

2014 Annual Report



Westminster
Presbyterian
C H U R C H
— *worship well* —

Dear Friends,

We offer this booklet as a summary of Westminster's life in 2014. We invite you to read, enjoy, and join in worship, service, education, and fellowship. None of what was accomplished would have been possible without the generous resources provided through stewardship, special contributions, and the countless volunteer offerings of time and talent by the congregation.

Larry R. Hayward
Pastor

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FELLOWSHIP

CONGREGATIONAL LIFE

In the spirit of celebrating fellowship together as brothers and sisters in Christ through the Holy Spirit, the Congregational Life committee planned special activities such as picnics and dinners. These various all-church events were enjoyed by the entire church family:

- March 12, 19, 26; April 2, 9 - Lenten Dinners
- April 13 - Palm Sunday Breakfast
- June 8 - Annual Picnic and Summer Kick-Off
- October 18 - "One in the Spirit" all-church campfire with songs, stories, and s'mores!
- November 2 - Stewardship Blessings Brunch
- December 14 - Christmas Pageant and Congregational Dinner

The committee also serves as the liaison between Session and the following fellowship groups: Flying Solo Singles, Seniors Ministries, Roadsters, Presbyterian Women, Men of Westminster, Faith Groups, Tables for Eight, Westminster Craft Group, Women's Shanghai Card Group, Young Adults, Westminster Softball Team, and sponsored Scouting organizations (Boy Scouts, Cub Scouts and a new co-ed Venturing Crew).

Fellowship Hour: The Congregational Life committee participates in Westminster's ministry of hospitality by organizing and overseeing Fellowship Hour: Coffee Hour during the program year and Lemonade on the Lawn the summer and early fall. Volunteers from church committees and various other church groups host Fellowship Hour after worship each Sunday throughout the year.

ADULTS

Tables for Eight held monthly dinners in members' homes and had their kick-off potluck on October 4. Fall 2014 marked the 20th year of this small-group ministry here at Westminster! The Craft Group held its annual boxwood workshop in December which always attracts many members, visitors, friends, and neighbors in preparation for celebrating Christmas. Faith Groups, small-group fellowships, continued seasonal book discussions. The Wednesday Evening Faith Group has decided not to continue in 2015. We are grateful for Jane Ring's leadership and the

many years of study and fellowship they had together. In June, church members also enjoyed a baseball outing to see a Nationals game.

FAMILIES

Rev. Casey Fitzgerald and Patty Chamberlain served children and their families with a wide range of programs throughout 2014. The annual M&M Week, our music camp experience for elementary aged children, was held in June. Children worked towards a performance of "Stories Jesus Told" and learned about the parables of Jesus. The Easter Sunday Donkey Processional and Christmas Pageant were held. Families were supported through a family picnic, parent education opportunities, Fridays for Families and a family retreat.

MEN OF WESTMINSTER

Men of Westminster sponsors a hot breakfast throughout the year on the second Friday of every month, from 7:00 – 8:30 a.m. During 2014, the speakers included political consultant and President of North Star Opinion Research Whit Ayres, former State Department official and arms negotiator Paul van Son, military author and novelist Thomas Young, and Boston Globe national political reporter Matt Viser.

MOW also organizes and hosts a men's annual weekend retreat in February at the Hallowood Retreat and Conference Center in Frederick County, MD. The leader at the 2014 retreat was Dr. Bruce Douglass, Director of the Reformed Institute of Metropolitan Washington, who presented the topic *Being a Man of Faith Today – Rethinking Religion and Masculinity*.

During 2014 MOW hosted Fellowship Hour on Mother's Day. MOW also hosted and did the food preparation for the pancake breakfast for the Youth Kick-Off Event in September.

