



Westminster Presbyterian Church

NEWSLETTER

March 2021



*Praise the Lord!
Praise the Lord, O my soul!
- Psalm 146:1*

Worship Joyfully. Serve Faithfully. Give Generously. Live Worthily.

PASTOR GREETING

For the last few months you've been hearing us talk and preach about Praying the Psalms. The sermon series is on the psalms, and our Lenten devotions are designed to help you pray the psalms.

Along the way, you've heard us say things like "The psalms are the school of prayer where we learn how to pray" and "There is a psalm for every occasion: a model prayer for everything life brings our way." Simply put, God has given us the psalms to teach us how to pray in the highs and lows of life. God wants us to stay connected to him in prayer, and the psalms are a means to that end.

But there is something more. When Paul teaches us about prayer in the New Testament, he alludes to the psalms. In Romans 8, he begins by explaining why we need to pray at all:

For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us. For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the sons of God. For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of him who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to corruption and obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation has been groaning together in the pains of childbirth until now. And not only the creation, but we ourselves.... (Romans 8:18-23)

After painting the picture of the brokenness of the world, he moves to the help we have from God. The Spirit of God helps us in prayer, interceding for us according to the will of God.

Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words. And he who searches hearts knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.

I think there are two ways to think about the help

we receive from the Spirit. First, in the same way Jesus prayed for his disciples (and for us) in John 17, the Holy Spirit of the living Christ prays for us today. I find it encouraging and comforting to know the Spirit is my prayer partner!

A second way the Spirit helps us in prayer is by giving us the words to pray. Romans 8:27 says the Spirit prays for us according to the will of God, meaning the prayers of the Spirit are the prayers we should also pray if we want to pray according to God's will. And, if we understand the psalms as inspired (in-Spirited) words, then when we pray the psalms, we are praying in the Spirit, according to the will of God. God has given us these Spirit-filled prayers to help us know how to pray. When we pray the psalms, we are joining our voices and our hearts with the work of the Spirit, who is already praying on our behalf. It means prayer is not so much what we are doing all by ourselves, it is instead our joining in, with the help of the Spirit, something that God is already doing.

So, friends, take heart! Pray in the Spirit! Pray the psalms!

Pastor Daniel

FROM THE PULPIT

Praying the Psalms

March 7: Psalm 137

Praying the Psalms when you are angry.

March 14: Psalm 136

Praying the Psalms when you think about the past.

March 21: Psalm 84

Praying the Psalms when you face death.

March 28: Psalm 22

Praying the Psalms when you are alone.

HOLY WEEK & EASTER SUNDAY AT WESTMINSTER

Welcome

Palm Sunday

We hear the shouts of adoration for the coming Messiah and then turn toward the shouts of anger as crowds call for Jesus' crucifixion.

- 10:00 a.m.** **Prayer on the Playground.** Kids and families gather on the playground. This week will include an outdoor procession of palms!
- 11:00 a.m.** **Sanctuary Worship.** Our sermon series on Praying the Psalms concludes with Psalm 22 - the one Jesus prayed from the cross.

Maundy Thursday

The darkness gathers as Jesus is with the disciples in the Upper Room.

- 7:00 p.m.** **Worship & The Lord's Supper in the Sanctuary**

Good Friday

Jesus bears the burden of sin and brokenness on the cross.

- 6:00 a.m.,
9:00 a.m.,
12:00 p.m.
& 3:00 p.m.** **ZOOM Gatherings.** We are offering four different times to gather for a brief (15-minute) time of prayer and reflection, marking the events Jesus endured at those times on that fateful Friday. ZOOM code will be provided. Exclusively online; join for any or all of the gatherings.

Easter Sunday

Jesus is alive, and we rejoice together in his saving love!

- 7:00 a.m.** **Outdoor Sunrise Service.** Unlimited Seating (bring your own chair); Reservations not necessary.
- 8:45 a.m.** **Sanctuary Worship.** Limited Seating; Reservations Required. Online Reservations available March 17th at wpccharleston.org.
- 10:00 a.m.** **Prayer on the Playground & Easter Egg Hunt.** Kids and families gather on the playground. Kids, bring your basket for the Easter Egg Hunt!
- 11:00 a.m.** **Sanctuary Worship.** Limited Seating; Reservations Required. Online Reservations available March 17th at wpccharleston.org.

