



The Voice of Westminster

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

February 2021

The Light of Love

When we think of February we often think of Valentine's Day, and with that, expressing our love to those closest to us. We know, however, that love is to go beyond that, even to loving our enemies. Christ called us to be light and salt in a dark and decaying world. We have the opportunity and are called to offer the "light" of love. As the old song by Jackie DeShannon said,

*What the world needs now is love, sweet love
It's the only thing that there's just too little of
What the world needs now is love, sweet love
No not just for some, but for everyone...*

The only way to offer the kind of love that Christ exemplified is through the power of the Holy Spirit. It is not a sappy, sentimental love with no backbone; it is a sacrificial commitment to do that which is loving in light of eternity. Love is the foundation of everything Christ did, so if we want a true example of it, we look at Christ, seeking to be shaped by his presence daily.

We repeatedly asked in the messages from the potter's wheel, "What or who is shaping our lives? Who or what is shaping our nation? Is our nation, are our lives truly being shaped more by Christ or our culture?" Is Scripture and Christ's example of love, the foundation of how we evaluate what is acceptable and what is not?

Paul in I Corinthians 13 provides a good definition of love in verses 4-6 "Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. ⁵ It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It is first important to read down this list and ask, "Do our lives reflect the life of love as shown here. To those (on earth) that we emulate, how do they measure up?"

A few other passages that expand on the above are the following:

"Speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head, that is, Christ." (Ephesians 4:15)

"Therefore each of you must put off falsehood and speak truthfully to your neighbor, for we are all members of one body." (Ephesians 4:25)

"Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen." (Ephesians 4:29)

"The tongue has the power of life and death, and those who love it will eat its fruit. (Proverbs 18:21)

We have seen in recent days in DC, how true this latter verse is. Words matter. Truth matters. All lives matter.

True hope for our country will not be found in any political party, or person in leadership. It can only be found in Christ, and living a life of love through his Spirit, evaluating our thoughts, words and deeds, according to his life and message.

Blessings, *Pastor Roger*

Session Notes

Session Extends Church Closing

Westminster's Session met Jan. 17 at 6:30 p.m. on Zoom. After devotions and prayer, Session did the following:

- Approved continuing online worship with in-person worship beginning on Easter, April 4.
- Heard from Paul Kongshaug regarding the Big Bang Foundation that is working with Wellington Heights youth by mentoring and support youth and their families. Pastor Roger will meet with Paul to write a proposal for the group to use the church for some activities. and bring it up for further discussion at the next Session meeting.
- Received an update from Gale Smetana on the increasing number of views of Westminster's YouTube worship services. A consultant has been contacted to advise us on improving the quality of our technology and techniques in producing these services.

Annual Meeting Reminder

This year's annual meeting falls on the last day of January (31), and due to the COVID virus, it will be held online using Zoom. It's important to remember that we need a minimum of 20 people on Zoom to proceed with the meeting. We will e-mail the Zoom link to you and include it in our weekly "This Week at Westminster" e-mail. We hope you will be able to join us!

Mail...We Get Mail...

You may not be coming to Westminster right now, due to COVID, but you might have mail here and not even know it. We have a stack of mail that's gathered over the past few weeks. We've received mail for the Deacons, for the Prayer Shawl Ministry and the Worship Committee.

Let the office know if you would like to stop by and pick up the mail at some point. If you would like it mailed to you (assuming you are the committee or board moderator, please let Gale know and she will forward it to you.



Gale's contact info: gale@crwpc.org or (319) 366-7185

Iowa Media Focus on Hunger Insecurity, Loaves & Fishes

Loaves and Fishes, its volunteers and many contributors continue to spread the word about the remarkable work being done by Westminster's most visible ministry. On January 19, the Des Moines Register ran a story written by Iowa Watch, which explored the growing issue of hunger insecurity in Iowa, due in part, to the COVID-19 epidemic. The article featured several food banks throughout the state, with L&F representing eastern Iowa. It explored the challenges of social distancing both inside the mission house and outside. L&F Director, Jan Kosowski, explained the early challenges and the decision to move to different quarters.

"The two initial impacts were there was no choice, and people weren't allowed to come into the house. And then we started having concerns about our volunteers. Our volunteers probably dropped in half," Kosowski said.

Tent-like awnings were purchased in mid-May, and the pantry moved to an outdoor model. But with the pandemic stretching indefinitely and the weather starting to change, Kosowski knew she needed a new plan. In November, Westminster signed a one-year lease, and Loaves and Fishes moved into old medical offices just a few blocks away from the house." - Iowa Watch

[Click on the link](#) to see the entire article.

Later on Jan. 19, CBS 2 visited the pantry to do a similar story. David Amelotti noted that one in ten people in Iowa struggle with hunger. He talked with both Jan Kosowski and Samantha Johnson, a regular at the pantry. Again, [click on the link](#) to watch his story.

Finally, a huge thank-you to everyone who gave to the pantry this past year, which was so critical. Some 82 different people or organizations contributed. It's a team effort in so many ways.

Part of this story was produced by the Iowa Center for Public Affairs Journalism-IowaWatch, a non-profit, online news website that collaborates with news organizations to produce explanatory and investigative reporting. Read more at www.IowaWatch.org.





February Needs

Loaves & Fishes Food Pantry

Creamed soup

Rice

Toothpaste

Thank you for supporting this important mission!

Remember, despite the move to Tanager Place, you can still bring your L&F donations to Westminster!



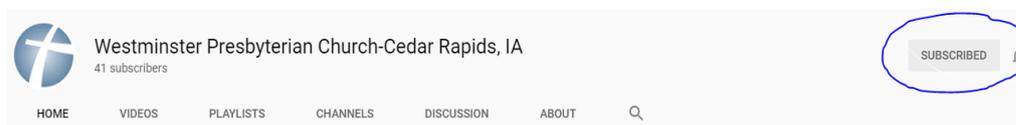
February Birthdays

Tamene Gelashe	4
Robert Ferguson	6
Lois Kahler	6
Catharine Johnson	7
Anne Bluder	14
James McWhinney	15
Patti Horton	16
Ruth Chipokas	17
Myrna Conderman	17
Dale Crosier	18
Claudia Warfel	18
Jeanne Pinckney	21

Are You A Subscriber?

We know lots of you watch our Sunday services on YouTube. Our numbers are growing. We started with a couple of subscribers and we're now up to 41. If we could get 100 total, we can customize the name or URL of our YouTube Channel to say something like WestminsterCR or WestminsterPresbyterian. That's much nicer than the random alphabet soup title we have now.

If you haven't subscribed to Westminster's YouTube Channel, please do so. Just click on this link : [YouTube](#) and click on "subscribe" just above our videos and to the right (see blue oval below).



February Calendar

Due to the extension of the church closing, there will be no calendar in the February newsletter. Any committee meetings will be conducted via Zoom. Please contact your committee moderator to doublecheck.

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Cedar Rapids, Iowa 52403-4084

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Return Service Requested

The Voice of Westminster
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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 YouTube or 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

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Damon Cole
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