Rev. Alanna Simone Tyler Reports on Travels to South Sudan
by Kathy Graves, Communications Consultant

Rev. Alanna Simone Tyler traveled with a group to South Sudan in May to witness the work of the South Sudan Education and Peacebuilding Project (SSEPP). Westminster made a $1 million commitment to SSEPP as part of Open Doors Open Futures.

“I went hoping I would bring back stories to share at Westminster about what has happened because of our support,” said Alanna. “I have so much to share, it’s almost impossible to know where to start...teacher training, parent training, construction of schools, clergy training, walking alongside those who are working every day to sustain and promote peace. So much good work is happening.”

The group, led by mission co-worker Leisa Wagstaff, toured four schools, learned about evaluation efforts underway, met with partners, and talked with leaders and graduates of peacemaker training.

Alanna says, “Being there, I learned how the South Sudanese church is involved in the highest level of peace discussions and the everyday work of reconciling people who have lived through conflict.” For instance, Rev. Peter Gai, moderator of the Presbyterian Church of South Sudan (PCOSS), traveled to the Vatican in April with the president of South Sudan and the opposition leader where he joined Pope Francis in urging the leaders to keep the fragile peace agreement they signed.

Alanna expresses great admiration for the PC(USA) mission co-workers serving in South Sudan. “The only way I can describe what they do is deep accompaniment,” she says. “In a country that is healing, they show up and listen and hold holy space where it is needed.”

South Sudan spends less than 1% of its GDP on education, so Alanna said PCOSS’s investment in schools, and the education of girls in particular, is especially meaningful. The group was present for the recognition of the country’s teacher of the year, Peter Mama Oleyo, an alum of peacemaker training. They met the first woman to be ordained in PCOSS, Rev. Awadia Aggrey, who launched a congregation that is now building a three-room school outside of Juba.

The study group also flew to Pochalla, near the Ethiopian border. There, they met with women who are earning income from farming because of a grant from Presbyterian Women.

“It was easy to see how important it is that the PC(USA) is actively supporting the people of this country,” says Alanna. “We can’t wait for perfect peace. We are supporting the hope and vision of South Sudanese people as they dream and believe and work to change their country. They believe South Sudan will be different because of how the church is involved.”
First Fruits
by Mary Hess, Director of Stewardship

Honor the Lord with your substance, and with the first fruits of all your produce; then your barns will be filled with plenty, and your vats will be bursting with wine. Proverbs 3: 9-10.

Recently a longtime congregant told me that every Sunday morning he takes great pleasure in writing a check to bring to church for the offering plate. He considers this part of his spiritual discipline, and a way to give thanks to God for the many blessings in his life.

There are many Westminster members who give regularly in a similar manner, whether monthly, quarterly, or semi-annually. Many use automatic deduction, which has the wonderful effect of simplifying giving and prioritizing financial support for God’s work.

Some, however, give at year-end only, either by necessity or choice. In fact, last year Westminster received over one-quarter of its member giving in December. With so much of the revenue not arriving until year end, Westminster had to borrow interim resources to fund the 2018 budget and ensure planned cash flow.

For any organization, whether a church, a household, or a multinational corporation, having regular income is beneficial because it allows for predictability and wise allocation of resources. You can help! If it’s possible for your household, please consider spreading your generous giving throughout the calendar year at any interval that works best for you. This will help Westminster manage cash flow and ensure ministries are fully funded.

First fruits. Scripture encourages us to give our first, and our best, to the Lord. If you’re able, please consider doing so with your own generous offerings.

A Legacy Thought
“To think about legacy is to focus not on the past, but on the future….what can we do to help make the world a better place when we’re gone?”
—Tim Hart-Andersen, May 5, 2019

Cantus Celebrates Voices of Hope at TownTalks
by Susan McKenna, Director, Westminster Town Hall Forum/Town Talks

On Thursday, July 11, join Cantus Vocal Ensemble as they highlight the mission of Voices of Hope, the choral group at Shakopee Correctional Facility for Women founded by Amanda Weber, Minister of Music and the Arts at Westminster. Cantus will sing selections from the repertoire they created with the choir during their collaboration this spring at the prison. Weber will share the story of the founding of the choir and the powerful role it plays in bringing meaning, purpose, and hope to the lives of its incarcerated members. The event concludes with a panel discussion by local experts and activists, including, among others, Rebecca Schlaefer, Research Director of the MN Prison Doula Project, and Deborah Jiang-Stein from the unPrison Project, who will explore the challenges and issues facing women who have been incarcerated.

