Worship is a lifeline for those seeking to discover what it means to belong.” Tim Hart-Andersen

The past 18 months have been more difficult than we ever could have anticipated. This time has challenged each of us to continue nurturing our faith, find new ways of being in community with one another, and discover how we might still live out God’s call for justice.

Coming back together once again, we will explore the stewardship theme this fall, which is Belonging to the Beloved Community: God, Neighbor, and Creation. In worship, we come together to center God in our lives. In service to each other, we celebrate God’s intentions as we work toward a sustainable community with love, joy, justice, and peace. And in our offerings, we give in gratitude to God as an expression of our faith in God’s hope for the world.

Remembering that together we can accomplish more than we can indi-

Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God; everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. (John 4:7)
One of the most humbling and inspiring facts about the Westminster Town Hall Forum is that nearly 85% of its budget comes from individual donors. It is because of thousands of individuals believing in and supporting the Forum for more than 40 years that it has grown into a world-class speaker series.

As the Forum’s director, I feel a responsibility to be a steward of this institution that so many have helped to build. I am answerable to generations of attendees, donors, volunteers, and community members who have invested in the Forum and its ideals. And I believe it is incumbent on all of us to ensure this space for “voices of conscience addressing the issues of the day from an ethical perspective,” remains strong for the next generation.

This October, the Forum will host two such voices speaking on our fall theme: democracy. They will address threats facing representative self-government, and what responsibility we each have in being stewards of an ethical democracy.

**Monday, October 4:**
Dr. Wendy Hui Kyong Chun of the Digital Democracies Institute will speak on how the Internet and social media are undermining democracy. Due to travel risks associated with COVID-19, this talk will be presented in a virtual-hybrid format.

**October 26:**
LaTosha Brown, the co-founder of Black Voters Matter, will speak on how to turn grassroots activism into political power. She will also address the myriad of voter suppression initiatives launched in the U.S. since the 2020 election.


---

Jessica Willson Named Lead Receptionist
by Nicole Cueno, Senior Director of Operations and Administration

In August, Westminster welcomed Jessica Willson to the position of Lead Receptionist. Jessica brings knowledge of the workings of the reception desk, a strong customer service background, and a deep commitment as an active church member to the position.

Prior to taking on the Lead Receptionist role, Jessica served as Interim Receptionist since the middle of this last summer and, prior to that, worked regularly as an Evening Receptionist. Before working for Westminster, Jessica worked as a Sales Associate in retail and as an Office Manager for Cuddy Energy Systems.

Many of our members likely know Jessica from her membership and deep involvement in the church. Jessica has been a member at Westminster since 2013. She has served on the Board of Deacons, as both Vice Moderator and Moderator. She has been involved in Women’s and Memorial Ministries and been active in Mom’s Group and WOW. Jessica will continue to sing in the choir, help with day camp as needed, and care for all the church’s candles.

Jessica is an active Extension Master Gardener volunteer and often treats the staff to fresh vegetables from her garden. She lives in NE Minneapolis with her husband, Jacob, and daughter, Abigail.

We wish Jessica a warm welcome and are grateful for all the knowledge and commitment she brings to the Lead Receptionist position.

---

Gilvia Anderson joined Westminster staff as the Weekend Receptionist in August. You can read more about her in the September 2021 issue of Westminster News.
From Our Pastor

Dear friends,

We are off and running into the fall at Westminster...well, sort of.

With Covid protocols still limiting attendance, masking still required, and children still in remote Church School, we are not there yet. It will be a while longer before it will be safe to begin lifting restrictions.

Our caution has worked: to our knowledge, we have not had a single instance of Covid infection at a Westminster event. Thank you for your cooperation – and for getting vaccinated!

It has been a long haul. I have seen the staff team and church members deal with the impact of the continuing pandemic. Within our own households it has been difficult – children, aging parents, grandparents, neighbors, friends, all affected by Covid. At work and school, we have had to adjust and re-adjust and then re-adjust again. It can be exhausting and frightening.

Together we have discerned how to continue to worship and educate, care for one another, serve the community, and practice our faith in these extraordinary times. With all of you, I, too, am overwhelmed with gratitude. This is the community to which we belong, and it has sustained us through personal and social turbulence that seems unending.

