



Westminster

Presbyterian Church

ZEPHYRS

ADVENT 2022



REBUILDING: A MISSION TRIP REFLECTION

Pastor Rob McClellan

In September, a number of us traveled to Kentucky to help rebuild homes destroyed by a devastating tornado that ravaged the state nearly a year ago. The trip was born of member Carol Coffman's personal connection to the area. The very congregation where her father served as pastor for many years is the host site for the steady stream of volunteers which have been coming since the beginning of 2022.

There are a lot of gifts to be found on such a mission trip. It's a chance to roll up your sleeves, make a tangible difference in someone's life, and maybe embody a little hope that they are not forgotten. It's an opportunity to meet new people from different backgrounds, learn their stories, and appreciate how they live. It's a blessed time to hear how other (cont...)

DEVOTIONAL TIME DURING ADVENT

Associate Pastor Bethany Nelson

Every year, we talk about Advent being a time set aside to wait for the Christ Child and prepare our hearts, minds, and souls for Christmas. We talk about not getting caught up in the hustle and bustle of the season and finding some quiet moments to reflect on what the birth of Jesus means to you and your faith journey. We talk about the importance of the sacredness of this season not getting overwhelmed by the secular celebrations.

All of that is easy to say, but it is much more difficult to do! I begin Advent every year with the intention of slowing down, of taking time for the holy, and of focusing on the miraculous birth of the (cont...)



REBUILDING: A MISSION TRIP REFLECTION Continued...

Christians think about their faith. It's an occasion to deeper relationships with those from your own church without the hurry and obligations of home. I felt the blessing of all these gifts.

I left carrying important memories. I won't forget the families on whose homes we worked, their tales of the tornado and their resilience in rebuilding. I won't forget the man who has volunteered every day since the effort started because he can't imagine what life would be like having lost everything. I won't forget sitting with Westminster members, including the Sayers now living in Washington DC, worshipping together one evening in the Kentucky sanctuary where Carol's father preached. These memories serve as encouragement to keep up the good work of the faith.

Others, I know, have wanted to participate in such mission work and have hoped we could explore something closer to home. I'm glad to share there will be just such an opportunity this spring. Outreach chair Suzanne Mellen and I met with representatives from the First Presbyterian Church of San Rafael about joining their trip through Presbyterian Disaster Assistance during the last week of April to the Paradise area devastated by wildfires. See Suzanne or me for more information.

Not everyone can take a week to go on a mission trip, but there are countless opportunities to put your faith into action through service. The outreach committee put together a simple flyer detailing some of those possibilities, and weekly there are things advertised in the bulletin and eNews for folks of all abilities and interests. As always, I'm happy to talk with you to help you connect your gifts to the needs of the community. Know that your participation in and support of Westminster helps make all of it possible. Thank you.

God's Peace,
Rob



DEVOTIONAL TIME DURING ADVENT Continued...

Christ Child. Then, inevitably, my schedule fills and the present buying becomes frantic and my Christmas-related obligations become overwhelming, and I completely lose track of my intention to focus on the holy.

Will this year be any different? Who knows! But I do know that Westminster is providing several devotional opportunities to help keep the sacredness of the season at the forefront of our minds. First, the annual Advent Word is back. Each day during Advent, Rob and I will offer a written devotional on a specific word. You will be able to find these on both our website and Facebook page throughout Advent. We will also record them for the WPC podcast.

Second, we will have available a special Advent devotional from Illustrated Ministry titled, "Now In Flesh Appearing." This devotional explores how the Advent story is about God taking on a physical body like ours. As we wait with anticipation and prepare for baby Jesus to be born this Advent season, we will consider what it means for God to move, act, and live with us. Each week, you are invited to explore the devotional as you light an Advent candle at home. You can find this on the Members page of our website.

Third, our Spiritual Life Committee is offering a drop in "Quiet Advent Series" the first three Saturdays in December. Read more about this on page 7. May this Advent season be a blessing for you!