The evening begins with happy hour at 5 pm in Westminster Commons, followed by the program at 6 pm in Westminster Hall, and concludes with a meet-and-greet reception. The event is free and open to all, and no registration is required. Parking is available in Westminster’s underground garage.

For further information, contact Susan McKenna at 612.332.3421 or smckenna@wpc-mpls.org.
From Our Pastor

Dear friends,

The year of Invitation continues at Westminster! This summer we started two new outdoor experiences to welcome the community into Westminster’s outdoor Lower Plaza, and to bring our members out into the community. The Westminster Sunday Farmers Market began in June and will continue each Sunday through October 13. Vendors have told us the first few Sundays have been encouraging. We learn each week how to improve the Market and the welcome... move vendors onto the sidewalk, serve coffee, offer music, promote the Market in the neighborhood, nudge Westminster folks to visit the Market...recruit volunteers.

The vendors will soon have capacity to accept electronic benefit cards (EBT) cards, which replaced the former food stamp program. The cards assist neighbors who might otherwise not have resources to shop for enough food. As encouragement to purchase fresh produce, the government gives cash back when the EBT cards are used at a Farmers Market. This program is another way Westminster is responding to the needs of our community.

The other outdoor experience this summer has been Bluegrass Evening Prayer. Each Wednesday in June we have set up chairs under the trees on the Lower Plaza to sing with Amanda Weber and Westminster’s Bluegrass band. From 5:30-6:00 people were invited to call out numbers from the songbook; itsounded like a group sing-along of the soundtrack of O Brother, Where Art Thou!

An average of 100 people gathered every week to sing our way through the evening prayer service from 6:00-6:30. We sang psalms and prayers, and heard brief reflections on a parable. One week I highlighted a line from Jesus’s interpretation of the parable of the good shepherd where he says, “I have other sheep who are not of this fold.”

I suggested that Jesus might have been indicating that God’s mercy is wider than we can understand and we should take care not to limit it, especially with regard to other religious traditions. A guest who had come in from the street stood and loudly took issue with my comments. She ended by saying “Get another pastor up here!” I listened quietly, and then went on. She was welcome in our space.

Such is the experience of our church when it encounters the world. It is exciting, and you never know what will happen. Let’s keep the invitation going!

Have a great summer – see you in church!

Grace and peace,

Tim

Clergy & Staff

Staff Leadership
Rev. Dr. Timothy Hart-Andersen, Senior Pastor
Rev. Dr. Meghan K. Gage-Finn, Executive Associate Pastor
Janice Telican, Executive Assistant
Congregational Care
Rev. David Shinn, Associate Pastor
Deb Wagner, Administrative Assistant
Angelique Kingsbury, Coordinator of Volunteers & Senior Center
Congregational Life
Rev. Sarah Brouwer, Associate Pastor
Deb Wagner, Administrative Assistant
Kristin Kieft, Communications Coordinator
Vanessa Uzong, Wedding Coordinator & Receptionist
Educational Ministries
Dr. Carmel Tinnes, Director of Educational Ministries
Mahsin Hamilton, Administrative Assistant
Barbara Mauk, Librarian
Faith in Action
Rev. Alanna Simone Tyler, Associate Pastor for Justice and Mission
Vanessa Uzong, Administrative Assistant
Families, Youth, and Children
Rev. Matthew Johnson, Interim Associate Pastor
Jim Cochrane, Director of Youth Ministries
Marti Kruzkop, Coordinator of Early Childhood & Family Ministries
Kasey Collier, Nursery Coordinator
Music and the Arts
Dr. Amanda Weber, Minister of Music & the Arts
Dr. Rodney Allen Schwartz, Director, Gallery & Archive
Barbara Prince, Program Facilitator, Director Global Choir
David Ostenson Moore, Director, Gathered at Five
Brad Ollmann, Dir. Early/Middle Childhood Music
Ryan LaBoy, Director, Youth Music
Mark Kieffer, Director, Handbell Choir
Finance & Administration
Julie Champ, Director of Finance
Kienan Mick, Accounting Manager
Déborah Majune, Accounting Clerk
Sheila Delaney, Events Manager
Lacey Jung, Hospitality Assistant
Stewardship
Mary Hess, Director of Stewardship
Anna Gram, Stewardship Associate
Operations
Pl Eichten, Director of Facilities
Mike Anderson, Facilities Team Lead
Chris Brown, Todd Bushy, John Seagard, Richard Wilder, Facilities Staff
Emeriti
Rev. Elizabeth D. Heller
Rev. Byron Thompson
Rev. Katherine S. Michael
Rev. Douglas Mitchell
Dr. Melanie Ohnstad
Samuel G. Cooke
Parish Associates (Volunteer Clergy)
Rev. Dr. James Brasel, Rev. Denise Dunbar-Perkins, Rev. Judy Allen Kim, Rev. Judy Landt, Rev. David Liddle, Rev. Dr. Margaret McCray
Westminster Camp Ajawah
Sofia-Bella Vitale-Gill, Registrar
Westminster Counseling Center
Rev. Dr. Margaret McCray, LMFT, Director
Peter Bruhn, MA, LADC
Sherri Dunham, MA, LPC
Laurel Severns Gunzel, M.Div, MA, LPCC
Carol Hornbeck, LMFT
Rev Susan Thornton, M.A., M.Div., LP
Jennifer Aden, Office Manager
Westminster Town Hall Forum
Susan McKenna, Director
WPC Happenings

