

The Methodist Greeter

February 2021



United Methodist Church
Open Hearts. Open Minds. Open Doors

Our mission is to develop and strengthen disciples of Jesus Christ, building a community that transforms the world."

Pastor's Corner

Pastor Terry B. Hall

BIBLE READINGS FOR THE MONTH

February 7

Mark 1:29-39;

I Corinthians 9:16-23

February 14

Mark 9:2-9

February 17

Ash Wednesday

Matthew 11:28-30

February 21

Matthew 8:1-4,16-17

February 28

Matthew 8: 5-13



Are we there yet?

Is it safe to come out yet? Are the angry mobs gone? If so, where do you suppose they are now? Have they just gone home, conscientiously stored their weapons in gun safes and returned to their day jobs as they anxiously listen for the next "ally-ally-in-come-free" whistle calling them to sedition? Are there adults around, and if so, do they seem to be in charge? I've heard rumors of patience, respect, truth being sighted and heard in unexpected places. Are we ready to agree that opinions, no matter how often or loudly they are repeated, are different from facts and truth-telling is supposed to the expectation, not a coincidence or accident.

The answers, as of the moment in which this is being written, have not yet been revealed. How do we go from being so unconcerned about our neighbors, co-workers, friends and even family that properly wearing a mask and maintaining a safe distance from others while in public is refused on the grounds that it violates one's freedom, to becoming a community where caring about and for one another are woven into the fabric of all we do? What we know is that it won't come from legislation or law enforcement, as Jesus tried repeatedly to reveal to the Pharisees. We just simply can't be 'made' to change our attitudes or behaviors, and short-term systems of reward and punishment deliver very short-term results, at best. But – and this is a big but – that is not to suggest our situation is hopeless.

To borrow an expression from our new President, 'here's the thing, folks:' we are the ones we are waiting for. Like neighbors forming a bucket brigade when a fire breaks out in the community, it is up to us to carry God's loving Light to those who see, feel and understand only darkness, knowing that sometimes we're among the ones thirsting for that Light and trusting it will come to us in turn. And like it or not, sometimes this means standing up and stepping into conversations we find uncomfortable, even taking public action to speak out for those who dare not draw attention to themselves. It is messy and generally uncomfortable when we are following Jesus well, as he warns potential disciples of every generation. When our church involvement becomes a way to connect with potential sponsors, clients or unquestioning supporters we can be sure we have wandered off from The Way!

One of the ironic challenges we face in this time of information overflow is that we can really only truly get to know a relatively small group of people at a time in the ways

(continued on next page)

(Pastor's Corner Continued)

that make real friendship possible. Even when we had full use of our building, we were challenged to get to know more than a dozen or so people at a deeper level, and now we have spent nearly a year in relative seclusion. Many of us who never wanted to use our phones, tablets or computers to connect with others via programs like Zoom, still worked through the trial-and-error process, usually with help from someone who was a few steps ahead of us. We've tried to ensure that we were keeping in touch with everyone, using the best available means for each person. Now that we are seeing the first rays of hope this could be the year we gain enough control over COVID-19 to eventually, cautiously, get together physically again, we'd like to offer some ways to get even better acquainted as we find ourselves in the next version of local communities, nation and world. Look for additional information in another article.

Pastor Terry

Ash Wednesday and Lent

Ash Wednesday falls on Feb. 17th this year, opening the season of Lent. We have typically had a short service that included the traditional marking with ashes. I'm not sure at this point exactly what we will be able to do, but there will be a service of some sort to mark that day of transition, and it will be based on Marcia McFee's new series, "**Holy Vessels: a Lenten Season of Recovery,**" which we will follow for during the 7 weeks leading to and including Easter.

FINANCIAL REPORT December 2020

	Income	Expense
Regular Account	\$37,901.17	\$28,338.01
Special Account	\$ 5,844.00	\$ 4,712.92
Memorials	\$ 225.00	\$ -0-

We have paid all of our bills and apportionments to date.

We thank you all so much for your continued support of the ministries of the church. Giving Statements for 2020 were mailed out recently. If you gave money to the church in 2020 and did not receive one or have questions regarding your statement, please contact Lori in the church office, 360-424-3628 or lori@mvfumc.org.

