

Westminster Presbyterian Church

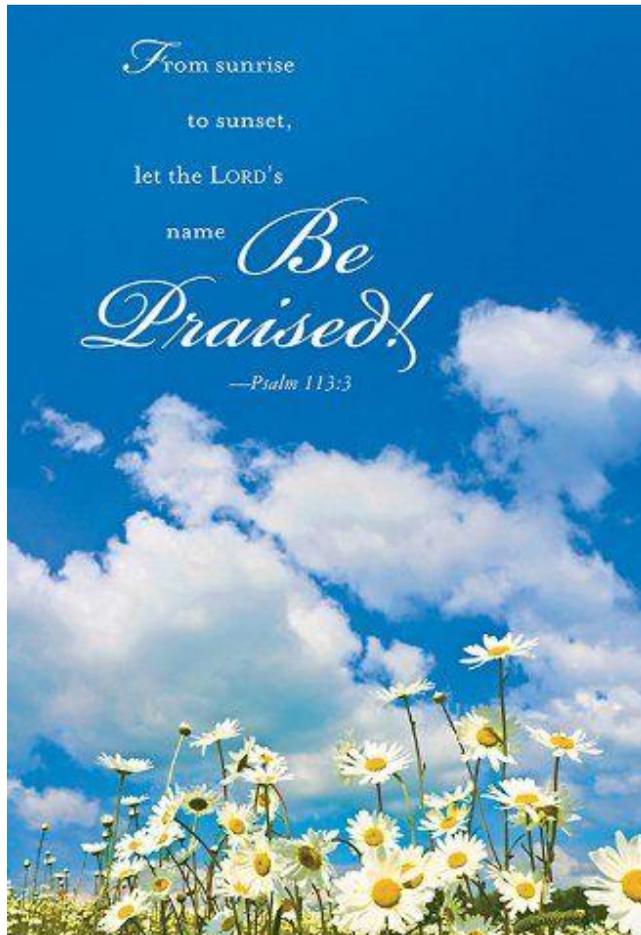
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June 2020 NEWSLETTER

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



JUNE Birthdays

- 1 Hillary Ruimveld
- 2 Eliza Murphy
Francis Cervencic
- 3 Mary Anderson
Lynn McFarlen
- 4 Mike Evans
- 5 Lindsey Krohn
- 7 Carol Madison
Zoey Kirkwood
- 8 Jackie Martinez
- 11 Ethan Dunlop
- 13 Caitlyn Cardwell
- 15 Paul Terpstra
- 16 Carole Evans
Kelly Schultz

- 19 Marilyn McKinley
Peggy Chapman
- 20 Tom Depper
Rachel Netz
- 24 June Waber
Barb Daniels
- 25 Alix Duggins
Charlie Vogel
- 28 Elexa Ferrera
Tim Bachleda
- 29 Pat Kurtz

Anniversaries

- 3 Bob & Sharon Brouwer
- 4 Karl & Dee Busching
- 5 Dan & Kathy Stuu
- 7 Bob & Nancy Husk
- 9 Richard & Geraldine Huebler
- 12 Tim Finton & Linda DeYoung
Bill & Helen Neff
- 28 Ed & Audrey Curry
- 30 Don & Beth Myer
Fred & Sandy Welch

The Session has called a special
Congregational Meeting
for **Sunday, June 14 at 10:30 am**
for the purpose of acting on nominations
from the Nominating Committee.
This meeting will be held **via Zoom**.
Watch your email
for an invitation to join the meeting.

Pastors Jerry & Janet will be
on vacation June 17 – 30.
Our Parish Associate Pastor
Rev. John Best will be on call
for pastoral care needs.
(Thanks, John!)

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 or Jerry 269-501-4701

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.

We are pleased to report that **Audrey Curry** is now a regular member of our Westminster staff, serving as **Bookkeeper**. Please be patient as she continues to learn this new role and helps us fulfill the critical responsibility of keeping all the bills paid!

