

# The newsletter of Westminster Presbyterian Church

17 William Street  
Auburn, NY 13021  
315-253-3331

June 2020

Worship 9:30am Sundays  
on Facebook Live

The Rev. Patrick D. Heery, Pastor  
office@westminsterauburn.org  
www.westminsterauburn.org

## Westminster's Plan Going Forward

*A note from Rev. Patrick D. Heery*



Session has decided to continue online worship through at least the month of June. There will be **no in-person worship** until the beginning of July at the earliest; the target date will be reassessed based on changing developments.

As Westminster begins to resume public activities, please know that we will do so through a careful process of discussion and discernment, with an abundance of caution and concern for those who are most vulnerable, upon consideration of the best scientific knowledge at our disposal, in the spirit of constant prayer, and with full trust in the grace and love of God.

In that spirit, Session has adopted a plan for a phased return to public worship. The founding principle of this plan is that life is sacred, and so it's worth protecting. We are grateful that there are faithful ways to continue being the church, even thrive and grow, in this time.

**Phase One, pending any new developments, will initiate on June 15, and will reopen our buildings to staff, individuals, and small gatherings of no more than 12 people (masked and distanced).** Session has authorized a team to review requests to gather, on a case-by-case basis. Approval is required before meeting, and will depend on the need to meet and the likelihood of the group abiding by safety protocols.

At the same time, the church will be instituting increased risk reduction and cleaning measures and procuring personal protection equipment, such as masks

and hand sanitizer stations. If your group would like to meet, please submit a request to the church by calling or emailing.

Phases Two and Three will gradually lead us to sanctuary worship and a resumption of public ministries. We won't know when we can move to the next phase until we see how phase one goes and until we know the status of the virus at that time. More information will be shared when we are prepared to move to the next phase.

## Worship on Facebook Live

Sunday morning worship on Facebook Live is thriving! We have many more folks joining us than we ever have had in person, including many from out of state and others in the local community.



Patrick leads worship from his study at 9:30am each Sunday, speaking directly into the camera, giving it an intimate and personal feel. Worshipers can post comments, responses, prayer concerns, and questions in real time, and it is interactive and real. In some ways it is a very different experience and in others very familiar, following a traditional order of worship with new and old friends in the comments feed.

Go to the Westminster Facebook page (you do *not* need to have a Facebook account) at [www.facebook.com/westminsterauburn/](http://www.facebook.com/westminsterauburn/), scroll down, and worship will come on to the page at approximately 9:30am. If you want to watch at another time, you can find past services on the videos tab on the left of the screen.

## Congratulations, graduates!

Graduation ceremonies and baccalaureate services are different this year, but they cannot take away the joy and pride we have for Westminster members who have completed high school, college, and graduate work this year. We recognize the following with love:



**Claire Brundage** graduates from Auburn High School this month, and is headed to Bucknell University in the fall, where she will study business and medicine at the Freeman College of Management. Claire played varsity tennis and golf in high school, and she is also an accomplished musician, playing violin, guitar, and bagpipes. She has

shared her talents with us at Westminster for Reformation Sunday and Presbyterian Heritage Sunday services. She is also a certified pet therapy handler, and has taken the family dog on monthly visits to Westminster Manor and Auburn Nursing Home. We have watched Claire grow from infancy into the poised, accomplished, and talented young woman she now is. We look forward to seeing where her path leads her.

**Henry Foresman** graduated from Dickenson College with a BS in Environmental Science with a minor in Physics. He plans to intern for a year, and then go to graduate school for Water Resource Management or some aspect of sustainable development.

**Shavonn Lynch** received her Master of Divinity from Northeastern Seminary. She will be doing some pulpit supply this summer while studying for a final exam in Biblical Exegesis which is necessary for ordination. She is working on her “PIF” (the Pastor Information Form) to submit to the PC(USA)’s Church Leadership Connection, which matches churches with candidates.

**Kimberly Patch** also received her Master of Divinity from Northeastern Seminary. Kim already had a Masters in Social Justice from there, and she completed the courses for her second degree this last year.

