

Westminster Presbyterian Church  
103 E. Midland Street  
Bay City, MI 48706

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# THE WESTMINSTER LOG

Dear Partners in Ministry,  
On Sunday, September 14, we held our second Town Hall of 2025 to share where we’ve been, where we are, and where we’re headed as a church. For those who were unable to join us, we want to invite you into this important ongoing conversation. A recording of the Town Hall can be viewed here:

<https://youtu.be/msYRQdlSell>

### Celebrating Progress

Westminster has been serving God in Bay City for **160 years**. That’s a legacy of worship, mission, and community that we do not take for granted. We want to ensure that this church continues to be here—not just for us, but for our children, our neighbors, and future generations.

We are grateful for your responses! Since May, we have:

- **Paid off the building loan nearly 10 years early**, freeing up some funds that had been designated to that payment for future ministry use.
- We received over \$36,000 in new or increased pledges since May and over \$2,000 in **per capita** payments!
- Enjoyed strong summer worship attendance, with new faces joining us and steady volunteer participation.

These milestones fill us with gratitude and hope. Thank you for the many ways you’ve stepped up and shown your commitment to Westminster’s future.

### Ongoing Challenges

Even with this progress, challenges remain. Our 2025 budget is \$474,270. As of August 31, we had received \$344,526 in income (pledges and regular donations), while expenses totaled \$278,519. That puts us ahead for now, but there



are some costs that are typically higher in the final quarter of the year, like curriculum, retreats, music and video licenses, special worship services and celebrations. While we hope to come in under budget, our projected income may not meet our budgeted needs.

While we’ve received encouraging gifts, many have come without pledge cards or commitments. This makes it difficult to know whether they represent one-time contributions, early payments of a previous pledge, or sustained increases. This makes it challenging for us to really know where we stand for the rest of 2025 and as we prepare next year’s budget. As the picture becomes clearer, we will continue to keep you up-to-date and find ways to show a more detailed representation of our income and expenses.

**TOWN HALL continues on Page 1**

WWW.WPCBC.ORG OCTOBER 2025 ISSUE 203

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Phone: 989-686-1360  
E-mail: [office@wpcbc.org](mailto:office@wpcbc.org)  
Office Hours:  
Monday through Thursday  
8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.  
(Closed 12:00 p.m.-1:00 p.m. for lunch)

**Visit us on Facebook:**  
**Westminster Presbyterian**  
**Church - Bay City**



Pastor  
Rev. Jamie Milton (ext. 204)  
Parish Associate  
Rev. Linda Williams (ext. 203)  
Secretary  
Bill Petzold (ext. 201)  
Facilities Manager  
Harold Miller (ext. 205)  
Financial Administrator  
Pat Foster (ext. 206)  
Director of Children and Youth Ministry  
Leah Sneller (ext. 208)

October

Sundays

8:45 a.m. Bell Choir Rehearsal  
for our Adults; the Bells play during Worship  
once a month

9:00 a.m. Adult Bible Study  
During the month of October our Bible studies  
will focus on "What Disciples Believe DO." See  
Page 7.

9:30 a.m. Fellowship  
Join us in Fellowship Hall for Coffee and Donuts  
and Conversation

9:45 a.m. Choir Rehearsal  
Pre-service rehearsal

10:30 a.m. Worship  
During October, we will continue exploring the  
role of disciples and what they are called to DO  
for the kingdom of God. See Page 2.

11:30 a.m. Fellowship  
Join us in the Chapel for Coffee and Cookies and  
Conversation