Worship in JUNE

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/



June 7 TRINITY SUNDAY

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

Scripture: Psalm 8; 2 Corinthians 13:11-13

June 14 Scripture: Ezekiel 37:1-14

Prayers for our 2020 Graduates



10:30 **Congregational Meeting** (via Zoom - watch your email for link to join)
The purpose of this meeting is to act on nominations from the Nominating Committee.

June 21 **FATHER'S DAY** Rev. John Best preaching

June 28 Rev. John Best preaching

July 5 Summer Sermon Series begins: **Reading Parables in a Pandemic**

Scripture: Luke 10:25-37

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

The Session has determined that in-person worship is suspended at least through July 5.
It is possible, even likely that when the Session meets again in June 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. They have considered what precautions would enable the resumption of worship services, and have concluded that none of the possibilities satisfy our concerns or offer a positive worship experience at this time.

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:

- Light a candle to remind you that God's Spirit is present. Too warm to light a candle? Use another object to designate sacred space, such as a cross, a rock, or a picture.
- Pray daily for other members of our faith community by name (consider praying through the directory) and for concerns shared in the weekly "joys and concerns."
- Pray for the needs of the world. A newspaper or online news can be your prayer list.
- 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.
- Learn a verse or two of scripture by heart. Say it over to yourself before you go to sleep.
- Study the words of a favorite hymn. Sing or hum it, paying close attention to the words. Is it a prayer? What truth does it affirm? What does it call or move you to?
- 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.

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

FROM THE PASTORS' DESK

We used to say, sometimes, jokingly, that more people should go to church, because church was just about the safest place you could be. Statistically, the chance of something life-threatening (heart attacks, fatal accident, etc.) happening to you in church was very, very low. Well, how things have changed! Now church is one of the MOST risky of activities. That's the consensus of experts on infectious disease prevention. One of the most helpful articles I read on this explained that it has to do with four things: people, place, time and space; that is to say: numbers of people, indoors, for an extended period of time, in close proximity. Oh, and... singing. Or reciting anything aloud in unison. Those activities make it much, much worse. Yikes!

What are we to make of it? It really changes how we look at ourselves and what we do, doesn't it? I must say, the thought that we could spread the virus among us makes me feel very uncomfortable. That's not the way I want to view my sisters and brothers. The fact that singing, normally a joyous or contemplative spiritual experience, could be a danger creates a certain sense of dissonance. I feel as if we are having to look at everything from a new and odd perspective, as if from a great height or through the wrong end of a telescope. It's disconcerting.

One thing is becoming clear: there are going to be no simple or quick ways to resolve the dilemmas this pandemic has presented the church with. The way forward isn't all that clear yet to any of us. The situation continues to evolve, and we continue to adapt.

This calls for more than a little **patience**. I know; I'm not that good at patience, either. But the opportunity to practice it is before us! If not now, when? This time also calls for acceptance of a little more "**open-endedness**" than many of us are comfortable with. For those of us who like to see a definite plan in place, this is a real challenge. For those of us who are used to getting to work and making things happen, this is a bit like being lost in a strange place. But honesty must compel us to admit that we are not in control here. **Humility** is called for!

We need to **trust** that God will see us through this.

Believing that - I do, and I hope you do too - will help us live through the uncertainty and make the sacrifices that are needed now for the sake of one another and our life together as a community of faith.

Peace, Janet



PS Thank you all SO much for your support for us and for our Session at this time!

ADULT EDUCATION NEWS

You're invited to participate in Adult Education via ZOOM!

Continuing through June 14 "Eight Practices of Pilgrimage"

Watch for information about other summer opportunities.

"Seven Marks of a Vital Congregation" (begun in March) will be rescheduled when some of our usual church programming resumes. Members of our Session will lead these conversations, the purpose of which is to get us thinking about what makes a healthy, vital, faithful church. Will that look different after this pandemic experience? It might! We can look forward to some good discussion! Watch for new dates.

