

WPC Worship Service is on Facebook **Live
every week at 10:30 a.m.**

Follow us on Social Media: **Facebook** at Westminster Presbyterian Church,
Twitter @ WestPresAkron, and **Instagram**.

WPC Staff

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The church office is open from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Monday-Friday



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Westminster Presbyterian Church

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The Script **September-October 2020**

Pastor's Corner

God Has a Plan for Us

In a typical year, the first Sunday following Labor Day highlights our annual Rally Day celebration. Ordinarily, this is the occasion when we welcome the return of our choirs and bell choirs in addition to education for all ages. In an effort to make this Rally Day even more meaningful, we originally made preparations to present the biennial Eberts' Lecture Series to coincide with our fall return, and we were excited to welcome The Reverend Dr. Will Willimon from Duke Divinity School as our guest speaker.

Yet, as we are all painfully aware, 2020 is no typical year. As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, in-person worship and gatherings have now been suspended since March, with no clear return date in sight. In the midst of these most unusual circumstances, I am grateful to those who continue to provide programming in the life of the church to care for individuals across generations and life circumstances.

(cont'd.)

Godly Play teachers, including Lisa Bansen-Harp, Jamie Willis, Kara Hoffman, and Deb Tondra are pre-recording stories for the benefit of our children. Margo Works, Susan Shellito and Walter Hayes continue to minister to the Tweens among us on Sunday mornings via Zoom. Andi Jopperi and Mike Grau remain committed to serving as youth instructors. And Rae Leonard continues to lead a weekly, adult education conversation. While Rae’s class was previously held on Sunday mornings, it is now offered on Thursday evenings utilizing Zoom technology.

Our Third Sunday Dinner crew continues to seek to serve the needs of those less fortunate, and we are grateful to the congregation for the continued donation of requested food items that are then distributed to our neighbors in need as part of an additional service project. I, along with my colleagues in ordained ministry, often hear folks speak about whether the church they attend is now “open” or “closed.” Such terminology makes us cringe every time. The truth is that the church never closed. We simply learned to minister in new ways.

I hope that you will join me in exploring how we can continue to open our hearts in service of others amid challenging and unusual circumstances. For just as the church never closed, the needs of those within our church family and the neighbors beyond our fellowship never went away. This means that we are each learning to be the church for such a time as this. Friends, God is still at work, and God has a plan for us. Let us respond by offering the gifts of our lives.

Peace,
Jon

and when to resume in-person worship and other activities. This is particularly important for those involved in planning fall activities. We recognize that many miss and would like to resume in-person activities. We also recognize that many are concerned about the risk of contracting the coronavirus. The problem with setting a fixed date for resumption of in-person activities is that the date could change as circumstances change. Session decided that in-person activities could resume based on certain criteria being met. The criteria are that the seven-day rolling average of new cases reported in the State of Ohio drops below 500 and sustains an overall downward trajectory or plateaus at a level of less than 400 for a period of 45 days. On August 25, the seven-day average was 939.

During our July 28 meeting, we adopted Coronavirus Quarantine Guidelines for staff and members. These include quarantine requests related to certain long-distance travel and recognizing the State of Ohio Health Department mandate to wear masks while in the church building.

 *From the Finance Office*

Monthly Financial Report

July 2020	Actual	Budget	YTD Actual	YTD Budget
Total Revenues	\$55,268.40	\$54,724.75	\$362,649.83	*\$372,205.05
Total Expenses	\$38,903.56	\$48,452.75	\$288,999.59	\$361,459.51
Net	\$16,364.84	\$6,272.00	\$73,650.24	\$10,745.54

*Budgeted total revenues include anticipated withdrawals from Rowley investments necessary to balance the budget totaling \$20,969 for the year.

Please contact the Finance Office if you would like a copy of the detailed financial report for the period ending July 31, 2020.

Wedding

Congratulations [Sarah Laferty and Nick Gronwoski](#), who were married on July 25, 2020 in Marblehead, Ohio. Pastor Hauerwas officiated. Sarah is the daughter of Sam and Debbie Laferty.

Our Friends Who Have Entered Eternal Life



♦ Former Senior Pastor (and Pastor Emeritus) [The Reverend B. Dr. Harry W. Eberts, Jr.](#) died on July 12, 2020 in Kalamazoo, Michigan.



