

D E C E M B E R 2 0 1 7

# Vashon Presbyterian Church

Vashon Island, Washington 98070

Listening to God, embracing all, living in joy



## December 2017 Newsletter

### Advent and Christmas

#### **Vashon Christmas Tree Lighting**

Right Here at VPC!

Saturday, December 2<sup>nd</sup> 5:30 PM

#### **Hanging of the Greens**

Our Traditional Decorating Party  
Sunday, December 3<sup>rd</sup> after Worship

#### **Congregational Meeting - Officer Elections**

Sunday, December 10<sup>th</sup> after Worship

#### **Deacon's Soup Luncheon**

Sunday, December 10<sup>th</sup> after Worship

#### **Mary's Place Giving Tree**

Deadline is Sunday, December 10<sup>th</sup>

#### **Book Club Christmas Gathering**

Supper, Gift Book Exchange  
Friday, December 15<sup>th</sup> 6:30 PM

#### **Special Christmas Coffee Hour**

Sunday, December 17<sup>th</sup> after Worship

#### **Longest Night Advent Spiral Service**

Wednesday, December 20<sup>th</sup> 7:00 PM - UMC

#### **Sunday Dec 24<sup>th</sup> 10 AM Service**

Special Music and Traditional Service

#### **Christmas Eve Service**

A Christmas Eve Candlelight Celebration  
Sunday, 24<sup>th</sup> 7:00 PM

### Advent Christian Formation

Pastor Leigh will be leading a four-week study on the season of Advent during the 9:00 am Christian Formation class time. There is no need to prepare ahead, just come and join us. We will be in scripture together, talk about where we find our hope, our love, our peace and our joy... and we will have a time of prayer with one another. If you're looking for something a little extra to add to preparing for Christmas, this just might be a good fit. We'll listen to and learn from both the texts and from one another. Come share your gifts and your heart with us. We'll end by 9:45 am.

### Two VPC Services on December 24<sup>th</sup>

VPC will have the usual Sunday 10 AM Service on the 24<sup>th</sup> and a "Christmas Eve" candlelight service at 7 PM that day also. There will be special music for both services.

### Dedication of New Hymnals

Due to several generous donations to the Memorial Fund new "Glory to God" hymnals have been purchased and will be dedicated in memory of Shirley Blake on December 3<sup>rd</sup>. The hymnals are a special remembrance that will be enjoyed for many years. You'll notice that the covers are in Shirley's favorite color, purple!

**Congregational Meeting to Elect Elders/Deacons  
December 10, 2017 after worship**

Dear Ones of Vashon,

If you've been in my office or in the Chapel during morning prayer or liturgy group, you probably have surmised that I love candles. For a very long time, the single solitary flame of a candle calls my own spirit into a calm sense of wonder. Anne Frank wrote in her diary that "a candle both defines and defies darkness." It is the first thing I do when I get to my office, before I hang up my coat or turn on the heat, I light the candle on my desk.

We light candles every Sunday in worship, we keep a special one lit for the victims of gun violence in our nation. We light candles on birthdays and at weddings, we light them for romance, we light them for centering, we light them to remember others or to lift our prayers.

We light candles, I suspect, because we are drawn towards the light.

As we proceed through this month together, we will light candles that we name, Hope, Love, Peace, Joy and on Christmas Eve, we will light the Christ candle. And then, we will light candle after candle, sharing light with one another and hold them up on that silent night. Thomas Jefferson said, "A candle loses nothing when it lights another candle." The imagery that Jefferson captures in that statement is one I hope will help guide us through this Advent and Christmas season. As we share hope, love, peace, joy and Christ with one another and the world around us, we lose nothing, we only gain...and we move one lit candle closer to the Realm of God.

I treasure the light within each of you, I treasure seeing the glimpses of your goodness and grace. Those moments are touch points with the Holy for me, lit candles that defy the darkness that fills our evening news and so much of what we carry in our own hearts. My prayer for you this Advent season is that you will continue to light candles, both literally and with your lives. My prayer is that we surrender to the quiet of the solitary flame that is God Incarnate and so let it fill us again that we take it out to a world in desperate need.

Grace and Peace,  
Leigh



## Purposeful Service

### Team News

#### Area of Responsibility

Scholarship, Mary's Place weekend/partnership, IFCH dinners, mission partner relations.

**Mary's Place Giving Tree** We are out of Christmas gift tags for the Mary's Place Giving Tree. If you still want to donate you can put in extra money for shoes (\$20 a pair). Money and tags should be turned in by December 10<sup>th</sup>.

**Christmas Eve Offering** The offering received Christmas Eve is going to Puerto Rican hurricane relief through the Presbyterian Disaster Relief Fund.

**December IFCH Dinner** The VPC IFCH meal is December 21. Please sign up at coffee hour. The dinner lasts from 4:30-6:30 PM.

