



THE REPORTER

WESTMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

533 South Walnut Street
Springfield, Illinois 62704

217-522-4415
www.wpcspi.org

April 2024

WORSHIP & EDUCATION CALENDAR

SUNDAY SCHEDULE:

10:00 a.m. In-person and Livestream Worship Service
www.wpcspi.org

FAITH FORMATION:

9:45 a.m. Nursery
Children Birth – Age 3
10:15 a.m. Sunday School
following Children's Sermon
Children Pre-K - Grade 5 and
Grade 6 -7 Confirmation
11:15 a.m. Grade 8 Confirmation
and Adult Ed Forum
5:00 p.m. Sr. High Youth Group

April 7

SECOND SUNDAY OF EASTER

Psalm 133; John 20:19-31

The Rev. Dr. Blythe D. Kieffer
The Art of Transition

April 14

SACRAMENT OF COMMUNION THIRD SUNDAY OF EASTER

Isaiah 6:1-9a; Luke 24:36b-48

The Rev. Christian K. Choi
Beyond Doubt

April 21

Confirmation Sunday FOURTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

Psalm 23; John 10:11-18

The Rev. Dr. Blythe D. Kieffer
Goodness and Mercy

April 28

Youth Sunday

FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

Acts 8:23-40; John 15:1-8

Seniors Kristianna Eastvold,
Will Hovey, Sam Simonson
Vine & Branches

Sermon manuscripts are located in the West Narthex and online at www.wpcspi.org.

TRIVIA NIGHT SUNDAY, APRIL 14

DOORS OPEN AT 5:00 P.M.

Each year, members support our youth mission trip at the Trivia Night Mission Trip Fundraiser. Sign-up yourself or your team online. Childcare is available in the nursery.



DOORS OPEN AT 5:00 P.M. Dinner is available for \$5.00 and prepared by Pat Hymans and her kitchen team. Participants are also welcome to bring snacks and non-alcoholic drinks.

QUESTIONS BEGIN AT 5:30 P.M. Once again, we welcome Aaron Berkowitz and Mark Luttrell who will create and present the questions.

TICKETS ARE \$20.00 and can be purchased on our website or from a youth on Sunday mornings.

SPONSORSHIP IS \$100 - You or your business can sponsor a round and will be featured on the screen between rounds. Contact Jennie Alt (jalt@wpcspi.org).

Gather your friends and join us for a fun, competitive evening supporting our mission-minded youth.

CONFIRMATION SUNDAY, APRIL 21

DURING 10:00 A.M. WORSHIP

The Class of 2024 will be recognized and commissioned on Sunday, April 21, during the 10:00 a.m. worship service. This is a time of celebration and a milestone on the faith journeys of our youth:

William Charles Affrunti
Juliet Kathryn Boutelle
Juliana Charis Pinckney Eastvold



These young people studied the New Testament taught by Cara Barnett, Meridith Bryans, Joe Fierstos, and Mary Ray last year and explored the beliefs, history, and practices of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) this year with Aaron Berkowitz, Peter and Blythe Kieffer, and Mary Ray. They have written personal statements of faith and memorized the Lord's Prayer and the Apostle's Creed. They visited other worshipping communities and have thought critically about what it means to be a follower of Christ today.

Each youth will receive a NRSV Student Bible which is a gift from Westminster. The Congregational Fellowship Committee of the Board of Deacons will host a reception honoring the Confirmands following worship. *Thank you to those who served as mentors to our confirmands: Rev. Gerald Boutelle, Valerie and Dave Leonatti.*

YOUTH SUNDAY, APRIL 28

SUPPORT OUR YOUTH AS THEY LEAD THE 10:00 A.M. WORSHIP



On Sunday, April 28 our youth will lead worship at the 10:00 a.m. service. This year's theme is **Vine and Branches** based on John 15:5. Seniors Kristianna Eastvold, Will Hovey, and Sam Simonson will present reflections on the text. Junior and Senior High youth will serve as liturgists and present special music.

FROM THE PASTOR by Rev. Dr. Blythe D. Kieffer

In sovereign love, God created the world good and makes everyone equally in God's image, male and female, of every race and people, to live as one community. All that we are, including our bodies, including our sexuality, is God's gift to us.

Peter and I were privileged to teach the Adult Ed Forum "God's Gifts of Sexuality and Gender" during Lent. It was a timely topic amid a liturgical season that affirms our humanity as beloved children of God. The slide show for both classes can be found on www.wpcspi.org under the Adult Education tab.

We also taught a human sexuality seminar to our senior high youth group based on the PC(USA) curriculum God's Gift of Sexuality which is currently out of print. Although updates were necessary for the youth presentation, much of the material in the children's curriculum is still helpful and relevant. When teaching children about sexuality, the PC(USA) affirms:

1. Parents are the primary educators.
2. Children need to have accurate and clear information at the appropriate age level.
3. Open communication makes healthier children.
4. Girls and boys need information about both males and females.
5. Sexuality education needs to center on the goodness of the gift of sexuality.
6. Sexuality education needs to include information about the misuse of sexuality.

