A DIGITAL MILESTONE!

On Sunday, July 26, 2020, Westminster officially entered a new stage in the electronic communication world by holding our first congregational meeting via Zoom! During this time of safety precautions against the coronavirus, we had not met in person since March 8. What a treat to see screen after screen of smiling faces as we gathered for this meeting!

The meeting was called to approve the unanimous recommendation from Session and Trustees that Westminster purchase the property adjacent to our parking lot at 1307 N. Rodney Street. This purchase would be consistent with Westminster property acquisitions over the years that have included 1301, 1303 and 1305 N. Rodney Street at various times and 1503 W. 13th Street as recently as 1990.

Trustees Bob Ridout and Sue Linderman gave a presentation that described the property in detail, including photographs, purchase and operations financing, and initial intended use. Everyone in attendance had a chance to ask questions and offer suggestions during the discussion period. To help ensure that all could vote on the motion, there were multiple options for people to register their choice – by Chat vote during the meeting or by subsequent telephone call.

The final vote tally was 167 in favor and 2 opposed – a resounding statement of support for this wonderful opportunity in the life of our church.

Many thanks to all who participated in assessing the potential acquisition, developing the recommendation, presenting the proposal, negotiating and closing the purchase and preparing for a new chapter in our partnership with Friendship House.

Thanks be to God for guiding us to this new opportunity for Westminster’s ministry!
Fall is upon us. Under normal circumstances our children would fill classrooms with laughter and energy. Calendars would fill with various events: Picture Day, football games, school plays and concerts, the Homecoming Dance. For many of us, this time of year is typically so busy – so full – as life returns to its “ordinary” rhythm. It’s a routine we anticipate with excitement or dread (or a combination of both) after the lazy days of summer … Usually.

But these aren’t normal circumstances.

As I write, some schools have made the decision to keep classes online for the start of the academic year. Others are attempting in-person education with face masks and social distancing. Some districts still haven’t made a decision, leaving families and communities in limbo. Team sports are suspended. Special events are cancelled. Traditions are disrupted. This year is anything but ordinary.

By the time this issue is published, our column may be out-of-date because of a drastic decline in cases. I hope so, but I’m not banking on it. It appears autumn’s routine will be one more thing we’ve lost as this pandemic rages on.

The sense of loss I’m feeling after months of social distancing is not only due to missing the people and activities I enjoy. It comes from the loss of the rituals by which we mark time: Memorial Day barbecues. Fireworks on the 4th of July. Communion on the first Sunday of the month. Rituals – both secular and sacred – offer mileposts on our lives’ journeys and give meaning to our days.

Marking time is something the church does particularly well. If you pay attention to the strips of cloth (called paraments) that hang from our lectern and pulpit, you know that the church has its own seasons – each with a corresponding color. We use purple for Lent, the 40 days when Christians strive to ‘realign’ our lives as we prepare for Easter. Blue signifies the four Sundays of Advent when we wait with expectant hope for the coming of Christ at Christmas. White is for the “High Holy Days” when we laud God’s redemptive work through Jesus Christ. And there is one square of red on our liturgical calendars – the Day of Pentecost.
when we celebrate the fire of the Holy Spirit igniting the church's witness. The seasons of the church provide a rhythm for our life together that acknowledges the fullness of life and its spectrum of emotions: exuberant joy, sorrowful lament, hope-filled longing ... sometimes co-mingling in our hearts as we lean into the paradoxes of human existence.

Right now we are in a long stretch of Ordinary Time – the days between Pentecost and Advent that are denoted by green because our focus is on growing in faith.

Ordinary Time, eh? That’s ironic.

And, yet, I also find it reassuring that in this extraordinary time, the church is returning to some of our most familiar stories. During Ordinary Time we recall scenes from Jesus’ life and ministry: parables that teach about the Kingdom of Heaven; encounters with those who come seeking healing; miracles like Jesus walking on water. These are stories that many of us learned in Sunday school; they nurtured our faith when we were young, and they can nurture our faith still – even in times of crisis.

For these narratives reveal a God who is present in the midst of life's ordinary and extraordinary moments. Whether teaching about something as mundane as a mustard seed or multiplying five loaves into a feast for thousands, Christ is there to offer hope, love, and grace. So our faith is nurtured in this season of the church’s life — a faith that sustains us in the midst of trial and tribulation.

