

**The Church Mouse/Vashon Lutheran Church**  
**18623 Vashon Hwy SW**  
**Mailing: PO Box 2930**  
**Vashon, WA 98070**  
**Email: [vlc98070@centurytel.net](mailto:vlc98070@centurytel.net)**

**APRIL 2023**



# The Church Mouse

## From the Bishop:

I recently learned that the largest glacier between Mt. Rainier and Glacier Peak is no more. The reporter actually said that the glacier had died. Died. Gone. For thousands of years, the Hinman Glacier lived in the Washington Cascades providing much needed water to the Skykomish River. It is now gone.



A few months ago, my beloved dog, Gracie, died. She was thirteen. She was sick. It was time. But Gracie was with me through my cancer treatment, my children leaving home, my marriage ending, moving to a new city, beginning a new job, being in a new relationship ... and now she has died. She is now gone.

In this synod we recently had two churches close: Clearbrook Lutheran Church in Lynden and Shepherd of the Hills Lutheran Church in Concrete. There are additional congregations who are discerning closure in this synod. All these congregations thrived in their communities for many years. Baptisms, weddings, funerals happened. People heard, shared, and lived into the good news of Jesus. And now these congregations have either decided, or are discerning, if their time lifecycle has come to an end.

All of these deaths are hard. They hurt my heart. There is grief and there is pain. And, while I might not know what you are grieving, I am sure that there is heartache in your life, too. Sometimes it seems that there is so much death. And sometimes it seems overwhelming.

As Christians we might say, "But I thought we were promised immortality. I thought "death has lost its sting." Truthfully, it doesn't feel that way. Death is real. It hurts. Where is this resurrection and new life we are promised?"

Dr. Brian Bantum, professor and author, writes regarding human immortality:

Our personhood, the body we speak of so confidently that was meant to live forever, is itself an arrangement of cells and tissues that are cycling through life and death. Our bodies are constantly undergoing changes, small transformations in our gradual development from infant to adult. Our bodies are no different and are connected to the cycles of life and death that are intrinsic to creation's goodness. As Indigenous theologian Randy Woodley reminds us, 'Death is simply another part of living.' (Christian Century, Did God intend for Adam and Eve to live forever?, March 12, 2023)

On Ash Wednesday this year, I had a vision of God playing in the dirt. Kneeling down, mixing dirt into mud, molding and mixing, and forming each human. God – laughing and creating. God – loving and generating. I smiled at this sight. Later in the service, when I went forward to receive ashes in the shape of a cross upon my forehead, when I heard, "Dust to dust and ashes to ashes," I had a vision of God scooping each beloved human into God's arms at the end of their life. Holding the human turned dirt again.

Office Hours  
Tuesday-Friday 12-3pm  
206-463-2655  
PO BOX 2930  
Vashon, WA 98070  
Marita Ericksen, Secretary  
Church Office: 206-463-2655

## VLC Council Members

Pres. Patte Wagner  
206-519-3841  
[pattewags@aol.com](mailto:pattewags@aol.com)  
V.P. Jack Kirkman  
253-820-8737  
[acumen.llc@comcast.net](mailto:acumen.llc@comcast.net)  
Sec. Marita Ericksen  
206-715-7126  
[maritaericksen@gmail.com](mailto:maritaericksen@gmail.com)  
Interim Treas. Erica Wagner  
206-353-0115  
[erica\\_marlene@outlook.com](mailto:erica_marlene@outlook.com)  
Memb. at Lg.  
Martha Gebhard  
206-463-1290  
[MarthaGebhard@gmail.com](mailto:MarthaGebhard@gmail.com)  
Rev. Dr. Jeff Larson  
206-567-4779  
[the-key@hotmail.com](mailto:the-key@hotmail.com)

Loving and creating even more.

Dr. Bantum writes later in the same article, “Change, transformation, death, cycles of renewal and cessation—these are all part of God’s creation. And this change is beautiful and good.” Is it possible to move beyond the grief we feel when something ends and see the new life that might be coming?

Perhaps the glacier that died could be an impetus for us to take seriously the threat of climate change. I would hope so. I hope that the love my dog Gracie had for me will make me more loving towards others. In our synod, we are working with the closing congregations so that together we may begin new ministries and new ways of being church in this new day and age.

