

2015 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

The Congregational Life committee plans all-church fellowship events throughout the year, some in conjunction with other groups in the congregation, in order to celebrate our life together as one church family. In 2015 we enjoyed the friendship and love we share in Christ through these special activities:

- February 25, March 4, 11, 18, 25 - Lenten Suppers
- March 29 - Palm Sunday Breakfast
- June 14 - Annual Picnic and Summer Kick-Off
- October 17 – S'mores & More: Congregational Campfire and Chili Cook-Off
- November 15 - Stewardship Celebration at Coffee Hour
- December 13 - Christmas Pageant and Congregational Dinner

The committee also serves as the liaison between Session and the following fellowship and outreach 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, Women's Workday Pillow Ministry, Young Adults, Westminster Softball Team, and sponsored Scouting organizations (Boy Scouts, Cub Scouts and Venturing Crew).

Fellowship Hour: Church committees, fellowship groups, and other church organizations take turns hosting Fellowship Hour after worship each Sunday throughout the year. Coffee Hour takes place indoors during the colder months, and Lemonade on the Lawn is held out in the Blomberg Courtyard and front lawn in the spring, summer and early fall. In 2015, we extended the schedule for Lemonade on the Lawn in order to enjoy the new courtyard and to greet visitors more easily after church. A special "thank you" goes to Doug Anderson who organizes and hosts coffee hour for the early service each week.

ADULTS

Tables for Eight held monthly dinners in members' homes and had their kick-off potluck on September 26. The Craft Group held its annual boxwood workshop in December which attracted many members, visitors, friends, and neighbors as we prepared to celebrate Christmas in our homes. Tuesday Morning Faith Group continued seasonal book discussions and small-group fellowship. In July, church members enjoyed the annual baseball outing to see a Nationals game, and this year our very own Westminster Softball Team won the championship in the Alexandria church softball league! The WPC softball team is made up of all sorts of Westminsterites, from youth and young adults to men and women of all ages. Families and friends enjoyed cheering on our team!

FAMILIES

Rev. Casey Fitzgerald and Patty Chamberlain served children and their families with a wide range of programs throughout 2015. The annual M&M Week, our music camp experience for elementary aged children, was held in June. Children worked towards a performance of "Growing Up in Galilee" and learned about the teachings 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 2015, the speakers included former Clerk of the U. S. Supreme Court and current Visiting Fellow at the Hoover Institution at Stanford University, William K. Suter; former Senior Director for China with the Office of the U. S. Trade Representative and current Executive Director for International Government Affairs for Amgen, Paul Neureiter; former USAID Mission Director for Peru, Ecuador, and the former Soviet Union and current international development consultant, Tom Geiger; and neurosurgeon at Georgetown University Hospital, Dr. Drew Rice.

MOW also organizes and hosts a men's annual weekend retreat in February at the Hallwood Retreat and Conference Center in Frederick County, MD. The leader at the 2015 retreat was Dr. Eric O. Springsted, Former lecturer in philosophy and theology at Princeton Theological Seminary and current member of the Company of Teachers associated with the Reformed Institute of Metropolitan Washington. The retreat theme was Having an Inner Life.

During 2015 MOW hosted the March 11 Lenten Dinner. MOW also hosted Fellowship Hour on Mother's Day.

SCOUTS

Scouting has been part of Westminster's youth ministry since January 31, 1942, the same year the Church's first building opened. Cub Scout Pack 129 serves 70 boys in grades 1 to 5. The younger Cubs had a week of summer Day Camp and the older Cubs spent a week at the Goshen Scout Reservation in southwest Virginia. Boy Scout Troop 129 serves 70 boys ages 11 to 17. The Troop spent a week of summer camp at Goshen as well as camped and hiked 80 miles at the Philmont Scout Ranch in northern New Mexico. Four Boy Scouts earned the Eagle Scout rank. The Venturing Crew, started in 2013, serves 12 boys & girls ages 14-20. The Crew explored BSA's newest High Adventure camp, the Bechtel Summit in West Virginia, doing white-water rafting, shooting, zip-lining and rock climbing.

WESTMINSTER ROADSTERS—BOOMERS AND BEYOND

The Westminster Roadsters had a wide variety of activities during 2015. Seven different trips were taken by the Roadsters. Highlights included: a trip to the National Botanic Gardens, lunch at RT's Restaurant, shopping trip to Wegmans Grocery Store, tour of Mount Vernon, tour of Nats Stadium with the youth, trip to the National Archives, and a shopping trip to the Leesburg Outlets. (Our January trip was postponed to March due to snow.)

