

Westminster Presbyterian Church

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Bay City, MI 48706

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MAY 2023

WESTMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

ISSUE 174

THE WESTMINSTER LOG



It takes a village to raise a child is a phrase, we're sure, many have heard before. Scholars believe it originated from an African proverb, meaning it takes many people to provide a safe, healthy environment to bring up a child. Lots of times, when someone remarks about teamwork in general, it's shortened to "it takes a village!" We're going to change things a little and say "it takes a congregation!" And we don't mean any congregation. We're talking about a congregation that moves us with their generosity day in and day out. A congregation that gives of their time and amazing talents, working to provide a wonderful, welcoming place of worship and so much more! The staff at Westminster Presbyterian Church is so grateful for each and every one of you! All that we do at Westminster would be difficult and time-consuming, or down right impossible without the help of our church family. THANK YOU!!

We're thankful for our ushers, our TV and sound crew, our liturgists, our choirs, and our greeters who are with us every Sunday. We're grateful for our First Light teachers, those who help with our Sunday evening Youth Group and Confirmation classes, our VBS volunteers, and those who help out during our pageants. We are so appreciative of our members that bring us together in fellowship. Members that make sure we have donuts and coffee, those that cook amazing meals for our events and funeral dinners, those that bring a dish to pass for one of our potlucks.

We're grateful for our members who further the mission work we do through Westminster: our Food of Faith volunteers, our knitters and crocheters, those that partner with organizations in our community that help people in need. We're thankful for our Elders, Deacons, and all our committee chairs and members, who meet throughout the year to plan, share their leadership, guidance and good ideas that make our church more than just a place of worship on Sunday mornings. We appreciate our members that send cards, make telephone calls and visit the homebound keeping us connected to each other and to our faith.

We're thankful for prayers, hugs, smiles and kind words that brighten our days and remind us how lucky we are to work for, and with, such a generous, open and loving congregation. We love our village! Thank you Westminster!

We hope you'll join us for a luncheon on May 28th (see details on page 11). All are welcome!

Peace and Blessings to you all~*Pastor Jamie, Rev. Linda, Brandi, Dawn, Elaine, Rachel, Harold and Heather*

MAY 2023 ISSUE 174

WWW.WPCBC.ORG

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Phone: 989-686-1360
E-mail: office@wpbc.org

Office Hours:
Monday through Thursday
8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Visit us on Facebook:
Westminster Presbyterian
Church - Bay City



- Pastor
Rev. Jamie Milton (ext. 204)
- Parish Associate
Rev. Linda Williams (ext. 203)
- Church Secretary/Treasurer
Heather Heidtman (ext. 201)
- Youth Director
Brandi Higgins (ext. 208)
- Custodian
Harold Miller (ext. 205)

THE WESTMINSTER LOG

We're blasting off to Vacation Bible School!

June 12th-16th
9:00 - 12:00 p.m.
check-in begins at 8:30 a.m.



At Stellar VBS, kids discover what it means to shine Jesus' light in everyday life. Stellar is filled with awesome Bible-learning experiences kids see, hear, and touch! Science-themed gizmos, team-building games, unforgettable Bible songs, and tasty treats are just a few of the standout activities that help faith flow into real life. Plus, we help kids discover how to see evidence of God in everyday life—something we call God Sightings. Plans are underway for a wonderful week! All children through 5th grade are welcome and we're always looking for teen and adult volunteers. Join us for a STELLAR week!

You can sign up on our website: www.wpbc.org. Or scan the QR Code below:



May

Sundays

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

9:00 a.m. First Light
Sunday school for PreK-4th grade

9:00 a.m. Adult Bible Study
This month our theme is *Do Justice*; see pg. 1 for more details

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

10:30 a.m. Worship

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

4:00 p.m. Chime Choir
For Children in 2nd-4th grades

4:30 p.m. Children's Choir
For Children in PreK-4th grade

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

5:30 p.m. Block Party Planning
Dinner provided

**6:30 p.m. Ignite Youth Group/
Confirmation Class**
For Youth 5th-12th grade; Confirmation is for 8th graders

Sunday	Monday
<p>Titus Youth Theatre will be using our building again this year. They are here Monday-Thursday 5:30 p.m.-8:00 p.m. and Saturdays 9:00 a.m.-12:30 p.m.</p>	<p>1 Rummage Sale Set Up 6:00 p.m. Mission Meeting 7:00 p.m. Deacon Meeting</p>
<p>7 Communion Sunday Pray with Your Whole Self Psalm 63:1-4; 88:13-18; 139:15-16</p>	<p>8 5:00 p.m. Property Meeting 6:00 p.m. Finance Meeting 7:00 p.m. Stewardship Meeting</p>
<p>14 Recognize Injustice John 7:53-8:11</p>	<p>15</p>
<p>21 Confirmation Sunday Check Your Prejudice James 2:1-7</p>	<p>22</p>
<p>28 Pentecost Sunday & Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon Speak Up Exodus 3:1-12, 4:1-16 Acts 2</p>	<p>29 Memorial Day Church Office Closed</p>

Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Fri/Sat
<p>2 10:00 a.m. Hearts & Hands Knitting 6:00 p.m.- 7:30 p.m. Rummage Sale (Church Members Only) 6:00 p.m. Boy Scouts 6:00 p.m. Personnel Meeting</p>	<p>3 9:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m. Rummage Sale 6:30 p.m. Chancel Choir Rehearsal</p>	<p>4 8:30 a.m. TOPS 9:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m. Rummage Sale 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</p>	<p>5 9:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m. Rummage Sale</p>
<p>9 10:00 a.m. Hearts & Hands Knitting 10:00 a.m. Staff Meeting 11:00 a.m. Worship Meeting 1:00 p.m. Bay City Lions Club 1:30 p.m. FYI Happenings 6:00 p.m. Boy Scouts 6:00 p.m. Fellowship and Outreach Meeting 7:00 p.m. Spiritual Growth Meeting</p>	<p>10 6:30 p.m. Chancel Choir Rehearsal</p>	<p>11 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</p>	<p>12</p>
<p>16 10:00 a.m. Hearts & Hands Knitting 6:00 p.m. Boy Scouts 7:00 p.m. Session Meeting</p>	<p>17 6:30 p.m. Chancel Choir Rehearsal</p>	<p>18 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 7:00 p.m. Adult Bible Study via Zoom</p>	<p>19</p>
<p>23 9:00 a.m. Staff Planning Day 10:00 a.m. Hearts & Hands Knitting 6:00 p.m. Boy Scouts</p>	<p>24 6:30 p.m. Chancel Choir Rehearsal</p>	<p>25 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</p>	<p>26</p>
<p>30 10:00 a.m. Hearts & Hands Knitting 12:00 p.m. Lunch and Learn 6:00 p.m. Boy Scouts</p>	<p>31 6:30 p.m. Chancel Choir Rehearsal</p>	<p>27</p>	

Office Hours
Monday – Thursday: 8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.
website: wpcbc.org
Join us on Facebook
Westminster Presbyterian Church - Bay City

In March, the **Operating Fund** had income of \$19,590.39 and expenses of \$35,146.07. In addition to the normal, recurring costs we have to keep the church operating each month, the Mission Ministry made gifts to the Presbytery of Lake Huron and General Assembly in March to fulfill their quarterly commitment to support the mission work of the greater church. Remember that you can set up recurring gifts using our online giving portal found on the church's website www.wpcbc.org or look for the QR code in the bulletin. Thank you for your tithes and gifts to Westminster.

The **Building Improvement Fund** received contributions of \$1280.00; there were no expenses in March. We're grateful to those who contribute to the Building Improvement Fund.

The **Major Repairs Fund** had income of \$628.00 in March. As I mentioned last month, Session approved using money from the Major Repairs Fund to make a down payment on refurbishing our Handbell set. The check was sent in and the bells will be packed up in May and sent to Pennsylvania over the summer. The Major Repairs Fund has a balance at the end of March of 54,346.59. Thank you to those who contribute to the Major Repairs Fund.

Contributions to the **Capital Campaign Fund** totaled \$11,982.00. After our payment in March, the balance on the loan is \$201,078.23. Thank you to everyone who has and is continuing to contribute to the Campaign.

Heather Heidtman
 treasurer@wpcbc.org
 989-225-5718

Per capita for 2023 is \$29.77/member

- Of this amount:
- \$16.77 goes the Presbytery of Lake Huron
- \$3.25 goes to the Synod of the Covenant
- \$9.75 goes to the Office of the General Assembly

Why do we remind our members about their per capita apportionment in the bulletin each week and in the Log every month? Simply put, out of our 321 active members, less than half pay their per capita apportionment. Every year, we need to find between \$5000-\$5500, to make up the difference. We're grateful to those that pay their per capita. I'm hoping in the coming months to do a better job explaining where our per capita dollars go and why it's so important to our church and our denomination. Let me start with a few basic questions and answers:

What is Per Capita?

