

WESTMINSTER

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH



NEWSLETTER

June 2024

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Portage, MI 49002
(269) 344-3966

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Welcome Statement

We open our doors to all persons to join in worship, fellowship, educational programs and service.



We welcome into membership all who profess faith in Jesus Christ without regard to gender, age, race, ethnic origin, socio-economic status, sexual orientation, disability, or any other human condition.



We elect and ordain as leaders in the church persons who are called by God and committed to serving the Lord Jesus Christ in the Church.

Adopted by the Session, May 18, 2009



Cover Art: Our Art Festival Committee Prize winner
"Fifth Year No Mow" by Elizabeth Henderson

June Birthdays

1	Hillary Ruimveld	16	Kelly Schultz
2	Eliza Murphy	20	Rachel Netz
	Francis Cirvencic	24	June Waber
3	Mary Anderson		Barb Daniels
7	Carol Madison		Don Sexton
	Zoey Kirkwood	25	Charlie Vogel
11	Ethan Dunlop	28	Elexa Fererra
13	Caitlyn Cardwell		Tim Bachleda
	Preston Eakins	29	Pat Kurtz
15	Paul Terpstra		

Anniversaries

4	Karl & Dee Busching
5	Dan & Kathy Stuut
6	Laurie & David Nic
7	Bob & Nancy Husk
12	Tim Finton & Linda DeYoung
30	Don & Beth Myer
	Fred & Sandy Welch





WELCOME TO OUR STAFF

We are very pleased to welcome Nathan Schultz to our staff as Interim Bookkeeper. Nathan has been part of Westminster as long as he can remember, and was confirmed in 2011. He is a 2019 graduate of Western Michigan University, with a degree in Accounting. Nathan also serves United Campus Ministry as their Bookkeeper/Business manager. We are very grateful that Nathan was able and willing to step in as we had to find a new Bookkeeper on very short notice, when our previous Bookkeeper Audrey Curry had to resign due to illness. Having served on our Financial Review team, Nathan was already familiar with our church finances. This has enabled a very smooth transition. Nathan has great attention to detail and a commitment to doing a good job. Please give him your support as he continues to learn the ins and outs of this new role.



We remain very grateful for Audrey Curry's service as Westminster's Bookkeeper for the past four years. Audrey's dedication, skill and careful, detail-oriented record-keeping was a great support to our staff and leaders and a real gift to our congregation. Please continue to hold her (and her family) in prayer.



Please send joys and concerns for the Prayer List each week by Thursday noon. The Prayer List will be sent out by e-mail on Thursday and postal-mailed to those who are home bound.

Thank you for sharing your joys and concerns with others and for praying for the concerns shared.

OUR OFFICE HOURS :

Mondays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays: 9 am to 4:30 pm



We hope you've been enjoying our **2024 Westminster Art Festival** on the theme "Grounded." We have had a wonderful response to this year's exhibit from those who have attended events or visited during open hours. We've also had some terrific publicity – on WMUK's Art Beat and a super article published by Second Wave Media.

Books are now available, too! (Suggested donation \$5) They are beautiful and include all the poetry and images of all of the art work.

Awards were presented on Friday, May 10 by our jurors Conrad Kaufman (visual art) and Anita Skeen (poetry). Conrad and Anita shared their thoughts about the pieces they chose, and we got to hear the prize-winning poems.

The First Prize-winning poem was "FYI" by Janice Zerfas.

Other winning poems are noted in the book.

First Prize for visual art went to Dawn Edwards for her felted wool work, "Our House." Dawn was one of several artists and poets who were guest speakers at Sunday Adult Ed in May. All of them were fascinating and graciously shared about their work and inspiration.

The poetry workshop with Anita Skeen on May 11 was attended by twelve people, who learned a lot and were inspired by the art in the exhibit.



Coming up: OPEN MIC Poetry Night Friday, May 31, 6 pm

Read your own poems or just come to hear poets' share their work

CLOSING CELEBRATION Thursday June 13, 5 -7 pm

Brass quintet "***The Five Directions***" will be our guests for this event, the "People's Choice Prize" will be presented, and the 2025 theme will be announced. There will also be some tasty and pretty treats! We hope you'll join us.

Come see the exhibit, if you haven't already. It's open during church office hours and other times listed on the website: <https://www.westminsterartfestival.org/>

Invite a friend! People's Choice voting continues until June 13.

