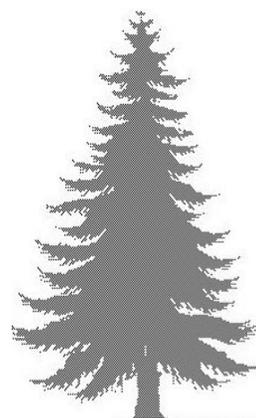
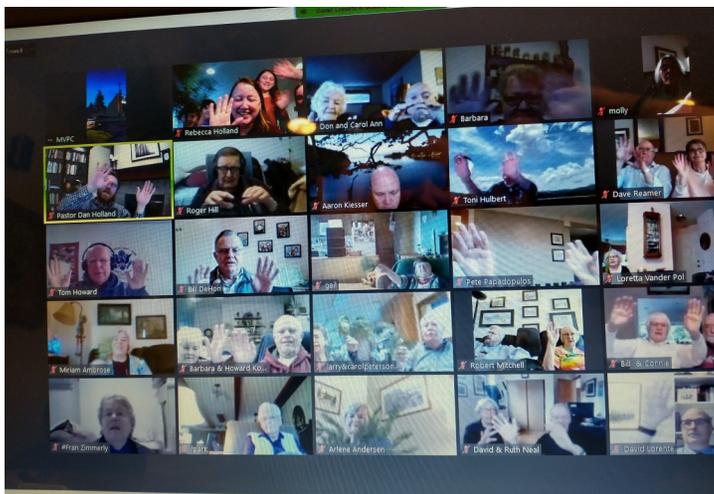


MOUNT VERNON PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Know God's Love... and Share it with Other People



2020-21
ANNUAL
MINISTRY
REPORT



Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing.
1 Thessalonians 5:11

REPORT FROM THE PASTOR

Rev. Daniel Holland, Pastor

Pastor's Report 2020 - 2021

Winston Churchill once said "Never let a good crisis go to waste." My leadership coach quoted that to me about a decade ago. It's hard to imagine either of them had something like Covid in mind. This particular crisis has been a tragedy of epic proportions. More Americans have died from covid than did in WWII (the context in which Churchill first spoke those words). Nobody would have wanted this and I'm hopeful that we may soon be emerging from the crisis, at least in this part of the world. I think everyone wants at least some aspects of life to go back to "normal" and yet, I think we know some things won't ever go back; and when it comes to the operations of the church, the time of the pandemic created a great opportunity for us to move forward in new and exciting ways.

For years we've talked about shifting the leadership structure of the church in order to alleviate burn-out, to allow people to better utilize their gifts and talents, and to do the aspects of ministry that they enjoy. This season of Covid helped our Session to see the needs more clearly and to decisively move that direction. You'll notice on the facing page that there are only 6 Session members and 6 Board of Deacon members identified rather than the 12 of each we've had in previous years.

This marks a transition which will allow the Session to focus on governance, discerning God's will for the whole congregation and what steps will help us to move forward together, faithfully, now and into the future. With this new model of leadership, Session won't be "running" the ministries of the church anymore. Volunteer ministry coordinators (a newly differentiated role) and paid staff will work with the members and friends of MVPC in the various areas of the ministry of the congregation.

Likewise, the Board of Deacons will be *organizing the care network of the congregation and Commissioned Deacons (a newly differentiated role) will be the ones who are mobilized to care for the small groups and service teams and other groups of the people of MVPC.*

The bottom line of this shift in leadership model is that we want you to be engaged in meaningful ministry doing something that feeds your spirit, helps you grow as a follower of Jesus and encourages you to share God's love. It's exciting to free people to do ministry which will be life-giving for them. It's also exciting to trust that if everyone engages, using the gifts God gave them to do things they enjoy, the ministry of the church will flourish! So keep your eyes out, make your desires known and when you see something that feels like it might "fit" for you, jump in - opportunities abound.

The leadership model is a significant change, and it's not the only one. When you read through the pages of this report, I think you'll find, as I did, that even in this season of crisis we've taken great strides toward health and faithfulness as a congregation. Of course, we've missed a number of members and friends who feel they can't, or don't want to, worship online. There's no doubt we look forward to being back in person together; but we can't overlook that the crisis of covid in the church has forced a level of creativity and intentionality that may not have ever emerged if we had been allowed to continue with "business as usual." So as we come back, I'm hopeful that we'll continue to pay attention to God's invitation and not lose what we've learned. I'm grateful for how God has worked in MVPC during this time. I'm grateful for the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the guidance of the Holy Spirit. I'm grateful for all of you, and I'm grateful for the future we move toward together.

