

THE CHRONICLE



Pilgrimages

By Rev. Dr. Larry Hayward

On the Friday night of Fourth of July weekend, I attended the Nationals–Royals game at Nats Park, taking my wife's 20-year-old great-nephew from California to one of his first major league games on his first trip to the East Coast.

It wasn't exactly major league quality. The Royals have one of the worse records in baseball, and while the Nats have been hot lately, they played sloppily, blew several chances to win the game, left nineteen runners on base, and managed to lose 7-4 in an eleven-inning, four-hour-and-forty-minute marathon.

Because my guest was new to baseball, and because I had bought more expensive seats than I normally buy for the occasion, we were among the few Nats fans who stuck it out to the end. As the game droned on, and as the

crowd subsided, it was nearly all Nats fans who left, leaving us alone in a crowd of royal blue jerseys.

It also occurred to me that many of the Royals fans had likely made a pilgrimage: DC, Fourth of July Weekend, baseball, national monuments, etc. I have made pilgrimages to see baseball games myself in years gone by, as well as pilgrimages to see Civil Rights shrines and holy places in the South. Sitting there among a sea of blue pilgrims, I was reminded that when you make a pilgrimage, you stay to the end of the game: win, lose, or draw. Pilgrims are rarely fair weather fans, who cut out early when their team is behind. They savor every moment of the experience, even the difficult moments.

In a culture more "in and out," more "drop in" and "drop by," more "racing to the next stop" than "savoring the pilgrim's way," I hope we will find our own ways to become pilgrims: participants in institutions, churches,

Continued on page 2

In This Issue

Adult Formation	6
Congregational Life	4
Endowment	3
Life Events	2
Mission	8
Mission Report	5
Youth	7

Continued from page 1

families, businesses, civil organizations, who take their time, stick with it, don't depart for the exits when their team is behind. In all sectors of our society, we need more people who will stay to the end of the game even when it is a slog. Often times, when we stay to the end, we find something new and beautiful even when the sights and rhythms of the game are the same, and even when our team doesn't prevail.

– Larry

Westminster Life Events

We welcome to the Westminster nursery:

Daniel and Michael Marosy, sons of Laura Barrett and Gary Marosy

Charlotte Canzone, daughter of Liz and Mike Canzone, little sister to Lily and Michael.

Graham Lowry, son of Coleman and Alesyn Lowry, little brother of Tanner.

We rejoice in the marriage of:

Mark St. John McKnight and **Cynthia Margaret Seidel** on June 29.

Please remember in prayer the family and friends of:

Shirley Johnson Shelley, who died June 27

John Edward Giles, who died July 22



Check Out The Pera Library

Westminster's library is a treasure trove of resources for children (and adults too)!

You probably pass by the Pera Library every Sunday on your way to the sanctuary. Next time, we invite you to stop in! You'll find what you might expect: Bibles for children and adults, Biblical resources (books and DVDs), Old & New Testament stories, and Bible story DVDs. But did you know we also carry: holiday books, fiction and nonfiction picture books, easy reader chapter books, and elementary school and young adult chapter fiction books? We even have (not-necessarily-Bible-related!) fiction and nonfiction books for adults, and family-friendly DVDs. You can even check out magazines such as *The Christian Century*, *Horizons*, and *Presbyterian Outlook*, for a taste of what is going on in the greater Presbyterian church and beyond.

You may check out anything in the library. Fill out the card in the book or DVD and place it in the file box that is located on top of one of the bookshelves. Many thanks to our Westminster librarian, Cathy Hunter, for her time, effort and dedication in keeping our library in order!

Coming up for Young Families

September 8: Whole Family Creation Station, Abraham and Sarah

September 11: Children's Choirs start

September 14: Family BBQ

October 19: Church Campfire and Outdoor Movie



Remembering Gloria Horning

The Westminster Foundation endowment grew significantly in 2019 with an exceedingly generous \$1 million bequest from Gloria Horning. With input from Barbara Anderson, we look back at Gloria's remarkable life.

