



Westminster

Presbyterian Church

ZEPHYRS

FALL 2020



WHAT'S NEXT? | Pastor Rob McClellan

When the shelter in place order was first given, many of us thought we would be in a very different place by now. School closed, and I wondered whether it would be for one week or two. I filmed nightly prayers on Facebook from my basement thinking it might help folks for the few nights we were cooped up. Then, I found myself coming to the church to pack up my computer monitor and printer, realizing this was going to go on for a while.

As we enter a new program year, still unable to gather on site, what's next for Westminster? Our online offerings will continue and evolve. We have made incremental changes to worship throughout, and we will keep working to offer the best worship experiences we can, within the limitations we have. *(cont...)*

STAYING CONNECTED | Associate Pastor Bethany Nelson

We are living in strange times right now, with both unexpected blessings and unexpected losses. Lately, I have been curious about what people are missing most during this shelter in place time. What have you missed the most? What is something that you perhaps took for granted that you now realize was an important part of your life? Someone told me the other day that for them, it was hugs they missed most. Another told me it was playing sports with a team. For me, I think it is doing music with other people. One of my most favorite parts of worship is when we sing together. It is just not the same to sing with my computer on Sunday mornings as I watch worship! I am really looking forward to the hymn sing that RuthE. is hosting over Zoom. *(See page 3 for more details.)* *(cont...)*



WHAT'S NEXT? Continued...

In addition to ongoing classes, meetings, and virtual gatherings, we are looking at forming additional small groups organized around interest, format, or demographic. We welcome your input into what would serve you and the community.

Beyond the health concerns of COVID-19, we have learned that the pandemic has been particularly taxing on the schedules of some groups of people such as families with younger children. In order to provide content that people can access on their own schedule and on the go, we are exploring additional platforms such as podcasts to deliver Sunday School lessons, meditations, teachings, and interviews. We won't be able to do it all, but we will do our best to provide what's best.

COVID-19 has kept us from physically gathering in large groups, but it has not kept us from caring. The Outreach Commission has been leading important work on racial inequity as well as other issues of concern to the community. The deacons have been critical in helping Westminster provide care to those in the church. Pastors, staff, and dedicated laity are available to connect virtually or in person outside following appropriate safety protocols.

Many have asked about the status of the building renovation. After an initial delay during shelter in place, construction resumed and with the building vacant the work has progressed unimpeded. The project is on schedule to be completed mid-late October. At that time, we will look to health department guidelines and the best interests of everyone's health and safety to make decisions about on-site gatherings. I take some solace in the knowledge that we couldn't be gathering now anyway.

One of the things I have realized during this unprecedented time is just what a potential this congregation has. From collecting now thousands of meals for distribution to holding new and growing online classes and gatherings, from experimenting with new forms of ministry to holding one another in prayer, Westminster has an essential role to play. Our story is worth telling, and to that end, as we document this time, we are also working toward finding better ways to communicate to the wider world. We believe there is room to grow.

In the meantime...Keep the faith. Stay in touch. Persist in hope and love.

*God's Peace,
Rob*

STAYING CONNECTED Continued...

Because I am not able to sing with others right now, I have had to make do with singing with me, myself, and I. I have developed an increased appreciation for the benefits of technology during this time, and one of those benefits is the ability to be a duet or trio all by myself. I simply record one part at a time until all the parts I want are singing together. I have especially enjoyed recording hymns in this way. There is something about singing my favorite hymns – the ones I have sung since childhood – that remind me of God's hope and love even during this difficult time.

Have you checked out Westminster's YouTube channel? All of the hymns I have recorded are there, in a playlist called **"Hymns of Inspiration."** I usually record about 1 or 2 each week. There is a lot of other great content on our YouTube channel as well, including all of our worship services; weekly Sunday School lessons (you don't have to be a child to watch those!); special music from RuthE.; Jeff's **"Prodigal Parent"** series; a series on calling, vocation, and listening for God that I put together for my Doctor of Ministry studies ... and more! Simply go to [youtube.com](https://www.youtube.com) and search for WPC Tiburon. You can even choose to subscribe to our page.

