Losing Paradise: Faith and the Ecological Crisis
by Tim Hart-Andersen, Senior Pastor

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters.

And God said, “Let there be light,” and there was light. God saw that the light was good, and God separated the light from the darkness. God called the light “day,” and the darkness God called “night.” And there was evening, and there was morning—the first day. —Genesis 1:1-5

Lent at Westminster this year will focus on our responsibility, as people of faith, to be stewards of the earth.

“Lent is a time of repentance and spiritual reflection,” says Tim Hart-Andersen.

“In light of climate change and clean water challenges, we will undertake that discipline of reflection with the focus on our own failures, responsibilities, and opportunities in stewardship of the earth.”

Worship on the five Sundays in Lent will walk through the Genesis creation story. A Lenten luncheon, catered by Eat for Equity, and dialogue will follow worship every week, continuing the conversation beyond the sanctuary.

March 1 | Worship: Creation
The intersection of science and the biblical view of creation

March 8 | Worship: Water
Lenten Lunch Dialogue: Presentation by and conversation with Sharon Day, Executive Director for Indigenous Peoples Task Force in Minneapolis, Ojibwe elder, and leader of Nibi (Water) Walks

March 15 | Worship: Land
Lenten Lunch Dialogue: A Roman Catholic Perspective: A Conversation with Michael O’Connell

March 22 | Worship: Animals
Lenten Lunch Dialogue: An Islamic Perspective: A Conversation with Makram El-Amin

March 29 | Worship: Earthlings
Lenten Lunch Dialogue: A Jewish Perspective: A Conversation with Marcia Zimmerman

Covenant groups will once again meet throughout Lent, facilitated by a lay leader. Most groups will meet Sundays at 9:15 am. Sign up in Heller Commons or online.
Notes from the Libraries
by Barbara Mauk, Librarian

In preparation for environmentalist Bill McKibben's March 17 visit to the Westminster Town Hall Forum, the Eco-justice team purchased a generous selection of his books for the congregation. Look for a small cart in Lowe Library with McKibben's books.

Are you a member of a book group that would like to hold a meeting in iconic Lowe Library? You might add an art/architecture tour of Westminster as well as stay to enjoy lunch downtown. Our parking makes it convenient in all weather. Contact me to discuss the possibilities.

As Beth and Tim Hart-Andersen listened on their Pilgrimage through the south in January, they wanted to ensure that Westminster children learned these same American stories. Look for the wonderful new books “Everybody” books in the Children’s Library that they brought home to us.

We would like to restore our Harry Potter collection. If you have gently used hardcover or paper back copies of JK Rowling’s books, please bring them to the desk in the Children’s Library.

Volunteers are needed from 11:30 am–noon each Sunday to be friendly hosts in the Children’s Library. Perhaps you or your family would like to sign up for one Sunday a month for this joyful task. Volunteers are also needed the second and third weeks of the month to check books in and tidy-up. Scheduling is flexible. Contact me at barbaramauk@gmail.com.

In Gratitude for a Recent Legacy Gift

“One generation shall praise thy works to another, and shall declare thy mighty acts.” Psalm 145:4

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 Marion Etzwiler, a member for 59 years.

Over those years, Marion held numerous strategic and leadership positions including Trustee, Elder, choir member, member of several campaign and search committees and Merryweds. She was a beloved and wise leader. Thanks be to God for her life and legacy.

For information on how you can create a Legacy Gift to Westminster, contact Mary Hess, Director of Stewardship, mhess@wpc-mpls.org or 612.332.3421, and see westminstermpls.org/giving.

Seven Last Words from the Cross
by Amanda Weber, Minister of Music and the Arts

This year, the Westminster Choir has taken on a monumental project, learning James MacMillan’s Seven Last Words from the Cross. This hauntingly beautiful piece for choir and string orchestra explores the depth of emotion found in the seven last sentences Jesus spoke before his death. Each sentence, or “word,” comprises a movement of the 45-minute work.

