



The Voice of Westminster

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

April 2020

It's Been Pretty Quiet Around the Old Graystone Church

There's a popular saying in faith circles on the Internet right now, "I didn't realize I was going to give up THIS much for Lent." Without question, when we look back on this holy season, it will likely be with gratitude that we won't likely face a pandemic like this again in our lifetimes.

While Westminster's halls are unusually quiet these days, the ministries of the church have not gone silent. When an emergency proclamation from the Governor prohibited a number of gatherings and threatened to close Loaves and Fishes (L & F), we found ways to work around it. Conference calls and virtual meetings replaced in-person gatherings. L & F volunteers under Jan Kosowski's direction, adapted new procedures that limited numbers in the food pantry and still got food to those who needed it (see p.2)

We're also helping our neighbors at the Willis Dady Shelter. Their residents typically leave the shelter during the day but are being kept inside to avoid spreading the virus. Westminster's Larry and Karol Cooper pitched in with sack lunches for 66—shelter residents on two separate days. Pastor Roger helped deliver.

A volunteer shows up to pick up debris on the property; another takes out our recyclables. Everyone maintains their distance, but the care and affection are obvious. Contributions are processed (thank you Westminsterites). A sermon is prepared for online distribution, communication e-mails go out, and TV crawls share the news that most churches, including Westminster aren't having services. A deacon makes a call to a care center, as visits are no longer allowed. Our methods change, but our message remains the same. God calls us to care, so we do.

At this writing, we know that we will not be worshiping together at Westminster through April 5. We hope that we can be together for Easter Sunday, April 12. And what a glorious Easter that would be! Much will depend on the progress of the COVID-19 virus between now and then. Please watch your e-mails and the crawls on KCRG-TV-9 or CBS-2. We are doing all that we can to communicate while keeping everyone as healthy as possible. You can watch Sunday services by going to our website, crwpc.org. Other updates are available there, too.

As many of you know, I recently spent time in Guatemala visiting a couple of missionary friends. At some point, our conversations came around to "Why don't you consider doing this, Gale? Your skills would be so helpful." My answer was always one of self-doubt. "I want to be comfortable. I want life to be calm," I would say.

My friends would come back with, "God doesn't want us to be comfortable. He wants us to be out there, doing his work." I thought of that quote about comfort after the coronavirus spread to the U.S. It's hard to find comfort these days as we watch news reports and perhaps fear the worst.

But what if, just what if, we were to seek a different type of comfort? A humorous e-mail sent to friends, offering to pick up a box of groceries for someone who needs it and can't get out, a friendly phone call telling someone about our latest Netflix binge—these small acts can give a comfort during a stressful time. We can all do them. Comfort isn't just putting our feet up; it's what we do for others. So, as the Bible says, "Be strong and courageous. God will not fail us."

- Gale Smetana, Communications Coordinator

When Did I See You Hungry?

While the Congregation will not be meeting for the next several weeks, it has been decided to continue with a modified form of our Loaves & Fishes food pantry. This week, we instituted some changes in our method of distribution in order to see if we could run with 10 or fewer volunteers and if we could keep the numbers on our mission house porch to 10 or fewer. We increased our hours of operation, limited the number of items distributed, allowed only two clients at a time into the house, and pre-bagged everything. Success! We did not have a score of people on the porch and snaking down our sidewalks as we usually do AND we served 190 people. Distribution moved very quickly and people were so very appreciative in these uncertain times. Thank you to the congregations of WPC and CEC for your continued support of this mission and for your continued prayers. The need is so very great and some of the most vulnerable people are afraid. - Jan Kosowski



Due to the coronavirus, the circle of prayer where volunteers hold hands, gives way to



Longtime L&F volunteer, Ruth Quisling, talks with Director, Jan Kosowski, before opening the doors on March 17.



Volunteer Gingie Hunstead, bags food as part of the pantry's procedures prompted by the governor's restrictions on gatherings as the coronavirus spreads.



There are so many things that have been written and said through this challenging coronavirus pandemic. Rather than writing something myself, I thought I would share something that voiced my sentiments. -
Pastor Roger

We will never be the same.

We will never take for granted the freedoms we had to do the simplest of things. To run to the store for bananas. To hug our grown kids. To sit on the floor and play with our grandkids.

We will never take for granted the privilege of gathering with our brothers and sisters in Christ to break bread, to worship, to come to the Table.

We will never take for granted a handshake. A hug. A kiss on the cheek in greeting.