5:00 p.m. Youth Bells  
For Youth 5th-12th grades

5:30 p.m. Youth Dinner

6:00 p.m. Youth Group  
For Youth 5th-12th grade

Happy Birthday

Iraline Yahrmarkt  
Marlene Mehlhose  
James Rowley  
Leota Clark

Joyce Hegenauer  
Beverly Pacynski  
Cheryl Harpst  
Kathy Elzinga

| Sunday                                                                                                                                                                                                         | Monday                                                                                       |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <div>Office Hours<br/>Monday – Thursday: 8:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m<br/>(Closed for lunch 12:00 p.m.-1:00 p.m)<br/>Website: wpcbc.org<br/>Join us on Facebook<br/>Westminster Presbyterian Church - Bay<br/>City</div> |                                                                                              |
| 5<br><i>World Communion<br/>Sunday</i><br><br>11:45 Fellowship and<br>Outreach Mtg                                                                                                                             | 6<br><br>5:30 p.m. Mission Mtg.<br>7:00 p.m. Deacons Mtg.                                    |
| 12<br><br>11:45 Gathering and<br>Games                                                                                                                                                                         | 13<br><br>5:00 p.m. Property Mtg.<br>6:00 p.m. Finance Mtg.<br>7:00 p.m. Stewardship<br>Mtg. |
| 19<br><i>Children's Sabbath</i><br><br>5:30 p.m. Being<br>Presbyterian                                                                                                                                         | 20                                                                                           |
| 26<br><i>Reformation<br/>Sunday</i><br><br>11:30 p.m. Chili<br>Cookoff /<br>Harvest Party                                                                                                                      | 27                                                                                           |

| Tuesday                                                                                                                                                          | Wednesday                                                                                                                                                        | Thursday                                                                                                                                                                                                            | Fri/Sat                                                            |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                                                                                                                                                  | 1<br><br>4 to 6 p.m. Food pantry<br>5:15 p.m. Contemporary<br>Choir<br>6 p.m. Rummage and<br>Bake Sale (members<br>only) until 8 p.m.<br>6:30 p.m. Chancel Choir | 2<br><br>8:30 a.m. TOPS<br>9 a.m. Rummage<br>until 4 p.m.<br>10 a.m. Food Pantry<br>1:30 p.m. Caring<br>Connections<br>5:00 p.m. Food of Faith<br>at Messiah<br>Lutheran<br>7:00 p.m. Adult Bible<br>Study via Zoom | 3<br><br>9 a.m. Rummage<br>and Bake Sale until<br>noon             |
| 7<br><br>10:00 a.m. Staff Mtg.<br>1:30 p.m. Book Group<br>5:00 p.m. Personnel Mtg.                                                                               | 8<br><br>5:30 p.m. Worship Mtg.<br>No Contemporary Choir<br>6:30 p.m. Chancel Choir                                                                              | 9<br><br>8:30 a.m. TOPS<br>10:30 a.m. Outreach<br>and Hospitality<br>5:00 p.m. Food of Faith<br>at Messiah<br>Lutheran<br>7:00 p.m. Adult Bible<br>Study via Zoom                                                   | 10<br><br>11<br><br>9:00 a.m. Fall<br>Retreat at Bay<br>Shore Camp |
| 14<br><br>10:00 a.m. Hearts &<br>Hands Knitting<br>1:30 p.m. Book Group<br>6:30 p.m. Spiritual<br>Growth                                                         | 15<br><br>1:00 p.m. Out-Lunch-<br>Bunch<br>2:30 p.m. Writing Group<br>5:15 p.m. Contemporary<br>Choir<br>6:30 p.m. Chancel Choir                                 | 16<br><br>8:30 a.m. TOPS<br>1:00 p.m. Lydia<br>Circle<br>5:00 p.m. Food of Faith<br>at Messiah<br>Lutheran<br>7:00 p.m. Adult Bible<br>Study via Zoom                                                               | 17<br><br>18                                                       |
| 21<br><br>10: 00 a.m. Staff<br>Meeting<br>10:00 a.m. Hearts &<br>Hands Knitting<br>1:30 p.m. Book Group<br>6:00 p.m. Boy Scout<br>Troop 150<br>6:30 p.m. Session | 22<br><br>1:30 p.m. Writing Group<br>5:15 p.m. Contemporary<br>Choir<br>6:30 p.m. Chancel Choir                                                                  | 23<br><br>8:30 a.m. TOPS<br>4:00 p.m. Deborah<br>Circle<br>5:00 p.m. Food of Faith<br>at Messiah<br>Lutheran<br>7:00 p.m. Adult Bible<br>Study via Zoom                                                             | 24<br><br>25                                                       |
| 28<br><br>10:00 a.m. Hearts &<br>Hands Knitting<br>12 p.m. Lunch and Learn<br>1:30 p.m. Book Group                                                               | 29<br><br>1:30 p.m. Writing Group<br>5:15 p.m. Contemporary<br>Choir<br>6:30 p.m. Chancel Choir                                                                  | 30<br><br>8:30 a.m. TOPS<br>5:00 p.m. Food of Faith<br>at Messiah<br>Lutheran<br>7:00 p.m. Adult Bible<br>Study via Zoom                                                                                            | 31                                                                 |

