

# Westminster Presbyterian Church

# MARKING THE



# PATH TOGETHER

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1515 Helen Avenue,  
Portage, MI 49002  
(269) 344-3966

**NEWSLETTER**  
**October 2025**

## 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**

### Please send joys and concerns

for the Prayer List each week by Thursday at 9:30 am. The Prayer List will be sent out by email on Thursday afternoon and postal-mailed to homebound.

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



### October Birthdays

- |                     |                     |
|---------------------|---------------------|
| 2 Mildred Watson    | 23 Miriam Duggins   |
| Ann Cirvencic       | 24 Terry Tessari    |
| 6 Abraham Chapeyama | 26 Jayme Ruimveld   |
| 11 Doug Nettleton   | 27 Don Myer         |
| 13 Jean Cox         | 28 Chris Fererra    |
| 17 Paula Schriemer  | 30 Kettie Chapeyama |
| 18 Elle Ray         |                     |
| 19 Larry Pierce     |                     |
| 20 Laurie Bushnell  |                     |



### October Anniversaries

- 2 Kaylee & Jeremy Trinkle
- 7 Elexa & Chris Ferarra
- 18 Dave & Catriena Kauffman
- 20 Terry & Scooter Tessari



October is stewardship month.

Our theme this year is **“Marking the Path Together”**.

After Joshua led the Hebrew people across the Jordan River, a stack of river stones, a cairn, was made as a memorial (Joshua 4).



Cairns serve as memorials but also as markers on a path. This year we have the joy of celebrating a long pastorate and our ministry together but we also need to mark our path into the future. Your pledges are critical for marking a path in 2026. You will hear more about stewardship for Westminster this month.

### GET YOUR UPDATED VACCINES TO PROTECT YOURSELF AND OTHERS.

There has been an increase in Covid cases this fall. Now through the end of October is an excellent time to get an updated Covid shot and this year's influenza vaccine. According to the Michigan Department of Public Health all adults and children over six months of age are eligible for Covid vaccines.



Paula Schriemer MD

Regular and senior doses of the **flu vaccine** and the most recent **COVID-19** vaccination will be offered at the Portage Zhang Senior Center for those who are over 65 or immunocompromised on Wednesday October 22, 2-4 pm Call 329-4555 to register. Vaccines are covered by most insurances.

CVS and Meijer Pharmacies are also offering both flu and COVID-19 vaccination appointments for all who check that they need them.

### OUR REGULAR OFFICE HOURS :

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



## **Our 2025-26 theme is “Celebrating Our Ministry”**

“The call of discipleship is the invitation to follow Jesus. The condition for discipleship is to engage in a ministry similar to his. We are called to engage in life-affirming, God glorifying, agony-eradicating ministry. We are called to partner with Jesus in service....”

Raquel Annette St. Clair, *Call and Consequences: A Womanist Reading of Mark*

## **WORSHIP IN OCTOBER**

**October 5**

**WORLD COMMUNION SUNDAY**

Psalms 121, sermon:  
Luke 18:15-17

“Who’s Watching the Children?”

We will receive the PEACE & GLOBAL WITNESS OFFERING  
& present the 2024 WESTMINSTER PEACE PRIZE to **Peace House**

*No Children & Worship today*

**October 12 Let us rejoice and be glad in this day God has made!**

Luke 17:11-19

*Children & Worship*

*join us after worship to celebrate Mildred Watson’s 90<sup>th</sup> birthday!*

**October 19**

**Stewardship Season begins**

Acts 24:1-21

*Children & Worship*

**October 26**

**REFORMATION SUNDAY**

Genesis 28:10-22

*Children & Worship*



*Looking ahead:*

**November 3 is All Saints Sunday** Our worship that day will include a time of remembrance for all those among our church family who have died during the past year. We will be glad to include in that remembrance any of your loved ones who have died during this last year. Please call the church office or email their names to Pastor Janet by October 29.

