



MOUNT VERNON PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Growing Followers Of Christ Since 1902

The Grapevine

I am the vine; You are the branches.

John 15:5

Year 118, Issue 11

November 2020

Prayerfully Preparing for Thanksgiving

I want to invite you to prayerfully remember what you are most thankful for in life. If you are inspired, take a few minutes to make a list and see how many things you can think of that fill you with a feeling of thankfulness. People. Experiences. Emotions. Whatever comes to your mind. There's really no right or wrong way to do this, so do what works for you. If you are able, try to select just a few of the things that you are especially thankful for in life. Take a few moments to appreciate everything about them. What is it that makes you so thankful for them? What does thankfulness feel like for you? Is it simply an emotion or is it more?

Now, I want to invite you to remember your favorite Thanksgivings. Remember all the Thanksgivings you've celebrated, looking back through the years, and pick one to focus on. It might have been when you were a child, sitting at the kid's table and eating a big piece of pie. Or perhaps when you hosted a thanksgiving dinner for the first time as an adult and had to look up how to carve the turkey? Or when you were filled with pride looking out to a table full of your grandkids laughing? Or perhaps there was a year you joined others in serving those in need, filling your heart as you shared food with those less fortunate? Take a few moments to remember everything about your favorite Thanksgiving. Who was there? What did it smell like and taste like? What were you feeling in the moment? Why was it your favorite Thanksgiving? What made it special?

Holding all your thankfulness and your memories of favorite Thanksgivings from the past, invite God to help you look prayerfully toward this coming Thanksgiving. How, in the midst of 2020, a pandemic, political tensions, and all the trials of life, will you move into Thanksgiving holding on to your thankfulness and holding on to those moments that make Thanksgiving special? What can you still do, while keeping family, friends, and yourselves safe, to celebrate and be thankful? Take the time to prayerfully discern your plan for Thanksgiving 2020. What will you do to celebrate? What will make it special? How can you create new memories to look back on with thankfulness? 2020 is the perfect time to come up with new traditions and to try new ways of celebrating. Thanksgiving doesn't have to be the Norman

Cont. next page



Sunday Worship

On Zoom

10:30 am

Meeting #972 436 044

Rockwell painting of everyone gathering around the turkey. In fact, my guess is that the favorite Thanksgivings that most of us hold on to and remember with thankfulness were far from perfect. Perhaps it was the year the power went out or when someone forgot to defrost the turkey or when things weren't so great and you celebrated anyway. Take time now to prayerfully plan how, in the midst of 2020, with all its challenges, you will celebrate and be thankful anyway.



Forward to a Bright Future Capital Campaign
Progress Report as of October 24, 2020

Nearing the end of our first year of the 3-year campaign, we wanted to share with you how we are progressing through the active part of our construction project along with the financial aspects related to funding it.

First, we would like to remind you that our commitment is to complete as much of our priorities as possible, not to spend more than what has been pledged and to pay for it within the three years of the campaign, ending December 31, 2022.

The actual construction of the project began in August 2020. Through the end of October, nearly all the major exterior work should be completed leaving interior repairs and cleanup left to complete in November. So far, we have received two major TRICO invoices for August and September of which has been paid for with funds from the construction loan. We anticipate drawing the last of the loan amount to help pay for the invoice, along with on-hand funds in the bank, for October.

The following provides a financial summary of the Campaign and the Construction Project.

Thank you all for your commitments and support during this difficult time and year. It is greatly appreciated.

Income: We initially received **75** pledges. Since inception, **58** households have made partial contributions; **11** have made full pledges for the three years; and **16** donations were received from those who *did not* pledge.

<u>Total Pledged</u>	<u>Total Received</u>	<u>Balance of Cash in the Bank</u>
\$996,408	\$448,724	\$293,373

Expenses paid to date from cash on hand (pre-draw): \$142,177

Consulting, Legal, Admin. & Financing Fees: 98% paid. Balance of consulting fee \$2,000 by the end of 2020.

payment of

Construction Design & Build:

Phase-I, Design Phase TRICO Contract: 95% paid (5% holdback)
Phase-II, Build Phase TRICO Contract: \$758,454

Construction Draw:

Construction Loan Amount: \$600,000
Draws taken (2) August & September: \$509,497
Draw Balance Remaining: \$ 90,503



With kind regards and God's Grace, Peace and Blessings be with you,
Mary Ellen and Bruce Lavers, Continuation Directors

Stewardship 2020

During this time of year when we are asking you to consider your pledge to support the ministry of MVPC in 2020, here's a reminder of some scriptural guidance for giving.