Four 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 hosted two lunch and learns with members of Westminster as our keynote speakers. Kim and Scott

Campbell did a presentation about what it means to be a military family in today's world; and Matt Viser talked about his role in the upcoming election as the DC correspondent for the Boston Globe. 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 (50's and above) enjoyed a variety of activities in 2015 which included fellowship with one another, service to the church and to the community, and educational opportunities. We had monthly Dine-Outs and Potlucks, three Roundtable Lunch presentations, quarterly Book Group discussions, our annual Fall Retreat, in addition to special events and mission projects. Some highlights of 2015 include:

- Fall Retreat to Bishop Claggett Retreat Center overlooking Sugarloaf Mt. in Buckeystown, MD. The theme of our retreat was “Happy Birthday To Us: Celebrating Our Church Community and Companions” which included discussions and activities centering on being one body in Christ.
- Roundtables included presentations and discussions with Sister Simone Campbell from the “Nuns on the Bus” social justice program highlighting income inequality, Ruth Everhardt on Un-Cluttering as a Spiritual Discipline seeking to make time and space for God in our lives, and Marjorie Phillips with her reflections on living and working in Mexico. We also started discussions about future hopes and dreams for the Flying Solo group.
- Service projects included making sandwiches for the Bag Lunch program at our monthly potluck, assembling packets for the People in Need project, and participating in the Holiday Sharing 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. In 2015 we discussed “Gilead,” “On Saudi Arabia,” “God Stories,” and “What Paul Meant.”
- Special outings and events where we enjoyed learning and fellowship together (Botanic Garden, Hillwood Estate, 4th of July concert at National Cathedral, Lincoln Cottage, and ZooLights), as

well as our Thanksgiving and Christmas Day dinners, and 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 pray for and reach out to each other in times of joy and in times of need. We are indeed one body in Christ.

WOMEN

2015 was a year of transitions for women's ministry as we thanked and honored Clara Beth Van de Water for her many years of loving and faithful leadership in women's ministry at Westminster. We also appreciated Amey Upton graciously and thoughtfully taking us through the interim period following Clara Beth's retirement. Both paved the way for Nancy Hall Berens who took on this responsibility as of June 1, 2015. In addition, we had a change in leadership and in name of the Presbyterian Women's Board. We expressed gratitude to Elizabeth Martineau who completed her term as Moderator, and we welcomed Bea Hurt as the new Moderator and Janet Harris as the new Vice Moderator of what we are now calling the PW Coordinating Team (instead of PW Board).

Women have many opportunities for meaningful fellowship, study, mission outreach –and fun at Westminster. We welcome women of all ages and stages of life to be part of our women's ministry. 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. We thank Diane for many years coordinating Shanghai, and we look forward to continued fellowship as Anne Pickett takes over from Diane. The annual Women's Retreat in March 2015 was led by Beth Williams and focused on "Passionate Spirituality: Practicing Faith with Joy." We enjoyed opportunities to grow in faith, to sing, pray, and worship, and to connect with one another in Christian fellowship. Women also held a Spring Gathering with Ruth Everhart who spoke about "Violence Against Women." Our Fall Gathering welcomed Patrick Hunnicutt who introduced us to the

idea of “Spiritual Direction and Contemplative Prayer” and talked about his training to become a spiritual director through the Shalem Institute. Five of our women attended the Synod PW Summer Gathering last June, and outgoing moderator Elizabeth Martineau attended the Churchwide Gathering of Presbyterian Women in Minneapolis. These gatherings provided members the chance to connect with other Presbyterian women in our region and from around the denomination, as well as to engage in Bible study, prayer, worship, and to learn about the many social justice issues which affect women world-wide.

YOUTH – MIDDLE SCHOOL AND SENIOR HIGH

Youth fellowship highlights include fall and winter senior high retreats, overnight lock-ins for middle school and senior high youth, and numerous fellowship gatherings. See elsewhere in the report for youth activities as they relate to mission, education and worship.

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. The 4th and 5th graders continued working on mission projects during Creation Station. The children hosted coffee hour, participated in the Music Ministry Outreach Program, and held a snow boot and snow pant drive for the children of Spirit Lake. The Children & Worship program continued to provide Biblical Stories to kindergarten and first graders during the 11:00 a.m. worship service.