Summer Worship

We know that this season offers nice weather for being outdoors, long-awaited vacations, and opportunities to spend time with friends and family—yay for all of that! Those things, plus the more relaxed pace of summer sometimes means taking most of these months “off” from church, especially since many of our church activities *do* take a summer break. However, we still have worship every Sunday! And **we hope you’ll come when you can**. Summertime worship is lovely in a lot of ways. Yes, it is occasionally warm, but we have fans and open doors. The atmosphere is informal and relaxed. Sometimes Coffee Plus is outside after the service. We get to enjoy a variety of special music, and usually a guest preacher or two. And if you have hymn or song requests, this is a great time to ask! Out of town guests? Bring them, and we will welcome them warmly. So do plan to join us for worship this summer. You’ll be glad you did!



WORSHIP IN JUNE

Summer Sermon Series begins “Food for Thought”

June 2 John 2:1-11 “Wedding Feast” **Communion**

Graduate recognition

Our choir’s last Sunday before summer break.

June 9 Luke 14:1-24 “Another Dinner Party”

Special music: Nathaniel Chui, trombone

June 16 Genesis 2:15-17; 3:1-24 “Appetizers”

Fathers’ Day

Special music: Peter Formank, reeds

June 23 Genesis 18:1-8 “Feeding Strangers”

Special music: Chris Garrett, French horn

June 30 Rev. John Best will be our guest preacher.

Special music: Jesse Williams, reeds





2024 WESTMINSTER GRADUATES

~Please join us on Sunday, June 3 during worship to honor these Graduates~

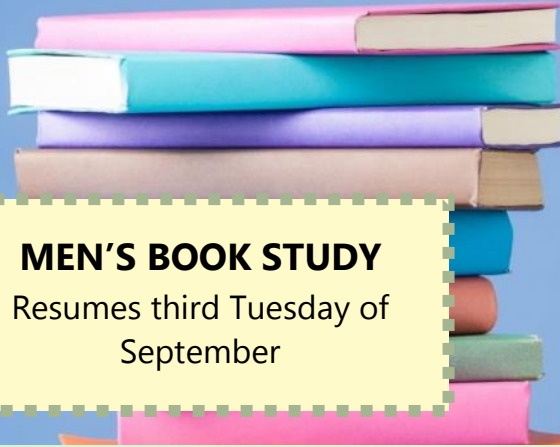
Abby Dunlop – graduated from Western Michigan University in December 2023 with a Bachelors in Health Services and Sciences and a minor in Addiction Studies; She is currently working at Lighthouse Autism Center as a Registered Behavior Technician. She has plans to enroll at Ball State University soon to work on her Masters in Applied Behavioral Analysis.

Annie Cardwell – has graduated from the University of Michigan – Medical School with her Doctorate. She plans to practice Family Medicine and will be starting her residency in Denver in June 2024.



Congratulations are in order!

- Leslie Ashbaugh** has been promoted to Manager at Consumers Credit Union Millwood Branch
- Val Glasscock** is now the Market Manager at the Texas Township Farmers' Market
- Kathy Stuut** has been elected President of the Michigan Medical Assistants Association
- Lisa Buesing** has been accepted into the "Cultivating the Gift of Preaching" Program, an initiative of our Synod to enable lay people to gain or develop preaching skills.



MEN'S BOOK STUDY

Resumes third Tuesday of September

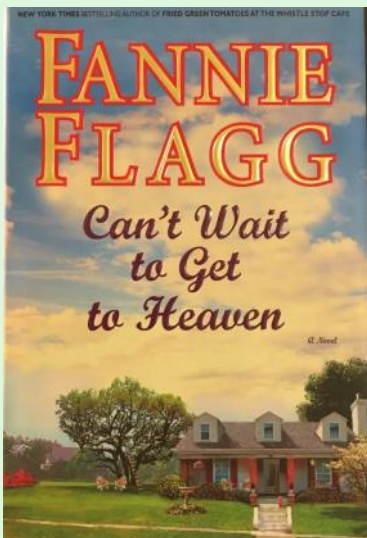
WEDNESDAY MORNING BIBLE STUDY

Resumes the 2nd Wednesday of September

Wish to borrow tables or chairs or other items from the church?

PLEASE CONTACT THE CHURCH OFFICE FIRST! We need to be able to keep track of where they are in case we need to set up for an event.

Please return borrowed items within a day or two as others may also wish to use them. Thank you!



FAITH BOOK CLUB

Next meeting: Tuesday, July 9, 7 pm **on Zoom**

Our book will be:

CAN'T WAIT TO GET TO HEAVEN

by Fannie Flagg

New to FBC?