FAITH FORMATION

Christian Education activities relating to worship themes are being provided each week for parents & children to use at home. If your family is not receiving this material and would like to, contact Leslie.

FAITH BOOK CLUB

July 9 book:

Meeting via Zoom!

Fahrenheit 454

by Ray Bradbury

September book:

My Stroke of Insight

by Jill Bolte Taylor



MEN'S BOOK STUDY will resume in the fall.

FELLOWSHIP OPPORTUNITIES...

We are exploring the possibility of forming some **ongoing small groups** that might help us foster a sense of community and connection during this time. These groups (probably 6-10 people) might meet weekly, twice a month, or monthly. A group might focus on fellowship, support, and prayer... or it might also choose to incorporate a little study or discussion. Initial meetings will probably be by Zoom but hopefully before too long there might be some safely distanced in-person gatherings. Watch for an email with more information or let Paula Schriemer know if you are interested in being part of a group.

We will also continue to offer occasional stand-alone online ZOOM fellowship opportunities. Watch your email for information about dates and times.

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.

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

Our Session has decided not to focus on promotion of the Pentecost Offering this year, largely because we need to simplify our calendar. But if you want to give to this special offering of the Presbyterian Church, which supports youth ministries, the Young Adult Volunteer Program, and programs that help children at risk, you can give online at <https://specialofferings.pcusa.org/offering/pentecost/>.

We have chosen to emphasize the One Great Hour of Sharing Offering, 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. 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!) We will dedicate our OGHS gifts on July 12.

PERSONAL CARE ITEMS FOR STUDENTS

During June we'll be doing another collection of personal hygiene products for Kalamazoo Public School students. The majority of KPS students live in low-income households and depend on school-based programs for nutrition and other needs. School district funding continues to provide food to many of these students during this time when schools are closed. That funding does not, however, cover other needs that students have, including the need for personal care items, which tend to be expensive for a family on a limited budget.

Most needed items include: Tampons and pads
Deodorant
Shampoo/conditioner

Other personal care items such as toothpaste, soap, etc. are also welcome.

You can **drop donations at church during office hours** (Mon & Wed 1-4 pm)
or **at Jerry & Janet's home anytime.**

You can also make a financial donation to this need; just mark your check clearly.

Questions? Contact Pastor Janet or Cindy Green

SERVICE SUNDAY & MALAWI MATTERS

Some of you may have wondered whether our Service Sunday projects would make it to Malawi this summer for their annual HIV/AIDS trainings. In fact, some of our materials are still in Leslie's office.

Phyllis Wezeman reports the following:

"At the end of April we decided to postpone our summer trip until probably March 2021. It's a powder keg there right now with the virus and re-do of presidential elections and I/we do not need to get in the middle of it. I've also curtailed their field work as we do not want them gathering groups in villages (which is really how people live but ...). So, we have all year and into next winter to finish training materials."

Please pray for Phyllis, her American colleagues, her colleagues in Malawi, and the Church of Central Africa Presbyterian (C.C.A.P.) Nkhoma Synod in Malawi.

LOCAL MISSION UPDATES

Volunteering is limited right now, but needs in our community, and the work of meeting them, continue. Here is a little update on the current needs of two ministries that continue to serve the growing needs of the community.

UPDATE from Kalamazoo Loaves & Fishes:

Items currently needed:

Easy-to-open canned ravioli, spaghetti, etc.
Jelly
Peanut butter
Breakfast items: cereal, oatmeal
Instant potatoes
Hamburger Helper, etc.
Snacks

Donations can be dropped off at KLF's administrative office located at 901 Portage St. from 9am - 3pm Monday - Thursday & 9am - noon on Friday. Pull up to the double doors off Jackson Street and ring the doorbell for assistance.

KLF also accepts fresh produce from home gardens, grocery store, market, or farm.

Of course, **funds are always welcome.**

The KLF staff says that things look good now but they feel that post-summer and the end of the calendar year will be tough.