Sunday Worship & Gathered at Five Guest Preacher
Sunday, July 7 | 10 am
Rev. Dr. Jeff Japinga, Executive Presbyter, Presbytery of the Twin Cities Area, will preach on July 7. Japinga teaches each year in Westminster’s officer training program and has led retreats for our church. Prior to his call to serve the presbytery, he was on the faculty of McCormick Theological Seminary in Chicago.

All-Church Summer Brunch
Sunday, July 28 | 11 am
We will have an All-Church Summer Brunch after worship on Sunday, July 28 in Westminster Hall. Our own Laura Lee will provide a delicious spread for $7 adult; $5 child; $25 family max. This gathering will also give us the opportunity as a community to thank Director of Youth Ministries, Jim Cochrane, and Interim Associate Pastor for Families, Youth, and Children, Matt Johnson, for their time among us leading FYC Ministries as they prepare to embark on what is next. Jim will begin seminary in the fall. Matt will return to ministry in the Lutheran Church (ELCA) and July 28 will be his last Sunday at Westminster. Join us for fun and fellowship and thanksgiving!

FEAST
Sunday, July 28 | 4-7 pm
Help serve a meal to the hungry in the church neighborhood. Sign up at the reception desk or contact Angelique Kingsbury, akingsbury@wpc-mpls.org.

Rocking Chair Re-Upholstery Help Needed
One of our Nursery rockers is in need of repair. The webbing holding the springs in place is disintegrating and needs to be replaced and the fabric on the underside of the seat is pulling away from the frame and needs to be replaced. Please contact Marie at mkruskop@wpc.mpls.org if you or someone you know can help. Thank you!

GATHERED AT FIVE
Gathered at Five: Summer in the City
Sundays through July 28 @ 5 pm | Westminster Hall
Join folks of all ages who are finding community in this non-traditional worship service. This summer we’ll worship outside, eat at food trucks, and share in art projects. Join us after a weekend at the cabin or the yard. Worship will be family-friendly. Come. Be Gathered!

July 7 | Jeff Japinga, Executive Presbyter of the Presbytery of the Twin Cities Area
July 14 | Sarah Brouwer
July 21 | Meghan Gage-Finn
July 28 | Matt Johnson

