



MOUNT VERNON PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Growing Followers of Christ Since 1902

The Grapevine

I am the vine; You are the branches.

John 15:5

Year 121, Issue 1
June—August 2023

What in the world are we doing this summer! Well, your leadership team has worked faithfully over the past nine months to be sure I understand the hopes and dreams, the concerns and the cautions for this time that Dan is away on sabbatical. As additional pastoral leadership during this time (Rebecca will continue to serve you too!), I will be focused on three areas: providing for the worship life, the pastoral care of the congregation, and support of your very skilled and faithful leadership team—Session, Deacons, and Mission & Ministry Leaders.

Through the fall and winter I have been excited to listen to the journey MVPC has been travelling, and the hopes for this sabbatical time expressed by the leadership at MVPC. In light of these conversations (and the charge I have been given in this ½ time position) I am looking forward to helping you share the story of both joys and the yearnings you have as God's people in this place. This summer will be a time to offer some of your discoveries, creative efforts, and celebrations of being a faith community in these challenging and exciting times. *Sacred Stories*: yours, ours together, and God's story will form one part of sharing our life together. Exploring *Sacred Space* is the other theme that will shape our time. Your last few years have included making improvements in a space for mission and ministry. This summer will include some opportunities to experiment with the worship space, and for us to hear about how this building makes space for relationship building and healing in our calling to be those who share good news here and now.

How can you help?

As I begin this ministry with you, please ***join me in praying*** for Dan on this time of sabbatical, praying for your leadership community, and I covet your prayers for me and for my family as I serve as your sabbatical pastor.

Could you ***help with the furniture moving*** (or know someone who can) as we play with the worship space during the summer? We might like to try using some of the flexibility the new seating offers. This may help us to better match the anticipated summer attendance, and to help explore some creativity and greater accessibility in worship. If you can offer a few flexible hours see Bruce Lavers or myself.

If you primarily participate in MVPC from home, ***I'd love to visit you*** there! If you would welcome a time to get together at your home, please ask your moderator of the Board of Deacons, David Lorente, call me, or send an email to me.



How to reach me?

In Person—Meet me for a cup of tea!

I am on the grounds and in the building most weeks beginning Wednesday, May 17 on **Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays**. I am happy to take a walk to visit as well. I'll publish routine times and days each week.

By Email—a good routine Sunday through Thursday Linda.MVPC@gmail.com I check email two or three times a day unless we are

(Cont. pg.2)

Sunday Worship 10:30 am

In person and on Zoom (Go to zoom.us/j - enter Meeting ID: 360 424 7675 Passcode: MVPC; or Meeting Room 1)

coordinating something together and we have arranged to check in this way. I usually take a tech sabbath Friday & Saturday. Unless we have arranged to be in touch during this time, I will not see an email until after worship on Sundays.

By Phone—Best if you need something quickly! At home anytime! 11:11 pm is the hour I turn into a pumpkin and someone here is awake by 7:00 am--but if it is critical, please do call. Your clerk of session, moderator of deacons, Barbara, and Pastor Rebecca will have ways to contact me.

Thank you for the opportunity to share in this summer with you. I welcome your questions, and am eager to support all in this community as we center our lives in

God's unity & calling by the power of the Holy Spirit. --
Shalom, Rev. Linda Stewart-Kalen

If you missed Linda's biography in early May, here is a [Link](#)



A Word from Pastor Dan

The theme for my 2023 Sabbatical draws on two words from our scriptures. The Greek word, "*Pneuma*" (pronounced **noo-ma**) and the Hebrew word "*Ruach*" (pronounced **roo-ahk**). Different languages but a similar concept, both words mean "breath", "wind" or "spirit."

In John's gospel, when encountering Nicodemus Jesus said:

"The wind [pneuma] blows where it chooses, and you hear the sound of it, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit [pneuma]." ~ John 3:8

Way back at the beginning of our scripture the author of Genesis proclaims:

"In the beginning when God created the heavens and the earth, the earth was a formless void and darkness covered the face of the deep, while a wind [ruach] from God swept over the face of the waters" ~ Genesis 1:1-2

While away, I will enjoy time to "catch my breath" by engaging rhythms of rest and rejuvenation, spending time with people I love and participating in activities that are life-giving to me. I will get to "feel the effects of the wind" as my family and I embark on a grand sail-boat adventure through the San Juan and Canadian Gulf Islands. And I will spend time intentionally

"reconnecting with the Spirit of God" through prayer, retreat, reading, reflection, and spiritual direction.

