

Vashon Presbyterian Church

News and Concerns

June 2021

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

Sermons Posted on Church Website

vashonpreschurch.org

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.



Getting Closer to Together

While we are maintaining our strictly Zoom worship service for now, we are gradually finding opportunities for in-person fellowship. See Jim Lilje's update on the status of our in-person worship evaluation, and check out the newsletter for other opportunities to gather together. In a nutshell:

- Tuesday coffee fellowship at Sporty's
- Thursday Theology Pub at Camp Colvos
- Second Saturday work parties, indoors and outside
- Book Club meeting at the Bakers' home
- Sweets and sparkling crémant with Liz
- Lunch with Lindsay
- Hors d'oeuvres with the Tuckers
- Outdoor worship at the Ross-Westons'
- Annual yard sale

Save these Dates!

- | | |
|----------|---|
| June 18 | In-Person/Zoom Book Club meeting 7:00 PM |
| July 11 | Outdoor worship at Ross-Westons', 2:00 PM |
| August 7 | Yard Sale 9:00 – 3:00 |

Check the Hospitality article for the latest on resuming our small hosted gatherings. Keep your eyes peeled for each Thoroughly Thursday E-News containing more detailed info on these fun events and how you can sign up!

As you see, we are making great progress as we edge closer to resuming all church activities face-to-face. Thanks be to God!

A Word from Pastor Leigh

Dear Ones of VPC,

The other day I was in my church office when I decided it was time for a coffee break. I stopped in the sanctuary for a few minutes, so I left through the front door. A person walking by stopped and said, "This church...this church is really helping me." I didn't know her so introduced myself. She then said, "This sign...it's kept me going during this past year, it's really kept me going...thank you all."

I invited her to join us for worship anytime, left her with my contact info if she needed anything but what I mostly took from the conversation is that you and I had come alongside a total stranger during one of the hardest years many of us have known. We'd been there for her when she needed us to be, when God needed us to be...all through plastic letters on a signboard.

How we live our lives, comments we make, words we write...those very things that may seem innocuous can be the most powerful. Words have the powerful to do great things for good or bad. They can bring healing and comfort or hurt and pain. And we all know this.

We know that words by others can be powerful when spoken into our lives. I suspect that's part of what Jesus was trying to say when he gave his two commandments, "Love God. Love one another." The call to love one another and to love God by loving God's people starts with how we care for one another, how we talk to and with one another, understanding the power of our words. And we are blessed and called as a congregation to share that love with our community.

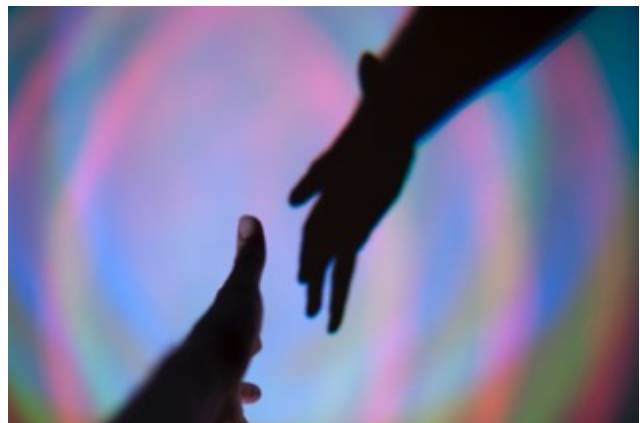
The world in which we find ourselves these days has lost its collective ability to talk with one another in loving ways, to listen to one another in deep ways and to make space for viewpoints and understanding as varied as humankind itself. That's one way I see us being called to care for the community around us as we learn to talk with one another and make space for everyone. I see you doing that and I'm grateful.

What are your prayers for those who walk down the street and think about our congregation? Are we helping? Are we offering support? Do our words bring healing? It's a high calling, isn't it? It requires our attention and care on a daily basis. And I'm grateful to be with you as we work to live into it.

"This church is really helping me," said one of God's beloved, walking on the sidewalk. Thanks be to God.

Grace and Peace,

Leigh



Update: Resuming In-Person Worship

When will we worship in person again? The Session addressed that question at our most recent meeting. We didn't come up with an answer but we did identify a lot of the issues that have to be dealt with before we can go back to using the Sanctuary.

First and foremost, is it safe to worship together in person? The answer at the moment is probably not, but that may be changing soon. Right now, the guidance from the CDC, the State, King County and the Presbytery is inconsistent at best. The problem is that we are finally in the transition out of a pandemic and into a situation in which the Covid-19 virus is more or less under control. We are not quite out of the woods yet and so we'll wait a while longer before we hold Church in the church.

