

The newsletter of Westminster Presbyterian Church

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

Worship 9:30am Sundays

March and April 2023

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

March-April Ministry Team



The March-April Ministry team is planning an exciting and meaningful ministry season for Lent and Easter. The Theme is "Love One Another". The scripture that demonstrates the intent of this theme is John 13:34-35: "I give you a new commandment, that you love

one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another."

The March-April Ministry team offers a variety of opportunities to demonstrate our love for one another. Whether the focus is yourself, the congregation, the community or our world, there are opportunities to pitch in and volunteer to care for others. These opportunities vary from joining a small group to celebrate Mr. Rogers, following a Random Acts of Kindness calendar, showing passion for the Earth by focusing on recycling/reducing/reusing, or even exploring opportunities to serve the church community by making beds, supporting the members of our confirmation class, or greeting the children during worship. There are opportunities for all who may be interested.

The members of this ministry committee are Rev. Larry Bell, Tiffiny Chapman, Diane Lehner, Shelly Pantoliano, Ann Wiley, Diane deRoos (chair).

The 2023 annual members are Jill Fandrich, Paul Dungey, Audrey McNally, Susan Marteney, Linda Russell, Linda MacKay, Shavonn Lynch.

As always, please reach out to any members via email office@westminsterauburn.org.

The Ministry of Mr. Rogers

Did you know that Fred Rogers (of *Mister Rogers' Neighborhood* fame) was an ordained Presbyterian pastor? He never served a traditional church, but instead was ordained to a special ministry of affirmation and acceptance through a television ministry with children. His birthday was March 20, and his life and work are celebrated on that date each year.



In honor of Mister Rogers, Westminster invites everyone to wear a cardigan sweater (similar to Mister Rogers' trademark sweater) to church on Sunday, March 19. Also, we will continue his work of helping young children by encouraging donations of socks to the Cayuga County Early Intervention Program. Tracy Blair, the Early Intervention director, said that new warm socks are a basic need for the families they serve. Socks in infant, toddler, and children's sizes can be brought to church on Sunday, March 19.

You are also invited to a **movie matinee** on **Saturday, March 18 at 3:00pm** in the church's social room to watch the documentary "Won't You Be My Neighbor?" This 2018 film examines the life and legacy of Fred Rogers, the beloved host of the popular children's television program *Mister Rogers' Neighborhood*. The movie is free, and popcorn and movie treats will be available. Please join us in the social room on March 18 to learn more about this brilliant, compassionate man whose belief in peace, love, and kindness created a groundbreaking tv ministry that shaped generations of children.

Lent—When We Are Saved By Tears

A note from Rev. Patrick D. Heery



Typically, at a wedding, when the music cues and the bride begins to process down the aisle, everyone turns to watch. But not my wife, Jenna. No, her eyes are fixed on the groom (or spouse). Because her favorite moment in any wedding is when the groom sees for the first time the bride in her dress walking down the aisle and begins to cry. She loves those tears. So much so that, when she and I were getting married, I was under strict orders to cry like a baby. She told me she didn't care if I had to stab myself with a needle; I was going to cry. At least I was if I wanted to marry her.

Not everyone's like Jenna. A lot of people see crying, especially in public, as a show of weakness. Tears mean you're not in control, and we like to be in control.

Sadness—especially prolonged grief—makes us uncomfortable. The raw and open display of pain demands compassion, time, energy, and a recognition of our own fragility.

It'd be easier to skip over the crying and get to the joy already. But Lent is not about rushing to Easter. Lent is about journeying with Christ to the cross; it's about dwelling in the hurting places of the world and of the soul that cry out for redemption.

Make no mistake: on this journey, Jesus cries. In fact, he doesn't just cry; he weeps. He weeps for his dead friend Lazarus and the grief of Mary and Martha. He weeps as he enters Jerusalem and sees a city on the edge of suffering. And he weeps in the garden on the night before he is taken to be crucified. The author of Hebrews goes even further and implies that for all his days on earth Jesus wept and cried as often as he prayed.