Living composer James MacMillan is known for his unique style, which blends Scottish influences with early music sensibilities, all the while speaking to a more contemporary time. This particular piece is heart-wrenching in its use of dissonance, featuring a recurring motive referred to as the “sorrow cadence.” The choice of strings to accompany the choir adds a wide range of potential colors, from the sound of knocking wood, to the hammering of nails, to the weeping of Mary.

The experience of learning a large choral work such as this is nearly indescribable. Like running a long-distance race, the preparation process is strenuous to both mind and body. The focus required is immense, as the choir is asked to embody the intensity of the passion story in their breathing and singing.

Be a part of this journey. Tickets are on sale at westminstermpls.org/wpas. The concert will be presented in Westminster Hall on Friday, March 27 at 7:30 pm, preceded by a pre-concert lecture at 6:45 pm, and a social hour beginning at 6 pm.
Dear friends,

On Tuesday, March 10, something extraordinary will happen at Westminster – weather permitting! Our six new bells will be installed!

The installation of the bells will be complicated, but the Mortenson Company has brought the same outstanding expertise to this unique project that they have to the construction of the new wing and all their work with Westminster. Mortenson has guided the planning, working with James Dayton Design and the Paccard Foundry in France.

Imagine the challenge... when all six bells and their heavy yokes – weighing nearly 24,000 lbs. – are swinging, they are no longer “dead weight.” The tower will have to manage the centrifugal force they generate, not to mention high winds and Minnesota weather. Thank God for contractors and engineers!

The steel structure will be assembled the first week of March on Westminster Green. The remaining four bells will be delivered in time for the next “reveal,” following worship on **Sunday, March 8.** Mortenson assures us the actual bell installation on March 10 should take only one or two days. The bells will be tested and then remain silent until the First Ring and Dedication on **Palm Sunday, April 5.**

Westminster’s six-bell peal will have both ecclesiastical and civic functions. The bells will summon us to worship and send us forth. They will mark memorial services and weddings. They will ring the hours Monday through Saturday (9:00am, noon, 3:00pm, and 6:00pm). And they will peal on other days of national and local significance.

Every time they ring the bells will speak of Westminster’s history. Each of the bells says “To God be the Glory” around the top on both sides. To honor our church’s history those words appear in Scottish Gaelic and Welsh (our founders), Chinese and Hmong (ministries begun in the 1880s and 1980s), Bafaw and Pidgin (partnership in Kumba, Cameroon), Portuguese and Spanish (partnerships in Brazil and Cuba), Arabic and Hebrew (partnership in Bethlehem, Palestine, and friendship in Minneapolis), and English.

We will place a sign on the exterior of the building and inside to tell those who hear the bells how they ring out this congregation’s remarkable story of partnership locally and around the world.

Thank you to all who have supported this effort; there is still time (and need) if you would like to participate in helping the bells ring out Westminster’s Telling Presence in the city!

Grace and peace,

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From Our Pastor

Clergy & Staff

Staff Leadership
- Rev. Dr. Timothy Hart-Andersen, Senior Pastor
- Rev. Dr. Meghan K. Gage-Finn, Executive Associate Pastor
- Janice Teliczan, 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
- Matt Skinner, Scholar for Adult Education
- 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 Dzieckiewski, Director of Children’s Ministries
- Matt Lewellyn-Otten, Director of Youth Ministries
- Marni Knusop, 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 Ostenso Moore, Director, Gathered at Five
- Jeffrey Gram, Artist-in-Residence
- Kenny Vigne, Interim Organist
- Brad Ollmann, Dr. Early/Middle Childhood Music
- Haskel Black, Interim Director, Youth Music
- Mark Kieffler, Director, Handbell Choir

Finance & Administration
- Julie Champ, Director of Finance
- Kienan Mick, Accounting Manager
- Déborah Majune, Accounting Clerk
- Lacey Jung, Events Coordinator
- Stewardship
- Mary Hess, Director of Stewardship
- Anna Gram, Stewardship Associate

Operations
- PI 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
Achieving Financial Balance
March 8 | 11:45 am | Recreation Room
Young adults and families: no-cost workshop on goal setting, budgeting, building credit and reducing debt, and balancing needs and wants. You will identify “first steps” to get on this journey. Facilitated by Kathleen Dufner of Thrivent Financial; lunch included, child care provided if requested. Questions? Contact Mary Hess, Mhess@wpc-mpls.org. RSVP by Feb. 27 to Anna Gram, agram@wpc-mpls.org.

