



Vashon Presbyterian Church

News and Concerns

January 2024

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.



Key January Dates

- 5 First Friday S'mores and firepit 5:30
- 7 Ordination/Installation of Deacons/Elders during Worship service
- 16 Session meeting 4:00 VPC
- 17 Deacons' meeting 10:00 VPC
- 19 Book Club potluck at Barb Huff's 6:00
- 25 Theology Pub 5:00 Camp Colvos
- 28 Congregational meeting after Worship: Approval of 2024 budget

Ring Out, Wild Bells by Alfred, Lord Tennyson

Ring out, wild bells, to the wild sky,
 The flying cloud, the frosty light:
 The year is dying in the night;
 Ring out, wild bells, and let him die.
 Ring out the old, ring in the new,
 Ring, happy bells, across the snow:
 The year is going, let him go;
 Ring out the false, ring in the true.
 Ring out the grief that saps the mind
 For those that here we see no more;
 Ring out the feud of rich and poor,
 Ring in redress to all mankind.
 Ring out a slowly dying cause,
 And ancient forms of party strife;
 Ring in the nobler modes of life,
 With sweeter manners, purer laws.
 Ring out the want, the care, the sin,
 The faithless coldness of the times;
 Ring out, ring out my mournful rhymes
 But ring the fuller minstrel in.
 Ring out false pride in place and blood,
 The civic slander and the spite;
 Ring in the love of truth and right,
 Ring in the common love of good.
 Ring out old shapes of foul disease;
 Ring out the narrowing lust of gold;
 Ring out the thousand wars of old,
 Ring in the thousand years of peace.
 Ring in the valiant man and free,
 The larger heart, the kindlier hand;
 Ring out the darkness of the land,
 Ring in the Christ that is to be.

A Message from Pastor Leigh



Dear Ones of VPC,

Years ago, when I was at summer camp as a teenager, a group of us hiked to the top of the mountain where our leader told us we were going to learn about trust falls. "It's easy," he said, "just stand shoulder to shoulder in two lines facing one another and put your arms out. Then he climbed up on a platform in the bend of a tree and fell backwards. Success! We caught him and it didn't hurt.

One by one we climbed up to that platform and one by one, most had to be coached into trying it. It was easy to catch but much harder to fall backwards into the arms of others. When it was my turn, I was terrified. What if they miss? What if I don't do it correctly and I get dropped? Why did I come to camp when I could be safe at home instead? After a minute, I suspect what really happened was I gave in to peer pressure and took my turn, too.

After each of us had a turn, we sat in the grass on the mountain top not far from the Blue Ridge Parkway. It is beautiful there. Relaxing together, the leader of our group said, "I wonder how God feels...when we are overcome with the unknown and God is ready to catch us, but fear holds us back from trusting that. I wonder if God isn't there cheering us on to trust...saying it's okay, I've got you."

That night, in my bed in my cabin, I prayed and said, "God, I will do anything you ask." A few minutes later I said, "But please don't ask me to do scary stuff because that was scary today and I don't want to do that again." It was honest.

I've been thinking a lot about that day on the mountain as we approach the new year. The hindsight of years has taught me that God is there to catch me in the scary stuff, too. I've also come to realize that I can't put conditions on what I'm willing to offer God in myself if I want to experience the fullness of God's love in my life. I have to be all in with God.

I wonder what trusting moments you and I might experience in the coming year, together and individually. Are we ready to be all in? Are we willing to fully embrace this new year by handing it completely over to God, to guide and lead and catch us when we fall?

I wonder what moments we will experience together and how God will teach us to love the community around us fully. What might it look like if we go where we are called and just trust God to catch us?

None of us knows what this coming year may hold, but we do know who holds us. I pray we take risks. I pray we love boldly. I pray we try new things. I pray we stay open. I pray for you and me as we begin a new year together. I can't where to see where we go.

Grace and Peace,

Leigh



Clerk's Corner

Minutes of the monthly Session meeting and a Special Congregational meeting are available upon request. Highlights from the December meetings include:

- The Congregation met December 10 to approve a proposed increase in Leigh's Terms of Call for 2024 and to elect Deacons and an Elder whose terms will begin in January 2024.
- Session set January 7 for a service of ordination and installation of new church officers.
- Session has also set the date of January 28 for the Annual Meeting of the Congregation and Corporation to review the 2023 Annual Report and elect the 2024 Nominating Committee.
- At the regularly scheduled meeting of December 19,, Session approved a resolution to disburse funds from Capital/Major Repairs Fund to Vashon Custom Homes for drainage repairs in response to flooding of the basement during heavy rain on December 5.
- Session also approved resolutions: That proceeds of the Christmas Eve Service be donated to IFCH; adopted the 2024 budget; and added Barb Huff as signee on bank accounts at PSCCU.

