

A vibrant watercolor illustration of various flowers, including a prominent yellow flower in the lower center, surrounded by pink, purple, and red blossoms and green foliage.

WESTMINSTER

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

NEWSLETTER

July- August 2024

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

Email westminsterp@wpcportage.org
website www.wpcportage.org
facebook@westminsterpresbyterianportage

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

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

OUR OFFICE HOURS :

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

July Birthdays

- 1 Nolan Worstell
- 3 Mike Jungel
- 7 Barb Goodwin
- 9 Lisa Buesing
- 11 Stephanie Rop
- 18 Glenda Fricke
- 21 Norman Carlson
Michael Poliak
- 27 Anne Bachleda
- 30 Luke Boven

Please send JOYS AND CONCERNS

for the Prayer List each week by Thursday noon. The Prayer List will be sent out by email (usually Thursday or Friday) and postal-mailed to those who cannot receive it via email.

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



- 2 Leslie Ashbaugh
Marty King
- 3 Jason Martin
- 5 Alec Schultz
Dan Stuet
Kaylee Trinkle
- 6 Linda DeYoung

August Birthdays

- 11 Anna Schriemer
- 12 Grady Trinkle
- 13 Lindsay South-McKim
- 14 Leland Trinkle
- 15 Leana Best
- 16 Justin Boven

- 16 Rachel Boven
Jessica Boven
- Traci Glasscock
- 19 Bernie Rodee
- 21 Carolyn Campbell
- 22 Nathan Schultz
- 31 Helen Rodee

Congrats to Val Glascock on receiving the "Spirit of the Civic" Award at the Kalamazoo Civic Theater on June 1, 2024. Mike Artis, Civic Director of Volunteers, says that Val is reliable, dependable and a great ambassador for the Civic. She contributed over 400 hours of service this year and has already volunteered to mentor young people interested in stage management next year. Val stage managed "39 Steps" and was ASM for "The Sound of Music" as well as working crew for "Catch Me if You Can". We are so very proud of Val's witness of Christ's love and commitment in our community.



July Anniversaries

- 6 Stu & Mary Werner
- 7 Bob & Leslie Ashbaugh,
Paul & Judy Paget
- 9 Judy & Doug Nettleton
Anne Meyer &
Preston Eakins
- 10 Mark & Rebecca Murphy
- 17 Tim & Anne Bachleda
- 19 Nolan & Alissa Worstell
- 24 Ralph & Elaine Brand
- 25 Jason & Heather Zerban

August Anniversaries

- 6 Jerry & Janet Duggins
- 14 John & Eileen Best
- 15 Francis & Ann Cirvencic
- 16 Chris & Mary Lou Rohwer
Paul & Cheryl Terpstra
- 17 Steve & Marga Keizer
- 19 Kirk & Kerry Truesdell
- 26 Nick & Carol Pratt



Summer Worship Schedule

WORSHIP IN JULY

July 7 Guest preacher: Rev. Dick Cushnie COMMUNION
Ordination & Installation of Elders
Special music: Jared Norwood, guitar

July 14 *SERVICE SUNDAY*
Ruth 2 "Food for Thought: Leftovers"
Special music: Nick Rankin, violin

July 21 *SERVICE SUNDAY*
Mark 6:30-44 "Food for Thought: More Leftovers"
Special music: Megan Peot, piano

July 28 "Food for Thought: the Fruit of One's Labor"
Isaiah 65:17-19
Special music: Miriam Duggins, voice

WORSHIP IN AUGUST

August 4 "Food for Thought: Table Talk" COMMUNION
Luke 22:14-38
Special music: Lucas Mansburger & Rebecca Hill, vocalists

August 11 "Food for Thought: the Taste of Memory"
Deuteronomy 6:1-8
Special music: Mason Christofferson, trumpet