Honoring the role of parents in teaching their children about the goodness of sexuality, Westminster is providing resources. Contact Meleah or Aaron Berkowitz, Co-Directors for Children's Ministry directly (berkowitz@wpcspi.org) to check out one or more of the following age-appropriate books to read with your children.

Birth through Age 6: In God's Image by Janet Neff Brewer

Grades 2-3: Wonderfully Made: God's Plan for Growing Up by Rev. Woody Berry and Dr. Sandra Elizabeth Fields Seymour

Grades 4-5: Amazing Stuff: God's Plan for Growing Up by Dr. Sandra Elizabeth Fields Seymour/ Rev. Woody Berry

Additionally, our Adult Library and Library Cart each have a copy of the following books which provide guidance and expand our understanding of human sexuality:

Sex + Faith: Talking with Your Child from Birth to Adolescence by Kate Ott, helps parents incorporate their faith values with sexual information so they can answer questions, discuss sexuality at each stage of childhood, and show support of sexual differences.

Jesus, the Bible, and Homosexuality, Revised and Expanded Edition: Explode the Myths, Heal the Church by Jack Rogers. In this revised and expanded best seller, evangelical theologian and former Moderator of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Jack Rogers makes a biblical case for equal rights for people who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender (LGBT).

UPDATE FROM THE APNC COMMITTEE

BY CHAIR KRISTA STELLER

Since our update in November of 2023, the APNC has reviewed 19 candidates using the Church Leadership Connection database set up by the PC(USA), and initiated contact with 10 candidates. Two of the ten interviewed with the committee by Zoom and neither candidate met our expectations. We continue to review candidates through the Church Leadership Connection and have a lead on a potential candidate in a nearby Presbytery.

The prayers of the congregation are appreciated as we continue in the diligent search to nominate a candidate to become our next Associate Pastor for Family Ministry.

MUSIC NOTES by Dale T. Rogers

THE WESTMINSTER CHOIR rehearses on Thursday evenings at 7:00 p.m. in the Music Room with regular work on anthems and special music for Sundays through Pentecost and beyond. Special attention is now given to a cantata of Felix Mendelssohn for Soprano, Chorus, and Organ. Eleanor VanDeventer is the soloist for *Hear My Prayer*, special music on Pentecost.

THE WESTMINSTER CHILDREN'S CHOIR rehearses at 5:00 p.m. on Wednesdays April 17, 24, and May 1. They are working on music for Mother's Day, May 12.

CHURCH MICE, a musical experience for infants through age four, meets each Saturday at 11:00 a.m. in the Second Floor Classroom. We will meet each Saturday through April.



ST. ANDREW'S SISTERS meets Tuesday evenings at 7:00 p.m. at the home of Julie Blythe.

LANDSCAPE GUILD SPRING CLEANUP

Spring cleanup has begun as teams work within their designated areas. Thank you to team leaders: Sue Cull (East Entry), Peter Kieffer (North of Sanctuary), Bill Deemer (West Terrace), Dale Rogers (South Entry), and Scott Day (Memorial Garden). Scott Day joins Peter Kieffer as co-chair of the guild with Andy Sherrick stepping down. The committee is staffed by Dale Rogers. Thank you to those who helped with the spring cleanup and to the custodial staff who trimmed the grass in the parking lot islands this year.

ADULT EDUCATION FORUM:

JOURNEY THROUGH THE PSALMS SUNDAYS, APRIL 7 AND 14

This adult education forum meets at 11:15 a.m. in the Second Floor Classroom. Join Lyle VanDeventer in an in-depth look at the book of Psalms—the prayer-book of the synagogue and the church. We are invited to approach God with the same honesty and intensity as the ancient Psalmists. The video presenter is Dr. Denise Dombkowski Hopkins, Professor of Hebrew Bible at Wesley Theological Seminary.

PAUL TILlich: THE COURAGE TO BE SUNDAYS, APRIL 21 AND 28

This adult education forum meets at 11:15 a.m. in Parish Hall. Join Blythe and Peter Kieffer in a review of Paul Tillich, one of the most influential theologians in the 20th century and his writings in preparation for the New Harmony Retreat May 2-4, 2024. Paul Tillich moved to the USA during the rise of Nazism in Germany and is buried at the New Harmony Retreat Center.



DR. KIEFFER'S DISCIPLE BIBLE STUDY

Dr. Kieffer's Bible Study meets Thursdays, 5:30 – 6:45 p.m. During April, we will view the DVD video "The Holy Land Revealed" with Professor Jodi Magness who is an archeologist with extensive field experience in Israel and teaches at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

APOSTLES' READ LIBRARY BOOK GROUP

The Apostles' Read Library Book Group meets Tuesday, April 23 from 6:00 – 7:00 p.m. in the Ziegler Library to discuss Actual Malice: Civil Rights and Freedom of the Press in New York Times v. Sullivan by Samantha Barbas. New members are always welcome! Led by Dr. Aaron Berkowitz.

