Palestinian Pastor, Theologian, and Educational Leader Mitri Raheb to Return to Westminster

We are eager to welcome the Rev. Dr. Mitri Raheb back to Westminster on Sunday, June 5. A longtime friend of our congregation and leader of some of our global partner institutions, Raheb is founder and president of Dar al-Kalima University in Bethlehem. This university of arts and culture lives out its vision to spread “the values of democracy, freedom of expression, and freedom of thought in order to build a conscious and free Palestinian civil society.” Previously Raheb served for two decades as the senior pastor of Bethlehem’s Christmas Lutheran Church. He has founded a number of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to benefit Arab communities. Raheb is a widely influential leader and one of the most audible voices among Palestinian Christians. In his tireless efforts and numerous books, he urges others to read the Bible and understand Christian faith in light of Palestinian geography, culture, and experience. Through his roles in higher education, he helps younger generations find opportunities to promote human flourishing, social justice, the arts, and creative resistance.

There are multiple opportunities to benefit from Raheb’s spiritual insights and leadership wisdom during his visit to Westminster. Beginning at 9:15 am, he will offer an educational forum titled, “The Church in Palestine: The History, Conditions, and Future of Palestinian Christians.” Join us in Westminster Hall or online via the church’s livestream and learn about what it means to be Christian today in the lands we read about in our scriptures. Raheb will preach in the worship service at 10:30 am. Later, at 2:30 pm, return to Westminster for his presentation and a panel discussion on the topic “The Next Generation of Creative Leaders in Palestine: The Power of Arts and Education”.

APNC Nominee for Adult Ministries

In 2005 a college student joined Habitat for Humanity’s bicycle challenge to bike from New Haven, Connecticut, to Seattle, Washington, staying in churches and working on build sites along the way. The group stayed at the YWCA across the street from Westminster. About 14 years later in 2019, that same college student returned to Westminster, but this time as an ordained teaching elder and a member of the Presbyterian Church (USA)’s APNC.

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In Case You Missed It: Campaign Learning & Listening Sessions
by Kelsey Crouch-Dodson, Director of Stewardship

Over the past month, a team of campaign committee members has facilitated nine Learning & Listening sessions with a wide range of congregational audiences. For those who were not able to attend, here is a recap of the information shared about the upcoming campaign.

Where We’ve Been
Initial conversations about Westminster’s future were expedited 10 years ago when the church was approached about purchasing the two other buildings in the city block. This opportunity sparked a bold vision: let’s strengthen the congregation for the next 100 years. And so, the Open Doors Open Futures campaign began.

Knowing that this was a large financial undertaking, the congregation – upon the recommendation of Session and the Presbytery – committed to raising 75% of the project’s costs in Open Doors Open Futures. The remaining 25% was financed with the plan to repay it during a second campaign.

Where We’re Going
With the physical space now completed, it is time to focus on building a sustainable financial future. Paying off the debt allows Westminster to grow and continue to thrive for the next 100 years.

The campaign goal of $30 million includes retiring all of the outstanding debt plus interest, renovating the chapel, and investing in mission projects. Guided by the precedent set by previous campaigns, a 10% biblical tithe of this campaign is designated for a mission component. A team of lay leaders is discerning how the $3 million will be distributed. Another $500,000 has been allocated for improvements to the chapel.

This campaign will pave the way for Westminster’s vibrant future and empower the congregation to continue being a telling presence in the city for generations to come.

Magnet Senior Center Receives Grant
by Angelique Kingsbury, Coordinator, Magnet Senior Center

Intergenerational trauma, racial injustice, and health inequities have had adverse effects on the mental health and well-being of underrepresented communities. The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic has increased feelings of stress, loneliness, and hopelessness.

In collaboration with Minneapolis Adult Community Education, Westminster’s Magnet Senior Center received a $23,000 Community Wellbeing grant from the Minneapolis Health Department (MHD). The one-year grant will fund Sharing Our Wisdom, a 6-week art program for adults 55+ that includes lunch and a snack each meeting to promote positive wellbeing and socialization. Participants will continue to meet monthly after the 6-week program with opportunities to stay engaged and connected.