Not able to join us for in-person worship? The following services are livestreamed and then available anytime on Facebook, Youtube, or wpccharleston.org

11:00 a.m. Worship on Sunday mornings
7:00 p.m. Maundy Thursday



PALM CROSSES will be available to those worshipping in person on Palm Sunday. If you are worshipping remotely and would like to pick up crosses for your family, you may pick them up from the church office Thursday or Friday, March 25/26 during normal church office hours. Please keep them in your refrigerator if you would like them to stay green.

If you would like Palm Crosses delivered to your porch, please call or text Dee Bee Wright at 843.729.7005. Leave your name, the number of crosses you would like and the address for delivery.

SUNDAY SCHOOL OPPORTUNITIES

9:00 - 9:45 a.m. via ZOOM

For Adults

Meeting ID: 856 1961 4490

Passcode: 12345

Dial in by phone: 646-558-8656

For Children

Meeting ID: 867 718 0847

Passcode: 1776

Dial in by phone: 646-558-8656

PRAYER ON THE PLAYGROUND

Sundays 10:00 - 10:30 a.m.

We are happy to welcome back our children and their parents for play on the playground Sunday mornings at 10:00 a.m. We will open the back gate to the playground for playtime followed by a quick devotion/prayer time at 10:30 a.m. We hope this gives young families time to get home and join us for our live stream worship at 11:00 a.m. All Prayer on Playground events are weather dependent, rain will be our only cancellation.

This time is designed for families of small children. Parents are expected to remain on the playground - this is not a drop-off event (like regular Sunday School).

ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL SERIES

Temptation in the Desert: A 6-week Study for Lent

Jesus' temptations in the wilderness after his baptism offer important instructions for us as we consider our Christian life. This study shows ways the temptations Jesus faced are still real for us today. Facilitated by Pastor Daniel, Pastor Lissa, and Lindy Coleman. Beginning February 21, join us on Sunday Mornings 9:00 – 9:45 a.m. on ZOOM. Study books are not required, but they are available in the Church Office if you would like one.

ZOOM Login:

- Meeting ID: 856 1961 4490
- Passcode: 12345
- Dial in by phone: 646-558-8656

HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

- 3/1 Maggie Bednarczyk
Kevin Dwyer
David Livingston
Sara McCoy
Ron Owens
Annette Waldrop
- 3/2 Josh Foster
David McCullough
Faith Towne
- 3/5 Sarah Miller
3/6 Gary Flowers
Claire Winkles
- 3/7 Andrew Crosby
Henry Earnst
Ella Stokes
Emmy Stokes
- 3/8 Christopher Housley
3/10 Diane Sloan
Lauren Smoak
- 3/11 Debra Frasier
William Mills
- 3/13 Love Moody
Susana Walters
- 3/14 Jim Drennan
Mary Patrick
Tony Gentry
- 3/15 Lee Jeter
John Livingston
Olivia Niblock
- 3/16 Joan Hutchins
3/17 Matthew Akery
3/18 Emma Louise Farmer
3/19 Travis Miller
Sally Rogers
- 3/21 Jim Frye
Lillian Grafton-McGlynn
Sophia Teitsort
- 3/22 Misty Boling
3/23 Regina Keene
3/24 Thomas Camburn
Chris Dorsel
Christopher Gentry
Daniel Grafton
- 3/25 Christine Towne
3/26 Manning Earnst
Laney Cotham
- 3/27 Lucas Ward
3/28 Jamie Hammersmith
3/29 Kana Gentry



MEN'S BIBLE STUDY

Tuesday, March 2

7:30 - 8:30 a.m. on ZOOM

Calling All Men! Join us for Bible Study the First Tuesday of every month. We're currently virtual (you must supply your own coffee and breakfast from home!), and hopefully we'll soon be able to make the transition to in-person.

Pastor Daniel is leading; join us for the Fellowship and Encouragement!