I quoted Dietrich Bonhoeffer in a recent sermon. “The church,” he said, “is not a religious community of worshippers of Christ, but it is Christ himself who has taken form among people.”

We are called to be the church, the form Christ has taken among us, not in some other time and place, but in this time and in this place. You and I are the church, doing our best to live within today’s realities. We will not get it right every time, but we will continue trying together.

Through these long pandemic months, we have sustained the church and its important ministry and mission because we belong to God and to one another. Thank you for your financial support!

As we begin to focus on the stewardship of our resources for the year to come, the theme of Belonging seems exactly right. In coming weeks, we will hear stories of the impact of Westminster, from those who belong to it.

Then we will be asked to make a financial commitment to 2022. I invite you to join Beth and me in doing so, with gratitude to God!

See you in church—in person or online.

Grace and peace,

[Signature]

From Our Pastor

Dear friends,

We are off and running into the fall at Westminster...well, sort of.

With Covid protocols still limiting attendance, masking still required, and children still in remote Church School, we are not there yet. It will be a while longer before it will be safe to begin lifting restrictions.

Our caution has worked: to our knowledge, we have not had a single instance of Covid infection at a Westminster event. Thank you for your cooperation – and for getting vaccinated!

It has been a long haul. I have seen the staff team and church members deal with the impact of the continuing pandemic. Within our own households it has been difficult – children, aging parents, grandparents, neighbors, friends, all affected by Covid. At work and school, we have had to adjust and re-adjust and then re-adjust again. It can be exhausting and frightening.

Together we have discerned how to continue to worship and educate, care for one another, serve the community, and practice our faith in these extraordinary times. With all of you, I, too, am overwhelmed with gratitude. This is the community to which we belong, and it has sustained us through personal and social turbulence that seems unending.

I quoted Dietrich Bonhoeffer in a recent sermon. “The church,” he said, “is not a religious community of worshippers of Christ, but it is Christ himself who has taken form among people.”

We are called to be the church, the form Christ has taken among us, not in some other time and place, but in this time and in this place. You and I are the church, doing our best to live within today’s realities. We will not get it right every time, but we will continue trying together.

Through these long pandemic months, we have sustained the church and its important ministry and mission because we belong to God and to one another. Thank you for your financial support!

As we begin to focus on the stewardship of our resources for the year to come, the theme of Belonging seems exactly right. In coming weeks, we will hear stories of the impact of Westminster, from those who belong to it.

Then we will be asked to make a financial commitment to 2022. I invite you to join Beth and me in doing so, with gratitude to God!

See you in church—in person or online.

Grace and peace,
EV EXPO
October 9 | 11 am-3 pm | Oak Grove Presbyterian Church
Westminster’s Eco-Justice Team invites anyone who would like to learn more about electric (EV) and plug-in hybrid (PHEV) vehicles to attend the EV Expo. Oak Grove Presbyterian is co-hosting this event with the MN EV Owners Group. Oak Grove, like Westminster, is a certified Earth Care Congregation.

Westminster Performing Arts Series presents Monroe Crossing
Friday, October 22 | 6:30 pm | Westminster’s Sanctuary
The evening will begin with a hymn sing-a-long led by Westminster’s Bluegrass Band. Monroe Crossing will take the stage at 7 pm, offering a blend of classic bluegrass, bluegrass gospel, and other related genres. Tickets are pay-what-you-can (suggested $15), available online at westminstermpls.org/wpas. COVID-safety protocols will be in place, including mandatory masking, social distancing, and limited capacity.

Women’s Retreat: Saturday, October 30

Join us for the Fall Women’s Retreat! We’ll come together via Zoom for a half-day of reflection, connection, and learning. It’s a wonderful opportunity to get to know each other better and meet new friends. In addition to a blend of guided study and small group discussions, we’ll offer an optional online yoga/gentle movement session in the morning.