It's a set amount of money paid to the greater church by congregations throughout the PC(USA). Portions of your per capita dollars go to our Presbytery, our Synod and the Office of General Assembly. It's how we share in the expenses of the entire Presbyterian Church (USA).

How is our Per Capita figured?

Each year we submit our total number of active members of the congregation. That total, 321 members multiplied by \$29.77, is Westminster's total Per Capita Apportionment. This amount, \$9556.00, in 2023, is due to the Presbytery at the end of February each year.

I haven't been to church in a while or worshipped online, am I still an active member?

Yes. Once you've been confirmed, or joined the church as a new member, you are considered "Active" until you request a transfer to another church or we've reached out to you and you've indicated that you want to move to the Inactive list.

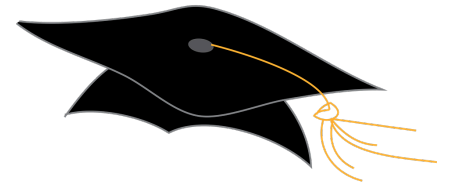
Next month, I'll explain specifically how our per capita gifts help the greater church, which in turn, helps us here at Westminster too! As always, if you have questions, please reach out to anyone on the Finance Ministry.

**Our May Birthdays
Happy Birthday!**

Donna Gould
 Judy Randall
 Larry Wilson
 Susan Wilson
 Terry Molyneaux
 Judy Hudson

Charley Curtiss
 Carol Eagle
 Patricia Horning
 Doreen Newcombe
 Ronald VanTol
 John Hegenauer

**Birthdays listed are for our 75+ Members*



If you know someone who is graduating from high school, college, or university, please call the church office and let us know! We will honor graduates on June 4 during the worship service.

Dear Westminster Family,
 Thank you for your prayers and support during my recent hospital stay. The kindness of our friends at Westminster will always be in my heart.

Love and peace,
 Sue Wilson

Thank You

FELLOWSHIP TIME

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



Coffee and donuts included!

CHURCH RUMMAGE AND BAKE SALE



You may drop off items for the rummage sale beginning Sunday, April 30 after the worship service and Monday, May 1st during office hours (8:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.)

Tuesday, May 2
 Members Only
 6:00 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.

Wednesday, May 3
 Open to the Public
 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Thursday, May 4
 Open to the Public
 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Friday, May 5
 Open to the Public
 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

Proceeds from the Sale will support our Food of Faith Program



Practicing prayer ties us to rich spiritual traditions from around the world and throughout time. John Calvin called prayer “the chief exercise of faith.” As an exercise, prayer is practiced, repeated, and nurtured.

Our intention of communicating with God involves a trust that God cares for us and hears us, even when our prayers are not perfect. In prayer we offer our hopes and confessions. Prayer shapes how we think and act. We pray because we believe that prayer changes things; Ourselves, our communities, our relationships, our social order.

During the four weeks of this unit, our Thursday evening Zoom Bible study will explore biblical text that illuminate the “practice of prayer.” The first week we explored how to “Pray Honestly.” Next we focused on “Praying Persistently and Humbly.”

Week Three, May 4th, Pray with and for Others - The book of James (5:13-16) includes practical advice for early Christians, especially in the ongoing practice of praying for oneself and others.

Week Four, May 11th, Prayer with Your Whole Self – The Psalms are often called the church’s “great songbook.” We will focus our attention on verses from three psalms (63:1-4; 88:13-18; 139:15-16) that touch on the emotional and physical embodiment of praying.

Join us on **Thursday evenings at 7 PM via Zoom**. A few books are still available in the church office. Each week the Zoom invitation is emailed to participants two days before the Zoom study. Even if you missed the first couple of weeks, please join us on any Thursday evenings, since each week’s study is self-contained.

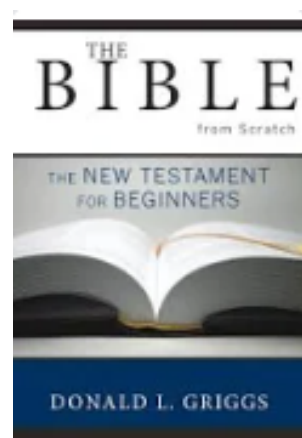
Beginning on **May 18th and for the next four weeks through June 8th**, the Thursday evening Bible study theme will be **“Do Justice.”** We will consider when and how to recognize injustice, identifying our own prejudices, knowing when and how to speak up, and how to do the work of justice. Please call the church office or Rev. Linda with any questions.

