



# The Grapevine

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

Year 118, Issue 12  
December 2020

## Advent and Christmas 2020

Advent begins this Sunday! It's the time on the church calendar set aside to prepare for the coming of Jesus. This year, we have videos of MVPC's kids, stories shared by members and friends, well loved music and messages all themed around "*The Journey of Advent: embracing the challenge and receiving the blessing!*" Take a few minutes to prayerfully think about how you and your family will be celebrating Advent and Christmastide this year.

### 1. Worship

- Advent Sundays 10:30 am on Nov. 29th, Dec. 6th, 13th, & 20th
- Christmas Eve Service at 7 pm on Thursday, December 24th
- Christmastide Service at 10:30 am on Sunday, December 27th
- Lessons and Carols Service at 10:30 am on Sunday, January 3rd

### 2. Pray

- Join the Pause Prayer Group in praying through the Christmas scriptures at 9 am Tuesdays.
- Journey into wonder daily with the MVPC Advent Wondering Questions (see page 6).
- Participate in the [PC\(USA\) Mission Online Advent and Christmas Devotional](#).
- Find a devotional or create a devotional practice that works for you and your family to grow in faith!

### 3. Serve

- Participate in the MVPC Christmas Elves letter writing to reach out to others (contact the office).
- Help the MVPC Christmas Basket team provide Christmas to Family Promise Families.
- Support local missions like [Family Promise](#), [OPOP](#), and [Friendship House](#).
- Give to [the ministry of MVPC](#), her mission partners, or through the [PC\(USA\) Giving Catalog](#).

### 4. Celebrate

- Join old and new friends in an after worship break out room on Sundays!
- Encourage your small groups to celebrate the season together online.
- Zoom Parties: Kids Group 12/9, Youth Group 12/20, & Family Group 12/20.
- After Worship Sharing of Christmas Trees and special decorations on Dec. 20th.



**MVPC Sunday Worship 10:30 am on zoom - Meeting #972 436 044**

## **Are you looking for a Small Group?**

By Elder David Gale

In the late 1970's we were transferred to Longview, Washington. We knew no one, but I was busy with getting a new branch up and running and Rosemary was busy with our two-year-old. One Sunday after church, the assistant pastor of our church told us he was starting a small group for folk with young children. So five couples soon started meeting on Sunday evenings.

It turned out to be a God-send for us. We didn't do a lot of Bible study or book studies, but it was a great time for five families with young children to share struggles and joys, lean on each other, and pray together. We got to be really good friends over time. When Mount Saint Helens erupted in May of 1980, we were evacuated from our home close to the Cowlitz River. At 11:30 at night we were able to call one of the families and camp out on their living room floor for the night.

When we moved to Maple Valley (another job transfer) we got involved with another small group. Lots of laughs; some tears. We supported each other as two wives lost their husbands.

In Auburn I got involved with two groups of men for study and prayer. Still call some of them today to share and lean on when needed. Now we're greatly enjoying building relationships with the group from MVPC that we belong to.

Jesus lived the importance of small groups. He always took time to communicate with His Father, was closest to Peter, James, and John, and shared things with the twelve disciples (His small group) that He did with no one else.

I can personally relate how enriching being involved with a small group has been. It may not be for everyone, but I highly recommend small groups.

God bless you on your own journey!



### **Tuesday 9 am Pause Prayer Group - Special Advent Prayer Time (on Zoom)**

You are invited to dive deeper into a prayerful Advent with the Tuesday 9 am Pause Prayer Group as we pray through the Christmas scriptures using an ancient prayer practice called Lectio Divina. Everyone is welcome. Please contact the church office or Pat and Rebecca for zoom numbers or to get on the list to receive a reminder email.

## Christmas Elves

Volunteer to connect in relationship with people in the congregation during Advent and Christmas by sending weekly Christmas letters of encouragement and prayers as a part of the Christmas Elf Team. Let us know as soon as you can how many people you would like to connect with, if you have certain people in mind, or if you would like to be matched with someone you might not know as well yet! **Please let us know if there are people you know who would appreciate having a Christmas Elf.** Please contact the church or get in touch with Head Elves Anne Long or Rebecca Holland.



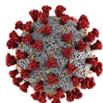
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## Stewardship Update for 2021

“Well done, good and faithful servant!” (Matthew 25:21)

Through your faithful and generous giving, we now have \$232,464 in pledges for 2021. We are two-thirds of the way to meeting the pledged income goal of the church for next year. It is important for those who have not sent in their pledge cards to do as soon as possible so Session can finalize the budget for 2021. Thank you again for your faithfulness to God’s work.

Your Stewardship Committee: David Gale, Bill DeHon, Beck Goodell, Leslie Braun, and Pastor Dan



### Covid Update

Dear fellow MVPC faithful,

Here's hoping this letter finds you safe and vigorous in our battle against the coronavirus.

Please wear multi layer masks whenever you are around someone that is not in your immediate household. Also minimize the frequency and duration of time that you spend anywhere in proximity to somebody who is not in your household and take proper sanitizing precautions when transitioning in and out of your household and places that may be of increased risk.