## Hospitality/Fellowship

### Team News

#### Area of Responsibility

Hospitality, Fellowship.

### **Celebrate this joyful season at VPC!**

**Dec. 3<sup>rd</sup>** Hanging of the greens.

**Dec. 10<sup>th</sup>** - The deacons will host a soup luncheon following the Worship service.

**Dec. 17<sup>th</sup>** - There will be a special coffee hour featuring Christmas cookies and games.

### **We hope to be a part of your Holiday!**

*Elder Brownie Carver*

**The VPC Book Club** meets on Friday December 15<sup>th</sup> at Skeffingtons at 6:30. We will discuss Christmas In Harmony by Phillip Gulley. Potluck and bring a wrapped book for white elephant game.

*Elder Al Ross Weston*

## Worship

### Team News

#### Area of Responsibility

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

### **Celebrate this joyful season at VPC!**

We will be having Communion every Sunday of Advent

**Dec. 3<sup>rd</sup>** - Dedication of new hymnals to honor Shirley Blake. Special Music by Jim Huff, Alison Bucklin and Sue Weston.

**Dec. 17<sup>th</sup>** - The choir will sing.

**Dec. 24<sup>th</sup>** - Christmas Eve Day! Barry Cooper will play the trumpet at the 10:00 AM service.

**Dec 24<sup>th</sup>** - The Christmas Eve Candlelight Service with special music will be at 7:00 PM.

**Dec. 31<sup>st</sup>** - The Methodist will join us for an ecumenical service.

### **We hope to be a part of your Holiday!**

*Elder Brownie Carver*

### **Liturgy Group and why you should CHECK IT OUT!**

Each week a group of 5 or 6 members of this church family gather together to work through the text for the following Sunday and create both the Call to Worship and the Unison Prayer of Confession. We have honest, raw, heartfelt and sometimes challenging conversation. We take very seriously that we are scripting words that others will both read and pray. We take our time listening to one another and to God.

If you have been curious or interested in joining this group, feel free to drop in on Mondays at noon in the Chapel. Come one time or come every time or come when you can. And come prepared to share your heart and how the text speaks deepest to you. Come with your questions, just come. This group has become a meaningful place for honest sharing.

## Mission Resource

### Team News

#### Area of Responsibility

Financials, Building and Grounds

**Finance Report** November continued our strong financial position. We made our budgeted giving for the month and held the expenses in line. We should end the year on a positive note.

*Elder Diana Lilje*

#### **Buildings and Grounds Report**

The Vashon Chamber of Commerce is once again stringing **Christmas lights** around the large spruce tree in front of VPC. The Chamber is providing the lights and will reimburse VPC for electricity. An Island wide celebratory lighting of the tree with caroling is scheduled for the evening of Saturday, Dec 2<sup>nd</sup> from 5:30-7:00 PM.

While Carpe Diem and Creative Preschool were on Thanksgiving break, all **fire extinguishers, sprinklers and alarms** were satisfactorily tested. Another opportunity to interact with the families of these wonderful students will be attending Carpe Diem's "Winter Celebration" program December 14<sup>th</sup>, at 7pm in the sanctuary.

The church received a very generous **donation of a piano** recently from Mary Ashby. We will enjoy this gift for many years. If you know of anyone who would like a free piano, the one in the narthex is available.

We're still trying to improve the **VPC website** [www.vashonpreschurch.org](http://www.vashonpreschurch.org). I'm trying now to add **recordings of Pastor Leigh's sermons**. Do you have anything to add to it? Please contact me through the church office if you have any suggestions.

We're also hoping to **train a few more volunteers** to greet visitors and answer phones during office hours. This is a wonderful way to serve the congregation and community while enjoying all the activity that goes on in and around our building throughout the week. If you're interested, call the office or speak to any of the present volunteers.

Blessings,

*Jacq Skeffington*

## Faith Exploration

### Team News

#### Area of Responsibility

Bible study, Christian formation (all ages)

**Faith Exploration** For December Pastor Leigh will be leading an Advent study on Sunday mornings. There is no material to pre-read. Come to listen and learn again as we await the birth of our savior.

We will continue the discussing The Reason for God by Timothy Keller in January.

*Elder Diana Lilje*

## Invitation and Outreach

### Team News

#### Area of Responsibility

New Members and Discipleship,  
Evangelism and Invitation

#### **Prayer and Love**

Elder Larry Commeree and I have been in a running conversation this fall about how to love Vashon well. We have hosted preschool moms for coffee, talked about ways to engage others in our community and how to come alongside the people of Vashon and simply love them for Love's sake. One way that we can love and care for others is to pray for them. This building that we call our church is open to and shared with many other groups. **Starting on Wednesday, January 3<sup>rd</sup>, at 10 a.m., there will be a time of prayer in the Chapel** to name and lift up the others that also call our building home. Come once, come weekly, come when you can. Just know there is space and there is time set apart to love Vashon well, starting with those who share our home together. And there will always be candles to light.