I certainly never thought I would be doing ministry via Facebook, YouTube, and Zoom, but I am grateful for the opportunity for connection that those platforms provide. That has definitely been an unexpected blessing. That being said, small, outdoor gatherings are now permitted. If you would like to visit in-person with one of the ministry staff, don't hesitate to reach out to us! Being with you – either online or in person – continues to be my favorite part of ministry. May we continue to nurture our relationships with each other and with God in these challenging times.

Blessings, Bethany



Four of Bethany singing in harmony.



HOW CAN WE KEEP FROM SINGING?

Ruth E. Wells, Music Director

I have been dismayed by the ban on choral singing caused by the pandemic. Surely the Creator does not mean for us to stop singing. Shouldn't recovered people be able to sing together? Since that's a relatively small number in our congregation, I've been wondering further, if indoor public worship cannot include singing for the foreseeable future, how can we keep the singing tradition alive until we are able to freely sing together again?

It's hard to tell from my side of the video screen whether you are singing along on Sunday mornings. Would it be more enjoyable to do if you knew you were not alone? I hope so. To that end, I am hosting a Zoom hymn singing hour on first and third Thursday evenings, beginning September 3.

I'll convene at 7:00pm and lead 6-8 pieces - whatever we can accomplish in about 45 minutes. I'll probably review a little history of each hymn so that we rest our voices, and hopefully learn something new about the tradition of singing our faith. We'll have to mute your individual contributions, but you'll be able to see one another, and we'll take some time to chat a bit afterward.

I want to pre-record the accompaniments, to provide the best sound quality on that platform. In order to prepare, I invite you to nominate a hymn you'd like to sing. Use the SignUp Genius link in the eNews, or email me at: music.at.wpc240@gmail.com to register and submit your nomination. You'll be sent pdf-copies of the playlist for the week along with the meeting link on the afternoon of the event. **Deadline for Sep 3 is Sept 1. Deadline for Sep 17 is Sep 15.**

Blessings,
Ruth E.

TRANS HEARTLINE

Carol Coffman, Outreach Commission

Calling all cooks, drivers and volunteers to show God's love to those in the Transgender community as they come to the Bay Area for Gender Confirmation surgery. Jordan Decker, the founder and Executive Director of Trans HeartLine, has created a warm inviting home environment in San Anselmo to welcome and provide a safe affordable place for post surgery recovery and healing.

Just think of a time when you were ill or recovering from surgery and simply wanted to be loved, cared for, and fed. We all want and need someone to be there for us during these times of rest and healing to lessen our pain and increase our hope for full recovery. Our transgender friends have these same needs and many more as family or friends have not always supported their journeys.

We invite you to join the WPC team and six other groups in this ministry. On a rotating basis once every six weeks, we provide food for the up to 7 residents and caregivers

staying at the home each week. We purchase Safeway gift cards to provide staples for breakfast, lunches and snacks and provide three home cooked evening meals served family style. There are also opportunities to drive guests to and from the airport and doctor's appointments. So whether you want to flex your cooking skills, or like to get out of the house as a volunteer driver or simply make a donation to the help fill the food need, there is something for all of us to do! We are scheduled for the weeks of October 4, November 8 and December 20.



For more information about this loving ministry, take a look at the "thank you" video at: <https://vimeo.com/445030296> or visit their website at transheartline.org. Come help us share the good news that God loves us all!



GO DEEP GREEN

Mary Mossteller and Judi Sachs

Here is an easy powerful action you can take today in support of a healthier environment ... Opt Up to 100% clean renewable electric energy through Marin Clean Energy (MCE)

Westminster Presbyterian Church has been a part of California's renewable energy movement for several years since we opted-up to MCE's Deep Green 100% renewable electric energy for our church operations. We are also members of MICA, Marin Interfaith Climate Action, which is encouraging Marin church members to opt-up. Follow WPC's example by going Deep Green for your home.

You likely already have Light Green 50% wind & solar produced in California – opt up to 100%.

• **HOW DO I OPT UP?** Visit mceoptup.org and enter your PG&E account number, last name, and zip code. Click the authorization box then hit submit. That's all it takes. Or call **(888) 632-3674** Monday–Friday, 8 am–5 pm, and one of MCE's representatives will help you opt-up to Deep Green.

• **HOW MUCH DOES IT COST?** About \$5 a month to go Deep Green.

• **HOW MUCH CO2 DO YOU SAVE OVER A YEAR?** The typical household will save nearly 1 metric ton, the amount of CO2 emitted by driving a standard gasoline engine car 1750 miles.

