

Mount Vernon First
United Methodist Church

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The Methodist Greeter

JULY 2018

"Our mission as a congregation is to strengthen our personal and group relationship with Christ and to reach out to all people through faith in action."

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Pastor's Corner

Pastor Terry Hall

BIBLE READINGS FOR THE MONTH

July 1

Matthew 25:14-1
Matthew 25:31-46
Mark 5:21-43

July 8

John 20:30-31;
John 1:1-5
Psalm 48
Mark 6:1-13

July 15

Psalm 24
Mark 6:14-29

July 22

Psalm 89:20-37
Mark 6:30-34

July 29

Psalm 14
Mark 6:53-56

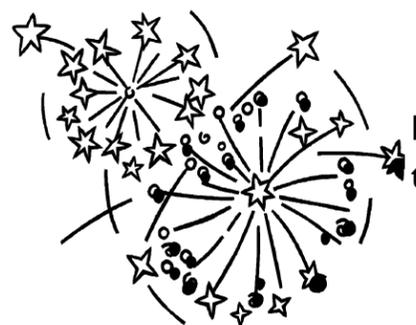
What do we mean when we say we are "Christian"?

When I was serving a church in Tacoma years ago, a couple of Jehovah's Witnesses came to the door of the parsonage. With barely more than a "Hello" one launched into the expected question: "Are you a Christian?" While I have always heard that question as the opening line of a sales pitch for a product of little interest to me, on that occasion I decided to see if the earnest young men were up to a real discussion about what that means. We did have a bit of a back-and-forth, all very collegial, before they made clear that what they really meant was "Can we convince you to become our version of a Christian?" by hearing me say I was the pastor of the church just across the street, but pressing on to question whether I was really a Christian.

As I have mentioned before, I was drawn out of a career I loved in large part because of what I was seeing and hearing from folks who were calling themselves by that title, but whose actions and words seemed to contradict their claim. I was confused and offended by their portrayal of the One who I understood to be the Creator, Sustainer and Redeemer of all that is and experienced as the ultimate unconditionally Loving Parent and Friend. I knew my faith was simple, undoubtedly naïve and therefore likely to be wrong, or at least limited in its scope and depth. Over 20 years have now passed, during which I have read many, many books and explored the informed thinking of women and men much wiser than I on topics I did not even know existed then - ecclesiology, soteriology, Christology, and more – and learned the value of reading through the eyes of original audiences and within the context of both original and current times. I now get that form matters; that is, poems and songs convey meaning in different (but no less important, meaningful or trustworthy) ways than historical accounts and have come to value the inherent struggle for meaning and understanding when dealing with texts intended to reveal the Invisible-Yet-Present God. And you know what? I am no longer confused by those who portray God as limited (i.e., only loving those who 'deserve' it), angry, or indifferent but must confess that I am perhaps even more offended, disappointed and heartbroken by them!

As Brian McLaren and the Most Reverend Michael Curry both point out, the public discussion of our faith is too often reduced to a litmus test of belief points about God instead of being lived out as a public testimony of love. Christianity would never have come through nearly twenty centuries as a vital, vibrant, life-sustaining force if all it had to offer was a God who rewarded those who followed instructions and punished

(Continued next page)



Freedom is nothing but a chance to be better.

~Albert Camus



You can find this edition of our newsletter on-line at www.mvfumc.org

(Pastor's Corner continued)

those who did not – as Jesus might say, even the gentiles do that! I think one might argue that is the sort of God we need, or at least a more believable version, but such a God is not revealed by, in or through Jesus. So, returning to the original question, what sort of God does Jesus show us? One who: heals without first checking where a person falls on the balance sheet of good works; forgives both unknowing and intentional violators of the Divine Will; teaches that loving God and neighbor, not being familiar with or even able to quote the words of scripture, is what God seeks; loves expansively, even exceeding all reasonable expectations and cultural norms. To claim the title of "Christian" is to tell the world that we place Jesus at the center, not the edges, of our lives – both over and under our politics, our economics, our relationships with family members, friends and yes, even the 'aliens' in our nation, remembering how God freed our spiritual ancestors when they were mistreated as resident aliens in Egypt so long ago. It tells the world that we start with Jesus and apply his example and teaching in our opinions about every topic, rather than deciding how we feel about the topic and then looking for support for our desires in the gospels or other biblical accounts.

