



# MOUNT VERNON PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

*Growing Followers Of Christ Since 1902*

## The Grapevine

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

Year 118, Issue 3  
March 2020

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Fasting is always about letting go of our favorite distractions and comforts SO THAT we can open up more space for **deeper prayer**, to hear God's voice. We turn towards what we are avoiding. We turn the TV off and feel the silence--so we might enter a truer listening silence within. Or we skip sweets or some meals, so we feel the hunger--and maybe a deeper hunger aching inside.

Silence and hunger are uncomfortable, but they can take us deeper into God.

Our Lenten series this year is "Fasting From Fear." Fear fills us up like TV and sweets. It's a bodily thing, fear. We all might have different fears. Or some might be more common. Our Wednesday Night Soup & Story series through the weeks of Lent will address some of the understandable fears keeping us from welcoming those "out there" (addiction, homelessness, violence). And some of the fears within our church, and even with parts of our very selves.

That's the fasting part: facing our fears. But what's more important is a shared **space for deepening prayer** as a church this Lent. As "welcome" is MVPC discerned charism/gift as a congregation, we are learning **The Welcoming Prayer** and going to practice it together this year (2020). We've purchased both simple photocopy versions and nicely printed versions of The Welcoming Prayer 40-Day Devotional.

Please grab the one you like in the lobby (suggested donations to Barbara in the office) and let's join together these six weeks before the Cross and Resurrection.

Liz Cooksey will teach us the heart of Welcoming Prayer through the Ash Wednesday service. Rebecca Holland will help us practice it together each following Wednesday as we enjoy soup together in Good Shepherd Hall. And there will be a Sunday morning Welcoming Prayer group Rebecca will lead as well. Join us.

It's easier to face our fears when we are together.

It's easier to pray when we pray together.

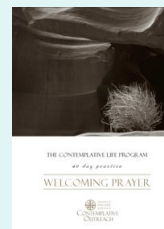
It's easier to say *Yes* to what God wants to bring us, and welcome what's next, when we are doing it together.



### Lenten Series—**FASTING FROM FEAR**

5:30-7:00 pm      Soup | Prayer | Personal Stories

- 2/26 **Ash Wednesday Service**
- 3/4 **Homelessness & Addiction**
- 3/11 **Community Violence**
- 3/18 **Race & Culture**
- 3/25 **Religious Differences**
- 4/1 **Accepting Our True Selves**





Through *One Great Hour of Sharing*, we become the household of God. We extend shelter to those who have no place to stay, offer compassion to those who have pain—be it physical, emotional or spiritual—and we set a feast, with God, for those who lack access to enough food to eat. God's household filled with love and everyone is welcome.

In Isaiah 58, God issues a call and a challenge—to love one another more deeply by sharing what we have with those in need. Together, we become the household of God where those seeking shelter, food and renewed hope are welcome.

There will be envelopes included in the Palm Sunday bulletin to receive this offering on April 5, 2020.

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## Spring Yard Work Parties

**\*\*Come for part or all of the time.\*\***

**March 14 ~ 9-noon** (weeding and pruning)

**March 28 ~ 10:30-noon** (haul pruning off, & weeding)

**April 4 ~ 9-noon** (spring planting & weeding)



If you are interested in working on the grounds on your own schedule please do! Dan Long is the Grounds Coordinator. If you're looking for suggestions or an area you are interested in, let him know. Talk with him after service or call the office for contact info or check in your directory.

## Online Giving Program

**NEW!**

For the past few months, we have been researching the possibility of providing online giving for those who would prefer this method of submitting their contributions, especially when out of town. We are pleased to announce that this opportunity has finally arrived and is now "live" on the Mount Vernon Presbyterian website. If you are interested, please visit the MVPC website at [www.mountvernonpres.org](http://www.mountvernonpres.org) and read all the information we have posted on the Online Giving page under the heading "About Us". If you have questions that the website has not answered, please feel free to ask Barbara Koozer in the office, Bruce Lavers or Leslie Braun.

## Membership Orientation

Whether you're a long time friend or a relative newcomer to MVPC, you are invited to attend the spring 2020 Membership Orientation Course. You'll have a chance to share your story, get to know people considering membership and gain insight into our answers to three fundamental questions for every organization:

"Who are we?" "What do we do?" "Why does it matter?"

The course will be led by Pastor Dan along with some of the other leaders of the church. There will be three sessions after church on **Sunday Feb. 23, Mar. 8 and Mar. 22**. The last will be a chance for you to interact with the Session (governing board) of MVPC. Please call the church office to express your interest.

If you're interested in exploring membership but the dates of the Orientation Course don't work for you, let the church office know and we'll look to host a group another time also.

