Creatively Serving God During COVID-19
by Suzanne McInroy, Director of Communications

On March 13, the Elders of Westminster held an emergency meeting and made the decision to cancel on-site worship for two Sundays. Now, more than seven months later, the building remains closed, worship continues online, and Westminster clergy, staff, and lay leaders continue to find creative ways to serve God during the COVID-19 pandemic.

“We are still the church, and our primary purpose is to worship God and to share God’s love and justice. That has continued unabated, every week through these months,” Rev. Dr. Tim Hart-Andersen said during his sermon on September 13.

Worship continues online as do committee meetings and many other events. Adult Education continued classes throughout the spring and summer, and has included speakers from across the country, thanks to the online format. Social Justice Forum returned this September, also online.

Families, Youth, and Children staff put together packets for the the families of the church so that they could hold Church School from home. For children and families, this fall’s programming includes regularly scheduled large and small group opportunities on Zoom, as well as a few in-person, socially distanced events, when possible.

“It can be difficult to make church a priority when we’re no longer in the building and engaging in person with our church friends, but the need for connection with those very people is what makes it all the more important to make an effort to engage in new and creative ways,” said Megan MacFarlane, who along with her family actively participates in FYC programming.

Youth switched their meeting time to Sunday afternoon and evening, and hold other events throughout the week to connect. “I heard from youth that they wanted to keep meeting because they really love this Westminster Youth community. They said that connecting with each other through youth group was really important,” said Matt Lewellyn-Otten, Director of Youth Ministries.

This year clergy, staff, and lay leaders are planning some new Advent and Christmas events with a few traditional twists whenever possible. While many details are still being finalized, these are the events and dates to note.

**ADVENTures**
**November 21-22**
An intergenerational event to be held at the church either outdoors or in the garage with Advent stations to visit. Advent wreath "to-go" kits will also be available. (More on page eight.)

**Gallery Window Exhibition**
**November 25-January 6**
The windows in Westminster Hall will be transformed into an Advent, Christmas, and Epiphany exhibition, including Westminster’s many nativity crèches visible from outside. (More on back cover.)

**Christmas Festival Days**
**December 20-27**
This week will feature some of Westminster’s most beloved traditions, including the children’s Christmas pageant, a “What a Wonder” video premiere, and online worship services.
Send in Your Questions for Eddie Glaude, Jr.

by Melanie McCall, Interim Director, Westminster Town Hall Forum

The fall season at the Westminster Town Hall Forum concludes with Eddie Glaude, Jr., one of the Forum’s most compelling and challenging speakers. Dr. Glaude’s latest appearance comes a week following the national election, and he will be speaking on race and racism in America. As always, your input matters, and you’re invited to join the conversation by sending in your questions for Dr. Glaude. Call the Town Hall Forum listener line at 612-504-1606 and leave a voicemail, or email info@westminsterforum.org. Be sure to tell us your first name and where you live. More info at westminsterforum.org.

Eddie Glaude Jr.
James Baldwin’s Lessons on Race in America
Tuesday, November 10, Noon

Eddie Glaude Jr. is the James S. McDonnell Distinguished University Professor at Princeton University and chair of the Department of African American Studies. He is the former president of the American Academy of Religion, the largest professional organization of scholars of religion in the world. He is the author of the award-winning books In a Shade of Blue: Pragmatism and the Politics of Black America and Democracy in Black: How Race Still Governs the Soul of America. His most recent book is Begin Again: James Baldwin’s America and Its Urgent Lessons for Our Own. He is a columnist for Time magazine and a regular contributor on MSNBC.

Sustaining Hope and Gratitude

by Song Lee, Westminster Member

How often do you get out the checkbook? Checks are a little old-fashioned, but I still prefer to use checks for my weekly offering. This discipline reminds me of my parents’ deep abiding faith and example.