The retreat theme is Compassionate Communication: Seeing Others through the Lens of Empathy and Honesty. Rev. Jamie Schultz will be our retreat leader. Jamie is in her 19th year as pastor of Bryn Mawr Presbyterian Church in Minneapolis, a lively neighborhood church. She attended Westminster before she was called to Bryn Mawr and led two popular retreats for Westminster. Jamie has been a practitioner and fan of Compassionate Communication (also known as Nonviolent Communication) since 2010; it has helped change her life.

In leading our program, she’ll help us see the ways so much of our communication involves blaming, evaluating, and judging, but Compassionate Communication offers a way to connect with others at a deeper level. Jamie will introduce its basic principles including identifying feelings that point to universal needs which contribute to the flourishing of life.

Contact Judy Kim with questions or Deb Wagner to sign up.
Westminster Wellness
by Jane Martin, Westminster Health and Healing Ministry

It is better to be patient than powerful. It is better to win control over yourself than over whole cities. (Proverbs 16:32)

Westminster cares deeply about the well-being of all. This month as we think about stewardship, the Health and Healing Ministry offers some science-backed ideas on kindness that can be applied to your own life and shared with others. Kindness is a huge buzzword for good reason. We all need it. In a world that’s simultaneously chaotic and beautiful, it’s empowering to remember that the only thing any of us can control is our own behavior.

According to research from Harvard and Yale, performing an act of kindness is just as beneficial for the giver as it is for the recipient. However, this is only true if we give from the heart and not to receive a payback of some sort. Like all habits, we get better with practice. Try to intentionally do one kind thing a day for someone else. Consider tracking or journaling your experiences. Notice how you feel. Does it become easier and more natural with time?

We are all influenced by those around us. Why not strive to be the kindness influencer in your circle? The positive impact may never be known to you, but it is no less powerful. We can never underestimate the importance of kindness. And most of all, please remember to be kind to yourself.

Beyond Sunday Connections: Andrea Knoll
by Lynne Thompson, Beyond Sunday Connections Committee Member

Beyond Sunday Connections invites Westminster women to come together in fellowship and share personal reflections about their faith, work, and daily life. Andrea Knoll is the featured speaker Monday, November 15, at 6:30 pm.

Andrea and her husband, Ben, joined Westminster in 2015. She has served on Session since 2016, leading the New Member Development team volunteers and assisting with the Stewardship Ministry. After a 15-year career in international trade banking in Tulsa, St. Louis, and Denver, Andrea focused full time on family and community. In 2010, she co-founded Oasis for Youth, a nonprofit in Bloomington that addresses suburban youth homelessness. Since 2016, she has been a floral designer at Arts and Flowers. Andrea will talk about how her faith has supported her and deepened throughout life’s many transitions.

There are two ways to attend Beyond Sunday Connections—in person and via Westminster’s livestream channel. Contact Deb Wagner to register and please let her know which way you would like to attend.


New Opportunities for Westminster’s Older Adults
by Sue Kolar, Chair, Third Age

Taking in a deep breath of fresh morning air, I smile up at the beautiful blue sky and give thanks to the Lord for this wonderful day. Wandering over to Westminster Green, searching for a nice shady spot, I say hello to some of those gathered for Tai Chi. Some I know by name, others just their faces, but we’ve all come together to learn from Tai Chi Master, Julie. I have found the sessions invigorating, exhausting, and inspiring; a great way to engage body, mind, and spirit together in gentle movements.

As we announced, New Old Adventure has become Third Age, with new vision and mission statements. Although many of the programs are designed with a penchant for older adults, everyone is welcome! Through sustained, imaginative, collaborative, and informative programming, Third Age looks to help Westminster be a more inclusive, interconnected, and multigenerational church. For example, this summer, in addition to Tai Chi, Third Age participated in three joyous Intergenerational Play events.

Join us on Wednesday, October 13, at 11 am in the Meisel Room, or via livestream, as we explore and discuss Life’s Third Age with video clips of Dr. Ken Dychtwald, a psychologist, gerontologist, best-selling author, and one of America’s foremost thought leaders regarding the implications of living longer. Register on Realm or contact Rachel Sheild for more information.