Though our worship looks very different, the rhythm of the church’s life continues. And of this I am certain: No matter what else 2020 brings, we will continue to nurture our faith during this “Ordinary Time.” We will still declare Christ Lord of heaven and earth on Reign of Christ Sunday. We will still light candles on our Advent Wreath as we await the coming of Christ at Christmas. No matter what else 2020 brings, we will celebrate the God who is faithful to us in all times and all seasons. And that is anything but ordinary.

Peace,
A HISTORY OF OUR BURTON HOUSE PROGRAM

In 1990, Bill and Marcie Perkins had created Friendship House as a ministry to the homeless in Wilmington and were looking to establish transitional housing that would help people who were moving from prison or rehab or other type of homeless situation back into independent living. Bill and our then pastor Jon Walton determined that the two-story brick garage owned by Westminster, located by our parking lot, might be a perfect site for such a ministry. That building had been acquired by Westminster when the church purchased the property at 1305 N. Rodney Street. For some time, the apartment on the second floor of that building was occupied by Frank Burton, who was a long-time sexton for Westminster. After Frank’s death, the apartment had been vacant. The Urban Mission Committee and Session determined that utilizing the space for transitional housing, to be supervised by Friendship House, would be a great mission use of the space. The apartment was renovated by Westminster, christened Burton House, and the first of Friendship House's transitional housing unit was created. Today, Friendship House supervises residents in 10-12 houses in various parts of Wilmington, all of whose residents are working to regain independent living.

One of those additional transitional houses is Daughtry House, also owned by Westminster and located next to our parking lot on the west side.
That building had been the site of the headquarters of the Girl Scouts of the Chesapeake Bay. When the Girl Scouts determined it did not need that building, they came to Westminster and offered it for sale to us. Session approved the purchase of that property at 1503 W. 13th Street with the understanding that the space would be used primarily to support non-profit mission activities in the city. Over the years, the ground floor space of that building has been occupied by such groups as Creative Grandparenting, Literacy Delaware and the Brandywine Pastoral Institute counseling services.

In 1995, as the AIDS epidemic reached a crisis stage and people diagnosed with the disease were being disowned by their families, evicted from their apartments and fired from their jobs, the Urban Mission Committee and Session approved converting the second floor of that building into housing for people living with HIV/AIDS and naming the building Daughtry House, after a WPC member who had died of AIDS. The program was supervised by AIDS Delaware and continued in full operation until 2008. At that point, AIDS had become less of a death sentence and more of a chronic disease, so the need for that specific program had diminished. At the same time, the crisis of homelessness continued to accelerate. The Urban Mission Committee recommended that the second floor provide the same type of transitional housing as Burton House, adding four more men to the transitional housing program and incorporating the space into the Burton House program.

Continued on page 6
Subsequently, Brandywine Pastoral Institute ceased its counseling services in the building and the ground floor space has since been rented to Friendship House as its headquarters offices under a renewable lease. More recently, as the needs continued to increase, the request was made to also convert the third floor of Daughtry House to transitional housing under the supervision of Friendship House. WPC Facilities Manager Paul Crothamel and the Westminster Phix-it Corps were nearing the completion of that conversion process when the coronavirus hit, so work has been temporarily suspended. And the impact of the virus is intensifying the difficulties being felt within the homeless community in Wilmington. By acquiring the eight bedroom house at 1307 N. Rodney Street (see cover article), we will significantly increase the number of people we can help transition to independent living.

In 2004, we were advised by her attorney that former Westminster member Helen Greene had bequeathed a sizeable sum to Westminster to support the operation of Burton House and its successors. Between 2005 and 2011, Westminster received three disbursements totaling more than $185,000 as that bequest. These funds have been used for Burton and Daughtry House capital/renovation projects and currently serve as a form of endowment for the Burton House program, whereby we draw 6% of the 20-quarter rolling average of the fund to support its operations, which are included in the Westminster annual operating budget. In addition, these funds have been used at various times over the years to support grant programs, whereby individual Burton House residents/graduates are able to obtain much-needed funding support, e.g. to purchase tools, aid in major dental work, etc., as they become gainfully employed.