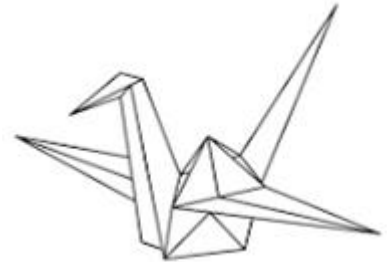
August 18 "Food for Thought: Manna"
Exodus 16:1-21
Special music: Fred Welch, voice

August 25 Food for Thought: a Good Life"
verses from Ecclesiastes & Song of Solomon
Special music: Patty Brill, alto sax



SERVICE SUNDAYS

Love Notes, Puppet Kits, Origami Cranes & More
July 14 & July 21



Please consider gathering after the worship service on July 14th and 21st to write Love Notes to members of our church community, help assemble puppet kits, band markers and pin ribbons for Malawi Matters (a program dedicated to the development and facilitation of HIV/AIDS education in Malawi), and make origami cranes to be given to patients in the children's unit at Bronson Hospital.



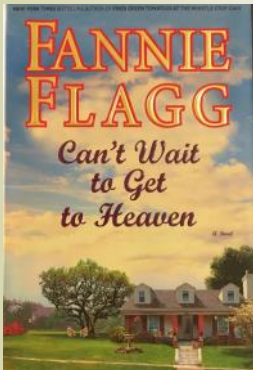
Serving others is a form of expressing our faith in and to God. God designed us to be in community--joins us as we make a difference in the lives of others.



Face Off Theatre Company presents "Bambiland" on Sunday, August 18 at 2 pm at the Jolliffe Theatre in the Epic Center.

Synopsis: It's 2019. Nic, a 28-year-old NYC-based journalist, has built her career writing gritty investigative stories. Her editor assigns her a story that could take her career to the next level: overtaxed Detroit homeowners. To pen the story, she must return home to Detroit after being away for ten years and finds herself facing what she's been running from.

Purchase tickets (\$5) online at <https://www.faceofftheatre.com/> Contact Barb Daniels for more information or to carpool.



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

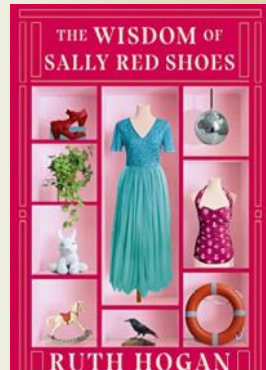
September 10, 2024:

The Wisdom of the Sally Red Shoes

by Ruth Hogan

New to FBC?

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



MEN'S BOOK STUDY

Resumes third Tuesday of September



WEDNESDAY MORNING BIBLE STUDY

Resumes the 2nd
Wednesday of September

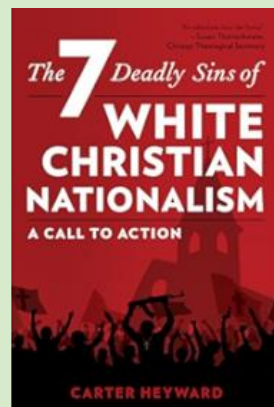
Contact Pastor Jerry for information

RACIAL EQUITY GROUP NEWS

You are invited to join us this summer as we continue our journey of learning about the history and present realities of racism in our society.

Come along to **visit the Charles Wright Museum of African American History** 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 Cindy Green know by Friday, July 12 if you would like to go as we plan to purchase tickets ahead of time.

You are also invited to join us for our regular meeting August 11 (3:30 pm at church), when we will continue conversations based on *The 7 Deadly Sins of White Christian Nationalism: A Call to Action* by Carter Heyward. (It's not necessary to read the book in order to participate.) We will also be talking about fall plans, including (we hope) hosting a guest speaker or two.



SESSION CHANGES

We are delighted to **welcome these new Session members, who will be installed on Sunday, July 7, during worship: Alissa Worstell, Tom VerHage, and Chris Rohwer.** Alissa, Tom, and Chris bring a multitude of gifts, interests, and experiences which will enable them to lead our congregation and (as the ordination vows say) “serve the people with energy, intelligence, imagination, and love.” We are grateful to each one of them for answering the call!