The Introduction to the book – **The Bible from Scratch: The New Testament for Beginners** – begins: “Do you have memories of your Sunday school teacher expecting you to memorize all of the books of the Bible in order? Can you recite them still? Have you been in conversation with someone who quotes so many Bible verses that you feel intimidated and embarrassed about how little you know about the Bible. Were you ever in a Bible study group when the leader instructed the class members to look up a Bible passage and you weren’t quite sure where to look? Have you been invited by someone to attend a Bible study group but thought of many reasons not to go because you were sure you would feel out of place?”

If you answered one or more of these questions in the affirmative, it may be that this book is just the right resource.

In response to a few folks who asked for a Sunday morning Bible study that would look at the whole of the Bible (we completed our study of the Old Testament in March) , we will continue our study - **each Sunday throughout May at 9 AM** - reading and discussing this book with chapter headings like “Introducing the Bible, the four Gospels, the Acts of the Apostles, the Epistles of the New Testament, and The Revelation to John.”

Learning about the Bible is always more rewarding when you can share the journey with a friend. So come join us **Sundays at 9 AM** in the Session Room or via Zoom. This will be a hybrid study group. Please call the church office (or Rev. Linda on her cell phone) to get the Zoom invitation and to pick up a book.



An enthusiastic FYI Westminster Church group met on April 11, 2023, to explore Memoirs: The Labels of Your Life. The group spent time defining memoirs, biographies, and autobiographies. Each person then put pen to paper and wrote a short memoir to share with someone special in their life. This was an important focus of the gathering: “Who would be interested in my memoir? Why should I write things down? And, I'm not very good at writing.” At the end of the session on April 11, 2023, each was able to understand these concerns in their own different way.



And, there was lots of laughter heard from the Narthex!

The next session for FYI, Memoirs: The Labels of Your Life is scheduled for **May 9, 2023, at 1:30 P.M.** at the church. The Bible verse focus will be Genesis 4: 18: “Enoch had a son named Irad. Irad was the father of Mehjael. Mehujael was the father of Methushael. And Methushael was the father of Lamech.”

This verse will hopefully remind each participant of relatives worthy of memoir writing. This will give everyone a chance to remember some interesting characters of their family. This writing experience will be made as painless as possible. All of your writing will be your own. There will be no requirement to share, unless you want to share. Hopefully, you can join us on May 9.

It has been said: “You can pick your friends, but you can't pick your relatives!”

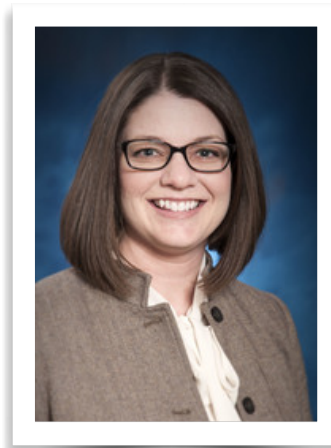
Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon

As we celebrate God’s gift of the Holy Spirit to the church on Pentecost Sunday this year, we also plan to celebrate YOU! The Staff and the Session recognize the importance of all our volunteers, without whom our work in ministry would be impossible. Please plan to join us for a special TACO lunch following worship on **May 28th**.





Many of you here at Westminster know Tami Sivy as a church member, choir member, elder, mom of two kids, daughter of our recent guest musician on Easter morning, David Weemhoff, playing trumpet. Tami is also a Professor of Chemistry at Saginaw Valley State University. She received a B.S. in Biochemistry from Calvin College and a Ph.D. in Chemistry from the University of Colorado-Boulder, before completing a postdoctoral appointment at Portland State University.



She has done community presentations, including SVSU's Olli Life-long Learning Program. As a scientist she has much to share about the everyday, practical matters of keeping our community safe.

For over a decade, she and her undergraduate students have been involved with testing methods used to determine beach closings around the Bay in collaboration with local health departments. In 2018, her lab used technology that was adapted to test for SARS-Covid throughout the Great Lakes Bay Region.