Quiet Worship
March 21 | 9 am | Bushnell Room
Gather in a place of warmth and beauty, to hear words from Scripture for this third week of Lent, and to come together, in sung prayer and silence. In gathering this morning, we will become a part of Contemplative Outreach’s “United Day of Prayer,” joining with people in thousands of places, all around the world. Sarah Brouwer leads worship.

FEAST
Sunday, March 22 | 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.

WOW Women’s Bible Study
Wednesdays | 9:30 am | Meisel Room
The WOW women’s Bible study on Wednesday mornings is studying the Gospel of John through April. Join us Wednesday mornings at 9:30! Free childcare is available. Questions? Email Sarah sbrouwer@wpc-mpls.org.

Parents Night Out - SAVE THE DATE
April 18 | 6-9 pm | St. Francis Bowling Center
Parents – mark your calendars for a parents’ night out! More details to follow. Contact Marie at mkruskop@wpc-mpls.org with questions.

Women’s Retreat - SAVE THE DATE
May 1-3 | Clearwater Forest
Join us for the annual Women’s Retreat in Clearwater! A bus will be provided for transportation to and from the church. The speaker this year is the Rev. Judy Landt. Judy is an attorney and pastor, who serves our Counseling Center as a mediator. She also does work at Grace-Trinity as a parish associate. She will present at the retreat on loving our neighbors—putting conflict resolution in a positive light (something we need!). There will be opportunities to sign up for the retreat in the coming weeks in Westminster Commons or online.
Care Ministry Team Grows  

by David Shinn, Associate Pastor

In the Gospel, Jesus shares compassion for the beleaguered crowd, grieving mother, and lost child. The care ministry of our church strives to embody Jesus’ compassion.

I am filled with gratitude for all of our members who give their time and hearts to care for everyone who is facing challenging life circumstances. With this gratitude, I’d like to share the good news of our growing care ministry.

First, I’d like to introduce Rev. Linda Mell as our newest Parish Associate for Congregational Care. She will join our clergy team and focus specifically on visiting members who are homebound. Linda comes to us with more than 40 years of parish ministry experience.

Second, I’d like to introduce Kathy Simmelink, our Parish Nurse for Congregational Care. Since joining the church in June 2019 with her husband John, she has been discerning her place of usefulness. She comes to us as a recently retired nurse educator with training and experience both as a spiritual director and end-of-life doula. She will join our growing and informative Health and Healing Ministry that has been shepherded by Jane Ellen Nielsen. Kathy will focus on walking alongside members facing end of life concerns.

Both our Parish Associate and Parish Nurse are giving their time and energy as a gift to our community. We are grateful for their generosity and their call to share the compassion of Christ with us.

Meisel Scholar Applications Available

by Meghan Gage-Finn, Executive Associate Pastor

Young people are invited to submit their application for the 2020 Meisel Scholars Program. As the cornerstone of Westminster’s vocational ministry with college-age students, a Meisel experience supports focused travel, a summer internship, or participation in a social action campaign or volunteer project, all in the spirit of the church’s mission. Scholars follow their convictions, share their talents, and reflect and build on their learning, while being supported by resources from the church, under the guidance of a mentor from the congregation. Typical awards range from $500 to $4000, depending on the quality and focus of the experience, the length of the proposed project, and other identified needs. Interested applicants should contact me at mgage-finn@wpc-mpls.org to discuss project proposals. The application is available at westminstermpls.org/young-adults. Applications are due by March 15 and decisions are communicated in early to mid-April. Potential applicants who are interested in participating or have questions, please contact Linda Krach at lkrach@aol.com or 612-584-3143.