I'm excited about the gifts and perspectives that Pastor Linda brings to MVPC as our Sabbatical Pastor and I know that she, along with Pastor Rebecca, the elders, deacons and ministry coordinators will continue to serve faithfully and well as individually and together they listen and respond to God's lead. While I'm away, please pray for smooth sailing (literally), deep rest, and discernment for how the Holy Spirit is leading me and the church into a new season of ministry together. And, over the summer, be sure to make time to pay attention to how the Holy Spirit is stirring in you as well!

I'm grateful to the Session and the congregation for the gift of this Sabbatical time, and when I get back, I look forward to learning how you felt the Spirit move this Summer. Many blessings to you... and I'll see you in August!

Pastor Dan



Coming Events

Appreciation Sunday

Sunday, June 4th with a light lunch after worship to thank everyone who has volunteered this year at MVPC - that's YOU! Thank you! Thank you! Thank you!

Graduation Sunday

Sunday, June 11th with a special time during worship to honor our graduating seniors: Malik, Betty, and Eden from high school and Annie from college! We will also be honoring all of the children and youth heading into the next stages of school with bibles, devotionals, or journals for those heading into kindergarten (elementary school), 3rd grade (the traditional year for a new bible), 6th grade (middle school), and 9th grade (high school). And we will be celebrating after worship with one of Laurie Parker's delicious homemade cakes!



Eden Cooksey is graduating from Mount Vernon High School and plans to attend University of Washington. She is enrolled in the school of Health and Sciences and is planning to study Nutrition.

Betty Rogers is graduating from Aspire Academy in Mount Vernon and plans to attend Skagit Valley College next year.



Malik Sumareh is graduating Mount Vernon High School on 6/9/23 and is attending Pacific Lutheran University in the Fall.

Annie Rogers is graduating from Seattle Pacific University with degrees in Mechanical and General Engineering



Fathers' Day

We will honor Dads and all who take on the role of Dad, after worship on Sunday, June 18th for Father's Day with our annual Donuts for Dads! Children and Youth, please plan to come early to help decorate the special thank you to Dad's table cloth at 10 am that morning. The donuts will be for everyone to enjoy after worship as we celebrate with the Dads.

Shepherd's Ice Cream Social for MVPC Seniors June 1 and August 3

Thursday, June 1st at 1 pm! Everyone is invited to celebrate the beginning of summer with an ice cream social on Thursday, June 1st at MVPC. If the weather is nice, we will gather at tables on the patio behind the church kitchen (which is wheelchair and walker accessible) and if the weather doesn't cooperate we will create our own sunshine in Good Shepherd Hall. There will be healthy, sugar free, and gluten free options as well. It will be a great time of fellowship and fun!



MVPC Hike and Beach Combing at Ebey's Landing on July 10th

Enjoy a beautiful hike and beach combing at Ebey's Landing on Whidbey Island on Monday, July 10th with others from MVPC. Pastor Dan will be spending most of his sabbatical on or near the Salish Sea so we wanted an opportunity for everyone at the church to enjoy it too! Please pack a lunch and water. We will meet at the church at 9:30 am and then carpool to our destination (drivers will need to have a Washington State Discover Pass to park). We will hike down the rocky beach, hunt for rocks, identify them (with the help of experienced rock hounders), and enjoy the breeze and the water. Please RSVP with Dan Long or Gail LaFleur.