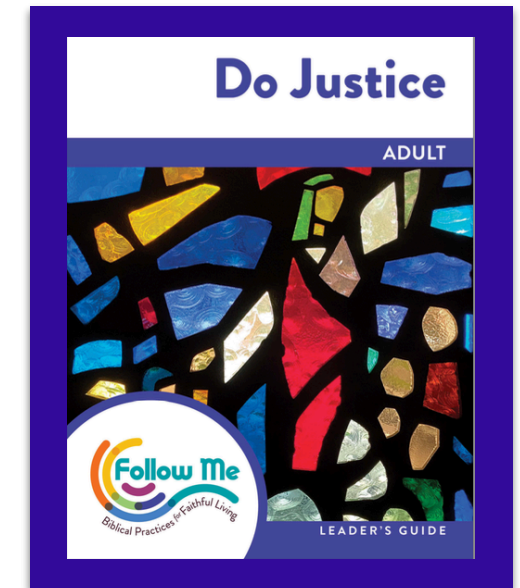
Come join us on **Tuesday, May 30th at Noon** in Fellowship Hall for Tami's presentation and a time of questions and answers. You are invited to bring your lunch if you chose. Beverages will be provided as well as a sweet treat. Hope to see many of you there. Please call the church office for more information.



IN MARCH, BETH COOK EDUCATED US ON THE JEWISH FAITH AND BROUGHT IN SOME SPECIAL TREATS.

We are closing out our second year with the Follow Me: Biblical Practices for Faithful Living curriculum that has guided our worship and study. The final unit for this program year is "Do Justice."

Introducing this important topic to us, Rev. Laurie Bright writes, "From birth, all of humanity seems to share some kind of internal compass of right and wrong. It is at the very heart of what it means to be a Christian. Liberating justice appears at the core of the Christian story, as we attempt to bridge the gap between the world as it is and the world toward which God is calling us. The stories and traditions that comprise Christianity find meaning in acknowledging the world as a deeply unfair place, and ourselves as participants in righteousness or unrighteousness, depending on our willingness to answer God's calling. Our savior was the recipient of state-sponsored execution without justice. And he was also the embodiment of the good news that tells us that a just world is possible."



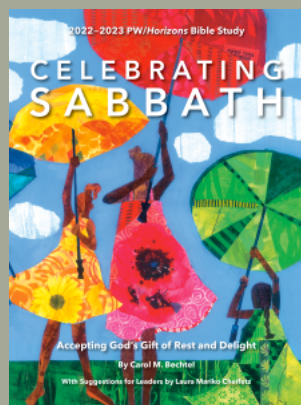
Micah 6:8 shares a call to do justice that is echoed throughout the Bible. "[The Lord] has told you, O mortal, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice and to love kindness and to walk humbly with your God?" We are called to do and be lots of other things as well, but at the core of the Christian tradition is a sense of creating a more just world.

Biblical justice is rooted in the ancient Hebrew concept of *mishpat*. *Mishpat* was a foundational value in Judaism and referred to a just ordered society, one in which equity and fairness rule. *Mishpat* is the compass by which we navigate right and wrong in the world, seeking fairness and equity in both interpersonal forms of injustice, and expansive systemic and generational harms caused by unjust actions.

The biblical command to "do justice" in Micah 6:8 reminds us that righteousness in the world is never completed but always in progress and incumbent on us to pursue, create, and establish. It requires that we **see injustice** in our midst and in our own behaviors. It necessitates that we **check our prejudice** to understand victims of injustice. It requires that we **speak up**: to power, to our own communities, and to ourselves. And it demands that we actually **do the work**, changing systems and practices that prop up injustice. Through these four aspects, the pursuit of justice demands we keep moving forward as we embrace this work as a lifelong facet of our identity as Christians."

LYDIA CIRCLE

THURSDAY, MAY 18
1:00 P.M.



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

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

DEBORAH CIRCLE



Deborah Circle will take a hiatus for the spring and summer months and begin meeting again in September. Please call Karen Schoepach at 989-684-1322 or email kaysue@chartermi.net with any questions.



- May 14
Recognize Injustice- *John 7:53-8:11*
- May 21
Check Your Prejudice- *James 2:1-7*
- May 28
Speak Up-*Exodus 3:1-12; 4:1-16; Acts 2*
- June 2
Do the Work-*Isaiah 58; Exodus 20*



Our Mission focus for May celebrates the anniversary of the **Pentecost Special Offering**. For the last 25 years, the denomination has been receiving this special offering that helps the church encourage, develop, and support its young people, while also addressing the needs of at-risk children. Only 1% of PC (USA) churches have received this offering every year, and Westminster is one of those churches (see the note below)! Over those 25 years you have given over \$16,000 to support the work of the church and other organizations that specifically help youth and children around the world. While 60% is used to support children-at-risk, youth, and young adults through ministries of the Presbyterian Mission Agency, 40% of this offering has stayed with

our church to be invested in ministries that make an impact in the lives of young people within our own community.

