



The Grapevine

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

Year 118, Issue 7
July 2020



Hymn for July by Josh VerHalen

As I sit here, wrapped in a blanket on the last day of “Juneuary”, waiting for a sign that we’ll see a “summer” this year, I can’t help but feel like this month’s hymn story should be a Christmas one. It is, after all, halfway to and halfway from the joyous season on our church calendar! Many of you who know me well probably know of my love for Old World renaissance and folk music, so it’s no surprise that I’ve decided to talk about “What Child is This”, a beautiful poem by William Chatterton Dix set to a nearly 400 year old folk tune.

In 1865, William Chatterton Dix was 29 years old and suffered from a near-fatal bout of sickness. He was afflicted with severe depression, and this near-death experience changed him completely. While undergoing recovery, he experienced a spiritual awakening that inspired him to start crafting hymns. He became an avid reader of the Bible and subsequently, he wrote the lyrics of “What Child is This?” and incorporated the tune of the celebrated English folk song, “Greensleeves.”

Greensleeves was already one of the most aesthetic and beloved melodies of the time when Dix set his now famous words to it. Although it wasn’t a quintessential Christmas tune yet, Greensleeves’ association with the season can be dated back to approximately 1642. It was paired back then with Waits’ carol titled, “The Old Year Now Away is Fled.” Also, William Shakespeare refers to this popular tune twice in his famous play - “Merry Wives of Windsor.”

The words of “What Child is This” are inspired by one of Dix’s verses titled “The Manger Throne.” It urges humanity to accept Christ. The eloquent melody is haunting, and its beautiful essence reiterates the “Adoration of the Shepherds” who paid a visit to Jesus during Nativity. The lyrics pose questions that

Cont. next page

Re-Discipling Series starting Wednesday July 15th 7 pm on Zoom

A discussion based on the book **Re-Discipling the White Church** by David W. Swanson

Available at [Intervarsity Press](https://www.intervarsitypress.com/). Physical books can be purchased from your [local bookseller](#) or [Amazon](https://www.amazon.com/).

Kids Camp (Online) 2020 is coming!



MVPC is co-hosting an online Kid's Camp July 13th to 24th on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays from 9 am to 10 am for kids heading in to Preschool through Middle School. Please let Rebecca Holland know how you would like to get involved:

* We are in need of a few folks who understand Zoom to help manage our meetings. If we have enough folks, they could even rotate through the 6 meetings so that they don't have to be at all of them! This is a great way to help behind the scenes!

* And of course, **please pray for the volunteers and kids** as they attempt this new format!

reflect what the shepherds might be pondering about during the encounter and subsequently offers a response to such questions.

The carol starts with a rhetorical question, condensing the concept of childbirth within a single paragraph. The poet has successfully painted a classic picture of Nativity - the Child Christ sleeping on Mother Mary's lap, as the angels and shepherds provide the background score with "anthems sweet" and "watch are keeping" respectively.

The second stanza offers a momentary reference to "mean estate," or less than an ideal condition. The poet registers similarity with the first stanza with another rhetorical question. He wonders why the Child Christ should be displayed in such a humble environment. The poet tries to decipher the answer analytically, and reasons that the "mean estate" that refers to the birth of Christ has its roots entangled with his future sufferings. The second stanza alludes to the anguish and distress of Christ's future.

The poet utilizes the final stanza to expand the emphasis on the people attending the humble scene. He draws inspiration from the Epiphany season and focuses on the metaphorical gifts that are being brought for the infant. His setting flouts the conventional structure of time quite comprehensively, like everyone, starting from the "king" or the "peasant" is offered an equal chance.

The meaningful lyrics and the soulful melody of the carol evoke a palpable scenario. It gives the feeling that God himself has transformed into the form of man through this baby, and that the almighty has arrived to rescue humanity. It's a certain and clear sign, which the humans went on to declare with courage and ingenuity. The tribute is fitting, as humans marvel and wonder in amazement the true sense of inevitability, "What child is this?"

Meet Elder Chris Hoke

Hi, friends at MVPC.

I'm going into my third year as an elder on session here, since I was invited to partner in a unique way with MVPC. That is, as you have noticed the last two years, my family and I do not regularly attend worship here! We worship at Burlington Lutheran Church, where we began a full year *before* the invite came from Presbytery and MVPC leadership to create a new missional partnership between Underground Ministries and the ministry programs and leadership here. Dean Strong, the stated clerk of Northwest Coast Presbytery, has since recommended more churches try this kind of partnership: where the Session, like the Board, is not just made up of insiders, but has strategic voices and stakeholders in the community the ministry aims to serve--and the church's aim should be to serve the its surrounding community, not just itself.

