

The Church Mouse

VASHON LUTHERAN CHURCH

JANUARY
2026

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this issue

Message from the Bishop **P.1**

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From the BISHOP:

Several years ago, when I was a young pastor serving in a congregation, a member came to tell me he was leaving the church for another one. When I asked why, he said, "I don't like all the lovey-dovey stuff." I was caught off guard and didn't have a very good response in the moment. Now I wish I had said something like, "When you say 'lovey, dovey' are you referring to the Sermon on the Mount when Jesus says we are to love even our enemies? Or when Jesus says his new command is that we love one another as he has loved us? Or when Jesus, hanging on the cross, says, 'Father, forgive them?' Or when the risen Jesus shows up on the shore, feeds his friends, and asks Peter – three times – 'Do you love me?' Or, maybe you mean Paul, who says that you can have all kinds of gifts and accomplishments, but without love, you are nothing. Or when Paul writes that out of faith, hope, and love, love is the greatest or ...". You get the idea. But I didn't have those words that day.

Now, several years later, I wish I could answer him again. Because as much as he thought he was rejecting something weak, living into God's expansive love is anything but. It can be beautiful and life-giving, yes – but it is also demanding and hard. Especially when that love calls us to care for people we don't particularly like, let alone agree with.

Today, in this fractured time, in this fractured world, how do we live into being 'lovey-dovey' in the way God first shows us through Jesus? How do we love when we're afraid? How do we love those who are causing real harm? How do we love people with whom we feel uncomfortable or "icky?" How do we love those we would rather avoid? How do we love those we despise?

First, we have to be honest with ourselves. As clearly as we may see the sin of others, we also must acknowledge our own. We fall short time and time again. We cannot justify ourselves out of sin, nor can we place ourselves above anyone else. God is the one who comes in Jesus to bring wholeness, reconciliation, and salvation – not just to some, but to the whole world (John 3:16-17).

From the BISHOP (continued):

Second, every person is made in the image of God. Every person is a small miracle. God formed each person with care and intention. Every person, all eight billion of us on this planet, are a wonder and a joy to God. God loves each person beyond measure. God loves those fleeing countries (like Moses and the holy family). God loves those tangled up in messes of their own making (like David). God loves those who are trying their very best (like Martha). God even loves those who would rather scroll on their phones than engage (well ... for a scriptural reference perhaps this could be those churches in Revelation who are neither hot nor cold). God loves us all. Thank God!

And because of God's amazing love, we are called to listen to one another and open our hearts to one another. This, of course, also means speaking up when there is injustice or harm – not out of hatred but out of love. Love rooted in Christ requires us to name and resist when harmful decisions made by those in power damage lives, especially when those decisions fall hardest on people who have been marginalized, silenced or erased. Love rooted in Christ pushes us to advocate for policies and practices that move people and systems toward equity and inclusion – whether we are talking about immigrants or farmers, children or grandmothers, those with homes and those without – neighbors all.

Third, we cannot love as God calls us to love on our own (see #1 above). We need the Holy Spirit and we need community. We need one another for accountability, and we need each other to help us journey forward together – beyond fear, beyond hatred, beyond the walls that we so easily build. Love cannot remain theoretical and abstract. No. Love is gritty and enfleshed.

As we begin 2026, I pray that, through the Holy Spirit, we love God and one another in our words and our actions. I pray that we practice loving all – even our enemies. And I pray that in this new year, others will look at us and say, “Wow. They are fiercely ‘lovely-dovey.’”

Following the Way of Jesus, may it be so.

Bishop Shelley Bryan Wee | bishop@lutheransnw.org

ANNOUNCEMENTS

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 Thurs 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.

The Vashon Old Friends Club is at the Presbyterian Church, Wednesdays. The Club, a place of fun & friendship for adults with memory loss or cognitive change, provides breaks for their caregivers. It's offered every Weds., 9:30 am– 2:30 pm. If you're a caregiver or know someone with cognitive challenges & have questions, please submit a Program Interest Form, available on the VCN website: www.vashoncarenetwork.org. If you want to volunteer, contact: laurettahyde721@gmail.com.



December 23, 2025

Vashon Lutheran Church
PO Box 2930
Vashon, WA 98070-2930

Dear Vashon Lutheran Church,

Thank you for your generous contribution of \$1,000.00. Your support brings us closer to being a sustainable congregation and allows us to provide services to those in need. One of the things that is often overlooked in caring for others is a place of worship, a place where faith can be nourished and grow. We who attend The Church of Steadfast Love are strengthened by word and sacrament and supported by community. We are provided a place of belonging, a place where we are not judged, but rather are welcomed in, and we come to a place where true healing can begin.

We firmly believe that we are called by name and sent out into the world to declare in word and deed what has been done for us. Your gift enables us to be an active part of the Body of Christ. Our congregation provides a safe place for people in the shelters, on the streets and in housing to come together and praise God and serve the neighbor. We invite you to come and worship with us.

Peace be with you,

Pastor Kristy Daniels
The Church of Steadfast Love
77 S. Washington St., Seattle, WA 98104
(206) 474-1007

Note: This letter is a receipt of your donation of \$1,000.00 to: Church of Steadfast Love, for which you received no goods or services in exchange. Thank You!! Under 1994 tax rules, you must retain receipts for donations of \$250 or more.



VASHON LUTHERAN CHURCH

PO Box 2930

Vashon, WA 98070 Street

Address: 18623 Vashon Hwy SW

Church Office Hours:

Mon, Wed, Thurs 10am-3pm

Phone: (206) 463-2655

Email: vlc98070@centurytel.net

Website: vashonlutheran.org

Our Faith In Action

SUNDAY

1st

9:45 AM – 10:15 AM

10:30 AM

6:30 – 8:30 PM

Jan. 11, 2026, noon

Feb. 1, 2026, 11:30 AM

Food Bank Sunday

Bible Study in Fellowship Hall

Worship Service

AA Group

VLC Council Meeting

VLC Annual Congregational 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

Lutheran Quilters Group

THURSDAY

Jan. 22, 5:00 PM

6:30-7:30 PM

IFCH dinner served at Vashon Presbyterian Ch.

VCN Family Caregivers Support Group at VLC

FRIDAY

7:00 – 8:30 PM

AA Group for Men

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