For most of the Hellenistic world at that time, this was not the behavior of a god. This was not the conduct of a savior. Gods and saviors don't cry; they conquer; they triumph; they stand invulnerable before the stings of life.

Today, our own culture is not so different. We prize strength and success. We display our achievements, but not our hurts. We like to be the ones who wipe away the tears, not the ones who cry them.

Friends, we are called to something far more authentically human.

My friend Arianne Lehn is a pastor and a runner. In 2013, she ran the Boston Marathon. In 2013, the Boston

Marathon was bombed. She remembers two loud booms, then sirens, and then, amid the chaos, that one terrifying word: "bomb."

That following Sunday, Arianne had to preach. But still shaken and in shock, she didn't know how.

When she walked into the pulpit, her hands trembled. The pages of her sermon sat there on the pulpit, but the words blurred and stuck in her throat. She opened her mouth, but no sound came. Finally, she wept. Big, terrible tears. She sobbed right there before the whole congregation.

After she pushed through the sermon, she turned to sit, her eyes glued to the floor, embarrassed and sure that she had failed. But then she heard something. It was applause. She lifted her eyes to see her whole congregation standing and applauding and crying—something one member said had never happened in all his 94 years at that church.

Scientists are now learning that our tears create chemical changes in the brains of those who are watching, inspiring the same vulnerability in them. Michael Trimble, a behavioral neurologist in London, says, "The same neuronal areas of the brain are activated by seeing someone emotionally aroused as being emotionally aroused oneself."

If true, then tears are not a weakness. Tears are powerful. They plant compassion where there was indifference, community where there was division, raw truth where there was the falsehood of self-sufficiency.

What we must remember on this Lenten journey is that we aren't saved by Christ's strength; we are saved by his vulnerability, by his willingness to get down into the mud with us, weep with us, and climb up on that cross with us. This is the scandal of the cross: we are saved by tears. We are called and held together by tears.

This Lent, how will you subvert our culture of toughness and autonomy? Will you cry? Will you hug and hold someone? Will you share your story and risk vulnerability with others? Will you be open about fears and hurts and even failures?

Trust that, if you do, Jesus will be right beside you.



Upcoming Sermons

March 5 : " Will you devote yourself to the breaking of bread?" a Confirmation sermon about the Lord's Supper and hospitality

March 12: "Who is your Savior?" a Confirmation sermon about salvation

March 19: " Will you devote yourself to the church's teaching?" a Confirmation sermon about creeds, doctrines, and conscience

March 26: "Can these bones live?" (church's teaching, part II), a Confirmation sermon about resurrection

April 2: " Will you devote yourself to the church's fellowship?" a Confirmation sermon about community

April 9: "One anothering," an Easter sermon about how to love one another

April 16: Special Easter Lessons and Carols Service

April 23: "Have you climbed a tree lately?" an Earth Day sermon about the times when it's hard to see God

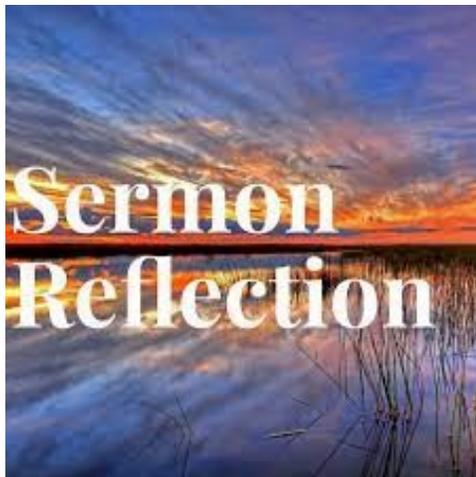
April 30: "The Acts of Westminster," an imagined new letter of the New Testament, reflecting on our growing community

Throughout Lent, the sermons will reflect on some of the questions our Confirmation students are studying and preparing to answer, if they feel called to become Christians and members of the church. This is a wonderful opportunity for us to learn together as a congregation.

