

The Grapevine

*I am the vine; You are the branches.
John 15:5*

Year 114, Issue 12
December 2016

Sabbatical Grant Received for Pastor Dan

MVPC has received a grant to enable Pastor Dan to participate in the 2016 National Clergy Renewal Program. We were one of 146 congregations across the United States selected to participate in this competitive grant program, which is funded by Lilly Endowment Inc. and administered by Christian Theological Seminary in Indianapolis, IN. Since it was established 16 years ago, the Clergy Renewal Program has awarded over 2300 grants which allow Christian congregations to support their pastors with the gift of extended time away from their ministerial duties and responsibilities in order for them to engage in reflection, renewal and rejuvenation. The Renewal Program approaches the time away as "Sabbath time," offering ministers a carefully considered respite which they have designed in collaboration with a team from the congregation they serve. The Program encourages congregations to partner with their ministers to develop experiences that address their unique renewal needs and hopes. Recognizing that ministers' families are subject to the stress and demands placed on pastoral leaders, the program encourages pastors to involve their families in renewal activities. And of course, Congregational needs during the minister's renewal leave are also considered. \$15,000 of the total \$50,000 grant will be used to support interim pastoral leadership during the pastor's Sabbatical leave, as well as renewal activities within the congregation.

Pastor Dan's Sabbatical leave will go from June 1 through August 31, 2017. His time of renewal will put him in beautiful places, with people he loves, engaging in activities which will be life-giving for him. Throughout the time, he will use photography as a spiritual practice to capture moments of God's presence and activity and reflect upon the array of experiences.



Christmas Eve Candlelight Service

December 24, 7:00 p.m.

Followed by our traditional Wassail Bowl
(Spiced Cider) Fellowship Time!

Bring your favorite
Christmas Cookies to share!

We will conclude our Christmas Eve festivities with a Wassail Bowl (Spiced Cider) and Christmas Cookie fellowship in the Fireside room. It's a very busy evening, but let's take time to wish everyone a blessed and Merry Christmas with a cup of Wassail and some Christmas treats! Bring your favorite Christmas Cookie or Candy to share with everyone, and maybe you'll find a new favorite on the table!

A BRIEF SYNOPSIS OF THE MOST RECENT STATED MEETING OF THE SESSION

- The meeting convened November 15 at 5:30pm in the Fireside Room with fellowship and dinner.
- Following dinner members offered prayers of thanksgiving for both personal and church related aspects of their lives.
- Deacon Pete Papadopoulos reported the Deacons are making progress with the Congregational Care related telephone calls. He noted some members of the Congregation had expressed displeasure at being called by their Deacon.
- The Session approved celebration of Communion on Sunday, December 25, 2016 and the first Sunday of each month in 2017.
- Session discussed the budget and pledge commitments. As of the date of the meeting, budgeted expenses are \$39,000 greater than the pledge commitments. Each Elder was tasked with looking at their respective mission area and bring to the December meeting their proposals for reductions, with a goal of ten percent in each.
- The Session approved adding information showing budgeted income versus actual income to the church bulletin.
- The Session asked the Stewardship Committee to develop a means of asking members of the congregation to increase their pledge amount.
- The Session discussed a proposal from the Music Ministry Director which included an increase in hours and corresponding pay.
- The Session approved the job description for the Interim Pastor for the period of Pastor Holland's sabbatical.
- The Session approved a temporary position to fill in for the Director of Children, Youth, and Family Ministry's unpaid leave during the sabbatical. It further approved the hiring of Jodie Kercheval to fill that temporary position.
- The Session approved the creation of a Moderators Council consisting three or four elders to support the Interim Pastor and, after the sabbatical, the called pastor as well. The council will start its work immediately.

Tom Howard
Clerk of Session

Thank You from the Stewardship Committee ...