Discipleship

MVPC Nursery and Play Room

A huge thank you to this year's Nursery Team: Ruth Neal, David Neal, Tracy Hall, and Sarah Maas. Plus our Nursery Staff: Miriam Cooksey and Natalie Holland. We hope to hire a few additional nursery staff to add to our team over the summer if you know anyone almost 16 and older who would enjoy playing with kids in the nursery a couple of Sundays a month. As we head into summer we will be shifting to saying "MVPC Nursery and Play Room" to make the nursery more welcoming to younger elementary students who feel too old to be in the nursery but aren't quite ready to be in worship for a whole service. The MVPC Nursery and Play Room will be open from 10 am to Noon on Sundays throughout the summer to provide care for infants, toddlers, preschoolers, and elementary aged kids while their adults attend worship.

Godly Play Kids Program

A huge thank you to the MVPC Godly Play Team for a wonderful year sharing and wondering about the stories of the Old Testament: Carol Peterson, Becky Goodell, Margo Wortham, Laurie Parker, Mary Pugsley, and Mim Ambrose! Next year the Godly Play kids will start in worship before heading back to the Godly Play Program. We are in need of additional helpers and storytellers to be part of the loving rotation in the Godly Play room every other month - please talk with Pastor Rebecca if you are interested. Thank you! We will be planning programs in June and July and then training next year's Godly Play team in August to be able to kick off the Godly Play program in September. Watch for details in the next Grapevine.



Youth Group

A huge thank you to the Youth Mentor Team for an amazing year exploring the books of the New Testament through the Bible Project: Becky Goodell, Dan Long, Mary Pugsley, and Connie Bowser! Next year the Youth will be diving deep into a year long Confirmation program. We would like to match each of the youth with a mentor from the congregation for a monthly mentor lunch after worship but we will need more mentors - please talk with Pastor Rebecca if you are interested. Thank you! We will be planning programs in June and July and then training next year's Youth Mentor team in August to be able to kick off the Youth Group Confirmation program in September. Watch for details in the next Grapevine.



Mops Moms Program

A huge thank you to the MOPs Kid's Program Team: Rand O'Donnell, Ruth Dunn, Tammi Riggs, Liz Rogers, Lou Cheney, Ruth Neal, and David Neal. Plus a huge thank you to Sarah Maas for heading up MOPs, for Sandy Pinaire for serving as a Mentor Mom, and to Laurie Parker for providing delicious desserts! We would like to do a more VBS style Mops kids program next year but we need more volunteers for the 1st and 3rd Tuesdays from 9:30 to 11:30 am - please talk with Pastor Rebecca if you are interested. And please talk with Skagit Mops Coordinator Sarah Maas if you are interested in being a Mentor Mom attending the Moms program to share wisdom and encourage the Moms. Thank you! Mops will host playdates at the park over the summer while prayerfully planning in June and July and then training the volunteer team in August for a September kick off. Watch for details in the next Grapevine.

Shepherds Senior's Program

A huge thank you to the Shepherds Team for helping to host a year of gatherings for seniors at MVPC:



Doris Wygal, Ted Langherer, Patti Allen, David Reamer, and especially Laurie Parker who provided desserts every month! We are building our team to be able to provide a delicious meal and seniors program the first Thursdays of the month next year - please talk with Pastor Rebecca if you are interested in being involved. Thank you! *Shepherds will be meeting for an ice cream social on the first Thursday of June and then planning and training the Shepherd's volunteer team in July and August to be ready to kick off in September. Watch for details in the next Grapevine.*

MVPC Children, Youth, and Family

Summer Gatherings and Fun!

Please talk with Pastor Rebecca to get on the MVPC Children, Youth, and Family email list for periodic email or text updates about upcoming children, youth, and family gatherings and fun - hikes, beach afternoons, ice cream runs, lock ins, picnics at the park, potluck dinners in homes, and more!

Tall Timber Summer Camp

It's not too late to sign your children, youth, or whole family up for summer camp at Tall Timber! Please check out the possibilities at talltimber.org. There are scholarships available through the Northwest Coast Presbytery and MVPC - please talk with Pastor Rebecca to find out details about how to register with scholarships. The youth group students are encouraged to sign up for the High Adventure Camp happening July 30th through August 4th open to Middle and High school students for camp fun and a multi day adventure

backpacking in the Cascade Mountains. *If you would like to support campers heading to camp, please donate to MVPC and mark it for the MVPC Camp Fund. The MVPC Camp Fund helps provide partial scholarships for MVPC children, youth, and families to attend summer camps as well as retreats during the year. The campers will be saying a special thank you to the congregation, sharing about their adventures, and asking for continued support for the MVPC Camp Fund for next year during worship on Sunday, August 13th.*



Get Involved at MVPC over the summer!

