



# The Grapevine

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

Year 119, Issue 7  
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## Identity and Purpose

It feels to me like we've been on a covid roller-coaster lately. Back toward the beginning of the Summer we were weary of covid shut downs, but on that front, things were going well, the numbers were trending in the right direction, people were excited to open up and "get back to normal!" The Governor proclaimed that on June 23rd, the state would reopen and restrictions would be gone... poof. The Presbytery reminded us to have grace for everyone, recognizing that some people would be excited to re-open, others would find security in continuing practices which had become the new norm after months of distance, masks and isolation.

Here we are as the season is poised to change. School is starting and the church building is reopened and Covid isn't behind us like we thought it might be by now. This pandemic has changed everything. And over the course of the last few weeks, I've been glad to have the First letter of Peter accompanying me in study and prayer as I prepare for worship.<sup>1</sup> With this letter, Peter wanted to encourage people. He wanted to remind them of their identity as God's people, and what that meant for their lives. He wrote the letter to "exiles" who weren't exiles in the normal sense. They hadn't been forced from their homeland and yet everything had changed for them because they had decided to follow Jesus. So Peter was trying to be a stabilizing and an encouraging force in this new way of life. He wanted to encourage people and remind them and to teach them that the location of their identity was secure: they are God's people! As such they've been invited into "an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled and unfading" and what's more that the inheritance isn't only way out there in the future somewhere. It starts now! (Even if there are some trials in the meantime...)

Of course the trials we face are different, but the message just may be the same. We are God's people. Even in the midst of the trials we need to deal with (both societal and personal), the fact isn't going to change that we are God's people! Thanks be to God. After that identity is firmly established in the letter, Peter moves toward an invitation with purpose. In effect he says, "Act like God's people: do what is right in all circumstances, regardless of the consequences." The crown of the whole letter, in my estimation, comes from chapter 4 vs 8-10: "Above all, maintain constant love for one another, for love covers a multitude of sins. Be hospitable to one another without complaining. Like good stewards of the manifold grace of God, serve one another with whatever gift each of you has received." (By the way, that's the text for my sermon next week.)

So even as we remain covid weary, and in a lot of ways we wish things could "get back to normal," I want you to know: the location of your identity is secure; you've been invited into an incredible inheritance simply by being in relationship with Jesus; and the way that we see that best is when we live it by stewarding the gifts we've received and using them to serve each other (the church and the community).

Thanks for the ways you step out in faith and thanks be to God for all of you!  
Pastor Dan

<sup>1</sup> recognize First Peter has some issues... I don't think anyone can be a fan of the way it's been used historically to justify slavery and abuse by powerful people... I tried to address that in the second sermon on Chapter 2. Likewise the patriarchy on display in chapter 3 stands at odds with our modern sensibilities, but if we're able to overlook the worldview of the culture where he lived and wrote, he has some important things to share.

**Sunday Worship** 10:30 am Zoom  
Meeting Room 1 and in person,  
masked

Go to [zoom.us/j](https://zoom.us/j) enter  
Meeting ID: 360 424 7675  
Passcode: MVPC

## WHAT'S HAPPENING AT MVPC?

### Time to Pause

There's a lot going on in the world. There's a lot going on in our lives. It has never been more important to take time to pause and connect with God and with each other. If you've been feeling the desire to slow down, breathe deep, and learn new forms of prayer to draw you closer to God, please come and check out the MVPC Pause Prayer Group. If you've been wanting to grow closer, connect, and be a part of a close knit group at MVPC, please come and check out the MVPC Pause Prayer Group. If you are just curious and want to see what all the talk is about, please come and check out the MVPC Pause Prayer Group. The MVPC Pause Prayer Group meets every Thursday from 9 to 10 am in MVPC zoom room one for a time of check in, guided prayer, and reflection. Everyone is welcome!



### MVPC Cancer Support Group



Cancer. The word no one wants to hear their doctor or loved one say. It has affected so many of us. The MVPC Cancer Support Group welcomes all those who are coping or have survived cancer. We are a safe place to meet for sharing and prayer. Please join us on Zoom in Room 1 on the second Tuesday of every month at 6:30 pm.

Please do not hesitate to call Pete, Tom, Rosemary or the church office 360-424-7675 if you have any questions.

