Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday: Hope and Community

by Alanna Simone Tyler, Associate Pastor

This month we welcome Rev. Dr. Joy J. Moore for our annual joint celebration with Liberty Community Church of the Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday. Moore is ordained in the United Methodist Church and serves as associate professor of biblical preaching at Luther Seminary. Prior to returning to teaching, Moore pastored several United Methodist congregations in Michigan, including Bethel United Methodist Church in Flint, the site of a help center that provided resources to Flint residents impacted by the water crisis.

Moore grew up in Chicago shaped by a family and church that emphasized the responsibilities of Christians of all ages to be ambassadors of the message that God has not given up on the world. She has led cross-racial and reconciling ministries in urban, rural, and suburban congregations, focusing her work on hospitality, honesty, and hope. “Hope is a strategy,” Moore says. “It undermines disaster, dismisses disappointment, and refocuses despair.”

As an “ecclesial storyteller,” Moore brings into focus the community-forming narratives that are found throughout the Bible and especially in Jesus’ life and ministry. We gather in church on Sundays, she says, to prepare together to live our faith when we scatter out into the world. She has written for Sojourners, Christian Century, and Good News magazine.


Saturday, January 18, 10 am
Joint workshop with Liberty Community Church at Westminster

Sunday, January 19, 8:30 and 10:30 am
Worship at Westminster

Upcoming New Old Adventure Offering

by Dorothy Simpson, New Old Adventure Committee

The upcoming New Old Adventure program is perfectly timed for your New Year’s resolutions. Melissa Schedler of the Alzheimer’s Association will explore the latest research involving diet and nutrition, exercise, cognitive activity, and social engagement.

We will have time to ask questions about recent news regarding research and possible new treatments regarding memory loss.

With many more of us living into our 80s and beyond, the topic of cognitive loss is critical, and finding ways to live with such challenges is a part of many lives.

Plan to join us Wednesday, January 8, at 11 am for the presentation and optional lunch ($5).

If you have questions, please contact Deb Wagner, dwagner@wpc-mpls.org.
**Beyond Sunday Connections**

*by Paula Fox, Beyond Sunday Connections Committee*

Beyond Sunday Connections invites Westminster women to meet new people and reconnect with old friends while sharing a meal and discussion about the way faith influences our daily lives. Vivian Jenkins Nelsen is the featured speaker on **Monday, February 10**.

Vivian is CEO of the Hypatia Group and consults with Fortune 500 companies on organizational and diversity issues. She has received numerous honors for her work, including a Bush Leadership Fellowship and the President’s Lifetime Volunteer Call to Service Award from Barack Obama.

Vivian is a longtime academic and leader at the University of Minnesota, Augsburg University, and Hamline University. She is currently teaching at Luther Seminary and is a Senior Fellow at Augsburg.

In her second term as an Elder at Westminster, Vivian participates in the Race and Grace Dialogues and serves on the Racial Justice Work Group.

Beyond Sunday Connections begins at 6 pm with a social hour, followed by dinner in Westminster Hall and the speaker’s presentation. Reservations ($28) are due by February 4 in the Westminster Commons or contact Deb Wagner, dwagner@wpc-mpls.org.

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**Help Keep the Church a Welcoming Place**

*by David Shinn, Associate Pastor*

A few weeks ago, we welcomed and hosted more than 7,000 people in a single week, not counting worship attendance! The two Parker Palmer events tipped the scale and set a record for activity in the new building. The inspiring events, heartwarming gatherings, and uplifting worship services have created new opportunities for us to keep our building tidy, welcoming, and in tip-top shape.

This is our invitation for service: we invite you to join us for a church “spiffing up” and fellowship time on the first Saturday of the month from 9 am–noon. Our facilities team will organize various projects around the building and grounds. Just like in your own home, the opportunities are plentiful! And as Jesus said, “The harvest is plentiful but the laborers are few.” (Okay, maybe not quite the same application, but you know what I am saying!) This will prepare our church for more guests and events and build community within our church.

If you have skills in drywall patching, cleaning, or gardening, we’d love to hear from you. Contact Deb Wagner, dwagner@wpc-mpls.org. Please share your email address so we can send you the link to sign up through Sign-Up Genius.