Gloria Hope Horning was born October 20, 1925, in Saratoga Springs, NY. A few months after Gloria was born, the family moved to Mobile, Alabama. As a child, Gloria loved going fishing with her father. After graduating from high school at the age of 15, Gloria continued her education at Stephens College in Columbia, Missouri, for one year before transferring to Louisiana State University, where she pursued a bachelor of music degree in vocal performance.

Following graduation from LSU, Gloria moved to New York City to be closer to her older sister June, who worked as a TV producer for Kukla, Fran, and Ollie and The Aldrich Family, and to pursue her dream of being a singer as a student at the Juilliard Opera Workshop. Her strong soprano voice had been featured in charity and television shows in Mobile and New Orleans in the early 1950s, sometimes with June. Gloria had the leading role of Violetta in the Mobile Opera Guild's presentation of *La Traviata*. The sisters traveled extensively in Europe as recreation hostesses, entertaining troops as part of the Army



Special Units in Germany in 1952-1954, and Gloria sang with the Winged Victory Chorus. Gloria even had the opportunity to sing for Ed Sullivan when he came to Mobile in 1954 for his "Toast of the Town" show with comedian Joey Bishop. Gloria spent numerous hours rehearsing and performing in operas, in the chorus at the Greenwich Village Opera Company, on Kate Smith's TV show and *The Aldrich Family*, and with the Metropolitan Opera. Sadly, June passed away from cancer in her late 30s.

In parallel with her singing career, Gloria held a secretarial position in New York City. She received a call one day from President Johnson's press secretary, Bill Moyers, requesting her to move to Washington, DC, to serve as a

stenographer in the White House. She edited the official presidential transcripts for Presidents Lyndon Johnson and Dwight D. Eisenhower. She had fond memories of traveling to Johnson's ranch in Texas, and to Puerto Rico and New England during her time as a stenographer. After the White House, she was a court reporter for many well-known judges in DC courts until she retired.

Gloria's favorite hobby was singing. She was a paid soloist at Alexandria Methodist Church for many years before transferring to Westminster. Here she was a member of the choir, active in the women's groups and Bible study, sent cards to the sick, and prepared the weekly church bulletins. Gloria passed away on April 14, 2017, after a very brief illness.

Congrats to Our Grads

As a community of faith, we honor and celebrate transitions. We celebrate those who have worked hard and are now rewarded by a diploma and all the rights and privileges pertaining therein! Blessings to our grads on all of your future endeavors. May God continue to be a lamp to your feet and a light to your path!

High School

Nathan Argust
Jonathan Barrett
Hunter Jacobsen
Ava Lovain
Grace Million
Lyle Ring
Sam Trainer

Undergraduate/Graduate

Ben Aland, University of South Carolina (Bachelor of Science in Marine Science)
Rebecca Dickerson, University California, Davis (Master in Agricultural Economics)
Patience Hudson-Duodu, Masters' degree in Cybersecurity Management and Policy
Meredith Hellmuth Mitchell, Virginia Commonwealth University School of Medicine
Annika Papke, College of William & Mary (Bachelor of Arts in Art and American Studies)
Matt Skiba, Mary Washington University (Bachelor of Science in Business)
Elisabeth Watts, West Virginia University (Master in Social Work)
Chad Williams, grandson of Fred and Nancie Williams, Georgetown University School of Foreign Service (commissioned as 2nd lieutenant in the US Army)

Join Tables for 8!

Making new friends at Westminster for 25 years

For those not familiar with this group, Tables for 8 (sponsored by the Congregational Life Committee) organizes groups of adults (singles or couples, members or visitors) to meet in homes every 4 to 6 weeks to dine and to enjoy fellowship together. The host or hostess prepares the main dish, while other members of the group contribute appetizers, side dishes, and desserts to complete the meal. It's a fun and interesting way to get to know other Westminster people in a casual setting.

Each group (of about eight people) creates their own schedule after the kick-off meeting on Saturday, September 28. We try to create each group with a mixture of singles and couples and with varied age groups, depending on the signup in a given year. We hope to see many new and returning participants! Please contact Janet Harris with any questions. Bon Appetit!