With this partnership, our Underground Ministries' office happily calls MVPC's beautiful conference room our Headquarters, and I am here inside the church as much as Dan and Barbara! Before COVID, this meant formerly incarcerated and former gang members in the area, working with Underground Ministries, find welcome, prayer and belonging in this building regularly. Our partnership has created fresh conversations in Session meetings, where I can bring my experience in nonprofit ministry work to agenda items. It's been an honor over the last two years to be part of the discernment and updating of MVPC's mission, priorities, and small group focus to strengthen the church's ministries all toward Knowing God's Love and Sharing It With Others. I am humbled by the trust of you all here to receive me when I preach, lead the Fasting from Fear Lenten Journey, help facilitate the One Parish One Prisoner team, and help shape the upcoming summer reading series, "Rediscipling the White Church," co-hosted by Pat Papadopoulos and Paul O'Donnell, starting Wednesdays at 7pm on July 15.

NEW SUMMER BOOK SERIES:

[RE-DISCIPLING THE WHITE CHURCH: From Cheap Diversity to True Solidarity](#)

by David W. Swanson

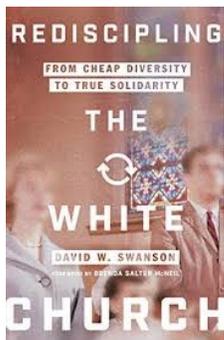
Christians across America are asking important, difficult and overdue questions about the role and work of the church in this age of reckoning with America's past and sins. Our MVPC discipleship ministry is joining other Presbyterian churches in the region who are also prayerfully reading David Swanson's timely book together, *Re-Discipling the White Church*. What better way to enter these difficult themes than as a matter of growing as disciples of Jesus?

[Order your copy of the book here](#) JOIN US via Zoom Wednesdays 7-8pm, starting July 15 - August 19.

The book series will be guest-facilitated on Zoom by Kevin Riley, our mission partner and pastor in Concrete, and **co-hosted by MVPC members Pat Papadopulos and Paul O'Donnell**. Pat and Paul invite you to join this learning journey in their own words below:

Pat Papadopulos: *My daughter's best friend from high school was a transfer from Compton, Los Angeles--a young black girl moved to her grandma's to be raised in a "safe" community. She was like a daughter to us yet I never had a conversation about her black life or even about race in general. Now I feel Jesus is pushing me into this conversation. I am unable to put this book down. It is clarifying and it opens a new perspective to me about how I act out what Jesus teaches (and doesn't teach...). This is such a good conversation. I look forward to being in it with you all!*

Paul O'Donnell: *I have been interested in issues of race and equality for years but didn't know what I could do to be a support to people of color. In reading the book *White Fragility* by Robin Diangelo and listening to discussions on race in several podcasts, I am growing in my understanding of how society has many built-in aspects that build advantage for me as a white person. Facing my biases is not comfortable, but I feel deeply it is what Jesus is calling me to do. I look forward to learning with others as Pat and I try moderating a conversation together! I look forward to growing with other Christians about how we can more closely follow Jesus' path.*



MVPC

Church Leadership

2019-2020

		Class Year	Ministry Area			Class Year
Elders				Deacons		
Patti	Allen	2020	Hospitality	Brian	Anderson	2020
Becky	Goodell	2020	Hospitality	Sarah	Catton	2020
Bob	Rauch	2020	Discipleship	Colleen	Higbee	2020
Bob	Higbee	2020	Ministry Support	Toni	Hulbert	2020
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	Capital Campaign Chair	Tom	Howard	2022
Bill	DeHon	2022	Mission	Sandi	Seabott	2022
Gail	LaFleur	2022	Worship	Sumiko	Shinozaki	2022

Notes from June 16th Session meeting

- The meeting opened with listening prayer and check-in of those present.
- Reports were received from the loan task force and the construction task force.
- Discussion was held on how to finance the \$60,000 into the MDC investment certificates in order to obtain a 1% lower interest rate on the loan from MDC.
- Discussion was held on exploring a study of the book "Rediscipling the White Church" to opening a discussion on racial justice in the framework of Christian discipleship in the wake of the recent protests.
- The Covid Response Taskforce has started meeting and is using the Presbytery's guidelines as their blueprint for moving forward.
- Dan (and Rebecca) will be on vacation June 22-July 5. Doug Bunnell, pastor of First Presbyterian, Bellingham will be preaching on June 28. Chris Hoke will be preaching July 5.

July 2020 Children, Youth, and Family Ministries

MVPC Family Online Summer Opportunities



Sundays 10:30 am	All Ages Worship
Sundays 9 am	Bible Study
1st & 3rd Sundays 5 pm	Family Small Group
1st & 3rd Sundays 7 pm	Youth Group
Wed 7 pm (starting 7/15)	Book Study

Contact the church to find out about these and additional opportunities and to get on the mailing list for weekly Zoom meeting numbers and passwords.