\*Birthdays listed are for our 75+ Members



Westminster Presbyterian Church

# 160th Anniversary and 50-year Member CELEBRATION



Invite your family, friends, and neighbors as we  
build on the past to shape our shared future!

NOVEMBER | 2 | 10:30 AM

Catered lunch to follow  
the worship service

## A snapshot of Church Finances

In August, the General Fund received \$64,642.83 in income and spent \$27,649.45. Your generous giving continues to exceed church expenses so far this year.

The Building Improvement Fund received \$120 in contributions and had no August expenses. At the end of August, the Fund has a balance of \$9,444.55. The Major Repairs Fund received \$80 in contributions and incurred no expenses. Its August Fund balance was \$40,878.69.

At the Town Hall, a question was asked about what we are doing to prepare for future expenses, now that the loan has been paid off.

In addition to the Building Improvement and Major Repairs funds that are available, it's important to remember that we have investments that can be used in case of need. Our current focus on general fund giving is to ensure that we

| GENERAL FUND      | YTD through  |               |
|-------------------|--------------|---------------|
|                   | September 15 | Annual Budget |
| Income            | \$ 353,270   | \$ 349,910    |
| Expenses          | \$ 308,676   | \$ 474,270    |
| Net Income/(Loss) | \$ 44,594    | \$ (124,360)  |

don't need to use our investments to cover ongoing expenses but can reserve them for major events: for example, needing to replace the boilers.

If you have any questions about these figures or anything else finance-related, please feel free to contact me.

*Pat Foster*

Financial Administrator

[treasurer@wpcbc.org](mailto:treasurer@wpcbc.org)

616-485-8272 (cell phone)

### TOWN HALL from the cover

#### What We've Been Doing

Since May, the Session, staff, and Finance Committee have shared weekly financial updates, mailed out giving statements to all active members, and sent per capita reminders. We have created a new Outreach & Hospitality Committee that is focused on visitor engagement, and ways to advertise and promote our church online.

#### Your Part in Our Future

As you think about what Westminster means to you, we hope that you will continue to prayerfully consider how you can partner with us in our ministry to one another and our neighbors. You can help by:

- **Stay engaged**—through worship, fellowship, volunteering, and inviting others.

- **Communicate with us**—if your giving has changed this year, let us know! This will help us as we monitor spending and plan for the final months of 2025.
- **Continue your support**—in whatever ways you are able to support the mission and ministry of Westminster. Every gift adds up.

As we celebrate the 160 years that Westminster has been in ministry and what we've accomplished together, we look honestly at the road ahead. We can meet this moment with faith, hope, and love — just as those who came before us did. With your prayers, your presence, and your gifts, Westminster will continue to be here for one another, for our community, and for the world Christ calls us to serve.

With deep gratitude,

Rev. Jamie Milton, Westminster's Session and Finance Committee

**What Disciples Believe Do:** In September we kicked off our fall worship series on DISCIPLESHIP. Over the last few weeks we have learned some important duties that Jesus left for his disciples, ourselves included. During October, we will continue exploring the role of disciples and what they are called to DO for the kingdom of God. Here are the texts and ideas for our continuing study:

October 5: Disciples Serve with Faith- *Luke 17:1-10*

October 12: Disciples Seek the Welfare of All- *Jeremiah 29:1-7*

October 19: Disciples Display Persistence- *Luke 18:1-8*

October 26: Disciples Live By Faith- *Job 19:23-27a*

In addition to these themes for worship each week, several of our services include other exciting aspects that connect us with the wider work of the church and our connection to our neighbors.