Throughout the years, there have been many Westminster members deeply involved in and committed to this ministry – a notable but incomplete list includes Jim Clark, Bob Cox, Martha Tatnall, Ken Barnaby, Charlie Reinhardt, Helen Walker, Jose Varela, Sandy King (a current Friendship House Board member) – and many others. Westminster members over the years have hosted summer barbecues and Christmas parties for the Burton/Daughtry House residents. We have connected residents with adult mentors and provided computer training. As a consequence of our joint operation of the Burton House program, hundreds – likely near one thousand – people have experienced the grace, compassion and helping hand toward a new start that the program provides.

How grateful we are for this 30-year partnership with Friendship House as we look with great anticipation to the future!
WOMEN’S MEDITATION GROUP

1st Friday of the month
(beginning October 2)
8:00 – 8:30 a.m.
via Zoom

Judy Stoddard will be offering a Zoom Meditation Group for women on the first Friday of each month between 8:00 and 8:30 a.m. beginning October 2. If you have never meditated and would like to experience it, this is a good opportunity to do so. Judy will email basic meditation background information materials as people sign up. All are welcome to join, including friends.

She will offer an hour long orientation, “Meet the Meditators,” on Zoom to introduce group members and discuss basic meditation theories, types of meditation, and answer questions. Date and time to be announced.

Most meditation will be guided, but sometimes the group will simply sit quietly together in meditation. There are no attendance expectations. People may attend as they are able.

Research has proven there are many benefits to meditating in a group. Margaret Mead said, “Never doubt that a small group of people can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.”

When we pray, we speak. When we meditate, we listen.

For more information or to join the meditation group, please contact Judy Stoddard at JLStod@aol.com or (302) 397-8867.
GREAT INTERFAITH COLLECTION FOR SYRIAN REFUGEES

All you have to do at Westminster is ask and you shall receive!

Westminster enthusiastically supported this collection (our third) for Syrian refugees. Our congregation, along with Congregation Beth Shalom, filled Classrooms 5 and 6 and a large closet with wheelchairs, crutches, medicine, hand tools, school supplies, blankets and clothing. The Islamic Society of Delaware, St. Joseph on the Brandywine, and the Meeting House (Quaker) transported their donations to the warehouse in Norristown.

For one week, volunteers received, sorted, boxed and bagged the overwhelming supply of donations, then packed vans, SUVs, cars, and a U-Haul truck and transported all items to the Narenj Tree Foundation warehouse in Norristown. This foundation is a refugee crisis and disaster charity organization that helps people whose lives have been shattered due to violence of war.

All items are tightly packed into 40-foot containers, driven to Bayonne, New Jersey, and then shipped to a port in Turkey near the Syrian border. The items are then loaded into trucks and taken to six refugee camps in the Idlib Province. Each tent city has a school, a clinic and a shopping tent where families can shop free with vouchers.
There have been 91 shipments since 2013 to help the hundreds of thousands of refugees driven from their homes by a cruel and destructive war. Eighty-two percent of Syrians now live under the poverty level and an average salary is $25–$30 a month. Narenj Tree struggles to pay for the shipments of humanitarian assistance, which can cost $5,000–$7,000 each. Westminster’s Church in the World mission committee donated $1,700 for this shipment.
Thank you for your incredible generosity of donations and your time. Remember the people of Syria in their dire need.

“Let us not love with words and speech, but with action and in truth.” John 3:18

VIRTUAL TRIVIA NIGHT

Are you a trivia buff? Jeopardy fan? Smart cookie? We’ve got a game for YOU! Put your knowledge to the test and team up with your family members to play against other Westminster households in an interactive, virtual trivia night. Questions about our church’s history, the Bible, and other surprising topics will aim to stump and delight you. Virtual Trivia Night will occur on Wednesdays, August 26, September 23, October 28, and November 18, 2020, at 7:00 p.m. via Zoom and takes approximately 45 minutes to play.

We will be using an online, interactive game called Kahoot! You will need access to Zoom and a separate device with internet to access Kahoot! This is a family-friendly event; no experience needed to play. Please email Deacon Jenn Blackford at blackfordj11@gmail.com to RSVP.
CHRISTIAN EDUCATION IN SEPTEMBER

Christian education kicks off online on **Sunday, September 27, 2020**! Zoom information will be provided each week.

Here is what we have planned:

- **Age 2 – Young Age 5 (PreK):** Bible Box Sunday school from 11:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. Boxes with supplies will be shipped to your home.*

- **K – 4th Grade:** Bible Box Sunday school from 2:30 – 3:00 p.m. Boxes with supplies will be shipped to your home.*

- **5th – 8th Grade:** *Colaborate* Sunday school on the second of fourth Sundays of the month from 4:15 – 5:00 p.m. If you did not receive materials in the mail and would like to participate, contact the church office for a copy of the workbook.