When our family immigrated to Minnesota from Korea in 1980, my parents juggled multiple jobs to keep afloat our family of five. Years later, I was helping my parents pack for a move and found stacks of processed checks in a closet. There were decades of checks to Minnegasco, Northern States Power, and my piano teacher. The most were my parents’ weekly tithe to our church. The individual dollar amounts were not big, but their faithful discipline and their trust in God’s abundance, even in our times of scarcity, was huge. It made a lasting impact on me.

Like us, my parents now attend Sunday worship online. During a recent phone call, Dad mentioned he still mails in his offering. I envisioned his small frame, hunched over his desk, writing out the check. My parents still model faithful giving, and faith-filled living.

In the past few difficult months, Westminster has also chosen to be hopeful, grateful, and faithful. I am immensely thankful for clergy, staff, and fellow congregants who, despite the challenges of being apart, are finding creative ways to fulfill our missional work as Easter people. We worship, sing in unison, and hold each other in prayer as we sustain one another through the binding power of the Holy Spirit. Thanks be to God!
Dear friends,

This missive is being written just before Reformation Sunday, when Protestants remember the theological and political movement that broke apart the Christian Church in western Europe in the 1500s. It is also being written two weeks prior to the national election on November 3.

Protestant Reformation and democratic election — the two events are not unrelated.

A basic tenet of the Reformation was the *priesthood of all believers.* While ostensibly a theological response to the power of Roman Catholic priests and bishops, it had political consequences. Once lay people were empowered in the ecclesiastical realm, it was a short step to their expecting to have agency in political affairs, as well.

As the Reformation unfolded across northern Europe, Roman Catholic power ebbed and new political entities began to emerge. Protestants worked hard at understanding how Christian faith and the new politics mixed. John Calvin, our Presbyterian progenitor in Geneva, was a leading voice in this effort.

While agreeing with his contemporaries that those with political power governed by the assent of God, Calvin also held that political leaders did not have ultimate power. If they moved from what believers understood to be God’s law, Calvin argued they should be resisted. That led to the notion that rulers had to operate within limits, and the people had a hand in determining those limits.

Add to those early stirrings of democracy the form of government Presbyterians eventually designed for the church, where we elect those who have authority — elders and ministers — to defined terms, and we begin to see how the Reformation and democracy are linked. The American Revolution — “that Presbyterian rebellion,” according to King George — and the subsequent political development of our nation, were infused with principles championed by Presbyterians.

All of which helps to explain why we have been over-represented in elected offices. We Presbyterians have always taken seriously our responsibility as citizens to participate in governance. We do not think of ourselves as focused on the hereafter, but on the here and now.

As Christians, we advocate for public policy. We speak up for equity. We work for systemic change. We run for office. We call our leaders to account when they stray from the values of “liberty and justice for all.”

And we vote — trusting in the power of democracy to move us toward the justice that God desires.

See you in church — online.

Grace and peace,
WPC Happenings

Mom’s ‘Off the Clock’
Thursdays, October 29, November 19 | 9– 10 pm via Zoom
Take a break! And join us for a casual, cozy evening of conversation via Zoom.
Contact Marie, mkruskop@wpc-mpls.org, for more information.

FYC Families Friday Fun Night
Friday, October 30 | 6–7:15 pm via Zoom
Join us on Halloween Eve for a Halloween costume showcase via Zoom, followed by a Netflix Party viewing of Room on the Broom.
Contact Marie, mkruskop@wpc-mpls.org, for more information.

ECFF – Early Childhood Family Fellowship
Saturday, November 7 | 8:30 – 9 am via Zoom
Join us—in your jammies, if you like—for a time of sharing, a reading of The Thankful Book by Todd Parr, and for some singing!
Contact Marie, mkruskop@wpc-mpls.org, for more information.

A Thanksgiving Quiet Worship
Saturday, November 21 | 9 am
With Thanksgiving Day just ahead, we’ll shape our worship around an affirmation from Scripture and the melody and words from one of the most familiar of the sung prayers from Taizé — “Give thanks to the Lord, . . . for he is good” With gathering in-person on hold, you are invited to download the Quiet Worship bulletin from the webpage (westminstermpls.org/additional-worship-opportunities), gather in your own special place to read or pray the bold-face words quietly, out-loud . . . knowing that they are being read or prayed by others at the same time . . . by a cloud of witnesses.