Finally, the M & M participants (Music and More) performed their musical, "Growing up in Galilee" for the June 28, 2015 worship service. This presentation was highly successful and we plan to continue to have the performance be during a Sunday worship hour.

YOUTH

Both Middle School and Senior High youth and their adult leaders continued to meet most Sunday mornings during the program year to explore faith and Scripture. Six youth participated in Confirmation, culminating in their becoming full members of Westminster. Middle School youth learned about key characters from the Old and New Testaments. Senior Highs had a variety of classes (some youth-led), as we continue to explore models that are engaging and well-enrolled.

ADULTS

We started 2015 by giving gratitude for the ministry of Clara Beth Van de Water who had been the Director of WPC Adult Education for over thirty years. The Adult Education program grew, flourished and deepened under her loyal leadership of many years. Amey Upton was hired as Interim Director of Adult Education/Women's Ministry in January 2015.

Four pillars were identified as the framework for Adult Education classes:

- Biblical Studies
- Current Affairs
- Health Education
- Spiritual Formation

A highlight of Adult Education was the work of many hands of the congregation when WPC held its' first "Dessert & Dialogue" on a Sunday evening in October with Dr. Thomas Insel, Director of the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH), as our kick-off speaker. Over 160 people attended the Sunday evening event followed by three consecutive Sunday morning classes with scientists from NIMH who taught us about the complicated issues and challenges surrounding the brain diseases which often lead to depression, anxiety and suicide. Over 60 people attended each of the Sunday morning classes.

Centering Prayer was offered for both Advent and Lent for the first time and well attended and received.

Twenty-three Adult Ed classes were held on Sunday mornings including Biblical classes on the Parables, John's Gospel, Matthew's women, Pope Francis, and Calvinism; Current Affairs classes on faith-based diplomacy, recycling, the Ebola crisis, US education policy, wildlife, Christianity in a plural society, faith and science, and climate change; Health classes from experts at the National Institute on Mental Health on depression, anxiety, and suicide; and Spirituality classes on uncluttering, philanthropy, homelessness, feeding the hungry, the Appalachia Service Project, and centering prayer.

WORSHIP AND MUSIC

WORSHIP AND MUSIC COMMITTEE

The Worship and Music Committee meets monthly and is responsible for preparation of communion elements, scheduling elders and deacons to serve, and clean up. Communion is served monthly at Westminster and delivered to homebound members by deacons. The committee oversees the ushers and the care of the sanctuary and chapel. Efforts were made in 2015 to maintain better organ tuning. Several of the communion pieces were replaced in 2015. The chairs in the choir loft were repaired and renovated. The committee oversees the music ministry at Westminster, working closely with Paul Stetsenko. Pastor Larry Hayward is grateful for the way the congregation at Westminster is committed to worship -- 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.

2015 ADVENT CALENDAR

The committee developed a web-based Advent calendar consisting of a scripture reading for each day (189 people signed up for the daily post; it averaged 173 views per day). A meditation, piece of art, and music were selected to illuminate that scripture. The pastors and 19 members of Westminster wrote the meditations. Pastor Casey Fitzgerald created videos in lieu of the meditation, enlisting the help of many more WPC members. A second version of the calendar was printed in black and white. While similar to the web-based version in conception and design, it included the meditations while omitting the video and music.

USHERS

Over 65 members serve as regular ushers for the 8:30 and 11:00 services on a rotating basis. We always need more ushers, if you are interested in learning more about this service, please email worship@wpc-alex.org.

MUSIC ENSEMBLES

- In addition to the Westminster Choir's weekly leadership in worship, festival services with orchestra such as Palm Sunday (Bach, Cantata "King of Heaven, be welcome"), Remembrance Sunday (R. Vaughan Williams, Cantata "Dona Nobis Pacem") and Lessons and Carols were impressive in quality and impactfulness.
- Westminster is fortunate to have two active children's choirs: the "Younger" with 22 choristers and "Older" Children's Choirs with 13 choristers. Each group sings in worship about twice a month. The repertoire is either composed by Music Director Paul Stetsenko or drawn from classical repertoire. The choristers are introduced to songs in other languages and they have an opportunity to sing with orchestra and instruments during the year.
- The handbell ensembles – Westminster Ringers and the Celtic Cross Ringers -- regularly enhanced worship in 2015. The ensembles also use handchimes and singing bells in addition to handbells.

