

# The Bell Ringer

Vancouver Heights United Methodist Church

## Pastor's Corner...

Last year, "Home for the Holidays" meant the usual journey back to northeast Ohio. For most of us this year, "Home for the Holidays" will involve simple traditions with those we see most of the time. While our dogs and cats are quite satisfied, I'm sure I will not be the only one to miss friends and family. At the same time, I am thankful to be healthy and I remember those who are staying or working in hospitals and care centers during the holidays.



Most likely before Thanksgiving, I will put out a tree and nativities for the much-needed holiday cheer. I am also working on an altar space near my home office and our bedrooms. As we wake and before we sleep, as we begin our homework and as we gladly put it aside, we will be able to light a candle or pause in expectancy as we trust that God is with us.

I know many of you are moving from exterior to interior remodeling and redecorating. My hope is that we might have this Advent/Christmas/Epiphany Season to work on our inner spiritual lives. Perhaps we can try different types of music to calm or encourage us. Perhaps we can search for items that feel sacred – old photos of loved ones, homemade candles, family Bibles and prayer shawls are just a few examples. While some enjoy reading scripture, others find comfort in hymns, contemporary music or poems. Some draw or color or paint. Find a spot that feels special to you and add something that reminds you of God, and perhaps a talent that God has given you. Then take a photo and share with me. And, well there it is you have just worshipped in community.

With my altar space is a banner made by a member of Mercer Island UMC with scraps of fabric from my first trip to Russia in 1997. It is meant to represent the Spirit of God covering the world.

*Continued page 2*



Volume 55 Issue 10  
December 2020

Join us Sunday's for our online worship via Facebook or our website.

**Need Holiday Gift Ideas???**

See page 10

**December 13th**

Photos of your family Nativity sets.

Please email to office by 12/13

**December 15th**

We would like to have Stewardship Pledge Cards returned to the office by 12/15

**December 24th**

STAY TUNED!

We are hoping to be able to do a couple small vigils outside.

**December 27th**

3:00 pm

Reading Radicals book pick up in parking lot





Several families will prepare weekly devotions with The Worship at Home Resource. The author, Mary Scifres, gifted us with ten copies. During worship each week, and also in the Sunday School program we will share scripture and prayers as Rev Scifres has organized them. Pat Hodney-Gould will add devotionals for adults. Her reflections for the first two Sundays, Peace and Hope, are included in the newsletter. We will share additional devotions through the weekly e-mail.

I pray for your health and happiness in this season and in the year to come.

Merry Christmas  
Pastor Jo Ann

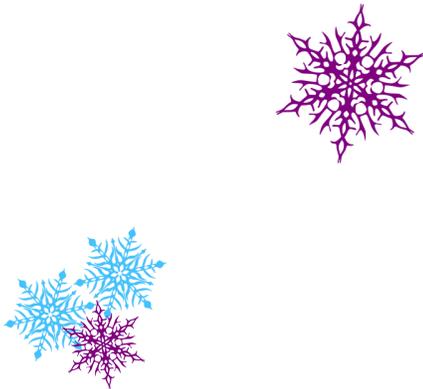
\*I'm buying a brick in memory of Kathy Chadborne. I will miss her. I look forward to breaking ground in 2021 and watching Kathy's friends dance in her honor.

*Here are other examples of spaces that church families have made to worship in home.*

*Left: Rick and Debbie Avery*

*Below: Kylee Goodwin and family*

*Right: The Niehaus Family*



## *Peace*

**John 14:27** *Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid.*

As we come into this Advent season, I was praying to have the Lord speak to me. How do I write about Peace this season? Our world has faced so much this year. Our community has been touched by so many things that has brought stress, grief, sickness, uncertainty, lonesomeness and things most thought we would not have to deal with. Yet in March, it started in earnest.

Who would have ever thought that as a community we would not be together each Sunday? Who would imagine that we would not be giving each other a hug or “hello” or “peace be with you” at least one time a week? Let’s face it, we have our favorite places in the Sanctuary, and we look for those that bring us comfort and peace. I believe it brings us stability to our lives and that stability was severely shaken. Our Peace was disturbed.

When we could not even go to the store in a manner we are so accustomed to, it’s unnerving. As a nation, we never had to wear masks or don gloves, but now to protect one another it is the right thing to do. We can’t congregate in a restaurant or shop as we used to, and we don’t like it. Our comfort and joy has not been the same.

