



Vashon Presbyterian Church News and Concerns January 2022

Sermons 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.



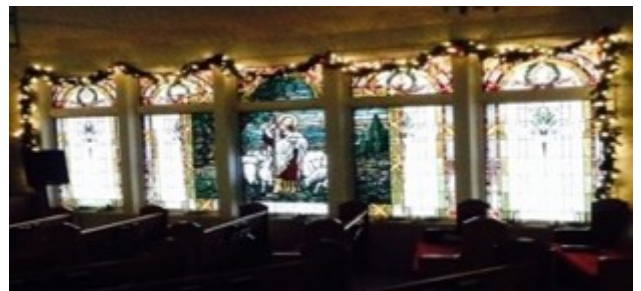
Happy New Year!

As we close the door on 2021 and enter the new year, we find we face many opportunities to engage in church and community stewardship—some new, some ongoing. A few events to be aware of this month:

- Removal and storage of Christmas decorations January 8th
- Ordination and installation of new Elders and Deacons January 9th
- A brief hiatus on Faith Formation Class as we consider various discussion topics
- Ongoing need to provide warm clothing, handwarmers and blankets for the homeless throughout the winter months

A Word About Worship

Please continue to pay attention to e-News concerning Sunday worship. We will meet on Zoom January 2nd due to concerns about the weather. We anticipate going back to in-person/hybrid worship on January 9th; however we will switch back to Zoom whenever we have inclement weather. So, stay tuned!



A Message from Pastor Leigh

Dear Ones of VPC,

Happiest of New Year's to each of you! As we begin another calendar year together, I thank you for several things. First, thank you for the most generous gift to me this Christmas. I am humbled by your kindness and reminded again that you are the most giving of people in every way.

Secondly, thank you for your hearts and your service to the community around you. You've showered the Food Bank with toilet paper and other gifts of love, you've supported Presbyterian Disaster's Relief of the tornado victims and throughout the year you supported many others. You show up. You do the work. You live your faith. And I am just so grateful to be in your midst.

And lastly, thank you again for calling me to be as your pastor. It is an honor for which I have no words. In the last five years we have worked together and gotten to know one another. I know you to be people of deep faith who keep the door open and the light on, who make space for others and live the gospel. You are not just my parishioners but my siblings in Christ and my faith is deepened by this call to be with you. Thank you for your love...for me, for one another, for God.

As we begin a new year which we all hope will be healthier and more open to being together, let us remember that we just finished an amazing one in so many ways. We have continued to grow together; we continued to learn together, and we continued to serve together. The pandemic didn't change any of that.

I thank God for you! I pray for you, and I pray that I help you to see how absolutely exquisite you really are and what amazing people of God you are. I so look forward to what the Spirit is yet to do in us, with us and among us.

Grace, Peace and so much love!

Leigh



In-Person Worship Guidelines

Due to the current guidelines from the King County Health Department, the concern over the delta variant and our need to create the safest possible space for everyone, we will follow these guidelines:

- We strongly recommend vaccination for Covid-19.
- Everyone attending in-person worship must wear a mask, in keeping with Washington State requirements (<https://www.doh.wa.gov/Newsroom/Articles/ID/2901/Updated-statewide-masking-order>).
- We will sing together.
- Pews will be clearly marked to allow safe distancing.
- Offerings will continue to be received online and by mail, but we will also have an offering plate up front for those who wish to contribute in person.
- We will share in communion. Bread will be placed on trays in individual paper holders and juice will be in little cups. We will not pass plates but come forward to receive the elements. If you prefer to bring your own elements you are welcome to do so.
- Bathrooms will be cleaned before and after worship by custodial staff.
- There will be a screen in the sanctuary to allow those in person to see who is worshipping with us on Zoom and to hear their prayer requests when possible.
- We will use the pew hymnals.
- Bulletins will be placed on the table outside the sanctuary doors. We will continue to email them on Saturdays.

The guidelines we have agreed upon as a Session are not meant to further divide or challenge anyone. They are simply our collective prayerful discernment about what is best for now. We will continue to strive to make the safest possible place for all to worship, in our sanctuary or in your home. And we look forward, with you and the whole world, to the end of this pandemic.

