

F E B R U A R Y 2 0 1 7

Vashon Presbyterian Church

Vashon Island, Washington 98070

Listening to God, embracing all, living in joy



February 2017 Newsletter

The Annual Report

If you were not able to attend the Annual Congregational Meeting on January 29th you should pick up a copy of the Annual Report on the informational table in the entry hallway.

It gives a summary of all that is going on at VPC. Besides the Pastor and Elder's reports there is information about the budget, personnel and nominating committees, and the newly formed Ecumenical Brainstorming group. The deacons have been busy and there is a review of the care they have provided for our members and the wider community. It also includes progress to date made by the Pastor Nominating Committee in the search for our new permanent pastor. The various reports summarize all the care, learning, and service carried out by the congregation this past year. It's rewarding to review how much our dedicated members have accomplished in one year.

New Officers at VPC

New Officers were installed January 22

Al Ross-Weston, Jacq Skeffington and Larry Commeree were elected ruling Elders, Class of 2019 and Lindsay Hofman was elected Deacon, Class of 2018.

Returning elders are Brownie Carver and Diana Lilje. Returning Deacons are Susan Commeree, Bev Skeffington and Nancy van Roessel.

Many thanks to outgoing Elders Barb Huff and Kate Smith and Deacons Christine Browning and Sue Weston. We greatly appreciate their dedication and service during their terms as officers here at VPC.

An Officer's Retreat is planned for February. The retreat provides quiet prayerful time for our leaders to decide what area of Church activity they will lead and develop major goals for VPC in the coming year.

Important Dates!

February 17 VPC Book Club

February 23 VPC IFCH Meal

February 26 "Brunch at Church"

Pastor's Annual Report

Taken for the Annual Report to the Congregation of Vashon Presbyterian Church

We do not live for ourselves, nor do we die for ourselves; for if we live, we live for the Lord, or if we die, we die for the Lord; therefore whether we live or die, we are the Lord's. Roman 14: 7-8

When friends ask me what Vashon Presbyterian is like, I always pause a moment and reflect. There are so many things I could say. I could use a string of adjectives like: small, welcoming, inclusive, affirming, kind, aging, generous, courageous, hospitable. I could say VPC is mission oriented, committed to the community, active in serving neighbors. And I do say such things.



But as I reflect on the life we have lived together as a community of faith in 2016 the most important thing to say is that you have shown, with graceful tenacity, that you belong to the Lord and that you trust in God's provision for your future.

2016 has been a year full of change, with more to come. Often when that is the case, a church will experience conflict and even division. That has happened to VPC in the past. But by the grace of God what I have witnessed among you is a pulling together and a commitment to supporting each other. You have become good at experimenting with different liturgies in worship, trying out different formats in deacons' and session meetings, and developing educational forums. You have shown remarkable energy in caring for those in need, building ecumenical relationships, pursuing interfaith endeavors, and fostering growth in ministries at VCC. You have worked hard to discern God's path for your future, strengthened your prayer ministry, and clarified and articulated the Gospel values you wish to live by. You have housed two schools and reached out to the community in a multitude of ways. As individuals you have been involved in everything from refugee resettlement to educating the community on end of life issues. All this as you continue to be very good stewards of your remarkable church building.

Most importantly, you have prepared well to call a new pastor. The Pastor Nominating Committee is working diligently and very soon a new pastor will join you. May that pastor be as blessed in his or her ministry among you as I have been.

*Christ's Peace be yours –
Lynn*

Journey/Invitation Team News

Area of Responsibility:

Bible study, Christian formation (all ages), new members and discipleship, evangelism and invitation.

Adult Education Class In mid to late February, we hope to begin another adult education class offered on Sunday mornings at 9 am. Possible books for discussion are under review now. Watch the eNews and Sunday bulletin for updates on the start of classes.

The Journey team is looking for new members who would like to help with the planning of classes and other projects. Please let Diana Lilje know if you wish to be a part of the team.

Elder Diana Lilje

Hospitality/Fellowship Team News

Areas of Responsibility:

Hospitality, Fellowship

VPC Book Club The book club will meet this month on the 17th, 6:30 PM at the Skeffington's. The book selection for the month is Lab Girl by Hope Jahren.