In the meantime, we will start to meet together outdoors in small groups. The first event will be the resumption of Theology Pub, in person each Thursday at 5:00. The Book Club meeting this month will be a hybrid of in-person and Zoom in the Bruce and Linda Baker's back yard. We hope to have some small group lunches this summer and we may even add an outdoor worship service in addition to the main service on Zoom.

We still have to consider what the in-person worship will look like when we finally go back. Do we mask or not mask? Do we eliminate use of the hymnals? How do we handle collections? How do we do communion? Do we need to add some sort of air filtering system? Will we have a coffee hour? The one thing we have decided for sure is that we will not require proof of vaccination to attend worship. That alone will have a bearing on when we can resume in-person.

Even when we do go back, we will continue to offer the option of attending via Zoom. Obviously, we have to have an option for members of the congregation who do not yet feel comfortable in a group but there are other advantages to continuing on Zoom. For one thing it allows members who are out of town or are housebound to attend. I wouldn't have been able to sit in a pew for the last two services because of a pinched nerve but no problem on Zoom. Our weekly church attendance was actually up for the past year as compared to the year before. Another advantage is that it allows visitors the chance to worship without the pressure of having to socialize with a lot of people they don't know well. We've actually welcomed two new members this year who never attended our service in the Sanctuary.

We have a lot to consider before we go back to in person worship. If you have any concerns or suggestions, please make them know to any Session member or to Pastor Leigh.

So back to the original question - when will we worship in person again? I like Elder Kate Smith's opinion. "It will probably be a month ending in 'r'." No promises though.

Jim Lilje, Finance Elder



Clerk's Corner

Session held its regular monthly meeting May 20th via ZOOM. Claudia Ross- Weston shared highlights of the deacons' activities and concerns. The deacons requested that a separate email list of active members and friends of the church be created for sharing intimate news of illnesses, etc. The elders thought it was a good idea and expressed gratitude for the way the deacons are continuing to keep in touch with so many members and friends of the congregation. The deacons will compose the list and office staff will add it to VPC email contacts.

Mission Resources Elder, Jim Lilje, presented the Income and Expense report through April 2021 and cash on hand as of April 30th. Donations were slightly below anticipated for April but still above anticipated year-to-date. Expenses are still lower than budgeted and mission partner donations continue as scheduled. Second Saturday work parties will continue maintaining the grounds and in May included a group working inside the building deep cleaning the kitchen. Carpe Diem and Creative Preschool have both been sent contracts for renewal of their leases for next year. All illegally parked vehicles have been moved or removed from the parking lot.

The plastics/styrofoam recycling joint collection on May 1st went smoothly. On the recommendation of the Purposeful Service committee session approved a motion that the 2021 Heindsmann Scholarship be awarded to two candidates with \$1,000 to Maxwell Mollison and \$670 to Tage Rouen, who received the full and larger amount last fall.

Faith Formation Elder Elizabeth Loveness will continue to offer discussion gatherings on Zoom. In the weeks through June 22nd the Tuesday evening class will explore the world of young professionals and families and their walk of faith, based on interviews that she and Thomas Abraham will conduct in person or on Zoom. "Free for All" discussions will occur on Mondays at 5:30.

Outreach Elder Barb Huff reported that attendance seems to be consistent at Friday night Game Nights and the VPC website has posted sermons since January. There was discussion around how long to maintain Zoom recordings of sermons due to added cost.

Pastor Leigh held her report until the end of the meeting to lead a discussion of the elders' thoughts about church building reentry and resuming worship in the sanctuary. Discussion centered on the uncertainty surrounding masking requirements and quality of the worship experience. All felt a strong need to maintain Zoom broadcasts for many who do not feel comfortable with meeting in the sanctuary. Increased attendance and outreach via Zoom was noted.

Session's next scheduled meeting will be June 15th at 4:30 pm via Zoom.

Blessings and Grace,

Jacq Skeffington, Clerk of Session

Deacons' Message

As I sit to write this edition for the newsletter, I am contemplating many concepts related to our church family; blessings, change, inclusion, and most of all seeing everyone in person again. The deacons have had the privilege of communicating with everyone and we have truly enjoyed the opportunity to share in your blessings and support you with your struggles. We rejoice in the accomplishments of this year and grieve the losses we have experienced. I am also grateful to all of you who have supported Al and me over the past year and a half. We have a genuinely caring community, and we are so thankful for all of you.

