



# The Voice of Westminster

*We are a servant church, nurturing each other's spiritual journey and personal gifts. All are welcome!*

September 2020

## A New Vocabulary

2020 has brought a few words into our vocabulary that we wish were never introduced: Pandemic, Covid-19, and Derecho. The experience of August 10, 2020 will be forever etched in our conscience. The following definition suddenly became *reality*: "*Derecho: a widespread, long-lived straight line wind storm that is associated with a fast-moving group of thunderstorms, potentially rivaling hurricane and tornadic forces.*"

Every day as I go to and from work or the store, I see something new that was damaged or destroyed. Seeing massive trees of all kinds uprooted or snapped in two, roofs that went airborne, silos and grain bins that were twisted like pretzels or completely flattened, huge signs folded in half and buildings totally collapsed. All of this, combined with the devastating impact on people's lives, was and is heart-wrenching. Our world has been turned upside down again.

In processing things, I admit it has been helpful to be facilitating a discussion of the RightNow video series by Max Lucado: You'll Get Through This: Hope and Help For Your Turbulent Times. We saw a true picture of turbulence in the derecho, with rippling effects in many dimensions of our lives. I have become more and more thankful that what we face is never alone.

We serve a God who meets us in the storm and journeys with us. I am also deeply grateful for the body of Christ—the church—and for those who have ministered to me and my family during life's derechos. I still vividly remember a vicious storm I was battling several years ago, and I kept repeating a favorite verse (which my dad asked me to preach on for his funeral). "*I can do all things through Christ who gives me strength.*" Phil. 4:13. Up until this time, I had interpreted it from an individualistic perspective. It suddenly dawned on me: "*How is Christ manifested in our world today? Is it not through HIS BODY---THE CHURCH? Could I not equally declare: I can do all things through Christ's Body, who gives me strength?*"

Admittedly, the Body of Christ is made up of imperfect people who sometimes create storms in our lives rather than calm them, but God still wants to use the church (us) in all of our weaknesses and imperfections to be his healing and helpful presence to those facing storms.

I hope you will never feel like you are bothering me...to connect with me to see about exploring how we can face a storm you are going through.

Blessings,

*Pastor Roger*

## Derecho Blows Through Westminster

At Westminster, we heard of high winds in Marshalltown, but when the sky darkened and power went out, we knew it would be an unusual storm. Session member, Mark Tyler, was picking up litter from the grounds, but we pulled him inside for safety. We watched as tree limbs flew by and the old garage/storage shed began to shift off its foundation. On the other side of the building, a tree was divided several ways with part of it resting on the church. There is roof damage, but much of the tree damage has been cleared by volunteers. Thank you to our Property Committee Co-Chairs, Jan Kosowski and Maggie York, for working with our insurance company to sort out the property issues.



## Loaves & Fishes Carries On Despite Derecho

On Thursday Aug. 6th we took delivery of our new refrigerator. In addition to all the meat in our freezers at that time, on Friday Aug. 7th I filled all three of our refrigerators to the brim with eggs, butter, cottage cheese, and yogurt. On Monday Aug. 10th Ronans made their usual morning HACAP run for fresh stuff and bread. Then in the afternoon the derecho hit and we lost power. On Tuesday the 12th, five of us were able to make it to the house and we hastily set up tables along the front of the house and gave away frozen meat, all the refrigerated stuff, bread and what fresh we had including boxes of onions and apples. What was left at the end of the apples and onions we took to Geneva Towers. We didn't lose any food and that is amazing!! On Aug. 23, our friends at St. Andrew Church in Iowa City staffed the pantry and serve lunch to our clients. - *Jan Kosowski*



# Thank You, Gracias, Merci!

No matter how you say it, the feeling is the same. Thank you to everyone who pitched in and helped with the clean-up at Westminster. The “Old Graystone” is a tough building, but when a derecho of such force moves through, it’s vulnerable. We all are. Major kudos to our Property Committee Co-Chairs, Jan Kosowski and Maggie York, who assessed damage, are still working with the insurance company and are making sure our security system, including video cameras is working properly. Thank you to our “Saints” who volunteer at Loaves and Fishes, many of whom came in to save food when the pantry’s power went out and then distributed food, despite suffering damage to their own homes and loss of power.