Prayer Shawl Ministry

by Linda Krach, Prayer Shawl Ministry

Members of Westminster’s Prayer Shawl Ministry knit, crochet, sew, and weave shawls that clergy share with members who would benefit from a tangible expression of Westminster’s love and support. Years ago, my husband received a prayer shawl when he was undergoing a heart procedure. We took it to the hospital with us, and it warmed him before the procedure and comforted him after it. He still wraps up in it at home regularly. I often think of how comforting and soothing it is to know it symbolizes Westminster’s supportive care.

We occasionally receive a note or email from a recipient, like this “The beautiful lavender prayer shawl arrived yesterday. I have appreciated its warmth ever since. My thanks to all who make prayer shawls possible. Your prayers and loving concern are appreciated.” We also make pocket prayer shawls or prayer pieces. These are small knitted items that people can carry with them. They are available in the library and delivered with the sanctuary flowers on Sundays.

All ages and levels of experience are welcome in this ministry; however, it is helpful to have some experience with knitting, crocheting, or sewing. We meet on the second Sunday of the month after the 10:30 worship service, typically in the Bates Room, to pray with completed shawls, to knit and crochet, and to share fellowship. If you are interested in participating or have questions, please contact Linda Krach at lkrach@aol.com or 612-584-3143.
Healthy Beginnings in The Magnet Senior Center
by Jane Ellen Nielsen, Health & Healing Ministry

Self-care is the focus of new programs at Westminster’s Magnet Senior Center. We believe life is to be celebrated in all seasons, and that each person, regardless of age, ability, or health challenges, is a sacred part of our community.

It’s never too late to feel empowered, inspired, and energized. Seniors are given tools that promote self-awareness, healthy choices, and accountability. Our aim is to dispel misinformation and to create a safe sanctuary for asking questions.

This year, monthly blood pressure screening began the second Monday of January. Seniors were challenged to take self-care action steps and to participate in a natural sleep discussion. February focused on heart health. Dietary impact on blood pressure, weight, and cholesterol management will be addressed during nutrition month in March.

Monthly themes and interactive discussions will continue throughout the year, coordinated by a seasoned team of Westminster nurses, including Michelle Lavelle-Henry, Carol Engelhart, and Jane Ellen Nielsen.

To learn more about upcoming health and wellness programs, and all Magnet Senior Center activities, look for the Magnet calendar on the info table, online, or contact Angelique Kingsbury, Coordinator of Volunteers and Senior Center, akingsbury@wpc-mpls.org.

New Old Adventure: Aging with Gusto
by Mary Anne Chalkley,
New Old Adventure Committee

Could aging be good for you? Aging with Gusto will help you see yourself in a more positive light as you age. Did you know that people with a more positive view of themselves in their older years will, on average, add seven and one-half years to their lives? In this lively, interactive experience, you will also learn how ageism might get in the way of your well-being and keep you from making meaningful contributions to your community.

Growing older in a youth-oriented society can be challenging. Our perceptions of aging are often set at a young age and operate below our awareness. This program will challenge many of the stereotypes that are so pervasive in our culture. It will allow all of us to think about aging in new and positive ways.

Join us April 8 at 11 am; Sally Brown and Donna Comer from the Vital Aging Network will lead our discussion. An optional light lunch will be available ($5). If you have questions, please contact Deb Wagner, dwagner@wpc-mpls.org.

Maundy Thursday: Come to the Table
by Sarah Brouwer, Associate Pastor

On April 9, join us for a wonderful opportunity to worship over a meal, much like the disciples did with Jesus at the last supper. We will eat a beautiful Mediterranean meal from 5:30-6:30 pm. Please come when you are able.