-Sunday Bible Study at 9 am in the Conference Room or Zoom led by David Reamer and team.

-Monday Care Pals Team serving on Monday mornings led by Linda Reamer and team.

-Tuesday Craft Group at Noon in the MVPC Library on the 2nd and 4th Tuesdays of June.

-Tuesday Friendship House Team serving on 2nd Tuesdays led by Laurel and Paul Coalwell.

-Thurs. Prayer Group at 9 am in the MVPC Library or Zoom led by Pastor Rebecca and team.

-Plus ongoing Small Groups and special events like the July 10th MVPC Hike!

-*Women's Fellowship, Men's Breakfast, Shepherds Seniors Program, Godly Play, Bible Studies, Craft Group and Youth Group will kick off again in September!*

Recent Pictures at MVPC



Easter 2023



Mother's Day Flowers



**All Are
Welcome**



**Resurrection Fellowship making a
difference in the neighborhood**





**MOPS
Events**



Care Pals Crafts



Wednesday Bible Study



Sabbatical Pastor Linda



Shepherds End of Year Lunch

Mission Partners

New Earth Recovery



Flower Share

Supporting Women in Recovery

Sign up below for a flower share, and support our Faith House garden interns as they build employment skills, express their creativity, and develop a resume.

Members pick up a fresh bouquet every week (or every other week) at Faith House in West Mount Vernon on Tuesday afternoons. Enjoy a flower share for yourself, or share a share with a friend! Local delivery available for an extra fee.

Bouquet pick-up begins July 11th, 2023. Spots fill up on a first come/first served basis. Please let us know if you'd like the full (weekly) or half (bi-weekly) option.

Please contact us if you are interested in donating a flower share to a business or other organization here in the valley. And if you know anyone who is interested but unable to pay, have them reach out to us about paying what they can for a flower membership.

Sign up by clicking the button below. For more information, email sara@NERecovery.org

Note: While shares help fund our flower program, this is not a donation since you receive flowers in exchange for your payment. Thank you for your understanding!

Care Pals

It has been almost 13 years this October since the mission Care Pals began. That is so hard to believe as time really goes by when you are loving what you do and sharing God's care and love with others. We started with just one volunteer. Now we have seven volunteers at Where The Heart Is, an assisted and memory care facility in Burlington.

Our time starts each week with a craft. During this time Louise Cheney provides music on her violin with residents singing along. They especially love old time songs and hymns. When she starts to play more residents will stop in just to sit and enjoy the music.

We have a new volunteer this month, Sylvia Schneider. Sylvia immediately fit right in and the residents enjoyed visiting with her and sharing their stories. Pat Schlecht continues to provide a card making craft each month. Once residents finish their card I see some immediately start writing and getting it ready to mail to their loved ones.

Other volunteers that have been with us for a number of years are: Kitty Willis, Glenda and Bob Mitchell, and

Linda Ream. We can always use more help. We meet each Monday from 10 a.m. to 11 a.m. at Where The Heart Is. We are flexible so if you are only available 1 or 2 days a month that will work out great. If you are unable to volunteer in person but would like to be a part of this ministry, please contact Linda Ream or the church office 360-424-7675. There are many ways to help so just give us a call.

Thank you to everyone of you. Without your prayers and continued support we would not be able to continue to show these wonderful men and women God's caring and love.



Friendship House is a place of many opportunities

15 individuals approved to move into their own apartments this week with more to come!

The recent opening of Martha's Place and Cascade Landing, is finding our shelter residents achieving their goals of permanent housing!

~ Couples and individuals from our First Step Center were approved

~ Individuals from our Men's Shelter have been approved

~ Women and Children's shelter applicants have been approved.

We are urgently supporting our shelter guests with their application processes to assure they are equally considered for housing as the available units are quickly being filled.

