



Vashon Presbyterian Church

News and Concerns

December 2024

Sermons and service 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.



Key December Dates

- 7 WinterFest Parade, concluding at VPC with the tree lighting 5:00 -7:00
- 10 Session meeting and dinner, Barb Huff's home 5:30 PM
- 17 Deacon luncheon at Ross-Westons' Noon
- 20 Book Club meeting at Spanglers' 6:00
- 22 Christmas Pageant during Worship
Congregational Meeting following Worship
- 24 Christmas Eve Service 4:00
- 25 Merry Christmas! (No church service)
- 26 Theology Pub 5:00 Camp Colvos

Ring Out, Wild Bells (An Excerpt) by Alfred, Lord Tennyson

Ring out, wild bells, to the wild sky,
The flying cloud, the frosty light:
The year is dying in the night;
Ring out, wild bells, and let him die.

Ring out the grief that saps the mind
For those that here we see no more;
Ring out the feud of rich and poor,
Ring in redress to all mankind.

Ring out the want, the care, the sin,
The faithless coldness of the times;
Ring out, ring out my mournful rhymes
But ring the fuller minstrel in.

Ring out false pride in place and blood,
The civic slander and the spite;
Ring in the love of truth and right,
Ring in the common love of good.

Ring out old shapes of foul disease;
Ring out the narrowing lust of gold;
Ring out the thousand wars of old,
Ring in the thousand years of peace.

Ring in the valiant man and free,
The larger heart, the kindlier hand;
Ring out the darkness of the land,
Ring in the Christ that is to be.

A Message from Pastor Leigh



According to the Merriam Webster Dictionary, to wait is to “to stay in place in expectation of.”

Advent is the season of intentional waiting. It is the invitation to stay in place and expect.

When Thanksgiving comes as late as it has this year and the reality that Christmas is just a few weeks away, it's easy to feel the panic. What all do I need to do? What does my family expect?

What commitments have I made? How much decorating, cooking, planning is expected of me?

These are the questions that are all too easy to fall prey to during this season but to think only of Christmas is to miss Advent. And to miss Advent is to miss the importance of waiting. It is to miss the importance of staying in place in expectation. It is to miss the deep need to prepare our hearts.

We light candles and use the words, hope, peace, joy and love but I often wonder, do we really expect them? In a world that feels so fractured and polarized, where family gatherings can simply be magnifying glasses for the broken places in our lives, do you and I stay in place expecting these things? Do you expect hope to come over your and change your life? What about peace? And joy? What about genuinely pure love?

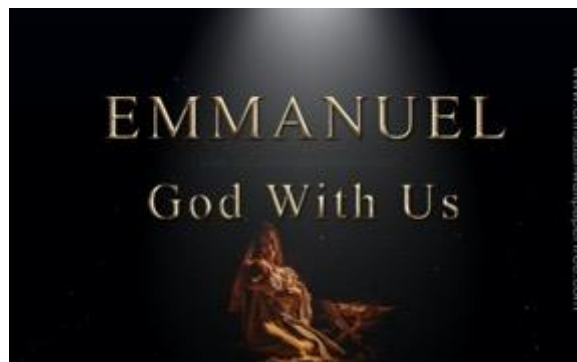
I wonder if Advent isn't a call to resistance. I wonder if it isn't a call to resist the temptation to get pulled into the chaos, to the busy nature of the season to the pressure to do it all right.

Perhaps the art of Advent waiting is to resist all those things and defiantly stay in place genuinely expecting hope and peace and joy and love. Perhaps the art of Advent waiting is so counter cultural that it has the power to transform our lives and prepare our hearts to receive the love of God in the most vulnerable way possible, that of a human infant, totally dependent on human nurturing.

I wonder if we might encourage one another this year to stay in place and simply expect that God does indeed keep God's promises and that you and I are about to witness a miracle! I pray we stand firm together, staying in place and waiting. Emmanuel is coming!

Grace, Peace, and Advent blessings!