Sign Up

In person on Sundays in September at Lemonade on the Lawn
 Anytime by emailing Janet Harris at tablesfor8@wpc-alex.org
 Deadline to sign up is Sunday, September 22



Make a Joyful Noise

Fall is a great time to join the music ministry at Westminster!

For more information on any of these opportunities, please be in touch with Ben Hutchens, Director of Music Ministries, at bhutchens@wpc-alex.org.

Westminster Music Academy

Wednesdays, beginning September 11
 Cherub Choir (4-year-olds)
 Genesis Choir (Kindergarten & 1st Grade)
 Covenant Choir (2nd – 5th Grades)
 Girl Choristers (Grades 6 and above)

Boy Choristers (Grades 6 and above, whose voices have not changed)

Instrumentalists: While we do not offer a band or orchestra, there is always a place for student instrumentalists to share their music too! Please be in touch with Ben.

Music Opportunities for Adults

Celtic Cross Ringers: an intermediate handbell choir -- great place to learn how to ring!

Westminster Ringers: an advanced handbell choir -- currently fully staffed, but always in need of capable substitute ringers

Westminster Choir: the primary service choir of our church. Offers music on Sundays at the 11am service and at other services and concerts throughout the year.

Instrumentalists: While we do not offer a band or orchestra, there is always a place for adult instrumentalists to share their music too!

Men of Westminster



The monthly **Men's Breakfasts** will resume for the church year, beginning on Friday, September 13. The breakfasts will continue through June 2020.

The breakfasts take place from 7:00 – 8:30 AM in Fellowship Hall on the second Friday of the month. A hot breakfast meal is served, and a guest speaker gives an incisive presentation on religious themes or secular issues of the day. At the September breakfast, David Aland, a cybersecurity research consultant for DOD, will give a presentation on how foreign cyberwarriors are posing a threat to our national security and to our society.



The **2020 Men's Retreat** will take place on January 24-26, 2020 at Hallwood Retreat and Conference Center, located at the base of Sugarloaf Mountain near Comus, Maryland.

It is not too soon to plan ahead and mark your calendars for our annual men's retreat. The retreat leader will be our own Rev. Larry Hayward. In addition to his many pastoral responsibilities, he strongly believes in encouraging knowledge and understanding of the scriptures. Over the years Larry has taught year-long courses on the Old Testament, New Testament, and the Bible. Those men who have attended previous retreats know how enjoyable and rewarding the program, food, and fellowship have been. Men who have never before attended a retreat should consider attending this one. Sign up will begin the first Sunday in November.



Trip Report: Mission to Moi's Bridge, Kenya

The United Orphanage & Academy offers a large, extended family of brothers and sisters to children in need

In June, 17 members of Westminster, the Old Presbyterian Meeting House, and Lewinsville churches visited the United Orphanage & Academy (UOA) in Moi's Bridge, Kenya. Our 3-church partnership has been supporting the UOA since its founding over 15 years ago by the Rev. Stephen Chege and WPC's own Henri Rush. And there is no doubt that Westminster and this partnership are making a difference in children's lives.

Today, the orphanage houses about 34 children full-time, and the academy educates over 180 pre-K-thru-8 students daily, including local children from at-risk households whose tuition and food are subsidized.

The 5-day visit included soccer, crafts, and classroom interaction with the kids, an epic painting project, local purchase of updated textbooks, and a current assessment of infrastructure and program needs. Our group visited a local public school that enabled useful comparisons with the academy environment. We also participated in Sunday worship at the local Matunda Parish church during which Rev. Patrick Hunnicutt preached the sermon and we donated a laptop computer and projector. We concluded the trip with a visit to the Lake Nakuru game preserve, full of natural wonders.

In conjunction with our visit, Rev. Chege organized a reunion of 15 of the earliest students/orphans, now in their 20s, who have gone on to live independent and purposeful lives, several as nurses or teachers. Late one evening, each gave a personal testimony to the impact of the academy on their lives, and this proved to be an emotional and moving experience.