SCOUTS

Scouting has been part of Westminster's youth ministry since 1942, the same year the Church's first building opened. In 2013, the Church expanded its scouting program to include Venturing Crew 129, a coed high adventure program for youth ages 14 to 20. Cub Scout Pack 129 serves 80 boys in grades 1 to 5; Boy Scout Troop 129 serves 70 boys ages 11 to 17; and Venturing Crew 129 serves 10 members. The younger Cub Scouts had a week of summer Day Camp and the older Cubs spent a week at the Goshen Scout Reservation in southwest Virginia. Six Boy Scouts earned the Eagle Scout rank. The Troop spent a week of summer camp at Goshen and both the Troop and the Crew spent a week of sailing at the Florida Sea Base.

WESTMINSTER ROADSTERS—BOOMERS AND BEYOND

The Westminster Roadsters had a wide variety of activities during 2014. Six different trips were taken by the Roadsters. Highlights included: a tour of the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception, a visit to the National Gallery of Art's Degas/Cassatt exhibit, a shopping trip to National Harbor, lunch in Middleburg, a visit to the Museum of Natural History to see the Jerusalem movie, and a trip to the National Cathedral to see the crèche exhibit.

Five lunches were also held at Westminster. We continued with our intergenerational lunches by hosting one lunch after the M&M Week performance and another one in August which featured senior high youth talking about their mission trip. We welcomed two guest speakers, Dr. William May who spoke about health issues and Bobbie O'Brien who is a volunteer for the Road Scholars trip program. Our final Lunch and Learn featured Paul Stetsenko who talked about his interest in iconography. We continued monthly trips to the Little Theater of Alexandria in Old Town, seeing fun productions by some fine local actors.

Over seventy people participated in at least one of the above activities.

SINGLES – FLYING SOLO

Flying Solo Singles (40's and above) enjoys a variety of activities each year that include fellowship with one another, service to the church and to the community, and educational opportunities. We have monthly Dine-Outs and Potlucks, three Roundtable Lunch discussions per year, quarterly Book Group discussions, an annual weekend Retreat, and numerous other special events. Some highlights of 2014 include:

- Fall Retreat to Roslyn Retreat Center just outside of Richmond, with discussion led by Jill Ewell on remembering and sharing our life stories.
- Roundtables included a discussion with pastor Larry Hayward about his experience as moderator of National Capital Presbytery, a presentation by Foundation Board member Laurie Blackburn on financial planning for retirement, and a talk by Jay Keller of Interfaith Alliance on religious freedom and diversity in America.
- Service projects included making sandwiches for the Bag Lunch program at our monthly potluck, assembling packets for the Street People Project, and participating in the Adopt-a-Family program at Christmas.
- Book Group met quarterly to read a variety of fiction and non-fiction works where we explored issues of life and faith.
- Enjoyed fellowship together on several outings (Arlington Cemetery, Folklife Festival, Marine Corps Museum, Ghost Tour of Old Town), at Thanksgiving and Christmas dinners, and at our annual Super Chili Bowl and Christmas parties.

In addition to many fun and interesting activities, Flying Solo also supports one another in Christian love and fellowship when members are experiencing grief, sadness, or difficulty. We are a community of friends who reach out to each other in times of joy and in times of need.

WOMEN

Women have many opportunities for meaningful fellowship—and fun! Six Presbyterian Women’s Circles meet monthly for Bible study, fellowship and service projects. Other monthly groups include Presbyterian Women Work Day, coordinated by Nancy McIver, to make pillows for children and heart patients at Alexandria Hospital; the Book Discussion Groups, morning and evening, led by Clara Beth Van de Water; and the Shanghai Card Night with Diane French. The annual retreat in March was led by Dr. Patricia Lyons, Director of Service Learning and teacher of religion and ethics at St. Stephen's & St. Agnes Episcopal School, on the writing of C.S. Lewis. Women held a fall gathering, "Journeys to Justice: Building Hope for Children and Farm Workers Among Us," with Rev. Dr. Sharon Stanley-Rea, Director of Refugee and Immigration Ministries, Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and Presbyterian minister.

YOUNG ADULTS

The Young Adults met regularly at Faith on Tap, finished out a year-long Sunday morning Bible study (in the spring), supported the Ladrey community at Christmas, and in December began an effort to support the youth by attending a high school performance of “The Great Gatsby”—starring one of our youth!