Peace,
Bethany

AdventWord

NOVEMBER 27 - DECEMBER 25
2022

<div style="display: flex; flex-direction: row-reverse;"> <div style="margin-right: 10px;">27</div>WALK </div> <div style="display: flex; flex-direction: row-reverse;"> <div style="margin-right: 10px;">28</div>TOGETHER </div> <div style="display: flex; flex-direction: row-reverse;"> <div style="margin-right: 10px;">29</div>TEACH </div> <div style="display: flex; flex-direction: row-reverse;"> <div style="margin-right: 10px;">30</div>MOUNTAINS </div> <div style="display: flex; flex-direction: row-reverse;"> <div style="margin-right: 10px;">1</div>MAKE </div> <div style="display: flex; flex-direction: row-reverse;"> <div style="margin-right: 10px;">2</div>READY </div> <div style="display: flex; flex-direction: row-reverse;"> <div style="margin-right: 10px;">3</div>UNITY </div> <div style="display: flex; flex-direction: row-reverse;"> <div style="margin-right: 10px;">4</div>DELIGHT </div> <div style="display: flex; flex-direction: row-reverse;"> <div style="margin-right: 10px;">5</div>RAIN </div> <div style="display: flex; flex-direction: row-reverse;"> <div style="margin-right: 10px;">6</div>WELCOME </div> <div style="display: flex; flex-direction: row-reverse;"> <div style="margin-right: 10px;">7</div>WINNOWING </div> <div style="display: flex; flex-direction: row-reverse;"> <div style="margin-right: 10px;">8</div>BREATHE </div> <div style="display: flex; flex-direction: row-reverse;"> <div style="margin-right: 10px;">9</div>FIRE </div> <div style="display: flex; flex-direction: row-reverse;"> <div style="margin-right: 10px;">10</div>FLOURISH </div> <div style="display: flex; flex-direction: row-reverse;"> <div style="margin-right: 10px;">11</div>MESSENGER </div>
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12

WILDERNESS

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STRANGER

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BELOVED

15

THIRSTY

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TRAVELER

17

MAJESTY

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PURIFY

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SIGN

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HEAR

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OBEDIENCE

22

CHOOSE

23

RESTORE

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BIRTH

25

EMMANUEL

KENTUCKY MISSION TRIP



WHY YOU LOVE CHRISTMAS MOVIES (AND THEY WILL TOO)

Jeff Shankle | Director of Youth Ministry

Walking home the other evening I felt the crisp cool air. I noticed it was dark (seemingly) far too early. Many of the leaves had fallen off the tree on the sidewalk... Probably a result of our most recent storm. It simply felt different outside. It felt like Christmas was coming.

It made me want to watch a cheesy Christmas movie.

You know the kind right? The Christmas movie where there's always the magical romantic snow scene. There's the aimless main character going through a life crisis. They return home, find their true selves and of course, true love. The love interest is always unexpected to the main character but we can see it coming before the opening credits are over.

Of course there's also a jolly guy with a white beard.

These movies are not for cynics. They are for those of us who are craving some simplicity, some predictability, some nostalgia.

Given the amount of information we sort through on a daily basis, it's a wonder these movies keep getting made year after year. We're overworked and overburdened. This is not something only adults are dealing with of course. Teenagers are overworked and overburdened more than previous generations.

You might think this is a shameless plug to force teenagers to watch the Hallmark channel. It's not. It's simply my own mind wondering, "What am I doing this Advent season, in preparation of Christmas, that simplifies the lives of young people? What are we doing to lay the foundation for a healthy bit of nostalgia?"

All the traditions you're sharing these next few months are extremely important to youth! We're setting them up to later enjoy the predictability, the nostalgia of it all.

Teenagers may very well be the most cynical of us all. But, if they aren't already, they will someday be like us. They will crave the simplicity of it all.



CAN YOU BE PART OF IT?

RuthE. Wells, Music Director

Someone sweetly inquired of me recently, “when is the choir going to be back?” Well, it is; has been for some time. Some days there are 4-5 people. Some days we are blessed with 10. We don’t have the 14-16 usual suspects we were used to seeing three years ago, and they don’t sing as frequently as they had back then, but the choir is available to anyone who is willing to participate. I’m especially eager to have people join in for the services on Dec.18, Christmas Eve and Christmas Day. Can you be part of any of it?

When I started as music director 15 years ago, there was a strategic planning retreat early on where we were asked where we see our programs going in 10 years. My hope was that music would be part of every liturgy and activity we do. My fear was that in 10 years, the dedicated, experienced singers would age out of the choir. And some of that is happening on both predictions.

