

WESTMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH



2019 ANNUAL REPORT

WPC-ALEX.ORG

A WORD FROM THE PASTOR

In my sermon on Christmas Eve, I said this:

Unlike many churches and synagogues of all stripes across the country, our church is doing well. The past six months have brought an uptick in almost every category of measurement – attendance, participation, financial giving, growth. As Pastor, I couldn't be happier.

The following pages of this Annual Report give details out of which my excitement and joy arise, and these comments pretty well sum up my gratitude. Serving and leading you at Westminster continues to be one of the two or three greatest blessings of my life, and knowing you as individuals simply adds to that sense of blessing.

Thank you for being who you are, as we say to each new member class: "giving glory to God, serving Jesus Christ, and led by the Holy Spirit."

LARRY HAYWARD
PASTOR



FINANCIAL HEALTH, ADMINISTRATION & FINANCE

Thanks to the ongoing generosity of our members, Westminster Presbyterian Church maintained its strong financial position in 2019. Moreover, with our track record of financial stability, this is expected to continue into the future. The church has good cash balances, reasonable reserves to address unforeseen circumstances, and robust revenue from pledges, offerings and other contributions.

Demonstrating the remarkable commitment of its members and visitors, Westminster's 2019 pledge satisfaction rate was 101.25% of the amount pledged, while plate offerings were 125% of the amount budgeted. These contributions provided the financial support necessary for the hiring of a fourth pastor, expanding church programs, and broadening mission outreach, as well as making important technology and facilities improvements.

As recommended in the September 2018 Report of the Ad Hoc Task Force on Three-Year Financial Planning, we implemented our new approach to utilizing Westminster Foundation endowed resources.

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This resulted in a Foundation distribution of \$91,586 flowing directly into the 2019 Operating Budget spread across various accounts, while maintaining a sound balance between the interests of the current congregation compared to those who will be attending well into the future. In addition, we have continued to respect the wishes of donors. Other Foundation resources were directly expended for repairing the church bus, purchasing a new church sign, building the new Fellowship Hall entrance, purchasing new handbells, and other items.

\$91,586

Notwithstanding these important expenditures, the Foundation began the 2019 fiscal year with \$3,737,487 in assets and ended the year with \$3,986,930 in assets. In December, the Session amended the Foundation Charter to authorize the annual Foundation distribution and to streamline Foundation financial functions.

Annual cell phone revenue (currently \$97,463) continues to be allocated to various Reserve accounts. This represents a significant source of revenue for the church with accumulated balances in these funds at the end of December of \$813,342.

Because cell phone technology advances may ultimately make cell towers, like our steeple, obsolete, this is an area of some financial exposure for the church. The Administration and Finance Committee monitors these technology advances and is actively planning for the eventuality that this revenue source ceases to exist.

In May, the Session approved revisions and updates to the Reserve Fund Draw Criteria. As part of this process, a new Capital Improvement Reserve Fund (not funded by cell phone revenue) was established.

FINANCIAL OUTCOMES FOR 2019

\$2,168,187

Operating Income

\$2,060,235

Operating Expenses

\$107,952

Net Income (Expenses)

\$3,986,930

*Westminster Foundation
Year-End Balance*



LOCAL MISSION

The local mission efforts are centered around five core areas: Children, Hunger, Education, Shelter, and Self-Sufficiency (CHESS). Seventeen different programs received support through the time, talents and budgeted monies of WPC.

CHILDREN

Support continued of the Child and Family Network Centers to continue providing preschool to low income families. During 2019 a new relationship with Community Lodgings began with a focus on their comprehensive tutoring program.

This year WPC hosted the annual backpack program for OAR, members and community members helped pack backpacks with school supplies for children with incarcerated parents.

Seventeen different programs received support through our time, talents and budgeted monies.

HUNGER

Volunteers from the congregation continued to support food distribution efforts through the Adopt-A-Turkey program, ALIVE food pantry, the Meade Memorial bagged lunch program, Meals On Wheels delivery, and our monthly meal service at Carpenter's Shelter.