- Voluntary, not compulsory (8:3; 9:5, 7)
- Generous, not tightfisted (8:2; 9:6, 13)
- Joyful, not begrudging (8:2-3, 11-12; 9:7)
 - Purposeful, not arbitrary (9:7)
 - Within one's means (8:11-13)

Thank you for your faithfulness to God's work through MVPC!

Blessings, Your Stewardship Committee:

David Gale, Bill DeHon, Becky Goodell, Leslie Braun and Pastor Dan

Taken October 20, 2020



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—Nov 21. We start the meeting at 9 AM and welcome women as they are able to arrive.

**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

Notes from October 20th Session meeting

- The Session meeting was opened with Check-in and Listening Prayer,.
- Membership and Evangelism reported that the Communications team is at work, the Prayer ministry is being revived, and discussed entry points for both new and current people.
- Covid 19 Reopening Guidelines were approved with the inclusion of some changes.
- The financial report shows a deficit for the year of (\$1,537.64)
- The session adopted the 2020 budget with no changes for 2021.
- As of October 2020, Anne Long is Treasurer and Beth Tacker is Assistant Treasurer.



Godly Play Stories in Worship

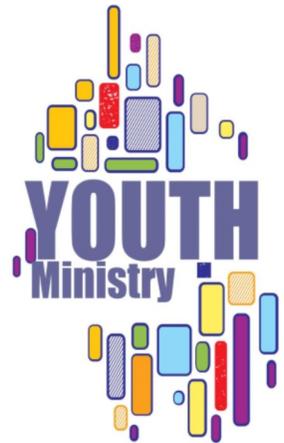
Nov 1st Greatest Parable Part 1
Nov. 8th Greatest Parable Part 2
Nov. 15th Greatest Parable Part 3
Nov. 22nd Thankfulness
Nov. 29th Advent: The Prophets

Online Kid's Group

2nd and 4th Wed. 4-4:30ish

Elementary kids (K through 5th grade) are invited for faith, fellowship, and fun just for kids! Contact Rebecca Holland, for an email reminder and zoom numbers.

**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.

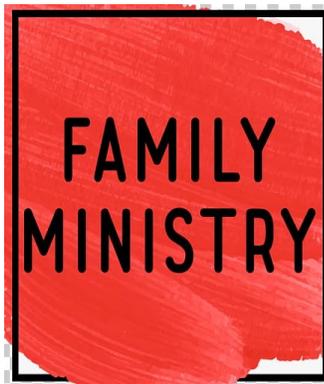
MVPC Family Online Opportunities

All Ages Worship Sundays 10:30 am
Family Fellowship* **1st & 3rd Sun 4 pm**
Youth Group 1st & 3rd Sun 7 pm
Kid's Group 2nd & 4th Wed 4 pm

Family Fellowship

1st & 3rd Sun at 4 pm

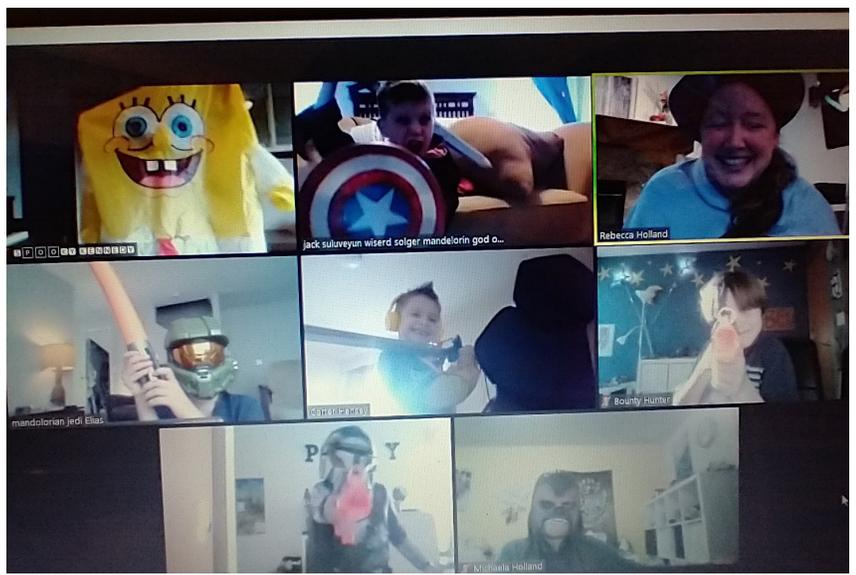
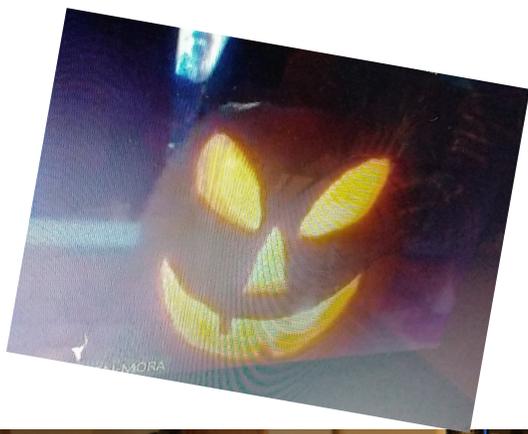
Families of all ages are invited for online fellowship, fun, and games at 4 pm on the 1st and 3rd Sundays on Zoom. Contact Rebecca Holland for an email reminder and zoom numbers.