Leigh



Clerk's Corner

Minutes of the monthly Session meetings are available upon request. Highlights from November's meeting that are not described elsewhere in this newsletter include:

- Background checks for church officers and employees need to be updated and printed copies kept on the premises.
- We will hold a congregational meeting to elect Session and Deacon members and approve the terms of call for Pastor Leigh on December 22 following Worship service.
- The Annual meeting of the church will be held on January 26, 2025.
- The Annual 2025 budget was approved.
- The next meeting of the Session will be December 10, 2024, for a meal at Barb Huff's home.
- Our next Session Meeting will be January 14, 2025, at VPC.

Claudia Ross-Weston, Clerk of Session

Worship and Advent

Schedule for the Holidays

First Sunday of Advent – Worship Service 10:00 AM December 1

Second Sunday of Advent – Worship Service 10:00 AM December 8

Third Sunday of Advent - Worship Service 10:00 AM December 15

Fourth Sunday of Advent – Worship Service and Christmas Pageant 10:00 AM December 22

Christmas Eve – Candlelight Service 4:00 PM December 24

Christmas Day – No Service December 25

We will celebrate Communion every Sunday during Advent. Please join us and bring friends and family to share the expectation and wonder that is Advent.





This year's Annual Meeting of the Congregation will take place on January 26!

We will combine this year's meeting with Worship and with a retreat and will meet off site. We're working with Camp Burton to firm up the details but here's what you need to know:

You won't want to miss it!

You don't need to dress up! In fact, jeans and tennis shoes will be way better!

We WILL eat fun food (details coming)!

It WILL still be hybrid, meaning Zoom will be in place because hybrid is hybrid!

There WILL be a slide show so send your pictures to Leigh at her email:

pastorleigh@comcast.net

There WILL be fun games!

There WILL be meaningful conversation!

No one is ever too old to go to camp so circle the date and look for details to come in early January!



Faith Exploration

We have concluded our group discussions of The Fourth Quarter of Your Life. This book generated a lot of interest (over 25 books were distributed) and class participants gave much thought to their “fourth quarter” as evidenced by our lively discussions. It was obvious that there are many different uses of this book. While one of its greatest uses is to get people started thinking about their remaining years, the book is a great reference in finding our way through this part of life with more reflections and planning. Thank you, Elizabeth Loveness for leading us through this experience.

Faith Exploration for Advent

Join us on Monday nights at 7 pm on Zoom during Advent while we look at the four themes of the season: Hope, Peace, Joy and Love!

Each week we will look at both an Old Testament reading and a New Testament reading designed to create conversation about that week’s theme. We’ll also delve in a little creative writing designed to help us think about the art of Advent waiting.

This will be a Zoom only gathering hosted by Pastor Leigh. We will be respectful of time and keep the study to one hour. Join us!



Upcoming

In early January, we will have shorter, one-off discussions, with standalone texts or topics. I’m looking for suggestions: a video, an especially inspiring essay, a book you'd like people to know about, a question you'd like to discuss. If you have a topic you'd like to talk about for just one evening, please let me know.

In the latter part of January and February, Nancy Tucker will guide us through our text, Pray Like a Gourmet. This is a non-traditional, but totally fun approach to exploring our faith outside our comfort zones. We’ll have books available in mid-January.

Lindsay Hofman, Faith Exploration Elder

Community Service

Areas of Responsibility

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

December 1 is Food Bank Sunday. There is always a need for staples such as spaghetti and other pastas, canned tuna, peanut butter, broth and personal hygiene items such as toothbrushes and toothpaste. Please also consider items such as condiments, baking staples, boxed potatoes, cooking oil, cranberry and pumpkin sauce and "meals in a can" such as beef stew. The Food Bank also provides pet food. For donations of bulk pet food, volunteers from VIPP will break down and repackage for individual distribution. You can bring items to the Sunday service, take them directly to the Food Bank or deliver them to the VPC office and we will follow up.

