THE WESTMINSTER L

E-mail: office@wpcbc.org 09£1-989-686 :anod9

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FEBRUARY 2023 ISSUE 171



Church - Bay City Westminster Presbyterian Visit us on Facebook:

submissions for content and space. The Westminster Log is formatted to be printed in color. Articles must be submitted by the fifteenth day of each month before publication unless otherwise noted. We reserve the right to edit The Westminster Log is published monthly by Westminster Presbyterian Church, 103 East Midland Street, Bay City, Michigan, 48706.

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Harold Miller (ext. 205)

Custodian

Brandi Higgins (ext. 208)

Youth Director

Heather Heidtman (ext. 201)

Church Secretary/Treasurer

Rev. Linda Williams (ext. 203)

Parish Associate

Rev. Jamie Milton (ext. 204)

Pastor





Westminster Presbyterian Church

103 E. Midland Street

Address Service Requested

Bay City, MI 48706





THE WESTMINSTER LOG

Think back to what brought you here to Westminster. Did you grow up in the church? Were you invited by a family member or friend? Did you hear about our church through an acquaintance? Now, think about what makes you stay? What keeps you involved? What do you love about this church? I imagine it's many things, but I feel safe in saying that it's the community we have here, that plays a big part in your answers.

I read an article recently, that stated that churches should realize the greatest gift they have to offer is that of community. When I think about Westminster, I see that.

We're a community of believers that show time and time again how much we care about each other and the world outside our doors. I see it in the life-long friendships formed, shared laughter, and prayers lifted. I see it in the work we do together, the ways we come together, and the gifts we share.

in fellowship together.

As we ask you to prayerfully consider your commitment to Westminster in 2023, think of this community we share. Think of ways we can grow this community. We're doing so many wonderful things, highlighted at our Annual Meeting, in the 2022 Annual Report and in the Log each and every month. The gifts of your time and resources help us to fulfill our Mission Statement-sharing the love of Jesus Christ with an open and genuine spirit! ~Heather Heidtman

We're the hands and feet of Christ every time we join in worship together, pray for each other, share



Thank you for continuing to support the church during the month of January. Despite waiting to collect commitment cards in February, your giving to Westminster didn't waiver. Any gifts made during this time, will be applied to your commitment for 2023.

Frequently Asked Questions about Stewardship

What benefits does Westminster receive from pledged gifts?

Pledges are the financial cornerstone for all that we do at Westminster. Pledges, unlike donations and loose offerings (also very appreciated and helpful) allow our Session and Finance Ministry a solid basis on which to map our programs and ministries for the coming year.

What benefits do I derive from

pledging? Making a commitment expresses the love we have for God and our gratitude for gifts God has given us.

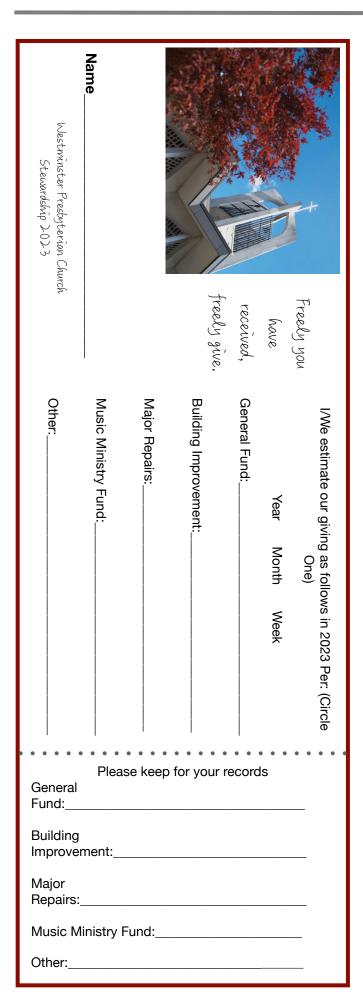
How are our gifts used at Westminster?

Your gifts fund every aspect of our ministries. Every thing we do and the costs incurred are made possible because of your gifts. While we are a non-profit, we have expenses like any business. Personnel, facilities costs, and other monthly costs.

