

Loose Change Offerings

Westminster designates the loose change collected in the offering plates to organizations or special causes. We have been passing a "virtual collection plate" when we meet online, encouraging donations to be mailed in or made online on the Give page of the church's website (www.westminsterauburn.org). When we worship in person this fall, we will again collect offerings in an actual plate. However you give, your loose offerings continue to help people in need!

In September, loose offerings will go to the **Westminster Manor Adult Home** on South Street. The Manor is hard at work on an application to become an Assisted Living Residence in order to offer a higher level of care to current and future residents. Some property improvements are necessary in order to obtain this new license, and our loose offerings will assist in that effort.

In October, loose offerings will support the **Calvary Food Pantry's Thanksgiving Meal** project, providing complete holiday meals to Auburn residents in need. Thank you for your generous support of Westminster's loose offering donations.

Coat Tree

As summer turns to fall, we start to think about the need for warm clothes. Westminster's **Coat Tree** provides coats, jackets, gloves, and hats for free to anyone who needs them. Fall is the time when many folks clean out their closets. If you have winter outdoor wear to donate, please bring them to the church and hang them on the Coat Closet rack in the first floor hallway of the education building. Only clean items accepted. Thank you for sharing and for keeping our neighbors warm this winter.



Personal Care Pantry

Westminster's **Personal Care Pantry** is back open, providing toiletries and cleaning supplies for free to people who need them. It is open Tuesdays from 10am-12 noon. Anne Malvaso is staffing the Personal Care Pantry, and is looking for others to volunteer. Contact her at malvaso8@verizon.net for more information.

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
17 William St
Auburn, NY 13021

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Visit www.westminsterauburn.org, and follow Westminster Church on Facebook (Westminster Presbyterian Church , Auburn, NY), Twitter, and Instagram.

The newsletter of Westminster Presbyterian Church

September - October 2020

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

Worship 9:30am Sundays

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

"Ode to Joy" Skinner Organ Restoration Campaign



This fall marks the beginning of a three-year capital campaign to help pay for the full restoration of our magnificent Skinner pipe organ (Opus 579) built in 1926.

The "Ode to Joy" campaign has been launched and donations/pledges are already beginning to come in from our church officers. In early September, all members and friends of Westminster Church will receive a special mailing, including a letter, brochure, and pledge card. Please read the "Ode to Joy" materials carefully and consider how you might joyfully respond. Through congregational and community support, foundational grants, and loans, Westminster Church's Skinner organ will continue to make a joyful noise to the Lord for many generations to come.

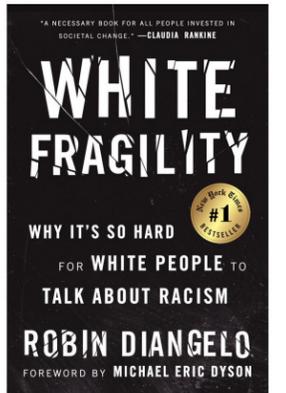


Ode to Joy
Skinner Organ
Restoration Campaign

Westminster Presbyterian Church, Auburn NY

Book Group

The Westminster Book Group will meet on Zoom on September 17 at 7pm to discuss *White Fragility* by Robin Diangelo. Some group members are also reading *How to be an Antiracist* by Ibram X. Kendri. Contact Ann Wiley at ann@annwiley.com for a Zoom invitation.



Refresh

The Refresh women's group has continued to meet throughout the summer! We are finding so much joy in seeing each other regularly and studying the bible as a complete, and *Seamless*, love story between God and His creation...Us! This study will conclude in September, and while we are still discussing what we might study next, we encourage any and all women to join us.



All women of Westminster are welcome and encouraged to join us in community and learning; or invite a friend! We will continue to study on Saturdays, using Zoom video meet throughout the study. For more information, please contact Aja Hahn or Shavonn Lynch at Refreshwithin@yahoo.com.

Westminster Begins Outdoor Worship and Enters Phase Two of Reopening

A note from Rev. Patrick D. Heery



Exciting news! Westminster will be entering Phase Two of its reopening plan in September. Our first in-person outdoor worship service will be on Sunday, September 13, at 9:30 am, on the church lawn. Just in time for Rally Day!

After much faithful deliberation and in consultation with state and federal guidelines and the most up-to-date medical information, your Session voted to move forward in our reopening of the church. Since June 15, the church buildings have been open to staff and small, pre-approved gatherings. Our safety protocols have worked. We have stayed safe, and we have faithfully protected the most vulnerable among us. Now, Session believes that those safety protocols will allow us to take the next step in coming back together.

After September 6, Phase Two will allow for occasional outdoor services and larger gatherings (up to 50 people, never exceeding 50 percent room occupancy). During this phase, there will be no services in the sanctuary (unless weather forces us inside) and no social/coffee hour; all necessary precautions will be taken; and we will continue both our online worship and our mailings. During this time, we ask that anyone who believes they might be sick (with anything) to stay home; we also strongly encourage anyone with underlying vulnerable conditions to stay home. The worship of God will continue, just as it has these many months, in community with you, wherever you are.