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**Be Part of Building God’s Beloved Community**

It’s not too late, and your support makes all the difference! If you haven’t already done so, pledge online at westminstermpls.org/pledge. Thank you for your good stewardship.

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**In Gratitude for a Recent Legacy Gift**

*“Let me abide in your tent forever, find refuge under the shelter of your wings.” Psalm 61:4*

One of the reasons Westminster will sustain God’s work into the future is because of those who remember the church with a Legacy Gift. Legacy Gifts are invested to serve the church in perpetuity. Westminster is grateful for a recent Legacy Gift from **Nancy Peterson**, a member for 42 years. A former deacon, Nancy believed in returning the blessings she had been given. Her Legacy Gift will be invested in the transitional and affordable housing portion of **Open Doors Open Futures**; Nancy cared deeply about both. Thanks be to God for her legacy.

For information on creating a Legacy Gift to Westminster, contact Mary Hess, Director of Stewardship, mhess@wpc-mpls.org or 612.332.3421, and see westminstermpls.org/giving.
From Our Pastor

The New Year is upon us, bringing fresh opportunities for Westminster to deepen our faith and reach out to the city in new ways.

For Beth and me, the New Year means a chance to grow spiritually with another sabbatical. It has been seven years since our last extended time away, when we walked the Camino in Spain. It is time for another adventure in search of good sermon stories!

We will spread the sabbatical over three separate months: January, May, and July. July we will spend at Ghost Ranch in northern New Mexico. In May we will walk a pilgrimage in Ireland called the Ring of Kerry. Trekking 150 miles through Ireland will be a good way to experience that land’s beauty, history, and Celtic spirit.

In January we will drive the Civil Rights Trail across the South. Our journey, however, will begin in New York City. I will preach at Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church on January 5, and then we will use our time in New York to prepare for our trip south. We will visit the little-known burial site of enslaved Africans in Lower Manhattan, and see two plays on Broadway, To Kill a Mockingbird and Hamilton.

On January 6, we set off for the African-American Museum at the Smithsonian in Washington, D.C., and the Lincoln and Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorials. After two days in D.C. we drive to Richmond, VA, to see the new Civil War Museum, then on to seven other southern states.

We began planning the trip by choosing the churches where we wanted to worship on Sundays. January 12 we will join the congregation at worship at Mother Emmanuel Church in Charleston, South Carolina. January 19, MLK weekend, we will be in the pews at Ebenezer Baptist in Atlanta, King’s church. January 26 we will worship in the Sixteenth Street Baptist Church in Birmingham, AL.

We expect this experience will open us to a more complete view of the American struggle with racism. I will send occasional “reports from the field,” but Westminster sermons when we return will offer a chance for me to sift through my own reflections on what we have seen and heard and learned.

I am grateful to Westminster for giving sabbaticals to its pastors!

See you in February and may the New Year bring you blessings in abundance!

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 Telczan, 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
Mahin 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
Sonja Dzieckowski, Director of Children’s Ministries
Matt Lewellyn- Otten, Director of Youth Ministries
Marie Kruskop, Coordinator of Early Childhood & Family Ministries
Kasey Colliver, 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
Jeffrey Gram, Artist-in-Residence
Kenny Vigne, Intern, Organist
Brad Ollmann, Dir. Early/Middle Childhood Music
Haskel Black, Intern Director, Youth Music
Mark Kieffer, Director, Handbell Choir
Finance & Administration
Julie Champ, Director of Finance
Kienan Mick, Accounting Manager
Deborah Majune, Accounting Clerk
Lacey Jung, Events Coordinator
Stewardship
Mary Hess, Director of Stewardship
Anna Gram, Stewardship Associate
Operations
PJ Eichten, Director of Facilities
Mike Anderson, Facilities Team Lead
Chris Brown, Todd Bushy, John Seagard, Richard Wilder, Facilities Staff
Emeriti
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
Carol Hornbeck, LMFT
Rev. Susan Thornton, M.A., M.Div., LP
Jennifer Aden, Office Manager
Westminster Town Hall Forum
Susan McKenna, Director
Elkina Piano Duo

Friday, January 10 | noon | Westminster Hall

Experience a dazzling piano duo in the second concert in a series jointly sponsored by the Westminster Performing Arts Series and the Schubert Club. Russian-born identical twins Julia and Irina Elkina have played together since the age of five and are praised for their “truly remarkable oneness” by critics who also recognize that “each is a formidable pianist in her own right.” This concert is free and open to the public.