Living Into Beloved Community at Gathered at Five
by Sarah Brouwer, Associate Pastor

Joe Davis, our new artist-in-residence, will help lead us in worship during Gathered at Five in November, and our stewardship theme, Building the Beloved Community, will guide our series.

Living Into Beloved Community will be informed by the familiar words of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. In this series we will explore more foundationally what we are stewarding as Christians in this season of life. There is the opportunity to sustain the wonderful ministries of Westminster, and Gathered at Five in particular, but how are we stewarding our nation? Our integrity? Our pursuit of the common good?

We will examine our role as Christians in this time of discord, and how we can live into being a just and healing presence. The world needs Christians to reject relegating our faith to what is comfortable; we must focus on living into the deeper meaning of stewarding serious discipleship and becoming the kind of people Jesus called upon to bring in the reign of God.

BIRTH
Ada Jensen Northenscold-Thomas
September 21, 2020

DEATHS
Carol Matteson
September 18, 2020
Dorothy Greene
Joseph Havlik
October 5, 2020
Service of Remembrance
by David Tsai Shinn, Associate Pastor

Psalm 13 begins with “How long, O Lord? Will you forget me forever? How long will you hide your face from me? How long must I bear pain in my soul, and have sorrow in my heart all day long? How long shall my enemy be exalted over me?”

This psalm is fitting for all who are under the oppression of grief. The enemy called systemic and structural racism along with the invisible enemy called COVID-19 have fractured our lives in myriad ways. No matter who you are, we are all experiencing a range of emotions such as anxiety, sadness, depression, anger, and loneliness. These feelings are manifestations of grief.

Back in June, we invited everyone to join us for a special mid-year Service of Remembrance. We were three months into a pandemic that had no end in sight. Now nearly seven months later, the end is again beyond the horizon. This sounds like grief because grief has no end.

On December 1 at 6 pm, we invite you to livestream our Service of Remembrance. COVID-19 has made difficult moments even more difficult. Holidays without our loved ones can be sorrowful. Some of us are still waiting for the comforting ritual of memorial services for us to express our grief and to celebrate our loved ones’ lives. We would like to invite you to bring the memories of your beloved spouse, sibling, parent, and other family members, and together let us remember them.

New Old Adventure
by David Tsai Shinn, Associate Pastor

Welcome to the New Old Adventure, where this splendid ministry team has been exploring engaging and relevant topics.

For the November and December sessions we will turn our eyes to memorial service planning. For the November gathering, I will be joined by Rev. Dr. Tim Hart-Andersen, Rev. Sarah Brouwer, and Rev. Judy Kim. As a panel, we discuss grief and end of life in the time of COVID-19. Our focus will be on experiencing and facing grief during this unique time of social distancing and disruption to rituals that we hold dearly.

During our planning meeting, Tim shared, “Death is death, regardless of COVID-19. Yet grief in this time is different when the experiences leading up to death, and the rituals that respond to death, have changed.” Each of the pastors will share from their pastoral experiences with our church members facing grief in this complex time.

Additionally, Sarah asks, “What have we learned from this time for memorial service planning? What once was important to us and what’s no longer important to us?”

Join us on November 11 at 11 am. Please reach out to Director of Engagement Rachel Gustafson, rgustafson@wpc-mpls.org, for more information and login information for the Zoom video call. If you would like additional technical help, please feel free to reach out to Rachel or me. We look forward to seeing you online and engaging our hearts and minds together.

Beyond Sunday Connections
by Paula Fox, Westminster member

Beyond Sunday Connections will be livestreamed for all Westminster women on Monday, November 16, at 6:30 pm. Rani Murdoch Zappa emcees the program and Marcy Conrad Nutt is the featured speaker. At the end of the program, church women are invited to participate in small group conversations on Zoom.