Grace and Peace to you,
Pastor Dan



**Current and nominated ruling elders serving on session
and Deacons serving on the Board of Deacons**

Class of 2021 will rotate off in July and Class of 2024 will begin their 3 year term of service.

SESSION

Class of 2022	*Nominated Class of 2022
	
Bill DeHon	Pat Papadopoulos

Class of 2023	
	
Becky Goodell	Joe Seabott

*Nominated Class of 2024	
	
Bruce Lavers	Sarah Maas

	
Clerk of Session	Pastor Dan Holland, Moderator

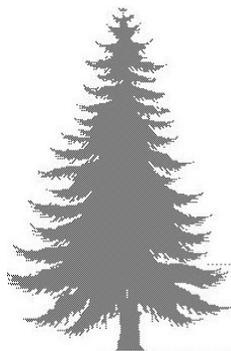
BOARD OF DEACONS

Class of 2022	*Nominated Class of 2022
	
Tom Howard	David Reamer

Class of 2023	
	
Arlene Andersen	Rosemary Gale

*Nominated Class of 2024	
	
Ward Ernst	Kitty Willis

*Nominated, to be elected June 6, 2021



MOUNT VERNON PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

“Growing Followers Of Christ”

MVPC STAFF

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 cell phone: 360-399-6396



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Joshua VerHalen Director of Music Ministry
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Barbara Koozer Ministry Coordinator and
 Office Coordinator
 Email: mvpc@MountVernonPres.org
 phone: 360-424-7675



Others who work in the church building

Counseling Centers of North Puget Sound :

Mary Jo Greenway Counselor

Email: mjgreenway@samaritannps.com
 office phone: 360-424-4296

Doug Chandler Counselor

Email: douglas.chandler@live.com
 office phone: 360-708-9595

Underground Ministries

Chris Hoke Executive Director

Email: Chris@undergroundministries.org

Alvin Shim

One Parish One Prisoner Coordinator & Communications

Email: Info@undergroundministries.org

*The church is the body of Christ in the world.
 Every member and friend is important to its life and ministry.*

MOUNT VERNON PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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WWW.MOUNTVERNONPRES.ORG MVPC@MOUNTVERNONPRES.ORG

WORSHIP

In the year 2020-2021, the Worship ministry has appreciated the technical expertise and time spent by David Lorente, Aaron Keisser, Josh VerHalen, Rebecca Holland and Pastor Dan in creating a worshipful feeling for the congregation on Zoom gatherings. They made possible not only Sunday worship services, but also Advent and Lenten gatherings that resulted in keeping us together as much as possible during the closure of the church building. Josh made extraordinary efforts to bring the choir “together” and all the other musical contributions.

With the limitations on gathering in person to celebrate Christmas, we were delighted to have Wassail distributed in the church parking lot and delivered to people’s homes leading up to Christmas Eve so that we could celebrate an old tradition in a new way. Many thanks to Brian and Mackenzie Anderson and Laurie Parker.



Throughout the season of Lent we had consistent small groups meeting on Wednesdays with discussions aimed at deepening our faith and strengthening our bonds together. Then on Maundy Thursday we were able to reflect on bible verses while viewing historical works of art depicting the events of Holy Week.

At our Memorial Sunday service, Pastor Dan brought together appreciation and gratitude for those members of MVPC who died during the Covid closure and were not able to have services.

To all those who participated in Godly Play contributions to our Zoom worship services, we express our thanks. Storytelling has been a large part of Christian fellowship in this past year. And we thank all the liturgists through the year.

In summary, we have learned to worship in our homes, with thoughtful guidance from a medley of people. To them all, the Worship Committee says “Thank You.”

Now we can all look forward to coming together in our newly renovated sanctuary in the Fall.