Worship will begin, at table, at 6:30 pm. We will read through a number of texts that tell the story of the Passover, the washing of the disciples’ feet, the bread and cup Jesus shared with his friends the night he was betrayed, and his last moments with them in garden of Gethsemane.

Music will include middle eastern instrumentalists and traditional Maundy Thursday hymns and anthems. There will be dramatic liturgy and the same tension that befell the disciples that final night with Jesus before he died.

Don’t miss this beautiful service, which will be sure to deepen your experience of Holy Week.

Holy Week may feel like a long way off, but Maundy Thursday’s worship and dinner requires early planning. If you’d like to volunteer, please email Sarah at sbrouwer@wpc-mpls.org.
Gathered at Five in Lent
by Sarah Brouwer, Associate Pastor

During Lent, Gathered at Five will follow the theme Losing Paradise. Each week will give us an opportunity to reflect on creation and the key elements that support life and flourishing. Along with sermons, in our worship we will use prayer stations and tangible reminders of our call to care for the land, water, animals, and ourselves. Our Gathered at Five goers will be challenged to take up a Lenten practice that relates to the theme. Whether it’s bringing reusable bags to the store, carrying a metal or glass water bottle instead of buying bottled, or going to a co-op or zero waste Tare Market to shop, we will commit to thinking of our “dominion over the earth” in sustainable, caring ways. And dinner after Gathered at Five will aim to be meat-free as we encourage all to reduce their carbon footprint.

We must harness this moment in history. Gathered at Five will show us how humbly and peacefully God calls us to live in creation and with one another.

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. Marcy Conrad Nutt is the featured speaker on Monday, March 30.

Marcy has been a Westminster member for 18 years and recently finished a second term as Deacon. As an architect, she focuses on design and sustainability through building science. She is a board member of Passive House Minnesota and is also an artist. At Westminster she lives out her faith currently through the Eco-Justice team’s work, but she has also been involved in affordable housing initiatives and Housing 150. Marcy is passionate about God’s call to be stewards of the earth and combating our current climate crisis. She and her husband, James Nutt, have one child, Leo, who is in the fifth grade.

In her talk, Marcy will reflect on her personal journey, trials of faith, family and health, and her commitment to architecture in a time of climate change.

Beyond Sunday Connections begins at 6 pm with a social hour, followed by dinner in Westminster Hall and the speaker’s presentation. Reservations and payment ($28) are due by March 24. Register in Westminster Commons or contact Deb Wagner, dwagner@wpc-mpls.org. Do not let cost be prohibitive to your attendance. Email Sarah at sbrouwer@wpc-mpls.org for a confidential scholarship.

Lenten Devotional Booklets

Lenten Devotional booklets are available on the info table or online. The booklet includes written reflections contributed by Westminster members, poetry selections, scripture quotes, and reproductions of art from Westminster’s collection.

It’s Girl Scout Cookie Time!
by Gina Gustavson, Girl Scout Cookie Grandma

We have Girl Scouts eager to sell you cookies—for yourself and for you to donate to FEAST and other groups at Westminster, with extra cookies going to Groveland Food Shelf. You will find us in Westminster Commons March 1 and 8.

We will pass out the cookies to FEAST guests on April 26. Please support our efforts. The cookies are as good as you remember!
The coming 40 days of Lent, with preparations and reflections that may be more solemn, can feel like a more grown-up experience, but the time is also important for our children, youth, and their families. Our young ones have an innate spiritual curiosity and, in many ways, Lent is a perfect time to nurture that curiosity and help them draw closer to God. Through prayer, focused spiritual practices, and worship, all the generations of the church can grow together in faith as we move toward Holy Week and Easter.

While regular FYC activities are suspended on Ash Wednesday, there is still the community meal and all are invited to worship together at 6 pm in Westminster Hall and to receive the imposition of ashes. Children may choose to be marked on their foreheads with the sign of the cross, or they may wish to receive ashes on their hand or simply come forward to receive a blessing.