Copies of the 2024 Presbyterian Giving Catalog are available in the east room, and online at <https://presbyteriangifts.pcusa.org>. If you are thinking of an unusual Christmas gift for that special friend or relative, this is your opportunity. Donate an animal, fishing supplies, water purification system, refugee food basket etc. to be sent where our parent denomination has identified a need. Those who make gifts can request either e-cards or hard copy certificates to send to the person being gifted.

Our Christmas Eve offering will be donated to a Presbyterian Church in North Carolina to help with their flood relief efforts. Black Mountain Presbyterian Church has established a special fund to assist flood victims from Hurricane Helene. Black Mountain has about 600 members and has been actively providing relief services not only to its members but to the greater community. It is in the Swannanoa Valley, which experienced widespread flooding. We are pleased to be able to provide such meaningful help to our sister church.

In the coming months we will be assembling two committees to review candidates for our two scholarships: the Heindsmann scholarship for those at least two years out of high school, and the scholarship for a Vashon High School senior. If you would like to be a reviewer, contact me at rwspangg@gmail.com.

WinterFest

Vashon's annual WinterFest parade and celebration is coming to town on Saturday, December 7. The parade starts at 5:00 pm at the Chamber of Commerce and concludes at 5:30 pm in front of our church for the tree lighting with Santa. There will be plenty of festivities and opportunities to visit local shops and sample seasonal goodies.

We'll be handing out hot cocoa and cider along with Christmas goodies (cookies, gingerbread, brownies, etc.) on the lawn and need some elves to help with baking, setup, and staffing the serving table. We'll begin setting up at 4:30 and will complete cleaning up by 7:30. We're looking for volunteers to help with one 90-minute shift – 4:30 – 6:00 or 6:00 – 7:30. A signup sheet is at the church--please consider how you can help support this fun-filled Christmas community event!

Note: The parade route will be closed from 4:30 –7:30, but a portion of the VPC parking lot will be reserved for VPC volunteers.

There will be no first Friday activities on December 6, but we hope to help ring in 2024 with a fire and s'mores on January 3.

Bob Spangler, Community Service Elder

Building and Grounds

From the VPC Planning Committee

- The area near the organ that was recessed and was a potential hazard has been elevated to be level with the rest of the carpeted floor. It has been covered with luxury vinyl planks.
- The trees along the parking lot have been trimmed and the light bulbs in the outdoor lights have been replaced so the area should be well lit during our dark evenings this winter.
- We are reviewing the replacement of the locking system used at the church and hope to replace what we currently have with a keyless locking system. We will be consulting a commercial lock specialist for satisfactory safety conditions.
- We are still looking for a lockable cabinet for our sound amplifier. This has proved to be a challenge.
- The front door badly needs refinishing. Trace Hyde is seeking a bid from a contractor to refinish and stain the door.
- Our conventional dishwasher in the kitchen will be replaced soon. Nancy Tucker has researched the best home dishwashers and made a recommendation to the Committee.

Diana Lilje, Planning Committee Chair

Deacon's Message

In this season of thanksgiving and gratitude, I want to express my appreciation for the opportunity to be a member of the Deacons and support our church community. My term has come to an end, I will be leaving the Deacons in good hands. Brownie Carver will be your new moderator, so please reach out to her when you have a request or need the church's support. As VPC's care team, the Deacons are the conduit for help and support when it is needed.

At times it may be difficult to ask for help but remember we want to be there in times of need. In a loving community we thrive when we help each other. So, if you need a ride, groceries, a meal, last-minute emergency funds or a note sent, don't hesitate to ask. We want to take care of each other and believe me, you have taken care of me when I was in difficult circumstances in the past.

Just know that I truly appreciate being a part of this loving, faithful and blessed community. Thank you for the privilege of serving you and being your partner as we celebrate and care for one another.

Claudia Ross-Weston, Deacon Moderator

Hospitality

WinterFest: Saturday, December 7, 5:00 – 7:00 PM

During the Vashon WinterFest, we'll set up a serving tent on the front lawn. From there we'll offer hot cider and cocoa along with Christmas cookies and other holiday treats. If you have some capacity to help, we need a few people to serve in 45-minute shifts, starting at 4:30.