MUSIC MINISTRY OUTREACH

- Monthly visits to homes or assisted living/retirement communities to share music, primarily Hymns, with those unable to regularly attend worship due to age or illness.
- Open to anyone in the Church to sing hymns/sacred music or play instruments. 34 people participated in the Music Ministry Outreach visits during 2015 as singers and/or instrumentalists, including many young people and their parents.

YOUTH IN WORSHIP AT WESTMINSTER

Increasing youth leadership in worship (beyond Youth Sunday) has been an area of focus for the Youth Renovation Task Force. In 2015, youth led worship in a variety of ways, including monthly ushering, playing anthems, reading Scripture and leading prayers. Our youth elders continue to participate in leading the Sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper. During the four Sundays of Advent, youth pairings led the opening call to worship and the lighting of the Advent candles. Those

youth who do participate in worship are featured in the bulletin notes of the service, which encourage older members to introduce themselves and inquire about a particular aspect of that youth's interests and activities. We hope to continue to build on this increased visibility in 2016.

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 2015!

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 May, five members returned to the ASP Guyan Valley Center in Brenton, West Virginia. Despite being a small group, the team completed several projects around the center. We continue to strengthen our relationship with the staff at the Guyan Valley Center and also contributed to that center with monetary gifts throughout the past year. Westminster had a visit from ASP CEO Walter Crouch in September during the Adult Education Hour, where he shared a new video about ASP produced by CityGate films. The committee presented him with a monetary gift to purchase a metal brake for the Guyan Valley Center, which was a special request from the director there.

BDECAN PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH AT SPIRIT LAKE

The committee 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 2015. Several times during the year, the committee “visited” with Joe Obermeyer and the ministry team at the Presbytery of the Northern Plains via Skype to help reinforce WPC’s connection to the Bdecan community. In October, Reverend Hunnicutt visited Spirit Lake to get a first-hand view of the progress being made and to lay the groundwork for a youth mission trip in 2016. While visiting, Rev. Hunnicutt got to see the children's program in action as well as the manse repairs funded by Westminster. The committee also established an educational fund to support higher education for members of the Bdecan community with the hopes of being able to offer assistance sometime during 2016.

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. For 2015, we raised a total of \$ \$2127.67. A significant portion of the amount raised (60%) was used to support the Adopt-a-Turkey program run by the Local Mission Committee, while the rest went to Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) hunger programs.

GLEANING TRIPS

On August 8, approximately 10 Westminster volunteers traveled to Colonial Beach, VA, to pick corn for the Northern Neck Food Bank. Along with other volunteers, we gleaned a total of 8,520 pounds of corn. On September 26, six volunteers harvested apples at an orchard in Winchester, VA, filling several vehicles to the brim for the Society of St. Andrew’s Gleaning Network. In total, we joined 137 other volunteers to glean more than 12,000 pounds of apples. These gleaning events continue to be a wonderful way to enjoy God’s creation, cut down on food waste, and give back to our extended community in Northern Virginia. The committee also supported both the Northern Neck Food Bank and the Society of St. Andrew in 2015 with monetary gifts.

GREEN TEAM

During Lent, the Green Team handed out Lenten Resolution Cards with an environmental theme. The team also helped arrange for a City of Alexandria official to teach an adult Sunday School class on recycling in February. For Earth Day, the team sponsored a "Walk, Bike or Carpool to Church" contest with environmentally-friendly prizes for the winners. The Green Team helped sponsor an adult education class in October on how to bring native plants to your own backyard. In a similar vein, the children of Creation Station used funds donated by the team to create an herb garden at Westminster. Finally, the Green Team provided monetary support in 2015 to Presbyterians for Earth Care and to the Northern Neck Food Bank to support their gleaning practices.

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 11 years, Westminster has supported the work of the United Orphanage and Academy (UOA) in Moi's Bridge, Kenya. There are currently approximately 55 children and youth living at the orphanage, ranging in age from 8 to 18, and 6 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. While we currently only have a few students who are studying at the college level, there are more to come in the coming years, which is very exciting.

UOA celebrated its 10th anniversary in 2014. In 2015, International Missions began planning for a mission trip to UOA; the last trip was in 2012. A group made up of Westminster members and participants from other churches that support UOA will visit the Orphanage in February 2016. The trip participants will celebrate the 10th anniversary of UOA at that time and present a plaque commemorating the first 10 years of this

very special place and recognizing the contribution of Westminster member Henri Rush (1937-2014) to the founding and growth of UOA.