It is better to be patient than powerful. It is better to win control over yourself than over whole cities. (Proverbs 16:32)
A Legacy Thought: Ensuring that Good Works Endure
by Sue Perkins, Westminster Member

The pandemic has brought home the importance of planning for the future. It was time for me to “get my affairs in order” and it was easier than I thought. I had excellent guidance from my attorney who helped me think about my giving goals and strategies. It was important to me to ensure that the good work of Westminster endures. I’m planning to do a beneficiary designation in my retirement account to be used in an unrestricted fashion. I am inspired by and trust the leaders in our congregation to make good use of financial resources. I also decided to endow my annual pledge via my Donor Advised Fund so that I can keep supporting the church every year, even after I’m gone. These plans make me feel like I’ll be a perpetual member!

Refreshing and Beautifying the Memorial Garden
by Mary Hess, Director of Stewardship

Westminster’s Memorial Garden, with its Columbarium and Memorial Wall, has recently been the focus of dedicated attention by a newly re-vitalized Memorial Garden Committee. Members of the Committee are Pat Hammink, Linda Mell, Elaine Dietrich, Fred Dietrich, and Rene Santiago, and several staff. This past summer they met to identify ways to refresh and beautify the space, and to re-introduce the Memorial Garden to Westminster members. Volunteer gardeners including Betty Heefner, John Logue, and Linda Mell have been hard at work. Located on 12th Street, just outside the sanctuary, the garden is open for quiet reflection and prayer every Sunday morning through the fall, from 8:30 am-12:30 pm and by appointment at other times.

The original mission of the Memorial Garden, established out of the 150th Anniversary Campaign, is to “provide a dignified memorial and interment ministry to Westminster members, in the tradition of the old-fashioned church-yard.” The Garden naturally enhances Westminster’s end of life ministry and provides new opportunities for members to remember or inter their loved ones within the embrace of their church home. The Columbarium has 660 niches, where urns containing cremated remains are interred, the niches are sealed with engraved limestone fronts. The Memorial Wall, also made of limestone, offers an opportunity to memorialize loved ones with the engraving of a name. For more information, please visit the website, or contact David Shinn, Associate Pastor of Congregational Care, or Nicole Cueno, Senior Director of Operations and Administration.
The 20th annual Groveland Food Shelf (GFS) movie benefit is scheduled for Sunday, November 7, at 1 pm at the Historic Heights Theater (3951 Central Ave NE, Columbia Heights). This year’s feature is the 1923 classic silent film Safety Last starring Harold Lloyd. Nationally recognized conductor, choral director and organist Philip Brunelle will offer musical accompaniment on the Mighty Wurlitzer.

GFS has experienced a twofold increase in clients served since the onset of the pandemic. It is now serving more than 5,000 people per month. The need is great, and the movie benefit is an easy way to support our neighbors who rely on GFS. This event is open to the public so invite neighbors and friends to attend. Movie-goers are invited to bring a non-perishable food item with them to the theater to donate to the food shelf.

All seats are $15 and will be available at the Heights Theater website or at the theater the day of the event. The Heights Theater requires all patrons to wear masks in both the lobby and auditorium.

This year’s movie reflects America 100 years ago. It will be good for us to watch for images and symbols that reflect this era and remind us of how far we have come and the work ahead.

**Peace at all times and in all ways**

by Alanna Simone Tyler, Associate Pastor for Justice and Mission

Thank you for your past support of the Peace and Global Witness offering. Through this special offering Westminster unites with Presbyterians everywhere to share Christ’s peace with God’s people everywhere. Together we witness to the promise of “peace at all times in all ways.” (2 Thessalonians 3:16)

Supporting a collaborative for peace-making Lebanese artist is an example of the reach of the Offering. Following the devastating explosions in Beirut, Lebanon, in December 2020, artists were helped in their efforts to respond to collective trauma through NABAD, a program at Dar al-Kalima University College of Arts and Culture. Rev. Dr. Mitri Raheb, President of Dar al-Kalima explained, “The support of the Offering is very crucial especially at times when everything is falling apart and people in the region feel abandoned. This support is a sign that we are not forsaken or forgotten.” Our witness to peace also takes the form of supplies for displaced students, food for refugees, and training for teachers.

