

# The newsletter of Westminster Presbyterian Church

September and October 2022

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

Worship 9:30am Sundays

The Rev. Patrick D. Heery, Pastor  
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## September/October Ministry Team Update

By Lydia Marteney,  
Chair of the September/October Ministry Team

The upcoming Ministry Team is excited to reveal the theme for September and October: Homecoming! Westminster will kick off the program year with a grand welcome to all in order to help “rekindle the gift of God that is in you” (2 Timothy 1:6-7). Special events and services will focus on renewing and growing our faith community and strengthening our connections together as children of God. After two years, our “Homecoming” will celebrate the opportunity we now have to worship, study, and be together. Read more about Rally Sunday, specially themed services, and the long-awaited return of adult forums, social hour, and more, in separate articles in this newsletter. Watch for more details in westminstergrams, bulletins, and social media.

## Rally Sunday - Homecoming



September 11 is Rally Sunday at Westminster. This year, it's a pep-rally, and it's a party, actually a tailgate party out in front of the church to celebrate

homecoming weekend. Football games are up and running, and it's still major league baseball season, so come dressed in your teams colors. Let's see those Buffalo Bills fans, along with New York Yankees, Syracuse, Auburn High, and all the rest. There will be music and lots of food. The party starts at 9 am, will break for the church service then continue with the party, including taking the church family photo on the front steps. Haven't been here for a while? Come by for the homecoming, that's where old friends and new ones alike can socialize and be energized within the Westminster family. For information contact Ted or Bronwyn, 315-323-3187 or [tedohara45@gmail.com](mailto:tedohara45@gmail.com).

## Church Family Photo

Westminster's annual tradition is to take a “church family photo” every fall to capture our gathered members and friends on Rally Sunday. Mike Trapani will climb the ladder to take this year's photo on Sunday, September 11, immediately following worship.

The photo will be taken on the church's front steps, weather permitting, or inside if necessary. We missed a year in 2020 due to Covid and in the 2021 photo, all the faces were masked. We look forward to a huge gathering this year, with everyone's smiles showing!



# Come Home

*A note from Rev. Patrick D. Heery*



Many of us have felt displaced, in different ways, by the last several years of pandemic, national strife, and economic upheaval, as well as by the more personal losses and transitions that life can bring. We may feel that we've lost touch with the foundations that make us feel safe and endow us with clarity. For a lot of us, the world became a whirlwind, and we were Dorothy.

Disoriented and landed in a place we neither recognized nor could make sense of. Oz.

It's not surprising, then, that many of us disconnected from church, and perhaps our faith life in general. We hunkered down, amid the winds, and focused on our families, our jobs, or even just surviving. We may not have resonated with online worship. We may have lost touch with friendships, or come to wonder whether any of this church stuff was true. We may not have felt church was safe, or we just got out of the habit. I think all of us got tired. Really tired. Overwhelmed.

But the thing about home, whether Dorothy's or this church, is that it's always there. Waiting for us. To click our shoes. To remember. Home never stops loving us. And the best homes change, adapt, evolve, in order to meet our new needs and realities.

So, this fall, Westminster's Ministry Team invites you to come home, whether you're new to Westminster and looking for a home, or this has been your home for a long time and you've just been circling in the winds for a while. Here there is no judgment, no shame, just love. And really, isn't that the surest foundation for safety and clarity? Love.

We've planned some delightful homecoming ministries for us all. There's much that is familiar (a tether to tradition), and there's much that's changing to meet folks where they are and help us reorient.

Thanks to a new seasonal structure, we were blessed this summer by Catherine Fessenden and Ernie DeCaro with weekly, beautiful devotionals; by Audrey McNally, Paul Dungey, Shelley Pantoliano, Rev. Janet Newman, Lori Rhodes Pettit, as well as Catherine and Ernie, with a fun Blessing of the Animals, a Hymn Sing, and a Service of Healing and Wholeness; by a resumption of our social hour after worship; by community outings and much more. The new approach hasn't been without hiccups; we've had plenty, and

some of them significant. But God is doing amazing things here at Westminster to strengthen existing leaders, raise up new ones, help us better listen to God through Scripture and prayer, and reorient us to new and old ways of being church. All so that we together can heal and be whole again, in this new crazy world.