Yet, through our prayers, we have been shown how to capture some of our Peace. With the hard work of a few, we have a worship service every week. Personally, I find great comfort in seeing those faces and hearing the songs and word during this time. We’ve been able to get the word out to offer prayers for those in need and find ways to stay in touch. We have collected food for Thanksgiving baskets, continued Sunday School, added new members during this time, collected over 500 mugs for the Sea Farer project and some how brought some Peace back into our lives.

I encourage everyone to take some time this Advent season to look inward and find what gives them Peace. A time of quiet, reading scripture, meditation, remembering what this season truly means, whatever gives you Peace, take time each day to renew your spirit and thank God for Jesus and the Peace he brings.

*Prayer: Lord, as we begin this Advent season, I ask that you touch our hearts and wrap your wings tightly around us as you always have. Grant us Peace during these days, allowing us to feel your love so that we may continue to be the light of Peace for you. Amen.*



## *Hope*

***Isaiah 40:31*** *But they who wait for the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles; they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint.*

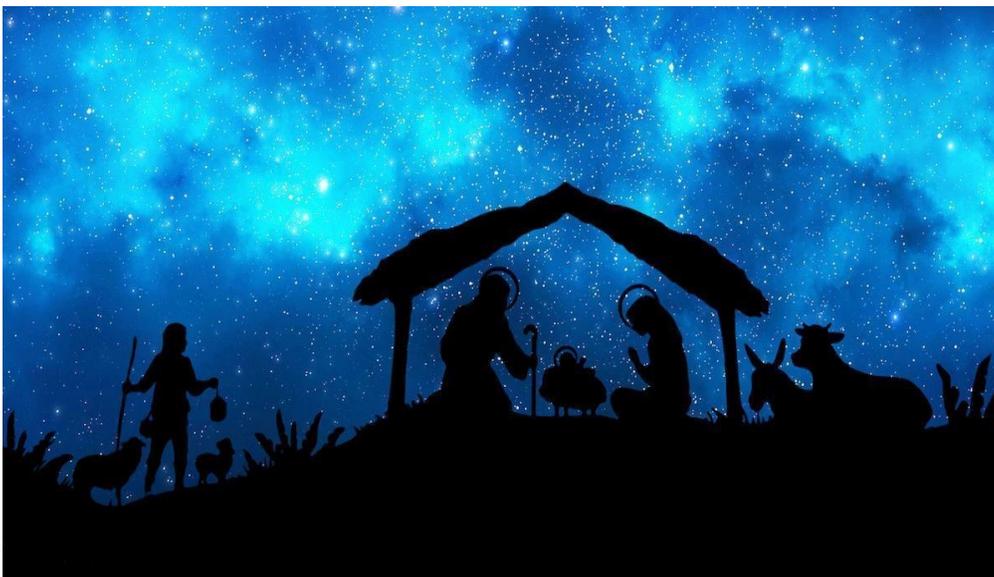
This is the season to be full of hope. My family will tell you I love the Christmas season. It's not because of the gifts and hustle and bustle. It's because of what this season truly means. I find that the season brings a glimmer of hope of what the world could be. Yes, people out there in droves, but often with smiles on their faces and sometimes with kind words exchanged.

This year, we may not see the smiles on faces, but we can see a change in peoples' eyes. Maybe that far away look changes to brightness with a little twinkle as we pass people. We can be the first to say "Happy Holidays" or "Peace be with you" or "Good morning". How hard would that be? They may not have someone share a word for a while, and we could do that for them. We could share two or three words and bring them Hope that someone is kind enough to bring them a pinch of Hope that this darkness isn't going to last forever.

Isn't that what God did for us in bringing Jesus? Didn't He give us the Hope of such magnitude that we have something to cling to in our darkest times and our best of times? How can we not have a twinkle in our eye when we think of this season? What love we have been given and all our Hopes and dreams can never be dashed out.

So, find comfort as we wait for Christmas this year. Renew your strength as you prepare to celebrate the birth of Christ. When you are weary, stop and pray. The Lord has never let you down. It may have felt like it at times, but look back and see what he has done for you this season. Count your blessings this season. It will give you the strength to walk on, and as you do touch the heart of someone less fortunate than yourself. 'Tis the season of Hope.