YOUTH MINISTRY by Mary Ray

JR. HIGH CONFIRMATION APRIL SCHEDULE

GRADES 6-7 CONFIRMATION PREP meets during worship (10:15 – 11:00 a.m.) for their final class on Sunday, April 7 (Old Testament Review). Thank you to ministry partners Cara Barnett, Meridith Bryans, Joe Fierstos who faithfully taught our sixth and seventh graders this year with Mary Ray. Next year, confirmation prep will teach the New Testament.

GRADE 8 CONFIRMATION meets following worship (11:15 a.m. – 12 noon) on Sunday, April 7 to prepare for their meeting with Session on Wednesday, April 17 at 6:15 p.m.

DINNER CELEBRATING OUR CONFIRMANDS will be held on Wednesday, April 17 at 7:15 p.m. in the library, following the 6:15 p.m. presentation to Session. Confirmands, their families, and mentors are invited to enjoy a wonderful meal provided by the Membership Committee. Mentors are: Will Affrunti/Dave Leonatti, Juliet Boutelle/Rev. Jerry Boutelle, and Juliana Eastvold/Val Leonatti. **CONFIRMATION SUNDAY IS APRIL 21.** See details on page 1 of this Reporter.

SR. HIGH YOUTH GROUP APRIL SCHEDULE

SUNDAY, APRIL 7 - Senior High will meet from 5:00 – 6:30 p.m. for games, dinner, and Bible Study led by Mary Ray. Responsibilities for **TRIVIA NIGHT ON APRIL 14** will also be reviewed. See details on page 1 of this Reporter.



SUNDAY, APRIL 21 - Senior High will meet from 5:00 – 6:30 p.m. for games, dinner, and to prepare for **YOUTH SUNDAY ON APRIL 28.** See details on page 1 of this Reporter.

Youth group meals will be prepared by Mary Ray (April 7) and Angela and Kevin Simonson (April 21). Thank you to ministry partners Cathy Brower, Susan Day, and Kyle Duffy who serve with Mary Ray.

2024 YOUTH MISSION TEAM COMING TOGETHER

The Youth Mission Team met Sunday, March 17 to begin preparations for our journey to New Orleans the week of June 15-22. To date, we have twelve youth and ten adult leaders who will serve on the team led by Mary Ray. Along with Rebuilding Hope in New Orleans (RHINO) through the St. Charles Avenue Presbyterian Church, the team will visit the World War II Museum in NOLA and the Mississippi Civil Rights Museum in Jackson, MS. They will stay at the Briarwood Presbyterian Church in Jackson, MS on their way to and home from NOLA. Sara and David Eldridge were married in this sanctuary.



CHILDREN'S MINISTRY by Meleah & Aaron Berkowitz

SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSONS FOR APRIL

April 7 – All in Common	Acts 4:32-35
April 14 – What a Surprise	Luke 24:36b-48
April 21 – Caring Shepherd	John 10:11-18
April 28 – Philip the Evangelist	Acts 8:26-40



FAMILY MATTERS ZOO TRIP

SATURDAY, APRIL 27, 3:00 – 5:00 P.M.

In April, we will be organizing a trip to the Henson Robinson Zoo on Saturday, April 27 for families with young children (birth to Grade 5). We will meet in the zoo lobby at 3:00 P.M. and then make our way through the exhibits. If they want, families can bring a picnic dinner to enjoy in the park across the street afterwards. Families will have to purchase their own tickets at the zoo. Please RSVP to Meleah and Aaron at berkowitz@wpcspi.org.

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL CAMP FIRELIGHT JUNE 3-7, 2024

Monday – Friday, June 3-7 from 9:15 a.m. to noon, children ages 4 to grade 5 will gather to experience God's love surrounded by water, trees, and rolling hills! Campers learn to face their fears while trusting in God. Each day, we will explore timeless Bible stories that show how Old and New Testament Campers trusted God in the face of their own fears and went on to do great things in God's name. We will also learn ways we can connect with and put our trust in God whenever we are afraid, challenged, or called to do God's work in the world. Registration is open at <https://wpcspi.mycokesburyvbs.com/>



THE CHILDREN OF ABRAHAM

DATE: Wednesday, May 8, 2024

TIME: 4:30-6:00 p.m.

PLACE: Springfield Art Association

WHO: Children & Youth Grades K-12

Join us for our last gathering in the 2023-2024 program year as we participate in a service project honoring our theme "Serving our Community."