We will receive the Peace and Global Witness Offering Sunday, October 3. Please give using the special envelopes available at Westminster, through Realm, or the Special Offerings link under the Give section of Westminster’s website. Twenty-five percent of the Offering stays with local congregations, and 25% with mid councils to unite congregations to support peacemaking in their regions. The remaining 50% will be directed to the Presbyterian Mission Agency.

**Westminster Welcomes New Artist-in-Residence**

by Kenneth, Vigne, Associate Director of Music

Westminster welcomes Katherine Parent as our Artist-in-Residence for 2021-2022. Katherine is a Twin Cities-rooted visual artist and musician. Her work explores themes of the mystical, healing, and racial and ecological justice through play with paint, textiles, recycled materials, and music. Katherine has worked as a visual teaching artist with many local church and community groups. She believes that making art can be a sacred group experience; a way to work together with our hands while opening up challenging conversations, and a healing space of playful spiritual resistance for people of any age.

As a musician, Katherine is a lifelong choral singer who studied with the Seattle Girls Choir and St. Olaf Choir. She now writes and performs as a singer/songwriter and enjoys collaborations with artists from multiple genres, from Irish traditional music to protest chants to hip hop. She is a 2021 Cedar Commissions artist at the Cedar Cultural Center. She has a PhD in history from Luther Seminary, with a focus on religion and racism in Minnesota.
Stewardship of Time and Talents in FYC

by Alexandra Mauney, Associate Pastor

In the Families, Youth, & Children (FYC) area of ministry, we find ourselves grateful every single day for how Westminster members steward their time and talents for the building up of our intergenerational community. Church School teachers, family ministry leaders, Council and Ministry Team members, youth group leaders, and countless others help to create a nurturing environment for faith formation here at Westminster.

This is one of the ways that we live into our baptismal promise, made on behalf of the community to everyone who is baptized at Westminster:

“We promise to love, encourage, and support you, to share the good news of the gospel with you, to serve that gospel alongside you, and to help you know and follow Christ.”

Please be in touch with any of our FYC staff members to learn more about how you might get involved in ministry opportunities with Westminster’s young people!

Welcoming Children at Westminster

by Marie Kruskop, Coordinator of Early Childhood and Family Ministries

As we settle into the routines of the new program year, you may have noticed there are not as many children among us on Sunday mornings. The Covid pandemic remains a major concern for families, especially those with children under age 12 who are not yet able to be vaccinated, so much of our Families, Youth, and Children (FYC) programming takes place over Zoom. Still, families with children of all ages may choose to come to worship.

In this year of belonging, and after such a long time separated from their church community, welcoming children is especially important. They need to feel as though they belong. Donna Sinclair puts it this way, “Parenting is too hard to do alone... We need to surround ourselves with surrogate mothers, aunts, uncles, friends... Churches are sometimes good at this. They can, at their best provide a community... people who know our children’s names. There is nothing more wonderful for a child than the sense of being surrounded by those who love them in their wholeness – wriggly, vocal, holy – and who give them a spiritual past. Our children need to know they are the result of the love of thousands.”

Each of us can be one of those thousands when we act on the promise we made when they were baptized. So how might we, the congregation, welcome children and families to church? Look for some answers in your pew! You’ll find a card offering a few simple suggestions to welcome children and their families.

Nurturing Faith in Westminster’s Young Ones

by Sonja Dziekciowski, Director of Children’s Ministries

Eliza Conrad, mother of three, serves as our Early Childhood Ministries Team Chair. She brings her love of children and her deep desire to ensure that even the youngest among us know of God’s love and begin to learn the stories of our faith. She hopes, too, that parents and caregivers of these young ones begin to build their own church community, right alongside their children.

Greta Wicker, mother of three and a long-time Pre-K Church School teacher, has long been involved in our FYC Family Fellowship ministries. She recognizes the benefit for the whole family, parents/caregivers and children of all ages, to share in fellowship with other families as a way to build a church community, a church family. She brings her creativity and joyful spirit to each event she helps plan for our families.