We are delighted to be able to worship together in person again as you are ready. Feel free to reach out to us, via the church's or Pastor Leigh's email if you have any questions or concerns.

Elders Barb Huff, Jim Lilje, Liz Loveness, Al Ross-Weston, Bob Spangler

Leigh Weber, Moderator

Jacq Skeffington, Clerk

Clerk's Corner

Session held its regular monthly meeting December 21st via Zoom due to the rising number of COVID cases. Pastor Leigh opened the meeting with prayer. Plans were finalized for the Christmas Eve and First Sunday after Christmas Worship via Zoom only. Leigh was authorized to take the week after Christmas off, with her only obligation to prepare for the January 2nd Worship.

In response to Session's annual review of the membership rolls, the Clerk was instructed to contact a few non-active members to see if they want to remain on the active membership roll. VPC is assessed by the Presbytery \$40/year per capita fee for all members.

Finance Elder Jim Lilje reported income continues to exceed expenses. Session authorized transferring \$6,059.05 from the General Fund checking account to the Building Fund to restore the Building Fund to \$30,000.00. This Building Fund is reserved for unexpected major repairs, appliance replacements or facilities improvements.

Session also approved designating Presbyterian Disaster Assistance Fund DR000015 (in response to the December Tornadoes), the recipient of the Christmas Eve offering.

Ordination and Installation of new Elders and Deacons will occur during Worship January 9th, 2022. The annual meeting of the congregation and corporation will be after Worship January 30th.

Details of other committee activities discussed and approved will be listed in each committee's section of this newsletter

The next regular session meeting will be January 18th at 4:30pm, location TBD.

Jacq Skeffington, Clerk of Session

Building and Grounds

There's been a lot of chatter on social media and around town about how lovely the church and lighted tree in front looked at Christmas. People showed up for the caroling event and candlelight service whom I've never seen before. We give a heartfelt thanks to Elder Barb Huff for finding a way to get the tree lit this year, and to Jean-Luc Bengle of Vitalitree LLC for donating his time and equipment to do the work. Thanks also to all of us who decorated the sanctuary, and purchased, set up and decorated trees inside. After our candlelight service on Christmas Eve, I spoke to a few younger people who expressed great appreciation for being able to come home to a Christmas celebration in the church of their memories.

Let's plan to take down and store those decorations January 8th during our Second Saturday work party. The timing seems right, just after the Epiphany! We'll gather from 10:00-noon and hopefully mark the swags again to facilitate putting them back up in the same places next year. We've got boxes for the ornaments and a couple of ladders. A tall orchard ladder and a couple of pickup trucks will make things a lot easier.

If the weather cooperates, some hearty souls can also work outside using those pickups and pitchforks to carry away the clippings we've been piling around the perimeter of the parking lot. Watch the e-News for updates as the weather develops.

Jacq Skeffington, Clerk of Session

Purposeful Service Team News Areas of Responsibility

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

The VPC 2022 budget authorizes a \$1,000 contribution to each of seven Mission Partners. We will write about each partner in the 2022 News and Concerns so all our members and friends are aware of their missions and initiatives.

Cold weather is now here, and we are collecting items for our homeless. Hand warmers, socks, and blankets are popular. All items should be clean and lightly used. Donations can be delivered to the church during office hours; do not leave items outside the building. If you have questions, contact Brownie at 206-795-6488. There is no overnight shelter at VPC this winter.

We will have a collection of plastics and Styrofoam products in the VPC parking lot on January 2, weather permitting. The collection will be immediately after the worship service. Please sort material – plastic bags in one bag, Styrofoam and meat package foam in another, etc. This collection is not for plastic items recycled at the county facility, such as clam shell food containers, water bottles, etc.

January 2 is Food Bank Sunday. Remember that items other than food, such as paper and personal hygiene products, are especially needed. We also donate to the Food Bank the reimbursement from IGA and Thriftway for receipts that are signed and have a phone number. Receipt boxes are in the east room.