WESTMINSTER COOPERATIVE PRE-SCHOOL

March was a wonderful month at the preschool! We studied simple machines and had so much fun exploring inclined planes, pulleys, wheel & axles, and levers. Pulleys were our favorite by far! Coleman and Mary Moore were busy creating again for our dramatic play center, and we now have the most fabulous space station! We enjoyed so many trips into outer space! We went to see Finding Nemo, Jr. at the Hoogland and watched a WCP alumnus play the role of Nemo. We received a grant from the American Business Club of Springfield which allowed us to purchase many new riding toys for the playground. The students love them! We finished this busy month with a special evening called "Dessert with Someone Special." The students made dessert during class time and then enjoyed one-on-one time with their adult in our classroom.

We welcomed prospective families to tour our preschool at an open house this month and were thrilled to have so much interest in our preschool. We still have a couple of spots available in our three-day class, and we have several openings in our two-day class for the 2024-25 school year.

Emily Rowley, Director

**BRIDGES CHILDREN VIEW HOLY WEEK DISPLAY, PARTAKE IN COMMUNION,
AND MAKE PBJ SANDWICHES FOR HELPING HANDS WITH THEIR ADVOCATES**



**SENIOR HIGH YOUTH GROUP PARTICIPATE IN GOD'S GIFT OF SEXUALITY SEMINAR
FOLLOWED BY A DELICIOUS DINNER PREPARED BY CHRISTIE AND ROBYN HOVEY**



Thank you to Bridges Advocates Pat McNutt, Jeanne Pittman, Marilyn Rigney, Karen Sherrick, Krista and Brad Steller, Pete VanGieson, some of whom joined in communion on March 20 led by Dr. Kieffer.
Thank you to Youth Group Mentors Cathy Brower, Susan Day, Kyle Duffy, and Mary Ray who joined the youth in the sexuality seminar on March 10 led by Blythe and Peter Kieffer.

PALM SUNDAY AND EASTER CELEBRATIONS



On Palm Sunday, Westminster Children and Youth gathered in Parish Hall with their OGHs Fish Boxes to greet Christ in the processional, and the Children's Choir sang Hosannas. The Worship, Music and Arts Committee created the traditional Lily cross in preparation for Easter. During the Easter children's sermon, the children retold the events of Holy Week with the Resurrection eggs. Sunday's festivities concluded with an Easter Egg Hunt on Westminster's back lawn.

NEW MEMBERS WELCOMED - Sunday, March 17



Benjamin D. Arnold by Certificate of Transfer from First Presbyterian Church of Farmington, IL. Ben grew up at Second Presbyterian Church in Bloomington and has lived overseas with school, military, and work for half of his adult life. He attended St. Andrew's University in Scotland from 1999 – 2001 before serving on active duty in the US Marine Corp from 2001-2006. Ben returned to school and graduated from the University of Illinois College of Law. He worked in Germany from 2011 – 2012 and then taught in Indonesia for 8 years where he met his wife, Michella. Ben is fluent in Bahasa Indonesia. Currently, Ben is a staff attorney for the State of Illinois. His sponsor is Lyle VanDeventer.

Kathleen M. Bacon by Certificate of Transfer from First Presbyterian Church in Springfield, IL. Kathy is a registered nurse and the owner of Bacon's Termite and Pest Control. Her partner is Steve Wright. She has two daughters Alicia Hawley and Sarah Reich and three grandchildren, Michaelah Hawley and Paislee and Chandler Reich. Paislee and Chandler have found a home at Westminster. Kathy's sponsors are Vonnie Hinesley and Roy Wehrle.



Cathy Greek Yokley by Certificate of Transfer from Grace Lutheran Church in Springfield, IL. Cathy is a dental hygienist. She spent her early years at Westminster. She has two daughters: Dr. Jessica Brand and Rebekah Huston and two grandsons, Elliot and Elijah Huston. Cathy enjoys golf, gardening, reading, and cooking. Her sponsor is Becky Huston.

Peter Q. Hancock by Reaffirmation of Faith. Peter moved from Topeka, KS to Springfield, IL in January 2016 to join the Capitol News Illinois team as a reporter. Before that, Hancock covered Kansas state government for much of the past two decades. For the previous 4 years, Hancock had been the statehouse reporter for the Lawrence Journal-World. Although Peter has close family ties in Springfield, he grew up in the Kansas City area and attended the University of Kansas majoring in political science and education. He has a son in Kansas City. Peter's sponsor is Brinton Wilkey.



Dorothy Hutchinson-Gross by Certificate of Transfer from First Presbyterian Church in Springfield, IL. Dorothy and her husband Jason have two children and two grandchildren. Grandson Logan has found a home at Westminster. Dorothy worked in marketing and non-profit management for 20 years prior to working for the State of Illinois. Her hobbies are theater, dance, knitting, and reading. Her sponsor is Randy Wiseman.



NEW MEMBERS WELCOMED - Sunday, March 17



Patricia L. McClelland by Reaffirmation of Faith. Trisha grew up in the United Church of Christ in Sheffield, IL. She has one daughter, Heather, two step children (Karris and Dewey), and four grandchildren. Trisha worked as an investigator of human rights for 25 years. Before that she was an auditor and had several positions with the State of Illinois. Her hobby is nurturing a hosta bed which she shares with neighbor Pat McNutt who is her sponsor.