Sermon Talk-Back Forums in March

Throughout March, every Sunday, after worship, Westminster will offer a forum to reflect on the sermon theme, ask questions, and offer our own personal perspectives. Each of those sermons will

relate to a Confirmation topic, thus affording the whole congregation an opportunity to journey with our Confirmation students on their path of faith and discipleship—and our own. Having heard the pastor speak, the congregation and Confirmation students will then, in these forums, wrestle with these questions themselves in a conversational format.



Holy Week

Palm and Passion Sunday: April 2

Holy Week begins on Palm/Passion Sunday, commemorating the day of Jesus' entry into Jerusalem and the beginning of his final days before crucifixion. We will distribute palm branches to worshipers; the children, in costume, will process to the theme of "Hosanna." The One Great Hour of Sharing and its fish banks will be received and dedicated. We'll also have the opportunity to deepen our fellowship, as we wear name tags, get to know each other, and greet Confirmation students after worship.

Maundy Thursday and Good Friday: April 6

Westminster members and friends will gather in the social room at 5:30pm for supper and Communion, remembering Jesus' Last Supper with his disciples and his commandment to "love one another." The joyful, leisurely meal will be organized by the Ministry Team, and will feature time for fellowship, Scripture readings, and child/family-friendly interactions with the story, much as the Passover meal would have. After our meal, we will proceed into the sanctuary, where we will mark Good Friday with a traditional Tenebrae service, which powerfully combines Scripture readings, music, and extinguished candles as we recount Jesus' Passion on the cross and depart in silence and darkness. The Tenebrae service will begin at 7pm, and will be livestreamed as well. You are welcome to attend either or both services.

Easter Sunday: April 9

The Resurrection of Our Lord will be celebrated at two services on Easter, the holiest day of the Christian year. The sunrise service, led by Rev. Larry Bell, will begin at 6:15am at the highest point in St. Joseph's Cemetery, in front of the stone cross on the hill (6020 Lake Avenue, Auburn). The site is fully accessible by car. We will gather in the cemetery by the light of the full moon just as Mary once did, and watch the first moments of a new day dawning over the lake, worshipping the risen Christ.

At 9:30am, Rev. Patrick Heery will lead our traditional Easter service in the sanctuary with festive music, Scripture readings, sermon, and Communion. An Easter egg hunt for kids will be held in the sanctuary following worship.

Easter Lessons and Carols: April 16

Similar to our much loved Christmas Lessons and Carols service, we will celebrate the Easter season with a series of Scripture readings, hymns, and special music, led by Rev. Patrick Heery, the choir, and congregational readers, as we retell the story of the resurrection, in all its fullness and hope.

Resumption of Home Communion



During the pandemic, Westminster sadly had to stop sharing home Communion with people unable to worship with us (due to health, disability, age, transportation, or other reasons). Prior to the pandemic, this had been a regular, monthly practice, in which the pastor and an elder or deacon brought

Communion, prayer, and friendship to beloved members of the church, on the same Sundays the congregation shared Communion in worship. The pandemic made it unsafe to do this (though we found other ways to stay connected). While we've found sporadic opportunities in the last couple years to make these visits, the pastor and the deacons are now attempting to resume monthly home Communion. If you or anyone you know (they don't have to be a member of the church, but please keep in mind that members and immediate family are our priority) would like to receive home Communion, please let us know. If you do not want Communion, but would just appreciate the visit, we'd still be happy to put you on our list. And of course, as always, our pastor and deacons are happy to visit, pray, and share love with you—just ask.