How do I make my pledge? Pledge cards will be handed out at the annual meeting or mailed out, if your unable to attend. There is also a pledge form on page 8. Pledge cards are due February 12th.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday]	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Februa	UY -] 6:30 p.m. Chancel Choir Rehearsal	2 8:30 a.m. TOPS 4:00 p.m Combustion Council 5:00 p.m. Food of Faith at Messiah Lutheran 7:00 p.m. Adult Bible Study via Zoom	3	4
5 Scout Sunday 8:45 a.m. Bell Choir Rehearsal 9:00 a.m. First Light (Sunday School) 9:00 a.m. Adult Bible Study 9:30 a.m. Fellowship Time 10:30 a.m. Vorship Service 11:30 a.m. Fellowship Time 4:00 p.m. Ignite (Youth Group) 6:00 p.m. Confirmation Class	6 7:00 p.m. Deacon Meeting	7 10:00 a.m. Hearts & Hands Knitting 5:00 p.m. Personnel Meeting 6:00 p.m. Boy Scouts		8 6:30 p.m. Chancel Choir Rehearsal	9 8:30 a.m. TOPS 4:00 p.m Combustion Council 5:00 p.m. Food of Faith at Messiah Lutheran 7:00 p.m. Adult Bible Study via Zoom	10	11
		 Happy Valentine's Day Day 10:00 a.m. Hearts & Hands Knitting 10:00 a.m. Staff Meeting 11:15 a.m. Worship Meeting 1:00 p.m. Lions Club 2:00 p.m. FYI Happenings 6:00 p.m. Boy Scouts 6:30 p.m. Committee Meetings 		15 6:30 p.m. Chancel Choir Rehearsal	16 8:30 a.m. TOPS 1:00 p.m. Lydia Circle 4:00 p.m Combustion Council 5:00 p.m. Food of Faith at Messiah Lutheran 6:30 p.m. Officer Training 7:00 p.m. Adult Bible Study	17	18
8:45 a.m. Bell Choir Rehearsal 9:00 a.m. First Light (Sunday School) 9:00 a.m. Adult Bible Study 9:30 a.m. Fellowship Time 10:30 a.m. Worship Service 11:30 a.m. Fellowship Time 4:00 p.m. Ignite (Youth Group) 6:00 p.m. Confirmation Class	20	21 10:00 a.m. Hearts & Hands Knitting 6:00 p.m. Boy Scouts 7:00 p.m. Session Meeting		22 6:00 p.m. Ash Wednesday Potluck 7:00 Ash Wednesday Worship Service	23 8:30 a.m. TOPS 4:00 p.m Combustion Council 5:00 p.m. Food of Faith at Messiah Lutheran 7:00 p.m. Adult Bible Study via Zoom 7:00 p.m. Deborah Circle via Zoom	24	25
26 Ordination and Installation 8:45 a.m. Bell Choir Rehearsal 9:00 a.m. First Light (Sunday School) 9:00 a.m. Adult Bible Study 9:30 a.m. Fellowship Time 10:30 a.m. Worship Service 11:30 a.m. Fellowship Time 4:00 p.m. Ignite (Youth Group) 6:00 p.m. Confirmation Class	27	28 10:00 a.m. Hearts & Hands Knitting 12:00 p.m. Lunch and Learn 6:00 p.m. Boy Scouts			8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.	Happy B Penny Reagh Richard Hebner Richard Talbot Leslie Frontjes Ann Morse	Birthday William Auger Beverly Sivertson John Young Donna Horn

^{*}Birthdays listed are for our 75+ Members



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In December, the **Operating Fund** had income of \$30,739.91 and expenses of \$54,875.35. There were three pay periods in December which contributed to this high number. In addition, the Mission Ministry made their quarterly gifts to the Presbytery Mission and General Assembly Mission, plus gifts to River Jordan and once again purchased duffel bags for foster kids in our area. The Worship Ministry had expenses that included new music and supplies for Advent and the Advent Dinner. Property expenses included our normal costs, and our yearly inspection by Tri-City Fire Protection. Several new fire extinguishers were purchased. The Operating Fund ended the year with a \$41,000 deficit.

Building Improvement Fund received

contributions of \$781.94 and did not have any expenses in December. The Fund ended the year with a balance of \$20,118.00. Thank you for supporting the Building Improvement Fund.