Sounds like a challenging way to live, right? Unrealistic, even impossible for any of us to actually do! Well, sure ... if we try to do it on our own. Thankfully, we are neither expected nor asked to do any of this alone! Hallelujah and thanks be to God for sending the Holy Spirit to remind us of everything Jesus said and did, and guide us in all things! Now go ahead and pass the plate, sing a hymn and dismiss yourselves – this sermon is over!

Pastor Terry

Financial Report for May 2018

	Income	Expense
Regular Account	\$16,168.33	\$21,076.45
Special Account	\$47,051.34	\$37,154.30
Memorials	\$ 5,115.00	\$ 0

As you can see we spent more than we took in during the month of May, but we were able to pay all of our bills and our conference apportionments.

Summer is a time when giving is typically down because of people traveling, etc. Please remember your church pledge during the summer months as well. The Finance committee would like to thank this congregation for supporting the ministries of our church.

Celebrating the Oil!

To keep the cogs of the church running smoothly, there are lots of people keeping them oiled. There is the person who waters the plants, the person who makes sure there are flowers on the altar on Sundays, the person who graciously hosts coffee hour when no one else volunteers, the men who keep mechanical aspects of our church in operating order, the ladies who meet each month to send out birthday and anniversary cards, those who prepare for communion, those who deal with the financial aspects of the church, and the list goes on.

Mark your calendar for **Sunday, July 22**. We will have a potluck after worship celebrating all those who work behind the scenes to keep the church organized and running smoothly. We give thanks for all these untold hours given to the church!



Congregational Care Team Library

There is a new library starting on the book shelf next to the UMW book library in the hallway. These books deal mainly with spiritual and personal growth and how to be in a caring relationship with others. Please feel free to check out any of these books by filling out the form on the clipboard. You do not have to be a member of the Congregational Care Team. Also, if you have books that you feel would be a good fit for this subject matter and would like to donate them to this library, please give them to Kay Martin.

New Book on UMW Library Shelves

"The Book of Joy: Lasting Happiness in a Changing World" by His Holiness the Dalai Lama and Archbishop Desmond Tutu is one of the 2018 UMW Reading Program books. "Nobel Peace Prize Laureates His Holiness the Dalai Lama and Archbishop Desmond Tutu have survived more than 50 years of exile and the soul-crushing violence of oppression. Despite their hardships, or as they would say, because of them, they are two of the most joyful people on the planet. Celebrating together His Holiness's 80th birthday they created what they hoped would be a gift for others and answer a question: How do we find joy in the face of suffering? By the end of a week filled with laughter and punctuated with tears, these two global heroes had stared into the abyss and despair of our times and revealed how to live a life brimming with joy. We listen in as they explore the Nature of True Joy, and then offer us the Eight Pillars of Joy that provide the foundation for lasting happiness." [from UMW Catalog]

Remember men and youth as well as women are welcome to read any of the books in the UMW Library. Just sign your name, title of the book, and check-out date on the clipboard prominently displayed on the third shelf of the Library bookcase.

Naomi Foote

**SPANISH WINGS: BEGINNING PLUS
GENERAL INFORMATION**

July 9 at 1:00 pm—July 13 at noon



Come soak yourself in the Spanish language, in a local church setting (here at our church!), using a method proven to support beginners and beyond. For a fraction of the cost (and no need to travel to Mexico or even further) you will:

- Gain confidence in meeting Spanish speaking neighbors
- Have fun learning with art, games, music and real conversation
- Learn prayers, try reading the Bible and some liturgies in Spanish
- Gain understanding of Hispanic-Latino culture
- Get over the fear of speaking in a safe space where the fun is more important than perfection

Let your brain relax and just soak in Spanish without a struggle

For more information and to register on-line go to—<http://www.pnwumc.org/event/spanish-wings-spanish-language-experience-for-church-leaders-beginning-plus/>



Faith in Action



34th Children's Art Festival at Hillcrest Park is Saturday, July 21st 10:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m.