YOUTH – MIDDLE SCHOOL AND SENIOR HIGH

The Senior High group held a ski retreat at Massanutten, VA, and both groups enjoyed overnight lock-ins. Youth also led worship on Youth Sunday, telling and preaching on the story of Christ’s transfiguration. Youth participated in local mission projects such as Last Saturday Food Distribution for ALIVE, the Adopt-a-Turkey and Adopt-a-Family programs, and created 10,000 meals for people in Liberia through the Stop Hunger Now program. Our summer mission trips included a Middle School gleaning trip to Exmore, VA, and a Senior High trip to Chapmanville, WV with the Appalachia Service Project, where they helped with home repair projects. The Youth began working with the Deacons through the "Deacons Buddy" program to assist with pastoral care needs in the church. The Renovation Task Force continued to work with Ministry Architects to help the Youth program focus its vision and grow its ability to serve Youth in Alexandria. Caitlin Dallas was hired as the Youth Program Coordinator in the fall of 2014.

EDUCATION

YOUNG CHILDREN

Babies are cared for by our dedicated Nursery staff. There is a paid staff person in each of the four separate childcare rooms for the age groups of ones, twos, threes and fours. A parent volunteer is also present. We continued to provide simple Bible lessons to our two-, three-, and four-year-old classrooms.

ELEMENTARY AND CREATION STATION

In Creation Station, our rotation model for Christian Education for grades Kindergarten-5, we continued our Whole Family experience. All family members are encouraged to participate in this hour during the first Sunday of each month. During the rest of each month, only the children come to Creation Station. The children continue to learn the story taught by volunteers through storytelling, art projects, cooking, video, games, and puzzles. 2014 brought a new focus on mission for 4th and 5th graders in Creation Station. The children hosted coffee hour, participated in the Music Ministry Outreach Program, and held a food drive. The Children & Worship program continued to provide Biblical Stories to kindergarten and first graders during the 11:00 a.m. worship service.

YOUTH

Each Sunday during the school year our youth continue exploring their faith, led by adult members of the congregation: Middle School Youth Café (Grades 6-7) and Senior High Youth Café (Grades 9-12). Sixteen eighth graders were confirmed following this year's Confirmation Class.

ADULTS

Sunday morning classes taught by professors (many from nearby universities, guest ministers, and Westminster members) were well received. Topics included the gospel of Mark, secularism, science, public and social ethics, a Lenten series on Paul, the Holy Land, climate change (including their effects on monarch butterflies and the oceans), John Knox, power and discipleship, political and social issues in the Muslim world, an Advent series on the infancy narratives, and two books talks with the authors—one on Simon of Cyrene and one on other religions.

Larry Hayward began a second course on the Old Testament on Sunday afternoons. A group of adults from the 2013-2014 New Testament class continued their studies in a Thursday morning Faith and Life series, taught by the students themselves and covering topics including telling your story, *The Grand Inquisitor*, C.S. Lewis, and science and religion. Westminster continued to support additional educational programs offered by the Reformed Institute of Metropolitan Washington.

LIBRARY RESOURCES

In 2014, the Library purchased many new books as well as receiving quite a few donations. Titles include the Pulitzer Prize-winning novel *The Goldfinch*, a biography of Bach *Music in the Castle of Heaven*, another in the *Sacra Pagina* reference series--this one on the book of Romans--and *The Forgetting*, an analysis of Alzheimer's. Also, there is now a "green" section for environmentally-themed items.

A burst pipe did some damage to the library, but only a few books had to be discarded. The library is usually a popular destination on Sunday morning, especially for parents of very young children. Parents appreciated the two comfortable chairs and variety of board books for toddlers.

WORSHIP AND MUSIC

The Worship and Music Committee coordinates with the church staff in all aspects of organized worship at WPC and represents (and defers to) the Session in such matters. Regular activities include organizing volunteers for and arranging logistics for administration of the Lord's Supper, ushering, provision of flowers, arranging some aspects of sanctuary and chapel care, and involvement in strategic planning for worship services. The committee also oversees the music ministry at Westminster, working closely with Larry Hayward and Paul Stetsenko. Larry is always grateful for the way people at Westminster are committed to worship with learning through the sermons and praising God through the music.