The Major Repairs Fund had income of \$518.93; there were no expenses for December. The balance at the end of the year is \$58, 439.59. Thank you to those who contribute to the Major Repairs Fund.

Contributions to the **Capital Campaign Fund** totaled \$2,089.00 in December. We made our regular loan payment and the balance of the loan at the end of the year is \$203,615.09 Thank you to everyone who has contributed to the Campaign, we were able to cut the principal down by over \$90,000 in 2022.

Heather Heidtman

treasurer@wpcbc.org 989-225-5718

Per capita for 2023 is \$29.77. This is per active, confirmed member.

⁻hank Ƴou

The family of Wendy Wissner Tally would like to offer our heartfelt thanks for the many kindnesses shown to us at this time. Westminster has been a big support as we navigate through our loss. Wendy loved her church and you surely loved her. Special thanks to Pastor Jamie and Pastor Linda, Leon Beaudin, the choir and the group that prepared the funeral meal. Always remember-God is good all the time-All the time, God is good. May he be with you as he has stood by our family.

Webster 6. Tally

Dear Westminster. We greatly appreciate the thoughts and prayers, phone calls and cards during Sandy's illness. Keep them coming! *Prayer works!* Love Sandy and Randy Thibo



Dear Westminster Congregation,

I am overwhelmed by all the love shown to me by my church family! At least 30 people have reached out to me while I am recovering from knee surgery—some more than once! I love our church family!

~ Judy Hudson

FELLOWSHIP TIME

Join your church family for a time of fellowship before and after Sunday's worship service.



Coffee and donuts included!

ANNOUNCEMENTS

With Sympathy



Wendy W. Tally

Prayers are extended to the family and friends of Wendy Tally. Wendy passed away December 30, 2022. A funeral service was held at Westminster on January 6, 2023 with Rev. Jamie Milton and Rev. Linda Williams officiating.

<u>fewardship</u> (elebration

Join us, Sunday, February 12th as we celebrate Stewardship Sunday. Westminster's Session Members will be hosting a Celebration Pasta Dinner after worship. Please plan to attend and celebrate all that we're able to do together!





SING A NEW SONG!

Westminster has long been a musical congregation. On any given Sunday, our services include beautiful instrumental music, intricate bell ensemble pieces, and melodic choral anthems, from musicians of all ages! In addition to these special music numbers, the congregation lifts its voice in song, joining together in hymns and choruses, old and new.

If we need any reminder, Reverend David Gambrell—musician, composer, hymn author, and Associate for Worship at the denominational level-shares with us the importance of singing. In our curriculum for the next 4 weeks, he writes:

"Sing to the Lord a new song!" Three of the 150 psalms begin with this exuberant call to praise (Psalms 96:1; 98:1; 149:1). Three more psalms make reference to a "new song" on the psalmist's lips (Psalms 33:3; 40:3; 144:9), joining the voices of the prophet Isaiah (Isaiah 42:10) and the heavenly choir (Revelation 14:3). Why are people of faith called to sing? And what is the significance of singing a new song?

The theological theme of singing a *new* song is connected with the proclamation of God's saving work in Hebrew Scripture. The prophet [Isaiah] announces, "See, the former things have come to pass, and new

things I declare" [and] in the very next verse, Isaiah continues, "Sing to the Lord a new song" (Isaiah 42:9-10, italics added). We are called to sing new songs because God is doing a new thing in our lives and in the world.

This musical motif is reprised in the New Testament [where we read the Gospel authors write of] a "new teaching" (Mark 1:27), the "new commandment" (John 13:34), Christ's "new covenant" (Luke 22:20), and the "new tomb" (John 19:41). In the epistles, this same term is applied to "newness of life" (Romans 6:4), the "renewing of [our] minds" (Romans 12:2), the cup of the "new covenant" (1 Corinthians 11:25), the "new creation" that is in Christ (2 Corinthians 5:17; Galatians 6:15), being clothed with a "new self " (Ephesians 4:24; Colossians 3:10) and on and on, at last, rejoicing in the new thing that God has done in Jesus Christ, the great choir of saints sings a "new song" at the throne of the Lamb (Revelation 14:3), and a voice from the throne responds: "See, I am making all things new" (Revelation 21:5).