Let Lorie Leak know if you need the Zoom link.

FROM THE PASTORS' DESK

Somebody recently asked another member of our church staff if that person knew what Jerry and I do all week. It made me laugh, because I barely know how to answer that question. I'm pretty sure that everybody knows we don't spend Monday through Saturday watching birds and reading murder mysteries (although wouldn't that be nice?!). But what do we do? Well, that depends on the week, and really, the possibilities arepretty open-ended!

A little sampling of what I've done over the past week or so: chosen some hymns for worship, prepared a bulletin, written a sermon, helped lead worship, cleaned up candle-wax, provided support to new staff members, dealt with a request for some assistance with rent, helped a family inter the ashes of a beloved church member in our memorial garden, read the Faith Book Club book, baked a couple of cakes for a PW event, enjoyed heart-warming fellowship at that same event, officiated at a wedding, reviewed monthly financial reports, welcomed Art Festival visitors, tried with limited success to clean up my desk, sent many emails, led discussion with our Racial Equity Group, made plans for a Memorial Service, and listened as several people shared about health crises and other things they're struggling with. Probably several other things, too, that I can't remember. I do remember that the week included both laughter and tears.

I share this not for sympathy (none needed) nor to boast of hard work (some of it was, but much was also enjoyable) but just to say that being a pastor encompasses a lot of different stuff. Some of it is what you might expect – preparations for Sunday worship, regular meetings, praying with folks who are sick – and some is not at all predictable. Sometimes we're looking up the meaning of Greek words and sometimes we're trying to un-jam the copier. The juxtaposition of ordinary, even annoying, tasks with "big" things like theology or questions of life and death is actually, for me, one of the charms of this work. "We live a whole life," we say in our intention statement, and ministry often feels like that to me. It reflects the diverse needs and tasks and emotions that are part of life. I don't feel that the "little" tasks are a waste of time. I do believe that God is present in the ordinary, daily, unexceptional tasks that are part of church life, as much as in the more obviously "sacred" moments.

Sometimes I do feel like I'm juggling a lot of balls. But I love the fact that I get to do so many and such varied things. I appreciate that sometimes I get to be creative, and at other times leadership or interpersonal skills are needed. I grow in faith through engaging both the Bible and the issues of our world. I get to follow my curiosity and to respond to yours.



I feel really blessed to do ...whatever it is I do from week to week. I'm never bored. I'm grateful I get to do it here, with you. And I look forward to next week, and the next... whatever they may bring.

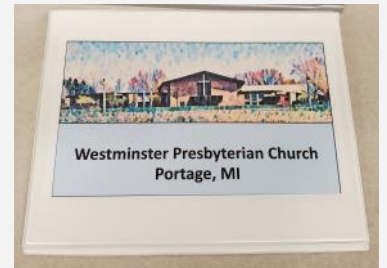
Peace,

Janet



THANK YOU!!

Thank you to the worship committee and all who helped to choose, compile and organize our new worship sign-in folders. They really sharpen up our worship space.



THANK YOU to all who have responded to our survey about your experience of online worship participation. We appreciate your feedback! It will help us to serve both in-person and virtual worship participants better.

Here is the link if you haven't responded and still wish to do so:



www.bit.ly/wpconlinesurvey

Questions? Talk to Matt Ray, Director of Engagement and Communications.

Our Intention Statement

At Westminster Church
we live a whole life in response to God
attentively
together
engaging the world
for the good of all
following Jesus Christ.



adopted by the Session, April 25, 2011

Get Connected, Build Relationships, Enjoy Exercise!

Play Pickleball (WPC Gym)

Monday & Thursday mornings 9-11 am

Tuesday evenings, 6:30-8:30 pm

Play Volleyball (WPC Gym)

Wednesday evenings, 7:30 pm

Outdoor Walking Group schedule for June

(7 pm unless noted)

June 6: West Lake Nature Preserve, 9001 S. Westnedge Ave.

June 13: 6 pm Location TBA.

“The Spazmatics” at Overlander Bandshell, 7810 Shaver Rd., 7pm

June 20: Eliason Trail, 1614 Osterhout Avenue

June 27: Y’OPA parking lot, 165 W. Centre Ave. (Frozen yogurt treat after walk.)



Craft Night!



Craft night is June 24 from 6:30-9 pm. Men and women are welcome. Bring a project you are working on or come and learn something new. This is a great time for fellowship and having time to work on a craft. So far we have had needlework, Diamond Dots, jewelry making, scrapbooking and drawing. What do you do? Please plan on joining us.

