



MOUNT VERNON PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Growing Followers Of Christ Since 1902

The Grapevine

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

Year 115, Issue 1
January 2017

RECEIVING GIFTS AND MOVING FORWARD IN HOPE!

In worship through the seasons of Advent and Christmastide we focused reorganizing and receiving the gifts that God offers: gifts of hope, peace, joy, and love. On Christmas Eve we celebrated the gift of Jesus himself and on Christmas day we looked at the gift of God's big story, starting with the fall from Genesis 3, continuing through the cross, asking the question of our part in the story. During the Sundays of Christmastide we celebrated gifts of redemption and revelation. I'm grateful to all who participated.

From decorating the sanctuary, the church and the candles, to reading scriptures as the candles were lit and enjoying the "Creative Kids" presentation of the Christmas story, it was a wonderful celebration.

Now, the decorations have all been put away (thanks to those of you who did that too), our days are getting longer and some of us are already wondering when Spring will spring. Lent, the season of preparation for Easter starts on March 1... less than two months from now. In some ways it seems like this is almost an "in-between time" bound by the big celebrations on the church calendar. God has been walking with and leading people through "in-between times" for a long, long time. It's part of what gives us hope for the future. Sometimes the only thing God's people have to hold onto is hope: trusting in God's promises, knowing the way they came to fruition in the person of Jesus Christ, and looking for fulfillment of those which have not yet come to pass. And all of this thinking led me to the sermon series that will begin this week which I'm calling "Facets of Hope." We'll turn to stories in our scripture to look at what hope is, where it comes from, and the effect it has on God's people... and I hope you'll be there.



Consider this your invitation to come join together in worship as we move forward together in hope.

Grace and Peace,
Pastor Dan

Congregational Meeting

January 29 after worship

Our regular Congregational Meeting will be held after worship on January 29. This will focus on presenting the 2017 Budget and Pastor's Terms of Call. A change from previous years—we will not be presenting the Ministry Area reports at this meeting. We will distribute those reports in May.

CYF Discernment Meeting

Be a part of prayerfully planning the coming year!

Children, Youth and Family Discernment Team Meeting

February 5th, after worship in the Great Room

PREPARING FOR SABBATICAL

Last month in the grapevine, we told you that MVPC has received a grant funded by the Lilly Endowment. This grant will allow Pastor Dan to take a 3 month sabbatical during the summer of 2017. The grant also provides for the hiring of an interim pastor, and for the congregation to participate in a practice of photography and finding God in nature, which parallels what Dan will be doing during the sabbatical. So, over the course of the next few months, there's a lot to prepare for!

For the church: We will be hiring a part-time, temporary, interim pastor to handle some of the primary pastoral responsibilities while Dan is away. The person is not yet identified but the Presbytery will be recommending candidates to the Session in the not distant future. The interim's first Sunday with us in worship will be May 28th when we will "pass the torch" by welcoming the new pastor and sending the Holland Family off with prayer and well-wishes. September 3rd we will welcome Pastor Dan and family back and say farewell to the interim.

The Elders and Deacons are preparing for Dan's absence and wanted to extend an invitation: This is an excellent opportunity to lend your leadership to the life and ministry of the church. If you've ever thought you might like to teach an adult education course or work with the children; if you have put off participating in the mission and service projects of MVPC; if there have been things you'd like to see happen or ways that you've thought about offering your expertise or energy, don't hesitate to get involved!

For the Holland Family: In addition to the logistics of making reservations and solidifying plans for the lodging and activities associated with the sabbatical time, Pastor Dan is researching the National Parks he will visit with his family and preparing himself for the practice of photography and reflection that will guide his time away. The Sabbatical is designed to help him capture moments of God's presence and activity and see the world with renewed eyes. A selection of his sabbatical reading list is in the box to the right if you'd like to take a look at some of what he is reading to prepare.

God has blessed MVPC richly. Nowhere is that more evident than in the people who come together to worship and pray, to study and serve.