We will never take for granted what we once thought we would never lose.

We will be awakened.

We will be awakened because while we once thought we were in control, we never really were. We will see how fragile life is and that the Author of Life is the only One in control. We will seek God more.

We will be awakened to how connected we are to one another. Not just to our families and friends, but we are connected to people all the way on the other side of the world. Their destiny and our destiny are delicately intertwined. We will be more responsible.

We will be awakened to who we really are. We will see that we can be noble and heroic even with something as simple as just stay home. We will realize that what we really value isn't the stuff of life but it's the people in our lives...and the people we do not even know. We will see that like generations before us that we have what it takes to do what's necessary for the common good. We will be more noble.

We will be awakened to the needs of others. We have been asked to slow down for the sake of those who are at risk. And we have done it. We have closed businesses, cancelled money-making events, delayed dream trips. We have stopped doing what might hurt our neighbors. We will awaken to finally see the needs of all the at-risk among us. We will see the poor and disadvantaged in a new way and we will act and vote differently. We will be more conscientious.

We will be awakened to our limits. We will see that even though our world leaders seek to do what's necessary and best for the common good, they are limited. They do not fully know what to do—and yet they lead bravely. For us individually, there is also so much we do not understand. But humbly, we comply. We will be more **humble**.

We will be awakened to our personal and institutional gaps. For us personally, we will realize how much we need **community**. We will reach out and connect in ways we never have. We will build the social network we wish we had had in place before. For the church, we will also realize where the gaps are in our way of doing church. We will see whether we have built a network of community that can sustain not meeting on Sundays. We will ask and seek answers to the question: What does it mean to be the church? In our isolation, we will emerge with a new commitment to connection. We will be more connected.

When this ends, we will never be the same.

Where There's a Will...There's a Way

When Pastor Roger picked up the phone and Willis Dady was on the other line, he found out in talking with them that, in light of the coronavirus, they were keeping people inside all day. They were checking out food resources and mentioned that if the church could provide lunch for a couple of days, that would be helpful. We asked Karol and Larry Cooper if they were up to the challenge. They were.

Deacon Barb Moss brought in freshly baked cookies. Jim Shanklin asked a client, Zio Johno's, for a discount on gondola sandwiches and Jan Kosowski pitched in hams, chips and other items from Loaves & Fishes.

On Monday, March 23, residents there got a sack lunch with a gondola, chips, cookie and other goodies. On Tuesday, ham sandwiches, again with chips, cookie and other items.



Time for Delivery!

Once the sandwich bags were stapled shut, they were ready for delivery. On both days, our own Pastor Roger delivered the lunches to Willis Dady.

Thank you to all the team members who made this happen, especially Karol and Larry Cooper who organized and executed the sack lunches.





April Birthdays

Betty Pohorsky	1
Nancy Evans	2
Don Meyer	3
Bob Moran	8
Butch Hataway	10
Mark Tyler	10
Joan Charters	12
Donna Jiruska	13
Barbara Schultz	20
Jennie Shanklin	25
Tom Read	26
Karen Zazza	26
Ann Hearn	29

Missing the Calendar?

You can access the Westminster calendar on our website.

Please keep in mind, the calendar has regular meetings and services listed even though these have been suspended through April 5 and suspensions could be extended.

Here's the link: <https://www.crwpc.org/calendar>

The Month of April * Thank You Volunteers!

Westminster has suspended services through April 5. The schedule below is assuming we will be able to worship together starting on Easter Sunday April 12. Any new declarations by the governor could likely change that. Thank you for your flexibility!

Offering Stewards

April 13—Barb & Bill Moss

April 20—Warren Feerer & Tom Read

April 27—Pat Teig & Mark Tyler

9 a.m. Liturgists

April 12—Lemi Tilahun

April 19—Barb Mumford

April 26—Val Neubauer

11 a.m. Liturgists

April 12—Ann Buckheister

April 19—Dick Trotter

April 26—Jan Kosowski

11:00 a.m. Ushers/Greeters

April 12—John Henderson & Joan Charters

April 19—Brian Read

April 26—Barb Schultz & Dick Trotter

If you are unable to serve at the designated time, please try to find a substitute. Thank you!



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Return Service Requested

The Voice of Westminster
April 2020

Westminster Presbyterian Church

Office Hours

Monday - Thursday

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

Sunday Worship Times

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

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

Visit us on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter or at www.crwpc.org

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