Come home, and join us!

## Upcoming Sermons

**Sept. 4:** "Hero or coward?" a sermon about Paul's complicated relationship with slavery and our own with injustices of today

**Sept. 11:** "When home can't be found," a Rally Sunday sermon about feeling lost

**Sept. 18:** "Rethinking life's priorities," a sermon about how the last couple years have made us re-examine how, and with whom, we spend our time

**Sept. 25:** "Baptism: a seed of home and hope," a sermon about the power of remembering our baptism

**Oct. 2:** World Communion Sunday with guest preacher Rev. Unzu Lee

**Oct. 9:** "Home is where you are," a sermon about adjusting our expectations

**Oct. 16:** "God is a mobile home," a sermon about unsettling times

**Oct. 23:** "The world's not safe," a sermon asking what we're called to do in the face of so much danger

**Oct. 30:** "Have you climbed a tree lately?" a sermon about those moments when you can't find God

## Baptism of Josephine Marguerite Heery



Please join us for the baptism of the newest addition to our pastor's family, Josephine Marguerite Heery, during Sunday worship on September 18. Patrick, Jenna, Emerson, and Josephine will have

the joy of being joined by a number of members of Josephine's birth family, as they continue to work toward her adoption. In baptism, we remember that Josephine has been claimed as Christ's own, loved by God and by her family and church family. We make vows as a church community to love and nurture Josephine.

## Contemplative Hikes September 24 & October 29

Spent partly in prayerful silence and partly in conversation, our contemplative hikes offer renewal as we reconnect with God, the earth, and ourselves.



On Saturday, September 24, from 10 am to 12 pm, we will hike the newly reopened dramatic forest and gorge landscape of Carpenter Falls and the Bahar Nature Preserve, with a trail that strides shimmering waterfalls and leads to Skaneateles Lake. The park reopened this summer after a \$1.27 million project to build an elevated boardwalk, viewing platform, and other measures to make the park accessible to all, including those with disabilities. We will begin with that boardwalk to the

falls, which should be easy for all (and some might choose to do that part of the walk only). We will then walk to the lake, which will involve a dirt trail with both moderate and steep portions. It's about a 25-minute drive from Auburn.



On Saturday, October 29, from 10 am to 12 pm, we will take a special All-Saints-themed hike at Fort Hill Cemetery in

Auburn. We will walk in memory of loved ones who have died and joined that great communion of saints (whom we will remember and celebrate in worship on November 6). As the name suggests, Fort Hill does involve some steep incline, but is otherwise paved and easy. This has probably become our most popular walk, which involves the naming of loved ones, placing roses on graves, and special stops at the graves of Harriet Tubman, William Seward, Henry Fowler (our founding pastor), and personal loved ones. Many join us who don't have relatives buried at Fort Hill but who wish to walk prayerfully for their loved ones.

RSVP is requested. Please contact Patrick ([pastor@westminsterauburn.org](mailto:pastor@westminsterauburn.org), 315-253-3331). Detailed information will then be provided.

## Westminster Church to Host Pastor from Korea on World Communion Sunday



The Rev. Unzu Lee, PC(USA) Liaison to North Korea, South Korea, and Hong Kong, will visit Auburn October 1-2, 2022. She will join Patrick Heery in leading worship, and will serve as guest preacher, as Westminster Church joins churches around the world in the celebration of World

Communion Sunday on October 2, which is also designated as Peace and Global Witness Sunday. Rev. Lee is a member of the Presbyterian Peace Network for Korea (PPNK) and a strong, tireless supporter of efforts to end the Korean War. Following worship and refreshments, Rev. Lee will lead a forum program open to both church and community members.

Rev. Lee is currently living in Korea. Her profile and recent newsletters can be found at: <https://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/missionconnections/unzu-lee/>

## Christmas Giving Tree

Westminster's "Christmas elves" (aka "Christmas Giving Tree Small Group Disciples") are busy preparing the 2022 Christmas Giving Tree, a mission project near and dear to this congregation for many years.