Bob Spangler, Purposeful Service Elder



Christmas Eve Service Enjoyed by Vashon Community

Our Christmas Eve service was especially moving this year. The program offered us opportunities to sing many of the traditional songs, led by our talented church members. The organ was in fine fettle and was played expertly by Marsha Morse. Especially poignant was the outpouring of attendance by non-church members, some of whom were unknown to us all. (We ran out of bulletins and candles early on, and rushed to replace them so that everyone could participate.) Families, singles, people from different backgrounds joined together in the singing of carols and lighting of the candles. Leigh's message of acceptance and "Enough" lingered long after the service. A brief hot cider and cookie fellowship helped bring us face to face with our unknown friends from the community.

Outreach and Hospitality News

December was a banner month for our outreach activities: Winterfest, Game nights, tree lighting, Christmas Market, Christmas caroling, cookie and jigsaw puzzle exchange, and the Christmas pageant. Indefatigable Outreach Elder Barb Huff deserves accolades and gratitude for the success of each of these events, both in the planning and execution. January will be a much more relaxing month, with the continuation of Game Nights as the only (now) planned Outreach and Hospitality event.

VPC Tree Lighting

Our outdoor tree shone brightly this year, thanks to the efforts of Jean Luc Benge and his crew with Vitalatree, LLC. On a rare sunny day, they brought in their boom and installed the lights free of charge. Thanks to Jim Huff and Chris Coldeen, who commandeered the three-foot star topper, removing the old lights and attaching new white lights just in time for the star to ascend to the treetop. The community at large enjoyed the lighting event, as evidenced by the positive feedback on Facebook and in person.

Winterfest

On December 4, we participated in the Vashon Winterfest, which included a street parade, a visit from Santa Claus and concluded with the lighting of the Vashon Christmas tree

Caran-Marie Weston Dunbar displayed her amazing artistry with the creation of a reindeer chute, which dispensed candy canes to the children. We also handed out cookies and other treats to adults as they gathered at the Vashon Theater and followed Santa to the tree lighting at Vashon Village.

Game Nights

Game Nights continued with a Christmas flair in December. A highlight was our scavenger hunt which ended with everyone displaying an ornament they found to share on Zoom with everyone.

We rang in the New Year on New Year's Eve on Zoom with a few games including Bingo, and concluded with the countdown accompanied by the iconic Time Square ball drop.



Decorating the Church

Decorating the church is always a delight to do together. For the benefit of our Zoom family, we added a tree to the sanctuary.



Outreach and Hospitality News (Continued)

Christmas Market

Our two-day Christmas Market attracted a consistent stream of visitors. Ten local artists set up booths laden with Christmas crafts to sell. In advance, our own VPC members gathered for two craft days to create goodies for us to offer, including Santas, custom soaps, Christmas-themed masks, candy, and more. Laura Jean Walls-Fisher organized the offerings from Community Care Closet, which provided free baby items. We also had a local Santa Claus on site, who listened to the wishes of both young and not-so-young. Thanks to Al Ross Weston, Michael King and George Eustice for donning the Santa suit. We even had pets visit Santa!

The artists donated ten percent of their proceeds to our selected charity, The Vashon Food Bank. All proceeds from VPC sales went to the Food Bank. Many visitors also made direct donations to the Food Bank. This fun event, which brought both the church and the larger community together, raised almost \$2,500. Many thanks to everyone who participated.

Christmas Caroling by the Tree

On December 19th, a crisp but clear Sunday evening, we gathered outside by the tree and sang Christmas carols. Folks stayed warm by the fire pit that Jan van Roussel kept burning brightly. This was a treat not only for VPC but for the Vashon community.



Christmas Pageant

In the second year of what looks to be an annual tradition, the Christmas Pageant had a coast-to-coast following. This Zoom event featured participants young and not-so-young, including a newborn baby Jesus and even a dog which accompanied the shepherds. Complemented by music from our talented congregation, the pageant offered an opportunity for families to connect, even remotely. If you missed it, (or would like an encore) go to the church website, click on Sermons and you will find the pageant located there for your viewing pleasure.