Sharing Our Wisdom will be held at four Minneapolis locations: Westminster, Sabathani Community Center, North Market, and the Brian Coyle Center. Each program site will bring older adults together to facilitate storytelling, exchange knowledge, share wisdom, and create an individual art piece representing the life lessons they would like to share.

The program will host a Community Art Opening in December to display the collective artistic works of the participants. This will be an opportunity to publicly share their art, wisdom, and life experiences with families, friends, and the larger community. A brief biography of the artist will accompany each art piece.
Dear friends,

Westminster is in a good place these days – active in ministry, welcoming new members, engaged in the city, financially strong, and blessed by outstanding lay leaders and staff members. As we head into summer, our congregation is full of life, even if still living with precautions due to Covid risk.

Day Camp will happen in June. Middle and High School mission trips will take place this summer. Mid-week Bluegrass Evening Prayer and Cookout will happen every Wednesday in June at 5:45 pm (Peavey Plaza) and July (Westminster’s Lower Plaza).

We will assemble each Sunday for one worship service at 10:30 am, either in-person or online. Let us all plan to continue through the summer months hearing God’s word, giving thanks for the beauty of the earth, singing together, and offering prayers for the world. Our spiritual life is strengthened by regular participation in worship – and we can now do that from almost anywhere.

Because of the shift in the CDC Covid risk level for our area from Low to Medium, we will not yet go back to serving communion in trays as we had planned. For now, we will continue to use the little packets of wafer and juice. A minister friend, Beth Merrill Neel, wrote a humorous prayer about those “communion kits.” A little summer levity might help us at this point:

Prayer for whoever invented those little all-in-one communion cups that look like jelly you get at a diner:

Dear Lord, this is a marvelous little invention for Protestants who admit to a little lower standard for our bread and wine. And here it is — the body and blood of Christ neatly glued together in what might be mistaken for a half-and-half container.

For those whose fingers cannot peel off the miraculous sliver of plastic holding the cardboardesque wafer in place, we pray for agility.

For those who accidently drink the grape juice first, we pray for forgiveness.

For the inventor of such a thing, and the tireless workers at the Amazon warehouses whose labor ensures that pastors who left planning the re-order to a rather late hour are not caught short at Sunday’s communion, we pray for your blessing.

For congregations muddling through with substitutes that are nowhere near good but have to be good enough for now, we pray for your love.

And so: Amen.

See you in church — in person or online.

Grace and peace,

Tim

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Clergy & Staff

Staff Leadership
Rev. Dr. Timothy Hart-Andersen, Senior Pastor
Rev. Dr. Meghan K. Gage-Finn, Executive Associate Pastor
Janice Tellezan, Executive Assistant

Congregational Care
Rev. David Shinn, Associate Pastor
Rev. Judy Allen Kim, Parish Visitor
Deb Wagner, Administrative Assistant
Anjélique Kingsbury, Coordinator, Magnet Senior Center

Congregational Life
Deb Wagner, Administrative Assistant

Educational Ministries
Rev. Dr. Matt Skinner, Scholar for Adult Education
Barbara Mauck, Librarian
Shadoe Myers, Administrative Assistant

Faith in Action
Rev. Alanna Simone Tyler, Associate Pastor for Justice and Mission

Families, Youth, and Children
Rev. Alexandra Jacob, Associate Pastor
Sonja Dziewicki, Director of Children’s Ministries
Marie Kruiskop, Coordinator of Early Childhood & Family Ministries
Shadoe Myers, Administrative Assistant

Worship and the Arts
Dr. Amanda Weber, Director of Worship & the Arts
Dr. Rodney Allen Schwartz, Director, Gallery & Archive
Joseph Trucano, Organist & Ensemble Director
Barbara Prince, Program Facilitator, Director, Chapel Choir
Kenny Vigne, Associate Director of Music
Brad Ollmann, Director of Early Childhood Music

Communications
Suzanne McNary, Director of Communications
Mahin Hamilton, Communications Coordinator

