

# Westminster Presbyterian Church

1515 Helen Avenue, Portage, MI 49002  
(269) 344-3966

Email [westminsterp@wpcportage.org](mailto:westminsterp@wpcportage.org)  
website [www.wpcportage.org](http://www.wpcportage.org)  
facebook [@westminsterpresbyterianportage](https://www.facebook.com/westminsterpresbyterianportage)



The Parable of the Sower ... art by Adina Henderson

## NEWSLETTER July-August 2020

## 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**

### July Birthdays

- 1 Christianna Gluys
- 3 Mike Jungel
- 7 Barb Goodwin
- 9 Lisa Buesing
- 11 Stephanie Rop
- 18 Glenda Farrell
- Glenda Fricke
- 21 Norman Carlson
- Michael Poliak
- 27 Anne Bachleda
- 30 Luke Boven



### August Birthdays

- 2 Leslie Ashbaugh
- Marty King
- 3 Jason Martin
- 5 Alec Schultz
- Dan Stuut
- Kaylee Trinkle
- 6 Linda DeYoung
- 11 Anna Schriemer
- 12 Grady Trinkle
- 13 Lindsay South-McKim
- 14 Leland Trinkle
- 15 Leana Best
- 16 Justin Boven
- Rachel Boven
- Jessica Boven
- 19 Bernie Rodee
- Nathan Schultz
- 31 Helen Rodee

### July Anniversaries

- 1 Dave & Carola Teugh
- 6 Stu & Mary Werner
- 7 Bob & Leslie Ashbaugh
- Paul & Judy Paget
- 10 Mark & Rebecca Murphy
- 17 Tim & Anne Bachleda
- 24 Ralph & Elaine Brand
- 25 Jason & Heather Zerban

### August Anniversaries

- 3 John & Peggy Chapman
- 6 Jerry & Janet Duggins
- 13 Brian & Jennifer Weiss
- 14 John & Eileen Best
- 15 Francis & Ann Cirvencic
- 16 Chris & Mary Lou Rohwer
- Paul & Cheryl Terpstra
- 17 Steve & Marga Keizer
- 18 Eric & Sara Vogel
- 19 Kirk & Kerry Truesdell

**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 or Jerry 269-501-4701**

**Jerry & Janet will be on vacation August 4 – 11.**

## CHURCH BUSINESS DURING SOCIAL DISTANCING

We continue to have limited church office hours due to the ongoing concerns about the covid-19 virus. Worship and most meetings and gatherings are suspended or taking place in alternative ways throughout the summer. Some small gatherings may be held outdoors under the portico or in areas of the church that allow for distancing.

**Temporary office hours:** Mondays & Wednesdays, 1—4 pm (subject to change).

At other times, you can leave a message request a return phone call.

If you come to the church building during these or other times, please observe safe physical distancing and/or wear a mask. **Please wash your 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.

We urge everyone to continue to follow 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.**

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**The Session has determined that in-person worship will be suspended at least through September 6.** It is possible that this time will be extended. The Session members are considering carefully the advice of medical experts, recommendations from our Presbytery, local data and restrictions and more. The Session and the Worship Team continue to consider what precautions would enable the resumption of worship services. None of the possibilities satisfy our concerns at this time or offer a positive worship experience.

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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 fulfil. **If at all possible, please continue to send in 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. Please contact our Financial Secretary Jason Martin if you have any questions about your giving records. Our bookkeeper Audrey Curry usually works two afternoons a week, so please allow a few days for payment of vouchered expenses.

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Thank you to Ed Curry for facilitating the purchase of a new AED for the church!

# Worship in JULY & AUGUST

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

We hope you will attend if you are able. Invite a friend!

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/](http://www.facebook.com/WestminsterPresbyterianPortage/)

Summer Sermon Series : ***Reading Parables in a Pandemic***

July 12      “The Sower”      Dedication of One Great Hour of Sharing Offering  
Scripture: Mark 4: 1-20

July 19      “The Widow and the Judge”  
Scripture: Luke 18:1-8

July 26      “The Workers in the Vineyard”  
Scripture: Matthew 20:1-16

August 2      “Seed, Yeast, Pearl, and Treasure”  
Scripture: Matthew 13:31-33, 44-45



**Communion** ...Prepare a little bread & juice so you can participate at home

August 9      Guest preacher... tba

August 16      “Lost Things”  
Scripture: Luke 15:1-10

August 23      “The Good Samaritan”  
Scripture: Luke 10:25-37

August 30      “The Ten Bridesmaids”  
Scripture: Matthew 25:1-13

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.

