



Westminster

Presbyterian Church

ZEPHYRS

LENT 2022



WHAT CAN THIS TIME MEAN FOR US?

Pastor Rob McClellan

“Lent” may be a word you have heard before, but you may not be entirely certain of its meaning. What is this ancient Christian season, and what can it mean for us today?

The word derives from a Germanic word that points to the “lengthening” of the days, as it corresponds with springtime. In the liturgical calendar, Lent is comprised of the 40 days, not including Sundays, leading up to Easter Sunday (“Easter” having its own interesting etymology).

In our cycle of Scripture readings, Lent features Jesus’ temptation in the wilderness (also 40 days). It is a season that has traditionally been a time of penitence and prayerfulness, often paired with fasting, and it dates back at least to the 4th century. The Muslim holy season of Ramadan grows out of the (cont..)

LENTEN DEVOTIONAL GUIDE

Associate Pastor Bethany Nelson

Many of you may remember that we put together an Advent devotional guide for a few years that featured reflections written by Westminster members and friends. This was a fun guide to create, as members had the opportunity to reflect on scripture passages that focused on the traditional Advent themes – hope, peace, joy, and love.

This year, we have created a similar Lenten devotional guide. For every week of Lent, you will find about 3 reflections written by Westminster congregants, each based on a specific scripture passage. The scripture passages are all recommended by the daily lectionary. This devotional is posted on our website and hard copies are available at the church. May it be a meaningful guide to you as you journey through the Lenten season. (cont..)



WHAT CAN THIS TIME MEAN FOR US?

Continued...

Christian practice of Lent.

What can all of this mean for us today? Plenty. First, words such as penitence and repentance can connote shame and guilt, but these concepts are, at their best, opportunities to reflect and reset. I recently read an article about an “apology page” on the internet where people can post anonymous confessions. Visiting the page, it became clear to me just how burdened we can be by past decisions. To have a chance to honor our regrets, commit to do repair, and work to do better can be a path to release and renewal.

Second, and similarly, Jesus’ time in the wilderness follows his baptism. In some Christian traditions, Lent has been a time of preparation for baptism. It is a readying to die to an old way of being and being born anew into a different set of values and commitments. If Lent can be a way of ridding old ways of being (a holy emptying), then it can also be a season of prayer and dreaming for what we can be (a holy filling). Lent helps us ask how we want to cultivate goodness going forward, not just for ourselves or our families, but for our wider communities.

Third, just as you are invited to do this in your own life, we as a church have been reflecting on who God is calling us to be, developing our “Roadmap to the Future.” One way you can engage this work is by revisiting the sermon series that began 2022, preaching through our new Christian Identity Statement. With Omicron, attendance was lighter and so if you missed some of these Sundays, revisit them on YouTube or Facebook Live to see how your church leaders are thinking about who we are so that we might better focus our ministry internally and more clearly articulate it to the wider community. Getting clear about how we are is at the core of Lent.

Fourth, it seems as though we have lost a number of great public and spiritual figures lately. As we use Lent to reflect on who we are and who God calls us to be, we can take account of those who have been streams of sacred wisdom for us. We can mourn those we have lost, and we can be on the lookout for who may be emerging as new voices. We can even open ourselves to the ways in which we are being prompted offer our understanding of the Spirit’s desire. Just as Jesus emerges from the desert poised for his ministry, we can come out of this wilderness time ready to make our contributions to the world.

Blessings for the journey.

God’s Peace,
Rob

LENTEN DEVOTIONAL GUIDE

Continued...

As we put this devotional together, we noticed that it was a much more difficult process than creating the Advent devotionals. While most congregants found reflecting on the Advent scriptures a joy, that has not been the experience with the Lenten scriptures. Within 24 hours of assigning the scripture passages, multiple people responded to me that they did not like their passages. The feedback I received was everything from, “Wow, this is challenging” to “I don’t agree with this at all” to “I’m going to need a different passage.”

These reactions did not come as a surprise to me. While the Advent passages deal with hopeful themes related to the coming Messiah, the Lenten passages address more difficult themes such as temptation, sin, and repentance. I’ll take reflecting on the birth of the Christ Child over reflecting about my sin any day!

There is no doubt that the season of Lent can be challenging. It invites us into a period of self-reflection and self-examination that is uncomfortable at times. It is never fun to focus on the bad decisions we have made, or the ways that we have let down ourselves, others, or God. That being said, Lent does not have to be a depressing season. “Repent” simply means to turn. Focusing on repentance during Lent means that we commit to turning away from that which keeps us from God and turning toward that which brings us into relationship with God. Rather than being a time of guilt or anxiety, I find that Lent can be just as hopeful as Advent. It can be a time when we specifically and intentionally strengthen our relationship with God and with neighbor. That seems pretty hope and joy filled to me.