Finance, Administration & Operations
Nicole Cueno, Sr. Director of Operations & Administration
Raysa Field, Controller to Finance, Administration & Operations
P. Echten, Director of Facilities
Kevin Kateley, Facilities Team Lead
Patrick Bayle, Building Hospitality and Safety Manager
Genevieve Gates, Event Coordinator
Jessica Willson, Lead Receptionist
Gabriela Ayana, Susan Clifford, Donna Draves
Part-time Receptionists
Keith Kopatz, A/V Coordinator
Chris Brown, John Seagard, Facilities Staff
Laura Lee Moffett, Kitchen Coordinator/Covid Support

Stewardship
Kelsey Crouch-Dodson, Director of Stewardship
Anna Gram, Stewardship Associate

Emeritus
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. David Liddle, Rev. Dr. Margaret McCray

Westminster Camp Ajawah
ajawah@wpc-mpls.org

Westminster Town Hall Forum
Tane Danger, Director
Nursery Families Meet and Greet!
June 4 | 2 pm | Recreation Room
Families with Nursery-aged children (birth through age 3), along with their siblings, are invited to join a Meet and Greet on Saturday, June 4, at 2 pm in the Recreation Room. Families will have a chance to meet some of the volunteers and staff who support our Early Childhood Ministries programs, and volunteers and staff will have a chance to meet other families with little ones as well. Come to our Meet and Greet and begin or continue building your Westminster community! Contact Marie Kruskop with questions and to RSVP by Thursday, June 2, at mkruskop@wpc-mpls.org.

Baccalaureate Sunday
June 5 | 10:30 am | Sanctuary
This Baccalaureate Sunday, we will honor the class of 2022 and surround them in prayer for the way ahead. High school, college, and graduate-level graduates will be recognized as part of the service, and information about their educational experiences will be on display in Westminster Commons. That morning we will also give thanks for family members, teachers, and mentors who have partnered with them in their development and growth. This group of graduates, no matter their age or educational program, has experienced significant adjustments to their learning and sense of connection to community these past two years because of Covid. We will rejoice in our worship ask God to continue to bless and keep them as they transition to the new places where God is leading them.

Day Camp Drop Off Caregiver Gathering
June 13 | 8:30-9:30 am | Great Hall
After checking in children for Day Camp, join Marie Kruskop, Coordinator of Early Childhood and Family Ministries, and other caregivers for an informal parent and caregiver check in. On Monday, June 13, from about 8:30-9:30am, parents and caregivers are invited to gather in the Great Hall for a time of connection and conversation as Day Camp kicks off. Drop in, stay as long as you’re able, leave when you must. We’d love to see you - even for a “llittle” while!

Summer with Westconnect Young Adult Ministries
WestConnect has continued to grow deeper and wider in 2022, adding in many new faces to regular fellowship and Bible study gatherings. While Meghan Gage-Finn is on sabbatical this summer (see page 6), the group will be self-led, with offerings such as discussion groups, museum visits, meals together, game nights, attending sporting events, and more! The first thing on the calendar is a BBQ gathering on Monday, May 30, for the Memorial Day holiday. If you would like more information on how to get connected to WestConnect activities, contact Janice Teliczan, jteliczan@wpc-mpls.org, to put you in touch with the group’s leaders.
Q&A with the Rev. Margaret Fox

We asked the Rev. Margaret Fox, nominee for the Associate Pastor for Adult Ministries at Westminster, a few questions to get to know her better. Read excerpts from her answers here and more online.

The APNC has described your faith story as unique. Would you be willing to share some of it?

I didn’t grow up in the church. My first exposure to religion came the summer before my senior year of college, when I fell in love with stained glass windows while on a research trip to France. 13th-century Gothic cathedrals tell the stories of scripture in comic-book form—each panel a scene from a biblical story. I learned to identify the characters through their iconography—Peter’s keys, Moses with horns, the virgin Mary dressed in blue. I was hooked. Back in the states, I started reading scripture, visiting churches, and taking as many religion classes as I could.

Westminster’s mission says we are a telling presence in Minneapolis. What excites you about joining in that mission?

