

The Church Mouse

Vashon Lutheran Church
JUNE 2026

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Message from the Bishop

From the Bishop:

What is the Bible? Some say the Bible is a book that dropped down from heaven completely written. Some say the Bible is nothing but a bunch of stories from long ago that don't matter. Neither of these are accurate. Instead, what we as Lutherans believe, is that the Bible is a sacred and holy book because through its 66 books – the stories, poems, history, laments, letters, and more – the Bible points us toward Jesus. Jesus, the One who reveals God's grace, mercy, justice, and love for the world.

As Lutherans, we understand that the center of the Bible is always Jesus. Martin Luther famously said that when we read scripture, we should ask, "Does it show Christ?" In other words, does this verse or passage reveal God made known in Jesus? Does it move us toward peace, wholeness, reconciliation, forgiveness, and love? Or is it being twisted to justify oppression, cruelty, and exclusion? Luther believed that faithful people do not simply quote isolated verses. We are to wrestle with scripture honestly and faithfully always through the lens of Jesus.

Luther also insisted that scripture must interpret scripture. No single verse stands alone. Every verse and passage and book is meant to be in conversation with the broader arc of scripture – with the prophets, the gospels, the letters, and, especially, with the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus. This means we read the Bible seriously, but not literally. We pay attention to context, history, genre, and the larger witness of God's love. When a verse seems to pull us toward harm or violence, we are called to read the passage again, asking whether the interpretation is consistent with God as revealed in Jesus.

I chose to write on how to read the Bible because, quite frankly, what the bible is and biblical interpretation matters deeply right now. I see scripture being selectively quoted by people in power to dehumanize and scapegoat vulnerable communities, glorify wealth and power, and distort sacred texts into slogans. Verses are being lifted out of context while the broader witness of Jesus' life is ignored.

Earlier this year, I watched a recruitment video for the U.S. Department of Homeland Security that opened with helicopters flying overhead and the words from Matthew 5:9 on the screen: *Blessed are the peacemakers*. What followed were images of heavily armed men in tactical gear carrying weapons, breaking down doors, and carrying out violent raids against immigrants. I could not help but notice how far this imagery stands from Jesus' Sermon on the Mount, the very place from which that verse is taken.

On the eve of the 250th anniversary of this country, I pray that we would reject the misuse of scripture and instead read scripture faithfully so that we might follow Jesus more closely. I pray that we would acknowledge our own complicity, resist the temptation towards power or fear, care for those who are vulnerable, and stand up and speak out truthfully and prophetically.

Let us return to the prophets who call for justice and care for the poor. Let us return to the Sermon on the Mount where Jesus blesses the meek, the merciful, and the peacemakers. Let us return to the cross, where God rejected violence and domination as the final word. Let us rejoice in the resurrection, where hope, mercy, and love rise again even in the midst of fear and despair. Let us read scripture faithfully and let us follow Jesus.

Bishop Shelley Bryan Wee | bishop@lutheransnw.org



ADVOCACY ACTION ALERT

The Farm Bill is now being considered in the Senate, and sharing your experiences and values can help shape a result that meets rural and nutritional needs.

A partisan Farm Bill [narrowly passed the House of Representatives](#) on Apr. 30 by a near party line vote. This comes as many governors say the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program ([SNAP](#)) [program could be in jeopardy in their state](#) if Congress does not take any action, and as farmers are facing high production costs, unstable markets and more. As the Farm Bill faces consideration in the Senate, the input of faith partners will be crucial to advancing a more bipartisan farm bill that supports needs of hungry people, rural communities and farmer families. (More information is available on the [ELCA Advocacy Blog](#).)

