



Flowers from the **Golden Harvest Tea**
at WPC November 3

Southwest Winds

December 2 is the First Sunday of Advent

*The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because the Lord has
anointed me.
He has sent me to preach good news to the poor
to proclaim release to the prisoners
and recovery of sight to the blind
to liberate the oppressed, and to proclaim the year of the
Lord's favor.
Luke 4:18 CEB*

Letter to the Congregation from your Pastor

Dear Westminster Family,

As you know, we have been working on a lot of changes at church! We've begun using our Congregational Councils to make decisions about our future, including a decision to pursue specific renovations and improvements to our physical plant, and now a dialogue on what it might mean for us to do organized outreach.

In the meantime, the Vision Team and Session had tasked me with thinking through some changes to our organization, to simplify and streamline, with a goal of allowing more people to be involved in the life of the church, and the tasks to be arranged in a more manageable way so our volunteers don't get overwhelmed or burnt out.

I've been working on this, but it hasn't been easy to clear out the "cobwebs" of HOW WE HAVE ALWAYS DONE THINGS... I started by trying to list all the tasks we are currently doing, knowing we really do need to ask ourselves these questions:

- What things do we think are really required, that must be done?
- What things do we think we would like to let go of, that are optional and we may not want to continue?
- What things do we want to continue?

- What things might we want to consider doing that we haven't yet done?

One of the good suggestions made was that we try to organize in such a way that we reduce the number and length of meetings our active members attend by having *one evening per month* when all of our teams would meet at the church to discuss plans and activities (1 hour), then would come together to share decisions made and plans scheduled (1/2 hour). The Session would meet another time during the month for support of the actions and activities determined by our teams and oversight of the church's collective vision implementation.

Quite frankly, as I tried to figure it all out, I got bogged down. In listing all the things we are currently doing, I lost sight of the goal: to simplify and streamline. So, here is my next attempt!

Three teams:

- Worship and Education Team
- Outreach, Hospitality and Caregiving Team
- Property and Finance Team

These teams cover the tasks involved in running an active, healthy church, but leave out the most important part, the part that has been conceiving and initiating the incredible progress we've made over the last two years: the Vision Team!

As I thought and prayed about this, it became clearer and clearer to me that what we

really need at our head is that team which will continue **to provide the vision to lead us into God's calling**, to discern and imagine what we might become as we follow Jesus toward a future we are just discovering.

Therefore, I propose:

That initially our teams meet on separate evenings, until we get the work done of sorting through tasks and discerning what will move forward and what will change. I propose Wednesday evenings (7:00-8:30 p.m. at the church), beginning in January:

January 9 – Worship and Education Team

January 16 – Outreach, Hospitality and Caregiving Team

January 23 – Property and Finance Team

January 30 – Vision Team/ Session

Having all the meetings on Wednesdays should mean participants can more easily plan their scheduling. Having them on separate Wednesdays at the beginning will allow me to fully participate in all of the teams, until tasks are determined and defined, and teams organized. With all of the work done recently to restore our downstairs space, we will in the near future be able to accommodate the first three teams on one evening during the month.

We are asking that each church family member consider which of these areas of the life of the church might be of interest to you, for your active participation. Consider the community formed by Jesus' disciples and what they accomplished when they worked together – their individual faith was strengthened and magnified, allowing them to spread the Good News of Jesus well beyond their own numbers and even beyond their own nation.

During the Advent season, we will be talking about bringing our gifts to serve Jesus, and we will be using a gifts survey to help us think about our personal gifts and how we might apply them. During the worship service on January 6, 2019 – Epiphany Sunday – we will be offering our gifts, just as the magi offered their gold, frankincense and myrrh.

If you have any questions about this new process, or thoughts you would like to share, I invite you to contact me. My email is

RevLoreleiKay@gmail.com and my cellphone is 505.290.5357. There will be challenges ahead, as well as exciting discoveries! We are committed to reviewing these changes in September 2019, in order that we might continue to evolve in ways that are constructive, and supportive of our ongoing vision.

One final thing. The energy that undergirds changes of this magnitude can only come from faithful prayer. Sharna Sutherin asked us this fall to make a simple commitment to pray for our church each evening at 7:00 p.m. for five minutes. I would love to see us continue that discipline. Not only is the prayer uplifting for each one of us, but as we commit to pray together, we will begin to see the power of a unified body, connecting with the very Spirit of God in hope and love.

