Building the Beloved Community
by Andrea Knoll and Jane Oberrender, Stewardship Co-Chairs

God tells us to “Love your neighbor as yourself,” but in the daily news we read of division, conflict, and crisis. Sometimes it’s hard to find a hopeful way forward. Westminster News tells a different story.

You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the greatest and first commandment. And the second is like it: you shall love your neighbor as yourself.
—Matthew 22: 37-38

The pages are full of opportunities to participate in a meaningful and welcoming community: exciting arts events and new worship experiences engage people in innovative and inclusive ways; the education curriculum addresses current issues and teaches us constructive dialogue; opportunities to work for environmental, racial and economic justice put our faith into action; and gatherings for all ages provide a place to belong. Westminster helps us find love, hope and faith in a changing world.

This year’s stewardship theme is Building the Beloved Community. At Westminster, we celebrate God’s love for us and the call to love our neighbor as ourselves. This fall, we will hear about how fellow members have found meaning and purpose in loving their neighbors and building community. We encourage you to grapple with your own sense of Christian purpose in this community, and how faith encourages you to seek justice and walk the path of Jesus.

As we address the challenges around us in the world, let us ask what God is doing and how we can cooperate in bringing about God’s intentions for humankind. Our stewardship of this beloved community and gifts of time, talent, and resources are an act of faith and an expression of gratefulness. We encourage you to explore and participate in the opportunities Westminster provides!

Stewardship Sunday is November 17, when we will invite you to declare your financial support for Westminster’s work in the coming year. Meanwhile, let’s explore together our role in building the beloved community of God.

Nachito Herrera Kicks Off Westminster Performing Arts Series

Pianist Nachito Herrera, one of the leading Cuban musicians of our time, kicks off the new Performing Arts Series on October 11. The new Series features a unique array of music and dance, from Cuban jazz to South African gospel, Latin American early music to a holiday classic, contemporary choral to bluegrass.

As music director of both the famed Tropicana Club in Havana and the Grammy Award-winning Cubanismo, Herrera made his mark from an early age. He has played at many of the world’s finest concert halls and prestigious jazz festivals and has earned Emmy and Grammy awards plus City Pages’ Best Jazz Artist for four years. Nachito is a beloved member of Westminster.

A social hour with free Cuban food precedes the concert starting at 6 pm. The concert, in Westminster Hall, begins at 7:30 pm. Tickets are $25 ($10 youth & students) at westminstermpls.org/wpas. A limited number of pay-what-you-can tickets are available at the door 90 minutes before the performance.
What We Need is Here: Hope, Hard Times, and Human Possibility
Parker Palmer, Carrie Newcomer & Gary Walters

This special event brings prolific author and educator Parker Palmer to Westminster along with Grammy-winning singer Carrie Newcomer and musician Gary Walters. This amazing program has toured venues around the country. A portion of ticket sales will go to Northside Achievement Zone and the 21st Century Academy.

If you’d like to volunteer to help at this event, contact Kathy Michael, dkmich4@aol.com.

November 15, 7 pm
Westminster Hall
Tickets $35
On Sale October 1

Beyond Sunday Connections
by Paula Huey Fox, Beyond Sunday Connections Committee

Beyond Sunday Connections invites women of all ages to meet new people and reconnect with old friends while sharing a meal and discussion about the way faith influences our daily lives. Nancy Moehle is the featured speaker on Monday, November 18. Nancy and her daughter Annie joined Westminster on Mother’s Day, 2002. She served two terms as Deacon and headed the hospitality committee for six years. A graduate of Southern Illinois University of Law, Nancy was a litigator in private practice for 34 years, and before that a middle school teacher. She will talk about how children shaped her life and career.

Beyond Sunday Connections begins at 6 pm with an informal social hour, followed by dinner at 6:45 in Westminster Hall. After the speaker’s presentation there is time for table talk. The evening ends at 8:30. Reservations and payment ($28) are due by November 12. Register in the Westminster Commons, via the online calendar, or contact Deb Wagner, dwagner@wpc-mpls.org. If cost is a concern, ask about the New Connections Fund created to enlarge our circle of friends. Questions? Contact Lynne Thompson, 612.339.3971.

