

OCTOBER 2020

# Vashon Presbyterian Church

Vashon Island, Washington 98070

“Love One Another”

## October 2020 Newsletter

### **First Sunday Recycling - October 4**

Gather up your Styrofoam, plastic bags, bubble wrap and head for the Open Space building this Sunday October 4 from noon to 4 pm.

### **Theology Pub is Back!**

Starting October 22 on Zoom, VPC is reinstating Theology Pub. For six Thursdays our discussion leaders, Bob Spangler, Barb Huff and Al Ross Weston will explore racial justice through a series of videos entitled “The Color of Compromise”. There will be opportunities for open honest discussion.

### **A Walk Through History!**

Vashon Island is unique among islands in that most islands have a seaside town or port as their commercial center, while Vashon has a landlocked main town. Why? Take a walk around Vashon (town) and through 34 interpretive panels placed on historic buildings you will find the answer. It’s outside, it’s socially distanced, good exercise and it’s home town. What’s not to like?

### **Mission Partner – Vietnam Ministries**

A special report will bring us up to date on how our mission partners in Vietnam are doing. Binh Nguyen gives us a special report. See p 6.

### **Important Dates!**

**World Communion Sunday**  
October 4

**First Sunday Recycling**  
October 4  
Noon – 4 pm

**Theology Pub**  
October 22 – November 26  
Thursdays 5 pm

**VPC Book Club**  
October 16  
Friday 7 pm

**Mini Gatherings**  
October 1 – November 1

**All Saints Day**  
November 1

**Advent Faith Formation Class**  
Begins December 1



Dear Ones of VPC,

Once again, we begin another month in this year of meeting virtually for the most part. The pandemic continues to change how we live life in so many ways and yet we press on. I have been encouraged by you in so many ways and I want to take time to share that with you this month.

You show up. You show up for worship. You show up in stewardship. You show up for neighbors. You show up to help others. You show up to plan and learn and dream and discern. And as you show up, you reveal to me and others that you take seriously your place in the Body of Christ.

In my own devotional time lately, I have been reading Paul's letter to the Ephesians. "I've heard of you, about you, how you live and how you press on." (My paraphrase) He begins his letter to them telling them that the way in which they live is known to him and to others.

One of the things I take from Paul's letter is that how we live our lives, how we live in community with one another, reveals who we are and tells others what matters to us most. I see you and hear you and watch you living your lives as people who show up for Jesus each and every day. You live as his hands and feet; you take that seriously. You care for one another, you pay attention. You ask the hard questions, and you aren't afraid to participate in uncomfortable conversations.

This month three committees of your Session, Faith Formation, Outreach and Purposeful Service are coming together to offer a short six-week series called "The Color of Compromise." It will be based on a biblically based video series offered through Amazon Prime on racial justice as the work of the gospel. Starting on Thursday, October 22 (5-6:30 pm) for six weeks, we will have a video with discussion afterwards and I would like to invite you to pray about joining us. I have watched this series and appreciate it's depth and scriptural lens. Each week the discussion afterwards will be led by a different person from these three committees.

When we engage in the hard work of being the Body together, of listening and praying together, we take more steps forward, with Christ, in this work of bringing about God's Kingdom on earth as it is in heaven. I see you. I hear you. I love you. And I am so grateful for you. I am also here for you, whenever you just need to check in. Call, email, or text anytime (425.221.1142)

Grace and Peace,  
Leigh



## Hospitality/Fellowship

### Team News

#### Area of Responsibility

Hospitality, Fellowship

**Mini Gatherings** As long as the weather stays nice mini gatherings will take place. Twos, threes and fours gather outside to renew “face to face” friendships.....enjoying each other’s views, patios, gardens etc. When weather begins to change we’ll have to get more creative in order to facilitate these get-togethers. A few people using the social hall for crafts, journaling or just sharing coffee or tea and a treat in this large space could provide room for social distancing.

**Zoom Partners** Recently some of us have been inviting a friend that has not been able to use Zoom to join us on Sunday mornings for the worship service. If you are someone who uses Zoom and has the capacity for more than one “Zoom station” (far enough apart so that they don’t interfere with each other) you can be a Zoom partner too. Get in touch with Leigh or Liz to make arrangements.

**A Walk Through History** The Heritage Museum has established a walk around Vashon (town) with interpretive panels on historic buildings. Each week you can join a member of the hospitality team to walk around Vashon and discover a few of these buildings. Our church is one. Look for its panel beside the ramp entrance door. See the weekly Enews for details on organized mini group walks.

*Elizabeth Loveness, Hospitality Elder*

## Invitation and Outreach

### Area of Responsibility

New Members and Discipleship  
Evangelism and Invitation

**Game Nights** continue on Zoom Friday nights 7pm. Cumulative prizes and special prize for first timers!

*Barb Huff, Outreach Elder*

## Worship

### Team News

#### Area of Responsibility

Sacraments Celebration, Music Program,  
Lay Leaders, Ecumenical worship,  
Church Décor

**October 4th is World Communion Sunday.** Join us as we celebrate with our brothers and sisters in Christ.

**November 1st is All Saints Day.** We are inviting you to bring copies of pictures of your saints to the church office by October 15th. We will project them during this special service.