### Growing in Faith through the Godly Play Program

The stories of our faith form a foundation that guides our understanding of God, others, and ourselves. As beloved children of God, we are always called to grow in our faith and understanding. When we not only listen to stories of faith, but engage in the stories of faith together by wondering, sharing our thoughts, and taking time to reflect, we build a faith deeply rooted in love. In the Godly Play program, we gather together in a circle for a time of sharing, prayer, story, wonder, and reflection. This year we will be offering the Godly Play Program both in person in the MVPC Godly Play room and online on Sundays at 9:30 am. Everyone is invited to be a part of the 2021-2022 Godly Play circle whether you are a child, youth, or even an adult, whether you come as an individual or with a loved one or with your whole family, and whether you know all the stories or are brand new to faith. Feel free to come check it out. Feel free to let yourself wonder. Feel free to let yourself grow.

### Chickens on the Ceiling

There were small rubber chickens stuck to the ceiling of Good Shepherd Hall for about a year. Why? Because MVPC is a place that welcomes youth, those teens who are navigating the crazy time between childhood and adulthood. The church is a safe place for them to be themselves, welcomed with all their fantastic questions, crazy styles, and quirky ways. The church is a place where youth are encouraged to grow in their faith as they grow in their understanding of the world. During the 2021-2022 Program Year the MVPC Youth Group will meet after worship every Sunday, providing a time for sharing what's really going on in life, praying for each other and the world, learning and growing in faith, and, yes, for crazy youth group games. But why chickens? Because the chaotic time of being a teen requires a bit of silliness as well as depth. Everything seems to be changing and you feel more and more like an adult but you also desperately need to play and have fun. So, if you notice rubber chickens on the ceiling, see youth giggling together in worship, or notice that pizza boxes are overflowing the garbage can, please say a little prayer of thanks for the MVPC youth. Thanks!



## Opportunities to Serve, Grow and Fellowship Together

- ♥ Do you have a heart for Children? The Godly Play team is looking for more helpers to be a part of the volunteer rotation for Godly Play on Sundays at 9:30 am.
- ♥ Do you like to laugh and have deep discussions with today's teens? The Youth Group team is looking for volunteers to be mentors for our youth, connecting with a youth and helping during youth group once a month after worship.
- ♥ Do you want to support Skagit Valley mom's by helping to develop a MOPS (Mothers of Preschoolers) Program at MVPC? Once the MOPS program starts meeting (sometime in 2022), would you potentially enjoy playing with kids while their Mom's meet for a time of fellowship and fun at the MVPC MOPs program?
- ♥ Do you care about MVPC's Discipleship Ministries for children, youth, and adults? Would you like to help prayerfully plan and create programs, events, and more to help everyone at MVPC grow in their faith? We would love to have you as part of the Discipleship Team that meets monthly for a time of prayer, discernment, and planning.

Talk with Rebecca Holland about any of these opportunities.

### Small Groups

The Stanwood small group has been meeting on zoom since Spring of 2020. This summer we met at the main Gazebo @ Warm Beach and have been able to Zoom from there also. Currently we are studying Acts, after studying the Presbytery Lenten series. Prior to that we studied all of Luke on Zoom for some of 2020. Currently we physically meet the 2nd & 4th Tuesday at the gazebo (weather permitting).

This picture is of Betty Anne Friedericks, Dee Jobe, Ruth & David Neal, Glenda & Bob Mitchell and Craig Riggs.



### MVPC Grounds Update

We've been blessed with a wonderful outdoor space surrounding our church building. Our children and neighborhood kids use the playground and play Gaga ball in the Court. We had an outdoor wedding this summer on the circular lawn. We've installed a Community food Pantry by the entrance to the South parking lot. Going forward we'd like to create a Contemplative/ Meditative walk on the West side behind the sanctuary. Planning for this project needs to happen this fall. There will be opportunities in mid September to walk the space and discuss ideas. The idea is to create the plan and budget by December with implementation to start in the Spring. If you would like to be part of the process to help develop the vision for this project contact Dan Long. Check the directory or call the church office, 360-424-7675, for contact information. A project in the near future is a drainage project by the South Entrance and Good Shepherd Hall entrance that will require digging and then replanting to repair the area.

We have weeded, planted and are weeding out again the mound on the North parking turnaround. Rhododendrons are being pruned and Fresh bark has been spread in front of the Sunday School windows.

A special thank you to Underground Ministries who have taken on the courtyard which has been weeded, planted, Sunshades hung and is now a beautiful, restful location.

