

WESTMINSTER

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH



NEWSLETTER

May 2025

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

Email westminsterp@wpcportage.org
website www.wpcportage.org
facebook [facebook@westminsterpresbyterianportage](https://www.facebook.com/westminsterpresbyterianportage)

Our 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

May Birthdays

2 Nicolaas (Nico) Worstell	15 Renée Szostek	24 Steve Keizer
4 Rosemary Jungel	16 Eileen Best	25 Annie Cardwell
6 Charlie Golyar	18 Sean Kirkwood	26 Barb Knickerbocker
7 Stuart Werner	Cathy MacDonald	29 Paul Bushnell
8 Paul Paget	19 Judy Nettleton	Val Kirkwood
10 James Watson	20 Henry Vogel	30 Wilhelmina Vogel
12 Becca Murphy	21 Jeanne Trompeter	31 David Teugh
Don Taylor	23 John Kuchta	
13 Frances Potts	Calvin Kirkwood	

HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

May Anniversaries

6 Jason & Melissa Martin		25 Dave & Paula Schriemer
16 Sean & Val Kirkwood		26 Jim & Mildred Watson
18 Robert & Mary Anderson		30 Ed & Jayme Ruimveld

Please send joys and concerns for the Prayer List each week to Nancy Husk
by 9:30 am on Thursday. The Prayer List will be sent out by email Thursday and
postal-mailed to those who can't get it via email.

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



Meet our New Members

Lindsay Davidson, Bruce Bickel, Michael Poliak, Rachel Netz, & Traci Glascock

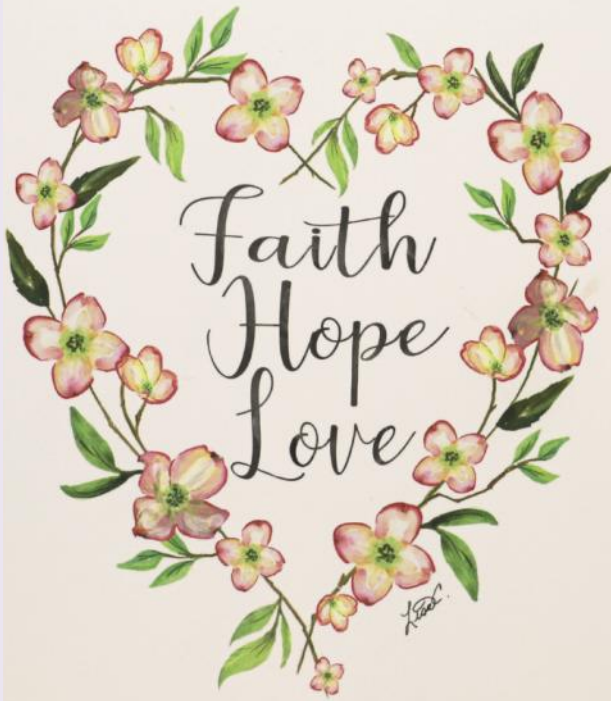


We are delighted to welcome five new members who officially joined Westminster Presbyterian Church in April 2025. Each brings unique gifts, interests, and energy to our community, and we look forward to growing in faith and fellowship together.

Lindsay began attending in February and has a heart for senior care and visitation ministry. **Bruce**, who joined us in March, enjoys photography and traveling and is eager to get more involved. **Michael** has been connected to Westminster since childhood and is passionate about sports, film, reading, and cooking. **Rachel**, who first came to Westminster with her family in 2019, was both welcomed into membership and baptized this April—what a joy to celebrate this special milestone with her! She loves being outdoors, reading, and traveling. **Traci** first connected with Westminster virtually after her daughter, Val got involved and is now part of our church family in person. She brings her love of drama, music, and cooking to our community.

Please take a moment to introduce yourself, extend a warm Westminster welcome, and help these newest members feel at home.





The May Magnificat

The world awakes, a vibrant hue,
With blossoms bright, and skies of blue.
The gentle breeze, a soft caress,
May's gentle grace, we now confess.

The birds sing high, a joyful sound,
In fields of green, where flowers abound.
A sign of hope, a promise true,
That life renews, fresh and anew.

Like Christ's rebirth, in springtime's gleam,
A resurrection, a vibrant dream.
May's gentle touch, a sacred art,
To fill our hearts, and start anew, to restart.