*Brownie Carver, Worship Elder*

## Faith Formation

### Team News

#### Area of Responsibility

Bible study, Christian formation (all ages)

**Theology Pub** Beginning October 22 Theology Pub returns to explore racial justice through a series of videos entitled “The Color of Compromise.” Your discussion leaders Bob Spangler, Al Ross Weston and Barb Huff will show a 20-minute video and then lead a discussion. This series will last six weeks on Thursdays at 5-6:30 pm.

**Advent Series** As the Theology Pub series ends an Advent faith formation class on Tuesday evenings at 7 pm will begin. We look forward to lively faith forming discussions in the coming fall season.

**VPC Book Club** meets on Friday October 16<sup>th</sup>. We will be discussing The Bartender’s Tale by Ivan Doig. See p 7 for upcoming selections.

*Al Ross Weston, Faith Formation Elder*

## Mission Resource

### Team News

#### Area of Responsibility

Financials

Building and Grounds

**Buildings and Grounds** Carpe Diem students returned to outdoor classes at VPC September 1<sup>st</sup> and the excitement of young students, although subdued due to COVID 19 restrictions, has returned. **Children meet in small “cohorts” with teachers on Mondays and Tuesdays and work remotely the rest of the week.** They meet under Creative Preschool’s gazebo in the courtyard and a tent in the parking lot most of the day and only enter the building for bathroom use. Sharing the space, especially the office space, does present a problem on days when children are present so Session is working on compatibility use guidelines. Anyone entering the building when children or teachers are present must be masked, have their temperature checked, and attest that they are not suffering flu like symptoms, in accordance with WA state guidelines for schools. We do not at present have regularly assigned office hours so please refrain from entering the church building on Mondays and Tuesdays before 4pm and check in with teachers on any other weekday. Please use hand sanitizer and wear a mask at all times in the building. More details will follow as Session and Carpe Diem staff work out arrangements. As our reader board says, “things will get better”.

Let’s try another **socially distant work party Saturday, October 17<sup>th</sup>, from 10-noon.** Last month’s was awesome! We moved two truckloads of yard waste to the transfer station and I’m sure we can fill up at least two more pickups this month. After all, they call this the fall! Please bring clippers, string trimmers, rakes, shovels, gloves and a smile. We’ll spread out around the grounds but please also wear a mask so that we can approach each other and share our joys and concerns.

Speaking of concerns! The backbone of our “toolbelts” group, **Chris Coldeen, is going in to Swedish Hospital for back surgery Oct 5<sup>th</sup>.** Please pray for him, his surgeons and family, and his complete recovery.

Blessings and Grace,

*Jacq Skeffington*

## Purposeful Service

### Team News

#### Area of Responsibility

Scholarship, Mary Magdalene Weekend, IFCH Dinners, Mission Partner Relations

Claudia and Al Ross-Weston have advertised the availability of the **Heindsmann Scholarship**. The applications are being sent and returned by mail, due September 28. Interviews will be via zoom unless we move to a new phase.

The committee met via zoom with Binh Nguyen, local contact for our **Vietnam ministries mission**, as described in the separate article (see p 6).

Bev gave a moment for mission explaining how our donation to **Mary’s Place** is being used.

**The Community Care Team, a unit of the Vashon Medical Reserve Corps**, has asked local organizations to become partners in their suicide prevention campaign, and as such publicize the group’s programs. VPC session agreed to be a sponsor; no financial obligation is required.

The committee will continue to publicize the **Food Bank and styrofoam recycling**.

We are continuing to collect **receipts from Thriftway and IGA** as part of our mission efforts. Please put them – signed and with a telephone number – in the prayer box near the sidewalk.

*Bob Spangler, Purposeful Service Elder*

## Deacon's News

### I've Seen Fire and I've Seen Rain

*"Gloom, despair, and agony on me; Deep dark depression, excessive misery; If it weren't for bad luck, I'd have no luck at all; Gloom, despair, and agony on me."*

Hee Haw

*"And not only that, but we also boast in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not disappoint us, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us."*

Romans 5: 3-5

Wildfires still rage persistently within California, hurricanes continue wreaking havoc as the season is in full swing, peaceful protests devolve into riots and looting, civil discourse all but disappears, and the pandemic marches on. We brace ourselves for the next chapter of Revelation, or possibly Job, feeling tested as never before. We feel anxious, even fearful, and powerless. But we need not.

All of us in our lives have enjoyed successes, both large and small. We have in general received excellent public school educations, continued that education beyond high school, and advanced within our chosen careers. We have forged solid and satisfying relationships and raised loving families. Although we are often tempted to take sole credit for these accomplishments, we know in our heart of hearts that there is no such thing as a self-made person, and that God's presence in our lives is the force that sustains us.

Let us remember that God never changes. The same God who gave us grace, strength and mercy to achieve our own individual successes is the same God who will guide us safely through these troubled times. Let not our hearts be troubled.