Singing is an essential element in the praise and prayer of the people of God. It always has been, as we have heard in the witness of Scripture; and it always will be, as Revelation reveals.

From now until Ash Wednesday (February 22), we will explore this theme of "Sing a New Song" in our own context. As mentioned above, the "new song" that we sing together as a congregation extends to more than just music, but also to the how we work together to proclaim the good news of the gospel in new ways. God continues to do new things. Let us sing a new song!

Quotes taken from Follow Me: Sing a New Song. © 2022 Growing Faith Resources, Louisville, Kentucky

NATIONAL BESTSELLER MY **GRANDFATHER'S** BLESSINGS Stories of Strength, Refuge, and Belonging RACHEL NAOMI REMEN, M.D. of KITCHEN TABLE WISDO

In the book, My Grandfather's Blessings, Rachael Naomi Remen shares some very meaningful stories from her life. They tell of her life experiences and are written to help heal our fears: that we do not belong, that we are not enough, that we are powerless, that we are alone. This book was written to help each one of us discover that we all

matter. These stories will make you laugh and cry and ultimately show you who you really are and how large a difference you have already made to the people around you.

In the Introduction to her book, Dr Remen writes: We bless life around us far more than we realize. Many simple, ordinary things that we do can affect those around us in profound ways: the unexpected phone call, the brief touch, the willingness to listen generously, the warm smile or wink of recognition. We can even bless total strangers and be blessed by them. Big messages come in small packages. All it may take to restore someone's trust in life may be returning a lost earring or a dropped glove.

Blessings come in forms as simple as the greeting commonly used in India. On meeting even a total stranger, one bows and says NAMASTE: "I see the divine spark within you." Here we are too often fooled by someone's appearance, their age or illness or anger or meanness or just too busy go recognize that there is in everyone a place of goodness and

Fpiphany $\int tar \chi/ords \sim Think About the <math>\int tar$

Your "Star" word, that is. As you go through your day or your week, think about how your "Star" word fit into your life as you went about your activities. Find a note pad (how about one of the many "freebies" that come in the mail from organizations and charities) and jot down two or three phrases or sentences that describe how your "Star" word came into play. When we take a few minutes to concentrate, that is when we can really connect the word to actions or experiences. As Pastor Jamie mentioned, you might have been disappointed with the word you received. Once you see how it connects to your life, you may find you really like your word! Give it a chance. Take a few moments and reflect. Put those reflections on paper. Do a little something just for ______ see the church office. vou!

FYI HAPPENINGS

integrity, no matter how deeply buried. We are too hurried or distracted to stop and bear witness to it. When we recognize the spark of God in others, we blow on it with our attention and strengthen it, no matter how deeply it has been buried or for how long. When we bless someone, we touch the unborn goodness in them and wish it well.

Everything unborn in us and in the world needs blessing. My grandfather believed that the Holy has made all things. "It is up to us to strengthen them and feed them...blessings strengthen life and feed life just as water does.

- The book is filled with short stories from the lives of Dr. Remen's acquaintances, family, and friends that will inspire us in our search for the Holy and Divine Spark in others and in ourselves.
- When we meet on **Tuesday**, **February 14th**, we will focus our discussion on highlights from chapters three and four: Finding Strength, Taking Refuge and The Web of Blessings. Each chapter has about fifteen brief stories that reflect on finding strength, taking refuge and the web of blessings that are evident in the lives we live in community with those around us. These brief stories are taken from Dr. Remen's own life: others are from the lives of those around her. During the time we meet from 2:00 to 3:30, we won't have time to discuss all the stories, so we will focus our attention on a few of your favorites.

We will gather in the narthex with a cup of coffee or tea, a little sweet treat and good conversation about blessings in life. Come join us on February 14th at 2 **PM**. Any questions or for more information, please call the church office or see Rev. Linda.



If you did not receive a Star Word during worship on Sunday, January 8 and would like one, please

GOD SIGHTINGS/ASH WEDNESDAY

GOD SIGHTINGS

These were times during the day recognized that God was active

being active in our lives isn't just something t

during the month on Facebook as well as slides during the them too.