Finding a Role in Building the Beloved Community
by Katie McCurry, Stewardship Ministry Team

In 1978 I visited Westminster and was welcomed by Edith Cochrane, one of the first women elders. She invited me to join the church. Not having a strong counter-argument, I soon did! My decision to become part of this faith community was one of the smartest things I’ve done, and I am grateful Westminster has been my church home ever since.

Because of your support, Westminster’s role in the building and nurturing of communities of all kinds has expanded over the decades. Most recently, Great River Landing was completed and now provides affordable housing for 72 men with histories of incarceration. There is even a playground for visiting children of the residents.

Affordable housing and jobs are the biggest challenges facing folks coming out of prison, and so Westminster worked with others to help build a place for people with these challenges. This is part of our legacy, building on working with Chinese immigrants in the 19th century and the Community Involvement Program in the 20th and 21st centuries. We follow the command in Matthew 22 to love our neighbors as ourselves, and the command of Micah 6 to do justice.

Decades ago, Edith invited me to be part of this hard, yet joy-filled work. As we enter this stewardship season, I invite you, too, to find your role helping build the Beloved Community.
Dear Friends,

One hundred twenty years ago, in 1899, Westminster made a major push to extend a robust welcome to the broader community. In 1897 we constructed a new sanctuary in a new location and church leaders felt that the time was right to move more assertively to grow the congregation.

At the September meeting of the Session we talked about that moment in the life of Westminster. It was a different time, of course. Minneapolis was going through its own population boom. The city created streetcar lines that radiated out from downtown, allowing new neighborhoods to spring up. The local economy was thriving. The city had 200,000 residents in 1900; by 1950, more than 500,000.

Westminster grew with the city. In 1900 Westminster had reached 2,000 members. By the 1950s that number passed 4,000. Through ensuing decades Westminster’s membership slipped; today it has risen to slightly more than 3,100.

Back in 1900 Westminster leaders sensed the time was right for the church to embark on a serious effort to introduce people to the congregation. In a five-week campaign Westminster added 205 new members. It was the greatest burst of growth in our history — fueled by increasing visibility of Westminster and its leaders in Minneapolis, interest in the beautiful new building, and the city’s population growth.

Today’s moment in the life of Westminster has similarities to that time in our history. In addition to the beautiful new wing of our building, the city — especially downtown — is experiencing rapid residential growth. The downtown population will have doubled from 35,000 to 70,000 residents in the 15-year period from 2010-2025. There is ample evidence of that growth all around us.

At their September meeting, elders discussed how to seize this unique opportunity with which God has blessed us. How can we work to expand the ministry of Westminster at this particular moment in our life? That topic will be the subject of a Session retreat in October.

In the meantime, we are organizing a campaign to increase engagement, attendance, and membership at Westminster. **November will be a Month of Invitation.** We will equip church members to invite neighbors, friends, family, and co-workers to experience some aspect of Westminster — worship, a Town Hall Forum, a concert, an educational event. Watch for more information.

A Month of Invitation will produce results only if we all pull together!

See you in church.

Grace and peace,

Tim Hart-Andersen
Kicks and Cummerbunds!

October 5 | 4:30-8:30 pm | Westminster Hall
All ages are invited to the FYC PROM. Enjoy food, dancing, board games, yard games, and other activities. Fancy, formal dress is encouraged! $8 per person and $35 family maximum. https://tithe.ly/event-registration/#/897186.

The Dignity Center Annual Fundraiser

October 8 | thedignitycenter.org
The Dignity Center, Westminster’s ministry partner supports neighbors experiencing homelessness on their path to stability. Learn about the Center’s work and be inspired as keynote speaker Minneapolis Mayor Jacob Frey shares his vision for tackling homelessness and promoting affordable housing.