From the Finance Committee

The Finance Team would like to say a huge "Thank You!" to Harlan Mayer for all of his work getting the church finances set up on QuickBooks. We were able to do our first payroll for 2021 using the program and everything went well. Having the finances on QuickBooks will save the Treasurer time keeping track of our regular, special and memorial accounts and running reports for staff and ministry teams.

A reminder that even though the building is closed there are several ways that you can continue to support the work of our church... you can mail in a check for your regular offering or any special offering (just note on the Memo line where you want your money to go), you can go on our website and click on our "Give Online" button and you will be taken to a secure giving site hosted by Vanco, or you can set up to have a check from your bank sent to the church on a regular basis. We once again wish to thank you all for your support of the work of our church. Your Finance Team: Beth Repplier, Doreen Nystrom, Janice Lisherness, Harlan Mayer, Pastor Terry, Mary Downing & Lori Flores

Trustees Update for February Newsletter

Trustees have been busy. It takes all of them to keep our church building and grounds safe even when we are not using it.

So many things just like at home we did not count on happening – some little surprises? Bob Hallberg got his magic wand out with the help of leak finders and pipe repairers and got our water leak fixed. The broken pipe was down 3 feet in the ground. You should have seen Lori's face when she opened the PUD bill. During those repairs we found a broken hydrant outside Sprague Hall and it was repaired.

Bob and Doug Rindal installed two solar motion lights on the north side and west side of the new pole building under the camera lights. Now all four sides have motion lights. We pray that will help keep the not so good artists from practicing their art on the building walls.

Doug met with the state insurance inspector for the furnace boiler and hot water tanks on January 19th. Howard Anderson repaired a couple breakers in the fuse box. Pending weather, Doug also has some roofers coming in February to repair the plastic membrane on our flat roof over the classrooms and restrooms.

Jess del Bosque has the patience of Job working with the Health Department inspector on the kitchen sinks. The requirement is to install a three-section sink for hand-washing dishes next to the dishwasher as a backup if the dishwasher breaks down.

With Lori's help with online applications, Chuck Cass is working on a City permit to replace two sets of exterior doors in Sprague Hall.

And if that is not enough, Doug and Bob will be supervising the removal of three dead trees on March 25.

Please take the time to Thank the Trustee Team members for keeping our church safe for us that we may return soon.

Your Trustees Team: Pastor Terry Hall, Doug Rindal, Bob Hallberg, Carol Turnbull, Chuck Cass, Phil Smoots, and Randy Rabenstein.

Family Promise, COVID 19, and MVFUMC – hope and persistence amid a pandemic!

In February of 2020 we hosted 4 homeless families for a week as we have done 4 times a year for 5 years. Then COVID 19 struck and the rotation from church to church was suspended. The children and their parents took shelter at Bethlehem Lutheran Church in Sedro-Woolley. The staff cared for them, depending on gifts for their housing and food expenses.

In August our congregation began providing Saturday night dinner for the families and we continued that service for 19 weeks. During that time a grant enabled Family Promise to expand its capacity to serve up to 11 families at a time. For 2 months they were housed in a hotel. Our responsibility grew to providing an entrée for 25 people each Saturday.

With the start of 2021 the FP staff has returned to assigning each church four weeks of responsibility for the guests. Everyone will remain in Sedro-Woolley until it is safe for them to visit our building again. We still are asked to cook and deliver dinner, however. Our first assigned week is February 21-28.

Before this newsletter could be released we had volunteers to cover the 3 dinners we needed! (That week Central United Methodist's "Community Kitchen" is operating for 4 nights and will include the families.) I am thankful for everyone's enthusiastic response!

Don't worry! Your chance to help will come! May 9-16 is our next turn to provide dinner for the 8 families now sheltering at Bethlehem Lutheran and Central United Methodist churches.