We give thanks for these faithful leaders!
Cultivating Belonging through Confirmation
by Matt Lewellyn-Otten, Director of Youth Ministries

Eric Caugh has been a faithful leader of Westminster’s Confirmation program for many years. His mentorship of young people, his commitment to their faith formation, and his welcoming presence have sustained and shaped the ways we minister to the young people of Westminster. Eric helped to create the curriculum we use within our Confirmation process, one that allows Confirmands the space necessary to ask questions, not settle on easy answers, and live out their faith. He has brought deep joy to the youth ministry and we are grateful for the ways he has served the Westminster community for many years. We wish him well as he “retires” from this service and moves on to other opportunities.

Young Adult Ministry This Fall
by Meghan Gage-Finn, Executive Associate Pastor

Westminster’s young adult group, WestConnect, is looking forward to a fall of safe, in-person gatherings to build community and faith formation. The group meets outside, with dinner, at 6 pm on the second and fourth Thursdays of the month on the 12th Street courtyard. We share in Bible study, book discussion, and support and fellowship. Throughout the fall, there will be other social gatherings, along with a retreat. These can be challenging times for young adults, whether you are a student, a new professional, establishing roots in the Twin Cities, or returning to a familiar place with a new perspective. WestConnect provides space to listen for God’s leading, serve God and God’s people with others, and grow in faith alongside others. Find the group on Facebook or contact me at mgage-finn@wpc-mpls.org!

Fall New Members Class
by Meghan Gage-Finn, Executive Associate Pastor

The next New Members Class will be Sunday, November 7 at 11:45 am. Senior Pastor Tim Hart-Andersen and I will lead the conversation, which offers a chance for those newer to the church to build connections, while also learning more about the congregation and the PC (USA). It is too early to say if we will be in-person, on Zoom, or gathering in a hybrid way, but we do know it will be a time of listening and sharing in whatever format allows us safely to do so. Perhaps you have gotten more involved in the life of Westminster these last 18 months and feel ready to unite with the congregation in membership. Or perhaps you know of someone else who might be sensing it is time. I hope you will reach out to me (mgage-finn@wpc-mpls.org) or find me in person on a Sunday morning if you would like more information!

Faithful Children’s Ministry Leaders
by Sonja Dziekciowski, Director of Children’s Ministries

Last year two new volunteers were added to the Children’s Ministries Team. After being invited to attend Small Hands, Big Hearts Zoom calls by Gene Davis to help lead meetings dedicated to her vision of building community by spreading kindness, Ann and Tracy Godfrey were hooked.

On the monthly calls they encouraged and delighted our 2nd through 5th grade students with games and humor. Tracy created some Zoom in and Zoom out games to share on Zoom, having students guess what object was being shown close up.

This year when a need arose to find new 2nd grade Church School teachers, Ann and Tracy said yes just one hour before a Zoom Church School Teacher Orientation that they showed up for. Our Children’s Ministries Team is grateful for the laughter and joy that the Godfreys add to Zoom calls.
Getting Involved at Westminster

Rachel Sheild, Director of Congregational and Community Engagement, and Alanna Simone Tyler, Associate Pastor for Justice and Mission, answer a few questions about getting involved at Westminster.

What’s behind Westminster’s invitation to get involved?

AST: Our invitation to get involved in the life of the congregation and in the world is all about living into the Covenant of Westminster Membership. In the Covenant we acknowledge our trust in God’s saving grace and we seek to follow where this grace leads us; we accept the joys and responsibilities conferred on us and we commit to showing Christ’s love and justice in the world. Some readers of this article are not formally members—please know this covenant can shape you, too. When we get involved we experience and co-create a sense of belonging in the congregation and out in the world God loves.

RS: I’m eager to identify places where we can increase our engagement relationally with each other and our neighbors. One thing I’ve learned in my years of engagement is that sometimes being is better than doing. When we show up to “do” something, it’s easy to let our own agendas and assumptions lead us. When we show up to “be” together, we’re more likely to be attuned to the people around us, to better hear what they’re saying, what they’re celebrating, what they’re mourning, and to be present with them in ways that are meaningful for all involved. This is why I love small groups because they are all about relationship. We accompany each other through the highs and lows of life. Out of being together more, our doing with and for each other becomes deeper.

How could people easily indicate areas they would like to get involved with?