This year, we have an amazing opportunity to support the youth of our church while also reaching out to the children and youth in our neighborhood. Our youth group was the recipient of a \$1,000 grant to host a youth led neighborhood block party for the students at our local schools. In addition to the fun activities and, of course, food that will be offered, we are reaching out to local non-profits and other organizations who specialize in working with youth and families to be present. We hope this will be a great opportunity for these organizations to meet face-to-face with families and let them know what resources are available for their children and youth. The Session and the Mission Partnerships Committee has designated our portion of this year's Pentecost offering to help sponsor this event. This means that 40% of your gift will go to support Westminster's youth group and their community outreach event. Please prayerfully consider how you might be able to donate to this year's Pentecost Offering in celebration of the 25 years that Westminster has supported this very important work.



JOIN US SUNDAY, JUNE 4TH!

WESTMINSTER FOOD PANTRY

Our Mission Partnerships Ministry is now overseeing the Food Pantry and Crisis Committee. Our Food Pantry is being utilized multiple times a week. In March and April we helped close to 40 families with bags of food from our Pantry. We're averaging about 4-5 families per week. We're so grateful for your gifts of non-perishable items and your monetary gifts that allow us help our neighbors when they need it the most. If you would like to make a donation to the Food Pantry, please indicate that on your check or envelope. Donations of food can be brought in on Sunday mornings, or anytime the church office is open. Again, THANK YOU!

A THANK YOU TO WESTMINSTER FROM THE PC(USA)

As we enter the Pentecost Offering season, I want to lift up a couple congregations in your community. 2023 marks the 25th anniversary of the PC(USA)'s Pentecost Offering, and Fenton First Presbyterian Church and Westminster Presbyterian Church in Bay City are two of the few (**less than 1% of the denomination**) that have participated in the Offering every year since its inception. Incredible! Their generosity over the years has nurtured the faith of generations of young people as they share their unique gifts with the church and the world.

Peace,
 Lauren W. Rogers (she/her)
 Ministry Engagement Advisor
 Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

This was shared in the
 Presbytery of Lake
 Huron's Bi-weekly
 Newsletter.

Go On a Picnic—Just getting some sun on our face as we eat a good meal can do a world of good for a moment of a day.

Think Before You Commit—No need to overcommit to things that don't feel right. Remember "no" is a full sentence. Well-meaning persons in your life might push you to engage with others when you don't feel up to it.

Change the Scenery—Take a drive if you like driving. Take in the moving space around you and explore from the space of your car.

Virtual Grief Support—Check out St. Luke's online grief support videos by visiting <https://www.slhn.org/vna>. These videos provide information about the grieving and mourning process and ways to care for yourself during these tender times.

Try to Meditate—Engage with meditation in spaces that feel safe and soothing for you. Finding a quiet space in a mind that is exhausted can be challenging. Learning to use deep breaths to nourish ourselves during grief can be an incredible skill. YouTube videos and classes can help you engage with this skill to support yourself.

Begin a Ritual—Work with rituals that honor and engage you with your loved one. This can mean a seat at the table during a holiday. It can mean visiting a grave site. It can mean having an outdoor memorial that feels connected to you and your family's needs. Listen to what feels right for you and not what you feel you "should" do.

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

**GOD SIGHTINGS
 APRIL 2023**

THANK YOU FOR DOING YOUR
 PART TO SERVE THE
 CONGREGATION OF
 WESTMINSTER!



