

MARCH 2017

Vashon Presbyterian Church



Vashon Island, Washington 98070

Listening to God, embracing all, living in joy

March 2017 Newsletter

PNC Update

The Pastor Nominating Committee has had a very busy two months. We have at this point completed the process of preliminary interviews and narrowed the field of applicants to two candidates. The next step is to go and hear a sermon given by each candidate in a neutral pulpit and a lunch visit to get to know them better. This will happen in March. We have two excellent candidates. The decision will be which one will best serve the needs of our church and the community around us. We trust that God will lead us to the one chosen for this calling. We would like to be hearing your thoughts and ask for your prayers as this process proceeds.

Lent Begins March 1st

Ash Wednesday

Ash Wednesday is one of the most popular and important holy days of the year for Christians. It takes place 46 days before Easter Sunday. Born out of the ancient Jewish tradition of penance and fasting, Ash Wednesday includes the wearing of ashes on one's forehead or hand. The ashes symbolize the dust from which God made us. As a priest or pastor applies the ashes to a person's forehead, in a declaration that we are all mortal, he/she speaks the words:

“Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return.”



Ashes also symbolize grief, in this case our grief that we have separated ourselves from God.

The mark of the ashes serves as a sign to ourselves and others that we acknowledge our mortality and prayerfully seek a closer relationship with God.

Ash Wednesday imposition of Ashes will be a joint effort this year with Rev Paul Mitchell and Rev Lynn Longfield at the Vashon Village Green from 11 am-1 pm. Also there is a drop in evening service at VPC between 6:30 and 7:30 pm.

March Events

Ash Wednesday	March 1st
“A Very Good Gospel”	March 5-26
Spring Work Party	March 18th
VPC IFCH Meal	March 23rd

Liz's email reminder to get my newsletter article written came through just as I was finishing up preparations for our Ash Wednesday services. The "Facing Mortality, Embracing Life" sign for the public imposition of ashes event is in the car, ashes sealed nicely in my black Ash Wednesday ceramic pot, handouts printed, evening readings and prayers lined out, Lenten stole folded and placed near the door so I don't forget it. I even have the first draft of the bulletin for the First Sunday in Lent completed.

But am I truly ready for Lent? Am I ready to face my own mortality? Is my own heart prepared to honestly examine deeply my own spiritual life, my commitment to God, my failings, my passions, my hopes? Am I ready to quiet my soul, to listen to the Spirit, *to walk with Jesus toward Jerusalem* and all that entails, to face the suffering of God, to hear again the good news of God's never failing love for me, to open myself to the possibility, again, of resurrection. Am I?

While I walked through the silence of Wright Park in the early hours of the morning a day ago, aware that birds had returned to the trees to sing their greeting of the dawn, I contemplated the fact that had I not left newspaper, TV, and phone behind I likely would not have noticed this subtle sign of spring's promise. Quiet – I feel drawn to stillness this year more than ever. Perhaps because of the incessant cacophony of voices inundating our public lives of late. "Now is the time", the Spirit seemed to say to me, "for stillness".

It is time now for all of us to quiet our souls and attend to the journey of Lent.

Early Christians observed "a season of penitence and fasting" in preparation for celebrating the resurrection of Jesus at Easter. Lent, from an Old English word meaning "spring" has a long history. In the Western church the forty days of Lent extend from Ash Wednesday through Holy Saturday, omitting Sundays.

This year my Lenten Discipline will be to responsibly but none-the-less severely limit my "in-take" of screens, news outlets, Facebook, texts and emails. My Lenten Discipline will be to let go of responding internally to the strident voices around me, in favor of listening with more intention to the quiet voice of God speaking to my soul. What will your discipline be?

Anticipating the Blessings of our Lenten Journey,

Lynn



Worship Team News

Area of Responsibility

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

Ash Wednesday, March 1st You will have two opportunities to receive ashes. Pastors will be in the Village Green between 11am and 1pm. Pastor Lynn will be at our church between 6:30 and 7:30 pm.

Helpers Sign UP Don't forget to sign up for flowers and coffee hour!

Looking for musicians for Lent and Easter. Please contact Brownie at 795-7488.