The Stewardship Committee would like to thank you all for your gifts to Mount Vernon Presbyterian Church in 2016. Your investment of time, talent, and money over the last year have enabled our church to provide opportunities for spiritual growth for all, not just on Sundays but throughout the week as well with bible studies, luncheons, adult classes, family dinners and children's programs. We have also been able to reach out to the community through local mission work at Friendship House and Tierra Nueva, hosting Family Promise, and providing gifts to children in the community and throughout the world, just to name a few.

As we look forward to 2017 we project a deficit budget and are actively looking for ways to both trim expenses and increase income. MVPC has have faithful and talented staff, and some of our ambitious goals for 2017 include the addition of a part-time Director of Youth Ministries as well as increased building maintenance and continued service in the community. We recognize there are many ways to do ministry and one remedy for any financial gap is greater reliance on the time and talents of members and friends of the Church. For example, half of our financial contribution to Family Promise could come from pancake breakfast fundraisers. One of the monthly Friendship House meals could be provided by people cooking at home and bringing food ready to serve rather than buying ingredients to cook at Friendship House Café. Likewise, organized fundraising events and consistent youth volunteers could extend our ministry and our budget.

God has blessed us abundantly. We have many opportunities to use gifts of time and talent in our congregation and we are confident God will provide what we need to do the ministry we are called to do. If you have not submitted a financial or time and talent pledge card, we invite you to do so next time you're at church. If you have any questions about Stewardship, pledging, or giving of your time, talent and resources, please talk to Gary Jones, chair of the Stewardship Committee.

Women's Christmas Dessert

Christmas - A Journey into Wonder

So many people to thank! Our 2nd annual Women's Christmas Dessert was another success.

I am so thankful, that in spite of threatened snowy weather, we had a wonderful turn out. Our speaker, Teresa Rinker, and our music program Harmony Northwest Chorus were wonderful.

It is such a blessing to live in a community where we can find such wonderful talent.

It took a lot of volunteers to put this event on, and we want to thank them all: our planning committee: Dee Jobe, Toni Hulbert, Patti Allen, Leslie Braun, Molly Howard, Lucy McLaughlin, Pat Papadopolus, Linda Rabenstein, Sumiko Shinozaki, Sarah Catton, Colleen Higbee, Ruth Neal, and Barb Hazelwood.

Also, a huge thanks to the table decorators: Patti Allen, Mackenzie Anderson, Sarah Catton, Laurel Coalwell, Madeline DeLia, Lynn Grobschmit, Barb Hazelwood, Molly Howard, Dee Jobe, Jodie Kercheval, Anne Long, Lucy McLaughlin, Nancy Oemick, Laurie Parker, Pat Papadopolus, Shelby Quilliam, Linda Rabenstein, Sumiko Shinozaki, and Margo Wortham.

In addition, we thank Betty Anne Friedericks, Cameron and Courtney Hazelwood, and Tracy Hall for their important help. And then our wonderful servers: Doug Catton, Paul Coalwell, Bill DeHon, Ward Ernst, Rob Hall, John Hazelwood, Ted Langrehr, Bob Mitchell, David Neal, George Ridgeway, Matthew Riggins, Dave Wilson, and Don Wolf.

The ticket sales for the event covered all the costs, with the amount remaining being donated to Faith House, a women's shelter. In addition this year two quilts were donated by Sue Springer of Traverse City, Michigan. They were sold at a Silent Auction with the proceeds also going to Faith House. God bless you all.

Sincerely,
Dee Jobe

Check out the slideshow that Leslie Braun made on our website!
www.MountVernonPres.org



Flowers and Poinsettias for Christmas

This year we are making a change to our Poinsettia tradition. For the past few years the poinsettias haven't been picked up after Christmas so in order to avoid waste, we will be doing a special floral arrangement ornamented with a few poinsettias in memory of loved ones for Christmas Eve service.

If you are interested in donating \$15 toward the floral arrangement in memory of or in honor of your loved one, please speak to Anne Long or put your donation in the offering plate, clearly marked "poinsettias".