A thank you goes out to the entire grounds team; Bruce, Doug, Jim, Ted, Sumiko, Lou, Leslie and everyone who has pulled a weed or watered a plant. If you want to join this wonderful team we are currently meeting online the 4th Thursday of the month or set up a time to meet in person with Dan or Bruce.



# Birthdays & Anniversaries

## September

- 3-Anne Long  
*Mike & Katie Weeks*
- 4-Micah Hall
- 5-Megan Nash
- 7-*Joe & Sandra Seabott*
- 8-Liz Rogers
- 9-Pete Papadopulos
- 13-Eden Cooksey  
Liz Cooksey
- 14-Vicki McCarty  
*John and Connie Shultz*
- 15-Phanice Olwete
- 20-*Dan & Anne Long*
- 21-*Gary & Vicki Jones*  
Betty Rogers
- 22-Val Smith
- 23-Michaela Holland  
Dee Jobe
- 29-Claire Coalwell
- 30-Dan Holland



## October

- 1-Nathan Curtis
- 2-Patti Allen
- 3-Sue Berger
- 4-John Shultz
- 8-Cameron and Courtney Hazelwood
- 9-Ben Rogers
- 10-Rose Cooksey
- 11-Frances Oyamo
- 12-Suzanne Gilbert
- 13-Susan Schlumberger
- 15-Darren Overby
- 18-Matilda Maas
- 20-Doris Hansen  
Rose Cooksey
- 26-Sadie Rutledge
- 27-*Don & Susan Schlumberger*
- 28-Amanda Scoby  
Merlin Zimmerly



## Women's fellowship

Gather for Bible Study and Fellowship at 9:00 am the fourth Saturday of the month on Zoom Room 2. Bring a friend and make more new friends.

### 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. Call Patti Allen for more information.



### Thank you to:

- \* All who have shared stories in worship this summer.
- \* The design committee for making wise choices, although hard at times, on the sanctuary design.
- \* The committee working with the contractor, Trico, on the remodel contract
- \* God, our creator, for walking with us through difficult times.
- \* Thanks to all who helped in the office during Barbara's surgery recovery



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

### Songs for The Heart - by Vicki McCarty

An invitation to those who would enjoy a daily song including the story behind it and some devotional thoughts. At the end of 2020, Iva Rauch began sending Ron, my husband, a recording of her playing piano and singing a favorite hymn. It was her way of helping him through the trying time as he dealt with his health ordeals. I began sharing them with a few people who were going through hard times, caregivers, those who just loved hearing the old hymns and those who just loved hearing Iva sing. She has continued sending the songs and we're happy to share them. If you - or someone you know - would like to receive the mailing, just let me know and I will add you to the list. Send an email to Vicki McCarty. For contact information contact the church office 360-424-7675 or the church directory.



**MVPC  
Church  
Leadership**



Session		Class Year	Board of Deacons		Class Year
Pat	Papadopoulos	2022	Tom	Howard	2022
Bill	DeHon	2022	David	Reamer	2022
Joe	Seabott	2023	Arlene	Andersen	2023
Becky	Goodell	2023	Rosemary	Gale	2023
Bruce	Lavers	2024	Ward	Ernst	2024
Sarah	Maas	2024	Kitty	Willis	2024

**August 2021 Session Summary**

- Added a regular standing Session Meeting for Prayer/Study/Development
- Reestablished the Moderator’s Council to set Session Agenda
- Delegated authority to design Ministry Coordinator Role to Pastor
- Approved Partnership with Resurrection Fellowship, a ministry of Underground Ministries

**Assistant Financial Secretary and Treasurer**

MVPC is in need of a volunteer who enjoys working with financial statements and computers to be trained by and work alongside Leslie Braun (our Financial Secretary) and assume the duties when she’s out of town. This is a one year commitment renewable as long as it’s working for the church and you’re enjoying yourself!