Summer (Online) Youth Group

Our Youth Group is teaming up with the Youth Groups from First United Methodist Church and St. Paul's Episcopal Church for Summer Youth Group on the 1st and 3rd Sundays of July and August from 7 to 8 pm. Youth heading in to 6th through 12th grade are invited to join the online faith, fellowship, and fun! Contact Pastor Dan or the church to get on the list.



Kid'S (ONLINE) CaMP 2020: MAKING a DIFFERENCE

Preschool through
Middle School

Games, Songs, Stories, Crafts, and
Special Community Guests

Co-Hosted on Zoom by
Mount Vernon Presbyterian
And First United Methodist

You are the light of the world.

Matthew 5:14

Register today at MountVernonPres.org.

Questions? Contact Rebecca Holland, Director of Children and Family Ministries.

The Creative Corner

Being "shut in and out" does have its advantages, so it is said. We'd like to take advantage of your attention. As part of our "continuing education" for the church, we are creating a "Creative Corner" segment for the Grapevine. Now, we know that there is a lot of talent out there just waiting to bud out and be shared with everyone. Won't you help keep this newly created segment of the Grapevine going with your creative contributions? Create and submit your talent piece via email to the church office (mvpc@mountvernonpres.org) to entertain all of us, and become a beacon of hope while we are all separated from one another. It can be a poem, a short story, a story about a particular talent you have and how it came about, funny antidote of something you experienced, a photo of something cheerful, artwork, something your kids/grandkids did, anything.



A Note from Larry Cole —

Just a note to say thank you for the amazing computer generated Bible study with Bob and friends and being able to take part in our worship services. This is all quite amazing to this old codger. I had to write my doctoral dissertation on my old Olympic Selectric typewriter, but fortunately a church member offered Lynn and I their condominium at Newport Beach so I could view the ocean out a picture window while I typed 250 pages of my dissertation.

A Squirrel's Lament by Leslie Ann Braun

My mom finally kicked me out of the nest, along with my brothers and sisters, when we were still fairly young. Even though we were now on our own, she made sure we were trained, and fully clothed in yummy, soft and warm fur coats, with a very fluffy tail to help us with our balance. She taught us well in how to find seeds, berries, acorns, and mushrooms to fill our tummies, and how to stash away food to sustain us during times of scarcity. One day, I came across very strange structures that looked like they might have some edible seeds in them. These edibles were put there by a "monstrous", two-pawed creature that was very scary to me. Getting to these seeds, however, turned out to be quite a chore. Once I mastered the process, it was well worth the fight for these delicious tiny morsels. You see, there were these tiny holes that made it difficult for me to get my paw or mouth into. Not only that, there were obstacles that impeded my advances that made me more determined to succeed. Giving up was not an option. I attempted different ways to mount these structures, sometimes climbing up on an overhanging tree branch and approaching the structure from the top, many times slipping and falling to the ground. With these failures, I devised another way by jumping from a tree branch directly on to one of these contraptions, forcing me to hang on for dear life. Once I found my purchase, I was able to hang on, sometimes upside down, and finally getting my hard-won reward. The key was to never give up. My next endeavor was to figure out how to keep this territory to myself and not share it with ANYBODY, an endeavor that I'm still working on! I did, however, succumb to the flying-in-the-air creatures, as chasing them away was to no avail. Trying to keep my siblings away was the challenge of my very being. I would chase the intruder up a tree, and then we would chase each other around and around, back and forth, back and forth, up and down, jumping from one branch to another, screaming at the top of our lungs, and fighting for our rights for this domain. We would continue the challenge until one of us gave up, and then went back to eating. After all that work, we would end up eating from the same ground anyway, squeaking at each other to make sure our presence was made known. I look forward to the day when all of them leave and go find their own territories and leave me in peace. I can only hope that the resident owl I see once in a while is very hungry tonight and helps me in my quest for this domain! Life is very hard and I can use all the help I can get!!

UPDATES FROM MISSION PARTNERS



Prayer request from ccfMinistry (Campus Christian Fellowship)

When Johanna of ccf wrote in a previous newsletter about a young man, Levi, she shared the amazing story of how he gave his life to Christ about a year ago. Now she is asking for prayer for his healing. He had a stroke in mid-April caused by bleeding on his brain and spent several days in intensive care. The bleeding has gotten worse and doctors say there is nothing they can do without causing more damage. They have told him to wait it out and see if anything changes by the time of the next scan. He experiences constant headaches and evidently some amnesia. We are praying for a miracle. He gave permission to share his story. Prayers for Johanna and staff as they walk through this time with Levi. It is not common in campus ministry to walk with someone through the high likelihood of death .