Please see Reverend Linda Williams or Brandi Higgins to share

ASH WEDNESDAY DINNER AND WORKSHOP- 6:00 P.M.



Before we gather to worship on Ash Wednesday, you are invited to join us for a potluck dinner. Please bring a dish to share of

your choice. In the same spirit as our Advent Dinner and Workshop, in addition to gathering for a meal, there will be craft tables available. The crafts will be focused on practices or disciplines that might be used throughout the 40-days of Lent to enhance our journey.

ASH WEDNESDAY SERVICE -7:00 P.M.

Each year on Ash Wednesday we begin our Lenten journey together with worship. This service reminds us of our mortality and invites us to begin Lent with confession. For those who choose, the sign of the cross is administered using ashes as we hear, "Remember you are dust, and to dust you shall return."

Our Lenten theme for this year is "Love God, Love Neighbor, Love Enemy." As Lent begins, we will think about the ways we have failed to love, confess those failures, and ask God's help to be more loving in all we do.

FOLLOW ME: SING A NEW SONG BIBLE **STUDY**

Our Thursday evening Bible Study series, beginning February 2nd, will coincide with our worship theme for the month of February - "Sing a New Song."

SING LIBERATION will help us reflect on the song Moses (Exodus 15), sung after the Israelites escaped the Egyptian army through the parting of the Red Sea Amazing Grace is a classic hymn of liberation which sings of the saving power of God. Do you have a favorite hymn that speaks to you of God's amazing grace?

SING TRIBULATION - Psalm 22 and other contemporary hymns of our faith can be an invaluable resource for devotion, formation, drawing out what is deep down, allowing us to access and experience emotions that may elude words alone. **Each week** you will have an opportunity to pick a song or hymn that is especially meaningful to you.

LENTEN STUDY OFFERINGS

Lent offers each one of us a time for inward reflection as we journey with Jesus and his disciples toward the cross on Good Friday. During the season of Lent here at Westminster we will have two opportunities for spiritual growth and faith formation:

On Thursday evenings via Zoom, beginning on March 2nd at 7 PM we will begin our reflections with Love God, Neighbor, Enemy. From the introduction of this unit's overview we read - When a lawyer asked Jesus how to live, Jesus affirmed the man's own answer, what we often call the Great Commandment: "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your would and with all your strength and with all your mind and your neighbor as yourself" (Luke 10:27) It is an expansive task requiring a robust faith and active love. And it begs the question - What does it mean to love?



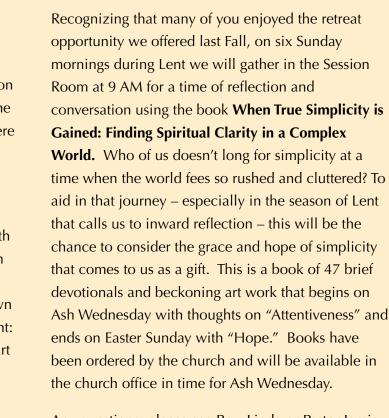
FAITH NIGHT

WITH THE SAGINAW

SPIRIT!

g es	SING TRANSFORMATION – The Bible is filled with stories of people and communities being transformed by God (1 Samuel 2 and Luke 1). In what ways do you want to see our world transformed?
of I ea. ch	SING NEW CREATION – The Bible begins as it ends, with a song of new creation. We will have the opportunity to consider "what is your version of a 'new creation?'" What songs do you listen to that give you hope?
	Please call the church office to pick up your book and to get a Zoom invitation. Any questions, please contact Rev. Linda

Follow Me



Any questions, please see Rev. Linda or Pastor Jamie or call the church office.

3

JOURNEY THROUGH GRIEF

Each month the Spiritual **Growth and Adult Formation** Ministry will share in the Log, a few thoughts on the journey of grief that we all experience. We hope these brief thoughts will be of help and support to all.

All grief needs to be blessed. In order to be blessed, it must be heard. -Dr. Lani Leary

Whether we admit it or not, most of us worry about something at some time in life. Common worries include concerns about money, family, relationships, health, work, safety and reaching personal goals. It can feel almost impossible to not feel the creep of anxiety and worry right now.