Marcy has been a Westminster member for 18 years, served two terms as Deacon, and is a member of the Eco-Justice Ministry Team. As an architect, she focuses on design and sustainability through building science. Marcy is passionate about God’s call to be stewards of the Earth. In her talk, she will consider how her faith journey has influenced her architectural path and commitment to ecology in an era of climate change.

While no dinner can be served as part of the program, we know some Twin Citians face a hunger crisis. We encourage those tuning in to Marcy’s talk to contribute to the Presbyterian Peace and Global Witness Offering. Your gifts support the denomination and, locally, Second Harvest Heartland and its feeding programs, Groveland Food Shelf included.

To sign up for Beyond Sunday Connections, contact Deb Wagner, dwagner@wpc-mpls.org, by November 10. She will send you a handout about Marcy and a Zoom link for the small group conversations. Questions? Contact Lynne Thompson, 612.339.3971.
Volunteering and Giving with Love, for Justice
by Doris Wong, Westminster member

Hold fast to love and justice, and wait continually for your God. Hosea 12:6

God has been so generous to me throughout my lifetime that I want to respond by sharing my resources with others. My college degree was in social work, but I spent my career working in the administrative side of human services. Volunteering has always been important to me, and so when I became more active at Westminster as an adult, I sought out the many volunteer opportunities available.

I have had the privilege of participating in many worthwhile activities, such as serving at FEAST to our grateful guests, watching the surprise and delight on the faces of the Nicollet Square young adults at the sight of the Holiday Party gift room, and being enveloped in love by our Cuba Partnership brothers and sisters. All this has been richly rewarding; it has kept me grounded, given me perspective, and resulted in many friends and relationships.

I look forward to when we can be together again in person and are able to join in giving our time to help Westminster work toward justice and “Build the Beloved Community.” Please consider your resources and join me in supporting the important work in which Westminster engages!

Serving continued from cover

Nearly every ministry area at Westminster has adapted programming to continue during COVID-19. Including:

• The Board of Deacons began a Phone Call Connection Program to maintain contact with and to support nearly 900 Westminster households.
• Faith in Action has updated the “Get Involved” opportunities on Westminster’s website to specify various community needs during the pandemic.
• This fall’s Men’s and Women’s Retreats changed to an online format, and these ministry areas have also offered opportunities for participants to meet online and safely in person.
• The Magnet Senior Center began “Walk with Us Wednesdays” for seniors to meet together safely outdoors, and is working to help seniors with technology needs.
• This fall the Westminster Choir began meeting every other week on Zoom to study music through its history, text, and musical meaning.

With many months likely left in this pandemic, Westminster clergy, staff, and lay leaders will continue to look for ways to gather and foster community during this time of separation.

“The faith of those who follow Jesus gives us an image of life in community, full of possibilities, full of promise and responsibility, full of hope,” Hart-Andersen said during his sermon on October 18. “We are one body of many members and if one member suffers, all suffer with it. Our future depends on embracing such a vision for our life together.”
On Sunday, October 4, Westminster Presbyterian Church in Santa Fe, NM called Madeline Hart-Andersen by unanimous vote to serve as their next Pastor. This marked a major step in her journey of discernment into ministry, and a point of celebration for all who have watched Madeline move into a call toward ordained leadership in the church.

Westminster was founded in 1893 in Santa Fe, and sits about a mile from the heart of the city plaza. Madeline describes it as a small congregation, proud of its heritage, and “deeply committed to being church together and to serving the community.” As the solo pastor, she will do a bit of everything from leading worship, moderating session, offering pastoral care, and teaching Christian education. Knowing Madeline’s background, her deep gifts and leadership experiences, it is clear to see why the Pastoral Nominating Committee and the congregation as a whole felt so strongly about Madeline coming to serve alongside them in building community and spiritual growth.

