

J A N U A R Y 2 0 2 0

Vashon Presbyterian Church

Vashon Island, Washington 98070

Listening to God, embracing all, living in joy

Newsletter January 2020

Happy New Year!

From All of Us at VPC!



Dear Ones of VPC,

I love the magi, the wise men who go home by another way. I wonder what other ways you and I will find in this coming year, ways that may surprise us. I suspect that the paths we are led to follow will be holy and good even if we only see a few steps at a time. Stepping out in faith is like that and one thing I know about VPC is that you are people willing to step out in faith. So, as we step out into a new year together, I share with you a favorite poem of mine by Jan Richardson:

For Those Who Have Far to Travel - A Blessing for Epiphany

If you could see the journey whole, you might never undertake it,
might never dare the first step that propels you from the place you have known
toward the place you know not.

Call it one of the mercies of the road: that we see it only by stages as it opens before us,
as it comes into our keeping, step by single step.

There is nothing for it but to go, and by our going take the vows the pilgrim takes:
to be faithful to the next step; to rely on more than the map;
to heed the signposts of intuition and dream; to follow the star that only you will recognize;
to keep an open eye for the wonders that attend the path;
to press on beyond distractions, beyond fatigue, beyond what would tempt you from the way.

There are vows that only you will know:
the secret promises for your particular path and the new ones you will need to make
when the road is revealed by turns you could not have foreseen.
Keep them, break them, make them again;
each promise becomes part of the path, each choice creates the road that will take you to the place
where at last you will kneel to offer the gift most needed—
the gift that only you can give—
before turning to go home by another way.

—Jan Richardson
from Circle of Grace

I am grateful to be stepping out in faith into another new year with each of you. And I am so very grateful that we are held in love by the One who knows the way. Grace and Peace, Leigh

(Feature Article)

Companionship Workshop Coming to Vashon

What is companionship? It is providing a compassionate presence for people living in circumstances of homelessness, mental illness, addictions, trauma, and isolation. It is rooted in our natural capacities to act on our concern for another person; it is a relational response to isolation and suffering, supportive of healing and recovery. It's not about "fixing" but instead, welcomes the stranger, building a circle of care with persons who are facing emotional and mental health challenges. Companionship aims to share the journey side-by-side with those experiencing distress, bearing witness to the full dignity and story of the persons experiencing these things.

The five practices of companionship are: hospitality, neighboring, side-by-side, listening and accompaniment. The three-hour workshop will explain in detail these practices. Companionship is designed to help individuals gain in knowledge and skill to move with confidence beyond the serving counter and into honest relationships with people in need.

Kae Eaton, who lives on Vashon and works with the Mental Health Chaplaincy will be conducting the workshop. Kae holds a Masters in Theology with emphasis in Counseling Psychology, and a Certificate in Spiritual Direction from the Seattle School of Theology and Psychology. She was the 2018 Chaplain Fellow at the Center of Excellence in Substance Abuse Treatment and Education (CESATE), at the Veterans Administration, Puget sound Healthcare System, and 2017 Chaplain Resident on the Acute Psychiatric Care Unit at the VA Hospital

She also serves as Consultant and Master Trainer for Pathways to Promise, a national cooperative of mental health organizations and faith groups working with those with mental and emotional illnesses and their families. Kae has years of experience on the streets of Seattle, not only working directly with people living without home and dealing with mental health issues, but also training others in the Practices of Companionship through outreach ministries of hospitality. Kae's work and trainings support both secular and faith-based communities locally and nationally.

The workshop will be free of charge, thanks to the Mental Health Advocates at the Vashon Presbyterian Church. The workshop will run from **9am to noon on Saturday, January 11th**. The Mental Health Chaplaincy supports companionship throughout Seattle by providing trainings to churches, nonprofits and other organizations. The goal of the training is to provide the tools to listen consciously, with openness and awareness to the stories and struggles of others, to enable at least a momentary reprieve, and to encourage a strengthening for the journey ahead.

Beverly Skeffington
VPC Mental Health Advocacy

Purposeful Service Team News

Area of Responsibility

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

Important Purposeful Service Team Meeting The Purposeful Service Team will meet Thursday Jan 9th in the library at 6:00 pm. We will be deciding sustainability goals for 2020.

IFCH Dinner VPC will be responsible for the IFCH dinner January 23rd. Sign up in the reception area.