Winter Quiet Worship

Saturday, January 18 | 9 am | Bushnell Room

Rev. Dr. Donald Meisel led this Quiet Worship annually as it is built around his favorite passage in the Bible. In this worship, we give thanks for the life and ministry of Dr. Meisel, as well as for the Westminster clergy and lay members who have gone before us. Rob Carlson leads worship.

All-Church Bowling

Saturday, January 25 | 4-6 pm | Bryant Lake Bowl

Cost is $10 per person. All ages and abilities welcome. RSVP to Deb Wagner at dwagner@wpc-mpls.org or online at westminstermpls.org.

FEAST

Sunday, January 26 | 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.

Achieving Financial Balance Workshop

Sunday, January 26 | 11:45-1:45 | Recreation Room

Young adults and families are invited to join a no-cost interactive workshop on goal-setting, saving/budgeting, building credit and reducing debt, and balancing needs and wants on your way to living a content, confident, and generous life. This workshop, facilitated by Emily Schmitz, will help you be wise with money and identify “first steps” to get on this journey. Delicious lunch included and childcare provided. RSVP to Anna Gram, agram@wpc-mpls.org.

Visioning for the Arts at Westminster

As we look to the future of Arts at Westminster, we would love to hear from you. What is your vision? In early January, we will host several listening circles in an effort to shape our collective vision. Consider attending one of these sessions:

- Sunday, January 5, 9:15-10:15 am, Bushnell Room or 11:45 am-12:45 pm, Bushnell Room;
- Wednesday, January 8, 5-6 pm, Classroom 209/210 or 6:30-7:30 pm, Classroom 209/210. If you are unable to attend a session but would like to offer comments, contact Amanda Weber, aweber@wpc-mpls.org.

IN MEMORY

Robert Rose
November 22, 2019

Aleda Muller
November 30, 2019

A big thank you to the women who faithfully prepare the Westminster News mailings every month: Peggy Henrikson, Lois Johnson, Betty Kinsey, Joanne Labernik, Phyllis Miller, Nancy Morin, and Mae Range.
Upcoming College Gatherings
by Meghan Gage-Finn, Executive Associate Pastor

Parents of College-Age Students
As families prepare to welcome home college-age children from semesters away, we know this time can be full of joy and reconnection, but it also marks transitions in life together. Changes in independence, communication, and responsibility are signs of growth in young adults, but may cause friction and require intentionality in relationships. Families move through these experiences in their own ways, but we have a lot of collective wisdom within our congregation! On Wednesday, January 22, 6:00-7:30 pm, parents of current college-age students are invited to join together for conversation and connection in the Garden Room. We will listen, share, and pray together. Dinner is available in Fellowship Hall, beginning at 5:15, and parents are welcome to bring a plate of food to our meeting upstairs. RSVP to Meghan Gage-Finn, mgage-finn@wpc-mpls.org.

College-Age Ministry Lock-In
On Friday, January 3, our college-age students can relive their middle and high school glory days with dinner, snacks, games, and movies (and maybe a little sleep) with a lock-in of their very own! We will meet at church at 6 pm and walk to dinner at a restaurant close by, then spend the evening playing, catching up, and running around the new building. We will end at 8 am on Saturday morning. RSVP to Meghan Gage-Finn, mgage-finn@wpc-mpls.org.

Gathered @ Five
by Sarah Brouwer, Associate Pastor

In January, Gathered at Five focuses on the theme of wisdom, taking a season to explore the Feast of the Epiphany (learn more about our feasting at the end!). The wise men came from the East, following the star, as the story goes, seeking Jesus and the revelation he would bring.

We still come to church seeking understanding, wisdom, or some sort of revelation from God. We yearn to be wise about our own lives and the life of the world. We want to be people who convey thoughtfulness, who are grounded yet curious, who remain teachable and open.

One of the things we are getting wise about at Gathered at Five is building community. We’ve begun a weekly supper post-worship and participation has soared. Wisdom cannot be created just by consuming worship; it must be offered in conversation, across the table, by breaking bread together.

And that’s just a starting point.