If you would like to assist in the work of this committee, please email us at worship@wpc-alex.org.

HIGHLIGHTS OF 2014

- A free concert was held on March 10 in the Westminster sanctuary by the renowned Duke Chorale. WPC member Rebecca Dickerson is currently attending Duke and is a member of the Chorale.
- The Music Ministry Outreach program had many visits to members in their homes, and to members and residents of Goodwin House. Over 30 people participated, including 10 children, primarily 4th and 5th graders.
- During Lent, videos of children and adults telling bible stories for each week were used in the Lenten Wednesday night intergenerational worship experiences. Sunday worship services during Lent featured a number of people telling scripture by heart.

CHILDREN IN WORSHIP & MUSIC

- Music & More Week presented *Stories Jesus Told*.
- Pre-baptism meetings readied families for the sacrament of baptism.
- The Milestones of Faith Communion Class (largely 2nd graders) helped to lead communion in October.

YOUTH IN WORSHIP & MUSIC

Youth led their Youth Sunday service focusing on the story of Christ's transfiguration. Youth elders officiated in the Sacraments of Baptism and Lord's Supper. Youth served as lay leaders occasionally. One of the youth, Jenny Abrahamson, served as usher captain. And two youth members, Amanda and Laura Wilcox, led musical pieces during worship.

MUSIC ENSEMBLES

In addition to the Westminster Choir's weekly leadership in worship, the choir sang the second half of Handel's *Messiah* on Palm Sunday, the Fauré *Requiem* on Remembrance Sunday, and the Bach *Magnificat* in Advent. Instrumental ensembles for these works were made possible by several special donations.

The number of children participating in the Children's Choirs has grown. Since September, we have two children's choirs, a "Younger" and "Older" group. Each group sings in worship at least twice a month; there are approximately 34 children participating.

The handbell ensembles, Westminster Ringers and the Celtic Cross Ringers, regularly enhanced worship.

MISSION

The mission committees are pleased to share the following with the congregation. Because of strong stewardship support and your special donations beyond your annual pledge, we were able to continue to expand support for mission. We also want to thank everyone who gave of their time. The countless volunteer hours serve as the face of Westminster in our community lending a helping hand with a personal smile. A big thank you to you for your efforts and support in 2014!

LOCAL MISSION

All of our local mission efforts are geared around our CHES theme: Children, Hunger, Education, Shelter, & Self-Sufficiency. Highlights: An increased in stewardship budget for local mission of more than 8%, for a total expenditure of more than \$111,000.

- ALIVE– \$17,200–Our largest recipient of financial support, ALIVE also benefited from Westminster’s volunteer effort in support of their last Saturday food distribution every month, a team of volunteers that deliver donated furniture one weekend a year, and more than 200 bags and boxes of food donated by our families.
- Carpenter’s Shelter–\$9,000–While our financial support was welcome, it was our service through preparing and serving dinner the first Monday of every month that was perhaps most appreciated. More than 40 different volunteers supported the effort during the course of the year, contributing more than 240 hours of volunteer service and serving approximately 800 meals.
- Rebuilding Together Alexandria–\$5,000–Westminster supported a spring and fall work day. In the spring, a volunteer crew of approximately 18 people helped to rehab one house. In the fall, a volunteer crew weatherized one house.
- George Mason Tutoring–\$4,500–For two days a week from October through May, Westminster was able to organize tutoring for approximately 25 students thanks to the work of 30 volunteers.
- Meals on Wheels–\$4,000–The third Tuesday of every month a dedicated group of approximately 14 volunteers delivered about 100 meals each week to seniors and shut-ins.
- Adopt-A-Turkey– \$8,000–300 Thanksgiving meals were distributed to Alexandria area families. The youth group, the Session, and the

Deacons provided the people power to pack the boxes take them to various drop points around town.

