



Vashon Presbyterian Church

News and Concerns

January 2023

Sermons and service posted on church website: vashonpreschurch.org

Zoom Link: <https://zoom.us/j/442169680>

Love One Another

Whoever you are and wherever your life's journey has taken you, you are welcome here. We hope that you will find VPC to be a people of warmth, acceptance, and commitment to the calling of Jesus Christ. We are honored to have you worship with us.



Congregational Annual Meeting January 29

We will hold a congregational meeting immediately following worship on January 29 to discuss the Annual Reports and elect the 2023 Nominating Committee. This annual meeting will cover 2022 highlights as well as plans for 2023. After this meeting, we'll adjourn to the Social Hall for a potluck lunch.

New Year's Prayer

by Charlotte Anselmo

Thank you, Lord, for giving me
The brand new year ahead
Help me live the way I should
As each new day I tread.

Give me gentle wisdom
That I might help a friend
Give me strength and courage
So a shoulder I might lend.

The year ahead is empty
Help me fill it with good things
Each new day filled with joy
And the happiness it brings.

Please give the leaders of our world
A courage born of peace
That they might lead us gently
And all the fighting cease.

Please give to all upon this earth
A heart that's filled with love
A gentle happy way to live
With Your blessings from above.

The New Year lies before you
Like a spotless track of snow.
Be careful how you tread on it,
For every mark will show.



A Message from Pastor Leigh

Dear Ones of VPC,

One of the realities of growing up on the East Coast is that you're led to think about NYC marking time for the whole country. The news comes on at 6:00 PM and it's live, not recorded for later or not "a special West Coast edition of...". New Year's is likely the biggest misleading of all. It's 2023 in the United States when the ball drops in Time's Square-- or at least that's what I thought when I was little.

One of my takeaways from that misunderstanding is the widening of my lens. When I moved to Seattle, I realized what I clearly understood in theory, that the country has several time zones and NYC doesn't set time for everyone. While that sounds like a simple realization, it's given me some insight. I bring a certain perspective, a lens, to my life and my understanding of it.

When we come together as a community, we come with a lot of different lenses. Some of us are steeped in the church, we grew up in the church, it's never hurt us or caused us to push away too much. Some of us grew up in the church, left the church and then returned. Some in our community had different experiences. Given all the many realities of life, the many lenses, it's safe to say that there isn't a "right" way to do things. But I do think there's a God's way.

God welcomes all people. God makes space and forgives and seeks to care for all people. God doesn't harm. God loves unconditionally.

My prayer for us in this coming year is that we continue to love like God, that we continue to make space for others, that we continue to love radically and care deeply. My prayer for us this coming year is that we take the light that we have found in God and share light with the community around us.

There's much we don't know in this life, sometimes just because of the lens we each have, but we do know how to love. As we love like God more and more, our lenses will only widen and perhaps we'll catch up a glimpse of what God sees. That gives me hope.

Blessings for a wonderful 2023!

Leigh



Worship

Worship Survey Update

The VPC Worship Surveys are about 75% returned. A 75% response rate is generally considered outstanding, but for our small community I hesitate to draw conclusions with that many members and friends unaccounted for. However, there are some common threads in certain areas that I believe are representative of VPC as a whole:

- ◆ Pastor Leigh's sermons were almost unanimously mentioned as a key worship element, with resonant messages.
- ◆ Almost everyone agreed having the hybrid Zoom/in person capability was a great feature of our Sunday worship services now. Whether people were ill, traveling or having company it is valuable to have the option to Zoom.
- ◆ Music is a very important part of the worship for our members.
- ◆ A majority of our members maintain some sort of personal daily devotional.
- ◆ There seems to be the correct number of offerings either in person or on Zoom for worship (timewise) but maybe the content or focus could be tweaked a bit.
- ◆ Over half of respondents were in favor of some kind of outdoor service in appropriate weather although there was some concern of how to be inclusive and inadvertently be in a location that was not accessible to all.
- ◆ There is an interesting desire to go to nature (and by example or deduction away from other people) to find spiritual experiences or connection to God.

These are just a few of summary thoughts from an initial look at the survey. Pastor Leigh and the Worship Committee will use your responses to help plan a program for next year. A complete review of the Worship Survey will be contained in the annual report coming out in January.

As always, I appreciate your comments.

Liz Loveness, Worship Elder

Clerk's Corner

Session held its regular monthly meeting December 20th at Elizabeth Loveness's home. While Session met in an upstairs room, spouses decorated Liz's Christmas tree downstairs. Following the meeting, all dined together. As Barb Huff will be leaving Session at the end of this year, the dinner was planned to honor her service in a special way.

Finance Elder Jim Lilje provided electronic statements of cash on hand and year-to-date vs budget as of November 30, and presented the 2023 budget for adoption. Session approved the budget for 2023, including the revised terms of call authorized by the congregation at a Special Congregational meeting on December 11th. At that meeting the Congregation also elected Bob Spangler and Al Ross-Weston to the Elder Class of 2025 and Caran-Marie Weston Dunbar and Larry Commeree to the Deacon class of 2024.