Wisdom is about how we live, and move, and have our being in this world. We could all take a moment—or an hour in worship—to discover not only what wisdom means for us as Christians, but how we can better live it out in a world desperate for wise people.

Won’t you join us for some Epiphany Wisdom this January? And a bite to eat after, of course.

We’re looking for people who love to cook simple, hearty meals for a crowd on Sunday nights. If you’re interested, please contact Sarah Brouwer, sbrouwer@wpc-mpls.org.

Meisel Sunday
by Meghan Gage-Finn, Executive Associate Pastor

January 5 is Meisel Sunday when we celebrate the stories and ministry of the Meisel program and hear from the past year’s scholars. Join us for lunch in the Meisel Room at 11:45 am to learn about the projects and experiences of the 2019 scholars.

This is also a great opportunity to find out information about how to apply to be a 2020 Meisel Scholar. Interested students can apply to receive a grant to pursue learning and vocational development outside of the classroom that interests them and furthers the mission of the church. Each scholar is paired with a mentor who walks with them and helps them reflect on their time in the Meisel program. Applications will be available in early 2020. Contact Meghan Gage-Finn at mgage-finn@wpc-mpls.org for more information.
WOW Women’s Bible Study
by Sarah Brouwer, Associate Pastor

Our women’s Wednesday morning has changed a bit this year. Last summer, we added a study on feminist interpretation of scripture—Helpmates, Harlots and Heroes: Women’s Stories in the Hebrew Bible—by Alice Ogden Bellis, and it really got our blood pumping! We welcomed new faces and found renewed energy to take a deep dive into the text every week.

This fall, we decided to stick with our Horizons Bible study, produced annually by Presbyterian Women. We covered the ten commandments during the nine weeks of study (don’t think too hard about the math!). The author did a wonderful job of deconstructing the ten commandments, first by renaming them the “ten words” (“commandment” is never used). What a difference that made! She called these words God’s love letter to us, describing them as ways that help us become holy before God and to live in a just and peaceful society.

We’ll take a short break in January to prepare for our next study: Encounters with Jesus: Studies in the Gospel of John, by Frances Taylor Gench. A professor at Union Seminary in Richmond, Gench is a prolific, approachable writer and New Testament scholar. The books are available at the reception desk free of charge.

We hope you will take advantage of WOW and this re-charged Bible Study this February. We gather at 9:30 am in the Meisel Room.

Cabin Fever? This Family Fellowship Event Can Help!
by Marie Kruskop, Coordinator of Early Childhood & Family Ministries

Get out of the house and celebrate the Chinese New Year – the year of the rat – on Saturday, February 1, from 4:30-6 pm. Join us – and invite your friends to join us, too – at the Midtown Global Market, an internationally-themed public market with great food and unique gifts from around the world. Meet us in the commons area where we’ll gather over dinner (on your own from any of the many food options available) and spend some time with friends, both old and new. RSVP to Marie by Thursday, January 30, at mkruskop@wpc-mpls.org.

I and Thou to be Next Read for Wednesday Evening Class
by Chad Quaintance, Westminster member

Living the Faith in the 21st Century is a Wednesday adult education class. We gather from 5:30–6:25 pm in the Bushnell Room.

The theme for Adult Education this year is “Creating Community in a Divided World.” To help us explore this theme we’ll read and discuss Martin Buber’s classic, I and Thou.

Copies of the book are available in class (approximately $10 or free). All are welcome. The first class session—to introduce the book and theme—is January 8. First discussion of the book is January 15; discussions run until Lent. If you have any questions, contact Chad Quaintance, 612.374.9410 or chadquaintance@gmail.com.