2019 IN MEMORY
Leona Hess
May 26
Nancy J. Peterson
May 27
Ronald Hemstad
June 15
Jim Ullyot
June 20

Daily Phone
DEVOTIONS
612.332.7087

July
1 1 John 2:7-11
2 Ephesians 5:6-20
3 Jeremiah 23:16-22
4 Psalm 30
5 Isaiah 66:10-14
6 Galatians 6:7-16
8 Psalm 119:73-80
9 Jeremiah 8:4-13
10 Luke 10:13-16
11 Amos 7:7-17
12 Psalm 25:1-10
13 Colossians 1:1-14
15 James 2:1-7
16 1 John 3:11-17
17 Psalm 25:1-11
18 Amos 8:1-12
19 Psalm 15
20 Colossians 1:15-28
21 Luke 10:38-42
22 Psalm 119:97-104
23 1 John 2:1-6
24 John 6:41-51
25 Psalm 85
26 Genesis 18:20-32
27 Colossians 2:6-15
29 Psalm 55:16-23
30 Romans 9:30-10:4
31 Matthew 5:43-48
Staff Transitions & Welcome Sonja!

by Meghan Gage-Finn, Executive Associate Pastor

Several weeks ago, we shared the news of staff transitions in the area of Educational Ministries. For many, this was difficult to receive, but we appreciate the ways we can live into change, and conversations around change, in community.

As a staff we celebrated Carmel Tinnes’ ministry among us, in leading children’s and adult education, and gave thanks for her creative energy over these last two years. In August, we will welcome Westminster member Sonja Mortenson Dzieckciowski (Dee-Cow-Ski) as Director of Children’s Ministries, a half-time position.

Sonja comes with more than a decade as a youth leader in Westminster’s Senior High Youth Ministries, and she has served as a Director of a Presbyterian summer camp. In her professional life, she earned a Master’s in Early Childhood Education and taught for 13 years as a 1st and 2nd grade teacher. Sonja will support our Sunday School Teachers and Church School Program, lead Children’s Church, help coordinate aspects of Wednesday evening programming, and work with a strong FYC staff team for many of the other keystones of this ministry area.

The search for a new, full-time Director of Youth Ministries is going well and we hope to have news to share soon about the completion of that process, with the goal of having someone in that role in August. The Associate Pastor Nominating Committee continues its good work in searching for an Associate Pastor for Faith Formation, who will join our staff later in the fall.

In the meantime, I look forward to serving as pastoral support for Families, Youth, and Children’s Ministries as we move into the program year. I will teach through the completion of the current Confirmation class and begin with the incoming class. The dates for retreats, lock-ins, fellowship, and service events are on my calendar! It will be a fun season of connecting with our youth and their families. And yes, some of my responsibilities are being shifted to allow me to have time and space to engage fully in the coming months!

Please see the notice in Happenings (on page 4) about an opportunity to thank Jim Cochrane and Matt Johnson on July 28 for their leadership and ministry.

College End-of-Summer Cookout

by Meghan Gage-Finn, Executive Associate Pastor

The Northenscold family will host a cookout on Friday, August 2 at 6 pm. It may feel early to think about summer’s end, but we know many students head back to college or semesters abroad by mid-August! We will share stories of summer jobs, internships, travels, and adventures, and have a chance to welcome the high school graduating class of 2019! Drinks, meat, and vegetarian options for grilling will be provided. Students are invited to bring a salad, chips, or dessert to share. Please RSVP to me, mgage-finn@wpc-mpls.org, by Wednesday, July 31.

Thank-You from Meghan

I would like to offer my deep thanks to the Westminster community for the support, encouragement, and financial resources these last four years as I completed my Doctor of Ministry at Luther Seminary. I am grateful to my colleagues, especially to Tim, who covered for me, who listened and asked good questions, and who allowed me time and space to read and write. I am most appreciative of members of the congregation who shared their experiences with me, and who offered deep reflections on their own faith life, related to Creative Time. I learned a great deal about myself and my capacity as a leader, and about Westminster and our potential as a people of faith, following the leading of the Holy Spirit. I look forward to continuing to grow in our shared ministry together!
Summertime Family-Friendly Services and Events

**SUMMERTIME DAYTIME PLAYTIMES!**

4th Wednesday of the month (7/24, 8/28) | 10 am | Oak Hills Splash Pad

All parents or caregivers and their children are welcome to attend these playtimes hosted by members of Westminster’s Moms Group. Look for more details in the FYC email on Thursday afternoons. Not getting the FYC email? Contact Mahin at mhamilton@wpc-mpls.org to get signed up.

**MINNEAPOLIS POPS ORCHESTRA**

July 14 | 5:30 pm – Lake Harriet Band Shell

Join us on for live outdoor music at Lake Harriet. We’ll listen to the Minneapolis Pops Orchestra. Bring a blanket and picnic dinner and meet us behind the band shell benches (between the benches and the path) for an evening of music and fellowship. RSVP to Marie by Thursday, July 11.