CHRISTMAS DAY WORSHIP

Christmas Day service on Sunday, December 25th will be a service of Carols, Readings, and Communion. We will be lighting the 1st Christmastide candle. It is a family friendly service so bring your family and friends. All of your Christmas company is welcome to attend this special Sunday service. **Christmas Day, 10:30 a.m.**



**New Year's Day
WORSHIP SERVICE**

NEW YEARS DAY
Sunday, January 1st we will have our regular worship at 10:30. We are continuing our Christmastide series with "The gift of Redemption".

WHITE GIFT OFFERING

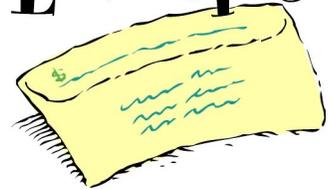
December 11 we will receive the White Gift offering for the Deacons.

The Deacon ministry is not funded as part of the general budget, so the White Gift offering makes possible the many Deacon ministry activities.

In the past year, in addition to regular activities the Deacons have provided scholarships for children attending Tall Timber summer camp, purchased provisions for the Annual Christmas Baskets organized by the Mission Ministry, provided boxes for Operation Christmas Child, helped fund the new Hearing Assistance system now being used Sundays during worship, provided extra funding for Friendship House Mission, and facilitated memorial services and receptions for our MVPC community.

The Deacons thank you in advance for praying for and giving from your heart so that we may continue and enlarge our ministry.

Offering Envelopes



Giving Envelopes for 2017 are now available in the narthex.

If you don't find yours, please talk to Leslie Braun or contact the church office.

*The
Joy
Of
Christmas*

**December 17
6:00 p.m.**

A Christmas concert featuring our Chancel Choir,
Glorify!, small groups and soloists.

No tickets needed.

A free will offering will be received to benefit
Family Promise of Skagit Valley.

**MOUNT VERNON PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
1511 East Broadway Street † Mount Vernon, WA**

Meet Elder Gary Jones!

Raising sheep and reading the Bible are my favorite past times. The two go well together. There are excellent sheep stories from David and Jesus in the Bible and many times when we are likened to sheep in God's pasture. Our sheep are a family project. Vicki has mastered carding, dying, and spinning the wool we harvest. She can also felt wool into hats and handbags. At MVPC I have participated in several long term Bible studies and enjoy Dan's sermons plus the class Bob Rauch has been leading. We live on the North Fork of the Skagit River and enjoy an old farmstead with pastures, fruit trees and gardens.

Vicki and I met at Whitman College in Walla Walla, Washington, were married at Mount Tabor Presbyterian Church in Portland, Oregon in 1968. We went into the Peace Corps. Our first house was a mud hut in the compound of Abdullahi Ousman at Markoye Upper Volta, West Africa. We returned to the US/Seattle in 1970. I started law school and enlisted as a cook in the 365th Civil Affairs Unit at Fort Lawton in the fall of 1970.

In March of 2016 I retired from private law practice after more than 42 years at Mount Vernon. The last 28 years of my career were in partnership with Gail Smith. Practicing law gave me a particular window into community life. Being involved in the formation of the Skagit Valley Food Coop, Skagit Hospitality House Association- Friendship House, Skagitonians to Preserve Farmland, Tierra Nueva, Ghana Together, and other social enterprises has been a gift. Several diking and drainage districts have been long term clients. Estate planning and probate work resulted in many meaningful relationships. However, that chapter is complete and there are new adventures in what had been avocations.

In addition to farming and Bible reading in the church, I have been a member of Kiwanis Club of Mount Vernon for more than 30 years and have served as Barbecue chair and President among other things. Kiwanis has been a way to keep abreast of community needs and connect with people who are willing to serve in good causes. We live in an amazing place with people who care about how it works.

Our daughter Amelia was born in 1981 and graduated from La Conner High School, Whitman College and University of Washington Medical School. During residency in Obstetrics and Gynecology at Ann Arbor, Michigan she married Vince Huntsberger, also an MD. They have two children and a third one on the way in January, 2017. Being grandparents has brought us great joy and another reason to disengage from working all the time.

