used for such a good community event with such a diverse group of Islanders learning and working toward social justice together.

Do you like the **VPC website** www.vashonpreschurch.org? Do you have anything to add to it? Please contact me through the church office if you have any suggestion for improving it.

Blessings,

Jacq Skeffington

Financials

Sale of OMAX Stock Omax offered additional stock sale which we took advantage of and sold 1200 shares for \$9,120. We have 7300 shares of stock remaining.

Financial Update Our mortgage balance is \$97,550. Our weekly offering continues to fall short of budget averaging \$1754/week_actual vs. budgeted amount of \$2125/week.

Our expenses are on budget, with the exception of building maintenance due to painting the church. This was not budgeted but funds were available for this deferred maintenance.

Our cash position continues to be strong with \$42,000 (\$2160 reserved funds) in the general fund and \$1850 in savings.

Elder Barb Huff

Journey/Invitation Team News

Area of Responsibility

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

Advent Study Currently there is an Advent adult education class on-going jointly with the United Methodist Church. One more class will be held at VPC on Sunday, Dec. 4 at 8:30 pm. The next two classes will be on Dec. 11 and 18 at UMC starting at 8:30 am. The class is reading Names for the Messiah by Walter Brueggemann.

Reverse Advent Readings There is a calendar of readings for advent on the table during coffee hour. Read a scripture daily while collecting items for the Food Bank. Turn them in on Christmas Eve.

Elder Diana Lilje

Deacons News

For quite a few years, VPC has been involved with an ecumenical program on the island to offer weekly Sunday worship services to the residents at the Care Center. Currently we are sharing responsibility for the service on the first Sunday of every month with the Lutheran congregation. Our deacons are involved with this in alternate months and on alternate fifth Sundays as well.

Under the current leadership of deacon Lindsay Hofman, with Christine Browning's help, about a dozen residents from both the assisted and skilled living sections of VCC are able to enjoy a familiar worship experience. They sing hymns and listen to a short meditation message and always conclude their service by passing the peace to each other just as we do.

Our VPC congregation, through the efforts of the deacons, has helped to make worship experiences possible for folks whose excursions are limited. Combined with the regular weekly Wednesday prayer gatherings, we are supporting and encouraging the VCC residents in very meaningful ways. Certainly the deacons who are involved would agree that we too feel very blessed by our experiences interacting with VCC friends.

VPC Deacons Team - Christine Browning, Susan Commeree, Lindsay Hofman, Beverly Skeffington, Sue Weston and Nancy van Roessel

Clerk's Corner

Session held its monthly meeting on November 9, with all but one elder present. Team reports had previously been distributed by e-mail, and discussion focused on Advent and Christmas plans. Session set two congregational meeting dates – December 18 to elect elders and deacons, and January 29, 2017 for the annual congregational meeting. Also, a leadership retreat will be held on February 18. At the recommendation of Purposeful Service Team, session voted to donate the Christmas Eve offering for relief work in Haiti. As required by the Book of Order, session reviewed the membership roll. One inactive member was removed from the roll; several other inactive members will be contacted about their status. Session considered further information and recommendations from the Pastor Nominating Committee, which had met with the Presbytery's Associate Executive Presbyter. After discussing the PNC's information, session voted to change the authorized terms of call for the pastor search to a three-fourths time position with a maximum effective salary of \$48,132. Finally, session received an oral report from the audit committee, which found the 2015 financial records to be in order.

Bob Spangler, Clerk of Session

What's on Your Mind ?

Discovery Dialogues 11/18/16

We had our second monthly Discovery Dialogue after worship November 20th. This is a very busy time of the year and many expressed sadness at not being able to join in the discussion. Only 6 members were able to meet in the library to discuss Tom Ehrich's article, **5 Obstacles to be Overcome in Reaching Young Adults**. I did however receive a few emails before and after our discussion and even enjoyed some sidewalk conversations about the article. One member emailed her adult children for their comments which proved very enlightening. In fact I thought the most important message in Tom's article was that we need to ask our 30 somethings these questions and truly listen to their answers.