The families we support will be identified through the Cayuga County Early Intervention Program, a program with whom we have had a long and mutually satisfying relationship. Recipients' wish lists and instructions for how you can support this mission will be available on or before November 1. Gifts are due at the church on December 4.

The "Christmas Giving Tree" was officially launched as a small group ministry on August 16 being led by Linda Russell. Joining Linda in this small group are Nina and Jerry Wickett, Shelley Pantoliano, Coylynn Cator, and Roger and Judy Dilmore. Many heartfelt thanks to Carolyn and George Hiza for their faithful, dedicated stewardship of this mission for the past 15 years. This new small group has big shoes to fill! Questions about the 2022 Christmas Giving Tree may be directed to Linda at 315-730-6930.

## You're Invited to Sacrament of Baptism



What better way to celebrate homecoming this September than to reflect on the invitation to be baptized. The invitation comes from the

resurrected Jesus, who commissioned his followers to go and make disciples, baptizing them and teaching a new way of life.

Many of us cherish the moment of welcoming a new child into Christian life through baptism, while others ponder the real meaning and/or mystery of baptism. It raises questions such as what is the meaning of baptism, how is the Reformed tradition different from other religious groups, can I be baptized as youth or adult (if so what are the steps), is baptism required to become a member of Westminster, can I be re-baptized?

Everyone baptized or not, young and old, members or non-members are invited to explore the meaning/mysteries of baptism on Wednesday, September 14, at Westminster Church. Meet at 4:30pm for mingling and 5pm for an interactive program followed by a light dinner. Childcare will be provided upon request and a Zoom Link will be available for the program only. A quiet homework room will be available as needed.

Sunday, September 25 during regular worship, please join the congregation at 9:30 am for a special Baptism service, reaffirming our own baptism and baptizing those who have committed to a life in Jesus Christ, marked by faith and love, and sought support/guidance from the Westminster session.

## Choir Rehearsals Resume!

Music director Lori Rhodes Pettit is excited to announce that on Wednesday evening, September 14 at 7pm, weekly choir rehearsals will resume for adults and teens, at Westminster Presbyterian Church in the upstairs choir room adjacent to the choir loft. Along with traditional repertoire, the choir will be learning more contemporary, praise-based music to share the glory of God through song. Please contact Lori with any questions at [loripettit22@gmail.com](mailto:loripettit22@gmail.com) or (315) 406-3417 .



## Fellowship Time Following worship

Simple snacks and drinks will be offered following worship on Sundays so that members and friends will have time to mingle, chat and get to know each other. Thanks to Audrey McNally for coordinating these treats. Fellowship time will be brief on the Sundays we have forums scheduled. On the Sundays with no forums, fellowship time will be extended and “getting to know you” prompts will be offered to encourage conversation with each other. It’ll be fun to catch up after two long years of isolation.



## Property Committee Report

Progress is being made in the water abatement project, which Beardsley Design is spearheading. Beardsley drafted and sent out three requests for bids to do this work. After consultation with Beardsley, the property committee recommended that Session hire the construction firm of Rich and Gardner from Syracuse. Session unanimously approved this recommendation. Currently, contracts from Rich and Gardner have been received and are being reviewed by the finance committee and WPC’s treasurer. Once they are signed, work can commence. The work is comprehensive and will involve the installation of gutters as well as underground installation of pipes to route water away from the church structures.

In other property news, carpet for the REACH wing is an ongoing project. Plans are being made to finish prepping the floor so that carpet can be installed. Other work day projects include getting rid of the sandbox in the playground and general cleaning up of leaves and debris in window wells. A mailbox has been installed under the archway so that mail can be delivered in hours when Melanie is not in the office.

Property caretaker Shawn Reeves has been busy with various projects. A room for storage of Master Works Chorale music (approved by Session) is being painted, a lockbox has been installed in the conference room so that keys needed for entry into other parts of the building can be secure, a damaged bathroom stall door in the education building is being repaired, the dishwasher in the kitchen in the education building has been anchored, and the mailbox under the archway was installed. Plans are being made to rent a lift so that Shawn can replace bulbs in the sanctuary chandeliers and clean them of cobwebs.