*Pastor Leigh*

## Deacon's Report

### **COMMUNITY VAN PROGRAM AVAILABLE TO ALL ISLANDERS**

There is a new transportation service available to all islanders. You may have seen the two recent articles in the Beachcomber describing the program. These vans could potentially take you to the airport (if prior van commitments on the island didn't interfere), Costco as well as a variety of places on Vashon. No excuse for being unable to get to church or meetings now!

The drivers are community volunteers with a clean driving record (of course) and there must be at least 2 riders. Here is the number to call when you want to set up a ride (must be 3 days in advance please): 206/773-7003. Janet Welt will be happy to answer any questions you may have including fare information. Janet can also help if you want to become a driver for the program.

We are hoping that many will be using this service. The program will be evaluated in 90 days, so we want to be sure it proves itself valuable enough to be kept up.

*Beverly Skeffington*

### **Memorial Committee Report**

Due to several generous gifts to the Memorial Fund, the committee was able to make some decisions to spend some of the donations. New "Glory to God" hymnals were purchased and will be dedicated in memory of Shirley Blake on December 3. We also purchased some new bibles for the sanctuary so now everyone will have the same translation. Unfortunately, our majority bibles are no longer in print so the page numbers will still be different. Lastly, by the end of the month, we should have some more VPC coffee cups!