ZOOM login information:

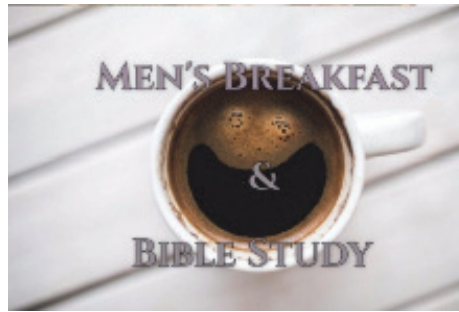
- Meeting ID: 856 1961 4490
- Passcode: 12345
- Call in: 646-558-8656

BACKPACK BUDDIES

Wednesday, March 17

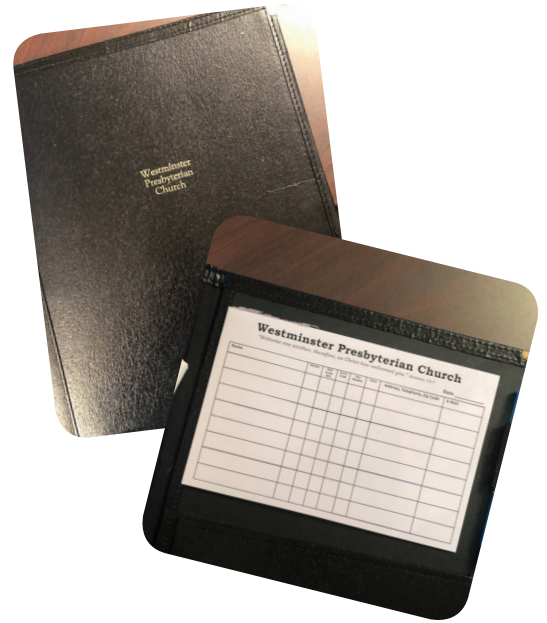
6:30 p.m. in the Breezeway

Join us as we pack weekend food kits for students at Goodwin Elementary School. We will pack outside in the breezeway wearing masks and social distancing. The work takes about 45 minutes, and all ages are welcome. Hand sanitizer will be provided, and masks are required. Please call Dee Bee Wright at 843.729.7005 with any questions! Thank you!



Happenings

VIRTUAL FRIENDSHIP REGISTER



The Friendship Register has changed a bit now that protocols for in-person worship are in place for safety and that many of you are joining us online via our website, Facebook or YouTube.

We want to still know you're worshipping with us by filling out the new Virtual Friendship Register.

In Person: Scan the QR code found in the Bulletin by hovering over it with your smartphone camera. It will request you to open a link to the Virtual Friendship Register Form.

Online: There is a link included in the text above or below the Livestream depending on if you are joining on our Website, Facebook or YouTube.

PRESCHOOL NEWS

The month of February was a very exciting month at the Preschool. This year, open registration far exceeded our expectations. To date we are just a couple of spots away from being completely booked for the 2021-2022 school year. This is so encouraging after the low registration for this past year.

The children celebrated Valentine's Day and shared all the songs they learned with their families via our school Facebook page. They learned about the color red and mailed special cards of love to their families. The parents helped supply goodies for the class parties even though no parents were allowed to attend.

It cannot be said enough that our Preschool families are the best and have supported all our efforts to keep our students safe.

Please remember to vote for your favorite preschool in Lowcountry Parent Magazine's Mom's Choice Awards.

<https://pnccontests.secondstreetapp.com/og/0a5f0481-33ba-4a4c-9cc0-1891e16ce232/gallery/269649378>

This link can also be found in the E-news. Daily votes are counted through March 31st.

PRAYER ON THE PLAYGROUND: SPECIAL DATES

Families with small children are invited to join us every Sunday for Prayer on the Playground at 10:00 a.m. We will open the back gate to the playground for playtime followed by a quick devotion/prayer time at 10:30 a.m. These events are weather permitting and will only be cancelled for rain. Here are a few special dates coming up:

***Palm Sunday, March 28
Children's Palm Procession***

***Easter Sunday, April 4
Easter Egg Hunt***

FAMILY MOVIE NIGHT

***Wednesday, April 7 (Week of Spring Break)
7:00 p.m. on the Playground***

This is an outdoor event and weather permitting. Movie, TBD, will be shown on the playground. Please park on the back loop and enter through the gate near the Scout hut. Bring a chair and/or blanket and a refreshment for your family to enjoy.

