



Westminster

Presbyterian Church

ZEPHYRS

SUMMER 2019



A SEASON OF GROWTH | Pastor Rob McClellan

While much of my time has been spent in meetings regarding the upcoming renovation and expansion of our physical plant, my mind has been filled with thoughts of how we can strengthen and expand our community in a much larger sense.

Just as a building needs to be maintained, so too do the relationships in a community and the infrastructure in an organization. As we all witness the very visible attention given to our building over the next program year, how will we likewise perform maintenance and strengthen our church community? How will we seek not only to expand our square footage but also our humble footprint in the wider community especially in a world where increasing numbers of people are hesitant to step foot inside a church? *(cont...)*

SOCIAL MEDIA | Associate Pastor Bethany Nelson

Anyone who knows me well knows that I am not a big user of social media. I have a Facebook account, but my profile picture was last changed in 2014 and I have posted less than a dozen times this school year. And most of those have been church-related posts rather than personal updates. My family has an Instagram account, where it says we have posted a grand total of 29 times ... and nothing since the year 2016. Social media is just not a natural way for me to interact with people and the world.

However, I do understand that it can be a meaningful way for people to connect. When a ministry mentor of mine was dying from cancer early last year, for example, it was very important for me to be able to read her posts about her health updates, to be in prayer for her, and to journey with her from afar. *(cont...)*



A SEASON OF GROWTH | Continued...

A number of church leaders in various groups are tackling these very questions. Growing out of conversations on the Session (or elected elders), working groups are already increasing our presence on social media and digital platforms. For good or ill, the virtual realm is where most people first encounter communities of faith. We are using these platforms as a place to both meet people where they are and show them a little about who we are. We recognize both that there are incredible people all around us who could bless our community and that Westminster remains an all too well-kept secret.

We are also considering ways we can be physically more present in the community, at public events, at gatherings of our own makings, and particularly in moments where church folk and others can mix. In this sense, the renovation to our building can be a gift. Since we'll lose the main building (not our sanctuary or preschool) for the better part of the 2019-2020 program year, we will be forced to hold many of our gatherings, large and small, outside the church building. Whether in homes, parks, clubs or other facilities, we will be coming together as a people of God in spaces beyond 240 Tiburon Blvd. and that's a good thing! Staff and leaders have already enjoyed brainstorming ways we can have fun with the year ahead. We will be sharing more about ways in which we can take advantage of the opportunities our temporary displacement will afford us. In the meantime, you can be thinking of how you can help us use this time to cultivate a season of growth in a multitude of ways. So, consider what you will do in your areas of involvement in the church to help us:

- **Turn more outward**
- **Gather more and strengthen our internal ties**
- **Recognize relationships we'd like to form or reinforce**
- **Get ready to invite the wider community to the next chapter at Westminster**
- **Look for Christ at work in the world and join in**

Let's look forward to this time in a way that celebrates and builds upon the vitality of our beloved community.

*God's Peace,
Rob*

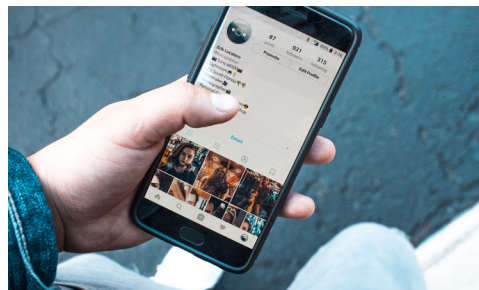
SOCIAL MEDIA | Continued...

I have heard from many of you how much you appreciate our efforts to livestream our sermons on Sundays on those days when you are unable to be in worship in person. And I do love seeing the pictures of my adorable nephews that my sister posts from time to time.

Rob will admit to being only slightly more adept at social media than I am, so together we are a bit like the Bad News Bears of social media. However, we are making the attempt because we do realize its benefits. Thank you, Jeff Shankle, for giving us the push in that direction! We don't have the opportunity to regularly connect with many of you during the week, and this is one way we can engage with each other more frequently. Social media is not only a great avenue for you to know what is going on in the life of the church, but it is also a venue to share spiritual inspiration and renewal.

Are you following us on Facebook at **Westminster Pres-Tiburon** or on Instagram at **wpctiburon**? If not, you have missed a lot in the past month, including some of my very first selfie videos. (Is that even a thing?) I'm still learning – apparently I used a bad angle for my first video. Who knew I had to consider angles? But, even if the angle is bad, hopefully the content is both helpful and thought-provoking.