Doris A. Melvin by Reaffirmation of Faith. Doris grew up at the Calvary Baptist Church in Taylorville, IL in a family with ten brothers and one sister. Her mother is 100 years old and now resides in a nursing home. Doris has three grown sons and 12 grandchildren. Doris is retired from PNC Bank and recently became the fiancée of Mal Hildebrand who is her sponsor.



Nancy J. Reed by Reaffirmation of Faith. Nancy grew up at Third Presbyterian Church in Springfield, IL. She has four grown children, three grandchildren, and two great-grandchildren. All three of her grandchildren either work at or attend Southern Illinois University. Nancy retired from the State of Illinois. She was an administrative assistant. Nancy enjoys baking and cooking. Her sponsor is Pat McNutt.



WELCOME TO JAVIER, EVA, JAVI, AND JONATHON!



WE ARE DELIGHTED TO INTRODUCE OUR REFUGEE FAMILY who arrived from Nicaragua by way of Costa Rica on Tuesday, March 26. They are Javier and Eva Velasquez Alonso, and their 10-year-old daughter Javiera (Javi) and 4-year-old son Jonathon. Rachael Hickman, Jess Weitzel, Krista Steller, Jeanne VanGieson, translator Beth Allen, and Rev. Choi welcomed the family at the St. Louis Lambert Airport.



522 S. GLENWOOD is their new home. Thank you to the Housing and Basic Necessities Sub Committee co-chairs Krista Steller and Jeanne VanGieson, who coordinated the task of preparing the home for the family. We are grateful to those who showered our new friends with housewarming items, financial gifts, and/or worked to prepare the house: Norma Adams-Johnson, Beth Allen, Cathy & Bill Allen, Brownie Anderson, Teena Archer, Kathy Bacon, Cara & Chris Barnett, Julie Barton, Meleah & Aaron Berkowitz, Lindsay & Greg Boutelle, Cathy Brower, Catherine Brown, Nancy & Rich Canady, Carol Cross, Sue



Cull, Susan and Scott Day, Bill Deemer, Linda & Kevin Dorsey, Melanie & Bud Green, Anne Haaker, Racheal Hickman, Vonnie Hinesley and Roy Wehrle, Georgina Hudspeth, Pat and Alan Hymans, Elaine Hoff, Dorothy Hutchinson-Gross, Mary Jo & Dave Jenkins, Blythe and Peter Kieffer, Kathy Kenyon, Mary & Charlie King, Knit 2 Purl 4, Judy Knox, Bob Leffler, Vena Long, Katy & Toshi Maeda, Mary Maddox, Camille & Tom Massey, Julie & Jim McDonough, Lynn McMenamin, Mary Caroline Mitchell, Maribeth Norton, Mary & Morley Peura, Jeanne Pittman, Judy & Fred Prillaman, Marilyn and Jim Rigney, Julie and Randy Robbs, Diane Rutledge, Sue Sawers, Sue & Steve Scaife, Linda & Bill Schlosser, Susan & Mike Shaw, Susan Shea, Karen & Andy Sherrick, Krista & Brad Steller, Julie & Mike Sundquist, Carolyn and Brad Swanson, Eleanor & Lyle VanDeventer, Jeanne & Pete VanGieson, Cheryl White, Kate Wilson, Jess Weitzel, Erin Winn, Randy & Bernie Wiseman, Sharon Zook.

Thank you also to those who donated furnishings: Betty Dawkins Estate, Tara Fritsch, Melanie and Gregg Humphrey, Judy and Todd Knox, Meg and Jim Kontio, Mike Nenaber, Janet Powell, Karen and Andy Sherrick, Megan and Greg Swanson, Jeanne and Pete VanGieson, and Carol Volle. Additionally, we collaborated with Wooden It Be Lovely who created the dining room set and our Wooden It Be Helpful Team, led by Coleman Moore, who are building a dining room serving table. Thank you to the Betty Smith Mission Endowment which provided funds for additional furnishings as well as paying the \$1,200 monthly rent and \$300 monthly utilities.



FAMILY'S NEW HOME AT 522 S. GLENWOOD



STEADFAST NEIGHBOR RENOVATION OF 518 S. GLENWOOD

Tim Kluge, who chairs the Strategic Planning Committee, provided an update of the work completed at 518 S. Glenwood to the Property Committee in March. Income from the sale will repay the Support and Endowment Loan. Session designated \$30,000 from the 2024 Steadfast Neighbor Mission budget to invest in renovating the home.

During February and March, all the wallpaper and carpeting have been removed, third floor has been primed with two coats of paint, four bedrooms on second floor have been primed with one coat of paint, kitchen, second and first floor bathroom cabinets and flooring have been removed (with a consultation from Dave Leonatti on mold and asbestos), piping in basement left over from hot water heat has been removed, and a kitchen layout with cabinets/pantry was completed by Barry Denham.