- **Teens and Adults:** Sunday Seminars from 1:00 – 1:50 p.m. Grace Song will speak on Modern Buddhism.

*Everything you need for fun, crafty Sunday school is coming your way in a monthly box! Sunday afternoon Zoom time for kids will have a Bible story video, music, and a craft. After our first month of the Bible Box, you’ll need to sign up to keep getting it, so email Alexis Droke at alexisdroke@wpc.org to get on the list. Drop off your empty box at the end of the month so it can be loaded up and sent off again!
STEWARDSHIP 2021

GOD’S VISION IS CLEAR...
WE ARE ALL IN THIS TOGETHER

“Stand firm in the one Spirit, striving together as one.”
(Philippians 1:27)

In her message in the Chimes earlier this summer, our Associate Pastor, Sudie Niesen Thompson, wrote how COVID-19 had affected her. Our “topsy-turvy” situation offered an opportunity. It was a gift of time — time, which for Sudie “has helped me focus on God’s nurturing, liberating presence in the midst of this darkness.” She offered words of hope for all of us, for if we look we will “glimpse God at work in the darkness and discover ordinary and extraordinary gifts of grace.” Such heartfelt words from Sudie, and Greg Jones’ 20+ Tuesday Messages to the congregation, have buoyed our spirits during this challenging year. Our bonds to Westminster have deepened as our concerns about health, food insecurity, social justice, and respect for one another have grown. Throughout it all, our members have shown again and again their Christian love, their willingness to help others, and their ongoing commitment to support the activities of the church.

This fall, stewardship takes on a special meaning. We have experienced so much as a congregation. Yet we remain strong, active, and grateful. Though the pandemic has prevented our church family from meeting together in person, the work of

The Thomas/Suarez family “attends” Westminster church from the safety of their home
Westminster has continued. Weekly worship services occur virtually, Christian education for all ages remains in place, officers and committees continue to meet regularly, the deacons and pastors have been calling and sending cards to members, and Greg and Jill have conducted several graveside/committal services for small family groups. Our weekly donations of food to Emmanuel Dining Room have been a great benefit to the food insecure in our community and have given Greg a chance to talk with members of our church family as they dropped off their donations. Our ongoing association with Friendship House has grown even stronger with the purchase of the 1307 N. Rodney Street property, which will soon complement Daughtry and Burton Houses as safe transitional housing for those in need. Most recently, our interfaith plea for clothing, blankets, tools, and other items for thousands of displaced Syrians living in refugee camps near the Turkish/Syrian border has generated an enormous response. In so many ways, the members of Westminster have demonstrated their devotion and generosity.

The year ahead will surely bring its own set of challenges and surprises. More than ever, we need the stability, compassion, fellowship, and love that Westminster offers. For the church
to continue to fulfill its mission, we need your help. A pledge of financial support is essential to crafting the annual budget for Westminster. The benefits to everyone are immense. Please join us in achieving God’s vision through a pledge this fall.

Click here to make your pledge online.

上帝的愿景是清晰的……我们都在一起

INTERFAITH COLLECTION FOR SYRIAN REFUGEES

WESTMINSTER’S PEACE & JUSTICE WORK GROUP IN ACTION

JOIN US!

The video of the death of George Floyd, along with the shooting deaths of Ahmaud Arbery, Breonna Taylor and Elijah McClain and others, have galvanized people across our country and around the globe to confront in new and deeper ways the issues of systemic racism that permeate our society.

Westminster’s Peace & Justice Work Group, in action since May 2018, has formed partnerships with local and national organizations, focused on education of our congregation and community, and encouraged the participation of our members and friends in actions to make a difference.
Recent actions include:

**Thursday Evening Education Events**
On July 9, we began hosting education events on Thursday evenings at 7:00 p.m. via Zoom. Our initial topics included:

- Viewing/discussion of Trevor Noah video – “George Floyd and the Dominos of Racial Injustice”
- Viewing/discussion of Phil Vischer video – “Race in America”
- Presentation on the Campaign to End Debtors’ Prison in Delaware
- Eugene Young, Tizzie Lockman and Sarah McBride discussion – “Where Do We Go From Here”
- Viewing/discussion of the documentary “John Lewis: Good Trouble”

**New Castle Presbytery Meeting**
New Castle Presbytery called a special two-hour meeting on July 14 on Dismantling Racism. Participants shared their personal stories and their views on structural racism in the PC(USA) General Assembly. You can view it [here](#). Sue Linderman gave an abbreviated 30-minute presentation on Racism in America – The History We Didn’t Learn in School.