15 approvals as of last week and counting! We are thrilled for the successes of these two housing projects and are eager to see what's next to come as we all serve our community members, together.

If you want to help these amazing people get moved into their new homes, support today! We are raising funds to purchase a replacement work vehicle, to continue getting folks into new apartments.

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Judd and Black along with the City of Mount Vernon have assisted us in upgrading our

laundry facilities! We are ever grateful for this as it allows us to better serve those who need it most.

Our [love and laundry facility](#) is being upgraded and growing to handle more wash loads

Women and Children's shelter laundry is getting an upgrade (long needed)

Our Men's house facility is also receiving new laundry units (so grateful)

The ability to wash and wear clean fresh clothing is one of those things we take for granted most of the time. For residents and our love and laundry guests, clean clothes is a first area of concern. Families visit the love and laundry to get the kids ready for another week of school while also keeping the bedding fresh for another week in the car. These are experiences you may be able to relate to. For most of us though, we do not understand the trauma of living on the streets and having to look the part. Our love and laundry facility allows people to keep clean and fresh clothing and bedding, even under the worst of other living conditions and we also [open showers and the giving room](#), so people have access to new clothing and essentials, when they need them.

How can You Help?

~ [Volunteer](#) to open the Love and Laundry

~ Donate clean [wears to the Giving Room](#)

~ [Support Skagit Friendship House financially](#) so we can continue our mission



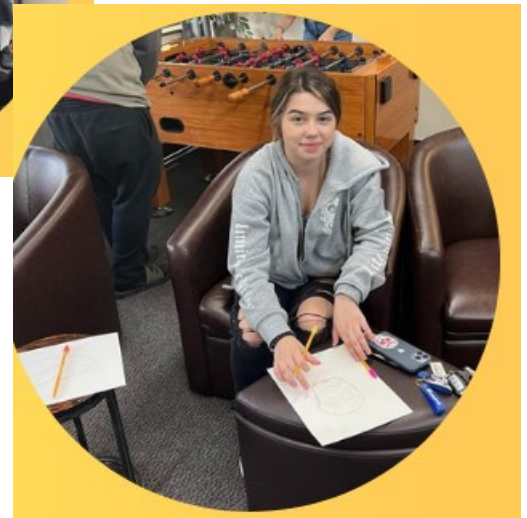
## Underground Ministries

A sister organization has come from the work of Resurrection Fellowship and Underground Ministries. Genaro Sanchez felt the heart to work with the youth of Skagit Valley and has created a non-profit, Our Journey. MVPC supports them with space to meet. The programs mission is: Support gang impacted youth to open their Heart, mind and soul through self empowerment, and healing themselves, family, and community.

O.U.R Journey provides youth with a positive source of connection with leaders with lived experience they can relate to. We use strategic prevention and intervention efforts to produce long term effects of positivity and guide youth away from the impacts of gang activity. We provide youth healthy, culturally sensitive, coping strategies by addressing:

- Family support ~ empowering families through reconnection, healing and hope.
- Mental Health ~ Depression and anxiety can lead to substance abuse as a way to cope. We often see the impact of trauma and adversity in youth resulting in stress, disconnection and violence in the lives of those we support.

Now as the youth come to programs on afternoons, they wave through the office windows.



## Prayers and Support at MVPC

There are teams of folks ready to prayerfully provide support while Pastor Dan is on sabbatical.

- Pastor Linda, Pastor Rebecca, and the Deacon Board will be available for pastoral visits and support.
- There is also an email prayer chain that sends prayers out to people wanting to pray for others if you email your prayer requests to [prayers.mvpc@gmail.com](mailto:prayers.mvpc@gmail.com) (and talk with Dave Gale to be added to this list if you would like to pray for others at MVPC).
- Please talk with Tracy Hall if you would like a MVPC Meal Train to be set up for you or someone you know at MVPC who is in need of meals during times of hardship or challenge.
- If you aren't sure who to call for your pastoral and church needs over the summer, Barbara Koozer is in the church office and is a wealth of information. Plus, there's a whole congregation of caring people ready to help with a variety of needs. We are all in good hands!