Elizabeth Loveness, Purposeful Service Elder

Invitation and Outreach Team News

Area of Responsibility

New Members and Discipleship, Evangelism and Invitation.

First Friday S'Mores We will continue to have a bon fire and S'Mores on first Fridays weather permitting. If you haven't tried one of special S'Mores yet you really need to come and enjoy! Friday January 3rd this month 5-7 pm.

Christmas Pageant The Christmas Pageant presented on December 22nd was really wonderful. A combination of the young and young at heart rounded out the cast. See photos on p 7.

Luna with Leigh Every Tuesday Leigh is at Luna Café at 2 pm. Everyone and anyone is welcome to stop by and visit with Leigh. It's an informal time to share your challenges or successes with your Pastor. Leigh has welcomed many who aren't otherwise involved in "church". She has really enjoyed the time and hopes more of us will check in and see what it's all about.

Barb Huff, Outreach Elder

Worship Team News

Area of Responsibility

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

Worship Team Meeting There will be a worship team meeting on the 19th following the morning service. Everyone is invited.

Brownie Carver, Worship Elder

Faith Exploration Team News

Area of Responsibility

Bible study, Christian formation (all ages).

Adult Education Class A six-week course titled "The Prophets Still Speak" will be offered on Sunday mornings at 9 am starting January 12. A course guide will be provided. As a supplement, a short book by Walter Brueggemann, From Judgment to Hope, will be used. It is available for \$9.00. Please contact Bob Spangler if you plan to attend.

Al Ross Weston, Faith Exploration Elder

Hospitality/Fellowship Team News

Area of Responsibility

Hospitality, Fellowship

VPC Book Club Book club will discuss Madame Fourcade's Secret War by Lynne Olson at 6pm on January 31st. There will be a potluck before the discussion. Meeting is at Barb and Jim Huff's. See p 5 for upcoming books through April.

Elder Al Ross Weston

Mission Resource

Team News

Area of Responsibility

Financials

Building and Grounds

Buildings and Grounds

OH MY, IT WAS CERTAINLY A WET DECEMBER! But the **church looked really beautiful once again this Christmas season** thanks to all of us who hung greens and lights, decorated Christmas Trees, moved benches and pews, set up and stowed tables and chairs, rerouted sump pump discharges, mopped and vacuumed up water in the basement and shoveled gravel in the parking lot. Over and over I heard visitors remark about how warmly welcomed they felt at VPC. Like coming **home for the holidays and being warmly embraced!**

Our **new solar panels** have been inspected and approved for operation. We're just waiting now for a PSE electrician to install a "Net Meter" before we join the grid and start getting credit for the solar energy we capture. We are very excited about this major commitment to Creation Care.

While Carpe Diem and Creative Preschool were on Winter break, our toolbelts group joined force with our custodian to **strip and wax the kitchen and back hallway floors.** With 3 coats of sealer and wax on those floors they should maintain their shine through the rest of the school year. Chris Coldeen and I also finished **installing the beautiful sink and vanity** donated by the Commerees in the nursery bathroom.

The Mission Resources Facilities Team meets the first Tuesday of each month at the Colvos Creek Pub from 6 to 7 pm, so please join us Tuesday, January 7th to discuss future needs and activities. Also, feel free to drop in any Tuesday between 10 and noon to help the toolbelts with maintenance and repairs. (At the church that is!)

Grace and blessings in the new year,

Jacq Skeffington, Mission Resource Elder

Financials

I haven't closed out 2019 yet but it obvious that we are going to end the year with a surplus. This would have been the case even without the sale of OMAX stock. Our regular income will exceed the normal expenses by a considerable margin. Thank you all for your generous support of VPC.

The sale of the OMAX stock came as an unexpected windfall and allowed us to do several things that would have been out of our reach otherwise.

- First, we paid off the mortgage. That freed up enough cash flow to bring our Pastor on full time. This has been a long term goal of ours and we were able to accomplish it at least a couple of years early.
- We donated 10% of the OMAX income to some of our mission partners.
- We brought the Capital Repair Fund up to a \$30,000 balance — another long term goal.
- Lastly, we were able to install solar panels on the church building. This will radically reduce our electrical bill going forward.

I will have a report on fiscal 2019 and the budget for 2020 at the Congregational meeting later this month.