It is said that the one constant is change. As we strive to understand each person's concerns as we transition back into the sanctuary, we will be listening to everyone and working to take into consideration all suggestions and ideas. We want everyone to feel included in the decisions as we transition back to in-person worship. So be patient with us, share any ideas you may have with the deacons and let us know how we can continue to support each of you in the coming months. Then, the deacons will share anything we glean from the congregation with the session to help them with their discernment for in-person gatherings. Hopefully, many of you will be able to take advantage of the summer gatherings that are going to be hosted throughout the summer and help us pull off a great yard sale this summer in August.

So, take a moment and pat yourself on the back. We have successfully weathered this past year with the help of each other and the loving protection of God. Truly we are the children of God and have felt the loving hands of support and protection as we navigated one of the toughest years ever.

Blessings to you all,

Claudia Ross-Weston, Deacon Moderator



Hospitality Committee Update: Summer Gatherings are Back!

We are very pleased to kick off the Summer Gatherings, with three planned dates in June. To ensure everyone has a chance to attend at least one event, please limit your attendance to two get-togethers for the summer. Contact the host directly to reserve a space at the party.

Liz's gathering is scheduled for Saturday, June 12, 2:00 – 4:00 at her home. Eight people may attend in addition to hosts Liz and Leigh. Sweets and Sparkling Crémant will be served outside, slightly distanced with masks optional. A mini wine auction will be held--choose from Liz's recent delivery from the Wall Street Journal Wine Club!

Lindsey will host a luncheon on Thursday, June 17 at 12:30. There is room for eight guests; contact Lindsay for more details.

Enjoy hors d'oeuvres and wine with the Tuckers at their home on Saturday, June 26, 3:00 – 5:30. The gathering will be both indoors and outdoors, and masks are optional.

I am planning the schedule month-by-month, and will post the July gatherings in July's News and Concerns. If you would like to host a gathering, please let me know. Enjoy!

Kate Smith, Hospitality Elder

Purposeful Service Team News Areas of Responsibility

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

After interviewing two candidates for the Heindsmann scholarship, Session agreed with the Purposeful Service Committee that an award should be granted to both. Tage Rauen, who was awarded the 2020 scholarship, is a senior at UW, majoring in mathematics. Maxwell Mollison is a student at Highline College taking coursework leading to a position in technology security.

About six people brought recycling materials to the church building on May 1 for the combined collection of styrofoam and plastics that are not accepted at the county recycling facility. We took a carload the next day. Given the relatively small turnout, we will plan to do the combined collection every other month, although those with enough items may prefer to go to the Sheffield Building on June 6. The first Sunday collection does not take items accepted at the county facility, such as bottles, cans, and plastic food containers.

We are still considering whether an outdoor event with Mary's Place will be possible this summer. If that is not possible, we will find another way to support this long-time mission partner. We are also awaiting information on the July festival as to if and how VPC can be involved as in the past.

Bob Spangler, Purposeful Service Elder

VPC Book Club – “Dessert and Discussion” *In Person AND on Zoom!*

The VPC Book Club will meet June 18th at 7:00 PM, at the home of Bruce and Linda Baker, 11840 Cedarhurst Road SW. There is plenty of parking. **The meeting will also be available on Zoom via the church's Zoom link.** The Bakers will offer dessert, cookies, tea, and decaf coffee. Their home is open for visitors, but if the weather permits, the discussion will be held outdoors.

June's book selection is The Wild Parrots of Telegraph Hill by Mark Bittner. Amazon describes the book:

Like a lot of young people in the 1970s, Mark Bittner took the path of the "dharma bum." When the counterculture faded, Mark held on, seeking shelter in the nooks and crannies of San Francisco's fabled bohemian neighborhood, North Beach. While living on the eastern slope of Telegraph Hill, he made a magical discovery: a flock of wild parrots. In this unforgettable story, Bittner recounts how he became fascinated by the birds and patiently developed friendships with them that would last more than six years. When a documentary filmmaker comes along to capture the phenomenon on film, the story takes a surprising turn, and Bittner's life truly takes flight.

July's selection is Getting Mother's Body by Suzan-Lori Parks.

I 
Book Club

Mission Resource Team News

Building and Grounds

Our Second Saturday work parties upped their game May 8th when Susan Commeree, Debbie Finch and Nancy Johnson spent their time deep cleaning the kitchen while Kathy O’Laughlin, Sheryl Lehman and Beverly Skeffington pruned, weeded, and deadheaded the flowerbeds and rhododendrons in front of the church. All are invited to join us every Second Saturday from 10-12 (or so), (inside or out)!!

I also noticed Phil Yunker trimming the red and white azaleas in front of the church during the week last week. Thanks Phil, they look great. Please contact me if you would prefer to work at your own schedule maintaining an area of the landscaping. People and families have “adopted” a particular flower bed or area in the past and enjoyed private or family time weeding, mulching and growing things which the whole community has enjoyed. We will gladly reimburse any expense.