**"We Gather in Thanks" November 23 at 5 pm** at the Unitarian Universalist Community on Shaver Road for our annual Community Thanksgiving service. There will be a community choir and a pie supper will follow. Mark your calendar!



### **HOST, USHER AND SHEPHERD TRAINING:**

All hosts, ushers, and shepherds are invited to a refresher training this October. Two identical sessions will be offered: either **Sunday, October 12**, or **Sunday, October 19, 10:45–11:00am** in the WPC Library. We'll review the vital role of greeters and hosts in welcoming new guests, as well as how to respond calmly and effectively in emergencies. This short training will help us strengthen both our hospitality and our preparedness as a church community.



### **COFFEE PLUS NEEDS YOUR HELP!**

We have an urgent need for a few more people to join our Coffee Plus crew. We are down a few people right now, and additional volunteers would be most welcome.

You can sign up for just set up (making coffee & putting out the snacks) OR just for clean up OR both! If you are new to Coffee Plus, we will teach you how to set up the coffee. We offer lots of support - providing treats, crackers, cheese and drinks.

Please contact Jayme or Val and we can get you started. You can do it just occasionally or regularly.

Thank you for considering helping us with this very important - and popular - ministry.



Jayme - [jayedruim@sbcglobal.net](mailto:jayedruim@sbcglobal.net) OR  
(269)998-1812 (call or text)  
Val - [foreveralegend@gmail.com](mailto:foreveralegend@gmail.com)





## FAITH FORMATION Resumes!

Typically the 1st and 3rd Sundays  
Meet Leslie after church – children of all ages for an hour of learning,  
crafting, playing, and gathering to hear stories from the Bible!  
Parents and Grandparents welcome as well!

### Upcoming Dates:

**October 5**

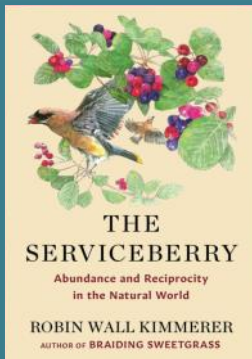
**October 19**

## FAITH BOOK CLUB

Next Meeting: November 20, 7 pm on Zoom  
*The Serviceberry* by Robin Wall Kimmerer

**New to FBC?**

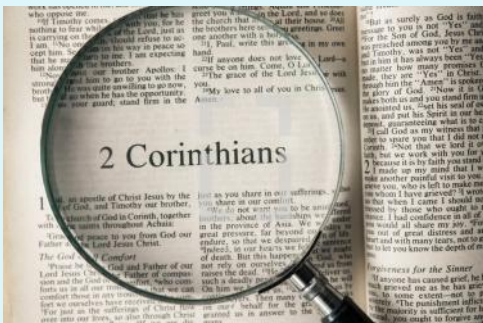
**Let Lorie Leak know  
if you need the Zoom link.**



## WEDNESDAY MORNING BIBLE STUDY

**Every Wednesday at 10 am**

In the choir room or by Zoom.  
We are continuing the study of  
Corinthians.

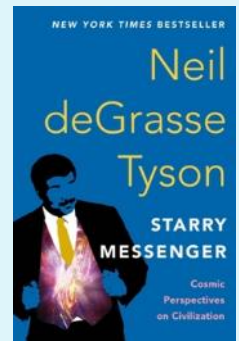


## MEN'S BOOK STUDY

**First and Third Tuesdays at 8:30 am**

We are reading and discussing  
*Starry Messenger: Cosmic Perspectives  
on Civilization* by Neil deGrasse Tyson

If you need help  
getting the book,  
contact Nick Pratt.





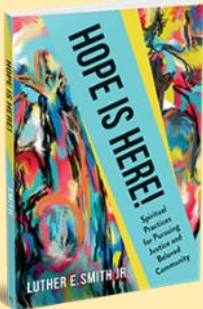
## SUNDAY MORNING ADULT EDUCATION IN OCTOBER

The seasons have changed and with that our Adult Education studies on Sundays after worship have begun again. Our first session in September was an insightful conversation about our ministry as a church in the world and as the congregation of Westminster.