At a time when houses of worship, food pantries, farmers, global partners and ELCA World Hunger affiliates are reporting alarming new rates of food requests in our communities, Congress should pass a comprehensive Farm Bill that promotes [sustainable livelihoods for all](#). Ask your senators to advance provisions that will help boost both rural communities and hungry families in need, including: Rejecting cuts and new state burdens to SNAP scheduled to phase in later this year, and starting a pathway for Puerto Rico to receive full SNAP benefits;

- Reauthorizing international food aid programs, such as Food for Peace, the McGovern-Dole Food for Education and the Bill Emerson Humanitarian Trust;
- Increasing local and regional procurement of international food aid for emergency relief and development programs;

- Promoting innovative practices for soil health and agroforestry in oversubscribed farm programs, such as the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) and Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP); and
- Expanding and making permanent the Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations ([FDPIR](#)) Self-Determination Demonstration Project to eligible tribes.

Public partners in the administration and Congress increasingly respect the critical role houses of worship play in addressing food security – making the feedback of the faith community essential in this conversation. **The Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry could soon release bill text – so this is a critical time to help share the top priorities of our communities.**

Contact your lawmakers today. Customize your message with your experiences and values.

[TAKE ACTION TODAY](#)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Edna Dam, wife of long-time VLC member, Jim Dam, passed away in the early hours on Monday, May 25th. Edna and Jim were married for 64 years! Cards may be sent to: N. James Dam, 14035 – 107th Way SW, Vashon, WA 98070. Services are planned for June 6 as follows: graveside green burial, noon at Vashon Cemetery; worship service at Vashon Lutheran Church at 1pm; refreshments/fellowship, 2pm at VLC. There is also Edna’s celebration of life party, July 12 at Jim’s 90th birthday party, at Dam’s home, 1–6 pm.

Contact Gail Larson (206/852-4967) with your prayer requests.

IFCH Dinner Program - VLC will provide a meal at Vashon Presbyterian Church at 5:00 PM the fourth Thursday of the month. Contact Cheryl Weise: cheryl.weise@gmail.com.

The Care Closet, Medical Equipment/Supplies – 206-473-8715. Vashon Care Network – 206-473-8715. Email: contact@vashoncarenetwork.org; website: www.vashoncarenetwork.org.

VCN FAMILY CAREGIVERS SUPPORT GROUP - Vashon Care Network invites you to join other family caregivers in a safe, supportive space to share the experience of caregiving. Thursdays, 6:30–7:30 PM at VLC. ?? Call Tory Hayes, 206.304-4544, victoriansmith@comcast.net.

Vashon Youth and Family Services, Family Place offers free programs to support families with young children in our community. The program focuses on child development, parenting practices, and family wellbeing. Contact: 206-348-3564, www.vyfs.org/family-place; familyplace@vyfs.org, Vashon Methodist.



Our Faith In Action

SUNDAY

1st

9:45 AM – 10:15 AM

10:30 AM

May 31st, 2:30-5:30pm

6:30 – 8:30 PM

July 12, 1:00 – 6:00 PM

Food Bank Sunday

Bible Study in Fellowship Hall

Worship Service

VCN Home Health Care Aides Training

AA Group

Jim's 90th BD & Edna's Celebration of Life at the Dam's home

MONDAY

June 22, 6:00 – 8:00 PM

Vashon Care Network Meeting

TUESDAY

2nd, 9:00 AM – 1:00 PM

3rd, 10:00 AM – noon

Quilt Sewers Group

Vashon Quilting Group

WEDNESDAY

1st, 9:00 AM – noon

June 24, noon

July 22, 1:00 – 5:00 PM

Lutheran Quilters Group

VLC Council Meeting in Pastor's Office

Tom & Molly Anderson 30th Anniversary Reception

THURSDAY

10:00 AM

June 28, 5:00 PM

6:30-7:30 PM

Intercessory Prayer Group in Pastor's Office

IFCH dinner served at Vashon Presbyterian Ch.

VCN Family Caregivers Support Group at VLC

FRIDAY

7:00 – 8:30 PM

AA Group for Men

SATURDAY

June 6, noon – 3:00 PM

June 13, 10:00 AM – 1:00 PM

Edna Dam's Green Burial at Vashon Cemetery – noon;

Service at VLC – 1 PM; Refreshments at VLC – 2 PM

VCN Home Health Care Aides Training

About us

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