The next regularly scheduled meeting of Session will be January 16 at 4:00 at VPC.

Jacq Skeffington, Clerk of Session

Deacon's Message

I'd like to take a moment to thank Susan Commeree and Sheryl Lehman for their service to our church community. They have both been Deacons for 12 years and have delivered many meals, sent notes and shared their large hearts with all of us over the years. They made many phone calls during our Covid Isolation and helped keep the connections so valued during those years. We appreciate you both so much.

As we begin this new year (2024 can you believe it?!), we want to invite you to think of the Deacons for support and remember to ask for help, even when it is difficult to do. Brownie Carver and Debbie Finch have joined Chris Coldeen, Larry Commeree and me as your current Deacons. If you have any new ideas, ways we can support the congregation or anyone who needs any extra support please let anyone of us know. We are your caring support team so please reach out to us.

We wish you joy and many blessings in the coming months. We are here to serve our church family and will continue to hold you all in our prayers.

Claudia Ross-Weston, Deacon Moderator

Worship

The Worship Committee finished the year with Advent and Christmas services. The Sunday morning worship service on the 24th was very well received. A very touching Christmas pageant, acted by a mix of youth and adults was presented. The pageant was full of meaning yet was lovingly humorous as acted by our "VPC players." This children's production about Jesus; born into poverty and vulnerability yet destined to change the world, never fails to bless and enlighten us.

Recently I've become aware of the "wild church" movement among Christians of all denominations, the bond being the services are held outdoors and the commitment to nurturing the environment. There is also a shift, I am seeing, in the world view of these groups...an updated interpretation of the human's place in the natural order of the universe. The vocabulary/emphasis of this movement is different from our traditional liturgy although the foundational beliefs in God are shared. I've met with congregation members informally and found there is interest to have (our own brand of) outdoor church next year during better weather. I will still be on the Worship Committee in 2024 and will be contacting all who are interested as we progress. In the meantime, I have made available several books that relate. You are welcome to borrow them. Look in our library for the shelf labeled "outdoor church.."

I'm finishing a two-year assignment as Worship Elder. I've learned a lot about Presbyterian protocol and the meaning of each part of the service. I've been impressed by the dedication of lay leaders, musicians, and many other volunteers who contribute to the service. I've been blessed, as have we all, I believe, by Pastor Leigh's leadership. Her sermons inspire and her pastoral care seems boundless. I look forward to 2024 and our new Worship Elder Al Ross-Weston.

Elizabeth Loveness, Worship Elder



Purposeful Service Team

Areas of Responsibility

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

January 7 is Food Bank Sunday. There is always a need for staples such as spaghetti and other pastas, canned tuna, peanut butter, broth and personal hygiene items such as toothbrushes and toothpaste. You can bring items to the Sunday service, take them directly to the Food Bank, or deliver them to the VPC office and we will follow up.

This month we will request notebooks prepared by Vashon High School seniors for the Vashon Community Scholarship Foundation awards. We are pleased to be a part of this community effort by awarding the annual Vashon Presbyterian Church Scholarship. If you would like to be on the review team which will recommend the VPC scholarship recipient, please contact me (rwspang@centurytel.net).

The Puget Sound Zen Center is hosting a meditative walk for peace on Sunday, January 14, from 1:00 to 2:00. Meet at the Island Center Forest Pavilion, off SW 188th Street. There will be no banners or signs, no chanting or cheering; rather people simply walking in silence, honoring the memory and principles of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Rain or shine! Please wear rain gear and boots.

Thanks to all who donated to the Christmas Eve offering. The collection amounted to \$671.25 and will be given to IFCH.

Bob Spangler, Purposeful Service Elder

Outreach

WinterFest was a great start for the holiday season. Lights were put up on the tree in front of the church. The parade arrived in front around 5:30 with Santa and a child, who lighted the tree from the steps of the church while the Vashon High School band played. VPC volunteers served hot cocoa, hot cider, and Christmas cookies to the crowd. After the tree lighting, Santa invited everyone to join him at the Theatre Backlot for carols with the Vashon Chorale, led by John DeGroen and Chautauqua Elementary students, led by Erin Kealy. Visitors expressed gratitude for our presence at the event.

We are hoping to have a fire and s'mores on January 5, 2024, at 5:30.

Lindsay Hofman, Outreach Elder

Faith Formation

Faith Formation discussions will resume on January 9 at 7:00 on Zoom. The topic is still under discussion; check your weekly e-News for more information. Regardless of the topic or theme, please know that you are welcome to join in these faith-filled discussions.