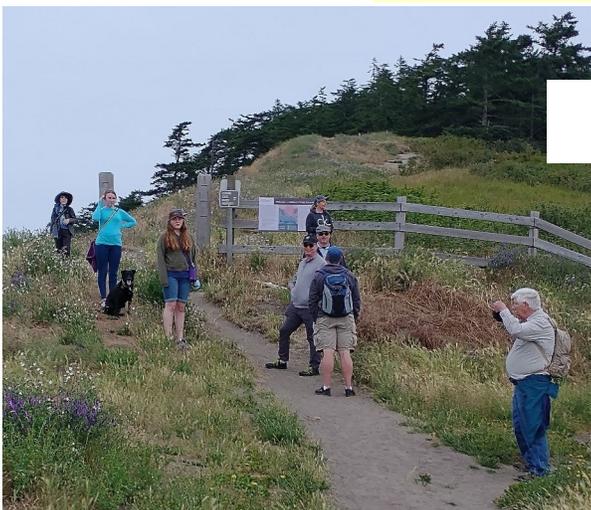
Also needed is an assistant for our treasurer, Anne Long, to back her up. Training is available. If you enjoy paying bills and working with numbers consider using your gifts in either of these positions.



**Back to  
School  
Blessing  
2021**



**Picture synopsis of summer 2021**



**Hiking**



Picture synopsis of summer 2021 cont.



Tall Timber  
Camp



Youth  
Group



Kids  
Group

Sunny Summer Sunday



Back in the  
building



## Mission at MVPC

The newest addition to our church is a Little Pantry. This is an outreach to our community that we hope is well used. As the sign says, "Take what you need; leave what you can".

When the concept was suggested, Doug Catton was quick to volunteer his skills along with his woodworker neighbor. They found a great plan to build and put together a great project. As you can see from the picture, Doug is a great delegator: he got his neighbor to lead the building of the pantry and Dan Long to dig the hole for the post! Great work all! *And thanks so much for your efforts which should help our community.*



*Rebecca and the youth will be monitoring the pantry to keep it stocked and organized. Our special thanks to them. Donations from the congregation can be placed directly in the pantry, or the box in the church office if the pantry is full.*

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## Join the MVPC Missions Team

Do you have a heart for missions, love local service projects, and want to serve others by helping to prayerfully discern the missions of MVPC? The Missions Team would love to have you involved! We meet on the 1st Thursdays of the month at 1 pm to support, encourage, and discern MVPC missions and local service projects. if you would like to find out more please call the church office or talk with David Gale .

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## Become a part of the MVPC Friendship House Team

The Friendship House Team is serving a delicious spaghetti dinner to those in need in Skagit Valley on the 4th Thursday of every month and we could use your help! We are looking for volunteers to come from 3:30 to 5 pm to help prepare the meal and from 5 to 6:30 pm to help serve the meal. We recommend that you be fully vaccinated. Please call the church office or talk with Laurel Coalwell to find out more details.

## Care Pals ~ More than Just Crafting

You have tremendous value to God and to the church. God gives everyone unique gifts and talents. Care Pals, a mission group at our church, has a perfect opportunity for you to use those gifts to brighten the day of residents at a care facility in Burlington.

We are looking for volunteers for just 1 hour on Mondays. No skills are required. Just a love of God and a willingness to share that love with others.

You will be surprised at the spiritual and emotional rewards you receive when you volunteer for Care Pals.

If interested or just want more information, contact Linda Ream or Molly Howard. Check the directory or call the church office 360-424-7675 for contact information.



# The Grapevine

Mount Vernon Presbyterian Church

**Rev. Dan Holland, Pastor**

1511 East Broadway

Mount Vernon, WA 98274

(360) 424-7675

<http://www.MountVernonPres.org>

MVPC is...and is becoming...a caring, welcoming and graciously safe community

**Know God's Love**

Deepening Life of Prayer and discernment

**Share it with Others**

Caring for one Another, the church and the Community



8th Annual Homeless for a Night Fundraiser

September 25, 2021  
5-7 pm



**WHO:** You! If you want to learn more about helping families in need, this is the event for you! Invite your friends, family & neighbors too!

**WHAT:** A fun, informative fundraiser for all ages!  
Games, Concert, Food & Client Testimonials

**WHERE:** Inspire Church - 805 Township Street  
Sedro Woolley, WA 98284

**WHEN:** Saturday, September 25, 5-7 PM

**WHY:** Families in our community are experiencing homelessness every day. We want to bring awareness & raise funds for these families with children in Skagit Valley.



**COME JOIN US FOR  
FOOD, MUSIC, FUN & LEARN  
ABOUT HELPING FAMILIES IN  
NEED!**

**Family Promise  
Currently has  
Matching  
Funds!  
Every \$1 you  
Donate  
equals \$2!**