Loving Creation would love to know if make you make this election. **Contact: Mary Mossteller mcmossteller@mac.com or Judi Sachs judisachs9@gmail.com** If you already have solar – thank you, and let us know that too!

WEDNESDAY BAG LUNCHES CONTINUE

It is amazing to think that something that began as a temporary fill-in for our Hot Lunch program has become a vibrant ministry! Every Wednesday morning, a group of volunteers led by Jeff Heely gather in the WPC parking lot to collect bag lunches. These lunches are made by a variety of Westminster members and friends. Some people make one or two lunches, others make over a dozen. Some people have participated once or twice, others make lunches every single week.

Each Wednesday, over 100 lunches are collected, and sometimes over 200! Some of these are delivered to Sausalito to give to the participants of the Hot Lunch program. The rest go to St. Vincent de Paul in San Rafael to help feed those who are experiencing food insecurity. Often, the lunches include a blessing or prayer for whoever will receive it. As of mid-August, 3433 lunches had been donated over the span of 20 weeks. Wow!

When one of the regular lunch-makers was asked why she does this week after week, she responded, *"It's such a little bit, but knowing a few more people are getting something to eat, however simple, makes me feel that I'm doing something to help those so desperately in need. It's also a way to connect with good friends from WPC, even if we have on our masks and stay 6 feet apart! At least we're connecting... in real, not virtual, time. (And...we get to check on the progress of WPC remodel.) When this is over, I may never buy peanut butter again!"*

Interested in participating? Simply make one or more bag lunches and bring them to the WPC parking lot on Wednesday morning between 10-11am. Soft foods are appreciated.



Two of our regular lunch makers.

RENOVATION UPDATE | Ron Meserve, Renovation Committee Chair

McDevitt Construction estimates completion of construction by mid-October. That means the project is 80% complete!

Construction is progressing nicely. Most of the exterior has been painted, including the Preschool building. The Sanctuary will be painted after the Narthex has been completed. The “bones” of the Narthex are up and all the spectacular glass will be installed soon. New windows have been installed. The elevator is being installed. All the sheetrock has been installed, taped, and sanded. The interior paint colors have been selected. The carpet has been ordered. Appliances, fixtures, and some of the furnishings have been selected... and some already acquired. It is so exciting!



New windows in Findlay Hall.

Plans for adding Solar are proceeding thanks to a generous donation by Michael and Libby Hatfield. We are hoping for installation before the conclusion of the renovation construction.

Ann West and David Elliott are working on the development of a Landscape Master Plan. We have received some donations towards the landscape materials, but more will be needed. If you are interested in participating in the acquisition of plants or other materials for the landscaping project, please contact Ann or David.

Adam Krivatsy is working on a proposal for a new sign to be located at the entrance to the church parking lot. A proposed design has been developed and a source for the sign has been identified. Jo Cooper has made a generous donation to support a portion of the cost of this new sign.

The Labyrinth, funded by the Spiritual Life Commission, has been fabricated and is currently being stored at the carpet vendor warehouse until the contractor is ready for it to be installed.

Work is progressing on the construction of a Quiet Room which will be located adjacent to the Sanctuary. A large window will enable persons in the Quiet Room to observe and hear church services.

The Renovation Committee members are all actively involved in various aspects of the project. Each member is assigned as a “lead” to focus on specific aspects of the renovation planning and process. For example: logistics, landscaping, interior design, sponsor program, church signage, neighbor relations. Tod Moody and I meet every week with the Contractor and Architect to carefully coordinate activities and monitor progress. Please let us know if you have any questions!



Awaiting new landscaping.



The new Narthex is taking shape.



(SOME OF) THE KIDS ARE ALRIGHT

Jeff Shankle, Youth Director

People have been talking about the memories and experiences that teens are losing these days. Things like mission trips, camps, proms, sports, all leave indelible imprints on our lives. But even more, what opportunities for self-discipline and leadership development are teens left with? What opportunities for social development and teamwork are they left with? This isn't just about pictures of kids all dressed up and partying the night away. This is about opportunities outside the home to fail, get up, learn from it, and try again. After all, we do want them out of the house eventually, don't we?