YWCA: It’s Time to Act

Mark your calendars for YWCA’s It’s Time to Act Forum, a powerful series taking place in Westminster Hall on three separate days. The series begins Thursday, January 16, with “Beyond the Ballet: Advancing Electoral Justice.” Minnesota state demographer Susan Brower, ACLU organizer Elizer Darris, and racial justice and health equity organizer Mónica Hurtado will discuss census data, election processes, voting accessibility, and the importance of community collaboration. It’s Time to Act provides an opportunity to further explore social issues covered at the weekly Social Justice Forums and through the Racial Justice Work Group. If you are interested in joining others from the Westminster community at one or more of the forums, contact Alanna Simone Tyler, atyler@wpc-mpls.org. Purchase tickets at ywcampls.org/events.
Westminster Performing Arts Series Presents

by Amanda Weber, Minister of Music and the Arts

Tickets are now available for the spring performances of the Westminster Performing Arts Series:

**Border CrosSing | La Colonia**
**Saturday, Feb 1, 6 pm social hour, 7:30 pm concert**

Border CrosSing is a Twin Cities-based professional choir whose mission is to integrate historically segregated audiences and musicians through the performance of choral music. Conductor Ahmed Anzaldúa, a recognized authority in Latin American and Spanish music, will present a program called “La Colonia,” an overview of Renaissance and Baroque music from the colonial period in Latin America. The choir will be joined by violins, recorders, and continuo.

**Westminster House Ensemble | Seven Last Words from the Cross**
**Friday, Mar 27, 6 pm social hour, 7:30 pm concert**

James MacMillan’s “Seven Last Words from the Cross” is one of the greatest masterworks of our time. This seven-movement work for choir and string orchestra will be performed by the Westminster Choir and friends, enhanced by a display of Lenten artwork from the Westminster Collection. Conductor Amanda Weber will offer a pre-concert talk to deepen the context of MacMillan’s piece for listeners.

**Monroe Crossing**
**Saturday, May 30, 6 pm social hour, 7:30 pm concert**

Monroe Crossing is Minnesota’s premier bluegrass and gospel quintet. The group will end our first performing arts season with an evening of classic bluegrass, bluegrass gospel, and original bluegrass selections that will have you on your feet! The group will also play in worship at Westminster the next day, May 31, for a rousing Pentecost Sunday. Monroe Crossing will pass along the bluegrass bug just in time for the return of our own Bluegrass Evening Prayer, Wednesdays in June!

Tickets are $25 (online at westminstermpls.org/wpas), or pay-what-you-can at the door.

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Take Time to Reflect This Holiday Season

by Peter Bruhn, LPC, LADC, Westminster Counseling Center

The holiday season can be demanding and draining. While we may ultimately enjoy this time of year, it’s not unusual to feel rushed, frazzled, and overextended. I’ll share a small personal example: we have the routine of celebrating Christmas Eve in the Twin Cities with my family, then getting up extra early on Christmas Day and driving to Southern Wisconsin by noon to have Christmas dinner with my wife’s family. Is this easy? Not at all. But we relish the time with family, sharing special foods and rich traditions. And I admit, sometimes it’s a relief when the holidays are over and life returns to normal, but there are no regrets over how we spent the time—and that’s what’s important.

So, after the snow has settled—church services have been attended, presents have been opened, tasty Christmas meals consumed, and we’ve slipped into a new decade—don’t lose sight of what really matters. Take time to reflect on what the season brought you this year. Did you reconnect with a friend or relative? Did you get to know someone you had never spent much time with before? Were you able to share some stories, smiles, or perhaps some tears? If so, and if this felt good, is there a way to keep this connective momentum going so you don’t have to wait another 12 months to enjoy the best of what this season has to offer?
What’s Happening in the Gallery?

by Rodney Allen Schwartz, Director, Westminster Gallery and Archive

We recently received a wonderful, newly commissioned painting of Westminster by local artist Michael Birawer and given in memory of Terry E. Nelson by his family. Birawer has a whimsical, distinctive style of bending and twisting architectural scenes and playfully manipulating light sources in a way that delights the viewer. The painting has been installed in Westminster Commons. You will want to discover it as the black and white representation shown here doesn’t do it justice.

I have just returned from attending the Art + Christianity symposium in London where I spent three days touring historic churches and viewing art made for specific sites. I also enjoyed a day packed with lectures and panel discussions. It is always fun and enlightening to spend time with other professional people who work with art in a religious setting. While English churches are more likely to commission art that is permanently installed in a specific location and less likely to have galleries and changing exhibitions from a larger collection of art as we do, there is much to discuss. These experiences always energize me and provide ideas for future exhibitions.

There were also plenty of museum and gallery visits in the extra vacation days that I spent in London. I acquired six engravings and etchings of biblical scenes that have been added to the Westminster Collection. Watch for their debut!