So let us praise, with thankful hearts,
For nature's gift, and God's great arts.
In May's embrace, we find our peace,
A renewed faith, that knows no cease.

REGULAR OFFICE HOURS

Monday, Wednesday and Thursday
9 am - 4:30 pm

Artist Attribution for this publication.

Cover Art is *World Music* by: Melody Allen
Page 6 Art is *Our Blue Planet* by: Mark Reile
Page 10 Art are: *People Make My World Go Round* by
Gay Walter
And *Turtle Earth* by Elizabeth Henderson



CRAFT NIGHT

Calling all crafters! Since the 4th Monday is Memorial day, we will meet the 3rd Monday, May 19 in the craft room from 6:30- 9 pm. Come for all or part of the time and work on your craft project or just visit. Our next meeting is June 23.

Our 2024-25 Worship theme is "CLAIMING HOPE"

WORSHIP IN MAY
The season of Easter continues...

May 4

"Love Embodied"

Communion

John 20:19-31

Taizé service

No Children & Worship

contemplative, prayerful, musical

May 11

Psalm 23 part 1: "The God Who Feeds Us"

Mothers' Day

Installation of Deacons

Children & Worship

May 18

Psalm 23 part 2: "The God Who Leads Us"

Children & Worship

May 25

Psalm 23, part 3: "Creation, Justice, & Belonging"

Looking ahead: Sunday, June 1 ... Ascension Sunday, Communion

Sunday, June 8 ... PENTECOST! Wear red to celebrate this special day

HOPE

is stronger than fear

SUNDAY MORNING ADULT EDUCATION

10:45 am only in the sanctuary



Adult Ed. May 4 – May 18 is sponsored by the Art Festival Planning team

May 4 (in the sanctuary) Our guests will be artists Norma Clack (painting) and Mark Reile (stained glass), who will share about their work.

May 11 Join Pastor Janet to discuss the art in our "One Planet" exhibit; come to share your thoughts as well as consider the different perspectives the art reveals. We'll meet in the narthex.

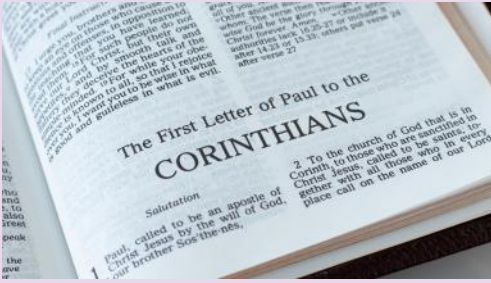
May 18 (in the sanctuary) Our guests will be poets Theresa Coty O'Neil and Gail Martin, who will read from their work and talk about the value of poetry.

This series will be in the sanctuary and only in person, not zoomed.

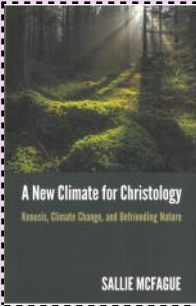
Listening Together Tuesdays in May

Join us to pray a text from scripture, poetry, or song any Tuesday in May from 7:00-7:30pm on Zoom. We pray silently using an ancient practice and then share how God has spoken through the text.





**Wednesday Morning
BIBLE STUDY**
10 am at church or Zoom
 We're studying *I Corinthians*
 Contact Pastor Jerry for info or Zoom link



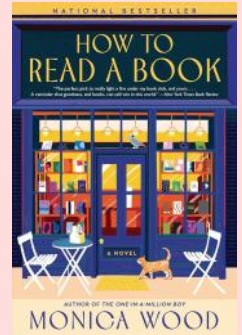
MEN'S BOOK STUDY

1st & 3rd Tuesdays (May 6 and 20)
 8:30 am at the church
A New Climate for Christology
 by Sallie Mcfague



FAITH BOOK CLUB

NEWS! We have switched our meeting night.
 We will meet on the third THURSDAY of the odd months so our next meeting will be Thursday, May 15 and we will read and talk about *How to Read a Book* by Monica Wood.
 For July 17 we will be discussing *Whiskey Tender* by Deborah Taffa.
 New to FBC?
 Contact Lorie Leak to request the Zoom link!