*Prayer: Lord, as we enter into this Advent season, how can we not be awe struck by how much Hope you give us. We often lose sight of Hope when we are struck down. It's hard to feel Hope at times. If we could muster one seed of Hope, we feel so much better. Give us the strength during this pandemic season to understand that there is still Hope to have a glorious Christmas as we focus on the true meaning of the holiday. Amen.*





### Thanksgiving Food Drive Update

As our God would have it, everything worked out perfectly. Over the past ten years I have learned so much. It never ceases to amaze me how Abundant God is. During the COVID pandemic, we received enough donations to feed 5 families, donate to the Little Pantry and to Martha's Pantry; as well as donate an abundance of food for Christmas Baskets. There is probably enough to even donate to the family (s) we buy Christmas gifts for in Learning Avenues. Years ago, I delivered a sermon called "Recognizing Answered Prayer". One thing I said was most of the time we don't recognize answered prayers because He usually answers them through people, which still resonates today. We prayed, God moved the people and the people followed His leading and they donated their little hearts out.

A great big Thank You to all those who participated in making this Food Drive a huge success! We had wonderful donations on both Tuesday and Saturday. A special thanks to Roberta Roche and Susan Chamberlain. I couldn't have done it without them. In addition, Father Jack for donating the turkeys, and Martha's Pantry for their food donations. And, a special thanks to Deb Avery, for thinking ahead, getting the kids involved and providing more donations. A special thanks also goes to those who donated cash. We actually received enough for Thanksgiving and Christmas gift cards, and other Holiday needs.



### Volunteers Needed



Volunteers will be needed this Christmas not only for putting the Christmas Mugs together and to get them delivered, but to also put Christmas Baskets together. If you are able and willing please let the Office know and we will let you know the details of time and place.



### Looking Ahead

I am moving forward in my life, and beginning a new Lifestyle. This is a very needed and necessary change, although there is some pain and sadness that goes with it. I am leaving my home of thirty years, and a roommate I have had off and on for twenty, which is very difficult for me; and I need your prayers'. I am happy and excited, and more than ready for my new lifestyle to begin. Of course, this has been a three to four year prayer, and God has answered it, once again through people. I will be busy the next few months, packing, moving and getting settled.

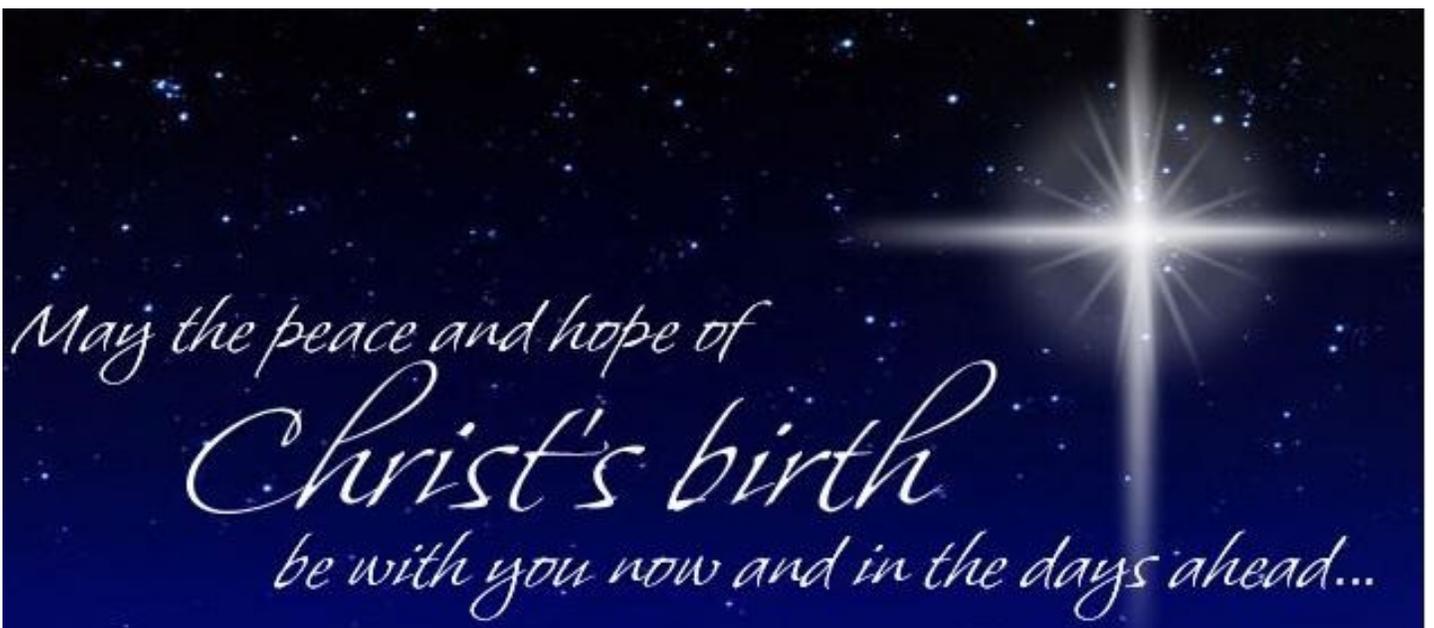
You will have a new Mission Chair and Co-Chair and I wish them well. I am ever so thankful for the opportunity to serve you and our community, and have learned much about God, and His people through my service with you. Everything I have done has been with great love and attention to detail, not only because that is who I am, but because God would want it that way. All I have is Thanks for all of you participating in the various projects over the years, and for God's Hand in it all.