April Contemplative Hike



Westminster took a hiatus with its contemplative hikes throughout the winter. This April, however, we have the chance to hit the

trails again and reconnect with our Creator, whose Spirit pervades us and all creation. Surrounded with the beauty, wonder, and sacredness of nature, contemplative hikes feature a brief devotion, a period of meditative walking silence, a brief time of sharing, and then friendly conversation during the rest of the hike. On Saturday, April 22, Earth Day, at 10am, we will hike at the beautiful Baltimore Woods Nature Center in Marcellus (4007 Bishop Hill Road). It's about 25 minutes from Auburn, and offers a trail moderate in difficulty with incline. Stick around, afterward, for the park's Earth Day events.

Lenten Soup & Study - Our Spiritual Wellness Journey

What is Spiritual Wellness? Spiritual Wellness is an expansive process of living each day, at work and at home, in alignment with God, a sense of purpose, and deeply held values. It's having a relationship with yourself, your heart, with people around you and relating to your environment and culture. It's experiencing life according to your life purpose and value. The March/April ministry team selected "Love One Another" as their theme using the passage from John 13: 34-35. As we continue to strive toward Love One Another, let us not forget the importance of Loving Ourselves. Self-love is often the missing ingredient when change is a struggle or when feeling overwhelmed. We are often busy with life, taking care of others, we do not take time for ourselves.

This year's Lenten Soup and Study series will focus on different techniques we can use and practice on our journey to Spiritual Wellness such as walking in nature, journaling, community service, volunteering, traveling, mentoring, appreciating music and the arts to name a few. For our Lenten Soup & Study series, we will focus on four techniques:

March 1 – Mindfulness Presented by Mary McGrath, Lic. Marriage & Family Therapist. Mary will help us explore this type of meditation—maintaining a moment-by-moment awareness of our thoughts, feelings, bodily sensations, and surrounding environment through a gentle nurturing lens.

March 8 – Chair Yoga – Presented by Wendy Vitale. We will discover the benefits of yoga through modified poses and breathing exercises while seated.

March 15 – Meditation Lead by Joe Sarnicola, Certified Spiritual Life Coach & Certified Meditation Leader. Joe will focus on mind and body techniques used to calm the mind and enhance our overall well-being.

March 22 – Contemplative prayer with Pastor Patrick Heery. Pastor Patrick will lead this session through prayer, as we draw closer to God and make us better able to hear God's voice by eliminating distractions and reducing anxiety.

March 29 – Group discussion on using these practices to foster Spiritual Wellness.

Please plan to attend our Lenten Soup & Study series on Wednesdays from 5:30 – 7. You may participate in person in the Social Room or via streaming through Facebook Live.

My Name Is.....

by Linda Russell



Jesus commanded us to “love one another.” Loving one another does not require we know the name of the “other.” God knows. But names are important. They give us a sense of who we are, the families and communities we belong to, and our place in the world.

God’s name is so special (because God is so special) that we are instructed not to take God’s name in vain, and for a time God’s name was not even allowed to be written out. In Isaiah 49:16 we learn that not only does God know us, but that we are so special to God that God writes our name in the palm of God’s hand. In John 10:3 Jesus the Good Shepherd calls us, his own sheep, by name.

On Sunday, April 2, worshippers will be invited and encouraged to wear a nametag during worship and fellowship time. Nametags will be available on tables at both entrances beginning that Sunday and going forward. With or without a nametag, you will be loved. But if you and your name are important to God, you and your name are important to us. May we get to know, and love, one another even better.



Earth Day Forum

Earth Day is an annual celebration that honors the achievements of the environmental movement and raises awareness of the need to protect Earth’s natural



resources for future generations. On Sunday, April 23, 2023, Westminster welcomes Ann Robson, president of OWLA (Owasco Watershed Lake Association), to speak on “Protecting the Health of Owasco Lake” during the Adult Forum hour. OWLA’s guardianship extends across the 208 square miles of watershed, the land where every drop of falling, flowing water eventually reaches the lake.

Since 1988, this group of concerned citizen volunteers has studied the issues, participated in ongoing strategies and activities designed to improve the water quality for both drinking and recreational use, and educated our community about watershed erosion, invasive plants and insects, and the damage of excessive sediment and nutrients entering the lake.