Session set the date of the Annual Meeting of the Congregation and Corporation as January 29, 2023. The business of that meeting will be to discuss Annual Reports and elect the 2023 Nominating Committee. Annual reports will be transmitted electronically, and paper copies will be available in the church lobby during the week before the meeting.

Corporate Registration has been filed with the Secretary of States' Office for 2023. Session was provided with an electronic copy of the membership roll for review. Membership declined from 44 to 40 members in 2023, but a group of new members is anticipated in the Spring.

Hummingbird Marketing Services has been hired and is in the process of switching the VPC website over to a new Internet Host by mid-January.

Session approved a motion from the purposeful service committee detailing that the scholarship sponsored by VPC through the Vashon Community Scholarship Foundation be awarded to a student going into nursing, preferably focusing on senior care with an interest in mental health and hospice training. Community service in some aspect of senior care would be of special interest.

Sessions' final action of the meeting was to approve a motion to contract with Lee Van Valkenburg for up to \$5,000 to prepare and install a concrete patio in the play yard.

More details of all mission activities are listed in each committee's section of this newsletter.

The next regular session meeting will be at VPC on Tuesday, January 17th at 4:30 PM.

Jacq Skeffington, Clerk of Session

Church Leadership

Pastor	Leigh Weber
Clerk of Session	Jacq Skeffington
Session Members	Lindsay Hofman, Jim Lilje, Elizabeth Loveness, Bob Spangler, Nancy Tucker, Al Ross-Weston
Deacons	Claudia Ross-Weston (Moderator), Chris Coldeen, Larry Commeree, Susan Commeree, Caran-marie Weston Dunbar, Sheryl Lehman

Purposeful Service Team Areas of Responsibility

Scholarships, Mary's Place partnership, IFCH, Mission Partner Relations

In December IFCH began serving the daily meals at VPC rather than the Methodist Church. Hot meals prepared by IFCH volunteers are served daily on a take-out basis from 5:00 to 5:30 pm Monday through Thursday. The Friday meal is a sack meal prepared by IFCH staff. We're pleased that our facility is used for this purpose, especially during cold weather. Warm clothing and blankets are also available at this time during the winter months. VPC's representative to IFCH is Brownie Carver.

On December 3 we collected a carload of plastic bags, Styrofoam and plastic packing materials in the VPC parking lot. Brownie took them to the island-wide event the next day. We will continue to have this collection every other month.

Three Purposeful Service committee members met to discuss the proposed criteria for the Vashon Community Foundation Scholarship that will be awarded in 2023. We will have more information about this in the future.

Mary's Place staff expressed appreciation for VPC's decision to donate the Christmas Eve offering to them. The receipts were \$700.

The 2023 VPC budget includes \$8,000 in donations to Mission Partners. We will highlight in 2023 newsletter articles the organizations that receive these funds. We can make these donations through the General Fund only with the generosity of VPC members and friends.

Bob Spangler, Purposeful Service Elder

Faith Formation

Faith Formation covered a lot of material in 2022. On alternate Monday evenings, one group faithfully followed One Year Through the Bible Devotional from January through December (and will be finishing up with the Book of Revelation during the last two weeks of January. Watch E-news for dates if you would like to join them.) Following the Call was discussed on Tuesday evenings with a break for the summer and for special readings during Easter and Christmas. During Lent, Rev Leigh led us through Entering the Passion of Jesus and in Advent, The Heart That Grew Three Sizes, finding faith in the story of the Grinch.

Looking forward, in addition to our discussion(s) of Revelation, on Tuesday, January 10 I will present a poem, *The Sons of Martha* by Rudyard Kipling. I discovered this poem from quotes in a mystery story I was reading, along with some background on Kipling. I found it an interesting take on the Mary and Martha story which I have always grappled with. During this discussion, we will also talk about topics or books that might be of interest to pursue in the new year. I will text copies of the poem this coming week to those I think might be interested. Let me know if I miss you.

Lindsay Hofman, Faith Formation Elder

Building and Grounds

Steve Radic, a local plumber, came and inspected the kitchen plumbing on Dec 7th and is pricing a grease trap. The vinyl tiled flooring near the sink shows signs of water damage and should be replaced. His recommendation is to have the floor tiles removed and replaced with waterproof flooring before installing the trap. Kitchen cabinet doors under the sink will also need to be removed for visibility and inspection of the trap.

The Second Saturday work party on December 10th was cancelled due to all the other Christmas activities.

We suffered a few winter-related problems in December but managed to keep the building warm and inviting. In fact, the building was open to the public as a warming spot during the cold spell while office volunteers were available. On Thursday the 22nd the furnace in the new building stopped working just before the Christmas Eve Service and reception. We strategically placed electric heaters around the social hall and the reception was a big hit. After Christmas I was able to restore the furnace with some manipulating of the thermostat. However, as I went into the crawlspace to troubleshoot the furnace problem, I discovered that the area's sump pump was not working. A replacement of the same size and configuration was found in the hardware store and switching out the old with the new was fairly simple. By the time the furnace was working, the crawlspace was only muddy instead of under water.