One abandoned car was towed away for scrap May 7th and the remaining blue truck was removed by the owner May 17th. There are no longer any abandoned or occupied vehicles in the lot. Thank you, Brownie and Skip Carver, for cleaning up the trash where the vehicles had been parked.

I’m still seeking a volunteer to mow the lawn. It’s a great way to get your weekly steps in! Please contact me if you’re interested.

Blessings and Grace,

Jacq Skeffington



Faith Formation

I want to thank Caran Marie Dunbar, Kate Smith, Barb Huff and Nancy Tucker for helping lead the classes in the series *12 Women of the Bible*. They were well prepared and added a great deal to the discussions and the class time in general.

In the weeks June 15th through June 29th we plan to have the Tuesday evening class explore the world of the young (25-40) and their walk of faith, based on interviews conducted in person or on zoom. Individuals in this demographic do not generally join mainline churches. It will be a time for listening and asking questions. If any member knows someone (ages 25 – 40) who wouldn't mind sharing, let us know.

On our "Free for All," (5:30 Mondays), we discuss subjects of interest but those not requiring a lengthy series to satisfy our curiosity. This is light-hearted at times, bittersweet or serious at other times. This hour is open to everyone. So far we have discussed the Seven Deadly Sins, why Jesus taught using parables, and the power of prayer in our daily lives. On May 31st we followed up with a second week of "Power of Prayer." We are taking a one-week break and resuming on June 14th, showing travel slides of the Holy Land!

If you have never attended Text Study (noon on Tuesdays), you should try it while we are still on Zoom. It's easy to tune in and it's a time that really prepares you for the scriptures and sermon the following Sunday. The discussion deepens your worship experience. Give Text Study a try sometime in June!

As the summer progresses, the Session wants to ask members what's on their mind and how they are transitioning out of Covid restrictions. We want to provide the classes and activities that you are needing most. We want to develop common themes across our various areas of responsibility so that we provide a more unified and relevant approach to life within the church and beyond as we reach out into the community. Hope to visit with you at one of outdoor, in-person gatherings very soon!

Elizabeth Loveness, Faith Formation Elder

June Birthdays

Join us in wishing a happy June birthday this month to:

- 2 Brownie Carver
- 4 Myrtle Walls
- 4 Skip Carver
- 15 Nancy van Roessel
- 28 Doug Johnson



Calendar

June 2021

- 3 Theology Pub Live! at Camp Colvos 5:00 PM
- 4 Game Night 7:00 PM
- 6 Morning Prayer Service 8:30 AM
Sunday Worship Service 10:00 AM **Communion Sunday**
- 10 Theology Pub Live! at Camp Colvos 5:00 PM
- 11 Game Night 7:00 PM
- 12 Work Party – Inside and Outdoors 10:00 AM
- 13 Morning Prayer Service 8:30 AM
Sunday Worship Service 10:00 AM
- 15 Deacons' Meeting 3:30 PM Session Meeting 4:30 PM Faith Formation 7:00 PM
- 17 Theology Pub Live! at Camp Colvos 5:00 PM
- 18 VPC Book Club 7:00 PM – in person and on Zoom
- 20 Morning Prayer Service 8:30 AM
Sunday Worship Service 10:00 AM
- 22 Faith Formation 7:00 PM
- 24 Theology Pub Live! at Camp Colvos 5:00 PM
- 27 Morning Prayer Service 8:30 AM
Sunday Worship Service 10:00 AM
- 29 Faith Formation 7:00 PM

Please Note

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

Ongoing Activities

- Mondays** Sermon After Talk Noon – 1 PM
"Free for All" Discussion 5:30 PM
- Tuesdays** Sporty's In-Person Coffee Hour 9:00 AM
Text Study Noon
Faith Formation Class 7:00 PM
- Wednesdays** Body Prayer 8:00 AM
Happy Hour 7:00 PM
- First Thursdays** Mental Health Advocates 7:00 PM
- Thursdays** Theology Pub Live! at Camp Colvos 5:00 PM
- Fridays** Grief Group 11:00 AM (Call Leigh for details)
Game Night 7:00 PM

Church Leadership

- Pastor** Leigh Weber
- Clerk of Session** Jacq Skeffington
- Session Members** Barb Huff, Jim Lilje, Elizabeth Loveness, Al Ross-Weston, Kate Smith, Bob Spangler
- Deacons** Claudia Ross-Weston (Moderator), Susan Commeree, Sheryl Lehman, Nancy Tucker, Sue Weston