Despite the pandemic, the Family Promise staff has continued to place families into stable housing. Meanwhile they are safe, warm and healthy. No guest has had COVID 19 and only one staff member tested positive months ago and was isolated until she had 2 negative tests. Gratefully! Carolyn Gregg

Faith in Action Page



With the new year we're shaking it up a bit for our plans to celebrate our church family members turning 90 and above. The drive-by parades were absolutely awesome, we lucked out with the weather all the way through, and we appreciate everyone who was able to join in the festivities.

Beginning this month, we'll be starting up a Birthday Team to deliver treats and best wishes for these extra special birthday folks from our church family. Just like the parades, these celebrations will be "no-contact" COVID-19 safe events.

For each birthday visit, team members will be required to complete the health-screening questionnaire, wear a mask, and physically-distance themselves at all times. If you're interested in joining this team, please contact Debbie at debbie@mvfumc.org or 360/424-3628.



We are preparing Valentine packages for approximately 20 of our church family members either living in care communities or isolated at home. We have asked our Sunday school kids and youth to help decorate Valentine cards and would appreciate help from the bakers out there to provide baked treats to be included with the packages. If you're willing to bake some Valentine treats and/or would like to help deliver the packages, please contact Debbie at debbie@mvfumc.org by Friday, 2/5, if possible.

kindness...

is a reflection of what
lives in our heart.
-RAKtivist



RANDOM ACTS OF KINDNESS

Consider different ways to share God's love on Valentine's Day. Here are a couple of ideas—but let your creative juices flow! Pay for someone's meal or coffee in the car behind you at a drive-thru. Compliment a student or teacher for hanging in there during this stressful time of learning. Leave an encouraging note for the letter carrier, UPS, or FedEx delivery person. Leave flowers on a neighbor's porch. Add a gift card to your grocery order and then hand it to the checker with a thank you when you leave. Kindness is contagious—put it out there and watch it grow!

News From the Church Council

Your Church Council met Saturday, January 16, 2021 on Zoom. We prayed, We met, We planned, We thank you for your support and prayers.

Reports:

- Lori Flores, Treasurer shared 2020 in the black information and the proposed budget for 2021, The new computer program, Quick Books has been installed and working well.
- Dennis Jones supplied the year ending report for our Endowment Fund.
- Deb Grant, Faith in Action submitted a written report of all the wonderful out reaching our congregation was doing. Pastor Terry shared that Deb was working with the Health Department to keep the staff and parishioners safe.
- Bob Hallberg presented the Trustees Report
- Carolyn Gregg, Hispanic Ministry and Family Promise lead presented updates, suggestions and requests and received council support.
- Lynnette Gerhard, SPRT Chair reported on staffing.

Chris Satterlund led us into Looking up – orientation and commitment to our mission and vision of the congregation.

Pastor Terry Hall continue with our Mission and Vision with Now What?

Our mission is to develop and strengthen disciples of Jesus Christ, building a community that transforms the world.

Our Vision for 2021

Focusing on Spiritual Growth and caring for one another – both our own congregation and the greater community. This likely will include developing small groups using the Wesleyan Class Meetings as a model.

Care of Staff (staff development) including training, defining roles, supporting an increasing sense of community among staff.

Continuing to develop our online presence.

It was proposed and approved that we commit to continuing our community building skills available to our church leaders and develop our small Faith Groups. The planning meeting was held. Information will be shared by announcements, e-mails, phone calls with the congregation.

Next council meeting – Simple Governance – Looking Back, Saturday, 4/17/21.

Blessings,

Your Church Council: Pastor Terry Hall, Lynnette Gerhard, Scott Thomas, Chris Satterlund, Carolyn Gregg, Shauna Flores, Kent Turner, Mary Downing

Let's draw closer together (safely)

Our church governing board has chosen **building community** as a goal for 2021. You are invited to a group session on the subject via ZOOM on Saturday, February 27 at 10:00 AM. Karen Gimnig will lead us toward building a closer congregation. You will meet and hear Karen in worship this month. The gathering is open to everyone! If ZOOM is new to you, help is available with a call to the church office. Let's prepare to be a closer, happier group when we can eventually come together physically again in our building.