AND we are also tremendously **grateful for the service of outgoing Session members Leslie Ashbaugh, Paul Paget, and Paula Schriemer.** Each of these three has served two consecutive three-year terms, with a level of dedication beyond expectations. It hasn't been the easiest time to be on Session. We have experienced many challenges and changes. But Leslie, Paul and Paula have served cheerfully and stepped up to do what was needed. Leslie has led the Nominating Committee and also provided significant support in the areas of worship, finance and of course also serves as our staff person for Children's Ministry. Paul has been attentive to all aspects of our church finances, a whiz at preparing the budget and a leader of several very successful stewardship campaigns. Paula has focused on our congregational life, working with other folks to come up with creative ways to have fellowship events, helping us move forward to hire an Engagement & Communications Director and (especially) providing invaluable and expert guidance about safety during the pandemic.



Lisa Buesing's Report of the Cultivating the Gift of Preaching Initiative

From June 6 to June 10, 2024, I participated in the opening conference for this new program of The Synod of the Covenant. We spent our days in the Chapel at Alma College worshipping, learning and getting acquainted. Our workshops were overviews of the Bible, Reformed Theology and Preaching. Participants will spend the next 18 months meeting with their same small group via Zoom, in person in January and again at a conference in June 2025. I will spend the next 18 months reading about preaching and learning to be a better preacher alongside 20 other people from Michigan and Ohio. It is a very exciting program and I am so glad I have this opportunity.

FROM THE PASTORS' DESK

It hardly seems possible that our first trip to Acadia National Park in Maine was over thirty years ago. I saw my first Black-throated Green Warbler our first year there and a number of sea birds unknown to me previously. Tide pools, short hikes with ocean views, popovers at Jordan Pond House were just a few of the things that made the park a special place for our whole family.

We went on the offer of a colleague to stay in what was her vacation home at the time. We managed subsequent visits while Bob and Lyta were in residence. Though the girls were not willing to sample Bob's blueberry pies, they delighted in the wild blueberry picking excursions we made together.

We had known Lyta quite well from working as colleagues in Lake Erie Presbytery, but had only come to know her husband, Bob, in his vacation mode. Kind and patient with our children, intelligent and insightful about current affairs and a loving husband and father, it was always a joy to see him. We saw him for the last time a year ago before he finally succumbed to cancer.

This year's trip will be a happy/sad time as we join with Lyta, her family and their friends in celebrating Bob's life. They've planned various activities that were special to Bob along with a memorial service that I'm sure will honor the many ways that Bob has blessed us.

While we're there, I'll also be thinking about the special people in Kalamazoo who've blessed and shaped our congregation, some of whom we've said good-bye to recently and some from many years ago. It's really the people, past and present, who make Westminster such a strong faith community.

I am reminded of what Paul writes to the church in Philippi: "If then there is any encouragement in Christ, any consolation from love, any sharing in the Spirit, any compassion and sympathy, make my joy complete: be of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind.... Let each of you look not to your own interests, but to the interest of others" (Phil. 2:1-2,4).

Bob helped to create this kind of community around him. Many others have done so for us. And you are continuing this great tradition.

Peace,
Pastor Jerry



Presbyterian Women had a nice walk around the Poppy field at Pleasant Hill Farm



WMU Seita Scholars Welcome Pack Collection

Presbyterian Women are asking members of our church family to donate items to the Seita Scholars Welcome Pack program at WMU. The Seita Scholars Program is part of a larger initiative to change the college going paradigm of youth in the foster care system. They are a campus-based support program that provides holistic coaching and programming to college students with lived experience in foster care. Many Seita Scholars will arrive at Western Michigan University without basic household items. To help students fill this gap, the university is seeking groups who are willing to sponsor one or more welcome packs and fill it with supplies for an incoming Seita Scholar. OUR goal is to give one new male and one new female Seita Scholar a full welcome pack! Please sign up for the items you wish to donate, purchase the items, and put them in the designated tote located near the church entrance by Sunday, August 4th. All items should be full-sized and in new condition. Please contact Barb Daniels if you have questions.