Yours in Christ, Pastor Lorelei



The November 4 Potluck

Pulpit Supply for two Sundays in November

During Rev. Lorelei Kay's vacation, **Rev. Kay Huggins** was the Pulpit Supply minister on November 4. Her sermon title was "*Not Far From the Realm of God.*" The first scripture reading was Ruth 1:1-18, and the second was Mark 12:28-34. She described the confrontation between several characters and Jesus in the Mark passage, who were trying to trap Jesus. Jesus was asked, "Which commandment is the most important of all?" Jesus replied:, "The most important one is Israel, Listen! Our God is one Lord, and you must love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your being, with all your mind, and with all your strength. The second is this, You will love your neighbor as yourself. No other commandment is greater than these." (See Deuteronomy 6:4-5 which is known as The Shema, which comes from the opening word in Hebrew which is translated "listen.") Rev. Huggins said that the crowd then withdrew in silence, acceptance and love. We need the neighborly silence of acceptance and love. She then told how she had lived on Squirrel Hill, very near the Tree of Life Synagog. There are many synagoges in the area, as well as her Presbyterian church. This is a tight community, and everyone there knows someone who was murdered in the very recent violent shooting, including her. She was still trying to process this shattering violence.

The **Rev. Kristin Pikaart** spoke on November 11. Rev. Pikaart's message was titled "On Walls and the Gospel" The scripture readings were Genesis 33:1-11 and Ephesians 2:11-22. Her message started with a wonderful children's story about a king who had a fabulously beautiful castle. But the problem was that during the night the castle was being damaged by certain people who spray painted the walls, broke windows, and tried to ruin the King's beautiful castle. So the king decided to build a super high wall around his castle and called in the very best



Rev. Kay Huggins



Rev. Kristin Pikaart

workmen he could find to build his wall. The king went away, and came back to find that only a low wall had been built. The workmen told him that there was just not enough stone in the area to build the high wall that the king wanted. The king then told the workmen, "I don't care where you get the stones. You can take them from any place that you can find. Just build me this super high wall." The king left and when he came back there was a beautiful, tall stone wall that you could not see beyond. When he opened the gate in the wall, to his horror there was no castle. It was gone! He then confronted the workmen who said, "But you told us to get the stones from any place that we could, and we did." The workmen had built the high wall out of the beautiful castle.

The sermon itself was about the harm we do when we build walls, both inside and outside of ourselves.

JMM

Audio Recordings of WPC Sermons are available on the WPC Website

Most of the recent sermons are available on the church website <www.wpcgallup.org>. You might check this out, especially if you missed a sermon or because you were especially touched by a sermon and wish to hear it again. If you are like me, sometimes it is helpful, especially if I didn't quite get what was being said, to listen to it again. Listening again can also be helpful as a resource if you wish to have a dialogue with the speaker at some later date. So I encourage you to check it out and use the resource.

JMM

The Un-wholly Saints to Meet Again

The men's group that gathered four times to discuss "*Practicing Extravagant Generosity*" has decided to continue to meet. The next scheduled gathering at **Pee Wee's Kitchen at 9:30 am was put off until Wednesday, December 5** because of Thanksgiving. Meeting frequency will be decided at each meeting because of the upcoming holidays.

Clint and I brought possible books to read, and the group thought that the following selection would be interesting and stimulating to read and discuss.

"Reading the Bible Again for the First Time"

by Marcus Borg, copyright 2001, Harper Collins. Used and new copies of this book are easily obtained on line. Speak to me if obtaining a book is a problem for you.

My copy has arrived and I find the ideas interesting and relevant to my reading and understanding our Scriptures.

If you need more information please talk to John Mezzoff or Tom Funk.

Communities Responding to Overcome Poverty

The CROP Hunger Walk total to date is **\$3,646!** Many thanks to our generous Gallup Community! Thank you to our WPC "Walkers" - Ona Fralinger, Holly Herr, Katie McGill-Peters, Marcia Monterosso, Barb Paredes, Betsy Windisch and the following faith groups: Catholic Charities, First United Methodist Church and the Gallup Interfaith Community for soliciting donations. The team hopes to raise the additional \$354 to meet the 2018 goal of \$4,000. This amount would allow Church World Service to make a donation to The Community Pantry of \$1,000, since one fourth of what is raised stays in our community to aid local hunger and poverty issues. The remaining funds are administered by Church World Service for immediate disaster relief, refugee resettlement, providing housing and employment assistance after natural disasters, and so much more. Donations can still be made online www.crophungerwalk.org/gallupnm or to one of the walkers noted above.

Betsy Windisch
Gallup CROP Hunger Walk Facilitator
betsywindisch@yahoo.com
[722-9257](tel:722-9257)



A Note from Deacons

Deacons Heather Nasi and Eryn Hannink shopped for Thanksgiving food items with the donated money. All donated food items went to the Battered Families shelter so that families staying in the care of the shelter could enjoy a Thanksgiving dinner. Eryn and Heather delivered 44 bags of groceries and 8 turkeys to Battered Family Services for Thanksgiving. The donations were used to support the 7 families staying at the shelter.