May Schedule for Faith Formation

Meet Ms. Leslie after Sunday morning worship and fellowship for Faith Formation. Faith Formation is for kids Kindergarten age and older. We meet for about an hour. We hear a Bible story, then follow it up with activities to reinforce the story. We use PCUSA curriculum "Growing in Grace and Gratitude." Parents are welcome to participate. Questions? contact Leslie Ashbaugh.



FAITH FORMATION DATES FOR MAY:
 May 4th & May 18th



Theresa Coty O'Neill opens her poem, *On Hope*: "This is the same planet on which I took/ my first steps...." Of the thirty-three entries into this year's art festival, hers is my favorite. Her affection for the earth comes through in this opening line and throughout the poem in images and stories. In her final story/image she writes of the death of her two day old son and closes with these words: "Burial made me think differently/about the way the earth reclaims us,/in all our fledgling guilt, in all our innocence."

Her poem encapsulated what artists and poets have been trying to communicate to us about the earth: that we have a relationship to it, sometimes characterized by guilt in our treatment of the planet, and sometimes by an "innocent" unconscious awareness of the blessings we receive through it.

This is the thirteenth year of the Westminster Art Festival, thanks to an initial grant from the Beim Foundation. Jim McKim, a member of its board and of this congregation urged us to come up with a project that would bring together children and the arts. It's gone through a number of changes over the years, but Jim's encouragement and the hard work of Lindsey South, Joey Burgam and Lynn McFarland built a solid foundation for current members of the team to work with.

I'm humbled by the way in which the art community has come to embrace this festival. For the second straight year, we received over fifty visual art entries in addition to the poems. For the first time, there was more art than we had space to hang. But more important than its success are the countless ways in which artists and poets have challenged and encouraged us to think about our relationship to the planet.

They remind us that we have not treated the earth well, that we have sometimes pretended to be its master when we ought to be its steward. They remind us that the earth gives and provides without thought of return: ground to walk on, air to breathe, beauty to inspire. I love that we can put an environmental theme out there that the community beyond the church helps us interpret.

I am so grateful to pastor a church that blesses me, seeks the welfare of the faith community, and wants to be connected to the community beyond the church. The mutual blessing of church and artists and poets is among the beautiful aspects of the festival. But the ultimate hope is that together we will mend our relationship to the earth, that we will awaken to the earth's "(re)claim" on us.

So I hope you'll come to some of the events and interact with the artists and poets as we celebrate this "one planet" on which each of us have taken our first steps.

Peace,
Pastor Jerry



Pastors Jerry and Janet will be taking vacation time April 28 through May 3 but can be contacted at home in case of emergency.

They will be away for study leave May 21-23. Please contact a deacon, elder or the church office if you have an urgent pastoral need.



Many thanks to everyone who made our Lent, Holy Week, and Easter services special: the Worship Team; our amazing musicians and choir; readers and liturgists; those who decorated the church with flowers, changed banners and moved chairs; our tech folks who made sure that everyone worshipping in person or virtually could hear and participate; the Congregational Life Team and Coffee Plus volunteers, who organized so many delicious treats as well as warm and joyous hospitality; Leslie who organized the Easter egg hunt; our new members, and of course *all of you* who blessed this community of faith with your presence and participation during this season.

Photo Credit: Val Glasscock



ART FESTIVAL NEWS

The 2025 WESTMINSTER ART FESTIVAL opened on April 26 with an artists' reception and music from local celtic band Selkie. It's always a pleasure to welcome Cara Lieurance, Michele Venegas, and James Spalink, who are not only terrific musicians but lovely human beings. It was a great start to the festival, which continues through June 12.

We hope everyone will take time to explore the art exhibit, which encompasses a great variety of styles and media. Be sure and read the artists statements, too. Many of them will not only add to your understanding of the work, but also offer interesting perspectives on what it means to care about our "one planet." Consider inviting a friend to come and see the art with you; it's a great way to share your church! The poetry book will be available in May, and could be a nice little gift for yourself or someone else.

There are a number of other Art Festival events coming up. Some of the artists and poets will be guest speakers for Sunday morning Adult Ed in May. The Awards Presentation will be Friday, May 9 at 6 pm (doors open 5 pm). The jurors will present the winners and we'll get to hear the winning poetry. We'll also have an open mike poetry night on May 30 and the Closing Celebration on June 12 will feature a variety of music (including some surprises from our choir) and the announcement of the 2026 theme. You have until June 12 to vote for your People's Choice Award pick (just one vote per person, please!) Please attend some of these events if you can, and help to welcome artists, poets, and guests to our church.