Elder Al Ross Weston



Mission Resource Team News

Area of Responsibility:

Financials, Building and Grounds

Buildings and Grounds I hope spring is just around the corner! We plan to **resume exterior painting** as soon as the temperature starts rising. In the meantime, we're planning to have the carpets cleaned and paint the French Doors during the next break in the Carpe Diem school year, mid-February. We also just installed a Wi-Fi extender, allowing internet access in the sanctuary, library and Creative Preschool. **Toolbelts** continue meeting on Tuesday mornings, recently changing filters in all the furnaces, repairing fencing around the stairs to Creative Preschool and preparing the railing around the wheelchair ramp for painting once the weather warms up.

We're also still **partnering with the United Methodist Church on recycling**. A collection can with compostable trash bags for our food waste has been set up in the kitchen. We then bring ours to the Methodist Church after worship Sundays. We're meeting with **Carpe Diem and Creative Preschool** to review expenses and plan for next year. Both schools are very happy with our present partnership and plan to continue renting our spaces again next year.

If you have any free time and would like to help out, you can always stop by the church at your convenience and pick up the litter around the parking lot. Recyclables and trash can be placed in the receptacles within the fenced in collection area in the parking lot. Every little bit helps.

Blessings,
Jacq Skeffington

Worship Team News

Area of Responsibility:

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

Brunch at Church On February 26th, we will have another Brunch at Church! We hope that all of you will be able to join us for fellowship and worship. Please let Brownie know if you are able to furnish a brunch item.

Opportunities to Serve The deacons need help on communion Sundays with prep and clean up. This should be rather easy since we will be serving by intinction the majority of the time. Please contact either Nancy van Roessel or Brownie Carver.

The worship team and personnel committee are also looking for help. Please contact Brownie if you are able to serve.

Elder Brownie Carver

Purposeful Service Team News

Area of Responsibility:

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

The IFCH Meal for VPC is Thursday February 23rd. Sign up sheet is on the information table at coffee hour.

The Purposeful Service Team meets on the first Thursdays at 7 PM. This month we will be establishing plans for 2017. Please plan to join in one of the projects this year.

Elder Al Ross Weston

Pastor Nominating Committee Update

The PNC received several responses to the posting of our Ministry Information Form announcing VPC's search for a pastor. After narrowing the field a bit, we asked those we wanted to pursue to respond in writing to these questions:

1. Please describe creative ways you have used to invigorate worship services.
2. VPC has primarily an aging population. What challenges/benefits do you see for a pastor of an older congregation?
3. Given the $\frac{3}{4}$ time of the pastor position, how would you prioritize the following?
 - Preaching and teaching
 - Pastoral counseling
 - Organizing and enabling lay leaders to reach church goals
 - Assisting and leading island ecumenical events
4. Taking into account the ferry commute, how much time would you anticipate being on island for your routine workweek?

Also, we asked for recordings of their sermons.

Having reviewed responses and listened to sermons, we've begun a further narrowing of the field. Interviews will begin shortly.

We remain encouraged. Keep us in your prayers. And feel free to interact with PNC members along the way (Jordan Browning, Brownie Carver, Larry Commeree, Diana Lilje, Liz Loveness, Claudia Ross Weston and Bob Spangler)

Clerk's Corner

The VPC session held its regular monthly meeting on January 11, with all attending. Session discussed the need to appoint a new Safe Conduct Policy administrator, in view of the vacancy for that position. Session also appointed the following to serve in the stated capacity in 2017: Corporate President, Jacq Skeffington; Corporate Secretary/Registered Agent, Bob Spangler; Treasurer, Barb Huff; Clerk of Session, Bob Spangler; Financial Secretary, Diana Lilje; Commissioner to Presbytery, Jacq Skeffington; Alternate Commissioners, Brownie Carver, Larry Commeree, Diana Lilje and Al Ross-Weston. Session discussed best meeting dates and decided upon the second Wednesday starting at 6:30 pm (although the February meeting will be on the 15th due to Lynn's absence). After further review of the membership roll, one member was removed pursuant to her request. Session approved VPC's participation in an interfaith Ash Wednesday service. Finally, session agreed that communion will normally be served by intinction.

Session also held a special meeting on January 29 to discuss a single issue – whether to worship at another location when the VPC pastor is absent. It was agreed that this issue is primarily within the purview of the Worship Team.

The annual congregational meeting was held on January 29. Barb Huff, Jim Lilje, Nancy van Roessel, Sue Weston and Kathy Olsen were elected to the 2017 Nominating Committee. Lynn noted that the Annual Report had been distributed, and that members had an opportunity to ask questions about the contents. Brief discussion followed. Finally, Larry Commeree, Chair of the Pastor Nominating Committee, presented an update as to the status of the search for a new pastor.