On October 5 Molly Mechtenberg will be our guest speaker and will talk about Peace House, which is the winner of the 2025 Westminster Peace Prize. Beginning October 12 we will begin a 6 week study of the book *Hope Is Here! Spiritual Practices for Pursuing Justice and Beloved Community* by Luther E. Smith Jr. Copies of the book are \$14 but you do not have to read the book to participate in our conversations.

If you would like a copy of the book, please see Pastor Jerry. For a description of the book, see below.

The next meeting of the Adult Education Team is October 28 at 12:30pm. Anyone is welcome to join us in person in the Choir/Zoom Room or on Zoom.



Luther E. Smith Jr. writes in the preface, "Hope enables us to be alive and responsive to the wonders of each day. Hope sustains us through times we welcome and times that trouble us. Hope reveals to us opportunities to experience fulfillment. Hope inspires us to love with our whole being. Hope transforms us and the world for beloved community" (p. x). This fresh look at hope draws on five spiritual practices that help readers to develop and embody hope in concrete ways. These practices prepare believers for "pursuing justice and beloved community." Join us for Adult Education beginning October 12 for six weeks as we learn more about "contemplative praying, prophetic remembering, crossing identity boundaries, transforming conflict, and celebrating community."

## FROM THE PASTORS' DESK

Every once in a while things are said at the Wednesday morning Bible Study that I wish more people had heard. Last month, we were talking about 1 Corinthians 13, a familiar scripture to many. Two remarks bear repeating from our discussion. Nancy said something like: "I'd much rather be told, 'love is kind...' than 'let us love one another.'"

Her comment made clear to me why the "love chapter" is treasured by so many people. It tells us what love actually looks like in a way that resonates with us. We recognize it from the description because it does in fact reflect our relationship with those whom we love. We can see and agree with those parts that are true as well as those places we fall short. "Let us love one another" doesn't tell us how. Here's the full description:

"Love is patient; love is kind; love is not envious or boastful or arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice in wrongdoing, but rejoices in the truth. It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things."

(vv. 4-7, New Revised Standard Version)

We most often read these verses for weddings and funerals, but they're really for all our relationships. Paul can be so specific because he intends for the Corinthian believers to understand that they are not behaving this way toward others within the faith community. It's not actually advice for marriage or honoring our loved ones (though not irrelevant for those contexts). It's how God loves us and how God wants us to love others.

I use to think it described a love that only God was capable of, but each of the parts is not unreachable. We know many people who fit large parts of the description. And we can pick out the parts that each of us is good at and where we need improvement. Where you find this standard practiced, you find a healthy faith community.



In addition to our conversation about the concreteness of love, I talked about verse 13: “And now faith, hope, and love abide....” These qualities are essential for healthy faith communities. We practice them now, in the present. Not perfectly, but well enough that they shape our living both among one another and in relation to the world.

Paul is clear that our vision of these things is imperfect. “We see in a mirror dimly,” he writes (verse 12). But he’s insistent that the future of the church in Corinth depends on getting to work seriously on embodying faith, hope, and love.

I feel blessed to have experienced “these three” among you; in your curiosity to learn more about faith, in your compassion for the vulnerable in our world, in your care for one another, in your patience when I have failed to respond quickly or sensitively to your need, and in your kindness expressed through appreciation of the gifts I bring to this faith community. Whatever health we’ve enjoyed as a congregation surely flowed from the practice of faith, hope, and love.