November Gathering

Everyone is invited to stay after zoom worship on the last Sunday of November (Nov. 29th) for a "Thanksgiving Leftovers Gathering." of fun and fellowship. All ages welcome! Bring leftovers!





Thank you to everyone who came to MVPC's modified Annual Pumpkin Party and the Kid's Group's Halloween Costume Party. It's great that we can still have fun as a congregation, even if we can't meet in person!



The Music Corner

Josh VerHalen, Director of Music Ministry



In the very first hymnal I used to lead worship on Sunday mornings at the United Church of Ferndale almost a decade ago, there are 904 hymns, psalm settings and musical prayers. But only one song features large black X through it and the word “NO!!!” at the top (written in my hand): “It is Well with My Soul”. For the first four years that I worked there, I absolutely refused to play it. It was slow, almost dirgelike, uncomfortable to sing, and honestly, I couldn’t play it well because it was in 5 flats. It wasn’t until I came across a choral anthem arrangement requested by one of my singers that I decided to give it a go. And since then, it’s rarely a month goes by that I don’t play portions of it as a prelude, meditative music, for a memorial or as a congregational hymn.

Unknown to me at that time, “It is Well with My Soul” (properly titled “When Peace, Like a River”) is easily one of the most well known songs in the annals of Christian hymnody. According to Hymnary.org, it has been printed in 433 hymnals to date, though strangely, not the Presbyterian Hymnal...but that’s a different article for a different month! As with many of our favorite hymns, it comes with a fascinating backstory that provides so much more context than the words alone ever could.

The hymn text was written in 1873 somewhere in the middle of the Atlantic Ocean. When Horatio Spafford sat down to pen the words that would become the hymn, he had already faced a great deal of personal tragedy losing his son to scarlet fever and a large portion of his investments in the Chicago Fire, both in 1871. But that paled in comparison to what was to come. In late 1873, he had planned to visit England on a vacation with his daughters and wife. Pressing business forced him to delay his voyage but he sent his wife and daughters ahead on a French sailing ship, the *Ville du Havre*. While crossing the ocean, their ship was struck by another and sank, killing 226 people including all four of Spafford’s daughters. His wife, Anna, survived and upon reaching England sent Horatio a telegram that said simply, “Survived alone. What shall I do?”

Spafford immediately set sail for England, full of grief. At one point in the journey, the ship’s captain, aware of the earlier tragedy, informed Horatio that they were sailing over the spot where the *Ville du Havre* had sunk. As Horatio thought about his daughters, words of comfort and hope filled his heart and mind. He wrote them down, and they have since become a well-beloved hymn:

When peace, like a river, attendeth my way
When sorrows, like sea billows, roar
Whatever my lot, thou hast taught me to know
It is well, It is well with my soul

The words were later set to music by Spafford’s good friend Philip Bliss, who named the hymn tune *Ville du Havre* after the ship on which Horatio had lost his daughters.

In this hymn, Spafford has given all of us words of comfort and assurance in times of physical and spiritual crisis, paraphrasing the words of Julian of Norwich: “And all shall be well, and all shall be well, and all manner of things shall be well.” Perhaps we cannot always say that everything is well in all aspects of our lives. There will always be storms to face, and sometimes there will be tragedies. But with faith in a loving God and with trust in His divine help, we can confidently say, “It is well, it is well with my soul.”



Are you looking for a place to pray and connect with others, taking time to pause and focus on how God is working in and through you? Come check out the new Pause Prayer Group that meets on Tuesdays from 9 to 10 am on zoom. Everyone welcome.