- Bag Lunch—\$2,843—Sandwiches, sandwiches, sandwiches. In 2014, the congregation made more than 2,700 sandwiches and distributed them as part of a four times a month meal service which fed on average 50 people each time.
- Persons in Need Packets— \$1,500—Two times a year packets filled with information, toiletries, and McDonald’s gift cards were assembled by volunteers for distribution by the congregation to the homeless. In all, more than 200 packets were taken and shared with our least fortunate neighbors.

We also supported the following additional organizations:

- Arlington/Alexandria Coalition for the Homeless - \$9,000
- Virginia Cares—\$2,000—Works with people released from prison
- Just Neighbors— \$2,000—Provides immigration services for those here legally
- Empower Women International —\$2,000—Entrepreneurial training for immigrant woman
- Alexandria Untouchables—\$2,000—Mentoring for young men
- Network Centers—\$4,000— Preschool for low income families
- Guest House—\$5,000—Housing and Job Training for Women post-incarceration
- Neighborhood Health—\$4,00 —Healthcare for low-income families
- Alexandria City Social Workers’ Client Support—\$4,800
- Senior Services of Alexandria—\$8,000—Support for a variety of senior services

2014 marked the third year of the Westminster Community Grant Program. This past year we funded more than \$20,000 to the following organizations:

- United Community Ministries for an industrial scale to process food donations
- Stop Child Abuse Now for training and other materials
- Center for Alexandria’s Children for supplies for summer camp
- Bethany House to renovate a bathroom in a shelter for victims of domestic violence
- ALIVE to repair its truck that is used to deliver food and furniture
- Alexandria Seaport Foundation for dory boat equipment

These are merely the highlights of the major efforts organized by the local mission committee this past year. There are dozens of smaller, meaningful efforts that could also have been mentioned. To read the full year-end report, please visit the local mission page on Westminster's website. We thank you for your support in 2014 and have exciting plans for 2015. If you have questions or would like to get involved, contact Kristin Eagan, chair, at LocalMission@wpc-alex.org.

NATIONAL MISSION

The National Mission Committee currently focuses on three primary areas: housing rehabilitation in Appalachia with the Appalachia Service Project; regional hunger concerns through gleaning trips in connection with the Northern Neck Food Bank and the Society of St. Andrew; and support of Native American ministry and mission with the Bdecan Presbyterian Church in Spirit Lake, North Dakota. In addition, the Committee runs the Cents-Ability program and supports a sub-committee called the Green Team, which was formed in 2013 to help Westminster become better stewards of God's creation.

APPALACHIA SERVICE PROJECT

In October, 11 members returned to the ASP Guyan Valley Center in Brenton, West Virginia. Despite some frustrating weather, two teams of adults worked on two housing rehabilitation projects. We continue to strengthen our relationship with the staff at the Guyan Valley Center and also contributed to that center with monetary gifts in the past year. The financial support went to general projects and for a new sewer system.

BDECAN PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH AT SPIRIT LAKE

We continued to support Youth & Outreach Coordinator Joe Obermeyer in his work at the Bdecan Presbyterian Church at Spirit Lake, North Dakota. Westminster provided for more than half of the salary and benefits for this position in 2014. In late April, a small mission team consisting of Larry Hayward, Janet Riksen, Art Sauer and Adrienne Griffin visited Spirit Lake to get a first-hand view of the progress being made. They met with both Joe and Kevin Kaufmann, the pastor at the Lake Region Presbyterian parish, and got to see the new children's program in action as well as manse repairs funded by Westminster. They also attended a meeting of the Bdecan Task force of the

Presbytery of the Northern Plains. In late 2014 the Lake Region Parish was dissolved, but Joe's position will continue under the supervision of the Presbytery.

CENTS-ABILITY

In connection with the Christian Education and Worship Committees, the National Mission Committee continued the Cents-Ability program to teach our children and youth about the need to support local and national programs to combat hunger. The younger children painted wooden reusable banks for participants to take home and collect their change. For 2014, we raised a total of \$2,608.88, an increase of nearly \$1,000 over the prior year. A significant portion of the amount raised (60%) was used to support the Adopt-a-Turkey program run by the Local Mission Committee.