College care packages were prepared for seven college students. The boxes included items such as: pens, highlighters, snack packs, popcorn, easy Mac & Cheese, candy, and homemade goodies. We hope the care packages help them get through finals with a little less stress.

Reminder- We Care Bags

Please remember to take a few We Care Bags from the box in the fellowship area to carry in your car. This is a small way to show people in need around our community that we care.

Nicole Jones and Eryn Hannink



Golden Harvest Tea Photo
Courtesy of Valdine Brower

ATTENTION: Would anyone Like to Ring Bells in a Bell Choir??

We had a call from Sam Pemberton, who directs the Community Bell Choir at the Methodist Church, asking if there might be people at WPC who would be interested in playing with them, and performing periodically at both churches, under his direction. So we are putting out the word to see if there is interest.

Currently, his bell choir rehearses at the Methodist Church on Wednesday evenings from 6:15 to 7:30, and usually performs at the beginning of the 9:30 Methodist service on the fourth Sunday of the month. This schedule might be open to negotiation or change depending on the schedules of interested persons.

If you are interested in playing bells, you can email or call Sam Pemberton at: spembert@gmail.com , or [979-0718](tel:979-0718) - or speak to Lorelei or Kathy Mezoff.

Tax Information for WPC Donations

Recently Valdine Brower, Pam Burgess and Sharna Sutherin attended a training for church treasurers put on by the Presbytery. One of the things discussed was the new tax laws and how to reduce your tax liability through charitable giving. One thing we learned and wanted to share was how people who are 70 and over and have a Required Minimum Distribution from a 401K or similar account can reduce their taxable income. This is done by contacting the company that holds your 401k and asking them to make a check directly to Westminster Presbyterian Church using a portion of your Required Minimum Distribution for the amount of your pledge. They will send you a Qualified Charitable Distribution form which you complete and send back. This money is never reported as income for you and reduces your tax liability by whatever tax bracket you are in. For example if your pledge is \$5000.00 and you are taxed at the 20% rate you save \$1,000.00. You don't have to use your entire Required Minimum Distribution, just the portion you would already be giving to the church. Contact Pam or Sharna for more info.

Session Summary for October for November 15 Meeting

Anna Bond, bookkeeper met with session to explain the reports and answered questions about the Quick Books program and its reports.

Financial overview as of October 31, 2018:

Cash on Hand, (bank balance).....\$12,434.20

Cash Dispersed (cleared bank).....11,339.14

Cash received.....9,010.00

Pledges received at the time of the meeting were \$81,370, but a week later it was up to \$90,720, and with the expected loose offerings, this puts us at the stewardship goal for the year of about \$100,000. It was also reported that the Golden Harvest Tea brought in \$1,635.

Lorelei reported on the various bids she had obtained anticipating capital improvements to the building and grounds in the coming year. It was reported that the Presbyterian Foundation has granted funds to help congregations with their capital projects. Lorelei plans to take her sabbatical June, July, and August fo 2019. She is working on

what what she will be doing with her time, and getting pastor support for WPC. She also told us about her reading during her trip to Korea involving keeping an open "mindset" in life, and "Advent and Psychic Birth" about the hope of breaking into a new thing. She explained how she sees WPC breaking into a new thing this past year, and in the future. You will be hearing more about this soon.

Lorelei announced that after church on December 9 she will hold a new member's class. Since the meeting we have had two letters of transfer to WPC.

The next session meeting is planned for Thursday evening, December 13 at 7 pm.



The Golden Harvest Tea, Brower photo

Congregational Council Meeting November 18

The Westminster congregation gathered in a circle after church to hear each others thoughts on the question: What does “organized outreach” mean to you?

Rev. Lorelei prayed, “God, let us hear how you are calling us.” I will list some of the comments here that I jotted down as representational of dialogue.

- Programs in the community are needed such as the LGBTQ meetings in the schools which now has 30 members.
- LGBTQ groups be invited to come and worship with us.
- We could be in the public sector as a church (listening to what the public is saying).
- Keep the efforts simple.
- It is about what the **community** needs.
- Find ways to connect people with our church family; informally connecting is better than preaching.
- Many programs die for lack of support. (There may be good existing programs that we could get behind.)
- Must be participatory, and it is inconvenient and hard work without many pay backs. It is about time and commitment.
- There is “out-reach” and “in-reach.” Inner spiritual development supports our outward efforts.
- There needs to be “structure” involving the people being served. Coming from love is very important.
- Are service and out-reach the same?
- Several people spoke of the many current WPC out-reach activities.
- Out-reach: with the intention of having folks join this community. Service: support of the community without thoughts of joining us.
- Do we invite people intentionally?
- Don’t pressure or proselytize, there needs to be a balance on how to invite people with love.
- Who are “they,” what do we mean? Aren’t we all “we?”
- What programs does this church do as a congregation?
- Make a list of all the (good) things this church has started.
- A singular thing cannot be forced or contrived, but a natural outflow of the living body.
- Homeless/children’s church/camping experiences/ I must be careful not to overcommit.
- There have been many activities over the years, things change, and I would be involved in what needed to happen.

