

MONTESANO PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

201 McBryde Ave. East, Montesano, WA 98563

Mailing Address ~ P.O. Box 110

360.249.3845

Sunday School: 9:00 a.m. ~ Worship: 10:00 a.m.

1883 ~ 2026

May 2026

Devotional: "Under the Sun" — Ecclesiastes 1:1–7

Ecclesiastes opens with a voice both royal and weary: "The words of the Preacher, the son of David, king in Jerusalem." The Hebrew name Qoheleth (קֹהֵלֶת) carries the idea of one who assembles or addresses the congregation—a preacher of hard truths. And his opening sermon is striking:

"Vanity of vanities, says the Preacher, vanity of vanities! All is vanity." (v. 2)

The Hebrew word *hevel* (הֶבֶל) is richer than our English "vanity." It means vapor, breath, something fleeting and insubstantial. It is not merely that life is meaningless, but that it is elusive—here for a moment, then gone. Like trying to grasp smoke, life "under the sun" cannot be held onto.

From a Reformed perspective, this is not cynicism—it is theology.

John Calvin often emphasized that the human heart is an "idol factory," constantly seeking lasting satisfaction in created things rather than the Creator. Ecclesiastes exposes the futility of that pursuit. When we seek ultimate meaning in work, pleasure, or achievement, we are chasing *hevel*—a mist that cannot satisfy.

Verse 3 asks the great question: "What does man gain by all the toil at which he toils under the sun?"

The phrase "under the sun" is key. It appears repeatedly in Ecclesiastes and frames the

problem: life considered apart from God's eternal perspective. Gordon Clark noted that Ecclesiastes reads almost like a philosophical investigation into meaning without divine revelation. And the conclusion is unavoidable—apart from God, there is no ultimate gain.

Charles Spurgeon, preaching on similar themes, warned that all earthly pursuits, when made ultimate, will disappoint: "You will find no rest for the sole of your foot until you return unto the ark." Ecclesiastes drives us to that same conclusion.

Verses 4–7 then paint a picture of relentless cycles:

"A generation goes, and a generation comes... The sun rises, and the sun goes down... The wind blows... and on its circuits the wind returns... All streams run to the sea, but the sea is not full..."

The Hebrew emphasizes repetition and weariness. Creation itself seems caught in a loop—movement without progress. There is activity, but no lasting advancement. As Calvin observed, the world, subjected to the curse (Romans 8), reflects this frustration. It is not functioning as it once did in Eden; it groans under the weight of sin.

This is the doctrine of the Fall on display.

Human life mirrors this same pattern. We labor, achieve, and strive—yet nothing we build escapes time, decay, or death. Generations come and go, and the world continues as if we were never here.

That realization can feel heavy—but it is meant to be.

Ecclesiastes is a mercy. It dismantles our illusions so that we might build on truth.

The Westminster Confession reminds us that man's chief end is "to glorify God, and to enjoy Him forever." Ecclesiastes 1 shows us the futility of every other end. If we seek joy "under the sun," we will find only hevel. But if we look above the sun—to the sovereign, eternal God—we find what is solid, lasting, and true.

In Christ, this passage finds its resolution.

Jesus entered into this vapor-like world, took on our frailty, and endured the curse that makes life feel so empty. Yet through His resurrection, He broke the cycle. What is done "in the Lord," as Paul says in 1 Corinthians 15, "is not in vain"—not hevel.

So how should we live?

Not by withdrawing from the world, nor by idolizing it—but by receiving it rightly. Our work, our days, our relationships—these are not ultimate things, but gifts from God to be stewarded for His glory.

When we feel the weight of repetition, the frustration of unfinished work, or the fleeting nature of life, Ecclesiastes teaches us not to despair—but to look up.

Because only what is rooted in God will last.

Reflection Questions:

- Where am I seeking lasting meaning in things that are ultimately hevel?
- How does the reality of God's sovereignty reshape my view of daily work and routine?
- In what ways can I live today "above the sun," with eternity in view?

Pastor Mike

Christian Ed

Everyone is welcome to attend the following Bible studies:

The second and fourth Tuesday Women's Devotional meets at 10:00 a.m. We are continuing to study the prayers of John Baillie.

The Adult Sunday School meets at 9:00 a.m. in the large classroom at the end of hallway. We are currently studying Desiring God by John Piper. We are blessed to have as many as three pastors included in our lively discussions. It is a time of learning and fellowship. Everyone is welcome.

Men's Bible Study meets at 9 am on Wednesday mornings. Breakfast is provided. The men are currently studying Galatians.

Women's Bible Study meets at 11:00 am every Friday. We are currently studying the crucifixion scriptures as written in each of the Gospel.

Congregational Life

On May 10th we are celebrating Mother's Day with our traditional Fellowship Hour cheesecake. Tamra Robins will be providing the cheesecakes. Please bring your mothers or any women who have provided a mothering role in your life.

Mark your calendars! May 24th at 4:00 Pastor Mike will be installed as our new Teaching Elder by the EPC. We know this is Labor Day Weekend, but it is a momentous occasion for our church. There will be a potluck supper following the installation. We will also be inviting all the pastors, who have graciously led worship, moderated Session, and Congregational Meetings, and provided prayers and sound advice when we were without a pastor. Please



plan to attend as we welcome Pastor Mike and thank our visiting pastors.

Soup and Bread Sunday (or maybe Brunch Sunday) will be held on May 31, 2026. This is a donation Fellowship Hour. The proceeds will go to the Uganda Mission.