GLEANNING TRIPS

On July 19, approximately 10 Westminster volunteers traveled to Colonial Beach, VA, to pick corn for the Northern Neck Food Bank. On September 27, eight volunteers harvested apples at an orchard in Winchester, VA, filling several vehicles to the brim for the Society of St. Andrew's Gleaning Network. This year we were joined on both our trips by youth and adults from the Alexandria Untouchables mentoring program. It was great to be able to participate in a joint mission project. The committee also supported both the Northern Neck Food Bank and the Society of St. Andrew in 2014 with monetary gifts.

GREEN TEAM

During Lent, the Green Team handed out Lenten Resolution Cards with an environmental theme. For Earth Day, the team sponsored a "Walk, Bike or Carpool to Church" contest with environmental prizes for the winners. On April 27, the Green Team sponsored an adult class on Monarch butterflies. In the fall, we facilitated a youth trip to Oronoco Bay Park to participate in a cleanup with the Clean Virginia Waterways campaign. We helped sponsor several adult classes focusing on the film series "Renewal" and one on climate change, which was taught by Dr. Victor Zabielski of NVCC. Finally, the Green Team donated funds toward native plantings in the Blomberg Courtyard and toward a garden project for the 4th and 5th graders as they plan, prepare and plant an herb garden in spring 2015.

INTERNATIONAL MISSION

The International Missions Committee coordinates the mission activities of Westminster through direct partnerships, through the Presbyterian Church, USA, and in cooperation with mission organizations.

UNITED ORPHANAGE AND ACADEMY

For more than 10 years, Westminster has supported the work of the United Orphanage and Academy (UOA) in Moi's Bridge, Kenya. There are currently 50 children and youth living at the orphanage and 4 that are away at college that we support. There are almost 175 students attending the Academy on a daily basis, which goes from primary school through 8th grade. In addition to supporting the children living at the orphanage, Westminster (and several the other U.S. churches that are involved in this mission) also provides financial support for 50 scholarship students from the surrounding area. We have 4 students who are study at the college level, with more to coming in the coming years, which is very exciting.

UOA celebrated its 10th anniversary in 2014. A trip to UOA was planned for summer 2014 but had to be cancelled at the last minute due to security concerns in Kenya. At the end of 2014, Westminster provided funds for the purchase of a used van to transport the school children—an urgent need that had been identified by the UOA Director. The Committee will evaluate the situation in Kenya and consider a trip to UOA in 2015.

EAST AFRICA MISSIONS

In 2011, Westminster entered into a Memorandum of Understanding with the Njoro/Elburgon Presbyteries of the Presbyterian Church of East Africa. The MOU documented Westminster's commitment to provide financial support for three church building projects that Westminster has supported historically and members of the church have visited in Kenya. In 2013, the International Missions Committee disbursed the final payments committed under the MOU. In 2014, one of the three churches, Temoyetta, was completed and dedicated in a ceremony attended by many dignitaries of the Presbyterian Church of East Africa. Westminster received a video of the dedication service. The Njoro/Elburgon Presbyteries Projects Coordinator has indicated that the other two churches will be dedicated as soon as possible.

In 2014, Westminster continued to provide scholarship funds to support a seminary student and his family at Justo Mwale Theological College in Lusaka, Zambia. Our scholarship student, Mr. Justine Zimba, has a wife and two young daughters, and is a member of the Central Africa Presbyterian Synod of Zambia. As we have done for many years, in 2014, Westminster also provided financial support to Chasefu Theological College, another small seminary in Zambia.

The International Missions Committee continued to provide financial support for Nancy Collins, the PCUSA Regional Liaison for East Central Africa. Nancy Collins provided updates throughout 2014 about Justo Mwale, Chasefu, and our scholarship students.

OTHER INTERNATIONAL MISSIONS

While Westminster's most extensive international mission efforts are in Africa, we also continued to provide support in other areas.