Jim Lilje, Mission Resource Financial Elder

Book Club Upcoming Selections

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| Jan | <u>Madame Fourcade's Secret War</u> by Lynne Olson |
| Feb | <u>When Breath Becomes Air</u> by Paul Kalanithi |
| Mar | <u>A Pilgrimage to Eternity</u> by Timothy Eagan |
| Apr | <u>The Great Gatsby</u> by F. Scott Fitzgerald |

Clerk's Corner

Session held its monthly meeting December 10 with all elders present. Jim Lilje presented the final version of the 2020 budget which was unanimously approved. Purposeful Service moved that the proceeds from the Christmas Eve Offerings be used for the Presbyterian/IFCH severe weather shelter. The audit of the 2018 financial records is scheduled for December 18. Members submitted written reports for their teams' activities. Caran-Marie Weston Dunbar was readmitted to membership in the church. A Congregational Meeting was held on December 15 to elect elders and deacons. Barb Huff, Al Ross-Weston, and Bob Spangler were elected to the Ruling Elder Class of 2022 and Susan Commeree, Sheryl Lehman, and Sue Weston were elected to the Deacon Class of 2021.

Diana Lilje, Clerk of Session

From Our Deacons

Without Love

Without love there is no hope and in this world people are starved for hope. Love gives people a glimpse of the possibility of hope for the future.. That is why we must share love and hope with others. Love is like the ripples in a stream. They are a sign of clean water. Hope is the abundant green growth that results from clean water. Stagnant water does not bring growth but fear. Share your love in this new year with others by acts of kindness so that people may be fed by the hope of a better future in what for many is a stark and bitter world.

Deacon Sue Weston

Newly Elected officers

Bob Spangler is our newly elected Elder and Susan Commeree is our newly elected Deacon. Thanks to Myrtle Walls who is going off the Deacons and Jacq Skeffington who is going off Session for their dedicated service. Jacq will serve as Clerk of Session starting January 2020. Many thanks to Diana Lilje who capably served as Clerk this last year.

Session

Pastor Leigh Weber
Clerk of Session Jacq Skeffington

Elder Brownie Carver
Elder Barb Huff
Elder Jim Lilje
Elder Elizabeth Loveness
Elder Bob Spangler
Elder Al Ross Weston

Deacons

Moderator Linday Hofman

Deacon Susan Commeree
Deacon Sheryl Lehman
Deacon Claudia Ross Weston
Deacon Nancy Tucker
Deacon Sue Weston



Christmas Pageant 2019

Vashon
Presbyterian
Church

All Ages Joined in on the Fun!
Audience was quoted as saying,

“We’ll have to do this
every year!”

Merry Christmas!



Calendar

January 2020

(all events at VPC unless otherwise stated)

Jan

- 3 **First Friday Bon Fire and S'Mores 5-7 pm**
- 5 **FOOD BANK SUNDAY**
- 5 **Prayer Service 8:30 am**
- 5 **Faith Exploration Class 9 am**
- 5 **Sunday Worship Service 10 am (Communion Service)**
- 11 **“Companioning” Workshop 9-Noon at VPC**
- 12 **Prayer Service 8:30 am**
- 12 **Faith Exploration Class (beginning a new series) 9 am**
- 12 **Sunday Worship Service 10 am (Installation of Officers)**
- 14 **Session Meeting 4:30 pm**
- 19 **Prayer Service 8:30 am**
- 19 **Faith Exploration Class 9 am**
- 19 **Sunday Worship Service 10 am**
- 23 **IFCH Dinner 5:30 pm**
- 23 **Theology Pub 5:30 pm at Camp Colvos**
- 24 **Session Retreat**
- 26 **Prayer Service 8:30 am**
- 26 **Faith Exploration Class 9 am**
- 26 **Sunday Worship Service 10 am**
- 26 **Congregational Annual Meeting after Worship**
- 31 **VPC Book Club 6 pm at Barb and Jim Huff's**

ONGOING ACTIVITIES

Text Study Group Noon on Mondays

Fellowship Breakfast meets at Sporty's at 9 am on Tuesdays

Tool Belts meet Tuesdays 9 to Noon

Luna With Leigh Tuesdays 2 pm at Luna Café

Theology Pub 4th Thursdays 5:30 at Camp Colvos

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