**Amy Sargent** completed a EMPA (Executive Masters in Public Administration) from the Maxwell School at Syracuse University, and also earned a Certificate of Advanced Study in Healthcare Policy. Amy works for the non-profit Liberty Resources as the Director of the Care Management Policy program. She plans to use her education to further her work in the healthcare field and engage in public service in our community.

**Clara Robinson** graduated from the University at Buffalo with a MS in Rehabilitation Counseling. She

hopes to assist individuals living with disabilities achieve their vocational aspirations.

Congratulations, all! We lift our virtual caps to you!

## Gilchrist Scholarship Recipients

Six Westminster Presbyterian Church students have been awarded scholarships, totaling \$15,440, from the Douglas J Gilchrist Memorial Scholarship Fund for the 2020-2021 term.

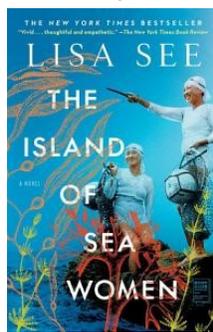
The students are listed below followed by the name of the school they will be attending:

Alexander Blodgett, SUNY Oneonta  
Katherine Brundage, Dartmouth  
Claire Brundage, Bucknell  
Glyn Davenport, Rochester Institute of Technology  
Lydia Marteney, Hartwick College  
Kimberly Patch, Northeastern Seminary

We congratulate these recipients and wish them well in their educational endeavors.

## Westminster Book Group

The Westminster Book Group will meet on Zoom Thursday, June 18, at 7pm to discuss Lisa See’s novel



“The Island of Sea Women.” The novel introduces us to the fascinating world of the female divers of Jeju Island in South Korea, and the friendships and rivalries among families in the years spanning Japanese colonialism in the 1930s, World War II, the Korean War, through the era of cell phones and wet suits for the women divers. Linda Russell will lead the discussion. Email

Ann Wiley ([ann@annlwiley.com](mailto:ann@annlwiley.com)) for a Zoom invitation.

## Upcoming sermons

**June 7:** “The Trinity: Let’s Have a Conversation,” an interactive exploration of the meaning of the Trinity

**June 14:** A number of options are being explored for this Sunday

**June 21:** “The True Life,” a sermon about costly, blessed discipleship, alongside our Baccalaureate celebration of graduates and scholarship recipients

**June 28:** “Love or Justice—Must We Choose?” a sermon about a God of both law and grace

## Online Giving

Westminster is very excited to offer a new online giving opportunity – a safe, easy, and convenient way to give your tithes and offerings using a debit or credit card or electronic funds transfer. The service, which is hosted by the Presbyterian Foundation, is easily accessed through the “Give” page on the church’s website or on the free app “GivePlus” or by scanning the QR code from printed materials.

Online giving is an especially good option now that we are worshiping online and therefore not passing a physical collection plate on Sunday mornings. When you give online, you can designate your donation to a variety of funds (pledge/general fund, loose offerings, special offerings, Deacons, and per capita).

Visit [www.westminsterauburn.org](http://www.westminsterauburn.org) today and see for yourself how easy it is to give online. Look for the “Give Now” button on either the home page or the “Give” page of the church website.



You can also make contributions on your mobile device. Just go to the App Store or Google Play on your phone or tablet, and download the free app GivePlus. Search for Westminster by zip code and follow the prompts in the app.



The QR code is another way to give. Westminster’s QR code is shown here. Scan it using your phone’s camera and it will take you to Westminster’s giving page.



Of course, contributions to Westminster can also continue to be made by mailing a check to the church office at 17 William St, Auburn, NY 13021, and cash and check offerings will resume physically on Sunday mornings when we eventually return to worship in the sanctuary.

We are grateful for your ongoing support of the work of God through your contributions to the church, and we hope this new online giving option will nurture the spirit of stewardship, gratitude, and generosity with you and others.