READING LIST:

Grounded:

Finding God in the World - A Spiritual Revolution
by Diana Butler Bass

**The Practice of Contemplative Photography:
Seeing the World with Fresh Eyes**
by Andy Karr

**Super, Natural Christians:
How We Should Love Nature**
by Sallie McFague

**God is at Eye Level:
Photography as a Healing Art**
by Jan Phillips

**An Other Kingdom:
Departing the Consumer Culture**
by Peter Block

**Eyes of the Heart:
Photography as a Christian Contemplative Practice**
John Muir: Spiritual Writings
by Tim Flinders

**The Essence of Photography:
Seeing and Creativity**
by Bruce Barnbaum

**Songs for the Open Road:
Poems of Travel and Adventure**
by The American Poetry & Literacy Project

NOMINATIONS NOW BEING ACCEPTED!

"When it comes to the health of a church, It may be impossible to overestimate the importance of choosing the leadership of the church"

The board of Elders (aka. "Session") and the board of Deacons are the elected leadership of Mount Vernon Presbyterian Church. We believe that God calls people into these positions, and each year the nominating committee convenes to discern that call on behalf of the church. The first step in that discernment process is listening for the voice of the congregation. Who do you think is right to lead this congregation at this point in time?

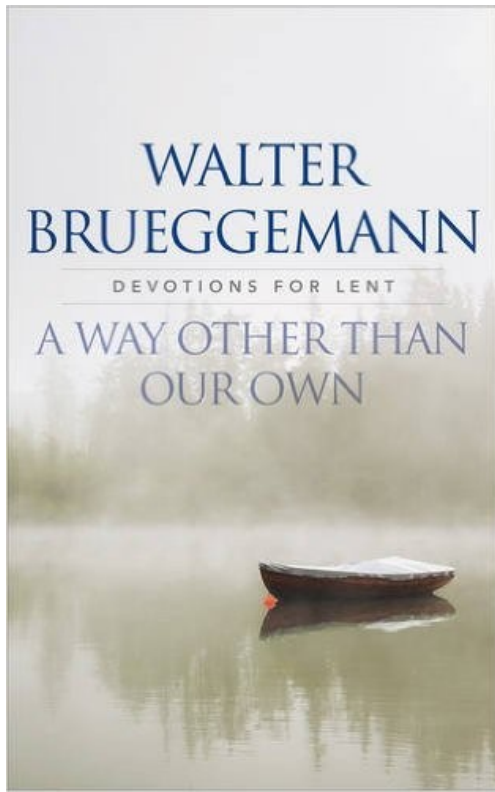
You are invited to nominate men and women who are members of the congregation. According to the Book of Order, God gives suitable gifts to those called into the role of Deacon and Elder. "Those who undertake particular ministries should be persons of strong faith, dedicated discipleship, and love of Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord. Their manner of life should be a demonstration of the Christian gospel in the church and in the world."

The nominating committee is in the process of reaching out to the congregation to hear your nominations. Over the course of the couple months, they will engage in a discernment and invitation process to call Elders and Deacons. Most will be called to a 3 year term.

The nominating committee is also charged with nominating members to serve on the nominating committee and on the endowment committee. Beginning January 15th, nomination forms will be available in the narthex and the office at church. Please fill one out for each person you would like to nominate and return it to the church office or place it in the offering plate at church.

Those who are nominated to serve will be elected in May and ordained and/or into their positions in July.

The Lenten Small group study has been selected!



From the Editor:

Lent recalls times of wilderness and wandering, from newly freed Hebrew slaves in exile to Jesus temptation in the desert. God has always called people out of their safe, walled cities into uncomfortable places, revealing paths they would never have chosen. Despite our culture of self-indulgence, we too are called to walk an alternative path one of humility, justice, and peace. Walter Brueggemann's thought-provoking reflections for the season of Lent invite us to consider the challenging, beautiful life that comes with walking the way of grace.