I am so appreciative for kind and patient church members who are helping Rob and me vault into the 21st century. In addition to Jeff, Libby Brockhoff, Teala Warga, Lyla Tipton, and Ava Warga have given a lot of time and energy into expanding Westminster's social media presence. I will likely always prefer in-person interaction to social media. Please don't ever hesitate to be in touch with Rob or me if you would like to get together. You don't have to be in crisis to meet with a pastor! But, I am beginning to appreciate more and more the online interactions we can have when getting together in person is just not feasible or as regular as we would like. I look forward to seeing you both online and IRL. (In real life ... just learned that one!)



*Blessings,
Bethany*



BE NOT AFRAID | Ruth E. Wells, Music Director

The choir season is coming to a close, and on June 9 we will center the worship service on God’s reassurance to us, “Do not be afraid.”

The principal work is a J.S. Bach double-choir motet based on an Isaiah text. It begins with the two groups in dialog: *“Be not afraid. I am with thee. Fear thou not, for I am thy God. I strengthen thee, I help, I support, and I brace thee up with the saving right hand of my righteousness.”* The choral lines are bold, bright and declamatory.

The second half of the piece brings the choruses together, now contrasting the affirmations of the soprano chorale tune (*Lord, my shepherd, fount of pleasure. Thou are mine. I am thine. None shall rob my treasure...*) with the interplay of two choral motifs that speak of God’s assurances (*For ‘tis I who hath redeemed thee, thou are mine. Yea, by thy name in love I’ve called thee.*). The chorale portion is both lyric (in the soprano tune) and vibrant (in the accompanying fugue).

While I can appreciate the technical wonder of Bach’s work, this piece is profoundly emotional for me. I chose this for the choir-feature service because of the strength I have taken from its message. It has played as the soundtrack in my head through every challenging time in my life...career changes (planned and unplanned), emotional setbacks, financial uncertainty...and has bolstered my faith.

The second anthem, “Do Not Be Afraid,” is a contemporary setting by Phillip W.J. Stopford that contrasts the intricacy (and perhaps busyness) of Bach with graceful lyric melodies and lush harmonies. Beyond the beautiful music, this piece speaks eloquently of God’s assuring presence through the fires and floods we encounter (literal and figurative).

If you (or someone you know) need to hear the comforting message that you are beloved of God who will always carry you through whatever life brings to you, June 9 is a worship service (both 8:30 and 10:00) you need to experience.

Soli de Gloria (glory to God alone),
Ruth E.

POETRY CORNER | Submitted by Debbie Dybsky, Spiritual Life Commission co-chair

BEFORE JESUS

Before Jesus was his mother.

Before supper in the upper room, breakfast in the barn.

Before the Passover Feast, a feeding trough.

Before his cry, her cry.

Before his sweat of blood, her bleeding.

Before his offering, hers.

Before the breaking of bread and death,
the breaking of her body in birth.

Before the offering of the cup, the offering of her breast.

Before his blood, her blood.

And by her body and blood alone, his body and blood
and whole human being.

The wise ones knelt to hear the woman’s word in
wonder. Holding up her sacred child, her spark
of God in the form of a babe, she said:

“Receive and let your hearts be healed and your lives
be filled with love for this is my body, this is my blood.”

~ Anonymous



COMPASSIONATE HIKERS

Polly Chandler

When I started attending Westminster, I knew I wanted to volunteer to support the church. Yet, I just was not sure where I fit. I knew that I do my best volunteering when I have passion. My passion is hiking so I decided my volunteer gift was to build community through walking.

Carol Coffman started the walking groups. Thanks to Carol's collaborative spirit I jumped on her idea and have been volunteering to lead hikes ever since. There are some people that spontaneously lead 2-3 mile "Pop Up Hikes" on the weekdays. I like the longer hikes and often host them on weekends so that people who work full time like me can join.

I've walked with numerous hiking groups in my life. Many hiking groups start with the question... "are you a slow or fast hiker?" From there people group up by their pace. What I've loved about the Westminster hikers is that the conversation is not so much about speed as the journey and the community building. My first friends at Westminster came through Carol's walking groups.

This winter I hosted several hikes. As the "leader" of a hike I welcome everyone, describe the route, and if the group is moved, we say a prayer of gratitude for our time together. I also stop along the way to make sure everyone feels connected to the group and does not feel like, as one hiker says, the "tail that wags the dog". I stop along the way, so people walk with someone new, meet a new person, and build community.

One of our winter hikes this year was from Pan Toll on Mount Tamalpais, down the Steep Ravine Trail to Stinson Beach and back up the Dipsea trail. Some people stayed at Stinson for lunch, some rode the bus back, some walked the entire distance.

