Welcome Statement

We open our doors to all persons to join in worship, fellowship, educational programs and service.

We welcome into membership all who profess faith in Jesus Christ without regard to gender, age, race, ethnic origin, socio-economic status, sexual orientation, disability, or any other human condition.

We elect and ordain as leaders in the church persons who are called by God and committed to serving the Lord Jesus Christ in the Church.

adopted by the Session, May 18, 2009

May 2020 NEWSLETTER

The winter is past, the rain is over and gone. The flowers appear on the earth; the time of singing has come, and the voice of the turtledove is heard in our land.

Song of Solomon 2:11-12
CHURCH BUSINESS DURING SOCIAL DISTANCING

Our church office hours are temporarily limited due to the dangers of the covid-19 virus and limitations on gatherings and in-person contact. Worship and most or all meetings and gatherings are suspended or taking place in alternative ways until further notice.

Temporary office hours: Mondays & Wednesdays, 1—4 pm. At other times, you can leave a message request a return phone call.

We ask that visits to the church building during this time be limited to activities necessary for carrying on vital church business and ministry, and that at all times safe physical distancing be observed. Please wash hands or use hand sanitizer when entering and leaving the building, and use the sanitizing supplies on hand to disinfect surfaces you touch before leaving.

If you need to come to church for other reasons it would be best to call first.

We urge everyone to observe the governor’s executive orders and the infection prevention recommendations of the CDC. But we are also here to help one another and serve our community in whatever ways we can. If you have or are aware of a need that the church might be able to help with, we want to know! Contact us.

If you need to reach Pastors Jerry and Janet and do not find them at church, please call them at home 269-349-5278 or call one of their cell phones:
- Janet 407-455-0821
- Jerry 269-501-4701

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Though we are not gathering, the ministry of the church continues! We still have staff who need to be paid, other bills due, church maintenance to see to, and important mission commitments to fulfill. If at all possible, please continue to send your pledge so we don’t have to add worries about cash flow to our other concerns at this time. This might be a good time to consider arranging for automatic payments from your bank. Giving via PayPal is also possible; you can read more about this and find a link on our church website.

We are delighted to welcome Audrey Curry to our church staff, as our Temporary Bookkeeper. Audrey, who also serves as bookkeeper for the Presbytery of Lake Michigan, brings lots of experience with bookkeeping as well as a love for our church and a commitment to doing a careful and excellent job. We thank her for stepping up to meet this significant need!

Worship in MAY

will be LIVESTREAMED on Facebook every Sunday mornings at our usual time of 9:30 am.

The Order of Worship is being sent via email on Saturday (with a version for at-home worship sent via US Mail to those without internet access only)

You do not have to have a Facebook profile or be a regular user to access it: if you have internet access you can go to www.facebook.com/WestminsterPresbyterianPortage/

May 3  COMMUNION  ...Prepare a little bread & juice so you can participate at home

May 10  “Sabbath”  Scripture: Exodus 20:8-11, Matthew 11:28—12:14
In honor of Mothers’ Day: prayers for moms and a special musical gift

May 17  “Peace I Give You”  Scripture: John 14:15-21, 25-27

May 24  ASCENSION SUNDAY
Scripture: Acts 1:1-11

May 31  PENTECOST  Yes, you can wear red at home in celebration of the day!
Scripture: Acts 2:1-11

No, it’s not quite the same as being together, but livestreaming our Sunday service is a way that many of us can connect, listen to scripture together and share in worship, even as we try to protect the health of our community by giving up our in-person worship. Remember, the church is not the building but the people; and we are still the church, whether together in person or in spirit.

A number of folks have asked whether we might consider continuing to livestream worship even after the restrictions imposed by the covid-19 pandemic are over, for the sake of those unable to get to church and for the purpose of outreach. The Worship Team is discussing this possibility. We would like to find a way to make this possible. To do it in a way not disruptive to sanctuary worship might mean investing in some new equipment. That is the easy part. Much more challenging: we would need someone to take charge of setting up and maintaining the system, recruiting, training, and scheduling others to operate it, and dealing with technical issues as they arise. If you might be interested in taking on this challenge—which could be a very significant ministry, please talk with Kelly Schultz.
We may have to give up in-person church services, but we don't have to give up worship!

We can — and should — worship God anywhere, anytime. Remember that wherever we are, we are united in love and faith.

Besides participating in our livestreamed worship services, here are some other ways to worship during this time when we can't meet to worship together:

- Pray daily for other members of our faith community by name, and for concerns folks share in weekly “joys and concerns,” as well as for the needs of the world.
- Light a candle, and let it remind you, as it does in church, that God’s Spirit is present.
- Pick up a flower, a rock, or some other object from the natural world, and study it closely. Give thanks for the intricate beauty and variety of God’s creation.
- Breathe. Breathe in God’s grace and strength. Breathe out compassion for others. Breathe in and remember those you love and are concerned for. Breathe out and trust them to God. Breathe in an awareness of blessings. Breathe out, lifting up gratitude.
- Name three things you are grateful for every day … be creative, and come up with different things! Ask your family and friends to do the same.
- READ to challenge your mind, inspire your spirit, and expand your faith. (Possibilities: one of the upcoming Faith Book Club selections, *The Book of Forgiving* or *The Great Spiritual Migration*, or articles from *Sojourners* (sojo.net) or *On Being* (onbeing.org). You could also ask one of your pastors for suggestions. Or read through one of the Gospels, a New Testament letter, or the Psalms.)