John's story was typical. Found alone on the streets, he was among the first few boys at the orphanage and lived there 19 years. Now 25, he has graduated technical school and works as a driver and equipment operator in Nairobi. "Seeing you come and visit gave us hope", John said, "a sense that we were loved." Miriam said simply: "This is my family. You impacted our lives, and the education you provided gives us hope."

In short, the UOA is offering a large, extended family of brothers and sisters to children in need, and providing education for their future. While this effort is only a small window to God's work in world, Westminster's ongoing support to the UOA is making a profound difference in the lives of these children.

To learn more about this mission trip and the UOA, attend a presentation and slide show on Sunday, September 15 in the Westminster Room following the 11 a.m. worship service. See you there!

Common Threads of Shared Humanity: Living the Gospel

A New Adult Formation Series Begins in September

"I do think if we're going to move forward, to unite the country, I think a generosity of spirit is the answer, and with people who you don't agree with on particular issues. I think a generosity of spirit also includes humility about yourself."

- John C. Danforth

This fall, you're invited to develop new perspectives and learn new ways to live a life of faith through our Adult Formation classes. Each class has been designed to

help us explore humility and generosity of spirit through our common threads and shared humanity towards living the gospel. From an art therapy program for children with cancer to a comparative religion series, each Sunday morning will challenge us to think about what we might agree and disagree with and to think about our own faith perspectives in relation to other points of view.

We'll kickoff the year on September 8 with Amir Tibon, a well-known international Israeli correspondent who will

talk about current issues of Jewish-American matters as well as Israeli-Palestinian concerns. Later in September, Larry Hayward will lead a series on how our government and politics, class differences, military and legal traditions and family structures challenge us, exploring what the Bible has to say about these social structures through the lens of the Old and New Testaments. Learn about the whole series for the fall at wpc-alex.org/adult.

Deepen your own spirit of generosity as you attend our adult formation programs, calling us all to live out the Gospel in each of our lives. It is the common threads of our shared humanity that humbles us and moves us forward toward a generosity of spirit.

See you in church,

Amey Upton

Writing From Our Hearts—Connecting Our Souls

Coming together to explore our thoughts and feelings through the written word



In June, a contemplative writing series brought together fifteen people to try different techniques of writing. In writing we often wrangle with our thoughts, feelings and learning edges. It begs our humility and our generosity of spirit with ourselves, and others.

"The writing group reminded me of all those words and phrases I often avoid... such as discipline, daily, habit, making time, my truth, going deeper, saying more," said one writer. "It was a wonderful experience! One that has gotten me back into writing after a long drought." Another "really appreciated the open atmosphere created and the gentleness demonstrated

in encouraging us to do what we can."

This class "helped me be gentle with myself and yet be open to moving beyond where I am now," said another participant.

Writing prompts helped people "untangle some strands of one's life that might have gotten knotted up." "I didn't know many of the people in the small series but that didn't last long. The sharing allowed us to become intimate friends which has been a blessing for sure." Adult education is about moving forward, developing a faith-filled spirit, and learning about oneself through a faith community. It is hoped another writing group might be offered this year. Stay tuned!

Mental Health Forums

Using humility and a spirit of generosity to battle the stigma of mental health

Our most recent mental health forum in July centered on self-care, whether providing care to family or friends who are struggling with mental health challenges, or for oneself while learning the tools and skills for managing these disorders. Over forty people attended this forum led by Dr. Christine Thayer on a Sunday afternoon. Dr. Thayer emphasized the importance of having physical activities for yourself as you care for another and the need for creating space for fun. "Take field trips, learn mindfulness," Dr. Thayer reminded us to "identify new interests and hobbies and provide comfort and balance to one's life." Such a stance does invite generosity of spirit.

Our next forum, on the evening of Thursday, October 17, experts in the field of anxiety and obsessive-compulsive disorders will cover some of the latest research and provide insights in battling these disorders. As we battle the stigma of mental health, both humility and a spirit of generosity goes a long way.