- Westminster has had a long relationship with Faith Ministry in Mexico, where we provide scholarships for two school-aged children in Reynosa.
- Westminster has also provided support for medical missions in Haiti, since the earthquake there in 2010. In 2014, we provided financial support to nursing programs of the Medical Benevolence Foundation in Haiti and the Community Coalition for Haiti, which organizes community clinics and surgical theatres.
- In 2014, Westminster participated in the annual Bread for the World Offering of Letters and provided financial support for this Christian advocacy group focused on ending hunger and poverty.
- International Missions used 2014 funds designated for crisis situations to respond to the Ebola crisis in West Africa. Westminster provided funds through two organizations (Doctors Without Borders and Medical Benevolence Foundation) working to control the spread of the disease.

PASTORAL & CONGREGATIONAL CARE

Every day the Pastoral Staff and the Deacons, with the help of the entire congregation, seek to be a caring presence to those experiencing illness, grief or major life transitions. Some related activities from the past year:

- New: deacon/youth initiative. Individual deacons “partner” with one of our youth, inviting them to participate in their regular Sunday duties such as serving as door greeter or assisting the seniors on the bus.
- Deacons sponsored two health and wellness programs led by Dr. Drew Rice, one on how to talk to your doctor and the second on healthy backs.
- Deacons and Elders made 30 extended Communion visits to members on Communion Sundays, in addition to 78 visits by the Deacons to deliver Sunday flowers.
- Deacon Meals Team volunteers, coordinated by Deacon Beth Richardson, provided 10 meals to families with new babies.
- The Card Ministry, under the creative leadership of Amy Stenlund and Deacon Nancy Pitcher, made and sent 65 get-well and sympathy cards, in addition to 150 seasonal cards to homebound members throughout the year.
- The Compassion Guild, under the leadership of Carol Dickerson and Anne Gross, provided support for 9 memorial/funeral services, and coordinated receptions following most of those services.
- A team of dedicated volunteer bus drivers, coordinated by Don Smyles, provided transportation every Sunday for residents of the Goodwin Houses and Washington House.
- The Music Ministry Outreach program, led by Carolyn Carmack, brought hymn singing to members who are homebound or ill. New this fall: the participation of some of our 4th- and 5th-graders in these singing visits.
- The bimonthly “Spotlight on Seniors” in the *Chronicle* featured an interview with a senior member of the congregation.
- The 34 members of the Prayer Chain maintain a confidential prayer list that typically includes 25 to 30 individual prayer requests at any one time. Members met twice to share prayer practices/concerns.
- “Lunches with Larry,” in addition to our traditional “Coffee with the Pastors,” were held at both Goodwin Houses.
- The Member Response Team continued its work to assist members in need.

OTHER COMMITTEES OF THE SESSION

CHURCH HOME

The Church HOME Committee (Helping Our Members Engage) continues to focus on the ways new and long-time members make Westminster their church HOME. The function of the committee is to facilitate the involvement of members in the life of the church by developing bonds among members and enhancing their spiritual growth through connecting them with activities in the life of the church. The HOME Committee participates in weekly visitor review meetings. It also joins the New Member Committee to meet with people considering membership in Westminster, and works with staff and pastors in using the church database as a tool for identifying members' interests and skills. On occasion, the committee is asked to reach out to members whose participation appears to have waned in order to determine interests and/or needs. During 2014, the Church HOME Committee helped to organize and host the New Member Brunch and recruited recently joined members to host three Coffee Hours after the 11:00 service. The committee also participated in the revision of the New Member Information Form. The revised form will make it more efficient for the HOME Committee to connect new members with their specific skills and interests to committees in need of those skills.

BUILDING & GROUNDS

The major event for Building and Grounds in 2014 was the completion of the Karen Blomberg Courtyard project. We gained permit approval after lengthy negotiations with the City regarding extensive stormwater management requirements that are almost invisible now but serve to prevent excessive runoff and meet state and federal requirements. We signed a construction contract with Harry Braswell and work began in the summer and was completed in the late fall. Although the plantings need to grow, the Courtyard hopefully will become a cherished and well-used space, serving as a proper tribute to Karen.