Farewell to Lori Flores

You may have heard rumors that Lori is retiring, and the rumors are true. Her last day in the office is February 28. She and Chris are moving to Arizona this Spring. They are building a log house on property near the small town of Young, Arizona, which is located about a 3 hour drive northeast of Phoenix. Although Lori is retiring the end of this month, she will be here in Skagit Valley until some time in April. We will definitely have a sendoff celebration for the Flores family before they leave. But we are holding off on definitive plans until closer to April in hopes that COVID restrictions will allow more freedom in getting together. Stay tuned for more information.



February 2 Janet Boston
Kathy Lawliss
Joyce Sward
Kevin Turnbull

February 9 Jeff & Roxy Romanelli

February 12 Wylie & Kerry Keeler

February 3 Mitchell Grant
Sue Kelder
Zulma Tifre

February 14 Al & Joyce Sward

February 5 Edith Diver
Seoyoung Han
Leila Wright



Contribute to MVFUMC by Shopping on Amazon

February 6 Clay Cook
Sarah Jang
Lynn Rabenstein

Mount Vernon First United Methodist Church is now a registered charity on the Amazon Smile program. Here is a link to get you registered <https://smile.amazon.com/ch/91-6049039>. Once you choose our church as one of the charities you want to donate to, you enter Amazon through the Smile portal. On the front page of the church website there is a link to the portal. It is on the bottom left corner under 'affiliates'. You can also save and use the link above in the article or use the URL smile.Amazon.com. 0.5% of the price of eligible smile.amazon.com purchases will be donated to selected charities by Amazon. If you need help getting set-up or have questions, please contact the church office. This is a great way to help the church while shopping!

February 8 Marti Wall

February 11 Suzanne Eiceman

February 14 Bettyjean Seabury

February 15 Carol Bratz

February 20 Raymond Slater

February 21 Lois Haley

February 23 Doreen Nystrom

February 25 Nick Neidzwski

February 27 Gale O'Neil

Let's Be Friends



Don't forget to "friend" us on Facebook! Visit our page at Mount Vernon First United Methodist Church and find out what's happening in our church and in our community. We're also using Facebook to introduce our church to our greater community via events, photos, news articles, and advertising. Invite your friends—pass the word!



Subscribe to Our YouTube Channel

Why? Because if you click the subscribe button on our YouTube channel, you will receive notification whenever a new video is uploaded. This is the easiest way to know that the worship video is ready to watch. Type MVFUMC WA into the YouTube search box.

FEBRUARY 2021

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
	01	02	03	04	05	06
	7pm White Fragility Book Study on Zoom	10 am Zoom Sisters of the Heart 1pm Staff Meeting	3 pm White Fragility Book Study on Zoom 7pm Zoom Choir	8:30 am Zoom Men's Morning Ministry 1:30pm Zoom Coffee Hour		
07	08	09	10	11	12	13
On-line Worship with Communion 11:15 Zoom Coffee Hour	7pm White Fragility Book Study on Zoom	10 am Zoom Sisters of the Heart 1pm Staff Meeting	3 pm White Fragility Book Study on Zoom 7pm Zoom Choir	8:30 am Zoom Men's Morning Ministry 1:00 pm Zoom Worship Planning 1:30pm Zoom Coffee Hour		
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
♥ Happy Valentines Day ♥ On-Line Worship 11:15 Zoom Coffee Hour	President's Day Office Closed 10 am SPRC meeting on Zoom 7pm White Fragility Book Study on Zoom	10 am Zoom Sisters of the Heart 1pm Staff Meeting	 ASH WEDNESDAY 3 pm White Fragility Book Study on Zoom 7pm Zoom Choir	8:30 am Zoom Men's Morning Ministry 1:30pm Zoom Coffee Hour		
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
On-Line Worship 11:15 Zoom Coffee Hour	7 pm Zoom Finance Team Meeting	10 am Zoom Sisters of the Heart 1pm Staff Meeting	7pm Zoom Choir	8:30 am Zoom Men's Morning Ministry 1:30pm Zoom Coffee Hour		10:00 am Building Community Group Session on Zoom
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On-Line Worship 11:15 Zoom Coffee Hour 12:30 pm Zoom Youth Group						