### Elder Bio ~ Gail LaFleur

I am one of the imports from Trinity Presbyterian last year. I am widowed with 3 adult children and 5 grandchildren, and they all live in Skagit County. Lucky me! I enjoy arts of various sorts (drawing, music, writing, drama). I grew up in the Des Moines, Federal Way area, living on small farms. Started Sunday school in my teens, but never took it seriously. Dropped out of college to get married and basically just raised kids in Sedro-Woolley until my youngest was in school. I received the Lord into my life during this time and started attending Trinity and became an elder there. Went back to college at some point to pursue nursing, but my anxiety got the best of me so changed my major. I also drew away from the church and the Bible then because the translations I had contrasted with the beliefs I have about a loving God. I have come to realize that we must receive the gist of the Bible, not try to do it word for word, and that more modern translations are more accurate. I am so glad that we have a God who loves us and keeps His promises to us even when we are being disobedient. I am also glad that I have found a church home that I feel so much a part of, and love you all.



### MVPC Church Leadership 2019-2020



Elders		Class Year	Ministry Area	Deacons		Class Year
Patti	Allen	2020	Hospitality	Brian	Anderson	2020
Becky	Goodell	2020	Hospitality	Sarah	Catton	2020
Bob	Rauch	2020	Discipleship	Colleen	Higbee	2020
Bob	Higbee	2020	Ministry Support	Toni	Hulbert	2020
Lou	Cheney	2021	Worship	Danya	Wolf	2021
Chris	Hoke	2021	Discipleship	Ruth	Neal	2021
Bruce	Lavers	2021	Ministry Support	Connie	Bowser	2021
Anne	Long	2021	Membership/ Evangelism	Tracy	Hall	2021
MaryEllen	Byerly	2022	Capital Campaign Chair	Tom	Howard	2022
Bill	DeHon	2022	Mission	Sandi	Seabott	2022
Gail	LaFleur	2022	Worship	Sumiko	Shinozaki	2022

### Notes from February 11th Session meeting

- The Session meeting opened with prayer and Lectio Divina, praying with Scripture.
- The finance report shows a year to date difference through Jan 31, 2020 of \$13945.79.
- The Nominating committee reported meeting for the first time and will be meeting weekly until the task is complete.
- The Ministry Support committee will make a recommendation at the next meeting regarding the use of MVPC facilities by the Marshallese church.
- Passed motion to direct MVPC corporate officers to sign a quitclaim deed on behalf of MVPC for property in Alaska as requested by Ziegler Law Firm in letters dated 2014 and 2020.
- Accepted Jodie Kercheval's letter of resignation with much gratitude for her service.
- Moved to empower Pastor Dan and team to explore a shared youth ministry endeavor with the Episcopal and/or Methodist Church.
- Passed a motion setting cap at \$7500 for Attorney fees for the building contract negotiations without further Session Approval.

# March 2020 Children and Family Ministries

## Church Nursery

Sundays 9 am to Noon

Drop Off & Pick Up

Play - Story - Craft



## Godly Play

Begin in Worship

Kindergarten to 5th Grade

Story - Reflection - Prayer



3/1 - Jesus the Teacher\*

3/8 - Jesus the Healer

3/15 - Jesus the Prophet

3/22 - Jesus the Shepherd

3/29 - 5th Sunday Kids in Worship

*\*Kids return to worship for communion.*

## MVPC Family Small Group

The Family Small Group meets the 2nd and 4th Sunday of most months to enjoy dinner together followed by a family-friendly time of sharing and prayer.



New families are always welcome! Talk to Rebecca to find out the next Family Small Group location.

## Annual Picnic with the Lambs at Mr. Gary's Farm

We will have our annual picnic at Mr. Gary's Farm sometime in March when the baby lambs



are ready and the weather looks like it will be good. Please let Rebecca know if you would like to be a part of the email notification list. Everyone is welcome!

## Kids Camp Planning

We are making our summer Kids Camp (formerly VBS) more of a mission focus this year and would love help planning the fun after church on **Sunday, March 15th**. Please talk with Rebecca if you are interested or have ideas.

And sign up to volunteer from **9 am to Noon July 20- 24**. Thanks!



**Please talk with Rebecca if you or your family might be interested in participating in the all ages Mission Weekend at Tall Timber 5/22 - 5/25!**

Questions? Contact Rebecca Holland, Director of Children and Family Ministries.

# Youth & Family Ministries

## March 2020



### Seekers (MS) & Explorers (HS)

Youth Bible study classes  
Held during the worship service  
on the 2nd and 4th Sundays of the month.  
March 8 & 22.



### Youth Group!

(middle & high school students)

March 8 & 22,  
Noon—1:30

Friends and newcomers are always welcome!