# Noteworthy

## Birthdays and Anniversaries

### May

4-Louise Cheney  
9-Glory Olwete  
11-Melissa Macken  
12-*Rob & Tracy Hall*  
Ruth Dunn  
15-Glenda Mitchell  
*George & Collie Ridgeway*  
16-Marcia Taylor  
Connie Bowser  
17-Craig Riggs  
19-Tom Howard  
23-*Keith & Beth Tacker*  
24-Gerd Mikkelsen  
26-David Neal  
Bill Ruthford  
27-Gloria Olwete  
28-Hannah Kercheval  
Carl Friedericks Jr  
30-Darlene Mailliard  
31-Timothy Long

### June

5-Betty Washer  
7-Jan Eerkes  
*Bill & Jan DeHon*  
8-CarolAnn Ross  
9-Mabel Long  
*Don & Margo Wortham*  
10-Ron Vander Stoep  
11-Lynn Grobschmidt  
Don Riedel  
*Howard & Barbara Koozer*  
*Bob & Colleen Higbee*  
*David & Ruth Neal*  
12-Bavon Olwete  
15-Madeline DeLia  
18-Bob Higbee  
19-Miriam Cooksey  
20-*Bob & Glenda Mitchell*  
*Larry & Carol Peterson*  
24-Dick Johnson  
25-Linda Walser  
26-Colleen Higbee  
Tom Long  
29-*Jim & Jean Byron*

### July

1-Gary Jones  
7-Ken & Sandy Ball  
11-Annie Rogers  
Wendy Bartholomew  
12-Tonnie Boer  
13-Don & Danya Wolf  
14-Abram Hoke  
Jean Byron  
15-Bruce & Joan Lavers  
19-Tom & Molly Howard  
Barbara Koozer  
20-Elaine Mclvor  
21-Sue Farrar  
Don Semrau  
26-Malik Sumareh  
27-Debbie Parker  
29-Josh VerHalen  
30-Doris Wygal  
Larry Peterson  
31-Bev Helton

### August

1-David Reamer  
3-Brad & Barb Clure  
4-Toni Hulbert  
5-Jim & Chris Johnson  
Karen Lorente  
9-Seaver Milnor  
11-Mim Ambrose  
Sarah Maas  
Don & Margaret Semrau  
12-Rob & Tracy Hall  
13-Cathy Riddle  
14-Vicki Jones  
15-Chris Hoke  
15-Paul & Laurel Coalwell  
18-Collie Ridgeway  
19-Douglas Catton  
Jessica Jasper  
20-Paula Rutledge  
21-Tracy Hall  
Brian & Mackenzie Anderson  
25-Ross Anderson  
26-Ted Langrehr  
Mike Weeks  
Dave & Rosemary Gale  
27-Don & Marjorie Riedel  
30-Daniel Jasper  
31-Chris Johnson



### Carine Ndifon

Carine was Commissioned into the Navy Chaplain Corps Program. Carine is currently pursuing ordination as a PC(USA) Pastor and is under care of Mount Vernon Presbyterian Church.



### Thank You to Everyone at MVPC

After worship June 4, an Appreciation lunch will be held in Good Shepherd Hall. There will be cards and envelopes on the tables to allow you to say "Thank You" to any of the many people who plan events, teach, and are friends to the children and adults of MVPC.

## SUMMER EVENTS

**Senior Ice Cream Social ~ June 1st & Aug 3rd 1 pm**

**Donuts for Dads ~ June 18th**

**Beach rock hunting Hike ~ Mon July 10th**

**Tall Timber Adventure Camp ~ July 30th-Aug 4th**

**Camper Sunday ~ August 13th**

**Back to School Blessing ~ August 27th**



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

### **Know God's Love**

*Deepening life of prayer and discernment*

*Growing understanding of the Bible*



### **Share it with Others**

*Caring for one another, the church and the community*

*Unified mission with the marginalized*

Mount Vernon Presbyterian Church

**Rev. Dan Holland, Pastor**

1511 East Broadway

Mount Vernon, WA 98274

(360) 424-7675

<http://www.MountVernonPres.org>

Please  
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