Green Team Announcement:

Work Day for the Flowerbeds

Monday, June 3 9am – noon

Join the Green Team to clean up the flower beds around the church and to plant native plants. Everyone is welcome to help take care of this land that we have been given. Please bring your own tools.



RACIAL EQUITY GROUP



We meet in order to learn, reflect and act in response to racism. All are invited to participate in the racial equity group. You may join at any time. We read books, reflect on issues and respond to the call of Jesus to a whole life, as a Matthew 25 congregation. We are currently reading *The 7 Deadly Sins of White Christian Nationalism: A Call to Action* by Carter Heyward.

At our May meeting, we reviewed a joint meeting with a group at First Presbyterian Church, Kalamazoo, where guests from the Justice League of Greater Lansing - Willye Bryan, Prince Solace, and Rev. Stanley Jenkins - shared their work in the Lansing area on racial justice. They gave historical background on the racial wealth gap and reparations, and discussed solutions. Our group recognizes the need to act to address racism and plans to work with First Presbyterian on this.

Our group also plans to attend more theater productions from the Face Off Theatre and visit the Charles Wright Museum in Detroit on July 16. Meet at church at 7:30 am to carpool). The drive is approximately two hours one way and we will spend the day in Detroit. The cost is \$15 for admission to the museum (\$12 for those 62 and older). Please let us know by Friday, July 12, 2024 as we plan to purchase tickets ahead of time. Contact Barb Daniels, Paula Schriemer, or Cindy Green know if you are interested in attending this or other upcoming events:

Sunday, June 9	WPC Racial Equity Meeting	3:30 pm	Church
Sunday, June 23	Harlem Renaissance	2:00 pm	Face Off Theatre, dinner following
Tuesday, July 16	Charles H. Wright Museum	7:30 am	Detroit, meet at church
Sunday, August 11	WPC Racial Equity Meeting	3:30 pm	Church



In keeping with the mission of supporting youth in need, WPC has chosen Ripple Effects Community Inclusion Center in Portage as the recipient of the local portion of the May 19 Pentecost offering. I'd like to share what Ripple Effects is and what it means to our family.

Ripple Effects' mission is to be a place where individuals of all abilities, backgrounds and ages can find community, support and opportunity, a place where everyone belongs and thrives. CEO Lauren Cavalli, a foster/adoptive mom and behavioral therapist, recognized the need for this type of facility for families in our area and has worked tirelessly to make her vision a reality.



I have attended many Ripple Effects programs since it opened last fall. My 12 year old daughter Aliya has attended cooking, beauty and dance activities and day camps. We attend free monthly Family Fun Nights with games and snacks. Most importantly, Aliya has made several friends there, and their mothers and I have become friends as well.

Ripple Effects has something for everyone. There are ping pong and pool tables, a video game room, a sensory room, a sensory friendly hair salon, a full kitchen and a caregiver's room where parents can have adult conversation while their children enjoy the many games, puzzles, toys, Legos and art supplies. There is a foster closet with clothes and supplies for families in need.

Two mornings a week there are mom and baby playgroups and Saturday mornings feature coffee and conversation for neurodivergent adults. They are in the licensing process for adding a preschool which is being delayed as they deal with structural damage from the May tornado.

Our donation will be greatly appreciated to help Ripple Effects continue its mission of inclusion for all. I encourage you to visit the center at 2255 W. Centre Avenue in the building that was formerly an adult day care center.



Debbie Netz

~Donations to the Pentecost Offering will be received through June 30~





Mission team is looking for nominations for the Westminster Peace Prize. This is awarded to a local person or organization doing notable work in the area of peacemaking. To nominate someone send an email to Fred Welch with the name/ organization, contact information and reason for the nomination. The mission team may contact you for more information or ask you to speak to it at their August meeting. Deadline for nominations is August 1



CONGREGATIONAL LIFE NEWS

Happy Spring! (Almost Summer!)

Here is a link to all the area summer outdoor concerts:

Summertime Live kalamazooarts.org

(Or if you go to the kalamazooarts.org website, click on "Programs" and then "Concerts in the Park and Summertime Live" tabs).

We will be posting sign up lists for some of the concerts on our Westminster Bulletin Board in the narthex. The idea is: find other Westminster folks to meet there and enjoy it together! Obviously, not required, but it's always fun to go with a group!!