Finishing my second term as an elder is the next goal. There has been much to be thankful for in the Mission Service Team. So many people worked to make it possible to host homeless families and support them with Family Promise's day center and staff. There is an expanding number of people receiving meals at Friendship Café, and crafts fun at Where the Heart Is. Connecting our Mission Team with the Skagit Regional Hospital, Caring Companions. Samaritan Counseling Center resources and the Tall Timber Ranch are on my prayer list.

The Capital Campaign for what became Good Shepherd Hall was my first venture in leadership at MVPC. Being an elder when we celebrated 100 years as a church was another highlight. We are growing followers of Christ and now I hope to see a confirmation class that adds to our membership.



Knitting Fellowship

4th Wednesday of the month at noon
in the Fireside Room

All are welcome to join, regardless of your
knitting expertise (or lack thereof)!

Men's Breakfast

All men are invited to join us on the 4th Saturday of the
month at 9:00 a.m. in Good Shepherd Hall for a delicious
home-cooked breakfast and great conversation.

If you have any questions about Men's Breakfast,
please speak to Bob Wygal.

Women's Fellowship

The good fellowship, coffee, tasty refreshments,
and warm fireplace go along with the spiritual lift.
Come and see!

All are welcome @ 9:00 a.m. in the Fireside Room.

Birthdays & Anniversaries

December

4-Ward Ernst

9-Betty Haworth

10-Bob Wygal

10-Bill & Linda Ream

16-Pat Papadopoulos

19-Laurie Parker

21-Keith Tacker

27-Aaron Fox

28-Barb Clure

29-Dave & Bev Wilson

31-Jodie Kercheval



Are we missing your special date?

Please contact Michelle in the church office at

Michelle@MountVernonPres.org or

424-7675 so we can celebrate with you!

Senior Shepherds

Join us December 20 for a delicious lunch
with a great presentation.

Still only \$5, so invite your friends also!

Questions? Please talk to Dave & Arlene Andersen
or Bob & Glenda Mitchell.



Want to keep up with
what's going on at MVPC?

Check out the calendar that's
posted on our website!

<http://www.mountvernonpres.org/calendar/>

Want to get more involved at MVPC?

There are several ways to get involved in ministry
at MVPC and newcomers are always welcome.

Contact people are listed below.

Mission Ministry Team: Meets the 2nd
Wednesday of the month at noon at MVPC.

Questions? Talk to Gary Jones.

Worship Ministry Team: The worship team meets
the 1st and 3rd Wednesday of the month at noon
at MVPC. *Questions? Talk to Anne Long.*

Prayer Team: The Prayer Team meets every
Tuesday at 10:30 a.m. in the MVPC Library.

Questions? Talk to Pat Papadopoulos.

**Check out the bulletin board near Good Shepherd
Hall for other ways to get involved in worship
and fellowship at MVPC.**

Listen for the Spirit ... Blessings abound.

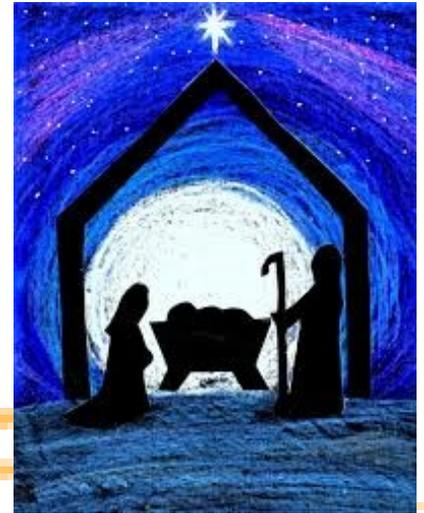


Fun at
Creative Kids,
Sunday School,
and
Family Night!