### October 5

#### World Communion/Peace and Global

**Witness-** As we celebrate the Lord's Supper here in Bay City, this special Sunday reminds us of our Christian siblings around the globe sharing in the same table of Christ. As we gather to think about the global reach of Christ's message of love, hope



and peace for all of humankind we will also be collecting the PC(USA)'s **Peace and Global Witness Offering**. This offering gives us a concrete way to contribute locally and nationally to the work of peace and the mission work of the church.

### October 19

**Children's Sabbath-** Our annual celebration and recognition of the divine mandate to listen to, follow, nurture, and protect children calls us to act with urgency in responding to the needs of children today. This service places special focus on our commitment to improving children's lives and working for liberating justice with, and on their behalf.

### October 26

**Harvest Party and Chili Cookoff-** Following worship we'll join together in the Fellowship Hall for our annual Chili Cookoff, complete with games and fall themed crafts for the whole family!

## LUNCH AND LEARN

Back by popular demand – Logan Reder, DPT, a Physical Therapist from MYMichigan, Bay City office. This past spring Logan shared tips tailored specifically for senior with a focus on lower body strength. This time – **Tuesday, October 28th at noon** - his presentation will cover essential topics such as maintaining mobility, preventing falls, and incorporating simple exercises into daily routines to enhance overall well-being, focusing on upper body strength. And again he will use a five-gallon

pail as the only equipment needed to do these exercises. A five-gallon pail much like what we may have at home. This session is designed to empower seniors with practical knowledge to stay active and healthy.

Join us on Tuesday, October 28th at noon in the Fellowship Hall. If you like, bring your own bag lunch; beverages and a small sweet treat will be provided. Any questions, please call the church office or Rev. Linda.

### From previous page

During this time, all donations given to the program during check out will be collected for our pantry. Simply Give donation cards will be available at the church and at the store. Just hand your card to the cashier and tell them how much you want to give (in \$10 increments) and they will add that to your total. Also, on Saturday, December 13, Meijer will double match all donations (your \$10 donation means \$30 for the pantry) up to \$5,000. At the end of the program, donations will be totaled and given to the pantry in the form of gift cards that we can use to purchase food from them. This is exciting because most programs do not give grants to purchase food. Please share the news with all your family and friends. If we can get the community behind us, this can be a huge gift for the pantry!

**So many of you have asked: How do we get our food?** We get our food from three sources: The Food Bank of Eastern Michigan (FBEM), Hidden Harvest, and food donations.

Most of our food comes from FBEM. We purchase this food at low cost, with deliveries every other Monday. It typically costs around \$3,000 to keep our shelves stocked each month.

We get a delivery from Hidden Harvest every Wednesday which includes bread, some fresh produce, and



anything else they bring to us. We never know what we are going to get! This food comes to us at no cost.

Food donations from church and community members round out what we can offer to our pantry guests. Less often we are the recipient of a food drive or a store has stock that is close to expiring that they send our way. These donations are always welcomed!

**And the second question: How do we pay for all of this?** Westminster Community Pantry is one of the church mission projects that fall under the Mission Partnership Committee. For 2025, the committee has

graciously committed to support the pantry with \$5,000 from their funds (which comes from the church budget). The Deacons also support the pantry with \$200 per month. The rest of our funding comes from direct contributions, outside fundraising and, occasionally, a grant. It is a struggle to keep enough money in our account to pay for the food we need. If you would like to support this ministry at any time, simply indicate "Food Pantry" on your check or envelope. Thank you for your continued support of this ministry and our neighbors in need!



**Fresh Produce:** A group of 10 pantry team volunteers recently picked 23 pounds of apples, 12 pounds of peaches, and 30 pounds of pears for our pantry guests. As the growing season winds down, we are still accepting your donations of fresh produce from your gardens. It's best to bring it to the church on Tuesday or Wednesday. We love offering fresh, wholesome produce to our guests!

**August Statistics:** We served 601 people from 203 families with 5,722 pounds of food. Those 601 people included 207 children and 109 seniors. 52 families came to our pantry for the first time. People came from Bay City, Essexville, Auburn, Kawkawlin, Linwood and Pinconning. We are grateful to be able to serve the people of Bay County with healthy food.