Throughout the season of Lent, the sermon series in worship will complement the study. If you are not currently part of a small group and would like to be, let Michelle in the church office know and we will help find the right fit for you. If you would like a copy of the book to read on your own you can also order through the church.

Small group leaders, please let us know how many books you will need. We should have the first order here by January 29th.

Lent begins with our Ash Wednesday service on March 1 this year. Watch for more details to come.

The Hall Family Lighting the Advent Candles



Thank You, MVPC Family ...

Thank you for the prayers, support, and ongoing kindness you have shown to me and my family while I have been undergoing cancer treatment. It has been a hard 10 month process of chemo, surgery, and radiation but we have felt supported and loved through it all. Thank you!

Blessings,

Rebecca Holland and Family



Secret Valentines!

Sign up on the clipboard on the Narthex table (under the bulletin board) to be a Secret Valentine to one of the MVPC kids. Rebecca will email you with your kid's name and instructions. All you have to do is bring a small treat/item to put in your kid's Valentine bag in the Sunday School hallway on January 29th and February 5th and then a fun treat/item to give to your valentine at the CYF Valentine party on Sunday, February 12th from 9 to 10 am where you get to let your valentine know who you are!

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

At the December 20, 2016, Stated meeting of the Session, the following occurred:

- The meeting convened 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.
- The Session discussed the proposed 2017 Budget and formalized further reductions in expenses. It then approved the now revised budget.
- The Session approved the recommendation of the Moderator's Council to make the time frame of our current Annual Report July through June rather than January through December as we currently do.
- The Session approved the recommendation of the Moderator's Council to make it the interview team for the Temporary Interim Pastor during Pastor Holland's upcoming sabbatical.

Tom Howard
Clerk of Session



MVPC Creative Kids
Playing Bells
in Worship

Presenting the
Cross in Worship



Sharing the Story
of Jesus' Birth



Meet Elder George Ridgeway!

I was born and raised around Peoria, Illinois. I spent 4 years in the U.S. Navy then I attended the University of Illinois on the G.I. bill. I aimed to be a secondary school teacher. Instead I worked almost 40 years in the Public Health field. I met and married my wife Collie in 1965. Next year we will celebrate our 51st wedding anniversary. We have one adopted daughter Jenny who lives a few blocks from us. I retired from the Skagit County Public Health department 5 years ago. Shortly after Collie and I joined MVPC. I am presently serving my second term as an elder which I thoroughly enjoy. I like reading, hiking, gardening, computer and just putting around my shop.



Outdoor Work Parties

B-r-r-r. It seems dark and cold, but the next three months are the perfect time to clean up the garden beds and prepare for spring. There is already new growth on shrubs - and of course those little green plants in the garden beds...

So for those of you who love to work on our beautiful and extensive grounds, work parties are planned for the following Saturdays, from 9-11:30: January 21st, February 11th, March 11th. On Saturday, April 8th we will be planting for Easter!

In 2016, members of our congregation were inspired with new ideas and vision for our grounds. A sweet pea garden was planted and dahlias were available for cuttings. A path was made for interest and trees were removed and limbed for health and safety. If you have a new idea, want to participate in planning or have special skills to make MVPC a more welcoming place, please contact Pat Papadopoulos, Madeline DeLia or Sumiko Shinozaki.

This coming year we will have sign ups for weekly opportunities to mow the lawns over spring and summer, edge, weed-eat and power wash the walkways and mossy brick walls.

More about grounds and other opportunities to care for our property will be presented in future Grapevine newsletters.

UNCLAIMED DISHES

The good news is that we have a lot of participation when it comes to potlucks, desserts, and other hospitality events. The bad news is, you're probably missing some of your dishes from these events!

We are amassing quite a collection of dishes in the kitchen that don't belong to MVPC. They are starting to take up room on the counter and get in our way when we prepare food. Please check to see if any of these items belong to you.

Anything that is not claimed by Feb. 1st will be donated to Goodwill or some other charity.