When considering what spiritual practices you might use this Lenten season, give some thought to what will both bring you hope and bring you closer to God. Often, people choose to give something up during Lent. If you do that, I invite you to also spend time considering how that practice helps you to turn toward God. Others may add something to their daily routines (such as reading an inspiring devotional guide!) that will strengthen their relationship with God. Whatever your Lenten practices, may this season be a time of blessing for you.

Blessings,
Bethany



WILL YOU HELP US PRAY FOR EVERY SINGLE YOUTH IN MARIN?

Jeff Shankle | Director of Youth Ministry

Everyone understands that COVID has had harsh effects on teenagers. I thought about putting a bunch of statistics from the CDC or Mayo Clinic in this piece, but I doubt anybody needs to be convinced. Adolescence is when you are biologically supposed to be leaving the nest to form your own identity. Yet, because of COVID, we had to ask our kids to stay in their nests. At a time when teens should be learning how relationships work on various levels (mostly through trial and error) we needed them to distance and, in some cases, even isolate.

It's not surprising that depression and anxiety in teens has doubled in the past couple of years.

Many of us have been trying to figure out what we can do about it. Despair is certainly an option that I fall into from time to time. Despair is something our spiritual ancestors endured as well. How many of the Psalms are written from a place of despair? There's an entire book called "Lamentations."

It is also important to take action. But what kind of action do we take as a crisis of spiritual health for teenagers grows?

We, like the Apostle Peter (of foot-in-mouth fame) and others, act first, and hope later that we've done something honoring to God and others. More of something! Less of nothing!

May I ask you to do something on behalf of our youth? It is something that meets the call to action from a place of concern.

Let's pray for the youth of Marin County by name. Every single one of them.

Over the next several weeks, our goal is to collect a copy of every 2021 yearbook in Marin County. There are close to 40,000 students in TK through 12th grade in Marin County. Each one of them represents a unique soul, unconditionally loved by Our God.

Next, after the Good Friday worship service, we will set up a place in the front of the sanctuary for you to take a yearbook, pray for everyone by name, and then return it. Who knows, maybe you'll pray through 2 or more yearbooks! This will continue through Easter.

It seemed appropriate that we would do this during the week we commemorate our Lord and Savior's sufferings. Teenagers everywhere are sharing in some of those sufferings. What a perfect time to pray for all of them because they are all worth suffering for. Aren't they? At least, that's what Jesus shows us that week.

By God's grace, may this act of faith be a blessing to our young people.

If you have questions and/or want to get involved, please contact Jeff@WPCTiburon.org.

POETRY CORNER

Submitted by Debbie Dybsky on behalf of the Spiritual Life Commission

LENT

By Joyce Rupp

The Cosmos dreams in me
while I wait in stillness,
ready to lean a little further
into the heart of the Holy.

I, a little blip of life,
a wisp of unassuming love,
a quickly passing breeze,
come once more into Lent.

No need to sign me
with the black bleeding ash
of palms, fried and baked.
I know my place.

This Lent I will sail
on the graced wings of desire,
yearning to go deeper
to the place where
I am one in the One.

Oh, may I go there soon,
in the same breath
that takes me to the stars
when the Cosmos dreams in me.



SINGING AS A SPIRITUAL PRACTICE

Ruth E. Wells | Music Director

I've been thinking lately about the application of ancient wisdom to the contemporary notion of self care. Many of us have a prayer practice, or a meditation practice, or a yoga practice. It's a commitment you make to your physical and psychological wellbeing that draws upon effective, ancient traditions.

Singing can be used in much the same way. It incorporates deep, regular breathing into an exercise that focuses the mind. So, I've decided that during Lent this year I will think about my singing as a spiritual practice, and if it speaks to you, I invite you to join me.

Choose one simple song – a praise chorus, a Taize chant or one verse of a favorite hymn – to sing each day. You could just sing it silently, in your head, but I encourage you to stand tall (or sit, but sit tall), take a few deep breaths, keep your chin up and sing it out loud.

My plan is to ground myself each night for the 40 days of Lent with the familiar song, and to sing a new song as I greet each new day.

May this season ground you in faith and hope.

Blessings,
Ruth E.

“LET’S TALK ABOUT GRIEF” SERIES

March 3, 10, 24 at 6:30 pm

Grief, most often associated with death and dying, can occur with any loss or change, particularly amplified during these recent pandemic years: job loss, financial despair, graduations via Zoom, canceled family visits, distanced family relationships, depression through increased social isolation, to name a few ways that many of us have been affected.

Over three Thursdays in March, WPC is pleased to offer a series of guided evenings, exploring this topic of Grief and Loss.