We also need people to donate apple cider and to bake cookies/Christmas treats. Please drop off your goodies at the church by 4:00 on Saturday the 7th.

Regardless of whether you can supply treats or dispense hot drinks, please come and bring friends and family. We'd love to see you!

Highlights from Harvest Dinner, November 16

Almost 65 people attended this popular annual event, a gratitude-themed elaborate potluck dinner featuring a freshly grilled turkey as the headliner. The Social Hall was beautifully decorated, and the fare was outstanding. Thanks to everyone who helped set up, decorate, provide food, and clean up.

The entertainment was fun and light-hearted. Laretta Hyde wrote, produced, and directed a mini-play: a new take on Noah's journey as he traversed the treacherous Drake Passage enroute to Antarctica to collect a pair of penguins. The cast: Laretta Hyde (narrator), Trace Hyde (Noah), Sue Weston (Mrs. Noah), Al and Claudia Ross-Weston (Noah's kids), and Ben Tucker (Poet).

The evening was filled with great food and drink, laughter, and friendship. If you missed it, please join us next year!

Nancy Tucker, Hospitality Elder



VPC Book Club

The VPC Book Club will meet on December 20 at 6:00 PM at the home of Bob and Carol Spangler, 17304 137th Avenue SW. In addition to our traditional potluck dinner, we will have our annual book exchange. If you would like to participate, bring a dish for the potluck and a wrapped book. We will gather on December 20, at 6 pm.

The book title and author will be introduced in the December 4 issue of our e-News. Stay tuned for details.

Al and Claudia Ross-Weston

December Birthdays



Join us in wishing a happy December birthday to:

- 3 Susan Commeree
- 6 Nancy Johnson
- 25 Leslie Hauck
- 31 Bob Spangler

Church Leadership

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|-------------------------|---|
| Pastor | Leigh Weber |
| Clerk of Session | Claudia Ross-Weston |
| Session Members | Lindsay Hofman, Barb Huff, Al Ross-Weston, Bob Spangler, Nancy Tucker |
| Deacons | Claudia Ross-Weston (Moderator), Brownie Carver, Chris Coldeen |

Calendar

December 2024

- 1 Sunday Advent Worship Service 10:00 AM Communion
- 2 Advent Faith Exploration 7:00 PM Zoom
- 6 Game Night 7:00 PM Zoom
- 7 Vashon WinterFest Parade 4:30 – 7:30, tree lighting 5:30 at VPC
- 8 Sunday Advent Worship Service 10:00 AM Communion
- 9 Advent Faith Exploration 7:00 PM Zoom
- 10 Session Meeting and Christmas Dinner 5:30 PM Home of Barb Huff
- 13 VPC Book Club 6:00 PM Potluck dinner
- 14 Second Saturday Work Party 10:00 – Noon VPC
- 15 Sunday Advent Worship Service 10:00 AM Communion
- 16 Advent Faith Exploration 7:00 PM Zoom
- 17 Deacon Luncheon (current and new members), Noon Al and Claudia Ross-Weston's home
- 20 Game Night 7:00 Zoom
- 22 Sunday Advent Worship Service 10:00 AM Communion
Christmas Pageant during Worship Service
Congregational Meeting Immediately Following Worship
- 23 Advent Faith Exploration 7:00 PM Zoom
- 24 Christmas Eve Service 4:00 PM
- 26 Theology Pub 5:00 Camp Colvos
- 29 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
inExploration.

Ongoing Activities

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|------------------------|---|
| Tuesdays | Sporty's In-Person Coffee Hour 9:00 AM Text Study Noon |
| Wednesdays | Body Prayer 8:30 AM |
| First Thursdays | Mental Health Advocates 7:00 PM |
| Fridays | Anything Goes (Grief Group) 11:00 AM (Call Leigh for details) Game Night 7:00 PM |