I’m not going to lie—your stained glass windows are a big draw! But so are the clear glass walls of the new building—opening the life of the congregation out onto the city, and vice versa. There’s a strong connection, at Westminster, between the story of God and the life of the community, the call to faith and the call to justice, the work of the church and the welfare of the city. It’s thrilling to imagine being at that point of intersection.

What ideas do you have for Adult Ministries at Westminster?

Westminster strikes me as incredibly strong on education at points of intersection: faith and social justice; faith and public life; faith and anti-racism; Christian faith and other faiths; faith, music, and the arts. Working alongside my colleagues and the adult education committee, I would look to expand and deepen these interfaith, intercultural, and multi-disciplinary learning opportunities that make Westminster such a rich and vibrant place.

At the same time, all of this intersectionality creates a real opportunity. Because of its many programs and partnerships, people come to Westminster who might otherwise have no reason to set foot in a church. This is a place where my own experience as an adult convert may be of some use.

In addition to learning about “faith and…”, there’s also a real need for opportunities simply to learn about faith itself. My hope for my work at Westminster would be to develop opportunities for people to learn and grow in faith in contexts that are open and nonjudgmental.

“From the initial application review through Margaret’s visit here, it was clear she would be an exceptional fit. She came ready to speak both to and about us; clearly, she’d done her due diligence. She articulated an understanding of our need for an innovative and approachable pastor, and that she would be an effective collaborator in a complex system. She demonstrated depth in listening, speaking, writing, teaching, and conversation. She is smart, funny, curious, and connects with those she meets. Above all, though, is a refreshingly genuine humility.” Kirsten Kemp, Community of Leaders and APNC member
Sabbatical of Rest, Renewal, and Travel
by Meghan Gage-Finn, Executive Associate Pastor

This April marked 15 years for me serving on the pastoral staff at Westminster, and it has been a blessing to grow in my ministry alongside incredible colleagues and gifted leaders. I am grateful to be able to enjoy a sabbatical of rest, renewal, and travel this summer, as I step away in late May, returning the third part of August. I will reflect on all that has been in my time with this community, and prepare myself for the coming seasons in our life together as the church.

We have some family travel planned, to the North Shore and some places farther afield, but mostly I plan on reading, relaxing, and spending as much time outdoors, which will include cheering on my children at many, many soccer games. I give thanks for the time and resources from the congregation, and the invitation to find space away from the regular rhythms of ministry, and I give thanks for all who will offer support in the coming months to the ministries I lead.

I will hold this Westminster family in my prayers and look forward to reconnecting in August and September!

Bluegrass Evening Prayer
by Amanda Weber, Director of Worship and the Arts

Westminster’s Wednesday Evening Worship continues through June and July, in a bluegrass style! Through an exciting collaboration with Green Minneapolis, Bluegrass Evening Prayer in June will take place in Peavey Plaza and will feature a liturgy written by local composer J. David Moore, which Westminster commissioned last year. In July, we return to Westminster’s Lower Plaza to sing “Mountain Vespers,” a liturgy written by Kent Gustavson at Holden Village, a retreat center in Washington state.

Both June and July have the same timeline: we will gather at 5:45 pm for an “Oldie-but-Goodie” hymn sing-along; evening prayer is from 6-6:30 pm; and all are welcome to head to the Upper Plaza at Westminster for an outdoor cookout following worship. This service is fun, informal, and family-friendly! It is a great opportunity to bring a friend or meet a neighbor! For more information, or to help with greeting/ushering, contact me at aweber@wpc-mpls.org.

29:11 Weeklong Residency
by Amanda Weber, Director of Worship and the Arts

Westminster is delighted to welcome back the South African Gospel Ensemble 29:11 in a weeklong residency from June 20-26. 29:11 International Exchange is a music ministry whose mission is to facilitate hope and reconciliation through musical performance and collaboration, artist development, and cross-cultural relationships. Co-founders Brendon and Gaylene Adams are based in Minneapolis, but have roots in South Africa. Each year, they gather a new group of young musicians from South Africa to tour the United States, including performances at such venues as Orchestra Hall, Paisley Park, and the Dakota Jazz Club. Their residency at Westminster will include a concert in Westminster Hall on Friday, June 24, at 7:30 pm, and featured music in worship on Sunday, June 26, at 10:30 am. There will be additional opportunities throughout the week to interact with these wonderful young musicians. Learn more online or contact me with questions aweber@wpc-mpls.org.
Sister Corita Kent in the Gallery
by Rodney Allen Schwartz, Director, Westminster Gallery and Archive

The current exhibition in the Westminster Gallery highlights Westminster’s extensive collection of art by John August Swanson and also includes work by his mentor, Sister Corita Kent.