Small Hands, Big Hearts

October 13
Children in grades 2-5 have the opportunity to respond to our call to be a telling presence as they share in Small Hands, Big Hearts (SHBH), a time of service and learning during worship. Children will leave the sanctuary when younger ones go to Children’s Church. They will spend the remainder of the service with volunteer leaders in the Garden Room engaging in stories and activities with a hands-on focus of serving the wider community.

Quiet Worship

October 19 | 9 am | Bushnell Room
“Comfort and assurance in God’s presence.” This familiar Psalm—and its companion assurance in Luke 12, “Do not worry about your life”—will shape this gathering of quiet worship. The Rev. Dr. Sarah Henrich serves as worship leader, assisted by Rollie Baldwin.

FEAST

October 27 | 4-7 pm
Help serve a meal to our neighbors in the downtown area. Sign up at the reception desk or contact Angelique akingsbury@wpc-mpls.org.

Guided Tours

Tours of Westminster’s architecture and art collection are offered for members and visitors. These 30-60 minute tours encourage dialogue about the impact of the arts in one’s spiritual journey. Anyone may request a free tour online, westminstermpls.org/tour-request. If you are interested in becoming a trained tour guide, contact Rodney Allen Schwartz, rschwartz@wpc-mpls.org or Elizabeth Winga, elizabethwinga@gmail.com.

WestConnect Annual Retreat

Save November 9-10 and watch for more info soon! Questions? Email Sarah at sbrouwer@wpc-mpls.org.

Gathered at Five

Do you like to feed people? Gathered at Five continues to meet Sunday evenings for casual, lively worship in Westminster Hall. We’ve added a dinner afterward so come for worship and stay for a meal with friends! If you would like to volunteer at the Gathered Dinners, contact Sarah, sbrouwer@wpc-mpls.org.

Daily Phone

DEVOTIONS

612.332.7087

October
1  Psalm 62
2  Matthew 19:16-22
3  Lamentations 3:19-26
4  Psalm 37:1-9
5  2 Timothy 1:1-14
6  Luke 17:5-10
7  Psalm 3
8  1 John 5:1-5
9  Mark 11:12-14, 20-24
10  Jeremiah 29:1, 4-7
11  Psalm 111
12  2 Timothy 2:8-15
13  Luke 17:11-19
14  Psalm 61
15  Ephesians 6:10-20
16  Matthew 10:5-15
17  Jeremiah 31:27-34
18  Psalm 121
19  2 Timothy 3:14-4:5
20  Luke 18:1-8
21  Psalm 57
22  James 5:7-12
24  Joel 2:22-32
25  Psalm 84:1-7
26  2 Timothy 4:6-8, 16-18
27  Luke 18:9-14
28  Psalm 84:8-12
29  1 Peter 5:1-11
30  Matthew 21:28-32
31  Daniel 7:1-3, 15-18

IN MEMORY 2019

Boyd Mast
  July 31
Margaret Thon
  August 12
Brian Paul
  August 17
Ross Paden
  September 8
Bill Petersen
  September 10

BIRTH

Jack Declan Flanagan
  April 16, 2019
Invitation to Create Community in a Divided World

by Kathy Michael, Interim Adult Education Director

Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God – what is good and acceptable and perfect. Romans 12:2

Theologian Karl Barth wrote that we deepen our faith by renewing our minds. We have this opportunity for deepening and renewing through Westminster’s Adult Education classes on Sundays and Wednesdays. October classes continue the “Invitation to Create Community in a Divided World.”

Dr. Matt Skinner explores the roots of Christian community to set the stage for where we have come from and what we can learn from the past. Rabbi Marcia Zimmerman invites us into our life together to look at challenges facing America in these troubled and divided times. Pastor Mary Halvorson sees worship as the key for sending us out into the world to make a difference. Dr. Margaret McCray will look at forgiveness as a means to creating community. I will reflect on the work of several theologians as well as biblical writers for inspiration to weave community in a wounded world.

