

The Bell Ringer

Vancouver Heights United Methodist Church

Pastor Jo Ann's Corner



Why is God bad at math?

I am excited to say that we currently have eleven students in our Sunday afternoon Confirmation Class. I have decided to order twelve of everything – and hope someone will ask for the extra packet. For now, I am holding the 12th chair and appreciating the technological expertise of Miss Abby and Miss Deb.

Remembering numbers is hard for me but, I am trying to keep up. There is the holy number 40 which is the number of days in Lent (Ash Wednesday to Easter), if you don't count Sundays. This number signifies, "a long time of waiting" such as Noah and his family experienced during the flood and Jesus experienced while in the wilderness. This is the start of remembering what is most important to our faith and offering assistance to those who are new to the faith. Along with our youth, I remember that this church was founded in 1906. According to the mat at our church entrance, we became a Reconciling Church in 2006. For over twenty-five years, our hearts have been with Jesus and our LGBTQIA+ brothers and sisters who have been, for the most part, excluded from full life in the Church.

As we pronounce every Sunday, we are each and every one of us beloved children of God. As Richard Rohr shares in *The Universal Christ*, God is terrible at math. God does not keep track of our rights and wrongs anymore than God numbers us in terms of worthiness. We are all the same in terms of importance / worthiness before God. Hopefully, this statement will cause you to stand a bit stronger and to sink your feet into the faith just a bit more confidently. When we are able to stand with our congregation, we witness many shades of many colors and experiences. In our family are countless realities. Our differences are significant. One hour on a Sunday morning or six hours in the season of Lent is not enough to truly know one another. However, one simple interaction can give us a glimpse of the face of God. With each glimpse, I hope we are motivated to want more.

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Volume 56 Issue 3
March 2021

Upcoming Zoom Meetings

No in person meetings at this time
(You will receive links via email if you are on these committees)

March 3

6:30 pm

Mission Zoom Mtg

March 4

6:30 pm

Finance Zoom Mtg

March 11

6:30 pm

Ad Board Zoom Mtg

March 18

6:30 pm

Trustees Zoom Mtg

March 21

11:00 am

SPR Zoom Mtg

March 22

7:00 pm

Reading Radicals Zoom Mtg

March 30

11:00 am

Education Zoom mtg

Continued from page 1

The Schroff and Haight families joined us just a few years ago. From different parts of our state, Mary and Dodie and their Chucks have been involved in Reconciling ministries for at least twenty-five years. There was crossover with our leaders (Deborah Marie, Mary and Sue) and so they felt as if they were part of us before they entered our doors. I grieve our loss of three of these four pioneers since August and ask that you keep Dodie in your prayers. Last I heard, she was determined to meet her new neighbors. She believed them to be a gay couple and wanted to invite them to our fellowship.

We are now a full year with our sanctuary closed for business. A long time ago, I stopped anticipating the future of worship. Instead, I have celebrated the ways in which the entire congregation has held together to support one another and our budget. THANK YOU ALL. You have been gracious and kind, creative and resilient. You have been a blessing not only to those you know but to many who will never know your names.

I do intend to introduce our confirmation class on Easter Sunday morning in some fashion. As I have shared with the youth, whether or not they choose to join us at this time, they deserve to be celebrated. **Others are welcome to join on this day, just reach out to me this month and we can talk.**

In closing, a special thanks to Mike Niehaus and Lugene Paprocki for completing our yearly statistical reports to the annual conference. Imagine if you will trying to capture how many have worshiped with us on a Sunday morning? Or how many people have been part of a small group? As always, Mike and Lugene took this task to heart and made us look good.

Blessings and peace,
Pastor Jo Ann



**PLEASE SEND ANY ARTICLES TO
THE CHURCH OFFICE OF CHERYL
FOR THE NEXT MONTHS
NEWSLETTER.
DUE 3/24 BY 2 PM**

The church email for questions, concerns, meeting updates and questions, etc. is:

vancouverheightsumc@gmail.com

The email for prayer requests is:

vhumcprayers@gmail.com

Please send prayer requests to this email. If you are not on the prayer chain and would like to be, feel free to send an email to the Prayer Chain email and you will get added.