The exhibit is open during Art Festival events, church office hours, as well as Sundays May 4 & 18, 11 am – 2 pm and Saturday, May 31, 10 am – noon. We can also arrange other times – just ask. Groups are welcome. You can find more information about the Art Festival theme and events on the website: <https://www.westminsterartfestival.org/>

If you have questions or would like to host or provide treats for one of the events, or assist with other Art Festival tasks, talk with a member of the planning team: Miriam Duggins, Jodie Gerard, Val Glasscock, Traci Glasscock, Lisa Buesing, Marta Best, Renee Szostek, Pastor Jerry, or Pastor Janet.

CONGREGATIONAL LIFE NEWS



Our Easter Brunch was attended by over 70 people! A special "thank you" to all those who prepared food and who helped with set up and clean up. We couldn't do it without your help!

The sign up for Coffee Plus is up for the summer months. This gives everyone a chance to help out without conflicting with summer travel plans. Would you like to volunteer to help out? New volunteers are always welcome! We provide juice, snacks, crackers and cheese to get you started. You may sign up for set up or clean up or both. For more information or to set up a training time for the coffee pot, please see Jayme or Val and we'll be happy to teach you! (Contact info in the new directory!)

We have some fun and easy summer activities planned for the whole family. Save these dates for our popular "Ice Cream Sundays" - June 8th, July 13th & August 17th. We will meet at Appleknockers Ice Cream Parlor in Vicksburg on Sunday afternoon for fellowship and ice cream. We usually meet around 4 p.m. - watch for details to come.



We are planning to attend the Summer Concert Series in Portage on Thursday, July 10th to see Old Days - a Chicago Tribute Band. Bring your lawn chairs or blankets and meet us for a fun summer concert. The Summer Concerts are at the Overlander Band Shell - 7810 Shaver Rd.

PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN DESSERT

Come enjoy some good conversation, laughter, and treats!

Sunday, May 18, 3 pm at church

Theme: "Who are you?"

Bring: Write down 2 truths and 1 lie on an index card
(cards will be available at church)

You can also bring: a friend

Sign up: at church or by contacting Leslie or Kelly



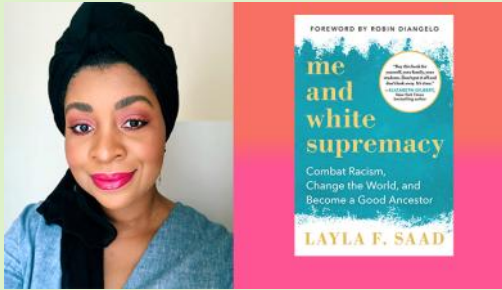
SAVE THE DATE:

Saturday, June 14, 2025
Presbyterian Women Summer Road Trip
to Leila Arboretum & Horrocks Market
Battle Creek, MI

RACIAL EQUITY GROUP:

Westminster's Racial Equity Group continues to meet monthly and welcomes everyone to join at any time. The group reads literature, acts on issues, and discusses issues of racial differences as well as how we come together in response to Micah 6:8 - "What does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness and to walk humbly with your God?"

Our next meeting is Sunday, May 4 at 3:30 pm at church. We are reading the book *me and white supremacy* by Layla Saad. We will be discussing the third section, pages 125 to 170. We have a couple more copies of the book available, if you want to jump in, but you do not have to read the book to come. Everyone is welcome to join the discussions which center on topics from the book. This part of the book explores white privilege, silence, fragility, and color blindness.