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:

- Put a flower in a vase, gather some beautiful summer fruit or vegetables on your table, or find a leaf or another natural object to remind you of God's beauty and bounty.
- Pray every for other members of our faith community by name (consider praying through the church directory, or for those who have birthdays this month).
- Pray for the concerns shared in the weekly "joys and concerns." Share your concerns, too... and remember that others are praying with and for you.
- Pray with a newspaper or online news site in front of you. Floods, disease, political upheaval, hunger, oppression, violence, greed, absurdity... it is all stuff we can bring to God in prayer, along with signs of hope, acts of courage, stories of solidarity.
- List three things you are grateful for every day ... be creative: What have you never thought about being grateful for before? WHO are you grateful for? Share your gratitude with someone else. Ask them: "And what are YOU grateful for today?"
- READ to challenge your mind, inspire your spirit, and expand your faith. Consider a book by Anne Lamott, Richard Rohr, Brian McLaren, Eugene Peterson, or Barbara Brown Taylor.
- READ a Psalm every morning or evening.
- Sing or listen to a different hymn or praise song each day. You can find words or YouTube videos for most hymns online. You could also borrow a hymnal or songbook from church—ask Janet or Jerry and they'll get one to you.
- 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.

## FROM THE PASTORS' DESK

Earlier this spring, Jerry and I attended the Festival of Homiletics, an annual preaching conference that was held online for the first time. It wasn't the same experience as listening in the same room with several thousand other people, but we still got to hear some wonderful preachers. Many of them, naturally, reflected on how different things were from what we had all expected. I particularly remember Anna Carter Florence remarking that "every Biblical text looks different" when you read it in a pandemic. You notice things you never paid attention to before. Familiar phrases speak to you in a new way. The concerns of the Biblical story feel surprisingly contemporary and relevant. In the weeks since, we have remembered Dr. Florence's observation repeatedly, as we have experienced the same thing. We've found it especially true as we've thought about our summer sermon series on the parables—hence the title, "Reading Parables in a Pandemic." Many of Jesus' parables (always many-faceted) do look different when you consider what they have to say to us in the midst of a pandemic. We think this is going to be a fruitful approach to well-loved stories; we hope you will find it to be so.

It occurs to me, though, that it's not only Biblical texts that look different when viewed in the context of a pandemic. LOTS of things look different from this perspective, don't they? The daily routines and habits we were settled into. Comforts and conveniences we took for granted. Our time and our relationships with family and friends. Casual social contact. Hugs and handshakes. The busyness of our lives. Things we "have to" do. The distinction between needs and wants. Church activities. Travel. Health care. The people around us doing low-skill, low-wage jobs. The global environmental crisis. The inequities in our society we have learned to accept as unfortunate but normal.

Some of the stuff we thought was really important now seems rather trivial. Other things we took for granted we now know to cherish. We've realized that we can do without some things. Our connections with one another seem more precious than before. Many of us look at our work differently now. Some have discovered the healing power of rest, or of nature. Others have had a "re-think" of priorities. We have a new appreciation for "essential workers" and have seen the effects of inequality on health. We have new questions about what a really healthy economy looks like. We have been forced to re-imagine church, and have found, to our surprise, that we can be adaptable. We have had ample opportunity to reflect on what faith means in a time like this... and hope, patience, freedom, compassion, justice.

"There's a time for everything." (Ecclesiastes 3). Maybe this is a time for looking at things—at our lives, our possessions, our work, our leisure, our church, our society, our economy, the global climate crisis, our neighbors, everything—a little differently. Who knows what new questions, new connections, new priorities, new callings, new passions, new perspectives God might show us?

Grace and peace,  
*Janet*



## FAITH BOOK CLUB

July 14 book:        ***Meeting via Zoom!***  
Fahrenheit 454  
by Ray Bradbury

September book:  
*My Stroke of Insight*  
by Jill Bolte Taylor

## WEDNESDAY MORNING BIBLE STUDY

Meets Wednesday mornings at 10 am, through July 22, via Zoom. We are finishing up our study of the book of Acts.

Study will resume in the fall. If you want to join in and have a say in the choice of a book to study, let Pastor Jerry know.

## MEN'S BOOK STUDY

will resume in the fall.

## CHILDREN'S MINISTRIES

Families with kids... watch for a "special delivery" of Faith Formation and summer fun in a bag! Leslie, with help from some of the Presbyterian Women, is planning some gifts and activities that will include opportunities to learn about the parables of Jesus.

## SMALL GROUP MINISTRY BEGINS!!!

3 small groups have been formed. The first, led by Lisa Buesing, is primarily a women's fellowship group that will be discussing various spiritual issues, meeting via zoom. The second, led by Cindy Green, will also be meeting by zoom, will be discussing racial justice issues and watching the Poor People's March video initially. The third group, led by Paula Schriemer, will meet monthly (either by zoom or with social distancing) and is planning to initially study the book "White Fragility".

Anyone else interested in joining a group, please contact Paula Schriemer.