Elders Lou Cheney and Gail LaFleur

Thanks to continued advancements in technology, the music ministry has been able to continue to contribute to meaningful and authentic worship experiences over the past year. Despite facing a challenge unimaginable just a year ago, the choir has remained strong, meeting biweekly via zoom for fellowship, support and fun. After a good bit of wrangling with multiple technological platforms, we were also able to produce several recordings made individually by singers in their homes then combined using a combination of computer programs to create a virtual choir. We have also received individual and collaborative recordings from several congregation members allowing us to offer a variety of opportunities for others to participate and share their musical gifts. We look forward to the day we can gather again to make music and lift our praises in exuberant song--a day that no longer feels so far away!

Joshua VerHalen
Director of Music Ministry



MISSION AND SERVICE

The Covid pandemic created a number of challenges that the MVPC Missions Team faced with faith that God would continue to help us reach out and spread God's love to those in need. We owe a huge thank you to the flexibility and creativity to everyone involved. Our congregation has a huge heart for mission and, by the grace of God, we were able to continue to serve and spread God's love in our community and the world.

Family Promise

Our church continued to show our love and support of the Family Promise Ministry and families experiencing homelessness during a challenging time that became even more challenging with the pandemic. We appreciate the congregation's willingness to follow the Covid procedures, dropping off delicious meals to be enjoyed by the families. We look forward to when it will be safe for us to host the families in our church building, connecting in relationships again.

One Parish One Prisoner (OPOP)

Throughout the year, the OPOP team continued to build relationships and offer support and encouragement to our prisoners, during a time of increased challenges as they faced the pandemic from prison.

Care Pals

The ministry of Care Pals continued to share their love and support with the seniors as they continued to provide crafts, ready to go, to be enjoyed and offer a bit of happiness during an extra challenging year for those in senior living. The team looks forward to when it is safe to return to building relationships and offering encouragement through the fun of doing crafts together in person.

Friendship House

The friendship house team continued to provide meals to those in need in Skagit Valley, although the team was not able to make and serve them as they love to do, due to the pandemic. It was with great joy that the team returned to making the delicious spaghetti meal together and serving it at the Friendship House in May, spreading God's love by serving others.



New Earth Recovery and Genesis Process

Our church continued to offer support and encouragement to people recovering from addiction through the New Earth Recovery Homes and the Genesis Process. We look forward to when more of our congregation can be trained in this amazing ministry and able to serve and spread God's love as they support those facing and recovering from addiction.

Sharing Our Church Home

MVPC continued to host Underground Ministries and the Counseling Centers of North Puget Sound in our church building as they continued their ministries and faced an increased need during the pandemic. What a blessing to be able to share what we have in order to support these ministries as they continue to grow.

Financial Support

MVPC continued to provide financial support to a number of ministries, including Nepal through the Medical Assistance Fund and New Life Psychiatric Hospital, Love Inc's ministry to those in need in Skagit Valley, Underground Ministries and their support to people returning from prison, and Danielle and Kevin Riley as they pastor Mount Baker Presbyterian Church, the missional church in Concrete, WA

The MVPC Missions Team

MEMBERSHIP & EVANGELISM

The Membership & Evangelism ministry is composed of three main areas; Communication, Welcoming newcomers, and Congregational care.



This year provided unique challenges so the communications team has been hard at work to improve communications and facilitate connections at MVPC so that everyone might feel welcome, informed, and part of the church family. The team worked to improve internal communications by improving the Grapevine and weekly emails, helping with internal surveys

to gather information about how our small groups function and what their needs are, and developing the 2 room Zoom system to make it easier for everyone to get connected online. They also enhanced the church's presentation to the broader community with a revamped website and regular posts on the public Facebook page.

The membership ministry developed a program of organizing kind notes to be sent to members and friends of the congregation beginning with "Christmas Elves" in the Winter, continuing through "Rays of Sunshine" this Spring. They also purchased (and set up) tablets that can be checked out from the church office which make it as easy as possible for less-tech-savvy members and friends of the congregation to access worship and connect with other online church groups. The email prayer list has been revitalized so members and friends can ask for and receive prayers in a timely manner and the members only Facebook page has become a place to connect and share prayer requests as well. (You are welcome to connect on Facebook and please email prayers.mvpc@gmail.com if you'd like to be added to the prayer list or if you have a prayer request).



And, of course, we are blessed with a wonderful group of deacons who have continued to serve our community through this time of social distancing. With regular calls, contact, home visits and extended communion for our congregation, the deacons provide the bulk of our congregational care ministry.

In the coming year we look forward to again offering membership orientation courses. If you are interested please let Barbara or Pastor Dan know.