Session approved hiring a contractor to prepare and install a concrete patio in the courtyard playground. It will be under the gazebo erected by Creative Preschool and extend another 10 feet or so beyond that towards the playground equipment. We envision it as an outdoor meeting space or classroom during warmer weather.

Speaking of warmer weather, Beverly and I've got plans to find some warmer weather south of here on a couple of weekends in January. The church will need someone to check up on the thermostats and sump pumps, maybe spread salt on the stairs or shovel a little snow. If you are interested in helping, please contact me at 206-354-8917 and I'll show you where the winter supplies are stored and what to check on.

Jacq Skeffington

Hospitality

In December, Hospitality sponsored a Christmas carol singalong on the 11th, and a community reception in the Social Hall before the Christmas Eve service.

On January 29th, we will hold a potluck luncheon following the annual congregational meeting. Everyone is encouraged to bring a favorite dish to share. Please contact me if you can help with the setup/cleanup.

Coffee at Sporty's continues on Tuesdays at 9:00 AM. We are looking for volunteers to host after-worship coffee fellowship for these dates in January:

1st: Zoom only worship
8th: Debbie Finch
15th: Open
22nd: Open
29th: Pot luck luncheon

If you are available and willing to host a coffee hour after service, contact Nancy Tucker at 818-259-1770

Nancy Tucker, Hospitality Elder

Outreach

December Highlights

We were a very busy church community in December, with something going on every week. Here are a few highlights:

Christmas Tree Lighting



We lit our Christmas tree on Friday, December 2nd, during a cold and sleety evening. The tree provided Christmas cheer for Vashonites and visitors to our island throughout the season.

Holiday Market and Santa



The Holiday Market was held December 3rd. Despite the slushy road conditions, the market raised \$700 for the Vashon Community Scholarship Fund. Santa braved the weather came to visit as well!

Outreach (Continued)

Christmas Pageant



The traditional Christmas pageant was held after worship service on December 18th. Angels, shepherds and wisemen told the story of Jesus birth. If you missed this performance, you can find it on our website, vashonpreschurch.org.

January Activities

Weather permitting, we'll enjoy S'mores on the front lawn in front of the firepit on the first Friday, January 6 at 6:00 PM.

Friday game nights were invented as a way for our church community to stay connected during the pandemic. It's proven to be so popular that game night is still going strong into its third year. If you haven't participated in it, join us on Zoom at 7:00 PM!

Barb Huff, Outreach Elder

January Birthdays

Join us in wishing a happy January birthday to:

2 nd	Sheryl Lehman
13 th	Sara Dunn
23 rd	Héré Thieme

Happy
Birthday

Deacon's Message

The More You Give

Here is a poem my mother gave to me many years ago, which I feel we really all believe:

The more you give, the more you get.
The more you laugh, the less you fret.

The more you do unselfishly,
The more you live abundantly.

The more of everything you share,
The more you'll always have to spare.

The more you love, the more you'll find
That life is good and friends are kind.

For only what we give away,
Enriches us from day to day.

Let's have a great and Happy New Year!!

Chris Coldeen, Deacon



VPC Book Club

Book club is discussing [The Personal Librarian](#) by Marie Benedict and Victoria Christopher Murray. Described by Amazon, "A remarkable novel about J. P. Morgan's personal librarian, Belle da Costa Greene, the Black American woman who was forced to hide her true identity and pass as White in order to leave a lasting legacy that enriched our nation, from *New York Times* bestselling authors Marie Benedict and Victoria Christopher Murray.

We will meet on Friday, January 20th at the Skeffingtons' home at 6:00 PM for a potluck dinner. . .



Calendar

January 2023

- 1** Sunday Worship Service 10:00 AM Communion **Zoom only**
- 3** Faith Formation 7:00 PM
- 6** First Friday VPC lawn S'mores at the firepit 6:00 PM
Game Night 7:00 PM
- 8** Sunday Worship Service 10:00 AM
- 10** Faith Formation 7:00 PM
- 13** Game Night 7:00 PM Zoom
- 14** Second Saturday Work Party 10:00 – Noon VPC
- 15** Sunday Worship 10:00 AM
- 17** Deacon Meeting 10:00 AM VPC
Session Meeting 4:30 PM VPC
Faith Formation 7:00 PM
- 20** VPC Book Club 6:00 PM
- 22** Sunday Worship 10:00 AM
- 24** Faith Formation 7:00 PM
- 26** Theology Pub 5:00 PM Camp Colvos
- 27** Game Night 7:00 PM
- 29** Sunday Worship Service 10:00 AM

Please Note:

Dates, times, and events might change after the time of this publication. Refer to the church bulletin and the weekly E-News for up-to-date information.

Ongoing Activities

- Mondays** Sermon After Talk Noon – 1 PM
- Tuesdays** Sporty's In-Person Coffee Hour 9:00 AM
Text Study Noon
- Wednesdays** Body Prayer 8:00 AM
- First Thursdays** Mental Health Advocates 7:00 PM
- Fridays** Grief Group 11:00 AM (Call Leigh for details)
Game Night 7:00 PM