**Item of the Month:** We are pausing our requests for Item of the Month until January 2026 so you can support other church mission projects like the Thanksgiving food baskets and the Angel Tree Christmas gifts. If you'd still like to donate to the pantry, any food items are welcomed. Please

## Westminster COMMUNITY PANTRY

know how much we appreciate your food donations.

**Meijer Simply Give Program:** Great news! We were selected as the recipient of the Meijer Simply Give program at the Wilder Road store from September 28 through December 27.

**Continued on next page**



On Sunday, September 21, Westminster Presbyterian Church was honored to host the service of ordination for Nikelle Johnson. Nikelle graduated in May with a Master of Divinity/Master of Arts in Public Theology from Union Presbyterian Seminary in Richmond, Virginia. She has accepted a call to First Presbyterian Church of Dixon, Illinois. We are glad we got to celebrate with her, and we will continue to pray for her as she begins her ministry as an ordained pastor.

## Being Presbyterian

During our first class, we explored the roots of our Presbyterian history, looking back to the Reformation and how Presbyterians made their way to the colonies in the 1600s. Did you know that the Rev. John Witherspoon, a Presbyterian minister, was the only ordained clergy member to sign the Declaration of Independence?



At our next session, we'll be talking about the Book of Confessions. Almost weekly, we use various creeds and confessions found within its pages to help us as we profess our faith in worship. We'll talk about the circumstances around when and why these foundational statements of faith were written and how they still apply to our lives today.

We hope you'll join us as we continue to explore what it means to be a Presbyterian! You can attend even if you were unable to attend the first class. We'll gather for dinner at 5:30 and then spend about an hour and a half in conversation together.

Fall Schedule: October 19, November 16, December TBD

## The Out-to-Lunch Bunch 🥪

The Out to Lunch Bunch will be meeting and eating at H20's Waterside Grill, 966 E. Midland St., on Wednesday, October 15th, at 1pm. This month, please contact Bill Petzold in the Westminster office if you plan to attend so we can reserve enough seats.



# Harvest Party AND CHILI COOK-OFF

We'll have some games and crafts, along with a selection of tasty chilis, grilled cheese sandwiches, and delicious desserts! If you're interested in entering your chili into the contest, please register on the bulletin board located in the Wenona Street Lobby or reach out via email to [sandra.graves@gmail.com](mailto:sandra.graves@gmail.com). We are also looking for volunteers, donations of desserts and chili toppings! If you'd like to help or donate, please scan the QR code for the SignUp Genius or send an email to [sandra.graves@gmail.com](mailto:sandra.graves@gmail.com).



Sunday,  
October 26



Following worship  
(approx. 11:45)

Bring a friend to worship and you both will be entered into our "Bring a Friend, Build Our Faith Family" Challenge!

See the Log for more details!



<https://tinyurl.com/2r4tx7w2>

You may not see them sitting in the pews, but there are a number of people who play a big role in how our church services are heard, streamed and shared every

Sunday — **the Technology Team!**

With their knowledge and experience, our Technology Team shares our church services with those who are homebound, those who may not live near our church but still call it their home, and those who simply want to rewatch a service.

In addition to sharing God's Love through Facebook livestreams, the church YouTube channel and the church website, team members monitor the sound board so those attending in person can hear what is being said and sung from the front pew all the way to the narthex. The team also ensures that our streamed services have excellent sound quality for those listening at home.

Thank you so much to our many members and friends who make up our Technology Team! Thank you for sharing God's love with our church through your time and talents!

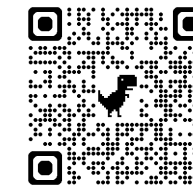
*God Sighting*

There is a fun event planned for youth at Johnson's Pumpkin Farm on October 19th! More details will be available as the date approaches.



## Youth Dinners

We're looking for volunteers to make our youth dinners a success this year. If you like to bake or cook meals, then we would love for you to sign up for a youth dinner on Sunday night. If not there is still a way you can help with dinners. You can provide pizza, chicken tenders, mac & cheese, sub sandwich makings, tacos, or something along those lines.