*Please note: In the event of rain or severe weather, fellowship events will be cancelled. When RSVPing for events requiring an RSVP, please provide your phone number to Marie (mkruskop@wpc-mpls.org) so she can reach you with updates.*

Members are the Key to Welcoming Our Community During this Year of Invitation

by Sheila Delaney, Events Manager

Westminster members continue to manifest our mission to be a telling presence in our city by intentionally inviting community members to visit, tour, and host events at Westminster. We are in need of your continued involvement and support.

We welcomed many visitors and guests to Westminster this spring! Volunteers greeted over one thousand visitors during the NCAA Final Four and the Festival of Homiletics. We also hosted a respite center lead by the Minneapolis Police Department Chaplaincy for over 800 public safety staff during the days leading up to the championship game. Many members also volunteered to lead tours during Doors Open Minneapolis. Fifteen members welcomed over 300 visitors on tours of Westminster highlighting our mission work, architecture, art and sustainable features.

This summer through October 13, Westminster Sunday Farmers Market invites neighbors to connect with Westminster. We are in need of members who enjoy welcoming new faces and sharing our good work.

Westminster member Rob Carlson has taken the lead in recruiting members. Thanks to Rob’s initiative, members can sign up for shifts at the market at:

https://tinyurl.com/y2qetart.

Starting in August and continuing through the winter, we are spearheading a series of networking events focused on inviting downtown neighbors and professionals as well as non-profit, civic and arts organizations into Westminster. We will offer tours of Westminster as part of these gatherings. The first of the series will be held on August 13 from 4-6 pm. We would greatly appreciate member involvement and support of this series. Please contact Sheila Delaney, sdelaney@wpc-mpls.org to learn how you might contribute to this effort.

Summer Mission Trips

by Jim Cochrane, Director of Youth Ministries

On June 24, Westminster middle schoolers took to the road on their annual mission trip to Duluth and Grand Marais, where they got hands-on experience learning how to care for God’s creation. Over the week, they spent time working in gardens and state parks while also studying the cultural history of our state. A big thanks to our leaders and youth for a great trip!

Westminster’s high school youth group will leave on July 13 for their mission trip to Greensboro, NC. Please continue to hold our young people and leaders in your prayers during their trip!

Stay connected with your Westminster Church friends over the summer. Make plans to attend the following family fellowship events and feel free to invite your neighbors.
Join the Call for Climate Advocacy

by Tomie Evans, Eco-Justice Ministry Team

The Energy Innovation and Carbon Dividend Act was recently introduced in Congress as the first bi-partisan climate legislation in 10 years. By adding a fee on fossil fuels at the source—at the well, mine, and border—carbon based products have an annually increasing cost. Price competition drives urgently needed faster business action for efficiency and innovation of lower carbon energy, products and services across the entire U.S. and world economy.

Proceeds are returned to all families equally as a monthly dividend. Consumers gain better lower-carbon choices, and the socially just dividend helps more than half of families break even, and many get a little ahead. Spending the dividend leads to more main street jobs.

On June 11, 1,200 Citizens’ Climate Lobby volunteers from across the country (including myself and many Presbyterians) again held over 500 Capitol Hill meetings with Congress, making progress.

Last June, the General Assembly (GA) affirmed the Texas and Minnesota overtures calling Presbyterians to advocate for climate action and the carbon dividend. Letters were hand delivered to Presbyterian members of the House and Senate asking for action.

This is an invitation from the Eco-Justice Ministry to all Westminster members and friends to answer the GA’s call to speak up for Creation. We will provide simple ways to lend your voice to the growing choir of relentless organized advocacy for action on climate. Contact us! Tomie Evans, tomdotevans@gmail.com.

Thank you for your care for creation.

A Weekend of Wisdom with Parker Palmer

by Kathy Michael, Associate Pastor Emerita

Parker Palmer is an author, teacher, and activist whose writings and work speak deeply to people in all walks of life. He is the founder of the Center for Courage & Renewal, a nonprofit retreat and education center committed to creating a more just, compassionate, and healthy world.