Protecting the health of Owasco Lake, the drinking water source for over 45,000 residents in our community and surrounding towns, is an important way to live into Jesus’ commandment to “love one another.” Come and see how we can help ensure safe water through both individual actions and larger group efforts.

Prayer Shawl Pantry

by Monta Faye Tuxill

The Westminster prayer shawl pantry needs re-stocking. If you knit or crochet and would like to help re-stock the Prayer Shawl pantry it would be



very much appreciated. We have a small supply of donated yarn and we also have patterns. We just need willing volunteers. If you are interested and need yarn or a pattern, please contact Monta Faye Tuxill.

March Loose Change Sleep in Heavenly Peace



Westminster Presbyterian Church's participation in the January 2023 Sleep in Heavenly Peace – Bed Build Day on Martin Luther King Jr. Day was a great success! People of all ages and abilities participated in helping to construct over a dozen beds. In total for the month of January, SHP-Auburn built 33 bed kits.

In March, the loose change offerings will support Sleep in Heavenly Peace. Additionally, if you would like to support in other ways, you can volunteer to help at any of the upcoming build days

Upcoming Bed Build Days at the SHP-Auburn workshop at the Fingerlakes Mall will be held on Saturday, March 18 from 9:30am to 2:00 pm, and Saturday, April 15 from 9:30am to 2:00 pm. Visit bit.ly/shpevent to sign up.

While SHP-Auburn encourages everyone to volunteer, for the safety of everyone involved, they have the following age limits:

Volunteers ages from 6-9 can help when directly accompanied by a parent or guardian. The parent or guardian must work with the child through the build to ensure their safety.

Volunteers ages from 10-14 can help when accompanied by a parent or guardian. The parent or guardian may or may not necessarily work in conjunction with their minor(s); however, the parent or guardian should be available in case any issues arise.

Volunteers from 15-17 may volunteer without a parent or guardian present, the parents must fill out the indemnification form prior to the start of the event.

Bed Deliveries: If you're interested in learning more about going out on deliveries, please reach out to the chapter by emailing ny-auburn@shpbeds.org, or call 315-294-0674. Bed deliveries are done on Thursdays at 5:30pm, Saturdays at 9:00am, and Sundays at 2:00pm. Once the delivery team arrives at a recipient's home, a delivery can take from 30 minutes to an hour, depending on the number of beds being set up.

If you have any questions, comments, or concerns, please reach out to ny-auburn@shpbeds.org or call the chapter at 315-294-0674. Drew Scharoun is chapter co-president for SHP-Auburn.

Thank you for your part to ensure that "No Kid Sleeps on The Floor In Our Town!"

April Loose Change



CHAPEL HOUSE

Westminster has been a longtime supporter of Chapel House of Cayuga County with financial and personal care donations. Again this April, we will proudly dedicate our loose change offering and collect personal care items to help sustain the ongoing mission. Chapel House provides emergency shelter for homeless men, women and children while offering the tools to make a safe, efficient transition to self-sufficiency. But we are reminded that homelessness is much more than just a roof over our heads, clothing and a warm meal, in the words of Mother Teresa, "the poverty of being unwanted, unloved, and uncared for is the greatest poverty." Let's love one another by reaching out to our community, give generously, bring items for the collection box located in the narthex, and consider volunteering 2-4 hours a week or whenever possible. Contact info@chapelhouseshelter.org for more volunteer options or schedule a time.

Personal care items for the collection box:

Facial Wipes	Cotton Swabs
Deodorant	Hygiene Products
Tissues	Nail Clippers/File
Toothpaste	Body Wash
Soap	Comb/Brush
Lip Balm	Powder
Wet Wipes	Razors
Shampoo/Conditioner	Toilet Paper
Make-up	Paper Towels
Shaving Cream	Underwear (various sizes)
Hand Lotion/Moisturizer	Socks (various sizes)

One Great Hour of Sharing

In a world of disaster, hunger and oppression, millions of people lack access to sustainable food sources, clean water, sanitation, education, and opportunity. The three programs supported by One Great Hour of Sharing Presbyterian Disaster Assistance, the Presbyterian Hunger Program, and Self-Development of People – all work in different ways to serve individuals and communities in need. From initial disaster response to ongoing community development, their work fits together to provide people with safety, sustenance and hope. Each gift to One Great Hour of Sharing supports efforts to relieve hunger, promote development, and assist in areas of disaster through Presbyterian Disaster Assistance through these three programs.