Volunteers are needed for 2 or 2-1/2 hour shifts in the MVFUMC booth at the 34rd Annual Children's Art Festival at Hillcrest Park on July 21, 2018. This community event is totally free, geared towards families and children of all ages and typically hosts approximately 400+ young participants. Last year we had lots of fun meeting the children and parents and helping them with an art project. All supplies for our booth will be provided by Mount Vernon Parks and Recreation. This will be a great event to show the people in our community the love of Christ by our *faith in action*. The hours need are: 10:00 a.m. to noon, noon to 2:00 p.m., 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. There must be 2 volunteers in the booth at all times between these hours. I would also appreciate someone to help put up our banner and get organized at 9:30 a.m. If you are willing to help out please sign up on the form on the Volunteer Central table in the narthex or contact Kay Martin. (kay@mvfumc.org or 360-770-1701)



Baby Shower, Sunday July 29th 3:00 p.m. in the Rees Room

Please join us for a baby shower for Karen Casteñadas, a member of Pastor Zulma's Hispanic Ministry. Karen is having a baby boy due in early August. Please come and support Pastor Zulma's Hispanic Ministry and let's shower Karen with lots of love and baby gifts.



Take Me Out to the Ballgame!

Join us at the Mariners vs. Houston Astros on Wednesday, August 22nd at 1:10 p.m. Tickets are \$13/person and 2 ADA seats have been included. We need 20 people to attend to receive the group rate, so bring your kids and grandkids, invite your friends and neighbors, and we'll have a great time rooting on the Mariners. Since this is a day game, it would be fun to get a group together to ride the train to and from Safeco field, saving the hassle of parking. The train leaves from either Mount Vernon or Everett depending on your choice and we will have more information as we get closer to the date. There is a sign-up sheet on the sign-in table in the narthex. If you have any questions please contact Dennis Jones or Kay Martin.



Hats, gloves, scarves, socks needed

MVFUMC will again have a booth at the Project Homeless Connect event at Skagit Valley College on August 24th. This year, along with our sleeping mats, we would like to provide hats, gloves, scarves, and socks to those who attend this event. If you love to crochet or knit, your hand-made items will be gratefully accepted. If knitting or crocheting isn't your "thing", we will happily accept purchased items. If you have any questions or would like to know more about Project Homeless Connect and how you might help, please contact Kay Martin.

Additional Faith in Action Notes

Volunteer Cleaning—Tuesdays, 7/10, 7/17, 7/24, 7/31 from 9:30am to 12N

Sleeping Mats for the homeless workshops—Tuesday, 7/10 and 7/24 from 1 to 3pm

Congregational Care Ministry—If you know of someone in our congregation who would benefit from a visit from a member of the team, please let Kay Martin know.



Vacation Bible School – July 16-20, 9 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. at Mount Vernon Presbyterian Church

We are again working with our friends from the MV Presbyterian Church to host a week of Vacation Bible School for children in our community. Registration forms are on the table in the Narthex. Please feel free to share them with family, friends and neighbors. We can always use volunteers too! If you have some time to share, we would love to have you join us! Please contact Lori Flores for more information. Can't help out on a daily basis but still want to support VBS? A snack sign-up sheet will be on the bulletin board in the Narthex soon so that you can sign up to bring a snack item for the children. Thank you so much for your support!

VBS Family Fun Night – Friday, July 20th at 6:30 pm

Our whole church family is invited to join us for our final gathering of VBS. We will meet in the Sanctuary at Mount Vernon Presbyterian Church for some songs and our video slide show of the week's activities. We will then head off to their Good Shepherd Hall for a some dessert, fun and fellowship! Hope that you can join us!

Trustee Work Area Update

Our new storage building is nearing completion.

The prime contractor, LAConstruction has concluded work on time and within budget and we are well satisfied with their work.

The second contract to provide electrical service to and within the building is in progress. Wiring and fixture installation within the building is complete. Work getting the underground power cable to the building is stalled at this time because using the pickup point installed years ago by Puget Sound Energy appears to no longer meet the required PSE standard. Our contractor is in dialog with PSE to find resolution to this unforeseen problem.

We have moved the lawn mowers into the new building, so the old mower storage buildings are ready for removal. Drainage work around the new building will be completed before the fall season.

Work to replace the sanctuary skylight has begun. We have facilitated design planning with the company Crystalight (Everett) that made the existing skylight. Detailed measurement of the unit has been done. We expect information soon regarding cost for purchase and installation of the new skylight.