Al Ross-Weston, Faith Formation Elder

Building and Grounds

Heavy rain on December 5 resulted in the flooding of the basement furnace room, bathrooms, and storage closet. Rich Singer of Vashon Custom Homes and a crew of workers temporarily rerouted the furnace room sump pump discharge and set up a portable pump to drain the pond that had accumulated on the front lawn. During the following week his crew discovered and repaired a blocked drainage line from the Sanctuary and Social Hall roof downspouts. Since those repairs, the basement has remained dry.

The restroom off the Narthex has been remodeled with a new sink and toilet and painted. This is the restroom that we make available to the public during Outreach events, so its “facelift” presents visitors with a more welcoming impression of our church.

A new water fountain and bottle filling station is being installed before Carpe Diem resumes classes on January 2. Trace Hyde has run the electrical circuit and Steve Radic is performing the plumbing service.

The belfry is being converted to a studio suitable for producing Pastor Leigh’s upcoming podcasts.

Carpets in the Social Hall, East Room, Narthex, Youth Room and Library are scheduled to be cleaned by Robin Lewis on February 21.

We still need to install baseboards in the kitchen and hallways. Pastor Leigh’s office door still needs to be stained. The front door, library table, and Communion table still need to be sanded and stained, and the wooden fence separating VPC’s front lawn from Zamorano’s’ dining area still needs to be replaced. If you are experienced in carpentry or in sanding and staining, please contact me and we will work out a plan for you to work at your leisure.

Jacq Skeffington

Hospitality

December was a busy month for Hospitality. We actively supported the WinterFest held on December 2, with an enormous outpouring of support. We had plenty of people on hand to serve cocoa and cider, enough cookies and other treats, and we outdid ourselves in the baking of gingerbread loaves. We had enough left over to freeze and offer as a gift on Christmas Eve.

Following our Christmas Eve candlelight service, with the help of VPC bakers we set out a huge spread of Christmas cookies and other holiday treats. Special thanks to Jill O’Block who donated homemade marshmallows of various flavors to complement our hot cocoa, and included candy canes and pirouette wafers as cocoa stirrers. It was a dazzling display—and a delicious one! The gingerbread loaves were again a hit with our visitors.

Upcoming Activities

After a very full November and December, there are no special activities planned for January. In mid-January I will hold a Hospitality Committee meeting to discuss fellowship opportunities for the first quarter 2024. Please think about fun, easy ways we can get together.

Ongoing Activities

Hosting Sunday coffee hours is easy; a signup sheet is in the East Room. Coffee at Sporty’s continues each Tuesday at 9:00 AM. Please join us—you don’t even have to order breakfast; just come for the chitchat.

Nancy Tucker, Hospitality Elder

VPC Book Club



The Book Club will meet on Friday, January 19 at 6:00. This month, rather than discussing a specific book, we are focusing on the life and contributions of Rosalynn Carter as depicted in all print and electronic media.

Please join us for a potluck dinner at Barb Huff's home. This is sure to be an engaging discussion.

All are welcome!

Al and Claudia Ross-Weston

January Birthdays



Join us in wishing a happy January birthday to:

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

Church Leadership

Pastor	Leigh Weber
Clerk of Session	Jacq Skeffington
Session Members	Lindsay Hofman, Barb Huff (to be ordained and installed), Jim Lilje, Bob Spangler, Al Ross-Weston, Nancy Tucker
Deacons	Claudia Ross-Weston (Moderator), Brownie Carver (to be ordained and installed), Chris Coldeen, Larry Commeree, Debbie Finch (to be ordained and installed)

Calendar

January 2024

- 5 First Friday, S'mores at the fire pit on the lawn 5:30
- 7 Sunday Worship Service 10:00 AM Communion
Ordination/Installation of Deacons and Elders during Worship
- 9 Faith Formation 7:00 PM Zoom
- 12 Game Night 7:00 PM
- 13 Second Saturday Work Party 10:00 – Noon VPC
- 14 Sunday Worship Service 10:00 AM
- 16 Session Meeting 4:00 PM VPC
Faith Formation 7:00 PM Zoom
- 17 Deacons' Meeting 10:00 AM VPC
- 19 VPC Book Club 6:00 PM
- 21 Sunday Worship 10:00 AM
- 23 Faith Formation 7:00 PM Zoom
- 25 Theology Pub 5:00 PM Camp Colvos
- 26 Game Night 7:00 PM Zoom
- 28 Sunday Worship Service 10:00
Congregational Meeting to approve 2024 budget; immediately following service
- 30 Faith Formation 7:00 PM Zoom

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

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| 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 | Anything Goes (Grief Group) 11:00 AM (Call Leigh for details)
Game Night 7:00 PM |