Peace,

Pastor Jerry





Kalamazoo's Premier  
Barbershop Chorus  
Since 1941



Presents the 2025 Chapter Show  
**CABARET AGAIN!**

Featuring:



Great Woolf Quartet



Boysen Blue

Spaghetti Dinner and Show

**October 25, 2025**

**Dinner 5:00 PM - Show 6:00 PM**

Westminster Presbyterian Church

1515 Helen Ave., Portage, Michigan 49002

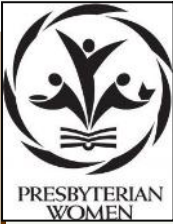
Tickets \$25 – Call 269-350-4085

We aren't able to schedule a **Blessing of the Animals Service** here at Westminster this fall... but one of our local "We Gather" congregations is having one, and you and your pets are welcome:

**"Blessing of the Animals"** at Prince of Peace Lutheran Church on Milham Road  
**Sunday, October 5 at 2 pm**

Pastor Rachel says that you have to have your pet on leash or in appropriate container and that you must be in control of your pet at all times.





## WESTMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN NEWS

### PW MISSION PROJECT:

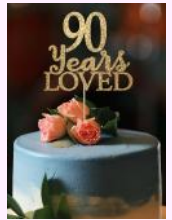
Join other women on **Saturday, October 18th from 9-noon** to create occasion cards for the WPC Deacons to give to parish members throughout the year. Materials, templates, stamps, etc. will be provided. No experience necessary. Bring a friend! This event will take place in the Craft Room at church. Please let Barb Daniels or Leslie Ashbaugh know if you plan to drop in! The **Walking Group** continues on Thursday evenings from 7-8 pm until October 30th. A schedule is available on page 12.



## CONGREGATIONAL LIFE NEWS

### HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO MILDRED!

Please join us on Sunday, October 12<sup>th</sup>, as we celebrate the 90th birthday of Mildred Watson. We will have a cake and other special treats during the Coffee Plus time, and there will be a basket for cards.



### COME TO THE THEATRE WITH US!

We still have a little time to make our reservation for *The Colored Museum* on Sunday, November 9th at 2 p.m. at the Parish Theatre.

"George C. Wolfe's razor-sharp satire offers a thought-provoking journey through the Black American experience. This groundbreaking play tackles stereotypes and historical struggles with biting humor and poignant insight."



We need just TWO more people to reach the discounted ticket prices!

For Seniors - the group rate is just \$20 (regularly \$25) and for general admission the group rate is \$22 (regularly \$32.) Please RSVP to the office so we can make a reservation at the beginning of October.

# 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 October

If there is inclement weather, we will meet at the entrance of the Food Court of Crossroads Mall to walk inside.

Oct. 2: Eliason Trail, 1614 Osterhout Avenue

Oct. 9: KRESA Service Center parking lot, 1819 E. Milham Avenue

Oct. 16: Bicentennial Park: 910 E. Milham Avenue

Oct. 23: Haverhill Park, 6577 Hampton St.

Oct. 30: Y'OPA parking lot, 165 W. Centre Ave. (Frozen yogurt treat after walk.)

**OPEN "PAINTING TOGETHER" TIME** for fun, encouragement, community and inspiration. Bring your supplies and join us any or all Tuesday evenings in October 6:30 – 8:30 pm.

We are primarily water color painters who are still learning but painters of all abilities and in any medium are welcome.



## NAVIGATING CHANGE TOGETHER

As you know by now, we are preparing for a pastoral transition in 2026, as Jerry and Janet plan to retire in June. Our Session and pastors are committed to making all aspects of this transition as smooth as possible. To that end, the **Session has appointed a Transition Team consisting of Kathy Stuut, Val Glasscock, Cindy Green, Paula Schriemer, John Kuchta, and Matt Ray** to help us through this time. They will help identify important tasks to be done, keep the congregation informed (including about Presbyterian processes and interim plans), and facilitate opportunities to celebrate the ministry we have shared with Jerry and Janet over many years. You can expect regular updates from this team over the next few months, but please talk to any member if you have questions.