With Much Love,  
Darla





**Mission Work still goes  
on despite of Covid!**



# Advent and Christmas Reading Plan

- Nov. 29: Hope for a King (Jeremiah 33:14-16, p. 122-23)
- Dec. 6: Elizabeth and Zechariah (Luke 1:5-25, p. 188-9)
- Dec. 13: Mary's Story (Luke 1:26-47, p. 190-1)
- Dec. 20: Joseph's Story (Matt 1:18-24, p. 136-7)
- Dec. 24: A Baby Is Born (Luke 2:1-7, p. 192-3)
- Dec. 25: The Shepherds Visit (Luke 2:8-20, p. 194-5)
- Dec. 27: Simeon and Anna (Luke 2:25-38, 196-7)
- Jan. 3: Follow the Star (Matt. 2:1-12, p.138-9)



cokesburykids.com | @cokesburykids  
raisingkidsforgood.com | @raisingkidsforgood



The church received a Nativity Set as gift from Emily Mallory. The Nativity belonged to her mother, Emily Bishop Bowles. Ruby Boyd is sister in law of Ms. Bowles.

When Pastor Jo Ann received the Nativity set , she found in the box the page from the Sears Christmas catalogue from which it was ordered many years ago. Gifts like these are always to be treasured.

In remembrance of her Mom, Emily wrote a few words.  
*Emily Bishop Bowles was not a church-goer, but she was a woman of faith, as exhibited by her nativity set which was recently donated in her memory to Vancouver Heights United Methodist Church. A native of Oklahoma, she moved to Vancouver in 1946 where she raised her family. She was loving, supportive, principled and hard working. She passed away in April 2020, and will be remembered for her steadfast devotion to her family.*



## Education Updates

Your Education Committee continues to plan for our New Year! We hope you have found time to take a look at our Virtual Sunday School on our Church website...scroll to the Education tab. All lessons are saved there as well as other video resources. Our topic, "Finding Peace in An Anxious World" is very beneficial to all ages.

Here are your Virtual Sunday School Leaders:  
Lyn Rush, Abby Niehaus and Debbie Avery

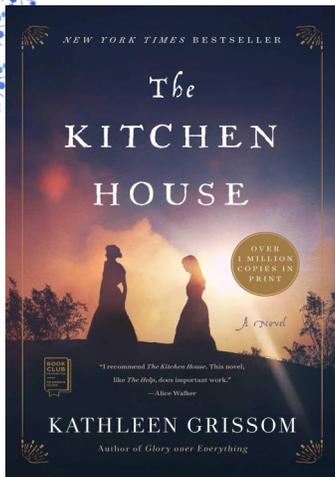


### Nativity Photos Wanted...

We are looking for pictures of special Nativity sets that you and/or your family display in your homes for the holidays. We will be including the pictures in the Sunday School lesson on the Sunday following Christmas, December 27th.

If you would like to have your photos included, please email your pictures to the church office at:  
[vancouverheightsumc@gmail.com](mailto:vancouverheightsumc@gmail.com)  
By December 13th.





**The Reading Radicals** book group has been reading throughout the pandemic but not holding meetings. We held our first Zoom meeting in November to discuss our most recent book.