Thank you

to our Church family for the wonderful celebration in honor of our marriage. It was such a blessing to us. Larry & Peggy Carlson.

Mission Outreach Union Gospel Mission Meals

2026 brings some changes to the Mission Meal Program. Most notably, the cost of providing the main course, salad, and dessert for sixty people. Our previous target was \$2.00 per meal. Currently we are closer to \$2.50 per meal. The meal is funded by your generous donations of cash and food from your gardens. We will have a sign-up sheet, by month, to help prepare the food, as well as to donate funds to purchase the needed supplies. If you would like to donate funds, you can mark your donation "Mission Meal" and put it in the Joash Chest at the back of the sanctuary. A donation of \$25 would be appreciated, but anything you can give helps tremendously. Like last year, I would love to have you join me in preparing the meal on the 3rd Monday of the month. ~ Tamra



Pastor Search

Committee

Praise God, Pastor Mike McMillian accepted our call to be our Teaching Elder. Pastor Mike led worship and provided a glorious message to our church family on April 12, 2026. During a Congregational Meeting following worship, the church membership voted to accept the PSC's recommendation to call Pastor Mike. He will be installed by the EPC on May 24, 2026, in a special worship service held at MPC at 4:00 p.m. Following the installation by the EPC, Pastor Mike will officially be our Teaching Elder.

Praying Church

Did you know that we are a praying church, and we want to pray for your families and friends who have needs? We have a Prayer Chain made up of people who will pray for you. If you would like to be a part of the Prayer Chain and commit to pray for concerns that are sent out, we can add you to this list. If you have a need you would like us to pray for, email or call either Peggy Carlson or Randi Toyra, and your request will be sent to the Prayer Chain.

Stewardship

It is mowing season once again if you can believe it. We will have a mowing sign-up sheet on the back table in the sanctuary to sign up to mow the church lawn or have Jack Sipe mow for you for \$40.00.

Worship

Morning Prayer...We meet for Prayer every Tuesday morning at 11:00 a.m., to pray for the needs of family, friends, and our Church body. It is our joy to pray together. If you would like to join us during this time of prayer, you are welcome to come and be a part of it.

May Coming Events

***Game Day: Game Day is such a hit that you can now join in EVERY Thursday at 1p!!**



Come join us and exercise your skills at Rummikube, Racko, Uno, Jenga, Mexican

Train and numerous card games. We meet in the Fellowship Hall at 1 p.m. every Thursday. Participants bring a treat to share – nothing elaborate – popcorn, cookies, candy, and other treats.

Games are open for everyone, the MPC congregation, former members of the church, friends, and neighbors. We have fellowship in a casual setting and enjoy laughter and conversation on a variety of uncontroversial topics.

Finding yourself with nothing special to do on a rainy Thursday afternoon, come join us. Later in the year, when the weather is more predictable (if that is a thing in Grays Harbor County!), we might move our game tables to the patio so that we can enjoy the dear Lord's sunshine, fresh air, beautiful nature, singing birds and the occasional passing deer.

If you have questions, comments, suggestions - contact Randi or Diana.

Hope to see you there soon!

***May Birthday Lunch:** 11:30 a.m., Monday, May 4 at Gepetto's, celebrating those having a May Birthday. For additional information or to be added to the list, contact Pat Willis.

***Men's Breakfast Bible Study...NEW DAY AND TIME...** is open to all men of the church. They meet for breakfast **Wednesday** mornings at **9:00 a.m.** They are currently studying Galatians.

***Morning Prayer:** Tuesday mornings at 11:00 a.m. All are welcome!

***Women's Bible Study:** is open to all women of the church. This study meets every Friday morning at **11:00 a.m.** We are currently studying the crucifixion scriptures as written in each of the Gospel.

***Women's Devotional Study:** Second and Fourth Tuesdays at 10:00 a.m. in the church Library, continuing the study of the prayers of John Baille.

Mother's Day Cheesecake fellowship following worship, Sunday, May 10.

Installation of Pastor Mike McMillan as our Teaching Elder, Sunday, May 24, 4:00p.m. Potluck to follow.

5th Sunday Soup & Bread (by donation) following worship, Sunday, May 31. Proceeds will benefit our Uganda Mission Field.

Deacon Meeting
Monday, May 11, 6:00p

Session Meeting
Thursday, May 14, 6:00p



Carol Fischback
 Edie Johnson
 Addi McMillan
 Danielle Parker

May 10 & May 17
 Mel & Gale Broughton

May 24 & May 31
 Ron & Lorna Claxton

June 07 & June 14
 Ron Dalan & Tom Ryan

June 21 & June 28
 David & Susan Mandt



Mike & Amy McMillan

Coffee Hour

May 03 ~ Open
 May 10 ~ Mother's Day Cheesecake
 May 17 ~ Open
 May 24 ~ David & Susan Mandt
 May 31 ~ 5th Sunday Soup and Bread
 June 07 ~ Open
 June 14 ~ Open
 June 21 ~ Father's Day Strawberry Shortcake
 June 28 ~ Randi Toyra

Who's Doing What

Reader of God's Word

Below is a list of the Worship Readers along with the Pastors they will be assisting.

May 03 ~ David Mandt
 May 10 ~ Peggy Carlson
 May 17 ~ Garrett Dalan
 May 24 ~ Pam Hildreth
 May 31 ~ Tom Robins
 June 07 ~ Emily Meier
 June 14 ~ David Mandt
 June 21 ~ Peggy Carlson
 June 28 ~ Garrett Dalan

Greeters

May 03

Peggy Carlson & Sue McCombs