We have dinner around 5:30pm. We will give you a count days in advance so that you are prepared. Scan the QR code to sign up or contact Leah Sneller to sign up. Thank you!

## Dress the Bird

Westminster family:

The Session has approved gifting families a Thanksgiving basket. More details will follow relating to Dressing the Turkey. In the meantime, here is a list of items we pack in the turkey baskets:

- Canned corn
- Canned (cut) green beans
- Canned fruit
- Cranberry Sauce
- Stuffing Mix
- Jell-O (Large box)
- Instant Pudding (Large box)
- Turkey or Chicken Gravy
- Packets
- Macaroni and Cheese boxes
- Brownie Mix
- Reusable Grocery Bags

If you have any questions, please contact me at 989-737-6844.

*Patti Wesenick*

## Growing in the Fruit of the Spirit

<sup>22</sup> But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, <sup>23</sup> gentleness, and self-control...<sup>25</sup> If we live by the Spirit, let's follow the Spirit.

— Galatians 5:22, 23a, 25

Even as we focus this fall on what disciples of Jesus are called to DO, we are also creating space to discover anew what it means to *be* a Spirit-filled, deeply loved child in whom God makes God's home. With some guidance from Eugenia Gamble's book "Tending the Wild Garden," we'll be reminded that "the Spirit and its fruit are already working away [inside of us], feeding and flourishing, whether we are aware of it or not."

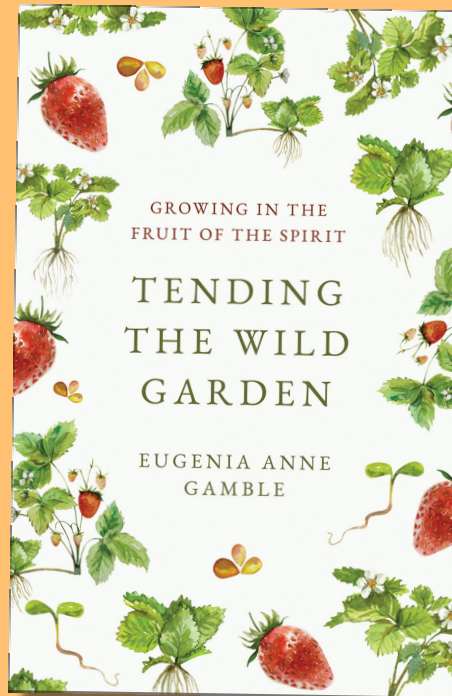
Through worship, reflection, music, prayer, and creative activities, we'll talk about the fruits of the spirit and how to cultivate this work of God's Spirit within us. There will be plenty of time for fellowship and relaxing throughout the course of the day.

Come "Tend the Garden" with us on **Saturday, October 11th at Bay Shore Camp in Sebewaing.** There will be an opportunity to carpool if you would like to ride out to the camp with other participants. **The retreat will begin at 9 a.m. and conclude around 4 p.m. Cost will be \$25 which includes lunch and snacks. Please call the church office to register by Monday, October 6.**

## Writing Group – "Tending the Wild Garden"

You may have noticed that at the Fall retreat this year we will be focusing on the "fruit of the Spirit" – love, joy, peace, patience..." God's Spirit already present and at work in our lives. We are going to spend a whole Saturday thinking about, attending to and reflecting on the work of the Spirit in our lives as deeply loved children of God.