Any questions, email Melanie Toole at [office@westminsterauburn.org](mailto:office@westminsterauburn.org)

## Refresh

Proverbs 27:9 tells us that "sweet friendship refreshes the soul." This is exactly what the Refresh Women's group has been feeling lately. In a time of sheltering at home and so much uncertainty, the Westminster women's study group has continued to meet, through zoom, and this time has been so thought-provoking and soul filling that we have decided to continue meeting throughout the summer. Typically, church activities and groups take a break in the summer to allow travel and other family commitments to flourish. Considering that we don't know what this summer will really look like in person, the women of Refresh have decided to remain in community and relationship, learning more about God's word, and finding ways to lift each other up. Just as Jesus created a relationship with the woman at the well (John 4:4-26), and connected deeply with the woman who needed his healing (Mark 5:25-34), we know that God can be found when we authentically relate and connect with each other. All women of Westminster are welcome and encouraged to join us in community and learning, invite a friend! We typically meet one Saturday per month at 10am. For more information, please email [refreshwithin@yahoo.com](mailto:refreshwithin@yahoo.com).

## Contemplative Hike

Contemplative hikes are back! Spent partly in silence and partly in conversation, our hikes offer renewal as we reconnect with God, the earth, and ourselves. On Saturday, June 27, from 10 am to 12 pm, we will hike among the stunning woods and waterfalls of Fillmore Glen State Park. This is a beautiful but strenuous hike, involving incline. It's about 30 minutes from Auburn. We will spread out for the sake of safe distancing. Email [pastor@westminsterauburn.org](mailto:pastor@westminsterauburn.org).



## Reclaiming the Old Testament

Shavonn Lynch, a recent graduate of seminary, will lead us in an eight-week course of rediscovering the Old Testament. An introduction will be offered on Sunday, June 28, at 1 pm, on Zoom, at which time participants will choose when they want to meet. Please email [lynchshavonn@yahoo.com](mailto:lynchshavonn@yahoo.com) for the link. Together, we will look at the unfolding story of God's redemptive plan for humanity—from creation and God's covenantal promises in Genesis to the foretelling of God's righteousness in Malachi. Through discussion and reflection, we will reclaim the biblical story of the Old Testament for us as Christians today. The course will run from July through August.

## June Loose Change supports

### NAACP school supply give-away

The Auburn NAACP is a non-profit organization providing hope for all people in its effort to continue the fight against racism and injustice. Their mission is to continue to be instrumental in improving the community we live in and to stand against racism, promote social justice and equality for all people. The NAACP is planning their annual back-to-school supply give away which will take place in August. This program assists families in preparing for the upcoming school year by providing some of the needed school supplies to help families who otherwise could not afford them. June loose offerings support the school supply give-away.

You can mail a check to the church office, designating "loose change" on the memo line, or choose the "loose change" option on the church's new online giving page. Either way, your offering will help children and families have the basic supplies they need for the academic year.



## Interfaith Pride Service

Auburn will celebrate its second annual LGBTQ+ Pride Week during the week of June 21. On Wednesday, June 24, a car parade will lead to Finger Lakes Drive-In, where we will enjoy a virtual Interfaith Pride Service during the evening. More info to come.



## New Member Class

On Sunday, June 14, at 1 pm, over Zoom, Westminster will host a new members class. We will explore our spiritual journeys and discern whether we are led to become members of the holy community that is Westminster. Our time together will walk us through the process of becoming a member, discuss what it means to belong to a Presbyterian church and to Westminster in particular, and explore how our passions, callings, and gifts could joyfully come alive at Westminster. Participating in a class is not a commitment; it's just learning more. Please share this invitation with others, and email [pastor@westminsterauburn.org](mailto:pastor@westminsterauburn.org) if you'd like the Zoom link. A call-in option is also available. If you're not available at that time, let us know, and we'll explore scheduling another class.

Westminster welcomes everyone, no matter where you are on your faith journey or your life journey. In faithfulness to our understanding of Christ, Westminster affirms the full inclusion of all God's people in the life and ministry of the church. We welcome persons of every race, gender, age, sexual orientation, family status, and economic status into full participation in our faith community. We value questions as much as answers. We encourage curiosity, discovery, and honest struggling with questions of faith.



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