**Our Intention Statement**

At Westminster Church we live a whole life in response to God attentively together engaging the world for the good of all following Jesus Christ.

adopted by the Session, April 25, 2011

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**FROM THE PASTORS’ DESK**

Many good things have happened in the last month. That may seem like an odd thing to say. All around us, of course, there is much to make us sad and anxious. We continue to pray for those who have contracted the coronavirus, those taking care of the ill and the grieving, those who are struggling financially, those in leadership making decisions that impact all of our lives, and all of us making adjustments in our daily routine to contain the virus and keep one another safe. But still, we have much to be thankful for.

We give thanks for those who have made livestreaming worship possible and improving from week to week including our tech crew, Kelly and Martin Schultz, Leslie Ashbaugh, and Chris Rohwer; our musicians, Marie Kerstetter, Miriam Duggins, Jason Zerban, and Chris Rohwer. We give thanks to the Worship Team whose reflections and suggestions have improved what we’re doing and how we might proceed in the future. And we give thanks for all of you who have participated from home. Your comments during and after the service are helping to create a genuine sense of community.

We give thanks to the Session whose wisdom and leadership sustains us in the midst of this crisis and we are confident will do well in moving us into the future.

We give thanks for Audrey Curry (bookkeeping) and Miriam Duggins (other administrative tasks) for maintaining important church office functions. We give thanks for those continuing to send in pledges and offerings and for our Finance Team for faithful oversight.

Above all, we give thanks for your ongoing commitment to being a faith community even through this strange and difficult time. So many of you have made phone calls, sent cards, shared joys & concerns, offered words of encouragement or helpful resources to others, and adjusted to using video conferencing technologies for learning, meetings, and fellowship.

We especially give thanks for our Deacons who have worked hard to stay in touch with the needs of their parishes, to those who’ve done, grocery shopping for others, to those who have given generously to assist with special needs, and to the Meals on Wheels volunteers.

Our church is doing well! We are engaged in worship, constant in prayer, faithful in financial stewardship, connected to one another in “thought, word, and deed,” and serving the world. We are grateful for our community of faith and for all of you.

Peace,

Pastors Jerry and Janet
ADULT EDUCATION NEWS
You’re invited to participate in Adult Education via ZOOM!
May 3 11:15 am
Discussion of The Book of Forgiving by Desmond Tutu and Mpho Tutu.
No Adult Ed on May 10 (Mothers’ Day)
May 17 11:15 am  Topic tba
Also coming soon: Continuation of “Seven Marks of a Vital Congregation” begun in March. Members of our Session are leading these conversations, the purpose of which is to get us thinking about what makes a healthy, vital, faithful church. Watch for information about dates.

FAITH BOOK CLUB
May 12, 7 pm via ZOOM:
The One-In-A-Million Boy
by Monica Wood.
July’s book:
My Stroke of Insight
by Jill Bolte Taylor

PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN TEA - Virtually!
We thought we’d have to cancel our annual gathering but decided it could be a virtual tea! You’ll have to provide your own tea and cookies, but we will still have a great time of fellowship.
Our theme: Sacred Places (from the 2019-20 worship theme) Plan to share about a sacred place in your life or a sacred place you’ve visited…. show a picture or just describe it. We’ll also have some trivia about sacred places and some fellowship time. Feel free to invite a friend!
Date: Tuesday, May 5
Time: 6:30 pm
Format: A WebEx meeting.
(Works best using a computer, laptop, tablet, or iPad with camera & microphone. If you don’t have those things, you can call in with a phone.) Watch your email for a link and instructions about how to connect, or rsvp to Kelly Schultz.

MEN’S BOOK STUDY
We are reading The Great Spiritual Migration, by Brian McLaren. We will meet via ZOOM at 8:30 am Thursday mornings May 7 & 14

WESTMINSTER STAFF
Reverend Janet Robertson Duggins
Reverend Jerry Duggins
Parish Associate - Reverend John Best
Pastor Emeritus – Reverend Richard Jackson
Sunday School Coordinator – Leslie Ashbaugh
Director of Music & Pianist – Marie Kerstetter
Choir Director – Jason Zerban
Temporary Office Assistant – Miriam Duggins
Temporary Bookkeeper - Audrey Curry
Custodian – Ernest Pueblo

CONGREGATIONAL LEADERS
SESSION
Mary Anderson, Clerk; Kelly Schultz, Leslie Ashbaugh, Paul Paget, Paula Schreimer, Jim Gluys, Cindy Green, Amy Capelli

DEACONS
Judy Paget - Moderator, Beth Myer, Laurie Bushnell, Gloria Padilla-Carlson, Sue Weng, Jodie Gerard, Ann Cirvencic, Connie Campbell

TEAM LEADERS
Administration
Finance………………………………………………..Paul Paget
Personnel…………………………………………….Cindy Green
Building & Grounds……………………………………Jim Gluys
Christian Education
Children & Youth Faith Formation…………………………….Leslie Ashbaugh
Adult Education…………………………………………Linda DeYoung
Youth……………………………………………….. Barb Daniels, Leslie Ashbaugh
Congregational Life & Evangelism……………………….Paula Schreimer
Art Festival…………………………………………….Sara Vogel, Lindsay South McKim
Mission……………………………………………….Pastor Jerry
Green Team…………………………………………..Eileen Best
Worship………………………………………………..Pastor Jerry
Interpretive Arts…………………………………………Bobbie Gerber

Worship Participant Coordinators
Acolytes………………………………………………Janet Duggins, Cindy Green
Children & Worship…………………………………Nancy Husk
Coffee Plus……………………………………………..Barb Daniels
Communion Servers & Prep………………………Kelly Schultz
Hosts/Shepherds……………………………………….Cindy Green
Liturgists……………………………………………Jean Cox
Nursery Volunteers………………………………………Martha Best
Projectionist…………………………………………….Kelly Schultz
Ushers/Sound Techs……………………………………Mary Anderson