Praise and Play Pickle Ball Group

by Linda MacKay

Does pickle ball make you feel closer to God? That's a question a group of women have begun asking themselves as part of a small group ministry called Praise and Play. A ministry designed to strengthen your relationship with God. Westminster church has opened its doors of the Great Hall for a fun, non-competitive game of pickle ball.

To answer this question and literally speaking, one does feel closer to God when the body aches from muscle strain and extremities burn with movement, all from hitting a ball similar to the light weight whiffle ball with holes and swinging a paddle smaller than a tennis racquet but larger than a ping-pong paddle. Not to mention the shortness of breath and rapid heartbeat can mimic the idea of impending doom and order up a group of appropriate prayers.

But that's not what makes you feel closer to God, it's the people this game brings into your life. Mostly retired teachers sharing years of wisdom, kindness, compassion and an infectious spirit of love. All who engage in community service such as meals on wheels, Calvary food pantry, Matthew house, St. Alphonsus food pantry, modeling love, concern and care for each other and our community.

As a newbie to the game, it proves to be thoroughly enjoyable with the energy a "boomer" can still endure and life experience it brings for maintaining good court habits (hit the ball and that's all). and a loving spirit sure to make anyone feel closer to God.

Come watch and engage the spirit. See Linda, M, Audrey, or Penny for more information.

Proverbs 17:22, *A cheerful heart is a good medicine, but a downcast spirit dries up the bones.*



Ugandan Supper and Movie Night



The Ugandan Family Education Fund invites you to a special Ugandan Supper and Movie Night on April 29. Supper of traditional African/Ugandan foods will be served from 5-6pm in the Junior Room and the movie, Queen of Katwe, will be shown at 6:15 pm in the Social Room. The movie traces the life of 10 year old Phiona living in Katwe, a slum in Kampala, Uganda with her mother

Nakku Harriet, and other family members. She and her younger brother help their mother sell maize in the market. Her world changes the day she meets Robert Katende at a missionary program. Katende coaches soccer and teaches children to play chess at a local center. Curious, Phiona visits the center, learns the game, and becomes fascinated with it. She becomes a top player in the group under Katende's guidance.

Proceeds from evening event and the May Loose Change will be directed toward the continuing education of Agnes nieces and nephews. To see the photos of Agnes and the kids and read more about them and their relationship with Westminster, check out the bulletin board in the narthex.

There will be a free will donation. Reservations are requested by April 15 to **Susan Marteney at 315-283-4181 or nasum@hotmail.com**.



Shalom from Refresh

by Bronwyn O'Connor



We have had two months of our Faith based words study....GRACE, HOPE, JOY, PEACE, FAITH, TRUST, EVANGELISM and more. In January, Bronwyn lead the group in a discussion of Piety, a life of holiness. Then, Tina lead us in a discussion of Praise with music.

We will continue meeting on Zoom for March and April. In March, Bronwyn will lead again, unless we have another volunteer step up. Then, Pat Kennedy will lead us in April. Refresh invites any interested women, not just Westminster Presbyterian women, to explore the Bible. Refresh women pray, chat, study, share, care and pray again.

We meet the second Saturday of each month at 10:00, for 1-2 hours. If you are interested or have questions, please contact Bronwyn by phone or text at 315-323-3187 or email boconno11@gmail.com.