Perhaps it’s a quality issue. I don’t program as much classical repertoire as I used to. I really don’t see us presenting a Vivaldi “Gloria” in worship (or concert) in the foreseeable future. We just don’t have the bench strength of musicians or budget to pull off an oratorio, and perhaps the interest in such projects has evolved as well. But I hear you singing out there, even on newer hymns. I know you know how. Can you volunteer a couple of rehearsals to learn the music for the coming Advent/Christmas season? See me after worship if you’d like to join the “choirs of angels.”

Soli Deo gloria,

RuthE. Wells
music.at.wpctiburon@gmail.com

YOUR CHRISTMAS TREE AND CLIMATE CHANGE – WHY REAL TREES ARE BETTER

Judi Sachs and Mary Mossteller, Loving Creation

We know that not everyone is able to have a real tree in their home. However, we want to share some things we learned from The Nature Conservancy. First, real trees don’t require the intensive carbon emissions that it takes to produce and ship artificial trees. Second, you’re supporting forests. Out of the 350-500M growing on tree farms across the U.S., only 30M trees are harvested for Christmas each year. Third, buying real trees helps keep tree farms in business – and in turn keeps their lands covered in the healthy forest habitat that wildlife depends on to survive. Finally, once all the festivities are done, real trees can be recycled. Marin waste management companies compost our Christmas trees. We’re going to continue to buy our real tree and enjoy it.



WHERE DO YOU FEEL SAFE?

Mary Beth Culler, Stewardship Committee Chair

Recently, I was struck by a line in an email from my financial advisor that said, “In a nutshell, there has been no safe place to invest in 2022.” That sentence caused me to pause, and I realized that for the past year I’ve been troubled by the sense that on a broader scale there doesn’t seem to be any place where I can feel safe. With global and national political unrest constantly in the news, along with stories about climate change, and the rise of crime, illness, and homelessness, I’ve become less confident about being able to protect myself and those I care about.

The feeling of not having control over my situation eventually pushed me to take inventory of all that was good in life and where, in fact, I could find a “safe harbor” and feel supported. Not surprisingly I put my faith and my church at the top of the list. They had been there all along, of course, but I had relied too much on myself and the world to provide the security I needed.

These days, I find myself turning to God and Westminster more and more for the sense of safety that makes it possible for me to remain calm in a stormy world of unknowns. From the inspiring sermons I hear on Sunday, to the small group activities offered throughout the month, to the programs and retreats that cause me to learn and grow with others, Westminster reminds me that God, and my fellow believers, are my safe harbor.



Mary Beth and fellow WPC congregants during the 2022 Tahoe Pilgrimage.

If you’ve also found Westminster to be a source of hope and comfort and haven’t yet made a pledge to the 2023 Stewardship Campaign, I urge you to do so as soon as possible. No funds need to be given now, just the intention that you’ll support Westminster in the coming year. By doing so, not only will you ensure the future operation of the church, but you’ll also ensure that WPC can continue to be a refuge for us all.

Pledging is easier than ever. Mail your pledge care to the church office or drop it in the collection plate on Sunday, or pledge online at www.wpctiburon.org/give.

Thank you!

CELEBRATE JESUS AS HE RETIRES

We will celebrate Jesus’ many years of faithful service at and after the 10:00 service on December 11. As part of our celebration, we will be presenting him with cards, personal notes, gifts cards, and financial gifts from the congregation. If you would like to contribute, you may bring your card that day or turn it in to the office between now and Friday, December 9.

Please make any checks payable to directly to Jesus Posada and not the church.



WELCOME NEW WPC MEMBERS!

We welcomed 8 new members to the Westminster congregation in October. Be sure to introduce yourself one Sunday soon if you haven't yet met them.

ABBY OTTENHOFF AND KEVIN MALONE

Kevin and Abby live in Mill Valley with their 2nd grade son. Kevin is a business development consultant in the digital media industry and avid outdoor adventurer. He has been a Mill Valley Little League coach for the past two seasons. Abby is a public affairs consultant who helps lead public awareness and legislative strategy efforts on a range of policy issues. She is a frequent volunteer at Tam Valley Elementary and hikes the Marin Headlands whenever she can. Their son's current loves include soccer, baseball and building things.