RS: We’ve got a great tool available to us in Realm. Each person can, in their profile, choose from a list of “Skills,” checking the ones they might be willing to lend to our community. There’s also a separate way to indicate “Interests,” which we’ve organized by ministry area so a community member can tick the areas they’re most drawn to. Lay leaders and staff can then search in Realm to recruit volunteers according to the skills and interests they’ve aligned themselves with. If you’re interested in being more involved, getting into Realm and filling out your profile is a great place to start!

AST: Please explore the Get Involved link under the Act section of the website to learn the numerous ways to serve and work for justice. I am glad to help with connections and make introductions.

What are some new opportunities you see on the horizon for members to get involved?

RS: Small groups! Small groups are a great place to build greater connections, cohesion, and feelings of belonging at Westminster through study, fellowship, affinity groups, and service together. They can also be an incubator or “trial run” for new kinds of groups, studies, and activities that you might have always wished existed at Westminster.

AST: The Westminster team making plans to co-sponsor a refugee family this fall would welcome additions. As would the Social Justice and Eco-Justice Ministry Teams. Or consider joining the Advocacy Team to equip the congregation to challenge the systems and structures preventing our neighbors from flourishing. Reach out to act@wpc-mpls.org to learn more.

Arts opportunities at Westminster include...

- Sing with a choir (Westminster Choir, Chamber Choir, African Choir, Youth Choir, Children’s Choirs – Cherubs, Seraphim, and Choristers)
- Join the Handbell ensemble
- Play an instrument or cantor in worship
- Become a gallery tour guide
- Assist with FYC’s “Arts Month”
- Volunteer with the Westminster Performing Arts Series

To get connected, contact Kenneth Vigne.
A Tribute to John August Swanson
by Dr. Rodney Allen Schwartz, Director, Westminster Gallery and Archive

The art of John August Swanson can be found throughout the Westminster Gallery and building. His bright and colorful images appear to glow from within. The process for printing these serigraphs is a technique that is a cross between a stencil and a silkscreen. Transparent and opaque, matte and glossy, the inks are printed as small dots that become luminescent to our eyes.

John is a life-long resident of Los Angeles where he was born to a Swedish father and Mexican mother. His father spent much of his life on the streets, and John often searched for him. The artist Sister Corita Kent found John and became his mentor. Together they created graphic art that demonstrated against war and advocated for the ordinary person through a variety of social justice themes.

While John’s primary body of work is his Biblical images; his work also featured musicians, acrobats, and the circus. Later in his career he returned primarily to his early social justice focus and has produced many graphic posters. The Westminster Collection is fortunate as John has gifted us with a complete set of these posters.

The Westminster Collection of John’s work has also grown with the recent gift of several serigraphs given in memory of John C. Salzsieder. Loaves and Fishes, Wedding Feast, and Take Away the Stone can be viewed in the hallway connecting the sanctuary and the Westminster Gallery.

I am sad to report that John died on September 23 after a short time in hospice care. May his gentle and loving spirit live on in the beauty of his art.

The Next Inspiration
by Margaret McCray, D.Min., LMFT

Nearly 10 years ago I wrote a column for the newsletter using this same poem by Wendell Berry. He recently turned 87 years of age. I will soon be 74. I am grateful for his wisdom that continues to speak to me. As I look at my life: working past traditional retirement age, wondering what is next, what is the journey ahead when I step off this familiar path, I realize I am asking stewardship questions. For all of us our “talents” (apt biblical word for our resources) and our challenges are ever changing. For myself I am looking at the prospect of retirement, new opportunities, health restrictions, family obligations, a world in turmoil, a planet threatened etc., etc.

Yes, I am a baffled mind, an impeded stream. What will I do with my time? How do I continue to make a difference in the world? How will I connect with people in new ways? Where will I find new meaning and purpose? How and where do I give my talents? How will I share my “treasure”?

These are questions for a lifetime. Life presents us with challenges and changes whatever our age and circumstance. The impeded stream of our lives sings ever new songs, stirring up the opportunity and inspiration for stewarding our talents.

It may be that when we no longer know what to do we have come to our real work, and that when we no longer know which way to go we have come to our real journey. The mind that is not baffled is not employed. The impeded stream is the one that sings.

-Wendell Berry