Thank you from the Hospitality Committee



ATTENTION GARDENERS

When you split your perennials this year, consider donating some of your favorites to MVPC. We hope to add new flowering plants and greenery to our yard, for beauty and to use in arrangements. Contact Sumiko Shinozaki, Madeline DeLia or Pat Papadopoulos if you have ideas or questions.



Knitting/Crochet Fellowship

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

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

**All Yarn and Thread Crafters welcome ... crochet or
knit, even quilting questions have been discussed
so come check it out!**



Women's Fellowship

The good fellowship, coffee, tasty refreshments,
and warm fireplace go along with the spiritual lift
on the 4th Saturday of the month. *Come and see!*

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

Birthdays & Anniversaries

January

1-Connie Shultz

Dave Wilson

3-Alberta Peters

4-Shirley Leamon

7-Beth Tacker

8-Loretta Vander Pol

10-David Lorente

13-Michelle Hanna

16-Bud Gilbert

16-Bob & Bev Helton

18-Pat Melton

19-Karin Brown

Arlene Andersen

22-Betty Anne Friedericks

Graham Kerr

23-Madison Yerigan

28-Elisa Gehringer

Janine Risenhoover

29- Molly Howard

30-Linda Ream

31-Sheila Daut

Kitty Willis

31-Martin & Tonnie Boer



Senior Shepherds

There will be no Senior Shepherds luncheon in
January. Join us February 21 for a delicious lunch
and program. Only \$5, as usual!

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

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.

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.

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!

MVPC Children, Youth, & Family ~ Jan. 2017

SPECIAL EVENTS IN JANUARY

Epiphany Party on Jan 4th from 5:30 to 6:30 pm at Family Night!

CYF Volunteer Lunch and Training on 1/22 from Noon to 2 pm.

MVPC Secret Valentines! Let Rebecca know if you would like to



participate in our annual Secret Valentines. Secret Valentines bring a small card/gift for an assigned MVPC kid on Sunday 1/29, 2/5, and 2/12 and then reveal themselves at the Secret Valentine Party on 2/12 at 9 am! It's a fun way to get to know the MVPC kids. Let Rebecca know if you are interested by 1/22.



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. We will be focusing on expressing faith through art January 8th to February 5th.

Sunday School during 10:30 am Worship

	<u>Seeds (Preschool)</u>	<u>Sprouts (K to 2nd)</u>	<u>Saplings (3rd to 5th & Youth)</u>
1/1	New Year's Hope	No Sunday School	No Sunday School
1/8	Jesus is Baptized	John the Baptist	Review
1/15	Martin Luther King Jr.	Calling Disciples	Martin Luther & Reformation
1/22	Jesus Calls Disciples	The Lord's Prayer	John Calvin
1/29	The Lord's Prayer	Sermon on the Mount	Styles of Worship

Seeds (Preschool) kids are being introduced to the Bible stories through play and crafts in the Nursery.

Sprouts (K to 2nd) kids are connecting the Bible stories together with special activities. Begin in Worship.

Saplings (3rd to 5th) kids are doing a 3 year rotation of Old Testament, New Testament, and Church History.

FAMILY NIGHT Wednesdays 5:30 to 6:30 pm

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! Dinner is potluck so please bring food to share. Epiphany Party on January 4th!

YOUTH GROUP 3rd Sundays Noon to 1:30 pm

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, fellowship, and a faith activity.

**"Like Us" on [facebook.com/MVPCChildrenYouthandFamilyMinistry](https://www.facebook.com/MVPCChildrenYouthandFamilyMinistry)
Questions? Email Rebecca@MountVernonPres.org or call 360.424.7675.**



Christmas Art Party



Family Night Christmas Party



Youth Group
Christmas Party

REGULARLY SCHEDULED EVENTS @ MVPC:

Centering Prayer: Tuesdays at 9:30 a.m. in the Pastor's Office

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

Youth Group: 3rd Sundays, noon-1:30 in the Great Room

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. *(No Luncheon in January)*

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.

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.

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!