Kent was born in Iowa in 1918 and grew up in Los Angeles where she joined the Order of Immaculate Heart of Mary. After teaching school in British Colombia, she returned to Los Angeles to teach and create art. Her art gained fame in the 1960s and reflected her spirituality and commitment to social justice. As head of the art department at Immaculate Heart College, she taught students to find art in everyday life as well as everyday objects.

Kent became very active in the anti-war movement during the Vietnam war to the extent that she was forced to give up her vocation and she left the order. John August Swanson met her and joined her in weekly protests. His life was at loose ends, and she helped him find a purpose in protest and through several of her art classes. One of Kent’s silkscreen prints (shown here) proclaims with bold graphics the word of Ugo Betti: to believe in god is to know that all the rules are fair and that there will be wonderful surprises.

Kent’s influence can be seen in Swanson’s work as he also created social justice themed art throughout his career as well as a large body of Christian art. A Tribute to John August Swanson continues through June 26.

Looking ahead to summer: A call for art made by members and friends for the exhibition The Joy of Being, which opens July 3.

Reflection on the Past Year
by Katherine Parent, Artist-in-Residence

It has been a unique blessing to be an Artist-in-Residence at Westminster in 2021-22. Moving with the congregation as it began to meet again in person, I was excited by how enthusiastically members participated in our first visual art project together. In our collaborative, mosaic-like triptych, each participant used oil pastel and ink to fill a square with one vision of beauty and belonging. Many told me about their own thriving art practices, while others shared that they almost never make art and found the process surprisingly enjoyable. When I facilitate art with church communities, I often think of 1 Corinthians 15:41, which celebrates how many different kinds of beauty there are in the sky alone, among the sun, moon, and stars. Each person’s story and process of creation express a unique and vital part of what gives a community life.

In my final mini-show of Pandemic Sketchbook paintings, I explored the sacredness, humor, and beauty of some of the hard times of the past year. Each piece is grounded in a particular shade of blue that for me represents both the sacred and a longing for liberation. I believe that God is with us in our experiences of pain, illness, horror, and struggle. Processing these experiences through art is a healing spiritual discipline, and viewing someone else’s art about pain can be an empathetic and connecting experience.

I’m grateful for the opportunity to make art and learn with you this year, and I know Westminster members will continue to connect and find solace and belonging through art.

Read Kat’s complete reflection online, including her work with children and youth as well as adding an art exegesis to worship in Lent.

to believe in god, by Sister Corita Kent, silkscreen, 1960
Faith in the Flesh: A New Summer Adult-Education Opportunity
by Matt Skinner, Scholar for Adult Education

The author of the biblical book of Colossians urges readers to “seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God” (Colossians 3:1). That might sound like living in an otherworldly way, with one’s head stuck in the clouds, but really it’s encouragement to think about how we encounter the Divine in our ways of living, spiritual practices, actions, and thoughts. Some of this we do together when gathered for worship, but much of it is intensely personal. What does it look like to live out our Christian faith? How do we think about growing in faith? How do we discover these things by learning from one another?

With the arrival of summer, adult-education programming will shift to a different approach during July and August. In a series of videorecorded conversations with folks from Westminster and opportunities for reflection either on your own or in smaller groups, I will lead us in exploring what it means to live out one’s faith not just in thought but also in practice. I encourage you to keep pace with these recorded conversations as they appear weekly. You will also be able to find links for them online in the Adult Education section of the church’s website.