**Outdoor Sign**
Session approved a sign to be displayed on the church cloister fronting Pennsylvania Avenue. The wording reads “Called by God to Work for Justice and Peace” and will include the Work Group logo.

**Website and Social Media Presence**
A regular series of announcements are posted on Westminster’s [Facebook](#) page. One feature has been the excellent continuing series of short videos by Emmanuel Acho – “Uncomfortable Conversations with a Black Man.” We are working with Nicole Hughes to create a page on the Westminster website ([www.wpc.org](http://www.wpc.org)) that will highlight the Work Group activities and resources. Look for it in September!

**21-Day Racial Equity Challenge**
All members of Westminster were encouraged to participate in this challenge, hosted by United Way Delaware and YWCA Delaware. We hope you took advantage of this opportunity and look forward to hearing your reflections.

There is so much to be done and we are finding purpose and gratitude by involving ourselves in this meaningful and much-needed work. Please join us by contacting Mike Gnade ([mgnade@hotmail.com](mailto:mgnade@hotmail.com) or 302-562-4464), Lynne Kielhorn ([lynne@kielhorn.us](mailto:lynne@kielhorn.us) or 302-593-5527) or Sue Linderman ([srlinder@dca.net](mailto:srlinder@dca.net) or 302-239-7650).
WHAT’S HAPPENING WITH POLICE REFORM IN DELAWARE?

Although the marches and vigils sparked by the death of George Floyd have gotten smaller and less frequent, the movement is still picking up steam. It is becoming clear that this time truly is different. Across the country it has led to deeper and sustained conversations on racial justice by a wide and diverse set of individuals, private companies, elected officials, and faith institutions. This gives us hope that we are on a path to necessary changes to both policy and cultural norms. Those changes cut across all parts of society including criminal justice, health care, education, housing, etc.

But, there is an urgency to the movement as well. In many states, that sense of urgency has been poured into reforming our police systems in hopes of improving the relationship between police and the communities they serve. Delaware trails other states in these efforts, but the process has begun. The Delaware Legislative Black Caucus laid out their Justice for All agenda, the Delaware Department of Justice put forward its police reform agenda and many advocacy organizations have developed plans as well.

One legislative success at the end of session was the establishment of a Law Enforcement Accountability Task Force. It is made up of a wide range of stakeholders, including police officers. However, this success also provides an example of what frustrates advocates for change. One key stakeholder voice, the impacted (justice involved) citizen, did not get a seat at table. Hopefully, impacted citizens will have seats on the subcommittees whose memberships should be announced shortly.

The following four subcommittees have been established:

• Use of Force and Imminent Danger – Assessing the feasibility and viability for a statutorily created use-of-force standard, as well as the implementation of a definitive imminent danger policy. These policies would encourage police officers to employ all tactics necessary to avoid using deadly force.

• Workforce Development – Evaluate recruitment, hiring and retention practices to ensure agencies have an appropriately diverse compliment of officers. Ensure that education and consistent trainings be made available and shall include de-escalation and resiliency components.
• Community Policing and Engagement – Ensure community-oriented policing policies to be consistent with the report on 21st Century Policing. Additionally, there should be an expansion of citizen-involved public safety outreach across the state, as well as increased crisis intervention services and ongoing proactive mental health care for every police officer in Delaware.

• Transparency and Accountability – Review and reform the disciplinary process for law enforcement officers to allow for greater accountability for misconduct, including amending the Law Enforcement Bill of Rights and establishing civilian review boards to provide independent review of police misconduct cases. Establish a statewide searchable database of police misconduct findings.

The meetings of the Task Force and its subcommittees will all be open to the public through virtual Zoom participation.

In addition to state level reforms, much can be done at other levels of jurisdiction. New Castle County Council recently made changes to their police department’s use of force policy. Red Clay School District recently considered (but voted down) the trading of School Resource Officers (local police officers) for district employed mental health professionals to handle discipline issues.