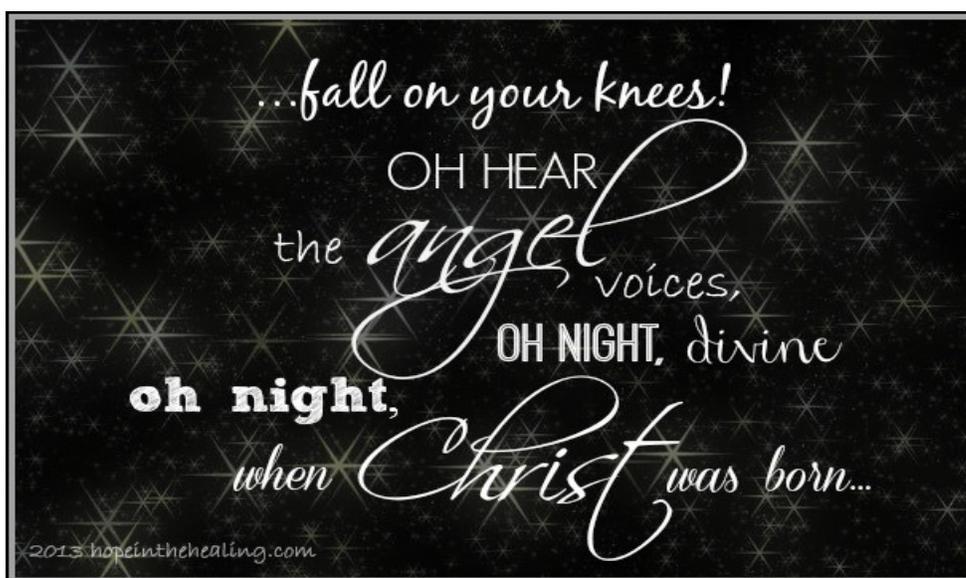
We will be starting a new book at the end of December. Joan Frazier will be in the church parking lot on Sunday, Dec. 27 at 3 PM to distribute the new books, which we get from the library. If you are interested in joining this group of readers, please stop by and pick up a book. We will have a zoom discussion on January 25. We read books from a variety of genres, and always use the library discussion kits available for check out.

Our new book will be "The Kitchen House" by Kathleen Grissom."

If you have any questions, please contact Joan Frazier.



Stewardship letters have been mailed. Please contact the office if you, or someone you know, didn't receive a mailing. We are hoping to receive pledge cards back by December, 15th.





## HOLIDAY GIFT GIVING IDEA

Looking for holiday gift giving ideas? This holiday season, consider shopping from home by making a donation in someone's name or purchasing an engraved paver for a loved one, to be incorporated into the church labyrinth project. The church will notify the recipient of your gift by sending them a card letting them know you made a donation/purchase in their honor. Engraved paver bricks are priced at \$50 (4x8) and \$100 (8x8)

Please prayerfully consider being a part of this lasting creation located on our church grounds and easily accessible to all who desire to participate in this path to reflection and wellness.

## Prayer Calendar 2020

### Mission Witness:

Isaiah 60-:1 says. "Arise, shine; for you light has come."

At the training of women leaders from Zambia and Zimbabwe, participants noted: "The experience that we have had during our visit has enlightened us to go and share the light of Jesus Christ though empowering women, youth and children. Amen."

### Mission Focus:

United States. Native American Children's Fund Assisting approximately 250-300 school age children with school clothing and offering VBS supplies.

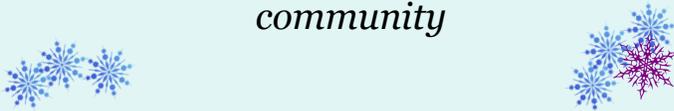
### Please remember in prayer:

Daniel Trujillo Fajardo  
Birthday-December 28  
dtrujillofajardo@umcmision.org  
Colonia Modelo Casa 102  
Tegucigalpa  
Honduras

**Remember in Prayer, Word and Deed**

- Carol Scott
- Ivan Baker
- Nina Lamb and David Womelsdorff
- Angie Ball
- The Stellini Family
- Bryan Harold
- Melba Corlett
- Elaine Baumann

*~ For the many unspoken prayer requests in our church community*



**Are you on our Prayer Chain??**

The email for prayer requests at Vancouver Heights is:  
[vhumcprayers@gmail.com](mailto:vhumcprayers@gmail.com).

Please send all prayer concerns and/or requests to this email. This email will be monitored on a daily basis by the office, Pastor Jo Ann and Cheryl Niehaus. *If you are not on our Prayer Chain and would like to receive prayer emails, please let the office know so we can add you.*



- 3** Lana Winn    **7** Trenton Goodwin
- 10** Lolinita Malua
- 12** Anna Boylan    **15** Joy Burton
- 15** Stephanie Brachmann    **15** Marc Norris
- 16** Robert Willoughby    **17** Roseanne Geiger
- 17** Carole Rinehart    **22** Nicholas Helgeson
- 26** Felicia Fitzpatrick
- 26** Nathaniel Harold    **26** Ken Rose
- 28** Kylee Goodwin
- 30** Tasha Mayer    **31** Jeffrey Milner



*Happy Anniversary*

- 12/7/2002 Greg & Janice Ritter
- 12/28/1992 Daniel & Ann Corlett




Please keep the family of Kathy Chadborne in your prayers as well as her friends at the Adult Family Home where she lived.