We are thinking that there may be a few people who would like to continue to reflect (even after the retreat) on the fruit and work of the Spirit in their lives through the tool and practice of writing. Our reflecting and writing focus will be not on a checklist that we use to



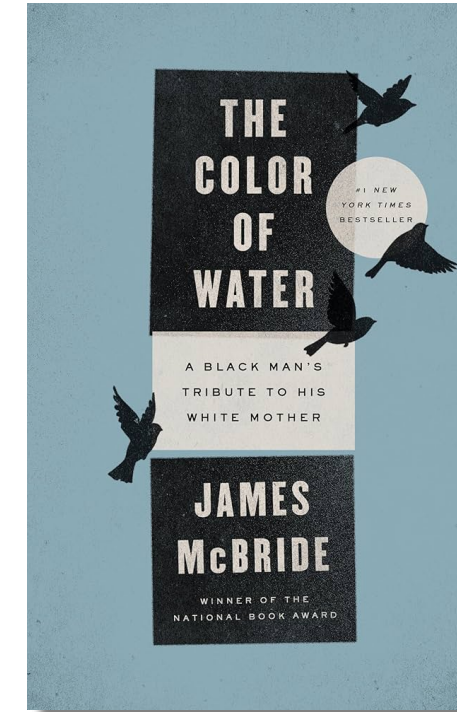
evaluate our Christian life or a set of moral characteristics to master. This is not about fixing ourselves, instead, it is very much about "being" ourselves. Each week we will consider one fruit already growing with us. There will be an opportunity to journal, to write poetry, or maybe even write a proverb or two.

The writing group will be facilitated by Judy Hudson and Rev. Linda. Please reach out to either of them with any questions.

Meeting dates will be October 15 at 2:30 p.m. and October 22, 29, November 5 and 12 at 1:30 p.m. in the Lounge.

FINALLY, the time has arrived and our Book group begins again. 13 copies of the first three top choices have arrived in the office: \*The Measure of a Man\* by Sidney Poitier, \*Everything Happens for a Reason, and Other Lies I Have Loved\* by Kate Bowler, \*The Color of Water\* by James McBride. Yet to be received \*The First Phone Call from Heaven\* by Mitch Albom.

After collecting the book suggestions, votes, and rankings, it's pretty clear that the group has diverse and eclectic reading interests. But even more notable were the comments you made that reflected an openness to participate in any selection made by the group. Things like – "I'm in. It's just great to be together and read and share and laugh."



And so we begin ... \*The Color of Water\* by James McBride on Tuesday, September 30<sup>th</sup>. This book alternates between the author's own life experiences and the life story of his mother, a Polish woman who emigrated to the U.S. as a child and faced significant challenges including an abusive father and complexities of her Jewish heritage. Their story is a beautiful and moving tribute to hope and faith, Jewish and Christian.

We will meet in the Lounge each Tuesday afternoon at 1:30. A donation to cover the cost is appreciated. Please call the church office or Rev. Linda to reserve a book, if you have not yet picked up your book.

## BUILDING OUR FAMILY OF FAITH

The Outreach and Hospitality Committee invites all of our WPC family to join in a special challenge this fall. We believe the good news of WPC is worth sharing—the news that we are a faith family rooted in love, joy, and community, eager to welcome others into God's embrace.

To add a little extra fun (and some friendly incentive!), we're launching the *Bring a Friend, Build Our Faith Family* Challenge. Here's how it works:

- **Invite a Friend:** Each time you bring a friend, neighbor, coworker, or family member to worship or another church event, both you **and your guest** will receive an entry into our raffle.
- **Win Prizes:** At the end of the challenge, we'll draw names for a variety of prizes—

from gift cards to a stainless-steel tabletop grill.

• **Celebrate Together:** This is more than a raffle—it's about growing our family of faith and celebrating the gift of community, all while sharing God's love with our neighbors!

A member of our committee will be at the Wenona Street Welcome kiosk before and after worship each week with entry tickets and to answer any questions. The challenge will run between now and the end of 2025. We have many exciting events planned that you can share with your friends.

We can't wait to see how God uses our invitations to grow friendships, strengthen community, and build up our family of faith. Let's spread the word and see what God can do!

## Finding Joy in Small Things

Grief can change our days in surprising ways. Life might feel quieter, slower, or heavier than usual. However, you might be surprised to realize that you can still feel small moments of joy. These moments often come from simple things we see around us every day.

Think about the warmth of a morning cup of coffee or tea, the sound of birds singing outside, or the gentle tapping of rain on the window. You might also feel a sense of peace just sitting outside for a few minutes or feeling the cool, clean sheets as you settle into bed for sleep.