Elder Brownie Carver

Hospitality/Fellowship Team News

Area of Responsibility:

Hospitality, Fellowship

VPC Book Club Schedule of Upcoming Books

March The Snow Child by Eowyn Ivey

April The Red Garden by Alice Hoffman

May The Light Between Oceans by
 M.L.Stedman

The location and time of the March meeting will be announced in the weekly enews.

Journey/Invitation Team News

Area of Responsibility

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

Adult Education Our next adult education class will start March 5. We will be reading and discussing a book entitled The Very Good Gospel, written by Lisa Sharon Harper. This is a thought-provoking book that inspires us to see the image of God in everyone. Ms. Harper states "Because despite our anxious minds, despite division and threats of violence, God's vision remains: Wholeness for a fragmented world. Peace for a hurting soul. **Shalom.**" Grounded in the story of God and all creation, The Very Good Gospel journeys from Genesis to Revelation, exploring God's original intent for a thriving world in light of today's headlines.

Elder Diana Lilje



Mission Resource

Team News

Area of Responsibility

Financial stewardship,
Building and Grounds.

Buildings and Grounds

Wow! Has it ever been a wet month!! When the weather allows, we'll **resume painting** the railing around the wheelchair ramp but will have to wait some time for the yard to dry out and weather warm up before allowing the painters to bring in a lift to finish the front of the church and bell tower. We did have the **carpets cleaned** last Friday. Carpe Diem and the IFCH chipped in to split the cost with us. Next we plan to paint the French Doors leading to the Great Hall.

We met with **Carpe Diem's** Head of School and administrative assistant early in February to review expenses and plan for next year. They are very happy with our present partnership and plan to continue renting our spaces again next year. We offered them another 1 yr contract at the same terms as our present agreement and are awaiting a response from their Board of Directors. We plan to meet with the **Creative Preschool's** Board this month for the same discussion.

Let's plan on a **work party Saturday, March 18th** from 9-12. We can trim shrubbery, clean up and weed flower beds and give the grounds a general sprucing up. If the weather is inclement we can do general spring cleaning in the sanctuary, kitchen and closets. In the meantime, feel free to stop by the church at your convenience and pick up litter around the parking lot. Recyclables and trash can be placed in the receptacles within the fenced collection area in the parking lot. Trash goes in the dumpster and recyclable material in the plastic containers. Every little bit helps.

Blessings, Jacq

Purposeful Service News

Area of Responsibility

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

The VPC March IFCH Meal falls on March 23rd. The signup sheet for helping with this meal is located in the reception room of the church.

One Great Hour of Sharing Through your gifts to One Great Hour of Sharing you can serve people in your community and around the world by alleviating hunger, rebuilding after crises or catastrophe, and working with communities to overcome oppression. **March is the month to start gathering up your spare change.** We will turn in all that we have collected on Palm Sunday, April 9th.

Heindsmann Family Endowment Scholarship

Application packets for the Heindsmann Scholarship 2017 are now ready. This scholarship is for someone who has already had some higher education and are continuing or returning after an absence. It is not for high school seniors. You can pick up application packets in the office M-Thurs 10-2. More information will be given in the enews and local newspapers. Deadline for the application is April 27th.

Purposeful Service Meetings We will continue to meet on the first Thursday of each month at 7 PM.

Elder Al Ross Weston

Deacons Really Want to Help You!

The VPC deacons are committed to offering helpful support for our church community in many ways. For your convenience, there are several good information pieces in the entry hallway near the bulletin board. Look there for up-to-date information on transportation services both on and off the island, housing related needs, health care, counseling, and food resources, etc. Much of this information is conveniently detailed and available in a single brochure from the Vashon Social Service Network. Deacons are also prepared to assist in temporary, emergency situations where some financial assistance would be helpful. A special deacons' fund in our church budget is set aside for just such cases. Please be encouraged to speak with Pastor Lynn or one of the deacons if you are in need of this type of support or have any questions; all these conversations and activities are strictly confidential.

Your VPC Deacons - *Beverly Skeffington, Susan Commeree, Lindsay Hofman, and Nancy van Roessel*

Clerk's Corner

Session met on February 15 with all members attending. Members distributed reports via e-mail before the meeting detailing team activities and plans. The clerk's statistical report for 2016 was approved. Members discussed their leadership roles for 2017, and a few changes were made. Session agreed to rename Journey and Invitation Team "Faith Exploration", headed by Diana Lilje. A separate Invitation Team will now be named "Outreach" and will be headed by Larry Commeree. Brownie Carver will lead the Worship Team and the Hospitality and Fellowship Team. Jacq Skeffington will continue as Building and Grounds elder, and Al Ross-Weston will lead Purposeful Service. Finally, Diana Lilje will be the Finance Team elder (with Barb Huff continuing as treasurer).