### Register Now for Summer Camp at Tall Timber



**Jr. High Camp: July 19-24**

(entering grades 6-9)

**Sr High Camp: Aug 2-8**

(entering grades 9-12)

We fund raise as a group so that all can attend.  
Friends are welcome and encouraged to join our  
group and fundraise with us!

Contact Jodie or the church  
office for more information  
and a registration coupon code.



### Youth Movie Night!

Friday, March 27 6:30pm

in the

MVPC Great Room!

Back by popular demand! All youth are invited to come  
to movie night! Showing: "The Greatest Showman" at  
the home of the youth director.



### Mark Your Calendar!

### Youth Group Family Bowling Party!

#### Sunday, April 26 at Noon

Join us for a fun afternoon!

Please sign up on the clipboard in the office.



### Easter Candy Sales



Help support our youth going to camp!  
Pre-orders due by Sunday, March 22  
For April 5 delivery.

## March Birthdays & Anniversaries

2-Ruth Haines

Lucy Nash

5-Jim Byron

Don Schlumberger

Katie Weeks

6-Ben Cooksey

7-Ariel St. James

8-Barbara Hazelwood

Marjorie Riedel

9-Bruce Lavers

10-Margo Wortham

15-Brad Vardy

19-Kurt Swanson

20-Ken Ball

22-Ron & Rita Vander Stoep



25-Brian Anderson

Rob Hall

26-Dottie Thayer

27-Pete & Pat Papadopoulos

29-Wayne Yerigan

Joan Lavers

Are we missing your special date?

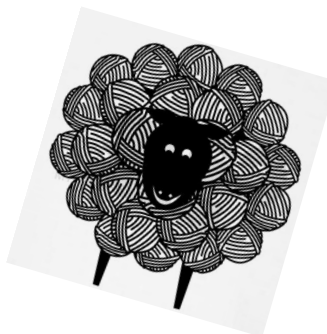
Please contact the church office at [mvpcc@mountvernonpres.org](mailto:mvpcc@mountvernonpres.org)  
or call or text 360-424-7675 so we can celebrate with you!

### MVPC Knitting/Crafts

Bring your craft project and enjoy fellowship with other MVPC knitters, crocheters, and more on the **2nd & 4th Tuesdays** of every month from noon to 1pm in the

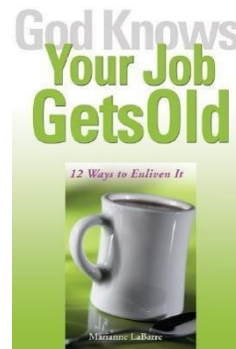
Great Room.

Questions? Talk with  
Patti Allen



There is a new book in the church library, one that has been put to the test by one of our small groups. Look for God Knows Your Job Gets Old by Marianne LaBarre on the "Small Group Studies" shelf.

This little volume really brought meaning to Tom and Molly's group but could do the same for an individual reading. Check it out!



**Men's Breakfast** next meets  
Saturday  
March 28th, 2020 for  
breakfast at 9:00 am in Good  
Shepherd Hall. Come  
experience fellowship and a  
great home-cooked breakfast.

### Women's Fellowship

The next meeting is Saturday  
March 28th at 9:00 am in the  
Fireside Room. Come  
fellowship with others.



## Mount Vernon Presbyterian Church

*Growing followers of Christ*

### *Our Vision Statement*

*E*ncounter The Hope

of the living God through Jesus Christ

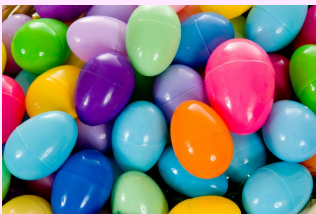
*E*ngage One Another

in authentic friendship

*E*mbbrace The World

with the heart and hands of Jesus

Easter is coming and we are collecting candy in the office to fill thousands of plastic Easter eggs! The Annual Neighborhood Easter Egg Hunt (which draws in hundreds of families from around Skagit Valley) will be on Saturday, April 11th from 10 am to Noon and is co-hosted by Trinity Lutheran Preschool and Church, First United Methodist Church, and US! Please talk with Rebecca Holland, Director of Children and Family ministries if you might be able and willing to volunteer that morning to hide eggs, guard eggs, or help with games and activities at the event. Please consider donating a bag or two of small, wrapped candy! Thank you!



Prayer

Would You like to join a prayer group?



PEOPLE OF PRAYER

We have many venues to present prayer requests.

- On Sunday, we have the Prayers of the People, during the service.
- Please feel free to write a prayer request on the Friendship Register form during worship. These requests are given to the deacons and Tuesday prayer gathering.
- Tuesday Intercessory Prayer Gathering - this takes place each Tuesday, at 10:30 in the library. Anyone who wishes to participate in group prayer is encouraged to come. It is a warm and caring experience, with huge rewards as we recognize all of the ways God has blessed us with answered prayer.
- Small Group Gatherings - sharing and praying together in our activities, requesting interaction with the rest of the church, as desired.