Elder Anne Long

HOSPITALITY

Programming of the Hospitality ministry was mostly dormant through the last year due to Covid restrictions. Still the congregation sought to live God's call: to be and become a welcoming, caring, and graciously safe community. We look forward to living out expressions of welcome in our newly refurbished building!

DISCIPLESHIP

Adult Ministry

There were a variety of opportunities for adults at MVPC to experience the session goals of a deepening life of prayer and discernment; caring for one another, the church, and the community; biblical literacy; and unified mission with the marginalized. Highlights included:

- The 9 am Sunday Bible Study met online weekly for an in depth study of the Bible.
- The Pause Prayer Group was created and met online weekly for an opportunity to learn and practice a variety of contemplative prayers.
- The Knitting Group met online twice a month for fellowship and fun while crafting.
- An online small group formed to study and grow in their understanding of where issues of race intersect faith. They read and discussed a number of books and articles including “What Lies Between Us” and “*Rediscipling the White Church*” which had a special session attended by the author, David Swanson.
- The congregation was introduced to mid-week story sharing groups during Lent and then continued the practice with new groups and topics between Easter and Pentecost. The “Growing Together Groups” created a new opportunity for deeper connection and faith formation, despite the restrictions of needing to meet online.
- Ongoing Small Groups met as they were able, online and in person and masked, to provide opportunities for much needed fellowship and support to one another.
- Online after worship fellowship provided more opportunities for people to connect with each other despite the isolation of the pandemic. We held a puppy parade to share animals, a pumpkin carving contest, a Christmas tree parade, and more.
- Women’s Fellowship continued to meet online for a time of faith and fellowship.
- A new quarterly Ministry Leader’s Enrichment was created with the first two initial meetings providing a “Brainstorming Symposium” with Chris Hoke, focusing on how to creatively incorporate the four ministry priorities Session has adopted into all of the groups and teams of the church.

In 2021-2022, we hope to continue to offer opportunities for growth for the adults in the congregation, including continued education and connection for the Ministry Leaders through the quarterly Enrichments, more opportunities for seniors in the congregation to connect with each other, and more opportunities for people to share their stories of how faith has transformed their lives. Please continue to keep the MVPC ministries in your prayers!

Adult Sunday School May 30, 2020 to May 31, 2021

Despite having to meet virtually via Zoom due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the adult Bible study class has had a successful year with an average attendance of 15-18 people, including one couple that has faithfully attended each week from Baton Rouge, Louisiana (Tim and Angela Loney). The class has spent the year working its way (albeit, very slowly) through the Book of Revelation, which it is now close to finishing.



Needless to say, Revelation has been a very challenging book, but the class members have pitched in with significant outside research efforts on their own. George Ridgeway has provided vivid, digital depictions every week that illustrate the sometimes confusing images described by John. Other members of the class have done detailed research on difficult, and often contentious passages. Discussion of those passages often continues into the following week via email exchanges among members.

The class has tried to establish a sense of “community” by setting aside approximately 30 minutes at the beginning of each session for members to report on significant events that have occurred in their lives during the prior week. We have shared prayers concerns, triumphs and setbacks. In short, we have done the best we can to show that we care for each other, even in the absence of in-person gatherings.

We have mourned the passing of Larry Cole who was a vital member of our class, and is sorely missed. Larry set an example for all of us of what it means to truly be “In Christ.”

The class is now discussing possible topics for our next study. The class convenes at 9:00 A.M. each Sunday, and we try to dismiss by 10:15 A.M. New members are always welcome. We try to encourage a full, open discussion of the issues, including opposing views, and doubts. There are only two rules: (1) no politics and (2) complete honesty.

Annual Ministry Report: Children, Youth and Family Ministries 2019-2020

The MVPC Children, Youth, and Family Ministry continued to provide opportunities to grow in faith and fellowship, despite the restrictions of the pandemic. Highlights included:



-Godly Play stories were presented during worship, continuing the Godly Play three year rotation of Old Testament, New Testament, and Church History, with an in depth look at stories of the New Testament.

-Elementary School aged kids met during a weekly Wednesday Kid's Group online and then outdoors and masked when it was safe to meet in person. Kids were given an opportunity to connect with each other through games, to grow in their faith through *Jesus Storybook Bible* stories and discussions, and to talk about how they were doing with the stress of the pandemic and online/hybrid learning.