## FELLOWSHIP OPPORTUNITIES...

We will also continue to offer stand-alone online ZOOM fellowship opportunities and Sunday morning "After Worship" outdoor conversations throughout the summer. Watch your email for information about dates, times, and discussion topics. Everyone is welcome!

# MISSION NEWS

## **WESTMINSTER PEACE PRIZE**

The Westminster Peace Prize is given each year to an individual or group in the community to recognize work that promotes peace, reduces violence, increases understanding or effects reconciliation. Do you know or know of such a group or individual? Please consider making a nomination! Send a note to Cindy Green or to the pastors naming the person or group and telling us why you think they are worthy of consideration for the Peace Prize. Describe purpose and work (what, where, with whom, etc.) and how it demonstrates peacemaking.

### **PEACE PRIZE NOMINATIONS ARE DUE by July 12.**

The Westminster Peace Prize is funded by our congregational portion of the Peacemaking and Global Witness Offering (generally received in October) and is typically presented to the recipient during worship on World Communion Sunday.

## **SPECIAL OFFERINGS**

We have chosen to emphasize the One Great Hour of Sharing Offering this year, because the programs it supports most directly address human needs. OGHS funds support Presbyterian Disaster Assistance, the Presbyterian Hunger Program, and the Self-Development of People Fund. Because we didn't have the opportunity to do this in the spring, we will dedicate our OGHS gifts on July 12.

You can read more about it at <https://specialofferings.pcusa.org/offering/oghs/>

If you have not already donated, you may do so via that website or by check to Westminster (mark it clearly, please!).



## MORE MISSION NEWS

- At the recent General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (USA), our own Eileen Best was elected to the Advisory Committee for the Presbyterian Hunger Program. Eileen is delighted to serve the church in this way.
- Our Mission Team and Session voted to send a contribution of \$1,000 to the Cuba Partners' Network to aid the Presbyterian Churches in Cuba as they strive to serve their communities in the midst of the pandemic and severe food shortages. The goal of this effort was to raise \$25,000. As of July 1, \$40,000 was received, along with additional commitments of \$10,000. Give thanks for this generosity, which will make a real difference to our sisters and brothers in Cuba.
- Thanks to all who donated to provide personal care items for KPS students! We collected several bags of shampoo, deodorant and other items along with some cash donations as well!
- Thanks to our drivers and "hoppers" who delivered Meals-on-Wheels during the week of June 22. Our next Meals-on-Wheels week is August 3-7.

### Ministry with Community has an Amazon wishlist!

You can purchase needed items from Amazon & have them delivered directly to MwC.

A link is on their website <https://ministrywithcommunity.org/>



## In Memory

Marilyn St. John died June 3 at Park Place Assisted Living. Marilyn was a long-time Presbyterian from Iowa who moved to this area several years ago to be near her daughter. She was a shut-in for some time but missed having communion, so made a connection with Westminster. Over the past several years a number of our deacons and elders have visited her and shared communion with her. Marilyn was a lovely lady who enjoyed chatting with visitors and greatly appreciated the ministry of the church.

After her death, we received the following note of thanks from Marilyn's daughter.

*"Please give my love and blessings to all the folks who visited mom and those who gave her communion. She very much enjoyed seeing everyone and receiving holy communion. I appreciate very much that you were there for mom, even though she had never set foot into your church. You have been Jesus hands and feet and for that I am eternally grateful."*

~ Jan Etzcorn

## Westminster Art Festival "Sacred Places, Wild Spaces"

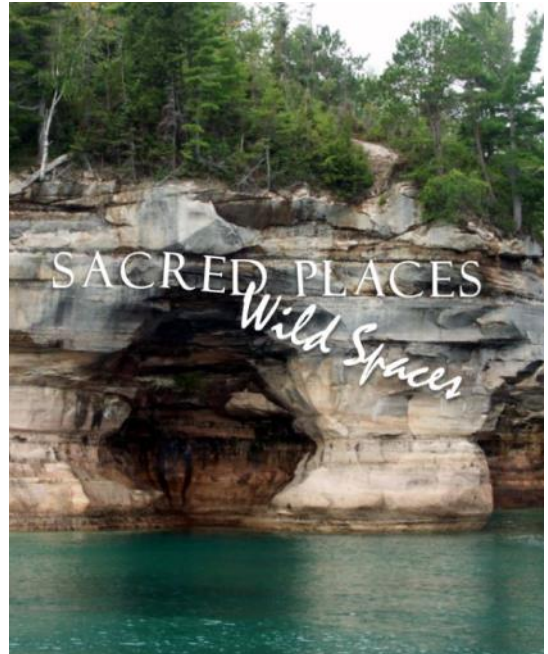
**has been re-scheduled**  
for August 1 - September 30, 2020!

We know that poets and artists have been pondering the theme and creating good work... and we are looking forward to recognizing and sharing that work!