SUMMER AT BETHELWOODS

Spaces are filling up! Register online through Bethelwoods.org, families pay 50% of selected camp of their choice, turn in receipt of registration & payment to church office and WPC will pay the remaining 50%. The week Pastor Lissa will be there is full, but multiple other weeks are available.

SO MUCH MORE...

Look for Children/Family Summer activities & dates TBA! We are planning Family Beach Days, Picnics in the Parks, and Family Hikes this summer.

YOUTH SUMMER FELLOWSHIP

***Middle School Montreat Youth Conference
at Maryville College, July 13-17***

Cost = \$250, Deadline to register = 3/14

***High School Montreat Youth Conference
Montreat, NC, July 25-31***

Cost = \$250, Deadline to register = 3/14

**We are staying in close contact with Montreat Conference Center to prioritize the safety of our young people. Refunds will be made available should the event be canceled or restructured for virtual meetings only.*



VOLUNTEER WITH READING PARTNERS SOUTH CAROLINA

Westminster is serving as a tutoring center for Reading Partners South Carolina. Westminster currently hosts 20 tutoring sessions and there is a need to serve more children from the Charleston County School District. Reading Partners is looking to host up to 30 more tutoring sessions from Westminster. Those interested in tutoring must attend two virtual orientations before being connected with an elementary school student and beginning a literacy mentorship. Tutoring sessions last just over an hour and volunteers must commit to at least one session per week, M-Th during the hours of 9am-3pm. No teaching or tutoring experience is required to participate in this program and onsite support is available. All tutoring centers follow CDC COVID-19 health and safety guidelines.

If you are interested in tutoring, sign up via www.readingpartners.org/volunteer or email volunteersc@readingpartners.org with questions. To learn more about the organization check out www.readingpartners.org/southcarolina.

Reading Partners is a national children's literacy nonprofit that mobilizes local volunteers to empower aspiring readers in underserved schools to read confidently at grade level through one-on-one tutoring.

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THANK YOU FROM HANDS OF CHRIST

The response for clothing donations for Mary Ford has been so great that we ended the clothing drive on Friday, February 28. During the first three weeks of this drive we delivered twenty five boxes packed with non school uniform clothing, uniform clothing, pajamas, blankets, coats, shoes, gloves, caps, and belts all in the T sizes. The school is so grateful for your generosity. Hands of Christ is making arrangements on behalf of Charleston Promise Neighborhood, Azalea Avenue Church of Christ, Westminster Presbyterian, and Hands of Christ to supply a new uniform to students at the school. During this time of crises brought on by the Pandemic you have truly "stepped up" to help these children and families.

GLOBAL MISSION UPDATES

Brazil: Mission Partners Felipe and Laura Matias plan to be in SC for several months in 2021, and we are hope to have time together with them and their family. Please pray: “The families who live in the slums near Casa Semear. There are many in need during this time of crisis due to Covid-19. Please pray that these precious ones would come to the saving knowledge of Christ and experience His love and peace.”



Laura, Felipe, and family.



Guatemala: While the LaPatria School in Coban is closed for the 2021 school year, scholarship funds (which WPC helped raise) are being used to help former LaPatria families attend other area schools. The national church has renewed its commitment to the school, and we’re praying for a reboot of the school in the future. Flood damage at the Presbyterian Complex is being repaired, and the Antioch church continues its search for a pastor.

Russia: Pastor Anton writes that the Church of the Transfiguration in Perm (our sister church) has not been overwhelmed by Covid, but there are many who are suffering with lingering effects. They ask for prayer for an upcoming revival and ministries to men who battle the effects of alcohol and drugs.



Pastor Anton and Family



WESTMINSTER FOOD PANTRY

Always in Need

Did you know that our Food Pantry not only provides non-perishable food items, but also diapers, forumula, detergent, toothpaste and so much more.

Thanks to your generosity, we have doubled the Food Pantry outreach, now offering 72 food bags per week to people in the community.

For more information and a full list of items we provide, email Nita Rushton at office@westminstercharleston.org or stop by the front office.