Westminster Minneapolis will celebrate Madeline’s ordination, via livestream, on Sunday, November 1 at 2 pm, ahead of Madeline’s move to NM and starting date of November 16. Madeline says she is grateful for the care and nurture she has received from her home congregation. As she reminds us, “In the Presbyterian understanding of call, we talk about the individual, the Holy Spirit, and the congregation. Usually we think about these three only in terms of a congregation calling a pastor, but it is also true along the whole path to ordination. Westminster has affirmed my call, over and over again.” Thanks be to God for the movement of the Holy Spirit in each of our lives and the life of the church, and thanks be to God for our opportunity to respond in celebration of the soon-to-be Reverend Madeline Hart-Andersen!

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**Mini Pilgrimages**

by Rachel Sheild Gustafson, Director of Congregational and Community Engagement

Adult Education is excited to unveil some fresh opportunities to engage bodies, minds, and hearts to explore sites around the Twin Cities that can teach us about the intersection of our faith with areas such as art, urban development, and social justice. Several lay leaders with expertise in particular content areas have developed a series of hyper-local mini-pilgrimages to significant locales in Minneapolis and St. Paul with accompanying interpretative and devotional materials. Those materials are now available on the Adult Education page of the website: westminsternpls.org/grow/adult-ed. Interested participants can download the materials for use as individuals, households, or small groups. These pilgrimages are primarily self-guided, but there will be a few virtual options as well.

- Mark VanderSchaaf is working on a pilgrimage exploring development around the Mississippi River and the ecological, cultural, and spiritual implications.
- Elizabeth Winga has developed a pilgrimage in November focused on “listening” to contemporary Indigenous artists and also a child-friendly one in December exploring nativity themes at the Minneapolis Institute of Art.
- Sarah Heinrich is also preparing arts-focused pilgrimages, the first of which helps us see how “Artists Show Us Our Fears.”
- I used the volume *Under Purple Skies: The Minneapolis Anthology* to follow the paths of poets and essayists whose work features Westminster’s hometown.

Check the website periodically for new additions and for information about how participants can share their experiences online as they go, and in a Zoom debrief at a later date.

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The Nativity c. 1425, Fra Angelico (Fra Giovanni da Fiesole)
Parenting as Improv
by Marie Kruskop, Coordinator of Early Childhood and Family Ministries

In late August, our Westminster staff gathered over Zoom for a staff retreat. One of our guests was from Comedy Sportz, an improv venue in Minneapolis. Michael led us through a number of activities, all based on the one rule of improv—“Yes... And...” I was reminded—again—how this rule can apply to parenting.

How, you might ask? Michael reminded us that saying “no” brings the exchange you’re having with another to a stop, whereas “Yes... And...” keeps the exchange moving forward. “Yes... And...” honors what the other has brought to the conversation—even when the other is your child. And it gives you the opportunity to offer an additional idea. This give and take builds relationships.

Further, the practice of parenting sometimes feels like improv! The act of improvising can be defined as “performing spontaneously or without preparation.” Sometimes, this is exactly what parenting feels like and how it happens! However, parenting also needs to be intentional, that is, done deliberately and with purpose.

This approach of “Yes... And...” may be needed now more than ever as we continue to live through the pandemic and the heightened awareness of racial injustices in the aftermath of George Floyd’s killing. Imagine how your relationship with your child might be transformed if you choose to say “Yes... And...” “Yes, I know how much you want to see your friends. And... that is a hard thing to do safely right now. Let’s think of ways you can be with your friends that are safe.” Or “Yes, it’s hard to stand up for your friend when someone says something disrespectful about them because of the color of their skin... And... let’s think of things you can say so you can be there for your friend.”

If you need ideas on what can be said in a situation like the one above, join us for Family Education Hour on Sundays at 9 am. One of our goals is to help equip our children and youth to be upstanders when they witness microaggressions toward a friend or classmate. They—and we—can learn ways to respond when something uncomfortable, disrespectful, or racist is said.