Here is a link to the [reopening plan](#) that was approved by our session recently. For the foreseeable future we are still in Phase 2 and the church facility remains closed. However please remain open to our church family residing in your heart while making and receiving calls and virtual meetings with each other, and nudges from Jesus!

As a word of encouragement, try to find the positives in each day's various situations. They are there, we just have to look deliberately for them. Certainly we will appreciate the freedom to be together again physically when we are able to, at some point.

Practice Safety! With Love, Coronavirus Response Team Leader -  
Brad Clure



## Godly Play Stories in Worship

- |           |                         |
|-----------|-------------------------|
| Dec. 6th  | Advent: The Holy Family |
| Dec. 13th | Advent: The Shepherds   |
| Dec. 20th | Advent: The Magi        |
| Dec. 24th | Advent: Christmas!      |
| Dec. 27th | Christmas Celebration   |

## Kid's Group Christmas Celebration

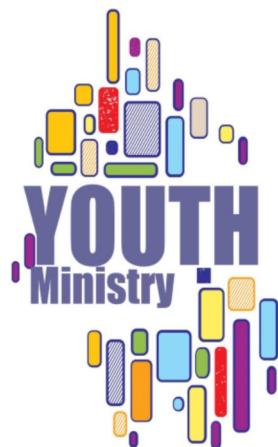
**Wednesday, Dec. 9th at 4 pm!**

Elementary kids (K through 5th grade) are invited for a special Christmas Celebration!

Contact Rebecca Holland, for an email reminder and zoom numbers.

*No meeting Dec. 23rd due to Christmas!*

## Middle School and High School Online Youth Group **1st and 3rd Sundays 7 to 8 pm**



Our Youth Group has teamed up with the Youth Groups from First United Methodist Church and St. Paul's Episcopal Church for Online Youth Group on the 1st and 3rd Sundays of every month from 7 to 8 pm. Youth in 6th through 12th grade are invited to join the online faith, fellowship, and fun!

Contact Pastor Dan or the church for an email reminder and zoom numbers.  
**Christmas Party on 12/20 at 7 pm!**

## MVPC Family Online Opportunities

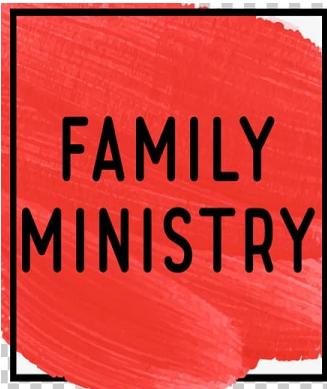
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|---------------------------|-------------------------------|
| All Ages Worship          | Sundays 10:30 am              |
| <b>Family Fellowship*</b> | <b>1st &amp; 3rd Sun 4 pm</b> |
| Youth Group               | 1st & 3rd Sun 7 pm            |
| Kid's Group               | 2nd & 4th Wed 4 pm            |

## **Family Fellowship**

### **1st & 3rd Sun at 4 pm**

Families of all ages are invited for online fellowship, fun, and games at 4 pm on the 1st and 3rd Sundays on Zoom.

Come to the Family Christmas Party on 12/20 at 4 pm!



## **Christmas (Zoom) Celebrations**

Kid's Group: 12/9 at 4 pm  
Family Group: 12/20 at 4 pm  
Youth Group: 12/20 at 7 pm

Plus: After Worship on 12/20  
the Congregation will be  
sharing their Christmas Trees!



## To All Women of MVPC

Women's Fellowship has restarted. A small group of us enjoyed each other's company last month with Zoom and want to share that with more of you. All who attended felt the companionship of each other as we blended our Scripture study into our lives amid Covid 19. It is an open group. Come when you can. Our next gathering is the third Sat—Dec 19. We start the meeting at 9 AM and welcome women as

## December Birthdays & Anniversaries

3-Warren Gilbert	Joe Seabott
4-Ward Ernst	20-Carolyn Gilbert
Carol Sanders	21-Keith Tacker
Al Berger	Aurelia O'Donnell
6-Pat Schlecht	22-Troy Olsen
10-Bob Wygal	27-Aaron Fox
10-Bill & Linda Ream	28-Barb Clure
14-Kimora Hansen	29-Dave & Bev Wilson
15-John Braun	Catherine Albiez
16-Pat Papadopoulos	31-Jodie Kercheval
Linda Rabenstein	Carol Peterson
19-Laurie Parker	

## CRAFTING ON ZOOM



The second and fourth Tuesdays of each month find busy fingers flying as a group of crafters and knitters meet on Zoom from noon to 1 pm. This December we'll meet once on December 8th and then again January 5th.

Call Patti Allen for more information.