Westminster’s Peace and Justice Work Group is engaged with the Coalition for Smart Justice, the Coalition to Dismantle the New Jim Crow, the Delaware Racial Justice Collaborative and others. We will continue to provide updates on topics of interest. If you are interested in learning more or joining the work group, please contact Sue Linderman (srlinder@dca.net or 302-239-7650).

SUNDAY WORSHIP

Due to the coronavirus pandemic, we do not yet know when we will resume worshiping together on Sunday mornings inside the church. Find the latest updates by visiting our website at www.wpc.org or subscribe to our e-newsletter here.
PROPERTY NEWS:  
AT WORK BEHIND THE SCENES

It’s a hot Sunday morning in August; you’ve finished breakfast, washed the dishes, and driven to Westminster to donate sandwiches and bottled water to the food drive for Emmanuel Dining Room. Now, back home, you’ve settled into a comfortable chair, turned on your iPad, and are about to “attend church.” You click onto the familiar YouTube channel; the video scans the stone tower of Westminster as our new Director of Music/Organist, Tony Thurman, plays an uplifting prelude. Soon Greg Jones or Sudie Niesen Thompson offer their heartfelt words of welcome and another rich spiritual experience is underway. Welcome to the world of Westminster during COVID-19.

Since mid-March, we have relied on virtual services to connect us to our church family. Meaningful messages of God’s grace and understanding, coupled with calls to serve those in need, have given us direction and hope. Though our access is digital, the core elements of a service — prayer, music, scripture, and pastoral guidance — continue to shape our lives and restore our souls. As you watch on YouTube, do you ever consider who made the program possible? And what went into the production process? Let’s pull back the curtain for a moment and pay tribute to those who create what you see.
You already know those who appear on camera, from Greg and Sudie to Chesna Hinkley, Alexis Droke, Tony Thurman, the choristers, and members of the congregation who occasionally deliver prayers. And you also recognize the role the pastors play in organizing each service. But none of these splendid efforts would ever reach YouTube were it not for three dedicated volunteers: Baden Saathoff, Chip Pfleegor, and Roger Reinicker.

Initially Roger oversaw the productions, Baden joined him in early April, and Chip came on board a month later. They now gather at Westminster every Friday morning to film the individual elements of the service and edit them into a seamless program. Their day begins at 10:00 a.m. and doesn’t end until after 5:00 p.m. With the bulletin for the upcoming service in hand, one person manages the video process from a corner of the balcony, using three 20-year-old cameras to record each segment onto DVDs. A second person transfers the digital files into a software system at a computer station at the end of the office hallway. There the files can be moved, manipulated, and enhanced with graphics. The resulting program undergoes further review on Saturday before the final version is uploaded onto YouTube for you to watch on Sunday mornings.

If you have been a regular viewer of Westminster’s online services, you have surely noticed many changes since the early offerings in March. The quality and complexity of the production have improved, thanks to a switch in software and the purchases of a new computer and wireless microphone system.

Two forthcoming upgrades will further enhance the productions and eventually make it possible to live-stream an in-person service from the sanctuary. The first — a new video system — fulfills an obvious need. The current equipment has served the church well but cannot meet our current needs.

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requirements. After extensive research, guided by Chip Pfleegor, Westminster purchased three new cameras from Frank Silva of Pro Audio, a vendor who has worked closely with the church for many years. Less apparent, but nonetheless equally important, has been the necessity of enhanced Wi-Fi within the church. In a nutshell, we must increase the upload speed from Westminster to the internet in order to broadcast our worship services live. Work is currently underway to achieve this goal. By mid-fall these critical refinements should be in place, at a cost of about $20,000. To fund the project, the Property Committee re-prioritized its 2020 expenditures, a process already underway because of COVID-19. Thanks to the success of the capital campaign, the Committee could move quickly to address a pressing need.

Tremendous thanks are due to our steadfast team of Roger, Baden, and Chip. Their work behind the scenes makes our virtual services possible. Not surprisingly, the most knowledgeable in the editing process is the youngest. The efforts of 16-year-old Baden Saathoff have been invaluable throughout the past six months. Westminster owes him and his two “slightly” older colleagues its deepest appreciation.