Our Youth Summer In Mission

Reflections on the High School Trip with the Appalachia Service Project and the Middle School Trip to Heifer Ranch in Arkansas



Appalachia Service Project

We woke up and Carey led morning devotion. At the worksite I put in a new OSB board floor to prep for the laminate and then painted the walls. While this was happening, people were putting in insulation and helping me cut the OSB board to fit into the doorways. After dinner, we had our evening gathering where there were different stations about meditation, praying and reflecting. At one of the stations we wrote prayers on rocks and threw them into the river. It was actually really helpful and we all learned about each other (the people in my group) and became a lot closer. It was really nice. Then we all went to get ice cream, which is always so much fun, came back, and played kick ball with a bunch of people. I don't think I stopped smiling all day.

by Fiona Donovan, 10th Grade

My experience at ASP was one of the most eye-opening and influential events of my life. While I have also attended mission trips to Alaska and Haiti, during both of which I participated in important work, ASP showed me how greatly people can suffer closer to home. My group worked on the house of a sweet and heartwarming woman named Angela, who lived with her niece and grandchildren. Over the course of the trip we became very close with them by listening to

their stories and talking to them, playing with them, and making sure that they had a safe place to live. If I were to choose one take away from ASP, it would be to not give up hope on people who are in seemingly inescapable negative circumstances, as it is always possible for God to uplift them and show them a path to a better life.

by CJ Chidlow, 12th Grade

I would like to thank the congregation for allowing me to travel to Hazard, Kentucky with thirteen wonderful young adults and three other adult advisers. It was a fantastic experience, tough but very worthwhile and rewarding for me. I got to meet five college advisers working for the Appalachian Service Project who were wonderful and talented and to work with seven WPC high schoolers who awed me with their construction skills and dedication to doing a great job of helping a poor family living in a trailer toward a better living experience. We spent five days on underpinning, replacing flooring in their laundry room and tearing down dry wall and insulation as well as taking down a wall post to transform a bathroom and closet into their daughter's bedroom. It was heartwarming to watch the mother, Sierra, show her daughter, Aspen, the framework of her "new" bedroom. They both had smiles to die for.

By Bill Watts, Adult Advisor



Heifer Ranch

From July 7-12 this year, the Westminster Presbyterian Church Middle School Youth Group travelled to Perryville, Arkansas for our mission trip at Heifer International's Heifer Ranch. The first day, we learned how potatoes are dug from the ground and how they get to our markets. The second day, we helped pick weeds from the herb beds, and we had to watch for fire ants, as well. That night was the night we entered the Global Village. There we had to cook our own meals and barter for our needs. We slept in shelters made to resemble either the urban slums, Appalachian wooden houses, Guatemalan brick houses, or a refugee camp. Being in the Global Village helped me to be more aware of what poverty looks like. The day after, we engaged in common chores, such as sweeping and washes dishes. We spent the last full day helping to take care of the animals and learned about a tomato's "life" before it reaches a store. That morning, we also learned how to milk goats and used their milk to make cheese for homemade pizza in the afternoon.

With this experience, I will always remember that more people are living in poverty every day. From now on, I will be more thankful for what I already have. With this new information from Heifer, I will be more aware of what I eat and work hard to produce less waste. I will also pay more attention to others around me and find ways to help people who are in need. Thank you very much for this opportunity!

By Rachel Cain, 8th Grade

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WPC IN MISSION



A Rewarding Morning of Fellowship and Mission

The annual summer corn gleaning day

On Saturday, August 3, a crew of seven gleaned corn in Colonial Beach, VA. The corn went to Healthy Harvest Food Bank, which supports families in Virginia's Northern Neck region. Although we got a bit of a later start in the morning due to muddy conditions and our truck getting stuck, we still had a good haul. It was a rewarding morning of fellowship and helping provide fresh produce to those in need. After we finished, we all enjoyed a nice lunch at Bobby K's Roadside Cafe to celebrate our efforts. We look forward to our annual apple gleaning trip on September 28!