“Peace to you, and may we all become people of prayer”.

Nominations Time of Year

The Nominations Committee has begun the process of finding nominees for elder, deacon, and the endowment and nominating committees.

- We prayerfully examine our procedures for doing our best to find the people that God will call to serve our congregation.
  - We prayerfully examine ourselves to be able to hear god’s guidance for the search.
  - We prayerfully ask our church members to consider what his or her role might be in leadership.
- In this way we launch the—let us call it sacred—search for leadership.

In the weeks ahead, Nominating Committee members will visit all the activity groups within our church—gatherings where dedicated, involved folks and identify others with skills, talents, faithfulness, leadership, or other gifts of the Spirit. They will be encouraged to submit those names to the Nominating Committee member who is visiting their group. Besides suggestions from groups, we are all invited to suggest nominations. Individuals suggestions can be given to a Nominating Committee member or through the church office.

It is so basic to our Presbyterian form of governing that we choose our leadership from among us. Careful preparation and informed decisions are essential for a good result. The Nominating Committee wants everyone considering the call to leadership to believe that, while we do the asking, God does the calling. We hold up to God the people chosen by the congregation, then pray for discernment for each named person. We hear God’s answer in our consensus.

We provide a nominee with clear definitions of the positions he or she is considering being called to. We are willing to spend time in prayer with them and for them for discernment.

Your Nominating Committee is Chris Hoke, MaryEllen Byerly, Gary Jones, Brad Clure, Sarah Catton, and Lou Cheney.

Thank you to:

- Bob & Glenda Mitchell, Laurel & Paul Coalwell, David Lorente, Bev Helton, Ward Ernst, Tammy & Craig Riggs and Barb & John Hazelwood for helping feed our Family Promise folks in February. You all are so wonderful giving time, talents and joy to others.
- Barbara and Howard Koozer for all their work keeping the bell choir going.
- Bob Higbee and the building task force for hours of contract negotiations.
- Family Promise hosts, meal providers and movement teams.
- Jodie for all her work with the youth the last couple of years
- Glorify! For leading us in worship every week



## REGULARLY SCHEDULED EVENTS @ MVPC:

<b>Centering Prayer:</b>	Tuesdays at 9:30 a.m. in Pastor Dan's office
<b>Intercessory Prayer Group:</b>	Tuesdays at 10:30 a.m. in the Library
<b>Small Groups:</b>	Call the church to get connected to a small group!
<b>Friendship House:</b>	First Thursday and second Tuesday @ Friendship House
<b>Family Small Group:</b>	2nd & 4th Sundays at 5 pm. Please RSVP to find out location.
<b>Youth Group:</b>	2nd & 4th Sundays, Noon—1:30
<b>Chancel Choir:</b>	Wednesdays from 6:15 to 7:30 pm
<b>Bell Choir practice:</b>	Mondays, 7:00-8:00 p.m.
<b>Tea @ 2:</b>	Last Thurs at 2 p.m. in Fireside Room (March through Sept)
<b>Women's Fellowship:</b>	Fourth Saturday of the month at 9:00 a.m.
<b>Men's Breakfast:</b>	Fourth Saturday of the month at 9:00 a.m.
<b>Deacons Meeting:</b>	1st Tuesday at 6:30 p.m.
<b>Personnel Committee:</b>	3rd Tuesday at 4:15 p.m.
<b>Session Meeting:</b>	3rd Tuesday at 5:30 p.m.
<b>Worship Team Meeting:</b>	1st Wednesday at 2:30 p.m.
<b>Finance Committee:</b>	2nd Tuesday at 5 p.m. in library
<b>Mission Team Meeting:</b>	4th Sunday (Stay tuned for meeting time)
<b>Children &amp; Family Team:</b>	3rd week of Oct, Jan, April & July

## THE SUNDAY SCHEDULE AT MVPC

### 9:00 CHRISTIAN EDUCATION HOUR

#### The Bible Class

An in-depth exploration of the Bible through discussion-based study for adults in the Conference Room.

### 10:30 WORSHIP AND SUNDAY SCHOOL

**GODLY PLAY** (K through 5th) Begin in Worship and will be returned to parents at 11:45

**SEEKERS & EXPLORERS** Youth (MS & HS) Begin in Worship; dismissed on 2nd & 4th Sundays to classes.

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

**Noon - 1:30 YOUTH GROUP** 2nd & 4th Sundays in the Great Room for Fun, Faith and Fellowship.

**\*Nursery Care Available 9 am to Noon.**