Faith Formation Report

I am truly thankful for this past year of collaboration, information and inspiration in our faith formation classes.. Our first classes were based on a study entitled 12 Women in the Bible. Nancy Tucker, Caran Marie Dunbar, Lindsey Hofman, Kate Smith, Barb Huff, and Pastor Leigh lead the classes. Each person brought her unique research and interpretation of the Biblical woman they had chosen. Besides the members in leadership roles, four or five others attended regularly. My thanks to Hére Thieme, Kathy Olsen, Claudia Ross Weston, Kathy O'Laughlin and Leslie Hauck.

A special thanks to those members who contributed to our Monday night **Free For ALL**. Brownie Carver, Nancy and Ben Tucker and Hére Thieme spent hours choosing their best pictures and showing their travel adventures in the Holy Land. The evening was so popular we were asked to repeat the presentations on Zoom the following week. Kathy Olsen also shared some of her girlhood stories when she lived in Lebanon. In another session we reviewed the Seven Deadly Sins (Zins- play on words which is a winery in California) and Barb Huff discovered a great online quiz/survey that predicted which of the seven sins a person would most likely succumb to! Although much of this was for fun, a lively discussion accompanied the frivolity. We then went on to discuss why Jesus taught in parables - simple examples that common people could understand that contained universal truths.

Our racial issues class focused on the concept of white privilege. Al and Claudia Ross Weston, Bev and Jacq Skeffington, Bob Spangler, Mark Fredrickson, Barb, and Jim Huff, Hére Thieme, Kathy Olsen, Kathy O'Laughlin and Lindsay Hofman attended the class which included some role playing. We decided a lot more practice is needed and that best possibility for that would be to volunteer somewhere in Seattle that places each one of us where we must communicate to do our job.

New Members Class - Leslie Hauck, Thomas Abraham and Debbie Finch joined the class taught by Jacq Skeffington and Bob Spangler. All three became members of our congregation.

Interviewing the younger generation "generated" a great deal of interest. My thanks to Thomas Abraham for co-interviewing with me. Thomas's thoughtfulness and sensitivity made the interviews enlightening and allowed the interviewee to feel comfortable with language about church and their spiritual journey that they found meaningful.

A special thank you to our interviewees. Ivan Wong, Mary Mossey, Charlotte Skeffngton, Judy Twedt, and Aglia Olsen. I will include their bios in the Newsletter.

We have started a daily devotional for about 15 members. Using the guide, **The One Year Through the Bible Devotional**, we will read a verse(s) each day and read in the guide a short passage for thought or prayer. We will have a time every two weeks for comment or questions. Our first gathering was November 16 on Zoom. or questions. Our first gathering was November 16 on Zoom.

Elizabeth Loveness, Faith Formation Elder



Deacon's Message

I hope this finds everyone warm and cozy as we watch the snow-covered landscape. As I sit in front of our wood stove I have been reflecting on the year. It has been hard and sometimes it feels like we take two steps forward and one backwards. I realized I have missed hosting meals, seeing people frequently, giving hugs and in person laughter. However, I am grateful for being able to connect with people across the country or at the other end of our street on Zoom, for our church community that feeds and encourages us to grow and meet the many challenges we have faced this past year, and for all the love and support our Vashon community showers on us.

So, as we go into 2022, I look forward to connecting with each and every one of you. Look for the positive in each situation you encounter. Look for the small and big things we can be grateful for. Know that we are each blessed and a chosen child of God. Look for the times we can engage with others with compassion and grace. Practice seeing the good in each person and know that we are all held in the arms of a loving God.

Wishing you a Joy Filled and Blessed New Year,

Deacon Claudia Ross-Weston

Coffee Hour is Back! Hosting Volunteers Needed

Volunteers are needed to help with our after-service coffee fellowship, specifically with providing nibbles and assisting in setup and cleanup. If you are interested, please contact Nancy Tucker.