BEAUTIFUL SERVICES ON THE CHURCH LAWN

On Saturday evenings in August, people gathered on our front lawn for our first in-person worship services in five months. Every person wore a mask, people sat within a hoop that had been placed eight feet away from other hoops, and all did a great job of respecting the rules of physical distancing as they entered and exited the grounds. Our sound system was clear and strong, Sue Spilecki rang hymns on our tower chime, Director of Music and Organist Tony Thurman played the piano, and choristers sang our hymns. We were so grateful to see all of you who participated in the service!
WOMEN’S ONLINE COMMUNITY GROUP

2nd and 4th Thursday of the Month
5:00 – 6:00 p.m.
via Zoom

Since April of this year, the Women’s Online Community Group has been meeting weekly via Zoom. As we move forward in this environment of COVID-19, we will continue to meet. As of August, we have changed from meeting weekly to meeting every second and fourth Thursday of each month.

The Women’s Online Community Group is designed for fellowship, prayer and conversation. Each time we meet we gather for large group discussion and prayer, and then we break out into small groups using the breakout room feature on Zoom. In the small groups we have questions that facilitate discussion and allow us to get to know each other.

This is a stress-free and easy group to enter as it needs no preparation to join and enables us to gather while staying socially distanced. Just click the Zoom link and join us any second or fourth Thursday at 5:00 p.m. All are welcome!

Some women enjoy receiving our discussion questions for the day a little ahead of time. If you would like to receive the discussion questions for the day before the meeting or if you have any questions about this group, please email Jill Getty at jgetty@wpc.org.

Zoom Link for Women’s Online Community Group:

- Go to https://us02web.zoom.us/j/477914100.
- Or, visit https://zoom.us/join, enter Meeting ID 477 914 100, and click “Join.”

Upcoming dates for our group:

- September 10 and 24
- October 8 and 22
- November 12 and 19 (note that the 19th is the 3rd Thursday as the 4th Thursday is Thanksgiving Day)
- December 10 and 17 (note that the 17th is the 3rd Thursday as the 4th Thursday is Christmas Eve)
EARTH CARE: IT PAYS TO HAVE AN ENVIRONMENTALLY-FRIENDLY HOME

PART 2: HOME ENERGY AUDITS

We are called as Christians to care for God’s creation, and there are many practical ways to do so. What follows are ways to help improve the sustainability of the planet.

Did you know that you can save money while helping the environment? The July/August Chimes article discussed various online calculators that can help you make decisions on how to make your home more environmentally friendly, but there is a more direct approach to help you save money by conserving energy: the home energy audit. Audits can be highly productive in saving money: one study by the American Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy (ACEEE) shows that doing minor changes as a result of a home energy audit can deliver a nearly 20% annual return on investment, which is large compared to the return on traditional investments such as stocks and bonds.

Two types of audits are available: do-it-yourself and professional. Do-it-yourself audits involve online instructions to check your home and provide guidance on making home energy efficiency improvements. Professional audits involve a visit from a home energy expert to evaluate your home and make recommendations on ways to improve the energy efficiency of your home.

1. Do-It-Yourself Audits. While not as comprehensive as a professional audit, it will allow you to catch major energy loss problems. The inset provides a list of simple things you can do at home to improve your home’s energy efficiency.
Aspects of Do-It-Yourself Audits (from Energy.gov)

1. Locate and seal air leaks using caulk and/or weatherstripping. Common areas for leaks are where the walls meet the floor or ceiling, and along the edges of windows, doors, pipes, and electrical outlets. Leaks can also occur where two building materials meet on the exterior of the house. Also, check that fireplace dampers are closed. Be sure, however, that adequate ventilation exists when fuel such as natural gas, propane, fuel oil, or wood is burned.

2. Check the insulation in your walls and attic. For the Delaware Valley, insulation rated at R60 is recommended for attics with no insulation, and R38 is recommended for existing attics with 3–4 inches of insulation. R19 and R5 insulation amounts are generally recommended for exterior walls on the first/basement and upper floors, respectively.

3. Ensure that your heating and cooling equipment are properly maintained, including the regular replacement of air filters. Consider replacing equipment over 15 years old. Seal all air leaks in ducts with duct tape, and insulate all ducts in unconditioned spaces.

4. Replace all incandescent lights with LEDs, and consider the use of light sensors, dimmers, and timers.

5. Recall from an earlier Chimes article that some appliances consume lots of energy (a.k.a. “energy hogs”). Consider how necessary these appliances are since removing them could save a lot on electricity.