People who are grieving the loss of someone they loved usually have an additional layer of worries to contend with. These often include some or all of the following: How will I survive this loss? What will happen to me in the future? What will happen to my young children or elderly parents? I feel so different — am I going crazy? Will I feel like this forever?

To control some of these normal and natural worries, experts suggest addressing them proactively. The first step is to write out your worry. Put it down on paper. Put- ting a worry in writing helps you focus on what's *really* bothering you.



Next, find a time and a place to worry. This is about containment, establishing bound- aries for worrying so we prevent troubling thoughts to occupy our lives 24/7. Choose a time, the same time each day, that you will "work" on your worries. Then choose a place where you will "be" with these worries. Maybe it's a room or a special chair in the house where you don't often spend time in. Don't choose your bedroom for your worry work, as this will interfere with your sleep.

Then at the allotted time and place, enlist your brain power and problem solving skills. For example, imagine what the worst possible outcome of a particular worry might be. Write down all of these outcomes. Then ask yourself, what is my estimate of how likely each of these events will occur? Again write down all possible out- comes, no matter how ridiculous some of them may seem. Then dig deeper and answer the following questions: What do I need to do about this worry? Who do I need to contact about this worry? What are the things I need to say to the person who is center of this worry? What is stopping me from taking care of this worry

and what I can I do about it? The final step in this process is to write down how you will handle the worry and set a date when you will begin to take action.

We all worry, about legitimate and frivolous concerns. Grievers have an additional burden after a loss but they also have a choice to make.

To quote a Swedish proverb, "worry often gives a small thing a big shadow." Make the choice today to create smaller shadows.

St. Luke's Hospice Bereavement Program, Bethlehem, PA.



Look for Part II of this article in next Month's Log. The article will touch on the differences between worrying and anxiety and ways to cope.





During this year's January Series, hosted & streamed from Calvin University, Grand Rapids, many people had the privilege of hearing 15 speakers from a wide variety of perspectives and passions. The series aims to cultivate deep thought and conversation about important issues of the day, to inspire cultural renewal and make us better global citizens. Rev. Kyle Meyaard-Schaap (Christian Reformed Church in North America) did just that, calling upon us as followers of Jesus to consider how we do that - to be good global citizens - in a warming world. He made an intelligent and passionate plea for us as Christians to address the climate crisis as an act of discipleship and neighborly love.

In response to the call to be faithful in our unch & earn care for this world, we have invited a Lunch & Learn speaker to be with us on **Tuesday**, February 28th at noon to share from her experience as a concerned citizen and high school educator. <u>Ms. Cyndie Roberts</u> is a Dow High **GO GREEN** Club Advisor and has been so since the club's inception in 2017. Sustainability is based on a simple principle: Everything that we need for our survival and well-being depends, either directly or indirectly, on our natural environment. To pursue sustainability is to create and maintain the conditions under which humans and nature can exist in productive harmony to support present and future generations (EPA). During her presentation and then in the conversation to follow, we will have the opportunity to consider what we can do as individuals and as a local church to support and enhance sustainability.

Our speaker is also set for our March gathering on March 28th. During the Christian season of Lent and Easter (April 9th) our Jewish neighbors will observe the Jewish Passover which this year begins on April 5th and ends Thursday, April 13th. Passover is one of the Jewish religion's most sacred and widely observed holidays; it commemorates the story of the Israelites' departure from ancient Egypt. Mrs. Barbara Cook of Bay City will be our speaker on March 28th at noon to share from her knowledge and experience of the Jewish faith.

Stayed tuned for monthly updates. Please call the church office with any questions.

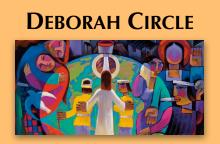
LYDIA CIRCLE

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 16 1:00 P.M.

Lydia Circle will meet monthly in person on the second Thursday at 1:00 p.m. in the Session room.

We are using the *Horizons* Bible Study, Celebrating Sabbath.





Deborah Circle will meet via Zoom at 7:00 p.m. on Thursday, February 23. If anyone wants to join, please call Karen Schoeppach at 989-684-1322 or email her at kaysue@chartermi.net.