A Testimonial from past guests in Family Promise Skagit:

Katie and Rob's story:

Family Promise came to our rescue right when we needed them most. We were staying in our car, homeless, trying to find shade, moving to different parking spots throughout the day to shield us from the summer sun. I was 6 months pregnant.

Being at Family Promise gave us a place to stay safe and stable during a difficult time in our lives. We were able to welcome our son Chace into the world without worrying about having our son live homeless in our car after he was born. He is 5 months old now and healthy as ever.

Today as we move out of Family Promise, I think about all the milestones we reached and amazing memories made while in the program. My fiance Rob found his job doing roofing while in the program. My son Chace was born while in the program. We celebrated Chace's first Christmas while in the program. We will be forever grateful for all the help we received from Family Promise during our stay. All the amazing volunteers and staff were always so kind and supportive during a very scary time in our lives and helped us find our way back on the right path.

Care Pals Update

Thanks to the team headed by Linda Ream finding a way to continue the weekly craft projects at Where the Heart Is care facility. Each week since the beginning of the shutdown craft kits have been assembled and delivered to the activity director there who helps residents with their projects. Can't wait to be able to again be there in person and have the ability to give hugs. If you would like to help, our elderly residents in care facilities need us more than ever. Sending cards or asking the facility what they could do would be appreciated.



2020census.gov.

Skagit County has info from **62%** of residents - Be sure and be counted!

The faith community is being asked to spread the word about the importance of responding to the Census questionnaire and being counted. The count impacts funding for school breakfasts and lunches, Pell grants for college, roads, bridges, senior and community centers, hospitals and housing programs. It also determines our representation in Congress. Grocery stores and retail all use the data to determine where to open new stores and reduce checkout lines. Library funding is allocated depending on the

Building and Grounds Team has been busy!

- ♥ Custodial service re-started 6/8, Mondays only, in main areas used by support, staff and ministry folks. Main bathrooms will have floors stripped & cleaned. Water line flushing is done each week in the kitchens.
- ♥ A building security check is done each day.
- ♥ The kitchen refrigerator was cleaned.
- ♥ Each month the emergency lights are tested.
- ♥ The building use policy is being updated for liability and indemnification.
- ♥ Lawn maintenance continues each week as well as weed pulling.
- ♥ Plants were trimmed way back from the building for access during construction and debris hauled to recycling.

Construction Project Update

By mid-July we expect that Session will have approved Phase 1 of work to be performed by Trico Companies, LLC. This phase of work will address the building envelope: roofing, siding and some windows. We will replace current hot tar roofing on the flat roof with a slightly sloped roof that will correct drainage issues. We will replace aging composition roofing elsewhere with metal roofing to match that already on the building.

The sanctuary siding will be replaced with metal siding in a color similar to the existing material. Other siding panels will be replaced with Hardie Plank lapped siding.

You can see an architect’s rendering of the proposed envelope work and a sample of the proposed metal siding in the south window of the narthex. Within a few days we will add physical samples of the Hardie Plank siding with two colors recommended by Carletti Architects. If you have questions please don’t hesitate to contact any member of the Construction Task Force: Bill DeHon, Gary Jones, Pete Papadopoulos, Bob Higbee or Pastor Dan Holland.

Thank you to:

- ♥ Building and Grounds committee for maintaining and improving the landscape.
- ♥ The Covid task group for beginning to determine how we can gather again.
- ♥ Rebecca Holland and others for creating an online Kid’s Camp experience.
- ♥ The teachers and leaders of Bible classes and study groups.
- ♥ Ben Cooksey and Pastor Dan for leading the youth in the interim.
- ♥ Liturgists who help with the worship 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. mvpcc@mountvernonpres.org

July Birthdays & Anniversaries

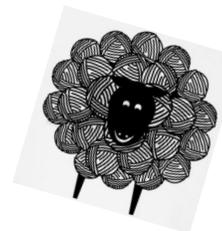
- 1-Gary Jones
- 7-Ken & Sandy Ball
- Annie Rogers
- 11-Wendy Bartholomew
- 12-Tonnie Boer
- 13-Spencer Fox
- Don & Danya Wolf
- 14-Abram Hoke
- 14-Jean Byron
- 19-Tom & Molly Howard
- Barbara Koozer
- 20-Elaine McIvor
- 21-Sue Farrar
- Don Semrau



- 24-Shayla Brown
- 25-Phil McLaughlin
- 26-Malik Sumareh
- 27-Debbie Parker
- 29-Peter & Karin Brown
- Josh VerHalen

KNITTING ON ZOOM

The second and fourth Tuesdays of July 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.



Mount Vernon Presbyterian Church

Growing followers of Christ

Our Vision Statement

Encounter The Hope of the living God through Jesus

Engage One Another in authentic friendship

Embrace The World with the heart and hands of Jesus