## PRESBYTERIAN DISASTER ASSISTANCE WORK TRIP

Western North Carolina was deeply affected by hurricane damage and the rebuilding efforts will continue for several years. In response to a call for volunteers from Presbyterian Disaster Assistance, the Mission Team is considering sending a team to help with clean up, repairs, and rebuilding. All hands are welcome--no particular skills are necessary. We are looking at mid April in 2026 but the dates are flexible. We will stay for a week (Sunday to Friday) at the Canton Presbyterian Church, which is set up to host work groups. If you are interested in participating or have questions, please contact Eileen Best.

## RACIAL EQUITY GROUP NEWS



On September 5 we hosted a presentation by Alyssa Stewart from the Kalamazoo Community Foundation about the RxKids Program which started in Flint and since expanded to other areas, including, this year, the city of Kalamazoo. We learned a lot about the needs and concerns this program addresses, including infant mortality and maternal health (of particular concern in the Black community), financial challenges facing new parents, and family stability. We also heard about ways to support this effort. We discovered that there was something we could do immediately, as the possibility of making RxKids available to communities state-wide would soon be before the state legislature. So on our church picnic Sunday, we provided an opportunity for folks to write to their state legislators on behalf of children and families. Thanks to all who participated!

Our October meeting will be **Sunday, October 19, at 3:30 pm** at church. We will be making some plans for 2025-26 and choosing a resource or resources for our continued learning. We are eager to welcome new folks to participate, whether you can come every time or just occasionally. To learn more, talk with Cindy Green, Paula Schriemer, or one of the pastors. We're also looking forward to the play *The Colored Museum* on November 9. (See Congregational Life page for more on page 11.)

### 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



# WESTMINSTER PEACE PRIZE

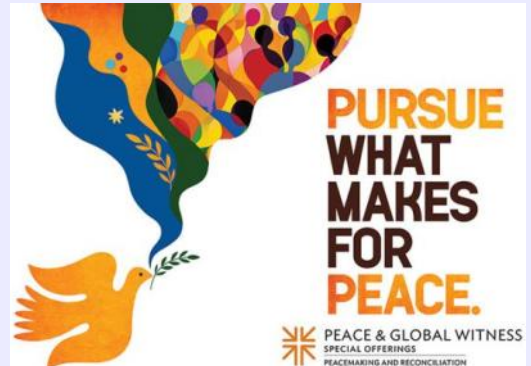
## **Westminster Peace Prize Awarded to Peace House**

Our annual Westminster Peace Prize will be awarded to Peace House, a local organization that is dedicated to building community in the Eastside neighborhood of Kalamazoo. Through their summer camps and after school programs for children, they provide a safe and nurturing space with green spaces to play, creative activities, and help with homework. Volunteers are an important part of their program and come from our high schools, Kalamazoo College, and United Campus Ministry. More information can be found on their website [www.peacehousekzoo.org](http://www.peacehousekzoo.org). During worship on October 5, Molly Mechtenberg, one of the founders of Peace House, will join us to accept the Peace Prize and tell us more about their work. She will lead the Adult Education session that day. Molly is also the director of Hope for Creation, our local interfaith environmental group.

## **Peace and Global Witness Offering**

The Peace and Global Witness Offering, one of our denomination's Special Offerings, will be dedicated on October 5. One quarter of the offering funds the Westminster Peace Prize to Peace House. The remainder of our offering is used to support peacemaking efforts by addressing systems of conflict and injustice across the Presbyterian Church (USA), with a special emphasis this year on gun violence prevention and our denominational work in Washington D.C. and the United Nations.


The offering will be received throughout the month of October. Please give generously to support this vital work.



**On World Communion Sunday**, we celebrate that Christ's peace extends throughout all creation. Whenever the church gathers for worship, we are assured of Christ's peace. We celebrate that we are connected, we are loved and we are not alone. We worship together and are fed from Scripture and at Christ's table of peace. The pursuit of peace in the name of Christ is part of an active, engaged faith — a witness to what it means for us to be the Church, together. Through participation in the Peace & Global Witness Offering, our church is extending Christ's peace throughout our community and our world. We begin at the communion table, with our siblings in every time and place, and we celebrate the peace we find there and commit to building a more just and peaceful world. God is with us ... and God in Christ is with us through the Sacrament of Communion, celebrated on World Communion Sunday. We are not alone. Peace begins with each of us.