Bob Spangler, Clerk of Session

See what the Presbyterian Mission Agency says about the needs of refugees worldwide. (P 6)



What's On Your Mind?

Pastor Lynn forwarded this article from the Presbyterian Mission Agency;



"I was a stranger and you welcomed me" – Matthew 25:35

When we welcome refugees, we welcome the refugee Jesus. Warned in a dream, Joseph and Mary took the infant Jesus to Egypt to keep him safe from Herod. At that moment, he and his parents became refugees.

Our recent observance of Holocaust Remembrance Day reminds us that our nation's record of welcome is far from perfect. Jewish refugees fleeing persecution were turned away from our shores during that time. On countless occasions since, however, our nation has provided succor for those fleeing persecution, war, and violence.

As this is being written, our nation, and we as Presbyterians, face another moment of decision. Will we welcome refugees in Jesus' name or will we go along with policies that would turn away those unable to remain in their homes and forced to seek safety and security in other nations, including our own?

This past week, the President signed an executive order that would halt refugee resettlement and would bar refugees from certain (mostly Muslim majority) countries entering the United States. Church World Service reports that the order suspends the US Refugee Admissions Program (USRAP) for 120 days for all populations, indefinitely bars Syrian refugees from resettlement in the United States and does not allow entry into the country of nationals from Iraq, Iran, Libya, Syria, Somalia, Sudan and Yemen (this includes refugees and people with Special Immigrant Visas) for the next 90 days. The premise is that this will protect us from terrorists.

Presbyterians, along with people of other faiths and people of good will, have responded that we will not give in to fear and we will follow the call of Jesus to welcome. In a January 28, 2017 statement, the Rev. Dr. J. Herbert Nelson II, Stated Clerk of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) said “We stand ready to welcome our new neighbors, friends, and family of all faiths and nations.” [Read the statement](#). Resources follow to support Presbyterians who seek to practice welcome in Jesus’ name.

The Call of Our Faith

[#RefugeesWelcome](#)

– the Rev. Jimmie Hawkins, director, Office of Public Witness

[A Prayer after Restriction of Refugees](#)

– the Rev. Dr. Laurie Kraus, coordinator, Presbyterian Disaster Assistance

[A Tradition of Welcome](#)

– a short video by Presbyterian Disaster Assistance



Act/Give

[Tell the White House and Congress](#) that you oppose the plan to halt refugee resettlement and to bar refugees from certain countries. Create opportunities to gather for mutual support. Attend a [#RefugeesWelcome Solidarity Event](#) near you—Refugees Welcome; the PC(USA) supports this coalition.

Support Presbyterian Disaster Assistance's ministries with [refugees facing emergencies](#). Support the [Fund for Obedience to Higher Authority](#) to provide assistance to those who suffer financial loss or difficulty as a result of moral acts of conscience.

Learn

[Executive Order FAQ](#) – compiled by Church World Service and other refugee resettlement agencies

[Refugee Screening Process](#) – U.S. Committee for Refugees and Immigrants

[Figures at a Glance](#) – UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR)

Policy Base

The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and its predecessor denominations have consistently called the church to welcome refugees in the name of Jesus. This call began when the 160th General Assembly (1948) of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America called for the resettlement of persons made refugees and displaced by World War II and continued through the 222nd General (2016) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) [statement calling the church](#) to “respond to the ancient biblical directive to provide for the stranger and the sojourner.

Presbyterian Mission Agency, an agency of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

100 Witherspoon Street

Louisville, KY 40202

800-728-7228 | 502-569-50

Calendar

February 2017

(all events at VPC unless otherwise stated)



Feb

- 2 Purposeful Service Team Meeting 7 PM**
- 4 Bible Study 10 am**
- 5 Sunday Worship Service 10 am (Communion Service)**
- 8 Deacons Meeting 4 PM**
- 12 Sunday Worship Service 10 am**
- 15 Session Meeting 6:30 pm**
- 17 VPC Book Club at 6:30 pm at the Skeffington's**
- 18 Bible Study 10 am**
- 19 Sunday Worship Service 10 am**
- 23 VPC IFCH meal 5-7 pm**
- 26 Sunday Worship Service 10 am "Brunch at Church"**

ONGOING ACTIVITIES

Prayer Group meets Wednesdays at 1:30 pm at the Vashon Community Care Center.

Women's informal breakfast meets at Sporty's at 8:00 am on Wednesdays.

Bible Study meets the 1st and 3rd Saturdays.

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