MVPC Children, Youth, & Family ~ Dec. 2016

MVPC Christmas Celebrations



Family Night Christmas Party on 12/7 at 5:30 pm

MVPC Women's Dessert on 12/8 at 6:30 pm

MVPC Christmas Concert on 12/17 at 6 pm

Creative Kids Presentation during 10:30 am Worship on 12/18

Youth Group Christmas Party on 12/18 at Noon

Christmas Eve Worship Service on 12/24 at 7 pm

Christmas Day Lessons and Carols on 12/25 at 10:30 am

SUNDAYS

Nursery 9 to Noon Sundays

A time for the youngest kids to play! Everyone in the nursery is invited to join the Seeds Sunday School story, activity, and snack in the Nursery during 10:30 am Worship.

Creative Kids 9 to 10 am Sundays

A wonderful opportunity for grade school and middle school kids to creatively express their faith. 12/4 Drama/Choir, 12/11 Rehearsal, and 12/18 Presentation! No Mtg. 12/25 or 1/1.

Sunday School during 10:30 am Worship

| | <u>Seeds (Preschool)</u> | <u>Sprouts (K to 2nd)</u> | <u>Saplings (3rd to 5th & youth)</u> |
|-------|--------------------------|---------------------------|--|
| 12/4 | Mary and Joseph | The Nativity | The Mystics |
| 12/11 | The Shepherds | Light of the World | A Chasm in Christianity |
| 12/18 | The Wise Men | King of Kings! | Christmas! |

Sprouts (K to 2nd) and Saplings (3rd to 5th & youth) begin in worship and then head to their classes, while Seeds (Preschoolers) begin and meet in the Seeds side of the nursery. Please pick up your kids from their classes.

FAMILY NIGHT

Everyone is invited to Family Night on Wednesdays from 5:30 to 6:30 pm in the Saplings and Great Room for food, faith, and fellowship! We will be decorating on 11/30, having our Family Night Christmas Party on 12/7, and hosting Family Promise on 12/14. No Family Night during Christmas Break on 12/21 and 12/28.

YOUTH GROUP

A time for middle and high school students to grow closer to God while having fun together. Youth Group meets the 3rd Sunday of every month from Noon to 1:30 pm for pizza, games, and a faith activity. We will have our Christmas Party on 12/18. Please bring a wrapped (\$5 gift) for the gift exchange.

“Like Us” on [facebook.com/MVPCChildrenYouthandFamilyMinistry](https://www.facebook.com/MVPCChildrenYouthandFamilyMinistry)

Questions? Contact Rebecca Holland, MVPC Children, Youth, and Family Director

REGULARLY SCHEDULED EVENTS @ MVPC:

- Prayer Group:** Tuesdays at 10:30 a.m. in the Library
- Bible Study:** Tuesdays at 10 a.m. in the Fireside Room
- Small Groups:** Call the church to get connected to a small group!
- Family Night:** Wednesdays, 5:30-6:30 p.m. at MVPC
- Chancel Choir:** Wednesdays from 6:15 to 7:30 p.m.
- Glorify!:** Wednesdays, 7:30 to 8:30 p.m.
- Senior Shepherds:** Third Tuesday of the month at noon.
- Women's Fellowship:** Fourth Saturday of the month at 9:00 a.m.
- Men's Breakfast:** Fourth Saturday of the month at 9:00 a.m. *Resuming In January*

THE SUNDAY SCHEDULE AT MVPC ...

9:00 ADULT EDUCATION HOUR

ADULT CLASSES:

The Bible Class

Join teacher Bob Rauch for an in-depth exploration of the Bible. This class is a discussion-based study and meets in the Conference Room. No prior Bible experience required.

KIDS PROGRAMS:

Nursery - Birth to preschool age kids enjoy playing together.

Creative Kids - Kids express their faith through art, music, and drama as they prepare to present during the Dec. 18th Worship Service.

10:30 WORSHIP AND CHILDREN'S SUNDAY SCHOOL

Nursery / Seeds Sunday School - Birth to preschool age kids are introduced to Bible Stories

Sprouts Sunday School - kindergarten-2nd Grade (begin in worship) journey through the Bible.

Saplings Sunday School for 3rd - 5th Grade (begin in worship) journey through Christianity.

11:45 FELLOWSHIP TIME: Please stay to enjoy treats and good conversation!