Please keep Gary Antijunti and family in your prayers on the death of his mother.

Please keep Ivan Baker and family in your prayers on the death of his mother.





*Good Morning, I am Susan Chamberlain, current President of the Vancouver Heights United Methodist Women. As most of you know, every year we give out a Special Mission Recognition certificate and pin. We usually do this earlier in the year during a church service but due to Covid we have been putting it off hoping to get back inside the church but since that is not happening anytime soon we decided to present these certificates and pins virtually.*

This year we decided on two recipients.

**1<sup>st</sup> - Cheryl Niehaus** - *She has worked with our youth and has planned many mission trips for our youth that made life-changing experiences for them. She has coordinated several small group sessions such as Bible Journaling, Health Care classes and the Grief Share Groups. She has developed creative ways to keep our community connected with our Bell Ringer newsletter and the Prayer Chain.*

**2<sup>nd</sup> - Lugene Paprocki** - *She is our current Administrative Assistant to Pastor JoAnn. She is a fun loving caring hardworking person, who will do anything for anyone, you just have to ask. She loves music and is part of the church choir. She works very hard in putting out the weekly church bulletin and announcements.*

Both of these women are very supportive in making sure that the activities of the United Methodist Women are brought to the attention of our whole church family.

We are so sorry that they couldn't be with us today for this presentation but they will be able to pick up their certificates and pins in the church office.

***Congratulations to Cheryl and Lugene!***







## Vancouver Heights United Methodist Church

Website: <http://vancouverheightsumc.org>  
5701 MacArthur Blvd. Vancouver, WA 98661  
360-693-4761  
Church email: [vancouverheightsumc@gmail.com](mailto:vancouverheightsumc@gmail.com)  
Prayer Request email: [vhumcprayers@gmail.com](mailto:vhumcprayers@gmail.com)



*We are part of the  
Reconciling Ministries Network.*

*We are a church that is spiritually alive,  
radically inclusive and justice oriented.*

### STAFF

#### Ministers:

The Whole Congregation

#### Pastor:

Rev. Dr. Jo Ann Schaad Shiple

#### Administrative Assistant:

Lugene Paprocki

#### Choir Director & Song Leader:

Nancy Huerena,

#### Pianist:

Lori Ritchey

#### Nursery Attendant:

Abigail Niehaus

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### *Vancouver Heights United Methodist Church*

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Prayer Email: [vhumcprayers@gmail.com](mailto:vhumcprayers@gmail.com)

Website: <http://vancouverheightsumc.org>



## VHUMC is still in Phase 2

*(Keep in mind—we are following our Bishop's recommendations so phases may look different)*

### COVID-19 'PHASE 2' REMINDER

#### Our current building Safety Actions that are in place:

- ◆ Outer building doors will remain locked.
- ◆ Face masks are required and must be worn at all times (unless recording).
- ◆ Maximum of 10 people in the sanctuary to record for worship services only.
- ◆ Contact tracking/reporting will be required for all gatherings.
- ◆ Physical distancing of 6 feet must be maintained.
- ◆ Hand washing/sanitizers must be used consistently.
- ◆ All contact surfaces must be sanitized before and after use.

*For those who are not comfortable with these safety protocols, we encourage you to continue to worship with us from home.*

JOIN US EVERY SUNDAY ON OUR WEBSITE AND/OR FACEBOOK FOR WORSHIP. YOU WILL SEE AND HEAR FROM FAMILIAR FACES FROM OUR CONGREGATION. YOU WILL HEAR WORSHIP MUSIC AND ALSO A SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON. ALSO WATCH FOR AN EMAIL WITH THE WEEKLY BULLETIN AND ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE OFFICE.

IF YOU ARE NOT ON THE ALL CHURCH EMAIL PLEASE SEND AN EMAIL TO:  
[VANCOUVERHEIGHTSUMC@GMAIL.COM](mailto:VANCOUVERHEIGHTSUMC@GMAIL.COM)  
AND YOU WILL BE ADDED.