The sign-up list for summer Coffee-Plus is posted in the narthex—and there are still lots of spots for you to volunteer! (And if you've never volunteered for Coffee Plus and would like to—we can train you!)

AND—BACK BY POPULAR DEMAND: ICE CREAM SUNDAYS! We're planning to meet at 4PM at Appleknockers in Vicksburg on Sundays June 30, July 21 (National Ice Cream Day!) and August 25. These are very informal times to eat ice cream, sit on their deck and hang out! Please plan to join us!





God's House / Our House...WPC Building & Grounds Update

We continue to make progress on improving the church properties.

On Saturday, May 4, a small crew arrived early to perform some spring cleaning work. We hope everyone is enjoying the transformation at the main, front entrance where weed pulling and tree/bush trimming took place. The sidewalk got edged and the parking lot curb got a good trimming to knock down the ever-present weeds. More tree trimming was done around the rest of the campus in preparation for lawn mowing season. A number of windows also got a thorough cleaning to enhance the outward view.

We installed a new door bell button for the main entrance; the old one had cracked which required a lot of effort to ensure proper function. Repair of roof-line flashing on the front of the building near the nursery room was also completed.

New valve kits were installed in the Narthex men's room urinals. A quote has also been received to replace the original privacy screens and restroom stall for the Narthex men's room; installation timing is not fully determined yet, but it will occur sometime this summer. This is the last, main floor restroom with original stall hardware, and we are excited to complete this Refresh activity.

The new water fountain in the Narthex is now working well after a few start-up hiccups. You can see how popular the bottle filler feature is if you take a look at the bottle counter display. The red flashing light can be ignored. This light usually indicates "time to change the filter," and the brand new filter is not the problem. Troubleshooting continues as time permits.

We are in the early stages of planning for a few new projects. Some are short term and some are longer term. The list includes: gymnasium lighting improvements (several lights are not working), roof drainage, and office heating/cooling replacement.

The Building & Grounds Team continues working to provide a safe, welcoming space while being good stewards of money and the environment. If you have a desire to help with this mission or have input on our facility, you can contact Jim Gluys with information contained in the church member directory.



Portage

P R I D E

Potluck Picnic

JUNE 2 | 12:30 - 3:00 PM

Portage United Church Of Christ | 2731 Milham Ave

All are welcome!

Grilled meat, veg option
& drinks provided.

Please bring
a dish to pass.

Family-friendly
event with fun
games and
activities!

Hosted by:

- Portage Prince of Peace Lutheran
- Westminster Presbyterian
- Portage Chapel Hill Church
- Portage United Church of Christ
- Unitarian Universalist
Community Church



Westminster Staff

Reverend Janet Robertson Duggins
Reverend Jerry Duggins
Parish Associate - Reverend John Best
Pastor Emeritus – Reverend Richard Jackson
Engagement & Communications—Matt Ray
Sunday School Coordinator – Leslie Ashbaugh
Director of Music & Pianist – Marie Kerstetter
Choir Director – Jason Zerban
Interim Office Manager – Laurie Nic
Interim Bookkeeper - Nathan Schultz
Custodian – Ernest Pueblo

Congregational Leaders

SESSION

Kathy Stuu, Clerk; Leslie Ashbaugh, Val Glasscock, Jim Gluys, Paul Paget, Carol Pratt,
Jayme Ruimveld, Paula Schriemer, Fred Welch

DEACONS

Ann Cirvencic, Moderator; Jean Cox, Cathy MacDonald, Kettie Chapeyama, Jodie Gerard
Karen VerHage, Mary Lou Rowher, Val Kirkwood, Nick Pratt

Administration

Finance.....Paul Paget, Leslie Ashbaugh
Personnel.....Carol Pratt
Building & Grounds.....Jim Gluys
Children & Youth Ministries; Faith Formation.....Leslie Ashbaugh
Adult Education.....Linda DeYoung
Congregational Life & Evangelism.....Paula Schriemer, Jayme Ruimveld
Art Festival.....Miriam Duggins, Jodie Gerard
Mission.....Fred Welch
Earth Care Team.....Eileen Best
Worship.....Kelly Schultz, Val Glasscock, Pastors
Presbyterian Women.....Kelly Schultz

Worship Coordinators:

Hosts.....Cindy Green
Ushers.....Sarah Sullivan
Liturgists.....Jean Cox
Livestream, Sound & Techs.....Kelly Schultz
Children & WorshipMary Lou Rohwer, Kelly Schultz
Communion.....Kelly Schultz