Due to ongoing concerns around Covid-19, we have made some changes to be sure that we can provide a safe space for artists and poets, and for guests to interact with their work. We will not be holding in-person, open-to-the-public events.

We will have open times when people can come to the building (in limited numbers) to view the visual art in a safe, socially distanced way. We have extended the length of the exhibit to include all of August and September. Awards Presentations will be held virtually. Watch for info about date/time. Poetry will be published in book version rather than hung.

We are excited to go forward with this opportunity to connect with our community beyond and to celebrate our core values of Earth Care and Art!



Beginning August 2, the Art Festival exhibit will be open for viewing Sundays 10:30 — noon, Mondays & Wednesdays 1-4 pm, and other times by arrangement. More open hours may be announced.

## God's House...WPC Building & Grounds Update

Our 2020 “**Refresh**” progress has slowed a little bit after the big progress in recent months. The nicer weather and personal outdoor projects have understandably taken more of the team’s time. On a positive note, the abundance of excess packaging cardboard has been laid down as a weed abatement material at a local community garden while large boxes were used as temporary trash receptacles at a local, social-distancing outdoor activity prior to recycling.

All of the Fellowship Hall tables have had the table leg frames serviced/repaired; the tops have all been scrubbed and bleached to remove paint, grime, and tape adhesive. New carts have been purchased for use in the Fellowship Hall for the storing and transporting of the rectangular tables. As well as being significantly more modern, the new carts functionally allow the tables to be loaded on vertically on the edge instead of horizontally on the bottoms. This orientation will be safer for the users to load and unload. The addition of another table cart also means all tables will be on carts instead of some sitting on the floor. Two additional small carts for folding chairs were also purchased; this will allow for small numbers of chairs to be moved to the Narthex without needing to roll a large chair rack from the Fellowship Hall.

The recent very heavy rains continue to show the drain we added last year is keeping the basement boiler room dry. Unfortunately, a different roof drain near the art room (just below the main floor coat room) indicates an additional repair is still needed to keep that area dry. Strategy, planning, and costing need to be developed.

Recent power outages after area storms resulted in local power outages and some tree damage around the property. Tree damage does not affect parking lot traffic flow, and clean-up will be done in the fall. Power outages showed that the recently installed “Exit” signs with LED emergency lights can stay on significantly longer than the older incandescent emergency light fixtures.

Fire detection sensors were replaced in late June. After 20 years, many of the sensors could not pass the appropriate functionality tests and some sensors signaled in error. The erroneous signals sometimes resulted in dispatching of the Portage Fire Department, and the errors seemed to happen too often at night between 11 and 2. Several fire extinguishers were also replaced to comply with a mandated replacement cycle. Sensors, extinguishers, and inspections were completed in a single visit to save money on the fire protection services technician’s travel time charges.

With appropriate weather for the task, sections of the parking lot are planned to have new asphalt sealer applied during July and August. Areas will be identified to indicate keep-out areas while the sealer dries over a few days. The sealer will be applied manually to critical areas of the parking lot. Commercial sealing of the whole lot is on the order of \$10,000, and the selective sealing providing our own labor will be a small fraction of this amount. Line painting will be updated after sealing.

The 2020 “**Refresh**” progress will pick up again as more time becomes available. Stay tuned!

The Building & Grounds Team continues working to provide a safe, welcoming **Space** while being good stewards of money and the environment. If you have a desire to help with this mission or have input on our facility, you can contact Jim Gluys.

## 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  
Bookkeeper - Audrey Curry  
Custodian – Ernest Pueblo

[jerryorjanet@wpcportage.org](mailto:jerryorjanet@wpcportage.org)  
[jerryorjanet@wpcportage.org](mailto:jerryorjanet@wpcportage.org)  
[johnmbest@gmail.com](mailto:johnmbest@gmail.com)  
  
[lesliea83@gmail.com](mailto:lesliea83@gmail.com)  
[kpianogirl@aol.com](mailto:kpianogirl@aol.com)  
[izerban@hotmail.com](mailto:izerban@hotmail.com)  
[westminsterp@wpcportage.org](mailto:westminsterp@wpcportage.org)  
[bookkeeper@wpcportage.org](mailto:bookkeeper@wpcportage.org)  
[ErPueblo@aol.com](mailto:ErPueblo@aol.com)

## Congregational Leaders

### **SESSION**

Mary Anderson, Clerk; Leslie Ashbaugh, Jim Gluys, Cindy Green, Paul Paget,  
Paula Schreimer, Kelly Schultz, Nick Pratt, Jayme Ruimveld

### **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.....Miriam Duggins, Lindsay South McKim

#### Mission.....Pastor Jerry

#### Green Team.....Eileen Best

#### Worship.....Kelly Schultz, Pastors

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.....Marta Best  
Projectionist.....Kelly Schultz  
Ushers/Sound Techs.....Mary Anderson