CCF Ministry

Zach & Johanna on Mission (from newsletter)

We made it! We made it to Bellingham, to the first day of the internship program, and to the budget we needed to be able to make it on campus! Thank you so much to all of you who joined our team this summer, and to everyone who has continued to partner with us through the wild transition! Your prayers, friendship, and support are all such an incredible blessing. Because of you, I can proudly say that Johanna and I are your missionaries to Western Washington University and Whatcom Community College.

We feel so encouraged and sent out by all of you. What a blessing it was to connect with so many good friends over the summer, to pray together, and to run towards the future together. To those of you who have been with us for years, thank you so much for faithful support and your excitement over this new season as we get to work together as a couple in ministry. To those of you who are new to the team, welcome! We are so blessed to have you! To all of you, we feel the weight of your prayers and have been blown away by the doors the Lord has opened ahead of us.



The Mission of Friendship House

Friendship House reflects the heart of God by feeding, sheltering, clothing and healing...to empower those in need.

Success Update

Terri came to Friendship House this last March following a challenging path. When people arrive at Friendship House one of the first things that happens is a meeting with the house manager to draft an action plan. The action plan is one key in the program to help those in need build life skills and work toward self-sufficiency. As Terri settled in, everyone began to see her enthusiasm for life. As part of her action plan Terri was assigned work in the Friendship House Café. Turns out she simply loved doing dishes. She is “happy helping”. Terri worked harder than most on her action plan. Her priority was finding a place to live independently. With the support of Friendship House Terri is starting a new life on her own. For the first time in 30+ years she is reconnecting with estranged family and is making friends, follows her love for animals by feeding the squirrels in the park by the Mount Vernon Library. She has also signed up as a volunteer at Friendship House in the Café doing dishes.

Friendship House is about self-sufficiency and Terri has certainly found her way to a fresh start.

Family Promise



Since the beginning of 2020 we have accomplished expanding our services. Your support enables us to continue providing these expanding services to the homeless children and their parents in our communities. Here is what we've done since January 1, 2020:

- ♥ In our shelter we served 19 families, provided 29 children with shelter and served 5826 meals.
- ♥ We continued serving 4 transitional houses with 16 families and 27 children and placed 11 families into housing.
- ♥ We provided 46 families and 80 children with drive-up services (supplies and food, as well as provided 32 families and 79 children with rental assistance

We have sustained the core of our program which provides counseling and informative classes for our guests, such as 1 on 1 counseling, nutrition and financial planning classes and access to community services.

The Caring Congregation

- a walk through the workbook by Rev. Karen Lampe

Please join us for a walk through of this workbook which is designed to help congregations be intentional about care and equip its member to:

Listen *** Visit *** Comfort *** Encourage

This is sponsored by Deacon Ministry and the invitation is open to all because caring is for all. Because this is a highly interactive session and our first time through it we seek to limit our participation to 10. There is still room and workbooks will be provided.

October 8th	Introduction, Theology, Prayer
October 19th	Boundaries, Listening & Spiritual Guidance
November 5th	Visitation, Death & Dying
November 19	Organization, Recruiting, Vision

Sessions are on Zoom from 6:00 - 8:00 pm.

Please contact Colleen Higbee or the church office: mvpc@mountvernonpres.org ph 360-424-7675

Thank you to:

- ♥ Thank you to the team that led the worship service October 11th: Bob Rauch, Iva Rauch, Leslie Braun, Margo Wortham, Linda Walser, Mike & Katie Weeks and Natalia and Warren Weeks, and Graham Kerr.
- ♥ The Hanens would like to thank Toni for the wonderful Birthday wishes...it brighten my day.....also to Michaela Holland for helping Kimora with her Spanish song it helped her alot!!
- ♥ To Bill Dehon, Bob Higbee & Bruce Lavers for shepherding the building project to completion.
- ♥ To Leslie Braun for keeping financial information updated and accurate.



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. mvpc@mountvernonpres.org

November Birthdays & Anniversaries

2-Howard Koozer

5-Peter Brown

6-Martin Boer

7-Don Wolf

9-Warren Weeks

11-Mary Ellen Byerly

13-Natalia Weeks

14-Bev Overby

17-Donovan Maas

19-Bob Mitchell

Karen Beckner



21-Stephanie Yerigan

Dale Irvine

23-Shirley Gilbert

Jadelle Moyer

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.



Mount Vernon Presbyterian Church

Growing followers of Christ

Our Vision Statement

Encounter The Hope
of the living God through Jesus Christ

Engage One Another
in authentic friendship

Embrace The World
with the heart and hands of Jesus