MISSION NEWS

**Date change from Saturday to Sunday!**



You are invited to Hope for Creation's annual Harvest of Unity event

# Water is Life

Sunday, Oct. 19, 5 pm


Featuring Dr. Nichole Keway Biber, Water Protector, tribal citizen of the Little Traverse Bay Bands of Odawa Indians, speaking about the struggle against Enbridge oil company that threatens Michigan waterways:

**"Minogame nibi (the water is good)"**

**Free and open to the public**  
**A vegetarian meal and drinks provided**

Location: First United Methodist Church downtown Kalamazoo

Learn more and RSVP at [hopeforcreation.net/events](http://hopeforcreation.net/events)



Hope for Creation and the Edison Neighborhood Association present

# LEARN, GARDEN, GROW

**SATURDAY OCT 4**  
**10:00 AM-12 PM**

Tay's Farm, 816 Washington Ave., Kalamazoo

Visit the Edison Neighborhood Association garden and learn about pest control, soil science and tips for putting your garden to bed for the year from community agriculture educator Forest Gluys. Both beginner and skilled gardeners welcome!



RSVP at [hopeforcreation.net/events](http://hopeforcreation.net/events)



EARTH CARE NEWS

## Westminster Staff

Reverend Janet Duggins	jerryorjanet@wpcportage.org
Reverend Jerry Duggins	jerryorjanet@wpcportage.org
Parish Associate Pastor – Reverend John Best	johnmbest@gmail.com
Pastor Emeritus – Reverend Richard Jackson	
Sunday School Coordinator – Leslie Ashbaugh	lesliea83@gmail.com
Director of Music & Pianist – Marie Kerstetter	kpianogirl@aol.com
Choir Director – Jason Zerban	jzerban@hotmail.com
Office Manager Admin. Assistant – Laurie Nic	westminsterp@wpcportage.org
Engagement & Communications Director - Matt Ray	matt@westminsterp.org
Bookkeeper – Nathan Schultz	bookkeeper@wpcportage.org
Custodian – Ernest Pueblo	ErPueblo@aol.com

## Congregational Leaders

### SESSION

Kathy Stuit, Clerk; Val Glasscock, Carol Pratt, Jayme Ruimveld, Fred Welch, Tom VerHage, Alissa Worstell, Mary Anderson and Eileen Best

### DEACONS

Ann Cirvencic, Moderator; Jean Cox, Cathy MacDonald, Kettie Chapeyama, Val Kirkwood, Nick Pratt, Barb Daniels, Pat Kurtz and Judy Markusse Paget

## Team Leaders

### Administration

Finance.....	Fred Welch, Leslie Ashbaugh
Personnel.....	Carol Pratt
Building & Grounds.....	Tom VerHage
Children & Youth Ministries; Faith Formation.....	Leslie Ashbaugh, Alissa Worstell
Adult Education.....	Lisa Buesing
Congregational Life & Evangelism.....	Jayme Ruimveld, Val Glasscock
Art Festival.....	Miriam Duggins, Jodie Gerard
Mission.....	Eileen Best
Earth Care Team.....	Eileen Best
Worship.....	Kelly Schultz, Pastors
Presbyterian Women.....	Kelly Schultz

## Worship Participant Coordinators

Hosts.....	Cindy Green
Ushers.....	Sarah Sullivan
Liturgists.....	Jean Cox
Livestream, Sound & Techs.....	Kelly Schultz
Children & Worship .....	Laurie Nic, Kelly Schultz
Communion.....	Kelly Schultz
Coffee Plus .....	Jayme Ruimveld, Val Glascock