LEAH
 SNELLER



ALMA
 WATTON

MAX
 WEATHERWAX





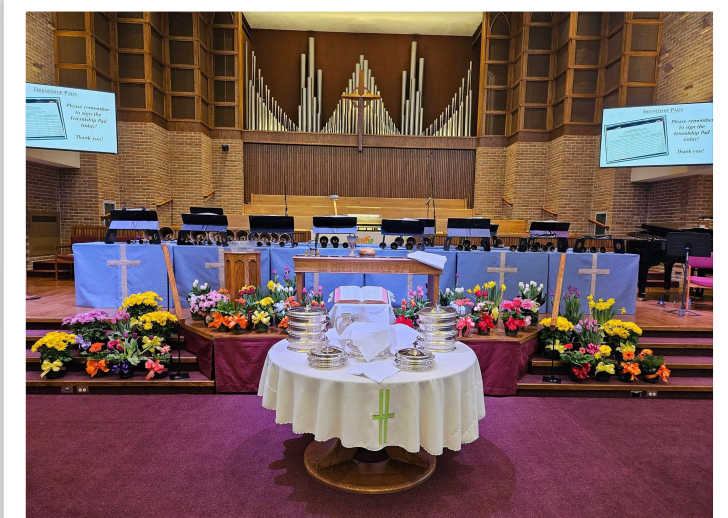
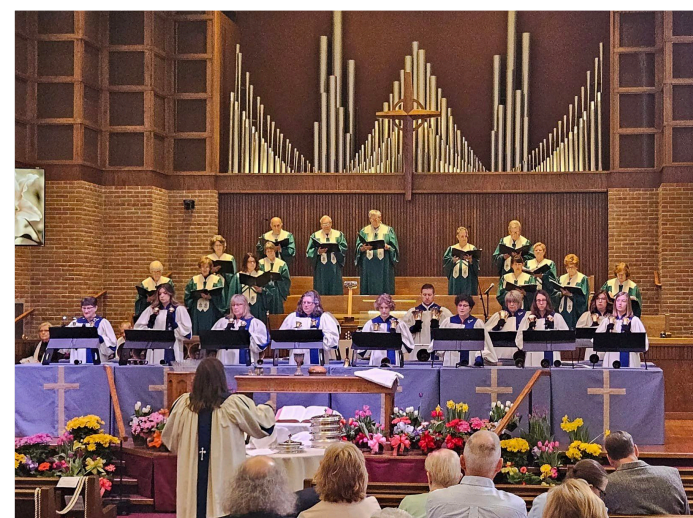
*Palm Sunday Pageant
Who Is He?*



Easter Sunday



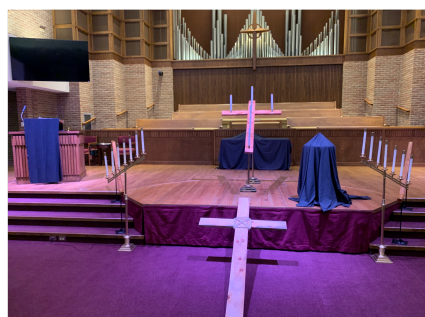
Thank you to EVERYONE who made Holy Week such a meaningful and special week for us all! A special thank you to our Fellowship and Outreach Committee for the delicious Easter Breakfast.



Maundy Thursday

Good Friday

Easter Vigil



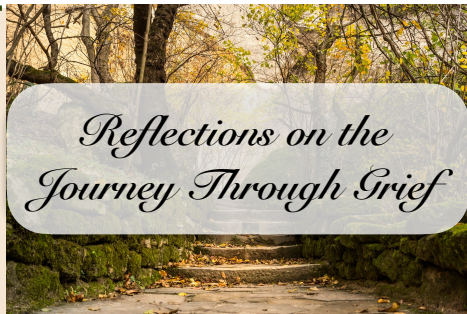
Each month the Spiritual Growth and Faith Formation Committee will share a few thoughts on the journey of grief that we all experience. We hope these brief thoughts will be of help and support to all.

"Nature is the kind of friend that never leaves my side. Even in grief-stricken times, in her soul I can confide." ~

Angie Welland- Crosby

Spring is starting now as we enter the month of April. Many of us have had a winter full of cold, snow, and isolation in our homes. Now that the days are getting warmer and longer, we can feel the small waves of hope and fresh smells from the new season. There is a feeling of rebirth and renewal rolling in for many. But this change, like all changes that come when we are in grief, can be confusing.

It's normal to feel anxious surrounding the changing of the seasons while we grieve. Spring generally brings a sudden flurry of change and things begin to move faster all around us. We might feel like we should be happier or we may even feel guilty when we are happy without our loved one. It might spur a deep sensation of how time is continuing to pass without the person we really want to have with us. We might feel more pressure to engage in things that feel overwhelming. We might feel far away from the person we were last spring. Sometimes we might just wish for cold rainy or snowy days because they feel more aligned with the feelings we have in our hearts. This can be deeply painful for some.



Regardless of what feelings come up for you, they are acceptable and okay to feel. Sometimes, taking care of ourselves requires stepping away from what we think we "should" be feeling and listening to the messages that our hearts and bodies are giving us about what actually feels right.