Little Free Library

Pick up a book from our always-stocked Little Free Library in front of the church! The "Little Free Library" at Westminster operates on a "Take a Book. Leave a Book" basis, and is entirely free

and open to everyone. If you have any books that you are through with, they can always be donated to the "Little Free Library". Learn more at www.littlefreelibrary.org



Property News

As was discussed in our February 12 congregational meeting, based on the Beardsley property assessment, the proposed projects for 2023 involve bringing certain items up to code (electrical, lighting, etc.), repointing the

masonry where needed, and shoring up the sanctuary basement where needed. These are important for keeping everyone safe and for maintaining the integrity of the building's structure.

The hallway in the REACH wing now has new carpeting. If you haven't already, go take a look. Carpet House did a great job!

The kitchen in the education building has received some much needed help from Linda Mackay in the form of cleaning and organizing. Unfortunately the mice have been busy there, especially as the kitchen isn't used as often as in pre-Covid days. Linda has cleaned and sanitized drawers, thrown out expired food, and generally organized the area. Hopefully this will slow the critters down. Future users, please be cognizant of the need for cleanliness. Look for some posted guidelines in the kitchen for people or groups to follow. And bless you, Linda, for a great job!



Thank you, French and Metcalf Foundations

Thank you to the French and Metcalf Foundations for their generous year-end grants of \$6,000 each to be used toward repairing the deteriorating wooden bell cradle in the south bell tower. The French and Metcalf Foundations have been generous supporters of Westminster every year, and we are very grateful to them for their current and past support!

Thank
you

A close-up photograph of a fountain pen nib, showing the gold-colored metal and the black ink reservoir.

Meet the Confirmands

by Chris Patch

MEET and GREET

youth on April 2, immediately after service.

This is a great opportunity for our congregation to get to know the next generation of our church family and for our confirmation class to connect with the larger community of believers. Our youth have been working hard as part of their confirmation class, which includes visiting other churches and performing community service.

Recently, the confirmation class had the opportunity to serve at the Auburn Hunger Task Force. The youth spent the evening preparing meals for those in need. It was an eye-opening experience for them, and they were grateful for the opportunity to make a difference in their community.

During the meet and greet, our confirmation class will share their experiences and insights from their community service projects. They will also be available to answer any questions about their faith journey and what confirmation means to them.

We encourage everyone in our congregation to attend this special event and welcome our youth into our church family. This is an excellent opportunity to connect with our young people and support them on their journey of faith.

We hope to see you all on April 2 after service for this special meet and greet event. Let us continue to support our youth and help them grow in their faith as they prepare for confirmation

St. Patrick's Day Party



friendly, green-clad folks.

This will be a great opportunity to come together and celebrate this special holiday. We look forward to having a great day!

Celebrate St. Patrick's Day at Westminster! Friday March 17 from 5:00pm-7:00pm. We are delighted to be hosting a fun family event to ring in the luck of the Irish. There will be a variety of food, fun with games and crafts, and of course lots of

Children's Events for Holy Week

There will be a costumed children's palm processional on Palm Sunday, April 2. Participants should arrive for worship no later than 9:10 in



order to dress and receive instructions. There will be an egg hunt in the sanctuary immediately following worship on Easter Sunday, April 9. Older youth are invited to participate by hiding eggs for the younger worshippers. Treat bags will be provided, including special ones for babies.

Children's Worship Center

The Children's Worship Center will be telling the Stories of Jesus throughout Lent leading up to the story of His Resurrection on Easter. Following worship on Easter Sunday, children are invited to stay for Westminster's annual egg hunt inside the sanctuary.



Noel is communicating with the Finger Lakes S.P.C.A to arrange a date for children to volunteer and read to the animals. Of course if they cannot read yet they can bring their favorite book to share pictures and tell a story of their own. Details will be shared on the REACH Facebook as well as in the Westminstergram.

For most children spring break is the first week of April. Monday, April 3rd, Noel will hold an open gym at the church from 4-6pm to play basketball, games, and run off some energy. Babies-8 welcome.