This year for the season of Lent, we are excited to be moving the Children’s Lenten worship from Wednesday evenings to Sunday mornings, at the beginning of Education Hour. This will allow us to include all of those involved in Westminster’s Families, Youth, and Children’s Ministries. During the regular Sunday Gathering Time, children, youth, their families, and Church School teachers are invited to gather in the Chapel from 9:15-9:25 am for singing, prayers, and a brief centering reflection offered by one of our youth. Those who attend Family Matters will also be encouraged to attend, as will our young ones and staff from the nursery. We are excited for this opportunity to worship together each week, with a focus on caring for God’s good creation. All are welcome to share in this brief worship as part of our journey through Lent.

Lent invites all of us into a period of change and balance, honesty and hope, and a reorientation toward understanding God’s deep love and forgiveness, no matter our age!

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Open to the Public: Community Group Performances at Westminster

by Barbara Prince, Program Facilitator for Music and the Arts

Things are cranking back up, with lots of not-to-be-missed concerts in Westminster Hall.

Westminster Performing Arts Series/Schubert Club: Border CrosSing
Friday, March 6 | noon
Westminster Hall
Missed the Border CrosSing’s Westminster Performing Arts Series concert or want to hear more? Come enjoy an entirely different program, jointly sponsored by the Schubert Club. Free and open to the public.

Cantus Open Rehearsal
Wednesday, March 11 | 5-6 pm
cantussings.org
Ever wondered how a self-directed group rehearses? Come watch Cantus work collaboratively to prepare for an upcoming concert. These rehearsals are free, but a reservation is required.

Cantus in Concert
Friday, March 20 | 7:30 pm
Westminster Hall
cantussings.org
There Lies the Home celebrates the courage and fortitude of early explorers who risked their lives on the tumultuous great blue unknown to make the world a little more connected. With riveting sea shanties such as Lowlands and Shenandoah, as well as the bombastic typhoon of Veljo Tormis’s Muistse Mere Laulud, There Lies the Home finally arrives back ashore with Edie Hill’s beautiful, haunting A True Heart is Waiting.

Schubert Club
Accordo in Concert
Monday, April 6 | 7:30 pm
Westminster Hall
schubertclub.org
Accordo is a string ensemble composed of present and former principal string players of the Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra and Minnesota Orchestra. The group has been named “Best Chamber Ensemble” by the Minneapolis Star Tribune and “the dream team of chamber music” by Minnesota Monthly.
Parent Groups to Serve as Covenant Groups
by Marie Kruskop, Coordinator of Early Childhood & Family Ministries

Family Matters, a parent fellowship group, and Moms Group will become Covenant Groups during Lent. Both groups will consider the themes presented in this Lenten journey through the lens of parenting. Family Matters, for parents with children of any age, will begin Sunday, March 1, during Education Hour in the Bates Room. Moms Group, for moms with children of any age, will begin March 4 at 10:30 am in the Nursery; childcare is provided. Please join us on the journey. Contact Marie Kruskop with questions at mkruskop@wpc-mpls.org.

Westminster Town Hall Forum
Building a Movement to Stop Climate Change

Bill McKibben
Tuesday, March 17, Noon

Go green on March 17! Join Bill McKibben, the leading voice in America on the effects of climate change supporting a fast and just transition to 100% renewable energy. He is the Schumann Distinguished Scholar in Environmental Studies at Middlebury College and a fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. A prolific and award-winning author, his 1989 book, The End of Nature, is regarded as the first book on climate change for a general audience. He is the founder of 350.org, the world’s largest grassroots campaign to counter the effects of climate change. He is the recipient of the Gandhi Prize, the Thomas Merton Prize, and the Right Livelihood Prize, as well as honorary degrees from 18 colleges and universities. He lives in Vermont in the mountains above Lake Champlain.

Music with the Southside Aces precedes the forum and a public reception and book-signing with the speaker follow. For information, contact Susan McKenna at smckenna@wpc-mpls.org or 612-332-3421.