Thank you for the diligent work of Lindsey, Juliet, and Brooke Boutelle, Rich Canady, Ed Caupert, Ellen Carpenter, Jim Dolan, Priscilla Kluge, Tom Owen, Lynn McMenamain, Jim McDonough, Julie Robbs, Mike Sunquist and to Tim Kluge and Pete VanGieson who are overseeing the project with Gary Warnick, Building and Property Manager.



PARISH LIFE NEWS by Rev. Christian K. Choi

MISSION AND COMMUNITY SERVICE

FIFTH ANNUAL STEADFAST NEIGHBOR OUTREACH



In 2020, the Strategic Planning Committee and the congregation made a commitment to invest \$450,000 in Westminster's neighborhood over the course of the decade. The Steadfast Neighbor Mission Task Force is actively pursuing this mission, energetically striving to reach the halfway point. With extended boundaries to help the homes in our neighborhood, we will have additional families which we can build a new relationship and an opportunity to be of service.

SERVICE WEEK: JUNE 17-21

Mark your calendars for this year's neighborhood outreach, taking place from **June 17 - 21**. We invite you to join us for one or more days during the third week of June as we spread goodwill throughout the neighborhood. Additionally, on Juneteenth, which falls in the middle of the week, we have the opportunity to come together to celebrate our abolitionist foundation and give back to the community.



MATCHING GRANTS

Local homeowners have been invited to apply for matching grants up to \$1,500 toward simple property improvements, especially addressing certain needs such as safety, security, and energy efficiency upgrades.

WESTMINSTER'S LITTLE PANTRY

Thanks to those who continue stocking our neighborhood micro pantry, on the grounds of Graham Elementary, which is also a part of our Steadfast Neighbor Outreach. If you are interested in helping, please scan QR code, use the link (<https://bit.ly/3C4s0vS>). or contact Jennie Alt for details.



MONTHLY MEALS

HUNGER ACTION TEAM

Westminster prepares two meals each month for Helping Hands at their new location (2200 Shale Street). On 2nd Fridays, Westminster provides 60 bagged meals and on 4th Wednesdays we provide the same number of hot meals to assist those who are seeking shelter. Thank you to Ann Collins, Sue Sawers, Georgina Hudspeth, Pat Hymans, Judy Prillaman, Krista Steller, Jeanne VanGieson for preparing the meals in March.



GIVE-A-MEAL-A-MONTH APRIL MENU

Canned Chicken/Tuna, Canned Fruit in 100% Juice, and Baked Beans or Veggies (No baby food, please.) Thank you to all who place items in the West Narthex for the Central Illinois Foodbank.

FAIR TRADE



On Sunday, April 21, following worship, visit the West Narthex for **Fair Trade**. We'll have Equal Exchange coffee, chocolate, tea, olive oil, nuts and more. Proceeds support ethical products and benefits small-scale producers. Becky Martin and Jeanne VanGieson oversee this ministry.

EARTH CARE UPDATE

Westminster has been recertified for the eighth year by the Presbyterian Church (USA) as an EARTH CARE CONGREGATION.



SPRINGFIELD EARTH AWARENESS FAIR

SATURDAY, APRIL 20, 11:00 A.M. – 3:00 P.M.

The Earth Care Team will host a table again this year at the annual Springfield Earth Awareness Fair, on Saturday, April 20, 11:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. at the Union Square Park (500 E. Madison St.) by Union Station.

Westminster will host a table on water conservation during the Springfield Earth Awareness Fair. Although water is God's abundant and renewable resource, only a small fraction is suitable for quenching our thirst. As we live our lives, let us reconsider our consumption and share with those who have less: a typical shower consumes half as much as a bath, washing by hand requires twice as much as the dishwasher, and running the sprinkler squirts away a 3-day supply in less than one hour.

EARTH CARE TEAM: Peter Kieffer, Chair, Keith Hamilton, Charlie King, Todd Lafrenz, Lynn McMenamin, Maribeth Norton, Susan Shaw, Brad Steller

THE ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING

Thank you to all who contributed to our denomination offering which was dedicated on Palm Sunday. We received **\$180** from our children and a total of **\$4,695** from the children the congregation.



COMPASS FOR KIDS WELCOMES NEW SITE DIRECTOR



Stacey Austin is the new Site Coordinator for Compass for Kids Mentoring Program at Westminster. Stacey also serves as the coordinator for Compass at McClelland School and is very familiar with the program.

Westminster has hosted Compass since 2012 and also provides financial support through our Mission Endowment Grants. This year Compass welcomes 24 children each week from Graham Elementary School. We are grateful for their ministry in our midst. Westminster members serving on this community board are Tanya DeSanto and Diane Rutledge.