Anthea Grimason and Karen Murray know a lot about this topic. As end of life or death “doulas,” they support individuals, as well as their families, in approaching all aspects of end of life matters. Assisting individuals and their families transform their grief and loss into healing, wisdom and gratitude is an important aspect of what they do. To register for this series, use the Eventbrite link on the Westminster website.



This workshop series is the kick-off event for a new WPC venture called “Westminster Events”. To learn more about this new community endeavor or if you have a program/class/workshop or presentation you would like to consider sharing with the community, please reach out to Erin Elliott at erinielliott7@gmail.com.

NEWS FROM LOVING CREATION

By Mary Mossteller and Judi Sachs

New Composting Law

Effective January 1, 2022, SB1383 went into effect in California; it requires all businesses and residents to divert organic materials including food waste, yard waste, and unlined soiled paper products from the landfill. Instead, these will need to go into our green cans.

This law builds on California's commitment to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and air pollution. These actions will greatly reduce landfill methane emissions; instead, it stores carbon via composted soil. Methane, a pollutant very harmful to our and our planet's health, is 80 times more powerful at warming the atmosphere than carbon dioxide over a 20-year period!

Most of us are probably already doing composting at home – this law will require us to be more attentive to what we throw away as trash that can be composted. Since each waste management company in Marin has slightly different rules about what can be composted, check with your carrier for specifics. A tip: put some yard waste in your green can first and it will handle the added food scraps without making a mess of your can.

New Waste Management Program at WPC

Coincidentally, Tyler Von Pervieux, an Eagle Scout candidate from Troop 48, just completed a recycling project at Westminster. WPC has always wanted to improve our waste management program and it has been confusing as where to discard various items. Now that we have lots of new meeting rooms and a new kitchen, revamping the program will help us to know how to dispose of used items and reduce our waste.

Tyler interviewed a number of people at the church to identify the needs for each room. The results can be seen around the church. The kitchen has a roll out cart with 3 bins that can be used for larger gatherings. The offices and library have smaller double bins.

We will continue to work with Tyler to refine the signage and training, so users know where to put trash, compost and recyclables and look forward to improvements in our processes.



WPC Is Applying to Become an Earth Care Congregation

At their January meeting, Session approved a motion to apply to become an Earth Care Congregation (ECC), a program promoted by the Presbyterian Church where congregations commit to and accomplish a specific number of actions toward caring for God's earth in 4 categories:

- ✓ Worship
- ✓ Education
- ✓ Facilities
- ✓ Outreach

Congregations earning 25 points in each of the four categories will be certified as Earth Care Congregations. WPC scored way above 25 points /category – over 480, in fact. But, it's not about "the label", it's about the actions we have taken – and will continue to take.

- ✓ It will help Westminster's earth care ministry as we use the audit as a planning tool and create greater support for this ministry from the whole congregation.
- ✓ Congregation members will be invited to participate as individuals by completing similar actions in their homes.
- ✓ It's also a signal to our community that WPC is committed to climate action, not just words.

Stay tuned for more information!

For questions on any of these programs, contact Mary Mossteller, mcmossteller@mac.com or Judi Sachs, judisachs9@gmail.com.

ABOUT OUR EASTER “FLOWERING OF THE CROSS”

By Sharon Terrill, Worship Committee Chair



This year, our congregation will again celebrate Easter with our tradition of the “Flowering of the Cross.” The flowering of the cross represents the transition from Good Friday to Easter, from meditation on Jesus’ death to a joyful celebration of his resurrection. We do this by transforming a barren cross into one covered with fresh, living flowers. We are asking church members to bring a favorite flower or greenery from their garden to Easter services. (If you prefer, we will also have flowers available at the service.)



Questions? Contact Sharon Terrill at sharon_terrill@me.com.

BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS UPDATE

By David Elliott, B&G Committee Chair

The WPC B&G committee remains engaged in a number of maintenance and capital improvement projects to keep our campus safe and looking good!

The heavy rains of December provided us a good measure of the water “tightness” of the building. Subsequently, we have patched a few leaky spots and should be ship shape moving forward. Interestingly, a number of the leaks were remnants of the re-model project. Our general contractor, McDevitt & Company, has been very responsive and addressed every issue that came about from their work. While one would think that a finished re-model would be, well, finished, McDevitt assures us there is always a punch list of small details to address. And they stepped right up to get the work completed.

Over Presidents Day weekend, we had DeMello Roofing on site to replace the roof that covers the closet “breezeway” between the community building and the pre-school. The roof was quite degraded and the December rains left significant water in the closets. DeMello got the job done in one day, and as such there was no disruption to the pre-school schedule. Kudos to Tod Moody for organizing that project.