Confirmation

Confirmation is a journey to help our youth understand what it means to claim the name Christian and be a part of the United Methodist Church. It is also a time for a congregation to celebrate their young people's commitment to "live as a faithful disciple of Jesus Christ," and to renew their commitment to do the same.

Please reaffirm your commitment to this confirmation class by referencing the congregational vow of Baptismal Covenant II (Red Hymnal, pg. 40).

**With God's help we will proclaim the good news
and live according to the example of Christ.
We will surround these persons
with a community of love and forgiveness,
that they may grow in their service with others.
We will pray for them
that they may be true disciples
who walk in the way that leads to life.**

Youth helping on Ash
Wednesday with food
collection for our Food Drive
for the Trinity Food Bank.

The youth participating in Confirmation are meeting every Sunday at 3:00 pm via Zoom.

On Easter Sunday the kids will be confirmed.

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On Ash Wednesday we held a drive by Food Drive and it was a big success. We were able to deliver the needed food to the Trinity Food Bank. They were very grateful for the donation. Thank you to all who participated and donated.



Remember in Prayer, Word and Deed

- Dodie Haight
- Mike Chercasen
- Larry Chercasen
- David Womelsdorff
- Jerry West
- Kay Sorenson
- Nina Lamb
- Barbara Wahl
- Delaine Harold
- Pat Chercasen
- Verna Ryan

~ For the many unspoken prayer requests in our church community



HAPPY anniversary

*Gary & Gail Antijunti 3/1/1975
Linda Donsky & Linda Morgan-Greene
3/5/2004
Wayne & Stephanie Roche' 3/5/2002*



- | | | | |
|-----------|-------------------|-----------|--------------------|
| 1 | Sam Stellini | 22 | Mary Zimmerman |
| 2 | Julie Johnson | 23 | Larry Chercasen |
| 2 | Monte Brachmann | 24 | Chris Hammett |
| 3 | Lori Ritchey | 26 | Sheree Fitzpatrick |
| 3 | Diane Steel | 27 | Hannah Avery |
| 7 | Wynette Saylor | 27 | Stephanie Roche' |
| 7 | Sione Malua | 27 | Jeani Johnson |
| 9 | Deb Avery | 29 | Dennis Short |
| 11 | Jonathan Caldwell | 29 | Grover Icenogle |
| 15 | Margie Schultz | 30 | Joan Hackett |
| 16 | Chuck Crawford | 30 | JoAnn Schaadt |
| 16 | Zizhao Chen | 31 | Xander Martini |
| 18 | Elaine Stellini | | |
| 19 | Lyn Milner | | |

JUST A REMINDER...

When on church grounds or attending a volunteer event at the church or somewhere else representing the church, or even a birthday drive by (where someone might come to your car door), masks NEED to be worn. Adults and children both need to wear masks, so parents please promote this if you will be at a church activity with your kids.

The mask needs to cover both your nose and mouth.

They are to be kept on at all times while on church grounds or at a church activity.

There are no exceptions to this.

But, I have had both Covid Vaccines, do I still need to wear a mask? YES! The vaccine does help protect you, but you could possibly still get Covid-19 and then pass it on to someone else. Generally, when you have had the vaccine your illness is much more mild, and the risk of hospitalization related to illness goes down. You still need to do your part to help protect others as well as yourself. This includes continuing to be diligent about wearing your mask, washing hands, and also continuing to social distance.

Mask mandates will not be lifted until the majority of us are vaccinated, so until then you need to continue to be careful.

Here is part of an article Bishop Stanovsky wrote 12/21/2020:

The United Methodist branch of the Christian church teaches that knowledge and faith are wedded together. From the knowledge side, we know that science-based interventions are effective against deadly disease. On the faith side, we hold a heartfelt conviction that each of us must make life choices that care for our neighbors as well as ourselves. Jesus teaches us that it is each person's job to love God and our neighbors as ourselves with our whole lives. In the pandemic, we model and encourage wearing masks, social distancing, washing hands and postponing gathered worship as acts of God's love toward our neighbors so that we might save lives.

We all need to be role models as the Bishop wrote, and one very easy way to do that right now—in the middle of a pandemic that at the time this is being written has taken the lives of 508,000 loved ones and caused illness to 28.4 million loved ones of ours. So please, do your part and wear your mask.