If you are not part of the REACH Facebook group and would like to be added please let Noel know and she will add you. It's a place to see upcoming events, and pictures of the fun things they do. You do not have to have a child or youth to be a part of it. Also, thank you to Catherine Fessenden and Linda Russell who have volunteered their time for the months of March and April to help in the CWC! If you'd like to volunteer your help is always appreciated. As always, if you have any suggestions for upcoming activities please reach out to Noel.

Charitable Giving



Did you know that if you are over 70 ½ you can contribute to the church directly from your IRA without incurring any federal income tax on the distribution? It's called a Qualified Charitable Contribution (QCD). An additional benefit is that QCD's also count toward the Required Minimum Distributions (RMD) from your retirement accounts.

Another tax tip is that, at any age, you can donate stock to the church directly. There are no capital gains taxes paid on the appreciated value of the stock. If you have some stock that has done very well in the recent stock market surge, you might want to think of this option to maximize your contributions to the church.

2023 Per Capita



Each church in the Presbyterian Church (USA) is apportioned a per capita that is used to help fund the missions of the Presbytery, Synod, and General Assembly. It funds more than just administrative costs. Per capita also funds

functions that are best accomplished collectively, rather than individually by each church, such as counseling individual churches, world-wide missions, and publishing of instructional materials.

This year's per capita is \$39.50 per member. That means that Westminster is responsible for approximately \$6,500 for per capita. Many members of Westminster have paid this separately from their individual pledges so that their entire pledges can be applied to the mission of the local church. Please help in defraying this expense by individually paying this apportioned per capita.

Membership Information Updates!

As you have read in other articles, there is a need to update the church directory. Over time, changes in addresses, phone numbers, and email addresses may not make their way to the office. Your help is needed to ensure the church database is accurate.



The goals are multi-faceted:

- * Ensure all members and friends are included in the master list including those who join worship in-person and virtually
- * Ensure contact info is correct
- * Identify which info individuals wish to share with other members and friends
- * Produce a list for distribution

To accomplish this, Michael Trapani and Carolyn Hiza will reach out by phone with a brief survey to identify new info or fill in the blanks where some info is missing.

If you wish to report any changes you may call or send an email to Michael Trapani, 315-246-6968, michael.trapani@outlook.com, or Carolyn Hiza, 315-283-8419, geotoni@roadrunner.com.

Meditation Room

The former Christian Education office by the conference room in the education building has been repurposed as a place for study, meditation, prayer and quiet conversation. Now called the Meditation Room, it's ready for use. If you are looking for a place to quietly reflect, work, or pray stop in and check it out!



Scout Sunday Photos



Coffee Hour



Come enjoy coffee, refreshments, and fellowship after Sunday worship. Coffee hour is back after a long (Covid) break. This is a chance to get to know your fellow worshippers and learn

more about Westminster. If you'd like to contribute cookies on any Sunday in March or April, please contact Diane Lehner at 315-726-2264. Welcome home!

Gilchrist Scholarships

April 3, 2023 is the deadline for Westminster college students to submit an application to receive a new or continuing scholarship from the Douglas J. Gilchrist Memorial Scholarship Fund. The applications and guidelines can be found on the Westminster Church website (Education page) or they may be picked up in the church office. Please note that first year applicants need to submit letters of recommendation with their applications, and will be interviewed by the committee.

Deacons

The Deacons of the church are here for you. Whether you are new to the church, or have been here for years, they are here to help you feel

welcomed and loved. After service there is always a Deacon available to happily lend an ear or prayer. Westminster offers many small groups (Refresh, The Care Pantry, even Pickle Ball), and volunteer opportunities. They can help point you in the right direction if there is something you are looking for. There may also be services you are in need of that they can direct you to.

Deacons, along with Pastor Patrick, will also be resuming visits for those who are only able to worship from home, as well as bringing communion. These things were halted due to Covid precautions, what a joy to be able to do them once again.

**We're here
to help!**

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.

Westminster Presbyterian Church
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