♦ [Martha Dixon Nelson](#) died on August 7, 2020. A graveside committal was held on August 13, 2020. A memorial service is planned for October 2020.



♦ [Robert Heber Pierson](#) died on August 9, 2020.



♦ [Harriet Young Cutler](#) died on August 21, 2020. A memorial service was held on August 27, 2020.

♦ [William Eugene \(Gene\) Dickerson](#) died on August 24, 2020.

Session

Session continues to meet on Zoom as needed. During a special meeting on July 22, Session discussed options for how (cont'd.)

Welcome Back Children & Families

So much has a changed meaning in the time of Covid-19. I am trying to work out what Welcome Back means for Sunday School and programming for children & families.

Fall means school is back in session. Like the school system we start classes every year, and like the school system we are beginning this year online. Our Tweens begin September 13 with a Zoom class at 10:00 a.m. and our Godly Play classes are going to be recorded and put on our YouTube channel to be accessed when families have time to set the stage for some sacred space. I suppose that is the great challenge. We at WPC do a very good job at setting sacred space. Our sanctuary is beautiful and welcoming, our classrooms have been set up to provide what the children need at their ages. Our music is inspiring. But, of course, church is not nearly the only place to find the sacred to respond to God, to hear the voice of God. But we do need time and space to ponder, to be open and to talk to God.



I invite you all this time of “Welcome Back” to create some sacred space and time, for you and your children. Set a quiet space. Light a candle. I hope that the good that can (and does) come out of the bad, is that we discover more about our faith and our God. And that our connections, although distant, continue.

ACME Acme Fresh Market Community Cash-Back

The collection of receipts began August 6 and will continue through December 26. We can earn 5% on purchases of Acme Fresh Market, Food Club, Simply Done and other select brands. (cont'd.)

ACME

Please put your register receipts in an envelop and drop them off with your First Sunday Food Collection Drive-In/Drop-Off. Or feel free to mail or deliver them at another time. Last year Presbyterian Women received over \$400 from purchases made by our Westminster family. Help support our ministries again this year by giving your register receipts to us. Thanks for helping us support our community and ministries.

Memorial Garden

Many articles about life in our city, state, nation and the world in general, have had some reference to the unprecedented times we are living in. And those references also hold true to Westminster. Our church has done it is best to "weather" these times and will continue to do so in the effort to make things as "normal" as possible. But one of the hardest things to deal with is the honoring of those who have passed away. Unfortunately, in recent weeks several members of our church family have passed away: Charles Pearson, Mary Ann Strassburg, Mary Jo Stasell, and most recently Martha Nelson, Bob Pierson, Harriet Cutler and Gene Dickerson. Though none of these members, except for Harriet have chosen to make their final resting place Westminster's Memorial Garden, we certainly pray for them and their families.

The Memorial Garden committee encourages WPC members, former members, and their families to consider this option. Although a decision like this might not be an easy one for everyone, the process is quite simple. An Interment Agreement can be purchased at any time. The cost is \$1,000. The agreement allows that cremated remains, ashes, will be placed in the garden during a brief service of commemoration. This could follow a memorial service in the church. A plaque with the member's name, date of birth and date of death will also be placed on a wall in the garden. With the exception of the \$200 cost of the plaque, the amount of the agreement is tax deductible.

(cont'd.)

A very grateful "THANK YOU" to the members and friends that hosted me and wished me well. I will miss the Westminster Family very much but look forward to being close to family.

With love and blessings, Anna Marie Wilton



Education News

Children's Ministries

First Class On Zoom

We gathered with our Tweens on Saturday, August 22 at Hardesty Park to start our program year in a socially distanced way. We will have our first class on Zoom on Sunday, September 13. It was so good to see these 10 (2 weren't able to make it) 4th -6th graders.



From The Church Office

Staff Work Anniversaries

The Reverend Jonathan S. Hauerwas, Pastor 9/1/15

Valerie Thorson, Music Director/Organist 8/19/19

Sheila Svoboda, Dir. of Children & Family Ministry 9/22/13

Claudine Schooley, WPC Church Office 4/23/18

Debby Evrard, Staff Accountant 3/4/19

Dave Bodnar, Daytime Custodian 11/5/18

Zack Troyer, Director of Adult & Youth Bells, and Children's Choir 8/2/17

Traci Range, Director of Childcare 5/12/16

Information to Know

Celtic Garden News

Sadly, our growing season is once again coming to a close. Where has the summer gone?