All of these classes are listed in the Education Offerings catalog available on the literature table at church or online. Sunday classes meet 9:15-10:15 am in Westminster Hall; Wednesday classes meet 6:30-8 pm in the Meisel Room.

Won’t you join us to deepen your faith through the renewal of your mind as we unwrap the potential for creating community in a divided world? I can’t think of a time when we needed it more.

October 2019 | westminstermpls.org

Presbyterians for Earth Care

by Rick Person, Midwest Region Representative, Presbyterians for Earth Care Steering Committee

Westminster has been an Earth Care Congregation (ECC) since 2011. Currently, 235 ECCs around the country undertake earth care and environmental justice activities in their communities through worship, education, facilities, and outreach. The Presbytery of the Twin Cities Area (PTCA) will soon have 11 ECCs, the largest number of any Presbytery.

The PTCA ECCs meet quarterly. The next meeting is November 9 at Central Presbyterian Church. Several ECCs, including Westminster, Church of the Apostles, Oak Grove, and Cherokee Park Presbyterian, focus on sustainability in their buildings and on procuring alternative energy from solar panels, Xcel Windsourse, and community solar gardens.

Several others, including New Life Presbyterian and First Presbyterian, maintain large organic gardens on their property for congregational and community use, including local food shelves.

All ECCs focus on education and advocacy to combat climate change and address other critical environmental issues. Several ECCs joined other faith-based groups and area youth at the recent Twin Cities Youth Climate Strike at the State Capitol.

Many ECCs carry out environmental programming on creation care issues in worship, daily devotionals, and newsletter articles. The Westminster Eco-Justice Ministry Team recently hosted a forum on renewable energy and will host an evening forum with Paul Douglas on November 12.

Westminster also focuses on water quality issues including sulfide mining in the Boundary Waters Canoe Area and cleanups along the Minnehaha Creek Watershed. Westminster, Cherokee Park, and Oak Grove are working with the Citizens Climate Lobby on the Energy and Carbon Dividend Act. Next year promises to be a major environmental year with the 50th anniversary of Earth Day.

New Old Adventure: Meet Cynthia Johnson

by Larry Clausen, New Old Adventure

The New-Old Adventure offers a second session of an exciting season of learning events on Wednesday, October 9. Cynthia Johnson, a licensed social worker who has worked extensively in areas of transitional housing and long-term care, will lead the discussion on housing. Johnson believes that planning ahead helps avert crisis situations and that learning about available choices is key to good decision making. Choices can be many, from aging in place to deciding when to downsize or move into smaller or more supported housing. Events such as unexpected illness or disability are also a reality as aging occurs, and options of hospital to rehabilitation to home need to be considered. Johnson will focus on these topics and more including cost and paying for services that are needed as we get older. Please join us at 11 am for two hours of learning, lunch, and discussion.

Questions? Contact Deb Wagner, dwagner@wpc-mpls.org.
What Are the Pastors Reading?
by Meghan Gage-Finn, Executive Associate Pastor

We had an interesting conversation at the close of our summer staff retreat about what books the pastors were currently reading, and what had sparked our interest over the previous few months. This is the first in a series; next month we will feature David Shinn and Alanna Simone Tyler.

Sarah Brouwer read the memoir Educated, by Dr. Tara Westover, which tells of Westover’s experience growing up in a fundamentalist tradition. She was homeschooled until she went to college, and then went on to earn a doctorate from Cambridge. Sarah describes the book as being about how education liberated Westover in many ways but how it still could not free her from her past.

Tim Hart-Andersen said the best book he read this summer was A Good Place to Hide, by Peter Grose, which describes the dramatic story of the village of Le Chambon-sur-Lignon, France. During World War II, the Huguenot people (French Presbyterians) in the area sheltered thousands of Jewish children at great risk to themselves. Tim says he was deeply moved by the story of the tenacious faith of these fellow Christians.