6. Finally, consider your budget and timescale to make these repairs. Many are cheap and effective, whereas others take several years to attain a payback for the improvement.

2. Professional Audits. Several fee-based home energy audits are available, and the most popular company for Delaware home audits is Energize Delaware. Energize Delaware’s Home Performance with Energy Star® program provides a rebate up to $300 for the assessment and modifications such as sealing air leaks, adding insulation, ensuring adequate ventilation, sealing and insulating ductwork, improving heating and cooling systems, and up to $200 in energy-saving products such as energy-efficient light bulbs, faucet aerators, low-flow shower heads, and hot water pipe

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insulation. Westminster used an Energize Delaware program to do an energy audit of Westminster’s Burton and Daughtry houses and is in the process of evaluating recommendations. The program’s blower door test (see graphic), which creates a vacuum within the house to draw in outside air through leakage points around the house, is particularly useful when run in cold weather.

For PA and NJ homes, home energy auditors can be found using HomeAdvisor. The site takes you through a simple questionnaire regarding your home and what you are seeking in the audit, and it then sends your information to its contractors. PECO also provides home energy audits including an income-qualified free in-home energy checkup, and PSE&G provides a residential whole house efficiency program if specific income conditions are met.

Further reading:

1. ACEEE, “For existing homes, energy efficiency often has a better return on investment than solar”, https://www.aceee.org/blog/2019/05/existing-homes-energy-efficiency, May 2019.

From EnergyVanguard
By now you may know that I’ve taken a position at another church. This was an unexpected opportunity to work for the church where I am under care in my ordination process. I’m very excited to work with my home congregation and to live in New York City. This has happened very fast, but I have felt confident at every step that God is calling me back to Madison Avenue.

I wish I had more time with you, and I wish we were worshiping together in person as we say goodbye. Serving this congregation has been a joy and a privilege, and I am praying that you will continue to grow in Jesus Christ and in fellowship with one another. Because I know the Holy Spirit is leading me in this next step, I know I leave you in the Holy Spirit’s care – so we can be confident that there are better things ahead, for you and for me.

“Now to him who is able to keep you from stumbling and to present you before his glorious presence without fault and with great joy, to the only God our Savior, be glory, majesty, power, and authority, through Jesus Christ our Lord – before all ages, now, and forevermore. Amen.” (Jude 24-25)

I will miss you.

Chesna
13TH STREET FOOD TRUCK FESTIVAL CANCELED

Due to the ongoing threat of the Coronavirus, the Membership and Evangelism Committee has canceled this year’s 13th Street Food Truck Festival. We look forward to the day when it is safe to break bread (or tasty food truck fare) together again!

NEED TO GET IN TOUCH WITH OUR NEW DIRECTOR OF MUSIC/ORGANIST?

Here is his WPC contact information:

Dr. F. Anthony (Tony) Thurman
tonythurman@wpc.org
(302) 654-5214 ext. 121
FLYING SOLO

Flying Solo is a group of single adults who meet to support each other in friendship, through social activities and fellowship.

Due to the coronavirus outbreak, Flying Solo has suspended its activities for the foreseeable future.

We hope to resume Sunday brunch at an outdoor location, weather permitting. A group email will be sent when plans are made. If you would like to be added to our email list, please contact Bill Kaye at billkaye3@verizon.net.

RECENT DEATHS

Those Who Have Joined the Church Triumphant

*We remember the families of those who recently died.*

*We pray that they will be comforted in their loss and be assured that their loved ones have joined God’s heavenly kingdom.*

**Sandra J. White**
May 23, 1938 – June 12, 2020

**Margaret Hill Hodges**
January 22, 1934 – July 26, 2020

**Evelyn S. Measley**
January 7, 1921 – August 8, 2020

**Thomas A. Ford**
August 29, 1917 – August 10, 2020
SAVE THE DATE!

Join Westminster’s Board of Deacons for an outdoor Fall Festival on **Sunday, October 11, 2020 at 10:00 a.m.** Children and their families will be invited to participate in crafts, a costume parade, and socially-distanced fellowship on the church lawn. (Rain date: October 18, 2020, at 10:00 a.m.)

Email Jenn Blackford ([blackfordj11@gmail.com](mailto:blackfordj11@gmail.com)) or Sandra Wermus ([sandra.wermus@bsd.k12.de.us](mailto:sandra.wermus@bsd.k12.de.us)) with questions.