Task Force Named for Westminster Counseling Center
by David Tsai Shinn, Associate Pastor for Congregational Care

The book of Ecclesiastes reminds us that “For everything there is a season and a time for every matter under heaven.”

Our beloved Westminster Counseling Center (WCC) is currently undergoing a new season in its organizational life and transformation. Since the beginning of this year, the counseling center is taking a pause to reimagine its future and service to our greater Twin Cities communities. A task force has been formed to diligently discern what steps we may take as we go forward to revitalize the center. This task force’s main responsibility is to create a viable and self-sustaining business plan and operational strategy.

The chair of this intrepid team is Paul Arbisi, and the task force members are: Ann Rainhart, Nancy Ulvestad, Paula and Jan Buckner, Dean Bachmeier, Diane Waavik (former board member and member of Bethlehem Lutheran Church), Sherri Dunham (former counselor at WCC and current counselor at Mount Olivet Lutheran Church), and myself as staff support. We covet your prayers as we press forward to fulfill our mandate and, more importantly, to prepare WCC to begin its new season of life in the coming year. As it has done since its inception, WCC will continue to be an important partner and component of Westminster’s mission and outreach to the broader community. For questions and more information, please reach out to Paul Arbisi at arbis001@umn.edu or me at dshinn@wpc-mpls.org.

Health & Healing Ministry Updates
by Michelle Lavelle-Henry, Health and Healing Ministry Team

Westminster’s Health and Healing Ministry will take a summer hiatus from offering blood pressure screenings on the third Sunday of each month. We will resume on Sunday, September 18. Until then, there are a few things you can do to stay healthy this summer.

- **Continue to monitor your blood pressure.** It is estimated that most people with high blood pressure, greater than 130/90, do not know it. Reducing your risk for heart attack and stroke is worth taking the time to check.

- **Live a healthy lifestyle** with regular exercise, a diet low in saturated fat, refined sugars, and salt. This lifestyle will go a long way in reducing your weight and your blood pressure.

- **Sun and bike safety are important.** Don’t forget to apply sunscreen and reapply often, stay hydrated, and shield yourself with a wide brim hat. When out on your bike, don’t forget your bike helmet.

- **Join us in the fall.** When we resume blood pressure screening, stop by on the third Sunday. In addition to checking your blood pressure, we can make sure your machine is accurate, offer health promotion materials, and answer questions about your health.
Men’s Ministry Rethinking the Practice of Community
by David Tsai Shinn, Associate Pastor for Congregational Care

During the spring men’s retreat, the Rev. Phil Romine urged participants to rethink our concept and practice of community. Instead of just adhering to traditional models, he implored us to consider and construct a wider, deeper, and more inclusive community here at Westminster—especially in light of the ongoing pandemic and the racial reckoning taking place in our country. At that moment, he was speaking specifically to the men’s ministry, even though the application could be wider.

With this in mind, the men’s ministry planning team invites all the men of the church to worship with the community on June 29. Join the bluegrass Wednesday Evening Worship on Peavey Plaza (see more on page 6). Afterwards, stay for the community meal on the Upper Plaza at Westminster and, if you like, join us for a post-dinner fellowship at Brit’s Pub.

The men’s ministry planning team is also working to plan our fall retreat and to build more small groups and breakfast groups to create wider community engagement opportunities. Join us for these exciting community-building experiences. For more information, contact me at dshinn@wpc-mpls.org.

Global Partners in Palestine
by Diana Warner, Palestine Partnership Team

Westminster’s Bethlehem/Palestine partnership gives us a connection to the “living stones” of the land where Christianity was born. Our partners at Evangelical Lutheran Christmas Church and Dar al-Kalima University are daily challenged by life behind the graffiti-embellished separation barrier erected by Israel. News coverage has highlighted increased tensions during this spring’s concurrence of Easter, Passover, and Ramadan, as Israel restricted worship by Christians and Muslims in the holy city of Jerusalem. Like us, our friends in Bethlehem struggle to love all their neighbors. They are people of amazing creativity, warmth, and resilience; we can learn from them. They define hope as a verb: positive action we take today, not giving up or giving in.