Thank you to that small group of volunteers that came in August 16, to clear tree limbs from the parking lot: Tina and Eric Mueller, Jan and Ed Kosowski, Sue Gearhart, Antoinette Mukakabanda and Gale Smetana.

For all of you who said a prayer, who are still dealing with the mind-boggling property damage and the bills that go with it, we say a prayer for you. Be kind. Love one another.

## Session Notes

Westminster’s Session met in person and via Zoom for a monthly meeting on Tuesday, Aug. 25, at 6:30 p.m. The meeting was rescheduled due to the derecho and storm damage clean-up.

Opening discussion generated input on the online services Westminster is offering and what improvements could be made. Sanctuary acoustics and mixing software for use with multiple cameras were among the topics. The Session, by consensus, agreed to direct Gale and task force members to seek out solutions and estimates for further consideration. Session also voted to:

- Begin the transition process for those organizations interested in resuming activities in our building. These include Narcotics Anonymous, Beacon of Light and Gospel Mission for now. Groups will be required to follow the same COVID-19 precautions that Westminster is following including use of face masks, social distancing and wiping down surfaces with disinfectant after meeting. Pastor Roger will be contacting these groups to ensure that they are willing to meet these requirements.
- Push back the start of both Adult Education and Sunday School. Session agreed to monitor the local COVID-19 statistics, especially as children head back to school before considering starting Christian Ed. We will keep you posted.
- Temporarily house Loaves & Fishes in the church when cold weather sets in. Social distancing due to the COVID virus make it impossible to operate inside the mission house. Efforts to find a more permanent solution that partners WPC with other organizations will continue.
- Session voted to have Tina Mueller revisit quotes for a new phone system as the current system is obsolete.

Session closed with attendees singing the Doxology. The next meeting will be Sept. 15 at 6:30 p.m.



**Wellington Heights**

**Back-to-School BBQ & School Supplies Giveaway**

Join us Tuesday, Sept. 1 for free lunch and a school supply giveaway. The event will be in the Westminster parking lot. The Presbytery of East Iowa is organizing the event. [Arnie's Corner BBQ](#) of West Liberty will provide good. Join us anytime from Noon to 5 p.m. If you'd like to pitch in school supplies, visit this [Amazon link](#) to see the list. We need all supplies by Monday, Aug. 31—you can buy locally and drop them by the church if you like. Join us!



**September Needs**  
**Loaves & Fishes Food Pantry**

Spaghetti-Os

Crackers

Toothbrush

Thank you for supporting this  
important mission!



**September Birthdays**

Wendell Snow	1
Dorothy Benesh	4
Lisa Conkling	4
Marcia Elhart	4
Bryan Hawkins	4
Angela Fowler	5
Cheanne Cosgrove	6
Kathie Lane	6
Becky Ranck	6
Barb Mumford	8
Janalee Kosowski	9
Gary Teig	14
Tricia Brown	22
Beth Roof	22
Don Thomas	23
Alice Crosier	27
Bob Moore	27
Marilyn Alford	29
Bob Allsop	29
Mike Canning	29

**Special Thank-You**

Westminster's Session would like to thank everyone who has continued to send in their offerings during this unusual time. As you know, the expenses and work of the church exist even when we aren't able to meet together.

Blessings!

**Westminster Presbyterian Church**  
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*Return Service Requested*

**The Voice of Westminster**  
*August 2020*

# Westminster Presbyterian Church

9:00 a.m. FUEL service in the Family Life Center

11:00 a.m. Traditional service in the Sanctuary

Livestream on Facebook

## Office Hours

Monday - Thursday

8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

*Visit us on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter or at [www.crwpc.org](http://www.crwpc.org)*

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