I read Americanah, by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie. We hear the story of Ifemelu, who leaves her native Nigeria, under military rule, for America for academic pursuits, leaving behind her young love. In unfamiliar America, Ifemelu must for the first time wrestle with what it means to be black, what it means to belong, and what it means to search for home. I also read the January Book Read selection Virgil Wander, by Leif Enger. I look forward to shared conversation on this book in early 2020.

Several of us read Dr. Andy Root’s The Pastor in the Secular Age, which discusses how the secular age has impacted the role, identity, and practices of the pastor, and how secular culture has shaped, and possibly obscured, the core vocation of pastors. I suspect we will have lively discussions on this topic!

It’s a Pajama Party!
by Marie Kruskop, Coordinator of Early Childhood and Family Ministries

What’s better than sitting around in your comfy pajamas? Sitting around in your comfy pajamas with your church friends sharing a meal, having fun, and helping others in need! We’ll be collecting new books and new pajamas in infant to adult XXXL sizes to donate to the Pajama Program, a non-profit that donates new pajamas and books to children in need, so those kids have comfort and security each night. Consider donating your favorite board book, children’s picture book, chapter book, or young adult novel for children aged infant to 18.

Join us from 6:30-8 pm Friday, November 8, at Wood Lake Nature Center in Richfield. We’ll start with a pizza dinner followed by time to explore the Nature Center, take part in other activities, and listen to stories around the fire. (Suggested donation of $5 per person; families capped at $20.)

Unable to attend? You may still take part by leaving your “FYC-Marie” labeled donation of pajamas or books at the reception desk.

For more information and to RSVP, contact Marie Kruskop at mkruskop@wpc-mpls.org.

Welcome Interim Organist!
I am excited to join you this season as interim organist. Church music is one of my great joys, and I especially love the mystery behind how the same melody and harmonies can reach out and inspire people in different and even unexpected ways. I believe in the interpretive power of music and plan all of my preludes and postludes to serve the message of the worship service. To that end, I will not only play a large variety of composed music but also find ways of exploring hymns and scripture through improvisation as well.

I received my Bachelor of Music from St. Olaf College (Um Yah Yah!) and my Masters in Music from the University of Oklahoma. I will be joined in worship by my wife Emily and children James and Ellen.

I’m looking forward to a blessed year with you. Please say hi; I would love to meet you.

—Kenny Vigne, Interim Organist
Prayer and Belief in the Gallery
by Rodney Allen Schwartz, Director, Westminster Gallery and Archive

The fall exhibition features the work of two local artists, paintings by Georgette Sosin on prayer and photographs by Wing Young Huie on belief.

Georgette Sosin is a Jewish artist who is fascinated by language and scripture. She created cosmic-inspired abstract paintings of numerous themes including two series on the Aramaic text of the New Testament Lord’s Prayer. These paintings and another inspired by the Old Testament Mourner’s Kaddish, the Jewish prayer for the dead, were recently gifted by her family to the Westminster Collection. First seen here in a solo exhibition of her work in 2008, these pieces now return as part of our permanent collection.

Wing Young Huie is an American born Chinese photographer who is well known locally for his images of Minneapolis’ Lake Street, St. Paul’s University Avenue and Frogtown, and the people who live in those neighborhoods, including the Hmong community. His work has been exhibited in multiple galleries and featured in nine books. A newly identified body of work illustrating the construct of belief has been drawn from the treasure trove of photographs made over the course of his 25-year career, and these compelling images join Sosin’s paintings of prayer in the Westminster Gallery and throughout Westminster’s first floor galleries.

Huie will be in the 10:30 am worship service on Sunday, October 6. A reception follows in the Westminster Gallery, with a lecture at noon. Prayer and Belief runs through November 17.