About Sunday mornings being a non-starter! It's true our young families are besieged with activities and Sunday mornings are their quiet (or active) times together. As an alternative, we discussed the idea of having a mid-week evening gathering. It was felt young mothers would enjoy a night when they didn't have to cook and could get together with other young families, enjoy family time, and share conversations. We felt that during these conversations it would be important to not present an agenda but rather sit and listen. Another idea raised was to occasionally offer Breakfast Church. Worship around a breakfast that again would give families a chance to get together and be nourished. In fact, we are planning to have such a worship service at VPC December 11th. Lynn will be away that day and rather than filling the pulpit with a guest as we always have, we'll leave the empty pulpit in the sanctuary and just gather as the people of God around tables sharing the Word, food and friendship in the social hall.

We agreed that just offering more programs will never reach some of our disenfranchised young adults. Some millennial simply don't believe in God or Jesus the way that we do. Some are turned off by the bad things they have seen churches do in the name of doing His work. Others simply don't want to "join" a church and be labeled by other's conception of what that means. Some feel that they will be judged for not having attended until now. We all want a safe place to gather, free from judgment, where we can expose our fears, failings and hopes. My hope is that we find ways to have these non-judgmental conversations and discuss our different perspectives.

We will continue the dialogues on the third Sunday of each month and you are all invited to join us. The next article to be discussed will be forwarded by email Dec 13th so that we can gather our thoughts before the discussion Dec 18th. Please call the office to receive a copy if you are not on our email list.

Blessings,

Jacq Skeffington

Ecumenical Yard and Food Waste Recycling

I had a conversation recently with Bob Dixon of Vashon United Methodist Church about efforts of "Zero Waste Vashon". As a result, we will begin gathering "food waste" in biodegradable green bags in the small plastic container beneath the middle kitchen sink. A list of acceptable "food waste" is posted on the door of the cabinet and to start off with it will be primarily coffee grounds and food scraps following coffee hours. Carpe Diem teachers are also anxious to start educating their students about recycling. When the container is nearly full, I'll transport it to the VUMC collection site and Bob will take the collected waste to the recycling and transfer station. Eventually we hope to expand to collecting yard and food waste from interested VPC households. We have space in our fenced trash and recycling enclosure in the parking lot for a couple of larger containers. If you are interested in this environmental ministry, please contact me via the VPC office.

Bless the earth,

Jacq Skeffington

Standing Rock

Here is a link to an article about the PCUSA's support of Standing Rock. Rev. Irvin Porter, mentioned an emissary, is the Pastor of the Church of the Indian Fellowship in Tacoma. The Synod of Lakes and Prairies of the PCUSA is coordinating donations.

<http://www.presbyterianmission.org/story/water-protectors-standing-rock-prepare-brutal-winter/>



Original Artwork by Odie Hendershot.
See Bulletin Board Display to find out how you can help.

Thank you for your participation and Support!

We are so grateful for the outpouring of support and the strong interest in being involved that YOU, our community, extended on November 18th. Over 130 people attended *Salam, Vashon* and we raised over \$2600! Additionally, the success of the event fulfilled our goals in a number of important ways.



Upcoming Events and Opportunities

LunaFest – February 7th, with Vashon Theater and Green Tech. [Info & Tickets](#)

A Family Day on Vashon – Inviting families to visit Vashon for a day of activities followed by a potluck supper and music. (January – Volunteers needed – Please contact Susan Doerr at 206-463-4515 or 206-432-1464)

Calendar

December 2016

(all events at VPC unless otherwise stated)



Dec

- 3 Bible Study 10 AM
- 3 Meet to go get Christmas Tree for the Great Hall 10 AM
- 4 Sunday Worship Service 10 AM
- 4 Hanging of the Greens after worship
- 11 Sunday "Interactive Brunch" Worship Service 10 AM
- 14 Deacon's Meeting 4:30 PM
- 14 Session Meeting 7 PM
- 16 VPC Book Club Christmas Supper 6:30 PM at Huff's
- 17 Bible Study 10 AM
- 18 Sunday Worship Service 10 AM
- 18 Congregational Meeting to Elect Elders and Deacons
- 18 Special Coffee Hour after Worship and Meeting
- 24 Christmas Eve Service 7 PM
- 25 Christmas Day Ecumenical Worship Service 10 AM

ONGOING ACTIVITIES

Life Changing Prayer group meets Wednesday 1:00 PM 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 10 AM

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