All in all, jobs big and small have occupied the committee’s time and energy. Many thanks to all the willing workers!

## Pride House

In September, Pride House will celebrate its one-year anniversary. This last year, Pride House is proud to have created a safe and confidential environment for young people ages 13–18 who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, asexual, who are questioning their sexual orientation or gender identity, or who are straight allies. The goal of Pride House has always been a nurturing and supportive environment where LGBTQ+ youth and their allies can unapologetically be themselves and thrive. As we enter year two, the program will be expanding to two days a week with a variety of life skills programs and services, from theater, judo, and culinary arts to expanded community service partnerships. In the last couple months Pride House has formed an advisory board made up of community leaders, youth and members of Westminster Presbyterian Church that will help guide us into the future. Stay tuned for some exciting fundraisers and community events coming soon.



## Confirmation Classes

Confirmation is a rite of passage for young adolescents into the Presbyterian church. It signals an affirmation of faith, the beginning of a lifelong journey and the entrance into mature participation within the congregation. Confirmation classes offer an education in denominational identity, and help youth explore, question and understand doctrines and beliefs associated with the denomination and their faith.

Westminster Presbyterian Church will offer Confirmation classes in the fall through a combination of online and in-person discussions, activities, community service projects and a weekend retreat. We will be using the confirmation curriculum from PC (USA), “Big God Big Questions” as a guide. It is our hope that these classes add clarity regarding confirmation, both theologically and traditionally, challenge youths current understanding of God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit and add a deeper understanding of how faith impacts their lives and the lives of others. Ultimately, our goal is to provide our youth with the foundation to help them create and develop their individual statements of faith and realize their role in a faith community.

There will be an informational meeting on Wednesday September 7 at 6:30pm, to answer questions and to discuss class times and days. Anyone interested is encouraged to attend or to contact Chris Patch directly at [ChrisPatchtmt@gmail.com](mailto:ChrisPatchtmt@gmail.com).

## Children’s Worship Center

The Children’s Worship Center will resume on September 11, Rally Day! What is the Children’s Worship Center? It’s a place for children to worship God! Following the children’s message kids ages 3-8 are invited to join story teller Noel Cregg for a



song, story, meditative work time and prayer. The stories are told chronologically beginning in the New Testament and follow the church calendar.

Once per month there is an activity or outing during the 11-12 hour. Occasionally this activity will be held on a separate day. In August children from the Worship Center, and other Westminster youth, had a lemonade stand in front of the church, raising \$106 to use to buy gifts for a family in need this Christmas! They were so enthusiastic about this cause! Please let Miss Noel know if you have any ideas or suggestions for events you’d like to see done with the children.

As always, the Children’s Worship Center is looking for volunteers. A second person is needed every Sunday from 9:30-end of service to assist with the children. Please sign up with Miss Noel if you are interested!

## Refresh

Refresh is a spiritual growth group for women that meets monthly to pray, enjoy fellowship, grow in faith, and study Scripture.

The group is currently following the Bible study “Matchless” by Angie Smith. The next gatherings will be on Saturday September 10th and Saturday October 8th at 10 am in the church social room. If you are interested in attending or have any questions please contact Catherine Fessenden: [catbird417@gmail.com](mailto:catbird417@gmail.com).



## Giving Thanks

The September loose change offering is designated for Thanksgiving dinners to be distributed by the Calvary Food Pantry. This year, the cost of a complete meal for a family of 4 is \$51.15. We hope to sponsor at least 20 meals or raise \$1000 for families in our community to enjoy a holiday feast. Our friends at the Calvary Food Pantry really know how to stretch our donations to feed more families each year. Your contribution will ensure a delicious meal including a turkey and all the fixings, plus dessert and a few extras. Thank you for your generous support.