This is the “Year of Listening” at Westminster. Improv—“Yes... And...”—requires us to listen. Listening to your child will strengthen your relationship with them; listening can be a way of acting on our baptismal promise to love, encourage, and support our children.

Westminster ADVENTures
by Matt Lewellyn-Otten, Director of Youth Ministries

Reflecting on the past several months, I am reminded of celebrating Easter Sunday in my home with my husband and dog snuggled cozily on the couch. At Easter, I didn’t even think that I could be celebrating another major Christian holiday from my home. Despite being so separated, we continue to have opportunities to feel connected to our Westminster community as we usher in a new liturgical season: Advent.

To help all of our members usher in the Advent season, there will be an Advent drive-thru event in the Westminster parking garage on Saturday, November 21, and Sunday, November 22. At this event, households will have the opportunity to collect materials for celebrating this season of hope. We will have materials for our little ones to explore their faith. We will foster joy in seeing one another face (mask) to face (mask). You’ll also hear the voices of the prophets preparing the way for peace.

Please mark your calendars and be on the lookout for opportunities for your household to sign up for this unique opportunity to usher in the season of Advent. Links for sign ups and other details will be shared via weekly e-mails, social media, and on the church’s website.

Our New Family, Youth, and Children Associate Pastor
by Suzanne McInroy, Director of Communications

During the Congregational Meeting on October 18, the Rev. Alexandria Mauney (pronounced Mooney) was approved as the Associate Pastor for Families, Youth, and Children. In November she will move from her current home in Greensboro, N.C., to the Twin Cities area. She is set to start at Westminster on December 1. We look forward to welcoming her during worship soon!
The New Testament offers stories of radical welcome on some pages and fearful warnings about “outsiders” on others. It’s hard to know how to make sense of the combination of hospitality and suspicion. The mixed perspectives can create confusion that manifests itself when churches wonder about how open they should be to their surrounding culture and “the ways of the world.” What was going on when the New Testament was written, when the Christian movement was just beginning to define itself? How do we read stories of inclusion and exclusion in our own settings in ways that are faithful, humble, and full of generous concern for our neighbors?

Adult Education will be hosting a new Bible study investigating these questions. Join Rev. Dr. Matthew Skinner, Scholar for Adult Education, for a 5-week class exploring a theme from the Bible that relates to how we live out our faith. By looking deeper into the ways the Bible first spoke in its original cultural settings, we are better prepared to think faithfully and creatively about what Christian belief should be now, in our culture. As we take a conversational approach to reading scripture, we discover that it is less about arriving at “the one right answer” and more about opening ourselves up to see where God can be encountered in our lives and as we consider what contributes to the well-being of our neighbors.

The first class was held Monday, October 19, but you can still join for the remaining classes held Mondays from 7-8:30 pm. Contact Mahin Hamilton, mhamilton@wpc-mpls.org, for the Zoom link.
A New Westminster Gallery

by Rodney Allen Schwartz, Director, Westminster Gallery and Archive

The Westminster Gallery and our collection of art have gone into hiding with the closing of the building to members and visitors. In an effort to make art available once again, we have created a new gallery accessible to the public facing the Nicollet Mall. Currently two of the seven large windows of Westminster Hall have been converted into a store-front display window complete with lighting for evening viewing. The first mini-exhibition features prints from the collection on social justice themes including a poster quoting Martin Luther King Jr., and silkscreen prints by Sister Corita Kent.

We are working to design larger exhibitions of Advent and Christmas art that will fill an expanded gallery across the entire seven windows. Think back to the wonderful Dayton's Christmas windows—but without the automatons. The Advent exhibition will open Thanksgiving weekend. Feel free to park temporarily in the Marquette drive through so that you might walk around the building and enjoy this new holiday tradition. The presentation of art will follow the liturgical journey through Advent, Christmas, and Epiphany with evolving exhibitions of art and crèches. In the meantime, be sure to follow Westminster on Facebook (@westminstermpls) so you can see my "Our Friend Rodney" videos about art.