Additional work/maintenance on the WPC facility included:

- new gutter guards around the Courtyard to prevent leaves from clogging our expensive new drainage system
- Replacement of 6 downspouts on the south side of WPC after a theft
- The complete replacement of the concrete plaza in front of the sanctuary
- Installation of a wheelchair accessible entrance to the Courtyard from the Chapel/Johnson Parlor corridor (soon to be completed)
- Replacement of a failed fire alarm monitoring panel
- Hired and received a report from consultants regarding a potential security camera system for our facility, in an effort to protect and secure our church and all its users (including the preschool, the scouts and other after hours activities)
- Received a proposal to monitor temperatures in the organ's enclosed chambers (an ongoing problem causing severe tuning problems)

As a committee, we are committed to performing the mundane but crucial work to maintain and preserve the WPC facility that serves us all.

NOMINATING

The 2014 Nominating Committee presented slates of officers for the Congregation's consideration as church officers. The committee would like to thank those who volunteered and those who considered volunteering.

PERSONNEL

Changes and additions to our staff:

- Ellen Livingston and Cheyenne Smith were hired as Sunday morning childcare workers in July.
- Caitlin Dallas was hired as Youth Program Coordinator effective October 24.
- Clara Beth van de Water retired as Director of Adult Education and Women's Ministries effective December 31.

STEWARDSHIP

The 2014 Stewardship Pledge drive was met with challenges due to a loss of many regular pledges due to deaths and disability in the congregation. We saw a decline in Pledge units down to 395 and a slight decrease in pledged dollars to \$1,619,681 and 6 youth pledges totaling \$428 as of January 28. The theme of the year was "Giving Forward," with our emphasis placed on the growing sector of the church population being younger families with young children. Session approved the hiring of a new Youth Program Director to support this area of growth and funding for this new position is the 2015 budget.

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP STATISTICS

1,007 total members as of 12/31/14 - a gain of 17!

- 64 new or reactivated members (includes 16 confirmands)
- 15 member deaths
- 32 other losses (transfers to other churches, removed, etc.)
- 28 child and infant baptisms, 4 adult baptisms
- 24 births or adoptions in member families

CHURCH FINANCIAL HEALTH, ADMINISTRATION & FINANCE

Westminster continues to be very strong financially thanks to the commitment and support of our members. The church has good cash balances, strong revenue sources from pledges, offerings, and contributions. Our 2014 yearly income exceeded our yearly expenses, primarily due to expenditures being lower than budgeted. Income from cell phone companies with antennas in our steeple continue to add to reserve funds which provide supplemental support for special programs like retreats and special music events, for major capital repairs and maintenance, for replacement of office equipment, and for major organ repairs and maintenance.

The Westminster Foundation, which invests and oversees funds established through special gifts and bequests, ended the year with a balance of over \$1.6 million. These funds support the work of every area of the church's program and mission. Within the church, memorial funds were used for a new communion table in the chapel and for the Creation Station mural painting. Other funds supported the music programs of the church, including refurbishment of the hand bells, sponsoring a Duke Chorale concert, and funding musicians for Faure's Requiem and Bach's Magnificat in worship services. The Foundation also supported mission activity through contributions to the Virginia Tech 3.2 for 32 Run in Remembrance, the bag lunch program, seminary scholarships in Africa, and PCUSA crisis and benevolence programs.

During 2014, the church implemented a plan to redesign the courtyard in memory of Karen Blomberg and install a new accessible door next to the Chapel. The project was funded by accumulated cell phone revenue, undesignated bequests and memorial gifts for Karen Blomberg and David Griffith. The completion of the project is expected to occur in early 2015.

2014 Year-end Finances

Operating Funds:

Pledges	\$	1,579,882
Offering	\$	139,895
Other	\$	<u>116,779</u>
Total Income	\$	1,836,556
Total Expenses	\$	<u>1,817,946</u>
Net expense	\$	18,610

Westminster Foundation:

Year-end balance	\$	1,645,769
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**WESTMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
2701 CAMERON MILLS ROAD
ALEXANDRIA, VA 22302**

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