One of the ways we can reclaim a feeling of connectedness with ourselves can be to get outside and to engage with the things that we can control within our lives. We can control if we sit in the sun. We can control if we move our bodies more in ways that feel good. Those of us who feel like getting our hands dirty might turn to gardening. It can even be as simple as taking more deep breaths and noticing spring smells and changes as we exhale. Give yourself permission to enjoy what you enjoy deeply and whenever possible. Lean in when you can.

Another way to engage with all this change is to be mindful of how the world around you is waking up. Note the sounds you hear, the smells, the way a flower or tree might change day to day around you. Nature provides a visual of how those that look dormant can change and reopen again in new ways, but only when their time comes. It shows a model of resilience and that there is a season for everything.

This spring might not feel like yours right now. It might feel like exactly what you need. Either one is correct and allowed. The process of grief cannot be forced or rushed. It is part of our nature and requires self-grace, time, and patience as we work on our unique, always changing, healing journey. Spring will come again.

Soothing Activities When Spring Doesn't Match Your Feelings

Long Walks—We can walk with friends or spend time alone in our favorite spots in nature. It can be a space to reflect on the sounds and complexity of the trees around us and can offer a great peace when everything inside us might feel chaotic or over-whelmed.

Gardening—Getting your hands dirty can be therapeutic. Investing in something for the future is inherent in the act of gardening and can offer a simple and a soothing quiet space to be with ourselves in nature.

Bird Watching—Another excellent way to find stillness and quiet as we take in the world around us without it feeling like it's overpowering us. This can even be done from the windows of our home.

Bonfires and Fire Pits—Sitting around a fire, either with your household or friends can feel deeply connected and simple. It allows us to be with others and with our thoughts, however feels right.

Our confirmation class is nearing the end of their study. Since January, four of our youth have been exploring scripture and matters of faith together, while learning what it means to be



actively involved in a community of faith. Week after week I (Pastor Jamie) am blown away by their insightful answers and curious questions. I am always humbled at the privilege to teach confirmation, and this year is no different. Please continue to be in prayer for Maddox Schmidt, Max Weatherwax, Grace Rezler, and Emerson Chambers as they finish the confirmation curriculum and write a personal faith statement. These youth will be presented at the Session meeting on May 16th and received in worship as full members of Westminster Presbyterian on **Sunday, May 21st**.

Thank you to members who made dinner or donated money for meals for Youth Group and Confirmation Classes on Sunday evenings!

Karen Brown-Fackler	Pam Johnston
Sally Calvo	Heather Heidtman
Pam Monville	Darlene Kusterer
Nancy Dobson	Tami Sivy
Marilyn Bechtel	Amy Weatherwax
Brian and Sandy Graves	Deb Pryce
Linda Williams	Karen Schoeppach
Alicen Rogers	Carol Campbell
	Judy Hudson



~The Youth Group of Westminster

MOTHER'S DAY BABY SHOWER

HAPPY MOTHER'S DAY! Well, it is for most mothers. There are some, however, who are in circumstances that make becoming a mother a challenge. For many reasons, they may find it difficult or impossible to provide everything that their baby needs. Parent or not, we all know how expensive it is to take care of and provide for a newborn. Each day brings several diaper and clothing changes. Over the years, Westminster has held a "baby shower" at church on Mother's Day. This year, Mother's Day is on May 14. There won't be any games or food. You don't need to wrap a gift or buy a card. But please bring baby items to church so we can help make the experience of bringing home a new baby a much happier one.



As in previous years, we're donating items to the [Good Samaritan Rescue Mission, the Bay Area Women's Center and Diaper Alliance](#). While all baby-related items are welcome, the Rescue Mission was helpful in sharing some of the things they need the most:

Baby lotion, diaper rash cream, bottles and bottle brushes, combs/brushes, nail clippers, nose syringes, shoes, diaper bags, summer clothes, bibs, diapers size 4-7, pull ups sizes 2T-5T.

If you wish to bring diapers, newborn, size 1 and size 2 are preferred. Onesies, sleepers, blankets, and any other baby care items will be appreciated. You may bring items to church the week before Mother's Day. Just stop in the office to find out where the items will be stored until Sunday. If you bring things to church on Mother's Day, there will be tables in the hallway outside the sanctuary where we will be displaying our "baby gifts".

Games and food make baby showers so much fun! Making sure moms (and dads) can have the things they need to keep their babies healthy, warm, and safe brings joy to the hearts of the receiver and the giver! Here's to a happy Mother's Day!