Painting the church was on our schedule until the foreman for the paint crew came to the church to see the scope of the work to be done. He found that quite a few of the window sills were rotten. Some so much that he was able to grab the sill and it crumbled in his hand. They have to be replaced plus need to add some metal cover to prevent rot from happening again. Also, the foreman found that the fascia board that surrounds the bottom edge of the roof is also in poor shape and needs work before it can be painted. Some need to be replaced and others sanded. This company is not licensed to do construction work, so this work has to be done before they are able to paint. All paint contractors are busy at this time and so this has postponed the painting until next year.

A special note of appreciation is extended to Mary Downing and her helpers, and custodian Chris Flores who are doing great work every week in keeping our church clean and functioning.

The Trustee Work Area

Doug Rindal
Jess del Bosque
Deene Almvig
Chuck Cass
Bob Hallberg
Jim Collins

BIRTHDAYS

- 7/1 Owen Smith
- 7/2 Emma Eliason
- 7/5 Wes LaRocque
- 7/7 Charlotte Ambrose
Buffy Gullberg-Williams
- 7/8 David Edwards
Erica Nystrom
- 7/9 Chloe Walker
- 7/10 Al Sward
- 7/11 Barbara del Bosque
Amelia Pirkle
- 7/12 Janeie Belisle
Asher Latulippe
- 7/13 Janielle Coghill
Hannah Ermi
Barbara Jackson
Robert Seabury
- 7/15 Vicki Cooley
Ashleigh Jacobson
- 7/18 William Burress
- 7/21 Donald Semrau
Debbie Bloodgood
- 7/22 Daniel Breznau
Terry B Hall
- 7/23 Susan Fisher
Dylan Thomas
- 7/24 Brandon Thompson
- 7/25 Jeff Drayer
- 7/26 Dan Gerhard
- 7/27 Joe Ambrose
- 7/28 Chuck Diver
- 7/29 Michael Hennessey
- 7/31 Rebecca Ayers



JULY



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 9:00 am Hispanic Ministry 9:00 am Piano Class 10:00 am Worship 11:00 am Coffee Hour	2	3 6:00 pm NAMI Board Meeting	4  Happy 4th of July!	5 8:30 am Men's Morning Ministry	6	7
8 9:00 am Hispanic Ministry 9:00 am Piano Class 10:00 am Worship 11:00 am Coffee Hour	9 Spanish Immersion Class 1:00 pm Hugo's Accordion Band	10 Spanish Immersion Class 1:00 pm Sleeping Mat Team 6:30 pm NAMI Education	11 Spanish Immersion Class 1:00 pm Staff Meeting	12 Spanish Immersion Class 8:30 am Men's Morning Ministry	13 Spanish Immersion Class	14
15 9:00 am Hispanic Ministry 9:00 am Piano Class 10:00 am Worship 11:00 am Coffee Hour	16 9 am – 12 pm Vacation Bible School at MV Presbyterian Church	17 VBS at MVPC	18 VBS at MVPC 1:00 pm Staff Meeting	19 VBS at MVPC 8:30 am Men's Morning Ministry 2:30 pm Trustees Meeting	20 VBS at MVPC 6:30 pm VBS Family Fun Night at MV Presbyterian Church	21 9 am – 4 pm Children's Art Festival at Hillcrest Park
22 Appreciation Sunday 9:00 am Hispanic Ministry 9:00 am Piano Class 10:00 am Worship 11:00 am All Church Potluck 2:00 pm FAE Board Meeting	23 9:00 am Newsletter Mailing Day 1:00 pm Hugo's Accordion Band	24 1:00 pm Sleeping Mat Team	25 1:00 pm Staff Meeting	26 8:30 am Men's Morning Ministry	27	28
29 9:00 am Hispanic Ministry 9:00 am Piano Class 10:00 am Worship 11:00 am Coffee Hour 3:00 pm Shower for Karen Castaneda: Rees Room	30	31				

ANNIVERSARIES

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY!

- 7/19 Billy and Virginia Skaggs
- 7/24 Leonard and Jill Eliason
- 7/26 Dan and Lynnette Gerhard
Colin and Alisa Sands
- 7/27 Wes and Lisa LaRocque
- 7/30 Dan and Marti Wall
- 7/31 Jim and Nancy Finkbeiner