Loaves & Fishes is also in need of volunteers to pack food boxes. Many 'regulars' can't help right now and KLF has some restrictions for everyone's safety. If you are under 60 years of age and healthy, with a little time to give, check it out. More formation can be found on their website <http://kzoolf.org/>.

NEEDS at MINISTRY WITH COMMUNITY

Special needs right now:

Cloth face masks (sewing, anyone???)
T-Shirts (new)
Deodorant (*travel size*)

Other items needed:

Shampoo & Conditioner (*travel size*)
Soap (*travel size*)
Lotion (*travel size*)
Lip balm
Two-blade razors & shaving cream
Tampons & Maxi-Pads
Toothbrushes
Band-Aids

Sugar (*packets or bulk*)
Peanut butter
Jelly
Coffee mugs (*standard 10 oz. size & shape*)
Washcloths (*dark colored, terrycloth*)

Socks (*new, adult size*)
Underwear (*new, adult size*)
All weather shoes (*adult size*)
Belts (*adult size*)
Coats (*adult size*)
Metro transit bus tokens
Two wheeled luggage
Duffel bags
Backpacks
Bicycles (*adult size, in working condition*)
Bicycle locks

Donation drop off: weekdays 8:30 am–3:30 pm at the back door next to the loading dock. Ring the doorbell and a staff member will assist you.

Ministry with Community also 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/>.

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

While some of the vision has changed since the last big Building & Grounds update in March as a direct result of our collective world circumstance, good things are moving ahead with the resources available.

Here is a run down of some good things that have happened around the building in recent months:

- 90 ceiling light fixtures were removed and replaced

- 60 new fixtures are LED with more light and less energy needed.

- 30 fixtures were reclaimed from the Fellowship Hall area built approximately in 1999.

These 20 year old fixtures replaced the 55 year old fixtures that had missing, broken, or stained lenses.

Look for these lighting updates throughout the Fellowship Hall, along all rooms on the front of the building, and in the overflow room to the right of the Sanctuary.

Painting is making steady progress with some new, fresh colors in the Fellowship Hall.

Fellowship Hall restrooms have new toilets and new plastic stall walls installed. One stall in the women's restroom still has a low seat height as a toilet was re-reclaimed. This same stall contains a regular seat along with an integral fold-up child seat. The stall walls are the same type found in the center women's restroom since 2007.

The center men's restroom now contains a higher, chair-height toilet. *This new unit flushes better and uses less water than the 1973 version it replaced.*

Ceiling fans in the Sanctuary were dusted (no more "fluffies" that can be seen as fans spin). When the electricity is off, the main hallway will now be lit by a new "EXIT" sign with LED back-up

HVAC contractor W. Soule found a small water leak in a pipe above the storage room behind the Sanctuary piano; fortunately this was caught before a larger leak could damage stored items.

One large pothole and multiple smaller ones patched in parking lot near Helen Avenue entry area.

Roof drains above the mail room were cleaned, and seams sealed in response to a minor leak. Despite heavy rains already this spring, the drain installed last year is keeping the basement dry.

This drain is an 8-inch convoluted pipe taking roof water to an in-ground cistern.

The cistern drains to a ditch west of the main parking lot.

Grass seed was planted either side of the main sidewalk for spring rains to water.

The tile floor in the Toddler Room has been scrubbed and sealed during this down time.

In early March, Fellowship Hall heating systems were turned down. The large, mostly empty refrigerator in the kitchen was turned off. Even the microwave has been unplugged to save energy.

The 2020 "**Refresh**" will continue with more painting, Fellowship Hall restroom sink installations, more "EXIT" signs with LED back-up lamps, Kitchen wall paper stripping, new kitchen faucet, gym improvements, and new water fountains over next few months. As you can see, 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

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ErPueblo@aol.com

Congregational Leaders

SESSION

Mary Anderson, Clerk; Kelly Schultz, Leslie Ashbaugh, Paul Paget, Paula Schreimer,
Jim Gluys, Cindy Green, Amy Capelli
Incoming members: 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.....Sara Vogel, 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