Human Growth and Sexuality Workshop

After the second service on Sunday, March 1, 4th and 5th grade students and their families will have a Human Growth and Sexuality Workshop. Following lunch, Greta Wicker and Sonja Dziekciowski will lead the breakout session focusing on how we are made in God’s image, how bodies and emotions change, and how to respectfully care for ourselves and others. Parents and caregivers will have their own session led by Marie Kruskop and Meghan Gage-Finn, focused on how to support and navigate this transitional time in our children’s lives.

Town Hall Forum Celebrates 40 Years

An excerpt from the presentation by Archibald Cox on September 18, 1980, special prosecutor for the Watergate investigation and the first speaker at the Town Hall Forum.

“The hardships of the frontier had taught our forebears that despite the value they placed on individual liberty, they were all fellow voyagers in the same boat. No man or woman could move very far ahead toward personal goals unless the vessel moved, and the vessel couldn’t move if some pulled ahead, some back-watered, some laid on the oars, others demanded a new boat, and others dropped out to go fishing. Toleration and cooperation flow, I think, from belief in the value of an enterprise, from confidence in its goals and in the manner in which it is conducted. But they depend, too, on the opportunity to participate and the realization that participation counts. I think our first need is to attend to the institutions, organizations, and associations that could help to preserve - and now rebuild - the individual’s sense of meaningful participation in the common enterprise.”

Visit westminsterforum.org to explore the archive for speakers and presentations from the past 40 years.
Learning in London
by Rodney Allen Schwartz, Director, Westminster Gallery and Archive

One of the great pleasures of my position as director of the Westminster Gallery is spending time with my peers. We all benefit from time away from our desks and with other people who share our unique skills and interests. I recently had the opportunity to attend a course in “Making Exhibitions” at the Victoria and Albert Museum in London. The V&A is the world’s largest design museum, with more than 4 million annual visitors. The extensive collection features paintings and sculpture, furniture, decorative arts including silver and ceramics, textiles and costumes, and so much more.

Nineteen of us were chosen through an application process from all around the globe. We quickly became a community as we learned from our leaders and from each other. We were treated to presentations by the museum’s senior program chairs and chief curators. We enjoyed tours of special exhibitions and the permanent collection galleries, peeks into specialized storage areas and conservation labs, and group projects. We each presented exhibition proposals and benefited from one another’s critiques.

I returned home energized and ready to continue making exhibitions. Watch for the upcoming Lent and Easter exhibition and remember to start planning for your submission to the members’ summer exhibition. The theme is Where Do We Find Hope?

Cycling with the Seasons
by Sherri Dunham, MA, LPCC, Westminster Counseling Center

During these cold, grey days of winter, our internal experience can seem to gradually and unconsciously mirror the external environment. I know mine does. The warmth of the sun feels so far away even though it’s ever-present. Though it may be impossible to avoid a dampening of our spirits altogether during the winter months, there are ways that we can support ourselves and perhaps find our way to honor and appreciate this time of year.

1) Acceptance. Accept that our energy and moods cycle with the seasons; our relationship with nature is inseparable. We almost always tend to feel better in the spring and summer. It’s easy to feel happy and energized when nature is radiating energy. But we suffer when our energy and mood is more like winter and we want to feel like spring. Perhaps we can see this as a period of rest and conservation and not that, “something is wrong with me.”

2) Activity. Bodies in motion are alive! Keep moving, even in slow and gentle ways, to keep your energy from stagnating—this can help boost your mood.

3) Connection. While some animals literally need to isolate and hibernate in the winter, humans need connection. If your mind starts trying to convince you that being alone is the best thing for you in a low state, think again. We need connection like we need food.

4) Know when to ask for help. Low energy and low mood are not inherently worrisome; it’s what our mind does with those states that can be worrisome. If you notice your mind starting to lack care or concern or make you feel bad about yourself, your life, or others, that can be a good sign to ask for support.