It seems as though we just planted the Celtic garden, and now some of its flowers are starting to look tired and bedraggled. Thanks to a dedicated group of gardeners, though, this summer the garden has



been as beautiful as it has ever been. Unfortunately, one of our gardening family will no longer be here to plan next year's garden. Anna Marie Wilton has been in charge of keeping the garden going for the past 26 years! She took it over when no one else would because she

wanted to make sure that our Celtic garden would continue. During all those years she faithfully and patiently led a varying group of volunteers to create a beautiful oasis in the neighborhood. Anna Marie's leadership and friendship will be sorely missed by all of us. Here is hoping she will plant flowers wherever she goes!



If you have any questions, please contact any of the committee members; Shelley Koutnik, Earl Pierson, Marcia Holcomb, Phil Fry or Jim or Barb Shriner.

Finally, please take a moment to read this Memorial Garden thought penned by Renee Wood...

*"Your life was a blessing,
your memory a treasure.
You are loved beyond
words and missed
beyond measure."*



Serve

The Third Sunday Dinner

The Third Sunday Dinner crew reopened on August 16 for the first time in several months. Following social distance protocols and using a drive through service, Akron community members were able to pick-up a hot meal prepared by WPC outstanding chefs: Mike Grau, Anne Karney, and Raphael Peoples. Several other volunteers helped to make this work including help in the kitchen, running food to the pickup point and distributing meals. Left over meals were given to Haven of Rest Ministries. This crew will do this again on September 20 and October 18. We are always in need of volunteers. You can sign on WPC website. For questions on how to become involved in this ministry email Rob Gilbert rgilbert@kent.edu or call 330-310-0564.

First Sunday Drive-In/Drop-Off Food Collection

Many thanks to the Tweens for receiving your non-perishable food items and organizing the items collected to make it easier to pack grocery bags for distribution. We are still spreading the word about our food distribution. Portage Path and Case Community Learning Centers are aware of our project and they are informing families of the availability. WYDACA is letting their families know about this food assistance. Here are the products we are collecting:

Spaghetti and Canned Spaghetti Sauce	Boxed Macaroni & Cheese Mix
Canned Tuna	Rice or Pasta Side Dishes (Knorr, Near East, Zatarains)
Canned Chicken Breast	Canned Vegetables (Green Beans, Corn, Carrots, or Mixed)
Jell-O Gelatin	Canned Fruit (Peaches, Pears, or Fruit Cocktail)
Peanut Butter/Jelly	Canned Soup (Vegetable, Tomato or Chicken Noodle)
Packaged Muffin Mix	Packaged Cookie or Brownie Mix

The next collection is Sunday, October 4 from 1:00 to 2:30 p.m. Thank you for your generosity!

Adult Education

During these troubled times, it often seems hard to find signs of light at the end of a long dark tunnel. Reading the Gospel of John offers us some hope and some stunningly beautiful insights into the nature of Jesus and the meaning of faith. John emphasizes Jesus teaching us to see God at work in him as he offers eternal life. We will consider



contrasts of darkness and light, blindness and sight, death and new life as John puts before us who Jesus is, where he is coming from, and where he is going.

Plan to join us as we study John's unique and often quoted Gospel beginning on Thursday, Sept. 10 at 7-8 pm via Zoom. Contact Rae Leonard at leonardrae4@gmail.com or 330-256-9316 so she can send you the link.



WPC Book Club

As always, all are welcome to join our intrepid group of readers on the 2nd Mondays at 7:00 p.m. We have been meeting via Zoom, but weather permitting we are going to trial an outdoor in-person meeting, in September for those who are interested.

Kacey Yates Gable will be hosting at 1450 W. Exchange Street. Contact Cathy Melver if you need the Zoom link or want to be sure to have updates.

Our books for the rest of the year are:

- 9/14/20 [Hypnotist's Love Story](#), Liane Moriarty - Kacey Yates
- 10/12/20 [The World's Strongest Librarian](#), Josh Hanagarne - Cathy Melver
- 11/9/20 [Circling the Sun](#), Paula McQueen - Kristy Yates
- 12/14/20 Holiday gathering? TBA.