Youth Cultural Healing Summit
by Lacey Jung, Events Coordinator

Westminster feels privileged to share space alongside so many neighbors who do the hard work of uplifting voices and opening hearts in the name of building community. Marnita’s Table is one of Westminster’s primary venue partners doing this work. Marnita’s Table, alongside the Catalyst Initiative of The Minneapolis Foundation, will host the Youth Cultural Healing Summit here at Westminster. This all-day event on Thursday, October 17, will “collectively lift up youth cultural healing leadership, as we dive in to explore integrative and culturally specific healing strategies and practices.” Featured youth performances include the Irreducible Grace Foundation and the Ikidowin Youth Theater Group at Indigenous Peoples Task Force.

You are welcome to participate in the various breakout panels and performances scheduled throughout that day, in the hopes of showing the power found in healing and sharing the grace found in equity. More event info can be found online at marnitastable.org.

Day Camp Reunion Sunday!

We hope the practices of seeking God’s shalom in our city and communities continued to be part of the lives of our children and youth long after the close of Westminster Day Camp. We all enjoy the songs and games, stories, and singing during that week in June, but one of the best parts is seeing the relationships built between our campers and the youth leaders. To help us reconnect this fall, October 13 will be Day Camp Reunion Sunday at the 10:30 service, with a special area of pews roped off for campers and leaders to sit together. Family members, you are welcome to sit among or near, if you would like. Feel free to wear your Day Camp t-shirt that morning and sit with your cabin group. There may even be some special music to remind us of our summer days together!
Westminster Town Hall Forum

Jim Sciutto
Tuesday, October 22
Noon
Russia and China’s Assaults on America

Jim Sciutto is CNN’s chief national security correspondent and co-anchor of the news program CNN Newsroom. He reports and provides analysis on all aspects of U.S. national security, including foreign policy, the military, the intelligence community, and the ongoing Russia investigation. An award-winning journalist, he is the recipient of the Headliner Award for the documentary Targeting Terror: Inside the Intelligence War and the Edward R. Murrow award for his reporting from Iran during the 2009 election protests. His new book, The Shadow War, explores Russia and China’s clandestine efforts to undermine the U.S.

2019 Peace & Global Witness Offering

The author of the second letter to the Thessalonica church concluded with these words: “Now may the Lord of peace himself give you peace at all times in all ways. The Lord be with all of you.” 2 Thessalonians 3:16

These encouraging words for the Thessalonica church are an audacious reminder for us that God is the world’s sure source of peace. In a world that is often chaotic, we bear witness to God’s enduring peace through the annual Peace and Global Witness Offering. We join Presbyterians across the country in sowing seeds of peace to support local, national, and international agencies engaged in justice, compassion, and peacemaking. One-quarter of the offering remains with congregations; one-quarter of the offering is designated for the Presbytery of the Twin Cities Area (PTCA), and half is designated to the ministries of the Presbyterian Mission Agency. This year the PTCA Mission & Witness Committee determined the Minnesota Chapter of the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) will receive the PTCA share of the offering. By offering support groups for families and individuals and serving as a clearinghouse for education, advocacy, and crisis resources, NAMI improves the lives of children and adults living with mental illness. Our 2019 gifts to this special offering are one of the ways we demonstrate our faith in God’s peace at all times and in all ways.

World Communion Sunday with Musicians 29:11

Sunday, October 6, Westminster will celebrate World Communion with the help of South African Gospel Ensemble 29:11. Together, we will look at themes of inclusion and reconciliation as we are led in both traditional and contemporary songs from South Africa. The name “29:11” refers to the Bible verse from Jeremiah: For surely I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord, plans for your welfare and not for harm, to give you a future with hope. Leaders Brendon Adams and his wife Gaylene have poured their life into this ensemble, which draws together young adults from conflicting tribes in South Africa to work toward forgiveness and reconciliation through music. 29:11 will lead Adult Education before worship on October 6, and present a full concert on Friday, November 1, as a part of the Westminster Performing Arts Series. Tickets are on sale at westminstermpls.org/wpas. We are looking to provide host families for their ten members during the entire month of November; if you are able to be a host, contact Amanda at aweber@wpc-mpls.org.