-Middle and High School aged youth met twice a month and then once a week Youth Group online and then outdoors and masked when it was safe to meet in person. The youth grew in their faith as they watched *Bible Project* videos about faith and understanding the Bible, followed by a discussion. They also spent time playing games and getting an opportunity to have fun, connect with each other, and process the stress of the pandemic and hybrid learning.



-Family Small Group met monthly online and then outdoors and masked when it was safe to meet in person. While they were not able to enjoy their usual meal together, they spent time sharing "highs, lows, and buffalos", praying for each other, and playing games.



-Children, Youth, and Family were given the opportunity to participate in a number of events, despite the pandemic with the use of technology and creativity. The congregation got to enjoy the children and youth's Advent Scripture Reading Videos and an Easter Scripture Reading Video during worship. During worship and online programming, children, youth, and families were able to participate in an online version of some of their traditional events like the Pumpkin Party, Christmas Celebrations, Easter Egg Hunts, and more. This Summer, there will be an all ages Sunny Summer Sunday Program with an all ages Sunday School and a Worship Watch Party, Youth Movie Nights, and all ages Saturday Hikes, all

outdoors and masked. Plus, the Youth Group kids are excited to be able to head to Tall Timber Ranch Summer Camp for Jr. High and Sr. High Camp and they are very thankful for the continued financial support and prayers from the congregation.

In 2021-2022, we hope to continue to minister to Children, Youth, and Families with increased mission opportunities, returning to the Godly Play Classroom, returning to Youth Sunday School, and more! We also hope to get some of our Elementary aged kids participating in the Tall Timber Kid's Camp and to provide an opportunity for children, youth, and families to participate in a summer mission experience. Please continue to keep the MVPC Children, Youth, and Families in your prayers!

MINISTRY SUPPORT

Ministry Support Highlights for 2021

The purpose of Ministry Support is to provide a functional, operational, safe and comfortable facility in which we can worship and grow and from which we can serve our community.

This past year has been a truly unusual one, mixed with a life of worship and work away from the church, functioning with new health concerns, and, all the while accomplishing a major upgrade to the exterior of our facility in support of our “Forward To A Bright Future” Capital Campaign. This meant that the Buildings and Grounds portion of the Ministry support team had to shift into different operational roles of support in order to manage a major project and help keep up with the church maintenance.



The following is a list of roles and things that were accomplished in the past year while the church building was closed:

A Security Check Team was formed from the beginning and still runs today, making sure that our building remains safe and secure on a daily basis.

- A Construction Project Team worked on site with TRICO between June 2020 and January 2021 ensuring a well-managed completion of our campaign project.
- Monthly Emergency Fire Exit/Lighting inspections and testing was maintained.
- Annual and Semi-Annual Fire Inspections completed.
- Annual heater maintenance completed.
- Modified major landscape adjustments to accommodate the exterior construction work.
- Maintained the landscaping upkeep.
- Adjusted custodial and waste management work and schedules as needed.

Our Building & Grounds Team is in its 3rd year of function with 11 members, including five Elders. The make-up of the team is intended to be volunteers that will provide continuity as elder and/or management assignments change. Bruce leads the Building Maintenance Group and Dan Long leads the Grounds Group. We are always looking for active new talent, skills and ideas. **We really need more help with building & grounds-type upkeep.** If you are interested in joining us for either group, please contact Bruce or Dan for meeting and project details. Our regularly scheduled meeting is the 4th Thursday of the month from 6:30-8:30pm.

Although the sanctuary will likely be closed or restricted in use throughout the Summer while renovations are made, we feel excited about continuing to make a positive difference in the operational support and maintenance of our beloved church. It will be wonderful to come together in a renovated space, with sufficient communication infrastructure and internet bandwidth to maintain our online options for those who aren't physically present in the church building!

We would like to thank the many volunteers who have provided countless hours of effort in maintaining our buildings, grounds and systems throughout this past year.

MOUNT VERNON PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

June 6, 2021
11:45 am
Congregational Meeting
AGENDA

Opening Prayer

Elect Elders, Deacons,
Nominating and Endowment
Committee

Present Ministry Report and
Appreciate Volunteers

Closing Prayer



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ANNUAL MINISTRY REPORT 2020-2021

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