CHARLOTTE WILL

Charlotte lives in Strawberry with her husband Tyler and 3 sons. One son attends Strawberry Point Elementary School and another goes to preschool next door to the church at Strawberry Preschool. Charlotte is a Director of Product Marketing at Google. She and her family moved to Marin in the depths of the pandemic and are thrilled to finally be integrating into the community!



CAMILLE VINCENT



Camille has lived in Marin/ San Francisco for the last 40 years and worked for American Airlines (on the ground) for 12 years. She lives in Strawberry, with her husband Chuck Terrazas. Her daughter, Elizabeth (26), works in NYC and was baptized here in 1997, during Camille's "first life" at Westminster!

Her passion is animals (many years showing American Saddlebred horses) and they currently have one amazing cat named Bob. Senior care is her true calling, having been a caregiver for 12 years. Camille now works as a senior move manager, helpful people clean out, downsize, and move.



We also welcomed **JULIA AND DAVID EATON** and **PETER AND KRISTIN DURHAM** (pictured above).

ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS EVENTS

QUIET ADVENT SERIES

Saturday, December 3, 10, 17, 5:00-7:00 pm

It is said that God often speaks to us in a “still small voice”. Each week during advent, the Spiritual Life Committee invites you to take a break from the hustle and bustle of our modern Christmas season and refocus your inner spirit on the delicate event that unfolded over two millennia ago. Sit in silence in our candle-lit sanctuary or walk the Sarah Todd Labyrinth to sacred music – or do both! Drop in any time between 5-7pm.



CHILDREN'S 3N1

Sunday, December 4, 11:15 am

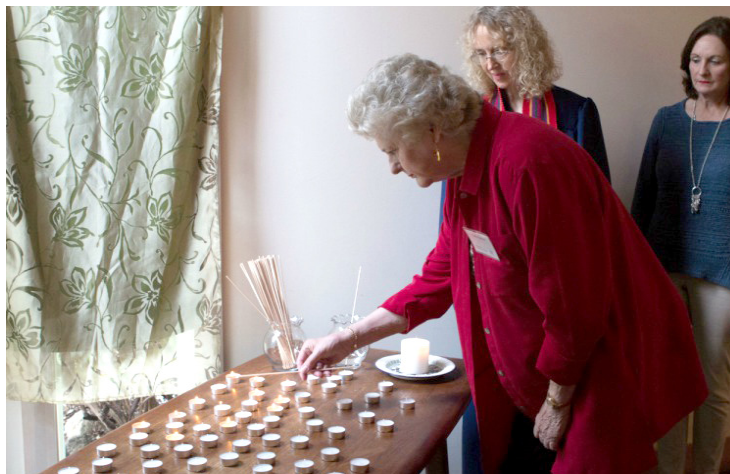
Children in 5th grade and younger and their families are invited to gather for lunch and a Christmas service project. Our middle school youth will also host a special Advent workshop for the kids while the adults have time for conversation.



CHRISTMAS CAROLING

Sunday, December 18, 11:15 am

We will spread some Christmas cheer as we carol at the homes of some of our homebound members. All ages welcome; no special singing ability required.



LONGEST NIGHT SERVICE

Wednesday, December 21, 6:00 pm

While joyful for some, the holidays can be a tough time as well, be it from grief, doubt, brokenness of relationship, being unwell, or having an overwhelming concern for our world. Recognizing the “dark night of the soul” is a sacred part of the spiritual journey. On December 21, the longest night of the year, we will have a service for those who don’t feel in “the Christmas spirit.”

CHRISTMAS WORSHIP SCHEDULE

CHRISTMAS EVE

Saturday, December 24

10:00 am and 9:00 pm

Traditional service with carols and candlelighting.

4:00 pm

Christmas pageant, also with carols and candlelighting.

Let Bethany know if your child would like to participate.

CHRISTMAS DAY

Sunday, December 25

10:00 am

Worship with Christmas carols

NEW YEAR'S DAY

Sunday, January 1

10:00 am

Traditional worship with Communion.



Please note, we will NOT have an 8:30 am service on December 25 or January 1.