Palmer will participate in a song-and-spoken-word event at Westminster on Friday, November 15. On Saturday, November 16, he will speak at a special Town Hall Forum. Don’t miss this opportunity to hear an outstanding spiritual guide and promoter of wholeness for the human community.

Friday evening, Palmer will be joined by Grammy-winning singer and songwriter, Carrie Newcomer, for their presentation What We Need Is Here: Hope, Hard Times, and the Human Possibility. This $35 ticketed-event (tickets on sale in the fall) will be held at 7:30 pm in Westminster Hall. The Town Hall Forum Saturday morning will take place at 11 am and is free and open to all.

While November may seem a long way off, I’m writing to encourage you to save the date, and to take the time between now and then to read one (or more) of Palmer’s books. They include Let Your Life Speak: Listening to the Voice of Vocation; A Hidden Wholeness: The Journey Toward an Undivided Life; Healing the Heart of Democracy: The Courage to Create a Politics Worthy of the Human Spirit; and his latest, On the Brink of Everything: Grace, Gravity & Getting Old.

Palmer’s books are profound and enlightening for those who seek to live more integrated, meaningful, and faithful lives. His honesty, vulnerability, and humor draw us into our own frail and wonderful humanity. His time with us will be rich and deeply rewarding. I look forward to seeing you there!

DAY CAMP 2019:
SEEKING GOD’S SHALOM

Kids and counselors spent the week of June 17-21 at Westminster, enjoying activities, music, and games in the morning, and taking field trips in the afternoon.
The Westminster Gallery, Collection, and Archive are busy telling stories. We tell biblical, social justice, and historic stories pertinent to the congregation and our setting in the city, within the greater community, and the world around us.

Current exhibitions tell stories depicted through art made by our members in Standing Hand in Hand in the Westminster Gallery, by Palestinian artists in Windows of Hope in the Garden Room, through a variety of artists in The Life of Christ in the Meisel Room, and by artist members of CIVA (Christians in the Visual Arts) in the Corner Gallery.

Two recently acquired paintings by the Beijing artist, Dao Zi, are installed near the chapel alongside two French artists’ interpretations of similar biblical stories. These new Chinese paintings were acquired recently when I attended a three-day symposium in Pasadena, Ca., where eleven Chinese Christian artists told their life stories and introduced us to their art.

In mid-June, I had the opportunity to tell Westminster’s story, talk about the history of our gallery and collections, and to describe how and why we collect and exhibit art during the biennial CIVA conference held in the Twin Cities. The organization’s 40th anniversary was observed with a tour, reception, and dinner held at Westminster for the current and former board members. I conducted a half-day workshop as part of the day-ahead activities. In addition to attending the conference and listening to many speakers and participating in discussions, I was one of the break-out speakers with a 90-minute presentation. Our story is being well told.

Telling the Story
by Rodney Allen Schwartz, Director, Westminster Gallery & Archive

R

So...What is this Counseling Center, Anyway?
by Peter Bruhn, LPC, LADC

Recen

ly I was chatting with a friend who has been attending Westminster for years, and he asked, to my surprise, “So all your clients are people who attend Westminster, right?” The truth is, no, not at all. But his assumption was an easy one to make, and it turns out it’s shared by many. In fact, the vast majority of our clients do not attend church at Westminster. They are from throughout the Metro area, and from a variety of cultural, ethnic, and socioeconomic backgrounds, seeking help with an array of emotional, transitional, and/or identity issues. We serve individuals of all ages, as well as couples and families.

It may also surprise many to learn that we are not a faith-based Counseling Center. We are, above all, client-centered therapists, meaning our goal is to help clients identify and work towards personal goals designed to help them live more rich, fulfilling, and authentic lives. To this end we utilize up-to-date, evidence-based, therapeutic interventions in an effort to give clients the highest quality of care possible. Of course, if a client wants to incorporate a spiritual component into their treatment, we will certainly embrace this. But we have no spiritual or religious agenda. We also have a strong commitment to helping all who need emotional assistance, illustrated by a sliding fee scale that is utilized by many, and satellite locations at Grace-Trinity Community Church, Presbyterian Church, and Bethlehem Lutheran Church.

In keeping with a core value of Westminster itself, we are a vibrant, open-minded Counseling Center. westminstercounseling.org