This will be a time of learning. A time of discovering what works and what doesn't, what's faithful and what isn't. We will alternate between in-person worship, which will be live-streamed on Facebook, and our highly successful online-only services. Here's what the schedule will look like:

- September 13: Outdoor Worship
- September 20: Facebook Live Worship
- September 27: Outdoor Worship
- October 4: Facebook Live Worship
- October 11: Outdoor Worship
- October 18: Facebook Live Worship
- October 25: Outdoor Worship

No matter what, there will be a worship service for you on Facebook at 9:30 am every Sunday, just as there has been. But you will also have the option of attending a biweekly in-person service. Please know that new developments may require us to change this plan at any time.

In order to ensure everyone's safety, masks and distancing will be required. You are asked to bring your own lawn chair; however, we will have chairs available. We will have live music again, but it will come in the form of anthems, instrumentals, and solos/duets; there will be no congregational singing, due to its risk of infection. We will also restore the multiplicity of voices so vital to the worship of God with the return of liturgists and responsive prayer. No transportation will be provided by the church, but certainly individuals are welcome to organize among themselves. No childcare will be provided.

During this time, we hope you will share your feedback with us, so that we can continue to make the most responsible and faithful decisions for our congregation.

We have missed you so much. We are so excited at the prospect of being able to see you again, to worship God as the community of the gathered, to find peace and rest at the foot of the cross. But we also know that we have been doing that all along. We never stopped being the church. The gospel survived the cross; it has most certainly survived this. In fact, we have discovered new ways of being church, loving each other, and serving God. Whatever comes, know that you are held fast in the love of the One who made you, who searches you, and who goes before you.

Upcoming Sermons

Sept. 6: "Can music save your mortal soul?" a sermon about the power of music

Sept. 13: "Ode to Joy," a Rally Day and Organ Campaign sermon

Sept. 20: "The five daily questions," a reflection on the simple prayer that has given my life new purpose and worth

Sept. 27: "Seeking joy," a reflection on suffering and relief

Oct. 4: "Is God first or last on your to-do list?" a reflection on priorities

Oct. 11: "Never good enough," a reflection on feeling overwhelmed and becoming enough

Oct. 18: Westminster's Domestic Violence Awareness Sunday

Oct. 25: "From Protestantism to Protest," a Reformation Sunday sermon

Sermon Series: Discovering The Good Life

Beginning September 20, the Rev. Patrick Heery will lead a four-part sermon series on discovering the good life—a life that is purposeful, joyous, and authentic. The world, of course, has all kinds of different answers: be successful, be popular, be healthy, be pretty, be smart, be righteous, make money, do something world-changing, raise a family, relax, take vacations, buy stuff. The problem with these metrics is that, always, we come up short—never good enough, never happy enough. We feel like something is missing. What?

Real Talk

On **September 13 and 27, at 11 am**, following the outdoor service, Rev. Patrick Heery will host a **Facebook Live sermon talk-back** with open and frank conversations about faith. Much like the "Stump the Pastor" series in July, these virtual forums will combine prayer, music, Scripture, and interactive discussions, utilizing the comment feature on Facebook. You'll be able to pose questions and share thoughts and experiences related to the topic of the day. Part worship, part adult forum, "Real Talk" invites us to grow together in mind and soul, all in the intimate setting we have come to love these past many months.

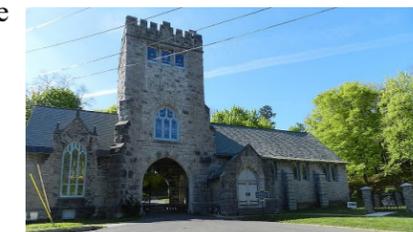
Rally Day Church Family Photo/Video

Every year, Westminster takes a big church family photo on Rally Day, with everyone squeezed together on the outdoor steps or the chancel steps. Obviously, for health reasons, we can't do that this year. But that doesn't mean we can't still have our **church family photo!** This year, we invite you (1) to send us a photo and/or (2) to make us a video of you (and your family, if applicable). We will put it all together in one big church family photo mosaic and in a special video. Photos could be you waving, just like we usually do, or could feature you on a fun family activity, or whatever you want. For the videos (which should be no more than one minute), you might say hello, share something you like about Westminster, share how you've been practicing your faith over the summer, recite your favorite Bible verse, offer a prayer, show you during a favorite activity (such as hiking or knitting or gardening) or talk about something you're looking forward to in the new church year. All photos and videos will be due by September 18, emailed to pastor@westminsterauburn.org (for larger files, consider using Dropbox, Google Drive, or another file sharing program). Anyone is welcome to submit; you do not have to be a member. Let's make this another great start to the church year!

Contemplative Hikes September 26 & October 31

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 26, from 10 am to 12 pm**, we will hike among the picturesque woods and wetlands located at the southern end of Skaneateles Lake, called **Bear Swamp State Forest** (located in Sempronius). It's about 40 minutes from Auburn, and is a fairly easy walk.



On **Saturday, October 31, from 10am to 12pm**, we will take our annual 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 1). As the name suggests, Fort Hill does involve incline but is otherwise paved and easy. This has probably become our most popular walk, which involves the naming of loved ones and placing roses on graves.

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

REACH and Children's Worship Center By Noel Lardeo

We want to wish all the children a blessed start to the new school year. It may be different, strange, even challenging at times, but you are all blessed and have our love and support. We are praying for you, and we are excited for you!

This year will look different in The Children's Worship Center and REACH groups as well, as we navigate how to do things safely and meet new needs. As always, your feedback is important to us. Thank you so much to the parents who answered our questionnaire. We will do our best to use that input as we shape things this year.