WOODEN IT BE LOVELY

SATURDAY, APRIL 27

On Saturday, April 27 from 9:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. Wooden It Be Lovely will host a Furniture Sale at Douglas Avenue UMC, (501 S. Douglas Avenue) with beautiful furniture hand painted by women helping women.



In 2021, Westminster committed a recurring grant of \$7,000 for seven years to support this meaningful ministry which offers hope and employment to women healing from lives of poverty, addiction, and abuse; providing transitional employment, mentoring, recovery tools, education, community networking, and a safe community. Westminster members serving on this community board are Jen DeJong, Kathy Germeraad, Diane Rutledge, and Cindy Davis.

FELLOWSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

KNIT 2 PURL 4 MISSION AND FELLOWSHIP gathers on **Tuesdays at 1:00 p.m.** in the Second Floor Classroom. The monthly brown bag lunch will be held on April 9 with drinks provided. You do not need to be a member or attend Westminster to join our group. Contact Mary Jo Jenkins at 217-622-8657.



PW LUNCHEON is Friday, April 5 at 12 noon in Parish Hall. Yves Doumen, Founder of the Motherland Gardens Community Project, will speak on the purpose of the garden, how it's grown, adding another garden, and how you can help the garden. Joyce Matthews is the Chair of the Day and Mary Ray is the Kitchen Chair.

RUTH AND NAOMI CIRCLE meets on Wednesday, April 3 at 7:00 p.m. at the home of Linda Folsie (2 Virginia Lane, 62712). Debbie Parker will lead the devotional by Annie Dillard entitled, "To See Clearly," (pp. 345-349) from the book, Devotional Classics.

ELIZABETH CIRCLE meets on Monday, April 8 1:00 p.m. in the Second Floor Classroom. Ann Kelson will lead Lesson 9 "People Encounter Jesus Through the Work of the Disciples" from the 2023 Horizon's Bible Study Sacred Encounters.

LYDIA CIRCLE meets on Tuesday, April 16 at 9:30 a.m. at the home of Joyce Matthews. Joyce will host and Nancy Scott will lead Lesson 7 "An Ethiopian Eunuch Encounters the Good" from the 2023 Horizon's Bible Study Sacred Encounters.

DAY CHANGE FOR APRIL

PRESBYTERIAN MEN'S BREAKFAST will be Wednesday, April 10 at 8:00 a.m. in Parish Hall. Officer Chris Jones will speak about Crime Stoppers program. Harvey Stephens will provide breakfast and Tim Kluge will provide devotions. Please RSVP on our website or by contacting the church office.

DMA (DON'T MENTION AGE) FRIDAY, APRIL 19 AT 5:30 P.M.

DMA (Don't Mention Age) will meet **Friday, April 19 at 5:30 p.m.** for a potluck and Program at 6:15 p.m. Mary Beth Maloney will describe the upcoming Muni Opera season. RSVP with weekly email link, website, or by calling the church office.

CONGREGATIONAL CARE AT WESTMINSTER

HOME COMMUNION - If you are unable to attend worship and would like to receive communion at home on April 14, please contact Jennie Alt at the church office. Thank you to the three teams of elders and deacons who made visits to eight members on Sunday, March 10. If you are an Elder or Deacon (currently or formerly serving) and you would enjoy serving other members in this ministry, please contact Rev. Christian Choi.

BLOOD PRESSURE CHECKS & CONSULTATION will be available on Sunday, April 7 by Parish Nurse, Ellen Carpenter.

SECOND HELPINGS MEAL MINISTRY

Westminster's meal ministry, initiated in winter of 2018, hopes to reach people just home from the hospital or in other situations where a meal would be appreciated. If you know of someone who could use a casserole, or if you'd enjoy occasionally making and bringing a dinner to someone, please contact Hospitality Coordinator Pat Hymans or Parish Nurse Ellen Carpenter.



WESTMINSTER NEWS

MILESTONE BIRTHDAYS

Andy Smith will celebrate 98 years on April 5.

Dr. Bill Lienemann will celebrate 92 years on April 6.

Dr. Naomi Lynn will celebrate 91 years on April 16.

NEW ARRIVAL

Palmer Katherine Walden was born March 1, 2024 to Carrie and Nick Walden. Palmer's big brother is Hallum, and proud grandparents are Kathy and Randy Germeraad.

IN MEMORIAM

Linda Dillard's memorial service and reception will be Saturday, April 20 beginning at 11:00 a.m. in our Sanctuary.

Silvey Wood Barge died March 17. Silvey was an elder and the wife of the late Rev. Dr. James Barge who served as Westminster's 15th Senior Minister. There will be a joint memorial service for Dr. and Mrs. Barge on Saturday, June 1 at 11:00 a.m. in our Sanctuary. The prayers and sympathy of the congregation are extended to their sons Kevin (wife Courtney) Barge and J. Stephen (wife Kathleen) Barge and grandchildren Aaren, (wife Sreemoyee Som) Cameron, Genevieve, Jackson, and Scarlett Barge.