## Domestic Violence Awareness

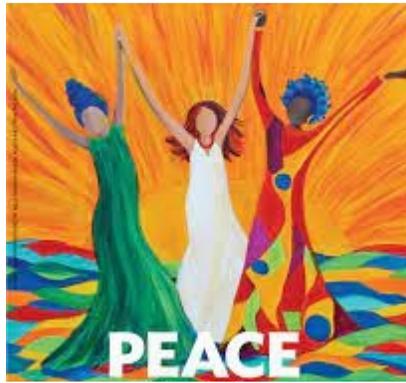
October is Domestic Violence Awareness Month. Domestic violence is also referred to as intimate partner violence. Westminster has made supporting the victims of intimate partner violence a priority. We have a policy to ensure when a church member/ attendee or a member of the public come to the church as a victim of intimate partner violence, they are treated with care, concern and receive the most appropriate help to ensure their anonymity, as well as their safety and the safety of people within the church helping them.

Domestic violence does not discriminate. Anyone from any household could be a victim regardless of any demographic. Social/economic status, age, gender identity, race, religion, sexual orientation or anything else does not matter. The victim can be a next door neighbor or a family member.

It is important to be aware of statistics to understand the severity of the issue. The following statistics are from the US Department of Justice: 1 in 4 women and 1 in 9 men experience severe intimate partner violence, contact sexual violence, and/or intimate partner stalking with impacts such as injury, fearfulness, PTSD, use of victim services and/or contraction of sexually transmitted disease. Intimate partner violence accounts for 15% of all violent crimes. Women between the ages of 18-24 years old are most commonly abused by an intimate partner. 19% of all domestic violence involves the use of a weapon. Domestic victimization is correlated with a higher rate of depression and suicidal behavior. Only 34% of intimate partner violence victims receive medical care for their injuries.

For these reasons, the Domestic Violence Victim Support Program at Community Action Agency in Cayuga County has been chosen to receive the Loose Change for the month of October. Look for more information in October.

## Peacemaking and Global Witness Offering



A gift to the Peace & Global Witness Offering enables the church to promote the Peace of Christ by addressing systems of conflict and injustice across the world. Individual congregations are encouraged to utilize up to 25% of

this Offering to connect with the global witness of Christ's peace. Mid councils retain an additional 25% for ministries of peace and reconciliation. The remaining 50% is used by the Presbyterian Mission Agency to advocate for peace and justice in cultures of violence, including our own, through collaborative projects of education and Christian witness. The Peacemaking and Global Witness Offering will be received October 2.

## Ode to Joy Donations Support Local Mission



The "Ode to Joy" Skinner Organ Restoration Campaign successfully raised over \$175,000 in donations, pledges and stock transfers from members and friends of Westminster. Fulfilling our

campaign promise to tithe 10% of these gifts to mission, four local non-profits received checks totaling \$17,500 from our organ fund. They were: Matthew House - \$5,000 for



home renovations, Calvary Food Pantry - \$5000 for building upgrades to their new Seymour Street location, Sts. Peter & Paul Ukrainian Catholic Church - \$5,000 for

resettlement, and Sts. Peter & John Food Pantry - \$2,500 to feed Auburn's food-insecure residents. In addition, the Food Pantry received needed additional funding from our regular Mission Committee's budget.



## Adult Forum Oct. 23: Overview of Westminster's Emergency Action Plan



The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) office of Presbyterian Mission suggests

that “all churches should engage in emergency planning so that when an incident occurs, staff and church leaders follow safe procedures. Potential emergencies can arise from acts of God (hurricanes, snowstorms), accidents (electrical fire, flooding), and acts of man (violence, infectious disease). While creating a plan can seem overwhelming, breaking down an emergency plan by potential emergency and discussing possible responses can make the task less onerous<sup>[1]</sup>.”

In the Social Room following worship on Sunday October 23, an Adult Forum, led by Paul Dungey, will offer participants an opportunity to learn about Westminster's Emergency Action Plan (EAP). The EAP, adopted by the church's Session in September 2019, is presently being updated with closer scrutiny being given to create emergency plans for potential acts of violence on church property.

Come, learn what policies, procedures, and safety measures have been implemented over the past 2 ½ years to better prepare our faith community and church campus for an emergency.

[1] Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Office of Presbyterian Mission. Developing An Emergency Plan for Violence on Church Property.