Session approved renewing the contract with Carpe Diem school for the 2017-2018 academic year.

Also approved were the one-time use of the sanctuary by the Refugee Resettlement Committee and the display of a "Hate is not Welcome Here" poster. Finally, Jacq reported on the January 17 Seattle Presbytery meeting and explained the need for a special Presbytery meeting in February.

Bob Spangler, Clerk of Session

Church Leadership

Interim Pastor Rev Lynn Longfield

Clerk of Session Bob Spangler

Session Members Brownie Carver, Larry Commeree, Diana Lilje, Jacq Skeffington, Al Ross Weston.

Deacons Sue Commeree, Lindsay Hofman, Bev Skeffington, Nancy Van Roessel

What's on Your Mind.....?

Interfaith Brainstormers

On February 21, the Interfaith Brainstormers met at VPC to continue our walk of faith together with other faith communities. Erica Carleton, of the Land Trust came to share information about Whatcom County Land Trust and its partnership with local churches to provide programs and work parties for the community. We are hoping that maybe we can pull an event together for Earth Day this year where our faith groups and the Land Trust will partner.

Ash Wednesday imposition of Ashes will be a joint effort this year with Rev Paul Mitchell and Rev Lynn Longfield at the Vashon Village Green from 11am-1pm.

We had discussion around keeping churches open during inclement weather (at least during the day) so that folks could get warm, enjoy a warm beverage or food and to be able to use their computer, make phone calls, etc. Each church will be searching to find people in their congregation to rally around this very important example of hospitality, and at the same time, encouraging people to form NERO groups in their own neighborhood to help in time of disaster or inclement weather.

Methodist and Lutheran churches have been generous hosts to overnight shelter during the very cold weather we have experienced several times this winter.

Volunteers from the community have come forward to be chaperones at these shelters. If this is a ministry you feel called to please let John Datin or Beverly Skeffington know about it.

We will meet again on Tuesday, March 21 at noon in the library and invite all interested to attend (feel free to bring your lunch). In these times when we might be feeling like we need some "light", this is a place to receive it.

Beverly Skeffington

Mary's Place Expands Services

Mary's Place continues to service homeless women and families in Seattle

1. Facilities:

Mary's place day Center in downtown Seattle

Emergency Family Night Shelter in Belltown houses 48 women and children

Julia's Place Night Shelter houses 5 families at Madrona Grace Church (includes fathers)

Mary's Place Family Center in North Seattle is home to 100 family members, as well as a second Day Care Center for families and co-located local service providers

Mary's Place Guest rooms in downtown Seattle houses 200 family members and families with pets

Rotating Night shelter houses 5-6 families with help from over 20 local organizations.

2. Program Services:

Two hot meals/day

Bastyr Naturopathic Clinic

Bon Mary's incentive program

Children's programs and snacks

Clothing ditribution

Counseling

Family Shelter

Hospital Outreach

Housing & employment Resources

Hygiene, Shower & Laundry Services

Jail visitation & Pen pals

Mail and phone services

Medical care

Resource referral

Saturday service

shelter referrals

Support groups

Treatment options & referral

Volunteer Services

Women in black

YWCA Health Access program

Beverly Skeffington

Calendar March 2017



March

- 1 Ash Wednesday Village Green between 11 AM and 1 PM
- 1 Ash Wednesday service between 6:30 and 7:30 PM
- 2 Purposeful Service Meeting 7 PM
- 4 Bible Study 10 AM
- 5 Sunday Worship Service 10 AM (communion service)
- 8 Session Meeting 6:30 PM
- 12 Sunday Worship Service 10 AM
- 18 Bible Study 10 AM
- 18 Spring Clean Up Work Party 9 - Noon
- 19 Sunday Worship Service 10 AM
- 26 Sunday Worship Service 10 AM

ONGOING ACTIVITIES

Prayer Group Wednesdays at 1:30 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.