PRAYERS AND SYMPATHY TO

Judy and Dan Dees on the death of Judy's brother, William O. Beatty, on February 7 in Clovis, CA.

Cathy Greek Yokely on the death of her mother, Maxine Greek, on February 22 in Des Moines, IA.

Sue and Steve Scaife on the death of Steve's mother, Nancy June Beatty, on March 7 in Springfield.

Virginia Cooper on the death of her brother's wife, Cathryn Gordon Huff, on March 10.

CONGRATULATIONS TO

The Reverend Dr. Shelly White Wood on her call to serve as senior pastor/head of staff at the Old Presbyterian Meeting House in Alexandria, Virginia.

ILLINOIS PRESBYTERIAN HOME

During the month of April, pastors will lead worship at the Illinois Presbyterian Home on Thursdays, April 4, 11, 18, and 25 at 4:00 p.m.

FEBRUARY FINANCIAL REPORT by Lisa Runkle

Income is strong since several families have given their total annual pledge early in the year. Westminster's Operating Fund ended the month of February with income above and expenses below our year-to-date budgeted amounts. Total income exceeded expenses by \$64,240.

2024 Operations	Actual	Budget	Difference
Income	\$ 236,893	\$ 187,142	\$ 49,751
Expenses	\$-172,653	\$- 187,142	\$ 14,489
Net Total	\$ 64,240	\$ 0	

PER CAPITA: This year Westminster will pay \$37.25 per member as a part of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to support the work of our denomination in the Presbytery, Synod, and General Assembly. Your special per capita contribution of \$37.25 for each confirmed member in your household will help to offset this cost in Westminster's budget.

NEW HARMONY SPRING RETREAT

THURSDAY - SATURDAY, MAY 2-4, 2024

New Harmony, Indiana is a Holy space where visitors meditate and celebrate the wonder and beauty of life and the God who created it. Along with award-winning architecture and sculpture, one can discover and explore labyrinths and a park dedicated to 20th century theologian, Paul Tillich.

Members and friends are invited to join Dr. Kieffer and Dale Rogers on a journey to New Harmony for a Spring Retreat Thursday-Saturday, May 2-4. Participants are welcome to drive down Thursday morning to visit the historic city, shop, and enjoy lunch. The retreat will begin with dinner on Thursday evening in the Paul Tillich Dining Room of the Red Geranium Restaurant and conclude at 12 noon on Saturday.



The cost of the two-day retreat is \$250 per person. This includes two nights of lodging and five meals. The Christian Education Endowment is subsidizing the retreat and scholarships are available. We currently have seventeen members and staff signed up and ideally would like to have 25 participants. **Those who are prayerfully considering joining us, please have their registration form**



returned by April 15, 2024. Applications are available in the West Narthex and on our website at www.wpcspi.org.

The retreat will be based on John Philip Newell's book A New Harmony: The Spirit, the Earth, and the Human Soul. Those planning to attend are also invited to the Adult Education Forum on Sundays, April 21 and 28 led by Blythe and Peter Kieffer. This two-week series entitled Paul Tillich: The Courage to Be, will be a review of the man and his writings in preparation for the New Harmony Retreat May 2-4, 2024.



THE WOMEN OF WESTMINSTER ARE INVITED TO
A GARDEN PARTY

HOSTED BY LINDA PURVES

6 N. COTTON HILL LANE

SATURDAY, MAY 18 AT 10:00 A.M.

RSVP at jalt@wpcspi.org



Westminster Staff

The Reverend Dr. Blythe D. Kieffer
Pastor and Head of Staff
bkieffer@wpcspi.org

The Reverend Christian K. Choi
Associate Pastor for Parish Life
cchoi@wpcspi.org

The Reverend Gerald W. Boutelle
Parish Associate

Dale T. Rogers
Director of Music and the Arts
drogers@wpcspi.org

Mary A. Ray
Director for Youth
zkarmar.mr@gmail.com

Meleah and Aaron Berkowitz
Co-Directors for Children's Ministry
berkowitz@wpcspi.org

Katie L. Moore
Director for Children's Music
kkilduski@gmail.com

Millie McNutt, Erin Winn
Nursery Coordinators

Emily Rowley, Keri Tate
Cooperative Preschool Teachers
emily@westminster-preschool.org
keri@westminster-preschool.org

Ellen Carpenter
Parish Nurse
ranell@comcast.net

Pat Hymans
Hospitality Coordinator
alnpat5@yahoo.com

Lisa Runkle
Financial Administrator
lrunkle@wpcspi.org

Jennie Alt
Church Administrative Assistant
jalt@wpcspi.org

Krista Steller
Communications Coordinator
ksteller@wpcspi.org

Gary Warnick
Building and Property Manager
gwarnick@wpcspi.org

**Peter Bysko, James Capler,
Terry Gietl**
Part-time Custodians

*Reporter folding and mailing will be on
Wednesday, May 1*