This poem by Hildegard of Bingen, an 11th century German Benedictine abbess, writer, composer, philosopher, mystic, visionary and medical practitioner, formed the basis of one of our online "Listening Together" sessions in June. The participants loved it so much they wanted to share it with everyone.

God's Soul is the wind rustling plants and leaves,
the dew dancing on the grass,
the rainy breezes making everything to grow.
Just like this, the kindness of a person flows, touching
those dragging burdens of longing.
We should be a breeze helping the homeless,
dew comforting those who are depressed,
the cool, misty air refreshing the exhausted,
and with God's teaching we have got to feed the hungry:
This is how we share God's soul.

Hildegard of Bingen, trans. Carmen Acevedo Butcher



THIS I BELIEVE TAPES

Between 1994 and 2008 some Westminster members offered talks about their faith during Lent. Some of you have received emails that your own talk is available on cassette tapes or CDs in alphabetized bags on a rack below the library's white board. You can claim yours through the end of July.

There are several recordings (cassette tapes) of members no longer living but remembered as inspiring to our congregation. If you would like to take one or more, they're available first come, first served. Please don't take a bag unless it is your own or on the list below.

Doris Baar

Fran Mason

Rock Colingsworth

Jackie Martinez

Larry Harris

Peggy Neupert

Marion Harris (CD)

"GROUNDED," the 2024 WESTMINSTER ART FESTIVAL concluded June 13 with a lively concert presented by local brass quintet, *The Five Directions*.

The People' Choice prize was presented to Gay Walker, for "Joy Dance." And we had one last chance to enjoy the art. Overall, the Festival, on the theme of land and how we use it, was very successful, with a variety of events including a poetry workshop and an open mic poetry night, as well as opening and closing concerts.

Over the course of five weeks, we estimate that about 250 people viewed the art exhibit. We also were blessed with some great publicity, in local media as well as through word-of-mouth. Many of us had great conversations about the art and the poetry, as well as *with* the artists and poets. Over and over we heard things like "thank you for supporting the arts" and "I'm glad you do this; environmental issues are so important."

Many thanks to everyone who supported this year's Art Festival, came to an event, brought a friend, bought a book, or provided encouraging words. Special thanks to Jodie Gerard for organizing the open mic poetry, Miriam Duggins for compiling and designing the book, and Traci Glasscock for planning some lovely food for events.

The Planning Team would welcome your feedback and help as they look ahead to next year, when the theme will be "ONE PLANET." Watch for more details on this (or pick up a flyer in the narthex). We still have plenty of 2024 poetry & art books available, if you haven't gotten one yet.



IN OUR OFFICE

The Session is happy to share the news that our Interim Administrative Assistant Laurie Nic is no longer “interim” but will be staying on in the position. We are so pleased to have Laurie’s skills, experience, organizational gifts, energy and friendly personality in this important role, which provides essential support for the staff, for weekly worship, for congregational communication and for all the ministries of the church.



CONGREGATIONAL LIFE NEWS

HAPPY SUMMER!!

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

<https://www.kalamazooarts.org/summertime-live/>

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

SIGN UP LISTS for some of the concerts are posted 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’s room for you to volunteer! (If you’ve never volunteered for Coffee Plus and would like to—we can train you!)

BACK BY POPULAR DEMAND: ICE CREAM SUNDAYS!

Meet us at Apple Knockers, Vicksburg at 4 pm 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!



SAVE THE DATE!

- ☺ Sunday, September 15: Annual Westminster Picnic. More details to come.
- ☺ Sunday, September 28: Apple picking at Schulz’s.

If anyone is interested in being a part of the Congregational Life Team, we’d love to have your input!! Please contact Jayme Ruimveld or Val Glascock for more information.

Craft Night!

Please join us on July 22 and August 26 for the drop in craft night. Bring a craft to work on, come and learn a new one or just come and visit.

This is not just for women, men are welcome too!