During this season of Lent – and into Holy Week and Easter – we know the truth of death. We know it in our bones. We acknowledge the pain, the difficulty, the fear, and the grief that comes with death. And yet, even more so, as people of faith, as people who celebrate Easter, we trust in God’s love through Jesus Christ who died and rose again for us and for the redemption of this entire world. Yes. There is death. And yes. There is resurrection.

God continues to play in the soil. God continues to create and nurture new life. God continues to hold and sustain life. And, fundamentally, without question, God brings life from death - each and every day.

May you have a blessed Easter. May we together, in this real world that we live in, trust in Jesus. And may we, with all the angels, archangels and all the saints, shout the good news together, “Happy Easter! Christ is risen! Christ is risen indeed!”

+ Bishop Shelley Bryan Wee / [bishop@lutheransnw.org](mailto:bishop@lutheransnw.org)

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

**Thank you, Rev. Thomas M. Aitken, for your participation in worship today at VLC!**

**Easter Sunday, April 9<sup>th</sup>, potluck breakfast, 9:00 AM. Bring a breakfast dish to share – an egg casserole, a meat dish, breads, fruits, or whatever you like.**

**VLC Mission Planning Committee Meeting – MPC next meets in person, Mon., April 17, at 6:00 PM.**

**Giving Your Offering – Thank you for continuing to give an offering to VLC! Our mailing address is: Vashon Lutheran Church, P. O. Box 2930, Vashon, WA 98070.**

**Contact Gail Larson (206/567-4779) with your prayer requests.**

**IFCH Dinner Program: The fourth Thursday of each month VLC is to provide the ingredients for five hand out meals at Vashon Presbyterian Church at 5:00 PM. Contact Patte Wagner: [pattewags@aol.com](mailto:pattewags@aol.com) if you wish to help. IFCH will provide containers for packaging the food into meal-to-go bags.**

**The Care Closet, Medical Equipment/Supplies – 206-473-8715. Vashon Care Network – 206-604-3253. Email: [contact@vashoncarenetwork.org](mailto:contact@vashoncarenetwork.org); website: [www.vashoncarenetwork.org](http://www.vashoncarenetwork.org)**

**The Vashon Island Chorale Concerts, Apr. 15, 7:30 PM & 16, 3:00 PM at VCA. Directed by Dr. Gary D. Cannon, highlights include the acclaimed settings of James Agee’s “Sure on this shining night” by Samuel Barber and Morten Lauridsen. Arrangements by Aaron Copland of traditional American tunes join William Averitt’s dramatic and optimistic “The Song We Sing.” “At the Water’s Edge,” a suite by Kevin Seigfried & Sarah Orne Jewett, & Bronwyn Edwards’s “Seashore” depicting our own Vashon Island. The McMurray Middle School Youth Choir will be featured. VLC members Gary Koch, June Langland, Dennis Drewes & Marita Ericksen sing with Vashon Island Chorale.**

**In September, 2023 we are having our annual rummage sale. Please begin gathering items, but keep them home for now. In spring, June Langland will tell you when items can be brought to the church.**

“The angel said to the women, ‘Do not be afraid; I know that you are looking for Jesus who was crucified. He is not here; for he has been raised, as he said. Come, see the place where he lay. Then go quickly and tell his disciples, ‘He has been raised from the dead, and indeed he is going ahead of you to Galilee; there you will see him.’ This is my message for you.’ “  
**Matthew 28**

## OUR FAITH IN ACTION

### SUNDAY

1st, Food Bank Sunday

10:30 AM Worship

6:30 – 8:30 PM AA Group

### MONDAY

10:00 AM Intercessory Prayer Group

April 17, 6:00 PM Mission Planning Committee Mtg. at VLC

### TUESDAY

2nd, 9:00 – 1:00 PM Quilt Sewers Group

3rd, 10:00 – noon Vashon Quilting Group

### WEDNESDAY

1st, 9:00 – noon Lutheran Quilters Group

April 19, 7:00 PM Council ZOOM Meeting

### THURSDAY

Apr. 7, 10:00 AM – 3:00 PM AARP Free Tax Prep, by appointment

Apr. 27, 5:00 PM IFCH Dinner prepared by VLC, served at VPC

### FRIDAY

7:00 - 8:30 PM AA Group for Men



Vashon Lutheran Church  
 PO Box 2930 Vashon, WA 98070  
 Street Address: 18623 Vashon Hwy SW  
 Church Office Hours: Tuesday-Friday 12-3pm  
 Phone: (206) 463-2655 Email: [vlc98070@centurytel.net](mailto:vlc98070@centurytel.net)