Our fabulous new industrial dishwasher has performed slightly less than fabulous since installation. After much diagnosis and testing, Dishwasher MD Dave Heneghan and I determined that it is essential to run the dishwasher exactly as the instructions describe. When we do, it works quite well, and quite quickly! We have made copies of the instructions and left them in a plastic sleeve on the counter. If you are running the dishwasher, please use the instruction sheet!!

Finally, we will soon be embarking on an overhaul of east side of Frost Garden, that abuts the Sanctuary. The plants in this part of the garden are old and tired, and consume significant water.

Our aim is to create a new plant pallet that is more drought tolerant, and more resembles the newer Narthex garden out front. We are fortunate to have an Eagle Scout to co-lead this Spring project. However, we will definitely be recruiting labor and some capital from the congregation to get this big project completed. All gardeners and those in looking for some good fellowship and outdoor exercise, please get ready to come out and help!

2021 ALTERNATIVE CHRISTMAS FAIR RECAP

By Kurt Peterson, Outreach Committee Chair

Much to everyone’s delight, we were able to return to an in-person Alternative Christmas Fair for 2021. With all of the setbacks in the last 2 years, it was a welcome change to be able to plan and execute.

There was no shortage of volunteers and enthusiasm.

The total raised was \$20,195. This blew past 2019’s previous high point of \$13,080 and last year’s \$12,495. It seemed as though everyone was so happy to be back together and able to celebrate.

The Sponsor and dollar breakdown is:

ALS (Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis) Spiritual Life	\$1,715
Center for Domestic Peace, Congregational Life	\$2,670
Haiti on the Rise, Women of Westminster	\$1,840
WPC High School Mission Trip to San Diego, HS Youth	\$1,700
IRC “Soft Landing Fund” for Afghan Refugees, Men’s Connection	\$2,245
Marin City Senior Center, Outreach Commission	\$4,110
Marin Foster Care Association, Congregational Life	\$2,561
WPC Middle School Trip to Santa Cruz. MS Youth	\$1,475
Presbyterian Disaster Assistance, Deacons	\$1,880

Over the month of November and into December, a total of 83 families donated for an average of \$243.30 vs. last year just 58 families participated at \$215.43 each.

The ACF Committee included Sandy Smith, Judi & Mark Sachs, Trigg McLeod, Charlotte Montgomery, and Kurt Peterson. The Fair could not have happened without the work of many volunteers, including Sue Hagen, Eunice Nian, Ginny Quick, Judy & Chuck Friede, Carole Gunn, Trisha Farrow, Karen Halsey, Susan Berkhout, Meme Hurd, Kirk Ludwig, Gwen Mauvais, Bob Miller, Jim Arce, and Jeff Shankle, Diane Newman, and Traci Eckels.

Thanks to everyone involved, especially those who gave money to the cause.



ANNOUNCING THE LAUNCH OF WESTMINSTER RENTALS AND EVENTS!

Erin Elliott, Communications Committee



Rob and Bethany, together with the Session and members of the Communications Committee, would like to extend an invitation for you to consider hosting your next life celebration, birthday party, book club gathering, recital, art exhibit,

musical performance at our beautiful newly-remodeled campus. And to sweeten the deal, WPC members receive a discounted rate! (AND, we are offering an even better rate for “repeat events”-weekly or monthly rentals.)

Imagine your next recital or concert hosted in the beautiful, acoustically resonate Sanctuary. Or your next big birthday party, wedding or anniversary celebration in Findlay Hall, utilizing the recently expanded garden area as well as our new commercial-quality kitchen. Perhaps you are an artist looking for a place like the light-filled Narthex or Findlay Hall for an art show. Our new upstairs rooms are perfect for off-site board meetings, Mon-Fri “We Work”-style workspace, and other smaller gatherings.

As you know, we have plenty of easy parking, a wonderful “main street” location, and are ADA handicapped accessible.

We have been back in full-swing on Sunday mornings since last March, and now, proud of our stellar Marin vaccination record, it is time to swing our doors open wide to one and all and invite in our membership-and their friends and neighbors-to fully utilize our beautiful renovated and expanded campus.

Please reach out to Traci (wpcadmin@wpctiburon.org) or see the WPC website (wpctiburon.org/rentals) for more information, rate sheet and other details.

Since it truly takes a village to get the word out, we are also hoping you can spread the word! So, please take a moment right now to ponder who else you know that would benefit from learning about this wonderful opportunity. THEN, reach out these friends, neighbors, fellow club members, work associates by giving them a call or emailing them this link - **wpctiburon.org/rentals**.



Westminster

Presbyterian Church

240 Tiburon Boulevard, Tiburon, CA US 94920