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 July & August (7 pm unless otherwise noted)

July 4: Bicentennial Park: 910 E. Milham Avenue

*July 11: 6 pm Haverhill Park, 6577 Hampton St.

7 pm "Kait Rose & Co. Presents: Fleetwood Mac Tribute" at Overlander Bandshell

July 18: Portage District Library front parking lot, 300 Library Lane

July 25: Y'OPA parking lot, 165 W. Centre Avenue (Frozen yogurt treat after walk.)

August 1: KRESA Service Center parking lot, 1819 E. Milham Avenue

*August 8: 6 pm West Lake Nature Preserve, 9001 S. Westnedge.

7 pm "The Motortown All-Stars" at Overlander Bandshell,

August 15: Celery Flats, 7335 Garden Lane

August 22: Eliason Trail, 1614 Osterhout Avenue

*August 29: 6 pm Y'OPA parking lot, 165 W. Centre Ave.



THANK YOU FOR YOUR SERVICE

BUILDING AND GROUNDS: A special thank you to all the folks who worked to clean up the storm damage in the church yard from June 15. We appreciate your hard work on a very hot day!

LOCAL MISSION: Thanks to all who have regularly volunteered for Meals on Wheels and Loaves and Fishes ministries. We are proud of the work you have done. If you would like to join these happy groups, you can contact Judy Markusse Paget for Loaves and Fishes or Carol Madison for Meals on Wheels volunteering.

Upcoming dates:

Loaves and Fishes: July 22, August 26, & September 23.

Meals on Wheels: July 1 - 5 and August 12 - 16



MISSION NEWS

NOMINATIONS ARE DUE August 1 for the Westminster Peace Prize

Do you know of an individual or group in the community doing work that promotes peace, reduces violence, increases understanding or effects reconciliation. Do you know of such a group or person? Consider nominating them for this annual recognition. Send an email to Fred Welch (fred@fredwelch.com). Tell us about their work and purpose and how it demonstrates peacemaking. ~ The Mission Team

AUGUST COLLECTION = PEANUT BUTTER

The Mission Team invites you to donate 18 oz jars of PEANUT BUTTER to the Generous Hands Power Pack Program that continues to provide healthy food weekly to students throughout the summer. Please place your items in the trunk near the front entrance during the month of July. Monetary donations can be given to Barb Daniels.

Generous Hands, Inc. is a small, non-profit organization, based in Vicksburg, Michigan, committed to helping families in time of need.



VISITING PEACEMAKER

Westminster will be hosting June Lorenzo through the International Peacemakers program of the Presbyterian Church (USA). June will be with us from October 1 to 7. Please contact Fred Welch if you are interested in helping to plan her visit.

- Attorney, consultant and human rights advocate
- Advocates for the rights of Indigenous Peoples before United Nations and Organization of American States bodies
- Member and clerk of session at Laguna United Presbyterian Church (Pueblo of Laguna)



Presbyterian Mission
**Presbyterian
Peacemaking Program**

June L. Lorenzo - Native Lands of the Southwest US

2024 INTERNATIONAL PEACEMAKER

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
Office Manager – Laurie Nic
Interim Bookkeeper - Nathan Schultz
Custodian – Ernest Pueblo

westminsterp@wpcportage.org

bookkeeper@wpcportage.org

Congregational Leaders

SESSION

Kathy Stuu, 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, Jodie Gerard
Karen VerHage, Mary Lou Rowher, Val Kirkwood, Nick Pratt

Administration

Finance.....Chris Rohwer, Leslie Ashbaugh
Personnel.....Carol Pratt
Building & Grounds.....Jim Gluys, Tom VerHage
Children & Youth Ministries; Faith Formation.....Leslie Ashbaugh
Adult Education.....Linda DeYoung
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 Coordinators:
Hosts.....Cindy Green
Ushers.....Sarah Sullivan
Liturgists.....Jean Cox
Livestream, Sound & Techs.....Kelly Schultz
Children & WorshipMary Lou Rohwer, Kelly Schultz
Communion.....Kelly Schultz
Coffee PlusJayme Ruimveld