This is not an easy hike and I immediately noticed the compassion and care on the trail. At one point I looked back and someone was holding a hiker's arm to navigate a set of stairs. At another juncture, we had to climb down a ladder that ran pretty close to a creek with fast moving water. The hikers waited supported and cared for each other down the stairs. As I walked, I started to think... maybe this group should be called "The Compassionate Hikers!"

At the end of the hike, Trisha Farrows said to me "what I love about hiking with this group is that everyone takes care of each other." Indeed, she and I were on the same page.

Westminster has a group of hikers that love the land and enjoying hiking. And, perhaps even more importantly, they have found how to weave compassion, care, and tenderness with hiking.

Thanks to everyone who hiked this winter. Stay tuned ... there will be more hikes this summer. I've even been asked to lead another pilgrimage. If you are truly interested in a 10-12-mile hike let me know. I will plan a route that allows for hiking and compassion.

For now, I celebrate the compassion and commitment of the group of hikers. I am grateful for a church that encourages people to bring their passion to their volunteering.

What's your passion? How can you share with Westminster?

HIKE WITH WPC THIS SUMMER!

Shorter distance hikes (3-6 miles) are planned for the 2nd and 4th Friday mornings of each month at various locations in Marin. Gather at 9:15, depart at 9:30.

For more information contact:

Judi Sachs: judisachs9@gmail.com or
Carol Coffman: boco54@gmail.com

Interested in a longer weekend hike? Contact:

Polly Chandler - paulinesarachandler@gmail.com.

TIME (TO CONTEMPLATE)

Steffen Bartschat, Spiritual Life Commission member

Time is our most precious resource. How much of it is devoted to God? How much of that time is devoted to listening? While most of us will never experience that “burning bush” moment where God reveals all, we may get inspiration from Spirit by being still.

On June 20th from 7:30-9:00pm, join members of the Spiritual Life Commission for a labyrinth walk in Findlay Hall and/or an opportunity to sit in quiet contemplation in our candle-lit Sanctuary. First-timers are welcome - we can provide some guidance if needed. This event is drop-in – arrive any time, finish by 9:00 pm.

This will likely be the last opportunity to walk the WPC Labyrinth together until our construction project is completed in 2020.



NEXT GENERATION JUSTICE LEADERS

Jeff Shankle, Director of Youth Ministry

How We're Training the Next Generation of Justice Leaders

There's a common complaint I get from the different organizations we partner with. We are constantly being told they can't get seasonal staff or regular staff and when they do, they're getting young adults who don't know what they're doing. I can attest from my own experience outside the church that this is the case. If you can get anyone to apply for these positions, they are generally far under-qualified in terms of experience and leadership skills. Border Angels, Youthworks, International Justice Mission, they all say the same thing, *"We can't find anybody and the ones we get have never done anything like this."*

Our youth ministry cares a lot about service and justice. We do a lot of work locally and on a state level that reflects that. Our youth and leaders serve others with WPC and on their own. It is our hope and intention that some of them will go on to serve in careers that make causes of social justice the core of their mission. At the very least, it is our desire that all of them find a season of their life to give to God's redeeming work in the world. Traditionally we've called these people missionaries, but as that term has become loaded, we'll simply refer to them as justice leaders.

What is the SLA? (Student Leader Apprenticeship)

When our middle schoolers and leaders go to Santa Cruz this summer, we will bring a couple of Westminster high schoolers with us called SLAs. These high schoolers have gone through an application process to co-lead a mission trip. Already they've met with our service partners in Santa Cruz. They've toured the Homeless Garden Project farm. They met with kids and staff at the Boys and Girls Club. They had lunch at St. Francis Catholic Kitchen. They talked over the logistics with the contacts at each of these places. They've had conversations about how we can best meet needs that aren't already being met. We toured our host church and signed documents. We also began brainstorming what our worship times will look like. We prayed for our hearts and minds to be open to a community that is welcoming us in. We've even been problem-solving our consistent struggle to find showers. *(cont...)*

NEXT GENERATION JUSTICE LEADERS | Continued...

When our students and leaders show up to serve, it will be our SLAs introducing us and serving as the liaison between WPC and our partners in the community. While they will be supported by our amazing middle school adult leaders, our SLAs will be the ones instructing, leading, and problem-solving. Some of our partners around the country know about the SLA program and are already asking to make sure our youth apply for their positions. By no means do we believe our SLAs will be finished products but, in the future, when some church or charity gets an application from a WPC youth, they'll read about the extensive experience our youth already have in doing the very work to which we're all called. Our youth will be the next generation of justice leaders because they're already leading the charge in this current generation.

“...it is our desire that all of them find a season of their life to give to God's redeeming work in the world...”