- We are human, we are not perfect, we are temporarily here. Out-reach is our human lives.
- How to be more intentional. What about intentional prayer, or small groups. The “Tea” was an outreach where people could talk. The new teacher program where people feel welcome. Prayer is critical. Commitment is far more than just Sunday.
- This has been a great discussion. We must focus on the little ones.
- Collective prayer at a set time has power.
- I agree about prayer.
- Growing as a committed community will mobilize us.
- I am impressed that we are the only LGBTQ affirming church space in Gallup. This is important for this community.
- Organized prayer time with prayer concerns.
- How are we offering a safe space to each other as a congregation?
- Homelessness out-reach, all in the ear shot of the trains (through Gallup). When you hear a train, pray for the homeless.
- Have an outside service, rain, shine, or cold.

This was an important initial discussion and sharing. It is a seed asking to be watered and nurtured by prayer and seeking spiritual guidance, both individually and as a body. Each of us carrying WPC in our hearts and committing to a 5 minute daily prayer period (perhaps in the morning as our day is starting, or whatever works for each of us personally) would bind us together with the power of the Spirit. And perhaps a weekly prayer gathering at church could further reinforce our commitment and relationships.

The editors



The Golden Harvest Tea, Brower photos



Building and Grounds Year End Report

As we come to the end of 2018 and I reflect on the year, there has been a lot of activity on the Westminster property. Starting on the inside of the building, upstairs we have completed a bathroom renovation that included adding hot water, a new vanity and sink, a paper towel holder and a paint job with colors that our pastor loves. The doors from the hall closet were removed and all stored items were removed. The closet was then painted and is currently being used for coats.

The worship committee has made decisions on what banners to keep and which ones to let go. They also have reviewed the music that is in storage downstairs. A group has been through the kitchen and organized what we had there, creating counter space and decreasing the appearance of clutter.

We have removed 2.5 tons of books and magazines that were stored in various places on the property and taken them to recycle. Some of the older electronic equipment has also been recycled.

We have also upgraded our alarm system following a break-in when we realized that the downstairs of the church was not included in our previous security system. We changed our phone and internet service, which has dramatically decreased our down time on the phone line.

Downstairs items stored but not used have been removed. This included a number of chairs, dressers and tables that were donated to Behavioral Health for use by residents. The residents of BHS have also helped to clear the property around the church and assist with maintenance and the reconstruction of the deck outside the church adjacent to the kitchen door. The children's rooms have also been sorted and unneeded items have been recycled.

After a break-in we replaced the downstairs wooden double doors with a single industrial quality steel door and frame. The carpet in the entire church has been shampooed.

Outside the property there has been fence repair, trail repair, weeding and gardening on an ongoing basis. We also completed the playground project, building a play set, creating a wooden border and filling it with a safety material to protect our children in case of a fall. A border has been placed around an area of indigenous plants and a memorial bench has

been installed there. The motion sensor lights are working most of the time.

The roof has been repaired so it no longer leaks. At the present time we are gathering bids for the following items: window replace, driveway repair and widening, parking lot resurfacing, a new sound system that would support our house concerts, smoke detectors added to our current security system, electrical upgrade, and future air conditioning. We have also completed an informal fire inspection as the county has no formal inspection system and are in the process of addressing the minor concerns raised by the fireman.

We still need lighted exit signs. Concerns have been raised about the fence and suggested that it be replaced with a chain link fence. Solar motion sensor lighting has been proposed for the parking lot by the basketball hoop and a portion of the project has been donated. We also have a proposed donation for painting the downstairs hallway.

If any of you are interested in taking a project on or would like to sit down with the property team to make proposals on building priorities for 2019 please contact me Sharna Sutherin 879-2962. Right now the biggest holdup in moving forward is the need for human power. Also, I am humbled by both financial and human power generosity of this congregation who have made all of this possible. Thank you all!

Sharna Sutherin

Southwest Winds, December 2018

Southwest Winds is a published
to report on church activities
and to be another medium of
communication between members and
friends of WPC
Editor and Publisher, John Mezoff
Editor, Kathy Mezoff

Westminster Presbyterian Church (USA)

is located a mile south
of the intersection of
Historic Route 66
and Boardman (State Highway 564)
on Boardman Drive
Gallup, New Mexico

Sunday Morning Worship is at
10:30 AM

The Church Telephone is
(505) 905-3247

The Church Website is
<www.wpcgallup.org>