MEMORIAL GIFTS

In Memory of

Bobbie Yandle
Beryldean Winter
Kenny Winter
Barry Van DeVenter

Given by

Hans & Tracey Friedrichs
Betty & Bill Winter
Clara Heinsohn
Jim & Shirley Seay
Brenda Jonsson

NOTES OF THANKS

A Sweet Valentine's THANK YOU for WPC from Mary Ford



From Fran Ligon:

Just want to send a note of thanksgiving for all my Westminster friends who have not forgotten me. I continue to receive cards and notes of encouragement. Especially reassuring is the fact that prayers are continuing for me. My progress continues to be very slow but I am pushing for improvement.

From David Wiggins for the Prayer Shawl



WESTMINSTER FINANCIAL UPDATE FOR 2020 AND 2021

The year 2020 ended with so many changes this past year that it is hard to recall a normal year and yet we have a ways to go in 2021 to approach a more normal time.

Our financial situation in 2020 turned out to be a pleasant surprise. Our giving exceeded our expenses by approximately \$14,000. The positive result in 2020 is through prayer and the generous giving of the congregation and friends of Westminster.

We were also able to complete our ADA bathroom, repaint the hallway in the Administrative wing, provide needed maintenance and repairs to our stained glass windows, and make some paving repairs.

The other good news is that we exceeded the budget in the area of Benevolences and Missions by approximately \$17,000. I am sure you agree that if we are going to exceed the budget, the area of Benevolences and Missions is the right place to be generous. Above and beyond that good news, we continue to support the food pantry, the Blessing Box, backpack buddies and other special missions.

By all measures, 2020 was a successful year for Westminster. Now is the time to look to the financial needs for Westminster in 2021. Challenges do face us in 2021. Our Stewardship Program this past fall focused on Jeremiah 29:11: “For I know the plans I have for you, declared the Lord, plans to prosper you and not harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.”

The 2021 Stewardship Campaign resulted in \$600,000 in pledges; however that is \$40,000 less than in 2020. Given the severe economic consequences of the Pandemic, this was completely understandable. The Session also adjusted the anticipated unpledged giving for 2021 by \$15,000.

We were able to hold our budgeted expenses similar to last year to continue to provide full support for all our Missions and Programs at Westminster. However there were two notable increases: the establishment of a Pastor Development line item in support of our Pastors and an increase in our insurance premium.

With the reduction in income and the increase in expenses the Session approved a 2021 budget with a Budget Contingency (the projected shortfall between income and expenses) of \$112,611. How was the Session able to do this? The Session has Faith that the Congregation will respond with their continued generous giving and the Session will be diligent in looking for ways to reduce spending.

Also, this was possible because of the generous giving of the Congregation in the past. We have gone the past three years with fully meeting or exceeding our budgeted giving and reducing our expenses. These extra dollars have been accumulated in the Session Discretionary Fund and available in times of need.

What can you do? I think back to Pastor Daniel’s sermon in early August on 1 Thessalonians Chapter 5 verses 16-18: “Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, and give thanks in all circumstances to God the Father in the name of his son Christ Jesus, for this is his will for you.”

May Westminster rejoice in the good financial situation of 2020, be in prayer for 2021 and give thanks for God’s will to be done in our Congregation.

Finally, if you did not make a financial pledge for 2021 or would like to increase your pledge, you may do so by emailing bookkeeper Tommye Owen at finance@wpccharleston.org.

Norman Hook, Finance Committee Chair

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Meg Dorsel, *Communications Coordinator*
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Carol Smith, *Church Hostess*

Sundays at Westminster

9:00 a.m. ZOOM Sunday School for Children & Adults

11:00 a.m. In Person and Livestream Worship Service
In-Person following Covid Protocols and also available on Facebook Live, Westminster's YouTube channel, and www.wpccharleston.org.

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Westminster Session

Class of 2021

Allyn Bruce
John Dounian
Norman Hook
Dale Norman
Michael Patrick
Paul Patrick

Clerk
Assistant Clerk
Treasurer
Assistant Treasurer

Class of 2022

Nancy Dixon
Sandra Pell
Kendall Ramsay
Carole Russell
Nathan Snider
Graham Wade

Priscilla Holtzclaw
Carole Russell
Doug Earnst
Patty Stokes

Class of 2023

Matthew Akery
David Boyd
Earl Frasier
Brenda Gibson
Tim Platts
Nathan Ward