EAST AFRICA MISSIONS

In 2015, Westminster continued to provide scholarship funds to support a seminary student at Justo Mwale Theological College in Lusaka, Zambia. We have a new student in 2015, as Mr. Justine Zimba, our previous student, graduated last year. Our new scholarship student, Mr. Andrew Chipeta, is a member of the Central Africa Presbyterian Synod of Zambia and has written indicating his appreciation of our support. As we have done for many years, in 2015, Westminster also provided financial support to Chusefu Theological College, another small seminary in Zambia. This seminary operates on a shoestring budget and our funds go a long way to support their operating costs, primarily food for the students.

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 2015 about Justo Mwale, Chusefu, and her work in Africa.

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 2015, we provided financial support to nursing programs of the Medical Benevolence Foundation in Haiti and the Community Coalition for Haiti (CCH). In 2015, part of our funding for CCH supported the youth mission trip to Haiti in summer 2015.
- In 2015, 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 provides funds every year to address needs caused by natural disasters or other emergencies. In 2015, we provided funds in support of recovery from the Nepal earthquake and the drought causing food insecurity in Malawi.

YOUTH IN MISSION

Youth continue to be active participants in the mission life of Westminster. At the local level, youth have

- Prepared meals for the Adopt-a-turkey program.
- Participated in the Last Saturday Food Distribution program.
- Helped clean up local waterways through events sponsored by the City of Alexandria.
- Made lunches for bag lunch
- Youth participated in the City of Alexandria Holiday Sharing program (replacing our Adopt-a-Family program)
- One youth served as an active member of the local mission grant review team

Additionally, youth mission trips continue to be a highlight of the program. In the summer of 2015, our senior high youth served and experienced transformation in Jacmel, Haiti, through Community Coalition for Haiti. Our middle school youth ventured to Philadelphia, PA to serve and learn about urban ministry through Broad Street Ministry. We are gearing up in 2016 for a senior high trip to Spirit Lake, ND and a middle school trip to Pittsburgh, PA.

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:

- Deacons made 24 extended Communion visits to members on Communion Sundays, in addition to 72 visits to deliver Sunday flowers.
- Four deacon youth ambassadors are paired with a deacon and participate with them in their Sunday duties.
- Deacon Meals Team volunteers, coordinated by Deacon Sarah Goldstein, provided 25 meals – to individuals recuperating from surgery, as well as to families with new babies.
- The Card Ministry, under the creative leadership of Deacon Amy Stenlund and Nancy Pitcher, made and sent 50 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 8 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. Once again, some of our children joined in a visit to Goodwin House Alexandria in December to sing Christmas carols.
- The “Spotlight on Seniors” in the *Chronicle* featured interviews with senior members of the congregation.
- The 35 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 and concerns.
- Our annual “Coffee with the Pastors” was held at both Goodwin Houses. Two afternoon gatherings with Larry were held at members’ homes at Goodwin House Alexandria in the summer. In December, Larry met for lunch with our members at Goodwin House Bailey’s Crossroads.
- 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 at Westminster, and works with staff and pastors to identify members’ interests and skills. It serves as a liaison between new members and the church’s committees to connect the two. During 2015, the Church HOME Committee began attempting to more closely

track members who have not been active within six months, identifying those who may need more attention, as well as checking on new members who joined three months earlier, to make sure they are finding ways to engage. The committee also helped to organize and host the New Member Brunch and recruited Recently Joined Members to host three Coffee Hours after the 11:00 service.

BUILDING & GROUNDS

In 2015, we were all gratified to attend the dedication of the Karen Blomberg Courtyard, which was well attended and officially recognized Karen's legacy. As the plantings have prospered (more than we expected in no small part due to the sprinkler system that was mostly funded by an anonymous member), Westminster now has a glorious outdoor space that has served as an outdoor venue for a range of church gatherings. We've also noticed that it has become an "oasis" of sorts for neighborhood walkers. As the trees mature, we hope the courtyard becomes even more of a focal point.

Beyond our more routine attending to leaks, leaves, pruning and other normal maintenance, Building and Grounds also oversaw:

the resurfacing of our entire parking lot
repair (replacement?) of the steeple clock mechanism - look up! They're now correct more than twice a day!

repainting of the Sanctuary facade and steeple including repair of some rotted wood surrounding the entrance to the sanctuary narthex.

We also oversaw a cleanup in the spring and fall, which were successes largely due to efforts by the scouts and other volunteers.

Building and Grounds continues to explore options to enhance the security for all our users, from the preschool through all the myriad functions our church hosts.

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 2015 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.

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