*"When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you; when you walk through fire you shall not be burned, and the flame shall not consume you."*

Isaiah 43:2

*Deacon Nancy Tucker*

P.S. Want to be inspired? Take a look at this AMAZING video, a testimony to the incredible strength of the human spirit God has instilled in us.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-cPakutgQZY>

## **Mission Partners: Special Report**

### **Vietnam Ministries**

The 2020 VPC budget authorizes donations to several organizations considered to be mission partners. The VPC community is well acquainted with the work of three of these partners –Presbyterian Disaster Relief, Interfaith Council to Prevent Homelessness and Vashon Food Bank. In this and future newsletter articles we will highlight the mission of our lesser-known mission partners.

For many years, VPC has provided support to church-related ministries in Vietnam. This year’s budget includes a donation of \$1000 for this cause. Members of the Purposeful Service committee recently spoke with Binh Nguyen, our Seattle-area contact for three ministries in Vietnam: the United Presbyterian Church of Vietnam, a health clinic supported by the Catholic church, and a scholarship program also organized by the Catholic order. Binh has led trips to Vietnam for area church members (including several from VPC) to learn more about these programs, but no trip took place this year.

Binh informed us that the Presbyterian Church in Vietnam is still not recognized by the government, and thus operates as an “underground” faith community. There are about 8,000 members in 33 cities or provinces. The medical clinic is near Hue, in the central part of the country. It serves the poor, and also receives funding as a mission program of Mercer Island Presbyterian Church. The scholarship program has as its focus students in the central highlands, where the population is poor and many residents are members of minority groups. Binh noted that some of the students who have received scholarships have entered the ministry.

Binh asked the Purposeful Service committee to identify which of these programs should receive VPC’s budgeted 2020 donation. After discussions with Binh and among ourselves, the committee decided to split the donation equally between the Presbyterian Church of Vietnam and student scholarships.

Members of the VPC community also have been actively supporting the Vietnam ministry by individually sponsoring a child’s education. The cost of a sponsorship is about \$350 per year. Please contact Bev and Jacq Skeffington for more information about creating a personal relationship with a Vietnamese child in this way.

## Clerk's Corner

Session held its monthly meeting September 22<sup>nd</sup> via ZOOM with all Elders present. Elder Brownie Carver opened the meeting with a meditation and prayer. Pastor Leigh reported that she has continued socially distant pastoral care, coming to Vashon twice per week and meeting with individuals and small groups in outdoor settings. She is also always available in emergencies by phone. Treasurer Jim Lilje reported that VPC is still in good financial condition. Donations are continuing to exceed anticipated offerings, helping to offset reduced rental income. Donations to the memorial fund in memory of George Thieme have been extremely generous and outlets to direct those funds to mental health ministries were discussed. Session has begun working on a budget for 2021 with many uncertainties to be considered. Purchase of a laptop and microphone to enable joining zoom worship services from the sanctuary by guest musicians and speakers was authorized. Brownie Carver reported that a survey of the congregation about resuming limited worship in the sanctuary revealed great satisfaction with our current zoom worship, although a few members would like to resume meeting in the sanctuary as soon as possible. Bob Spangler of the Purposeful Service committee proposed that VPC create a transportation program to provide necessary scheduled rides to medical appointments in accordance with the VPC Safe Conduct policy. He also proposed that VPC partner with The Community Care Team, a unit of the Vashon Medical Reserve Corps, in their suicide prevention campaign. Both motions carried. Friday night game nights are still gaining popularity led by Outreach Elder Barb Huff. Hospitality elder Elizabeth Loveness reported that small group gatherings are nourishing our need for community. Some individuals are beginning to meet in small groups at individual's homes for worship. Liz is continuing to research books for a congregation wide read on social justice issues.

Blessings and Grace,  
*Jacq Skeffington, Clerk of Session*

## Upcoming Book Club Selections

October - Bartender's Tale Ivan Doig

November One Long River of Song - Brian Doyle

December Wishin' and Hopin' - Wally Lamb

January Ho Chi Minh: A Life - William J Duiker





# Calendar for October 2020

(All events on Zoom unless otherwise stated)

## October

- 4 Prayer Service 8:30 AM
- 4 Sunday Worship 10 AM (World Communion)
- 4 Purposeful Service Meeting 1 pm
- 11 Prayer Service 8:30 AM
- 11 Sunday Worship Service 10 AM
- 16 VPC Book Club 6:00 PM at Skeffington's
- 18 Prayer Service 8:30 AM
- 18 Sunday Worship Service 10 AM
- 25 Prayer Service 8:30 AM
- 25 Sunday Worship Service 10 AM

## ONGOING ACTIVITIES

**Art in Worship** Sundays 2 pm

**Sermon Reflection/Text Study** Mondays Noon

**Coffee at Sporty's** Tuesdays 9 am

**Text Study** Tuesdays Noon

**Movement Prayer** Wednesdays 8 am

**Theology Pub** Thursdays beginning 10/22 5 pm

**Happy Hours** Mon Wed Fri 5 pm

**Games Nights** Fridays 7 pm

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