*Elder Diana Lilje*

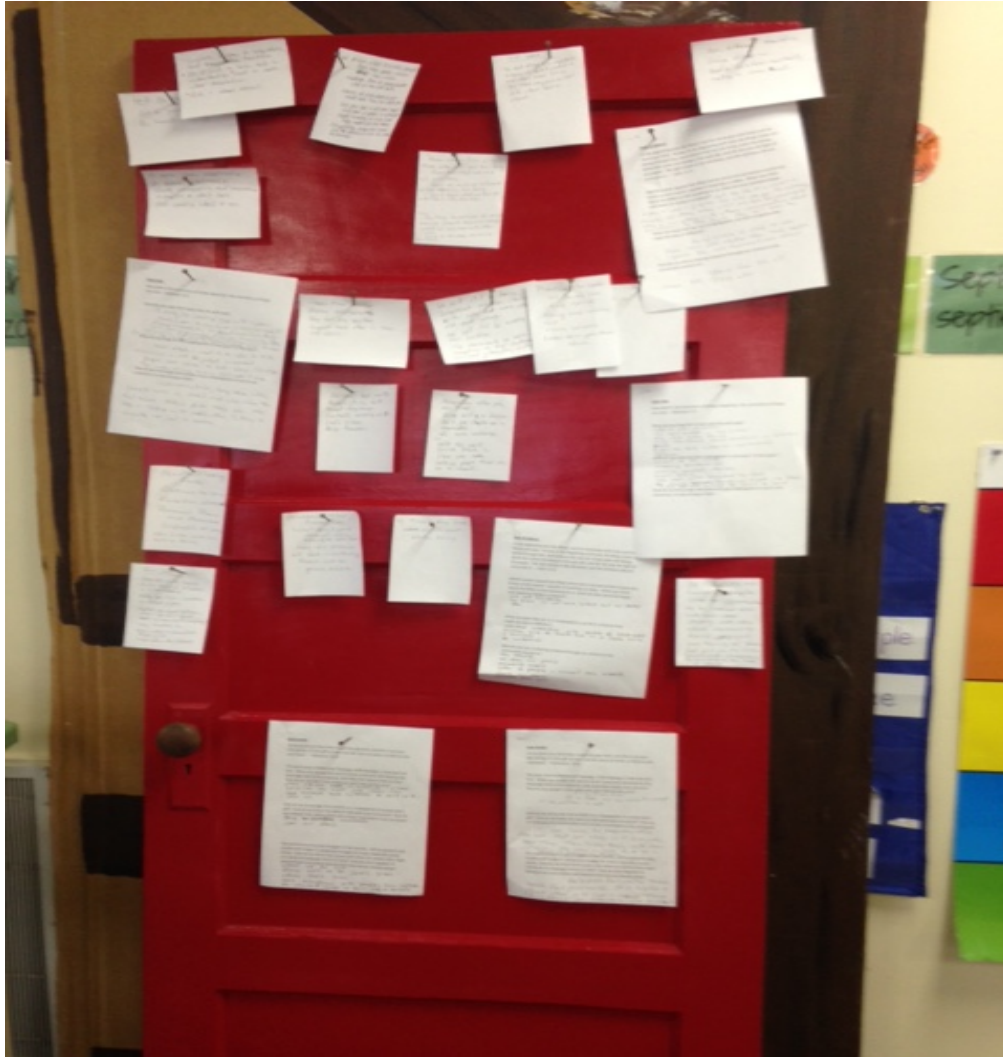
## **Clerk's Corner**

Session held its monthly business meeting on November 8 with all members attending. Session reviewed the membership roll, as it is required to do annually, and removed one member. Other members will be contacted as to their membership intentions. Session discussed and approved a proposal to create a congregational care team, composed of people who wish to be of service to those in need, but who do not want to be (or are not eligible to be) a deacon. After discussion, Jacq Skeffington was elected as a Second Alternate Commissioner to the 2018 PCUSA General Assembly. Brownie explained the offer of a piano and the need for tuning and maintenance of the organ; session agreed to accept the piano. Session also set two dates for December: reception of new members on December 17 and a congregational meeting to elect elders and deacons on December 10. After brief discussion, session voted that the Christmas Eve offering will be donated to Presbyterian Disaster Agency for Puerto Rico hurricane relief. Jacq reported on the progress of the Nominating Committee seeking elders and deacons, and summarized proceedings of the October Presbytery meeting. Finally, session informally discussed the pastor's terms of call, which will be set at the January congregational meeting.

Session also held a special meeting on November 19 to consider an offer from OMAX Corporation to buy back 1,500 shares of stock at \$7.80 per share. Session approved the sale and voted to use the proceeds to reduce the mortgage.

*Bob Spangler  
Clerk of Session*

## What's on Your Mind ?



**We had a great discussion and many good ideas and suggestions “nailed” to the door on Reformation Sunday. Session will be sorting through and discussing the ideas presented by the group assembled that day. Follow up and see if your suggestion has entered the decision and implementation level. They will be interested to hear your thoughts. Keep the conversation going...**

## **Longest Night Advent Spiral Service Wednesday, December 20 at 7:00 p.m.**

Vashon United Methodist Church Fellowship Hall

Please join us for an Advent Spiral Service on the eve of the shortest day of the year. This season of lengthening night and gathering against the cold is often difficult for those who grieve a loss, whether it is the loss of loved ones, the loss of opportunities, or the loss of health and vitality. In such times we gather for comfort and prayer, encouragement and hope.

For this time of meditation, a spiral of evergreen boughs is arranged on the floor and golden stars are scattered along the spiral. After shared readings and prayers, contemplative music is played while each person in turn walks the spiral to its center and finds the Christ Candle, symbolizing the journey inward to encounter the light of Christ. Each person then lights a candle from the Christ Candle and walks back out, placing the light on the path to light the way for others. This simple act reminds us that we carry the light within us as a sign of love for the world: kindled by God through Christ. The Spiral Service is appropriate for all ages.

Blessings,  
Rev. Paul Mitchell  
Pastor  
Vashon United Methodist Church

"The space between a person doing their best to deliver a message of good news and the needy listener is holy ground."  
Fred Rogers

### **Want to keep Christ in Christmas?**

**Feed the hungry,  
clothe the naked,  
forgive the guilty,  
welcome the stranger and the  
unwanted child,  
care for the ill,  
love your enemies.**

# Calendar December 2017

(all events at VPC unless otherwise stated)



## Dec

- 2 Vashon Tree Lighting 5:30 PM
- 3 Morning Prayer Service 8:30 AM
- 3 Advent Christian Formation 9 AM
- 3 Sunday Worship Service 10 AM Communion
- 3 Hanging of the Greens after worship
- 10 Morning Prayer Service 8:30 AM
- 10 Advent Christian Formation 9 AM
- 10 Sunday Worship Service 10 AM Communion
- 10 Congregational Meeting to Elect Elders and Deacons
- 10 Deacon's Soup Luncheon after Worship
- 13 Session Meeting 6:30 PM
- 15 VPC Book Club Christmas Supper 6:30 PM at Skeffington's
- 16 Bible Study 10 AM
- 17 Morning Prayer Service 8:30 AM
- 17 Advent Christian Formation 9 AM
- 17 Sunday Worship Service 10 AM Communion
- 17 Special Christmas Coffee Hour after Worship
- 24 Morning Prayer Service 8:30 AM
- 24 Advent Christian Formation 9 AM
- 24 Christmas Eve Day Service 10 AM Communion
- 24 Christmas Eve Candlelight Service 7 PM
- 31 Morning Prayer Service 8:30 AM
- 31 Ecumenical Worship with VUMC 10 AM

## ONGOING ACTIVITIES

*Liturgy Group meets at noon on Mondays*

*Fellowship breakfast meets at Sporty's at 9:00 AM on Tuesdays*

*Prayer group meets Wednesday 1:30 PM at the Vashon Community Care Center.*

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