## Online Worship Continues



Every Sunday, our worship attendance is doubled (often more than doubled) by folks worshipping online on Facebook Live. This lively group includes people from near and far who chat in the comments, offer prayers, sing and pray

from wherever they are (homes, hotels, beaches, assisted living facilities, and more), and actively engage in worshipping God as a thriving part of our church family. We will continue to livestream worship and occasional programs, recognizing our online community as beloved and important members. We are grateful for the Tech Team who make this possible, including Jack Hardy, Jim Burlingame, Paul Dungey, Ann Wiley, Jill Fandrich, and Diane Lehner.

## Sleep in Heavenly Peace Work Day



SLEEP IN HEAVENLY PEACE

Sleep In Heavenly Peace (SHP) is a national organization with a local Auburn, NY chapter, whose motto is: No kid sleeps on the floor in our town!®.

SHP fully believes “that a bed is a basic need for the proper physical, emotional, and mental support that a child needs.” When it was realized that there was a need locally for beds, local volunteers stepped up and took the initiative to form the Sleep In Heavenly Peace – Auburn Chapter, joining with the national organization answering the call to a national problem.

SHP-Auburn has a workshop located at the Fingerlakes Mall, where they cut, sand and assemble lumber piece to build bed frames. Year-to-date, SHP-Auburn has delivered over three hundred beds to children in need.

### VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR UPCOMING BUILD DAYS!

Time: 9:30AM to 2:00PM. Location: Fingerlakes Mall

**Saturday, September 10, 2022** - Bunks Across America - This is the day where most chapters hold a build day to raise child bed-lessness awareness.

**Saturday, October 22, 2022** - Disaster Relief NE Team Build Day - To prepare for delivery to families in the Northeast who are displaced by disasters – natural or manmade.

For this build, SHP-Auburn is asking the community if there are businesses that are willing to partner with us to help funding this endeavor. Our goal is to build one hundred beds. It costs \$250 per bed, so our target is to raise \$25,000. If an organization was willing to sponsor ten bed that would be a huge help. This would be a wonderful opportunity for a business to have a team building experience as well.

Donations of bedding materials are also needed. SHP-Auburn has a ‘wish list’ at Walmart: <https://www.walmart.com/.../b6846878-5e16-45e6-a973>.

For further information about Sleep In Heavenly-Auburn, contact: Drew Scharoun at (315) 294-0674, or email him at [drew.scharoun@shpbeds.org](mailto:drew.scharoun@shpbeds.org). the local organization has a Facebook page:

## Breadapalooza World Communion Sunday:

Our celebration of World Communion Sunday starts on Saturday, October 1 with a bread making class beginning at 10 am and running until all the bread is out of the oven. We will make yeast bread, biscuits, zucchini/spice bread and a few others. All ages and baking experience are invited to attend. Drop in participation encouraged. A few extra electric mixers with bread hooks and regular beaters and some mixing bowls would be appreciated! There is no cost for the class.



Later that day, we will share some of our fabulous breads at a pot luck soup supper at 5:30. Interested in bringing a pot of soup to share? RSVP/reservations/soup sharing ideas requested by Sunday, September 25 by contacting Susan Marteney at 315.252.7141.

On Sunday, October 2 during the World Communion Service and for coffee hour following the service, our special breads will be shared. There may even be some loaves to take home!

## Fall Rummage Sale

The Fall Rummage Sale is scheduled for Friday, November 4 from 4-7 pm (during Downton Auburn's First Friday) and Saturday, November 5 from 9am-noon. Drop off dates for



donations of household items, toys, kitchen goods, jewelry, books, records and more are Sunday, October 16 and Sunday, October 30 after church. If you must drop off at other times, please place all your items on the stage in the Great Hall. Sorting and pricing will be on Tuesday, November 1 from 2-5 pm; Wednesday, November 2 from 10 am - 1 pm; Thursday, November 3 from 3-6 pm; and Friday, November 4 from 1-4 pm. All proceeds will be donated to the Ukrainian Refugee Fund of St. Peter and Paul Ukrainian Catholic Church. **NO** clothing and **NO** electronics. Donate clothing to a local agency such as the Rescue Mission or Salvation Army. Questions or to volunteer, call Susan Marteney at 315-252-7141.

**W**estminster 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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