No one is saying that these little joys can take sadness away. However, they may remind us that we can experience both



sorrow and gratitude simultaneously. Noticing these small moments is a kind act for ourselves and helps us stay connected to life as it is right now.

As you go through this month, try to find small things to appreciate; a comforting routine, a peaceful moment, or a simple act of kindness. Even in sadness, these moments remind us that joy doesn't betray sorrow; It can make it more bearable.

## Where to Find Small Moments of Joy

When grief feels overwhelming, it may not seem easy to find joy. Here are a few ideas on where to look for these small joys, even when we feel sad.

**Start with your daily routines.** The simplest parts of your day can be comforting: the feeling of water on your hands when washing dishes or stepping outside to feel fresh air.

**Look to nature.** Listen to birds singing on a morning walk, watch sunlight shining through leaves, or hold a smooth stone or a flower in your hand.

**Find comfort in familiar things.** Revisit a favorite book, song, or movie, even if it's just for a few minutes.

**Pay attention to your senses.** Enjoy the softness of a cozy sweater, the sound of rain, or the warm glow of candlelight in the evening.

**Make small rituals.** Lighting a candle at the same time each evening, writing a note of gratitude, or watering a houseplant can become comforting practices that help us stay mindful throughout the day.

**Remember them.** It may be cooking their favorite meal, sharing stories about them, or simply saying their name. These small joys won't erase grief. However, they can sit beside it, reminding us that peaceful moments and connections are still possible.

— Provided by St. Luke's Hospice Bereavement Program, Bethlehem, PA

Good Grief!  
We've all heard and probably have used this statement many times. In this article, I want to us it in a

different context. There is such a thing as "good grief." To grieve is so important after you've suffered a loss in your life — perhaps a spouse, a child, a dear friend, a pet, a job ... and the list goes on.

I had my own notion of grief. I thought it was a sad time that followed the death of someone you loved, and you had to push through it to get to the other side. But I'm learning there is no other side. There is no pushing through, but rather there is Absorption, Adjustment and Acceptance. Grief is not something you complete, but rather endure. Grief is not a task to finish and move on, but an element of yourself, an alteration of your being. A new way of seeing a new definition of self.

Grief is a journey from disbelief and shock through various stages until one day life is worth

## Caring Connections

living again. There will always be a void, but you will achieve a new normal. Everyone travels this journey

differently. We would like to be with you on this journey if you have a recent loss or a loss of some time in the past that you have never come to terms with. We will meet you where you're at and try to help you through the bumps in the road.

We will be having monthly meetings starting October 2, 2025 at WPC, and hopefully we will grow to feel better about our lives and be able to deal with our losses. The meetings will be very laid-back and informal. If you want to come and just listen, that is perfectly okay. If you have concerns and question you want to discuss, we are there for you as well.

Please join us at 1:30 p.m. October 2, and we will start this journey together. Hope to see you then! If you have any questions, please see Mary Nicholson, Rev. Linda or call the church office.

## ADULT BIBLE STUDY

During the month of October our Bible studies – Sunday morning at 9 a.m. in the Conference Room AND Thursday evening at 7 p.m. via Zoom – our focus will be on "What Disciples Believe DO."

We will be reading Jesus stories from the Gospel of Luke:

- October 5<sup>th</sup> – Disciples Serve with Faith – Luke 17:1-10
- October 12<sup>th</sup> – Disciples seek the Welfare of All - Jeremiah 29:1-7
- October 19<sup>th</sup> – Disciples Display Persistence – Luke 18:1-8
- October 26<sup>th</sup> – Disciples Live by Faith – Job 19:23-27a
- We are continuing to use the Feasting on the word materials that challenge us to consider –

What is important to know in this Bible passage?

Where is God in these words?

So what does this mean for our lives?

Now what is God's word calling us to do?

And one final question – why study the Bible if each time we don't consider these four questions?

The book of James writes that we must be "Doers of the word and not only hearers ... otherwise we are like those who look in a mirror, see themselves, and then walk away, immediately forgetting what they saw/heard." (James 1:22-25)

Come join us as we weekly "feast on God's word" with others. See Rev. Linda if you have any questions.