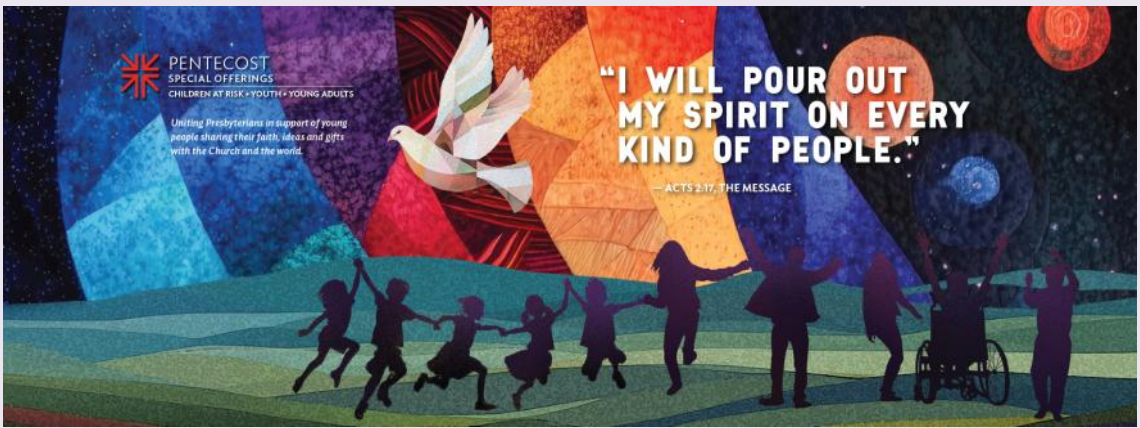
We appreciate all those who participated in the focus groups as we talked about the concept of reparations and shared information about a reparations initiatives in Kalamazoo. It was an opportunity to learn more, hear each other's stories, ask questions, and have a better understanding of what a reparations project might look like. As Saad stated, "Awareness leads to action, and action leads to change."

Several folks from Westminster are participating with others from the community in what is now officially the "Justice League of Greater Kalamazoo." Currently the work focuses on developing by-laws, making connections with leaders from the Black community, and forming a board of directors and advisory board. It's important to understand that this initiative is a long-term project and that care is being taken to do the work in ways that are thoughtful and respectful, as well as effective and sustainable.



UPDATED PHOTO DIRECTORIES AVAILABLE

Members and friends of Westminster can pick up a copy of the updated photo directory available in the church narthex for church and personal use only, please.



MISSION NEWS

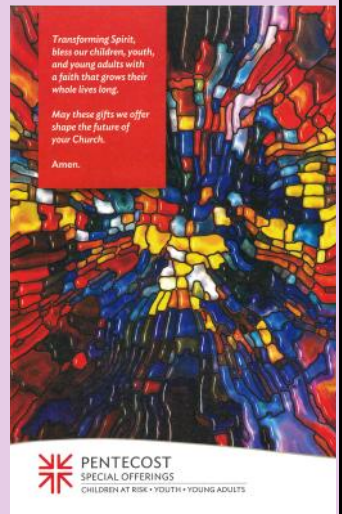
2025 PENTECOST SPECIAL OFFERING

The PC(USA)'s four church-wide Special Offerings help share Christ's love with millions of people around the world.

We will receive the Pentecost Special Offering on Sunday, June 8, 2025.

A gift to the Pentecost Offering helps the church encourage, develop, and support its young people and also address the needs of at-risk children. Forty percent of the Pentecost offering can be retained by individual congregations wanting to make an impact in the lives of young people within their own community. The remaining 60% is used to support children-at-risk, youth, and young adults through ministries of the Presbyterian Mission Agency.

The 40% retained by our congregation will go to a local ministry. Please give generously.



SAVE THE DATES
 Service Sundays: July 13 & 20 after worship



COMMUNITY NEWS ROUNDUP

CAREGIVER DAY 2025

Kalamazoo County's Area Agency on Aging and the Portage Zhang Senior Center recognize how challenging the role of caregiver can be and want to express our gratitude to all informal caregivers caring for someone 60+ in Kalamazoo County! Your work makes a difference, is meaningful, and we appreciate all of you!

EVENT HIGHLIGHTS

Keynote Speaker: Jill Terwilliger, M.Div., CPCC

Join speaker, Jill Terwilliger as she discusses Grief in Slow Motion. Explore the unique emotional journey of caregivers grieving the gradual loss of a loved one with chronic progressive conditions like dementia or Parkinson's disease. Through compassionate insight and practical strategies, this talk helps caregivers navigate the ongoing and often hidden grief they experience as they watch their loved one change over time.

Massages

Experience a relaxing 15 minute massage by local massage therapists.

Breakout Activities

- Mindful Movements: Move your body with a low impact cardio drumming.
- Guided Art: Unleash your creativity with this slow paced painting class.

Respite

If care for your person is needed in order to attend, let us know when you register.