January Birthdays

Please wish a happy January birthday to:

- 2 Sheryl Lehman
- 13 Sara Dunn
- 23 Héré Thieme

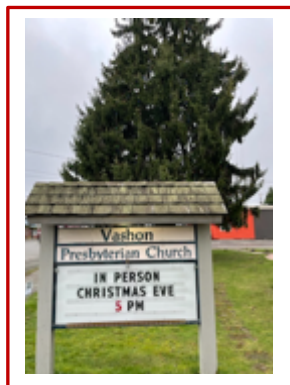
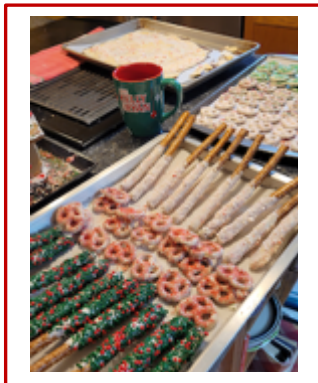
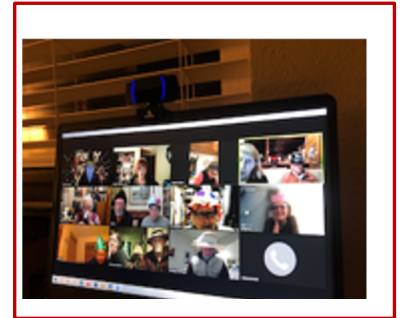
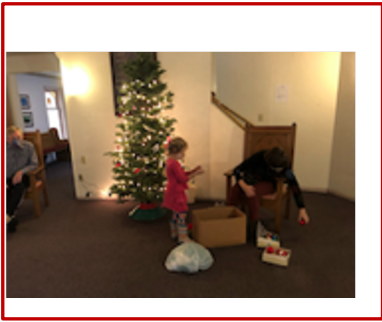
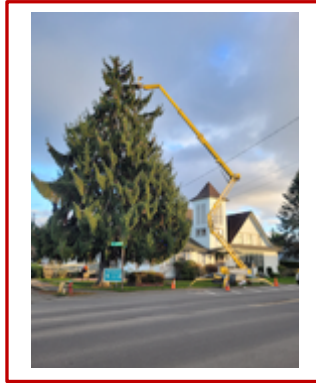
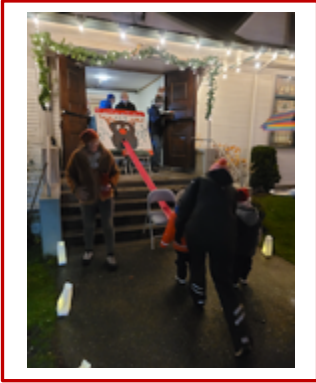
VPC Book Club

The book we are reading for January is Between Two Kingdoms by Suleika Jaouad.

"A searing, deeply moving memoir of illness and recovery that traces one young woman's journey from diagnosis to remission to re-entry into 'normal' life - from the author of the Life, Interrupted column in *The New York Times*"

Currently we plan to meet on Zoom on January 15 at 7:00. If weather and Covid circumstances improve, we might meet in person. Check out your weekly e-News for updates.

Christmas Highlights



Calendar

January 2022

- 2 Sunday Worship Service 10:00 AM Zoom Only
- 4 Faith Formation 7:00 PM
- 7 Game Night 7:00 PM – Christmas Theme
- 8 Second Saturday Work Party
- 9 Sunday Worship Service 10:00 AM
- 11 Faith Formation 7:00 PM
- 14 Game Night 7:00 PM
- 16 Sunday Worship Service 10:00 AM
- 18 Deacons' Meeting 10:00 AM
Session Meeting 4:30 PM
Faith Formation 7:00 PM
- 20 Theology Pub, Camp Colvos 5:00 PM
- 21 VPC Book Club, 6:00 PM
- 23 Sunday Worship Service 10:00 AM
- 25 Faith Formation 7:00 PM
- 28 Game Night 7:00 PM
- 30 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

Ongoing Activities

- Mondays** Sermon After Talk Noon – 1 PM
Free for All discussion 6:30 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

Church Leadership

- Pastor** Leigh Weber
- Clerk of Session** Jacq Skeffington
- Session Members** Lindsay Hofman, Barb Huff, Jim Lilje, Elizabeth Loveness, Bob Spangler, Nancy Tucker
- Deacons** Claudia Ross-Weston (Moderator), Thomas Abraham, Chris Coldeen, Susan Commeree, Nancy Johnson, Sheryl Lehman