Of course, our youth are being adversely affected by all that's happening. Gaps are widening - whether that be because of economic forces, matters of mental health, or spiritual disposition. If your family is well off in any of those areas, your kids are probably doing better than their peers right now.

WPC youth are not immune from any of this. Our youth ministry has seen this reflected in the interactions we've had with our students. Those who are advantaged in the three aforementioned categories are thriving. Those who struggle in one or another are not.

Fortunately for our youth there's one invaluable resource they can rely on: you and every single person reading this now. We need to continue recognizing that we're all role-models to young people. We're all fumbling our way through this season. What better time has there been to establish the virtue of grace by our open vulnerability? Find ways to confess your own stresses to them. You might be surprised by the wise counsel they give.

Instead of Googling for answers to how teens are doing, just ask them! Ask your kids. Ask the neighbors. Ask your nieces, nephews, and grandkids. Ask their parents.

Our youth want you to follow health guidelines ("*rules*" as they put it) so we can get past all this. They want to do "*youth group stuff*" again. They want to play team sports again. They want to spar ("*fight*" as they put it) in Tae Kwon Do again. They want you to help open the yacht clubs so they can go sailing! How do I know all of this? Easy. I asked them.

When's the last time you asked a teenager:

- What they thought about when/how schools should open?
- When/how the church should open?
- What can we/you do about systemic racism?
- How they both explore and express their faith without regular youth group gatherings?
- Who they'd like you to vote for in the upcoming elections and why?
- What we/you can do about matters of economic instability?

When people think about role-models, they think about hard work and honesty. This time of life might be drawing far more on our role-modelling of coping with stress, engagement in social issues, and spirituality. I worry sometimes that we don't talk enough about these things with teenagers. I know people are worried about not doing it right. But since we're fumbling our way through everything else right now, why not these important conversations?

Some of the kids are alright. All of them see how we're doing and take note.

POETRY CORNER

Submitted by Debbie Dybsky,
Spiritual Life Commission

PORTRAIT OF FALL

by Alora Knight

Looking out my window
In October's golden light,
I see a beauty unsurpassed,
A truly lovely sight.

Leaves are saying soft good-byes
As they come floating down
To make a nature's carpet
Of yellow, red, and brown.

Mountain tops, now turned to white,
Forewarn of winter chills,
While trees, like golden rivers,
Wind their way up through the hills.

Throughout our world's creation
You will ever find it thus,
Kaleidoscopes of color,
In God's hand, the artist's brush.



DRIVE-THROUGH BLESSING

We had a wonderful drive-through backpack blessing at the Westminster parking lot on August 23. As students and their parents entered the parking lot in their cars, they were greeted by one of our adult youth leaders, Malia. At the first station, with youth leaders Jeff and Elaine, they were given a stick and encouraged to step over it with intention to begin each school day. They met youth leader Grayson at the second station and received special bling for their backpacks encouraging them to be kind. Bethany and Ben shared a song at the third station, reminding the students and parents of God's peace flowing through their souls, even during this stressful beginning of the school year. Rob offered a special blessing for the families and their school supplies at the fourth station. Finally, Jeff said a special goodbye at the fifth station with an ice cream treat.

It was wonderful to see people face-to-face, and has definitely paved the way for future drive-through blessings.

STRATEGIC PLANNING

While this time has taught us the importance of being able to adapt, one of the lessons we have learned in ministry is the importance of good planning. Good planning helps an organization crystalize and fulfill its mission and adapt to unsuspected changes in circumstances. To that end, we have begun a strategic planning process that will help us get clear about where we want, and where we discern the Spirit wants the church to go over the next couple years. The pastoral staff and Parish Associate Ted Scott have begun some pre-work with strategic consultant Pat Newmann, with whom Westminster has worked before. In the fall we look forward to engaging lay leadership in this important process. With all that is going on in the life of the church and the world, this is the perfect time to get clear, get organized, and get moving on our shared future.

“... this time
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The Stewardship team wants YOU..

to pledge!



2021 STEWARDSHIP ANNUAL PLEDGE DRIVE is COMING SOON!

Look for materials in your mailbox and inbox the week of September 20, as we launch our annual pledge campaign (written commitment only!) for Westminster's 2021-22 fiscal year.



From Your Stewardship Team: Chuck Friede, Karen Halsey, Christina Hanson, Sophia Harkins, Bill McLeod, and Christina Werner