**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**mbrace The World  
with the heart and hands of Jesus



**MVPC**  
**Church Leadership**  
**2020-2021**

Elders			Ministry Area	Deacons		
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	Membership/Evangelism	Tom	Howard	2022
Bill	DeHon	2022	Ministry Support	Sandi	Seabott	2022
Gail	LaFleur	2022	Worship	Sumiko	Shinozaki	2022
Bob	Rauch	2022	Discipleship	Vacant		2022
David	Gale	2023	Membership/Evangelism	Arlene	Andersen	2023
Becky	Goodell	2023	Mission & Service	Rosemary	Gale	2023
Bob	Higbee	2023	Ministry Support	Colleen	Higbee	2023
Joe	Seabott	2023	Mission & Service	Wendy	Bartholomew	2023

### Thank you to:

- ♥ Josh and choir members for making a beautiful, inspiring rendition of Kumbaya for Sunday worship.
- ♥ Colleen Higbee, Iva Rauch and many others for preparing a Thanksgiving Evening of worship for praise and thankfulness.
- ♥ All Session and Deacon members for their faithful service.



If you would like to acknowledge your gratitude for someone's role in the church in next month's newsletter please email Barbara in the church office. [mvc@mountvernonpres.org](mailto:mvc@mountvernonpres.org)

# MVPC Advent Wondering Questions

Journey to Bethlehem during Advent by participating in the MVPC Daily Advent Wonderings that match up with our weekly Godly Play Advent stories. Allow yourself time to prayerfully respond with writing, art, or whatever inspires you.

## **Advent Week One: The Prophets (Luke 2:4-6)**

On the first week of Advent, we begin our journey to Bethlehem by remembering the Prophets, who pointed the way.

Sun, Nov 29th: I wonder what the time of Advent means to you? I wonder if you have Advent traditions?

Mon, Nov 30th: I wonder what you remember about the prophets, who pointed the way to Bethlehem, and the Christ child?

Tues, Dec 1st: I wonder if you ever came so close to God & God came so close to you, you knew what God wanted you to do?

Wed, Dec 2nd: I wonder how God speaks to you? I wonder what you do to listen?

Thurs, Dec 3rd: I wonder who in your life has pointed you toward Jesus? What did they do to help you with your faith?

Fri, Dec 4th: I wonder if you have pointed others toward Jesus? What do you do to help others on their journey of faith?

Sat, Dec 5th: I wonder what other wonderings you have about the prophets pointing the way to Bethlehem & the Christ child?

## **Advent Week Two: The Holy Family (Luke 2:1-5)**

On the second week of Advent, we continue on our journey to Bethlehem by remembering Mary and Joseph.

Sunday, December 6th: I wonder what it would have been like to be Mary when she came close to God talking to the angel?

Monday, December 7th: I wonder what it would have been like to be Joseph when he came close to God dreaming a dream?

Tuesday, December 8th: I wonder how God comes close to us today? I wonder how God comes close to you?

Wednesday, December 9th: I wonder what the journey to Bethlehem was like for Mary and Joseph?

Thursday, December 10th: I wonder if you have ever been on a long journey? What do you remember about the journey?

Friday, December 11th: I wonder what you do when you are facing challenges in life?

Saturday, December 12th: I wonder what other wonderings you have about Mary and Joseph on their Journey to Bethlehem?

## **Advent Week Three: The Shepherds (Luke 2:8-15)**

On the third week of Advent, we continue on our journey to Bethlehem by remembering the Shepherds and Angels.

Sunday, December 13th: I wonder what the shepherds thought when the Angels first appeared?

Monday, December 14th: I wonder why the Angels appeared to the shepherds who were not seen as very important?

Tuesday, December 15th: I wonder what it was like to hear the Angels sing?

Wednesday, December 16th: I wonder if there are songs that feel sacred to you to hear or sacred to you to sing?

Thursday, December 17th: I wonder what the shepherds thought as they ran to Bethlehem?

Friday, December 18th: I wonder what you think about as you journey to Bethlehem and prepare your heart for Christmas?

Saturday, December 19th: I wonder what other wonderings you have about the Shepherds on their journey to Bethlehem?

## **Advent Week Four: The Magi (Matthew 2:1-10)**

On the fourth week of Advent, we continue on our journey to Bethlehem by remembering the Magi.

Sunday, December 20th: I wonder how the Magi felt as they traveled far into a strange land?

Monday, December 21st: I wonder how you feel when you travel far from home?

Tuesday, December 22nd: I wonder why God led the Magi to find Jesus when there were other people closer?

Wednesday, December 23rd: I wonder how you have journeyed to find Jesus in your life?

Thursday, December 24th: I wonder how are you preparing to welcome Jesus as we come to Bethlehem?

Friday, December 25th, Christmas Day: We have journeyed to Bethlehem!

-I wonder what it was like for Mary and Joseph to welcome Jesus? How did Jesus change their lives?

-I wonder what it was like for the Shepherds and the Angels to welcome Jesus? How did Jesus change their lives?

-I wonder what it was like for the Magi to welcome Jesus? How did Jesus change their lives?

-I wonder what it is like for you to welcome Jesus today and every day? How does Jesus change your life? Merry Christmas!