Thank you for understanding as to why we need to continue to protect each other!

STAR TRIBUNE
S&K





Photos of Lou Orthmeyer on her 95th birthday. Her birthday was celebrated by a drive by birthday parade. Pat Wolthausen joined her outside. So wonderful to see our church family however we can !

Did you enjoy the snow? Doesn't it get quiet and bright when it is snowing? Here are some photos of our snowy church.





*They took palm branches and went out
to meet him, shouting,*

"Hosanna!"

**"Blessed is he who comes in
the name of the Lord!"**

**"Blessed is the King of
Israel!"**

John 12:13

debbiemc

*Holy Week
March 28 -April 3*

Maundy Thursday April 1st

Palm Sunday March 28th

Good Friday April 2nd

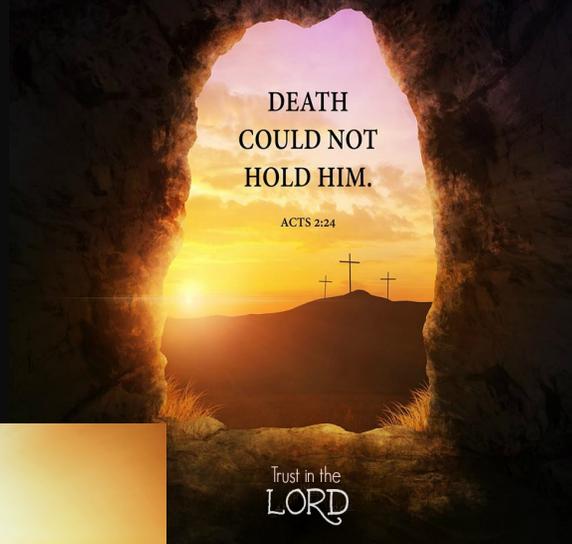
Easter Sunday April 4th



*Good Friday is a day of hope. It is a day
where we look forward to a brighter
tomorrow. Many things have happened to
change the course of our lives, but it has
not shaken our faith.*

Rev Dr Peola Hicks

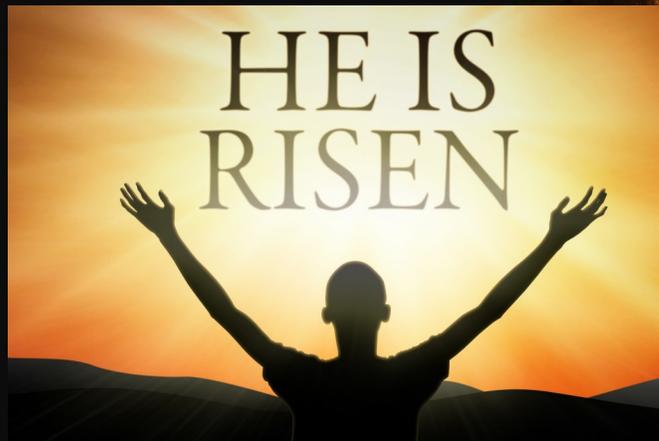
FlowersBloomHope.com



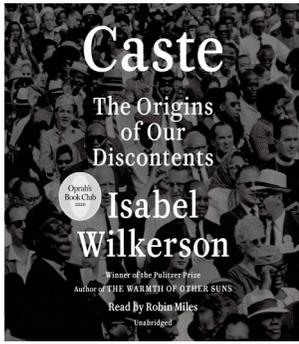
**DEATH
COULD NOT
HOLD HIM.**

ACTS 2:24

*Trust in the
LORD*



**HE IS
RISEN**



Are you looking for a book study group to become a part of this spring?

We have an opportunity for you.

Beginning Wednesday, March 17, a group (via zoom) will meet weekly for 4 weeks at 3:00 pm to share insights from our reading the book, “Caste...The Origins of Our Discontents” written by the Pulitzer Prize winning author Isabel Wilkerson. This book was also chosen to be in the 2020 Oprah’s Book Club.

Linking the caste systems of America, India and Nazi Germany, Wilkerson explores eight pillars that underlie caste systems across civilization. She also points forward to ways America can move beyond the artificial and destructive separations of human divisions, toward hope in our common humanity.