HEALTH & COMMUNITY SERVICES DEPARTMENT
Area Agency on Aging



PORTAGE ZHANG SENIOR CENTER



Keynote speaker:
Jill Terwilliger, M.Div., CPCC

10AM-2 PM

**17
MAY**

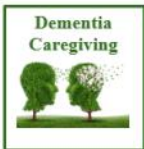
203 E. CENTRE AVE,
PORTAGE, MI 49002

**PORTAGE ZHANG
SENIOR CENTER**

*Registration starts at 9:30

Register Today!
269-373-5141

ARE YOU CARING FOR A PERSON WITH MEMORY LOSS?



This three-session **Dementia Caregiving Workshop** will help reduce caregiver stress by providing useful tools and information to those caring for a person with dementia or Alzheimer's disease.

Learn how to:

- Understand basic information about dementia and its impact on brain function
- Communicate more effectively with someone who has dementia
- Recognize stages of dementia
- Provide meaningful daily activities based on your loved one's interests and abilities
- Better understand and address dementia-related behaviors
- Create a positive caregiving environment
- Learn strategies and benefits of self-care
- Build your network of support



Dementia Caregiving Workshop

May 8 | May 15 | May 22

2-3:30 p.m.

311 E. Alcott St. Room 361

Contact: Patti Stratton, LMSW, 269-373-5141

This workshop is available in part through funding from the Michigan Department of Health & Human Services Bureau of Aging, Community Living, and Supports, and the Kalamazoo County Senior Millage



Get Connected, Build Relationships, Enjoy Exercise!

Play Pickleball (WPC Gym)

Monday mornings , 9-11 am
Tuesday evenings, 6:30-8:30 pm
Thursday mornings , 9-11 am

Play Volleyball (WPC Gym)

Wednesday evenings, 7:30 pm

2024 WPC Walking Group 7 PM

*Full walking schedule is available at church

May 1: Portage District Library front parking lot, 300 Library Lane (Garden Ln. East)
May 8: West Lake Nature Preserve, 9001 S. Westnedge Ave.
May 15: Celery Flats, 7335 Garden Lane
May 22: Eliason Trail, 1614 Osterhout Avenue
May 29: Y'OPA parking lot, 165 W. Centre Avenue (Frozen yogurt treat after walk.)





Westminster has been certified as an **Earth Care Congregation** by the Presbyterian Church (USA) for over ten years. We have just received our certificate for 2025. We are one of 331 churches in our denomination to be recognized for our care of God's creation. More information and a map of all of the Earth Care congregations can be found at www.pcusa.org/earthcarecongregations.



Hope for Creation invites you to

Climate Grief Sharing Circles

May 1, Thursday, 6:30-8 pm Skyridge
Church of the Brethren

or

June 1, Sunday, 4-5:30 pm
Portage Unitarian Universalist
Church

Free of charge and open to everyone.
Spots limited - RSVP required - childcare
available upon request

RSVP [HERE](#)



EARTH CARE WHILE CAMPING:

As we all prepare for our summer vacations here are some tips for camping in our beautiful country. Camp on durable surfaces, dispose of waste in provided receptacles or take your trash back home. Leave what you find for it could be the future food for a plant or animal who lives there year round. Fully put out your camp fire. Respect all wildlife and be considerate of other visitors. Pick up any litter as you walk the trails and pack it out. Dress for the weather. Always bring water when hiking. Wear sunscreen and a hat. Take only pictures and leave only foot prints wherever you visit.



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 Stuet, Clerk; Val Glasscock, Jim Gluys, Carol Pratt, Jayme Ruimveld, Fred Welch, Chris Rohwer, Tom VerHage and Alissa Worstell

DEACONS

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

Team Leaders

Administration

Finance.....	Chris Rohwer, Leslie Ashbaugh
Personnel.....	Carol Pratt
Building & Grounds.....	Tom VerHage, Jim Gluys
Children & Youth Ministries; Faith Formation.....	Leslie Ashbaugh, Alissa Worstell
Adult Education.....	Pastor Jerry
Congregational Life & Evangelism.....	Jayme Ruimveld, Val Glasscock
Art Festival.....	Miriam Duggins, Jodie Gerard
Mission.....	Fred Welch
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	Mary Lou Rohwer, Kelly Schultz
Communion.....	Kelly Schultz
Coffee Plus	Jayme Ruimveld