WPCERS TO SERVE AROUND THE STATE THIS SUMMER

Please hold in prayer the participants of the three WPC mission trips this summer:

June 17-21: Middle school mission trip to Santa Cruz

June 23-28: Adult mission trip to Lake County

July 28-Aug 3: High school mission trip to San Diego



PENTECOST ON JUNE 9

Sharon Terrill, Worship Commission Chair

Wear red to recall the miracle of the fiery tongues.

What does it mean? The word, Pentecost, means “fiftieth day,” and is celebrated 50 days after Easter Sunday, hence its name! But don't spend time counting 50 days... it is easier to count 7 Sundays after Easter.

Because Easter itself has no fixed date, this makes Pentecost moveable, too. The earliest possible date is May 10 (in the year 1818 or 2285). The latest possible date is June 13 (in the year 1943 or 2038), so this year is one of the later dates!

Pentecost Sunday is the day of the Pentecost festival, which originally was a prominent feast in the calendar of Ancient Israel celebrating the giving of the Law on Sinai. It later became a Christian festival, commemorating the

coming of the Holy Spirit with a rush of wind and tongues of fire upon the Apostles and others who had gathered in Jerusalem. Many were from foreign lands, and when they all began to speak in their native languages, everyone could understand each other. This day is considered the birthday of the church. You can read more about the Pentecost story in the book of Acts, chapter 2.

The main sign of Pentecost is the color red. It symbolizes the joy and the fire of understanding, and the movement of the Holy Spirit... **SO, on Sunday morning, June 9, celebrate with us by wearing any shade of red, from orange-red to violet-red!**



Renovation Committee Update

Ron Meserve, Committee Chair

****CONSTRUCTION COST**:** The contractor and architect have been working on the development of a realistic estimate of the costs for the renovation project. Not surprisingly, costs have escalated since we agreed on the scope of the renovation project more than 2 years ago. The current projection is that there could be a shortfall in excess of \$700,000. The session is considering options of how best to address the shortfall, including: **a)** reducing the scope of the project (What could be omitted? Deferred?), **b)** converting the line of credit to a loan, with the intention of having a second campaign to retire the debt not long after the completion of the project, **c)** approaching the congregation for additional giving now, or **d)** some combination of the above.

This important conversation continues among the elders. There have been some strong sentiments not to reduce the scope of the project that we have repeatedly affirmed is necessary. There is a desire, however, to take a few more weeks to study this further and, importantly, to engage the congregation. To that end, we will be hosting a congregational conversation on **June 16 after the 10:00 service**. Members should also feel encouraged to engage elders and/or renovation team members individually.

CONSTRUCTION TIMELINE: Some unexpected requirements identified as part of the building permit application process have caused the construction start date to be moved to no earlier than September with completion projected by May 2020.

CONTRACTOR SELECTION: McDevitt Construction has been selected as the general contractor for the renovation project. A Selection Team including Rob, Tod Moody, Lauren Nunnally, Jim Goring (Architect) and Ron Meserve conducted interviews, checked references and conducted background checks on six (6) general contractor candidates. McDevitt has extensive experience with commercial construction projects including non-profits and churches. One of the references we contacted was Gene Nelson, Bethany's dad, who pastored a church that used McDevitt for a renovation project.

SOLAR: American Solar has been selected to install the Solar system. This is part of our commitment to increased environmental responsibility and reduced cost for electric service. The solar panels will be installed on the South and West roof surfaces of the Sanctuary. Michael Hatfield led a team completing extensive research leading to the selection of the system design and the solar vendor. We have not confirmed when the installation will begin, but it is likely that it will be before the renovation construction starts.

LOGISTICS: Tod Moody, Vice Chair of the Renovation Committee, has been working very hard on many aspects of logistics leading up to and during construction. He has identified sources for the rental of modular units for staff offices, toilet facilities, storage, and a classroom for Strawberry Preschool (this is required because 2 of the preschool classrooms located in our main building will be unavailable during construction). These 4 structures will be placed on our property in ways to minimize loss of parking space.

PLEDGES RECEIVED: As of March 31, 2019, a total of \$1,138,100 has been received. This represents about 40% of the total amount pledged.

NEW COMMITTEE MEMBER: David Elliott has been added as a member of the Renovation Committee. David brings an outstanding finance background to the Committee.

MARCH FOR GUN SAFETY

On Saturday, June 8, you are invited to join in the 4th annual march across the Golden Gate bridge to raise awareness for gun safety.

Meet at the Marin Vista Point at 12:30. Parking is limited; you can catch a Golden Gate transit bus from the Marin City shopping center. **Wear orange!**

Sponsored by Moms Demand Action.



WPCers at the march in 2016.


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