Westminster shares with our partners the goal of a just, loving, peaceful world, but we work from different directions toward that common end. Westminster enjoys a dominant culture that has inherited power and position from generations under a favorable system. In contrast, Palestinians are the “people of the land,” subjects under successive empires for millennia. How can we help each other promote freedom and justice for all in our respective societies?

To join our Partnership Team, contact me at act@wpc-mpls.org.

Celebrate Twin Cities LGBTQ Pride Festival
by Phil Asgian, LGBTQ Discussion Group

The Twin Cities Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer (LGBTQ) Pride Festival will take place Saturday and Sunday, June 25 and 26, in Loring Park in downtown Minneapolis. This year the festival is back with a parade and all. Westminster will join other Churches of the Downtown Area in sponsoring a booth at the festival; we have commitments from five other congregations besides Westminster this year. This is a great opportunity to work collaboratively with members of other faith traditions supporting this community effort.

Schedules for volunteer time will be available in early June. Please consider joining us to help staff the booth by signing up for a two-hour block of time on Saturday, June 25, or Sunday, June 26. For more information or to sign up to volunteer, email act@wpc-mpls.org.

You can also show support for the LGBTQ community and the festival by purchasing a lawn sign from the Twin Cities Pride Committee online.
Day Camp 2022: Llove Your Neighbor
by Sonja Dziekciowski, Director of Children’s Ministries

During the week of June 13, the halls of Westminster will be alive with the sound of laughter, play, music, and learning. We are so excited to have Day Camp back at WPC after two summers away. We’ll begin each day at Westminster with a morning of music, hearing from WPC community partners, games in our “cabin groups,” and lunch. In the afternoons we’ll load up the bus and head to different outdoor locations in the Twin Cities.

You’ll notice the creative spelling of “llove” in our theme title, which pays homage to our trip to a llama farm, where we’ll experience the beauty and lovableness of God’s creation!

Meisel Scholars
by Meghan Gage-Finn, Executive Associate Pastor

Since its inception over 30 years ago, in honor of Donald and Ellie Meisel, the Meisel Scholar Program has supported experiential learning, travel, and research for over 80 young people, while furthering the mission of the church. This summer, Westminster adds two more Scholars to the program.

Olivia Bruhn is a student at the University of Madison, Wisconsin, majoring in dance, with a minor in business. This summer she will travel to Westminster’s partners in Bethlehem, Palestine at Dar al-Kalima University College of Arts and Culture. One of the main programs of the college is dance and understanding the program’s vision “for the people of Palestine to have life in abundance,” Olivia will learn about and explore this vision through dance.

Elizabeth (Libby) Hall, a student at the College of Wooster, will spend the summer in Washington, DC, taking classes and serving as a Development Intern at a policy network to learn about public policy and economics. Libby would like to use this opportunity to strengthen her faith in following the gospel imperative “to love thy neighbor as thyself.” In her own words, Libby says, “I want to see how faith influences the decisions public officials make and how these decisions impact citizens’ lives.”

Libby and Olivia each will be guided by an adult mentor in the congregation, who will help them reflect on their learning and experiences. Later in the year, the Scholars will have the chance to share with the community about their time with the Meisel Program. We will commission them in worship on Sunday, June 12!

Youth Mission Trips this Summer
by Alexandra Jacob, Associate Pastor for Families, Youth, and Children

Things might quiet down at church during the summertime, but not in the youth ministry area! We’re gearing up for two mission trips this summer and are so excited to hit the road after two Covid years without our usual mission trip opportunities. Our junior highs will spend a week in northwest Minnesota, engaging in a variety of service learning experiences: sorting food in food shelves, working with a local YWCA, engaging with Red River cleanup efforts, and more. Our seniors highs will load the vans and head to Breathitt County, Kentucky, where we’ll partner with Appalachia Service Project for a week of home repair work in rural Appalachia. Please pray for us during these weeks—that we would deeply engage the work of seeking justice, and that our relationships would be strengthened throughout the journeys.

If you feel led to contribute to our mission trip needs, take a look at our Target Wish List, where you can purchase supplies for us to take along with us! target.com/gift-registry/gift/wpcmissiontrips.