Participants will need to have their own copy of the book that can be found through Cokesbury, Amazon and other resources.

Please let Deb Avery know if you are wanting to be able to access the zoom link 2-3 days prior to the first session.

Looking forward to our time together,
Deb Avery



Did you know?

St. Paddy's Day started as a religious celebration in the 17th century to commemorate the life of Saint Patrick and the arrival of Christianity in Ireland. This “Feast Day” always took place on the anniversary of Patrick's death, which was believed to be March 17, 461 AD.

In Ireland, St. Patrick’s Day is a national holiday and has been since the beginning of the 20th century, but the first parade wasn’t held in its honor until the 1930s.



Last week of 2020, December 26-30 for us was attending a Filipino Christmas Institute (CI) held every year. The Filipino American youth camp this year was all through zoom and was a renewal of spiritual walk with God, full of vibrant youth and young adult leaders as well as a few clergies who were there during worships and Act of Faith. Indeed, sacred spaces still exist between all the technology accessibility. Truly, appreciating and recognizing that despite the pandemic God is in the midst of it all.

Even though I grew up in the Philippines, this has become my first experience of intentional participation in CI, one of a kind and God moves us all. I was part of the Support Staff and was able to share some tasks like doing one of the Workshops and delivered a sermon on the second night worship with the theme “Press on with Endurance”. The theme was Press On based on apostle Paul’s scripture in the book of Philippians 3:12-16. My hope is to be able to share this to our youth among our UMCs and especially with our own at Vancouver Heights UMC. It will be a great intercultural exchange of how spiritual formation and leadership has thrived from the Philippines Methodist Christmas institute to America.

This year will be the centennial celebration of when Christmas Institute began in the Philippines. Feel free to check more photos and details of what we have done in this years' CI. PNW website: <http://ci-pnw.org/index.html>

Isabel shares her first time CI experience as new camper

The camp was heavily oriented around God and believing in God. Though I’m not really sure what else it would be about. It felt rather similar to school, you sit, they talk, you answer things; except it was about God (I don’t mean this in a bad way).

My favorite thing about CI was the passion groups. My favorite passion group that I attended (not saying the others were bad) was Finding Joy Through Your Passions. I feel that I learned a little bit more about myself in that passion group.

I would go back to CI again through your support this year or in a couple years. Maybe by then my faith would be stronger as well as my understanding. I do recommend going to CI. There are certainly things that can be learned from it. But personally, at the moment, it’s not really for me. The seed of faith in me has yet to grow to that extent I had seen at CI but it also showed that I have lots of room to grow in.

Lyn Rush

(she/her/hers, they/them/theirs, siya)

Certified Lay Minister of Former Pinoy Van-Port Ministries



Thank you for all of the prayers, gifts and beautiful cards. Thank you to Pastor JoAnn for waving to me through the window and the flowers. Thanks to my circle and friends for all the food for Larry and Mike. Please continue the prayers.

Pat Chercasen

We received a thank you card from Renee Gaines.

Dear Friends

I thank you so much for the drive thru birthday. I was so surprised I never thought I would ever have one of those. I was totally blown away but I loved it.

Thank you for the flowers, balloons, candy, spring plate, and Valentines. Cup with cute little stuffed dog. I loved them all. Cyndi and I want to get into one of those drives so let us know.

Thank you
so much
Renee
1/11/22

There are people
in this world
who know who they are,
what they're about,
what they alone can give.
And just like them,
the gifts they share are
a true blessing.

Shalom to you now, shalom, my friends.

**May God's full mercies
bless you, my friends.**

In all your living and through your loving,

Christ be your shalom,

Christ be your shalom.





Vancouver Heights United Methodist Church

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360-693-4761
Email: vancouverheightsumc@gmail.com
Prayer Request mail: 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 Schadt Shipley

Administrative Assistant:

Lugene Paprocki

Choir Director & Song Leader:

Nancy Huerena

Pianist:

Lori Ritchey

Nursery Attendant:

Abigail Niehaus

Worship Producer:

Stephanie Harold

*A Monthly Publication of
Vancouver Heights United Methodist Church*



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
AND YOU WILL BE ADDED.