EDUCATION

Support of education includes the Untouchables through the mentoring program, and Friends of Guest House supporting women post-incarceration.

SHELTER

Recognizing the importance of stable housing in well-being, efforts to maintain and transition to stable housing were continued. Volunteers delivered furniture donations through ALIVE; made repairs to a house during Rebuilding Together Alexandria; and provided ongoing support to Carpenter's Shelter. Additionally, programs supporting residents returning home after incarceration, such as Offender Aid and Restoration (OAR) and Bridges to Independence, received support to ensure stability and reduce recidivism.

SELF-SUFFICIENCY

Time, talent and monies were mobilized to support efforts that increase self-sufficiency and autonomy. These included: emergency assistance to the Alexandria City Social Worker's Client Support fund, Neighborhood Health's comprehensive services, legal support services through Just Neighbors, aging in place services for seniors through Senior Services and people in need packets for our most vulnerable neighbors.

The Local Mission Committee partnered with the National and International Mission Committees to host the Annual Alternative Giving Bazaar. The 2019 AGB hosted nineteen agencies in Fellowship Hall offering a variety of ways to support the mission of the agencies including, financial donations and purchasing wonderful goods.

Thank you to all who shopped the AGB and supported the represented agencies. It is through the donations of time, talent, and allocated monies that Westminster has continued to ensure our most vulnerable neighbors have continued access to necessary services for stability and well-being.

WESTMINSTER COMMUNITY GRANT

This marked the seventh year of the Westminster Community Grant Program. Local Mission granted \$25,462.91 to the following organizations:

Carpenter's Shelter: \$3500 for supplies for the temporary shelter
Liberty's Promise: \$4,400 for new laptop computers
Just Neighbors Ministry, \$3,654 for two new computers and operating system
Christ Church Lazarus: \$4,965.95 for supplies for their food pantry
Space of Her Own: \$3,450 for summer camp scholarships
Alexandria Symphony: \$2,490.96 for new instruments
Offender Aid and Restoration: \$3,000 for transportation and cell phone subsidies



NATIONAL MISSION

In 2019, the National Mission Committee continued to cultivate our church's steadfast support of our three main projects—ministry and mission at the Bdecan Presbyterian Church and Cankdeska Cicana Community College on the Spirit Lake Indian Reservation in North Dakota; housing rehabilitation in Appalachia through the Appalachia Service Project in West Virginia; and gleaning to combat regional hunger with the Healthy Harvest Food Bank and the Society of St. Andrew in Virginia. With our members' commitment of time, talents, and treasure, we continue to positively impact lives from North Dakota to West Virginia and beyond.

BDECAN PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH AT SPIRIT LAKE AND CANKDESKA CICANA COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Joe Obermeyer, Youth and Outreach Coordinator, continued his ministry at the Bdecan Presbyterian Church. Under Joe's care, the Bdecan church continued to support its members and the community through its weekly afterschool children's ministry, Sunday services, monthly food pantry, and newly opened clothing closet. Our partnership with the Northern Plains Presbytery remains strong, as does the need for our support.

In addition, Westminster continued to support tribal students at Spirit Lake's Cankdeska Cicana Community College.

With our church's generous financial contributions, seven more Bdecan Presbyterian Scholarships were awarded. The recipients share the common goals of providing for their families and giving back to their tribes and community. Our financial support plays a critical role in helping these students achieve their goals. In October 2019, several Westminster members had hoped to travel to Spirit Lake to visit with Joe and the Bdecan Presbyterian Church community and current/former scholarship recipients, but, unfortunately, had to cancel the trip due to an early snowstorm. We hope the weather proves more cooperative when we next travel to Spirit Lake.

APPALACHIA SERVICE PROJECT

The high school youth this year went to ASP's Knott County, Kentucky location for their summer mission trip to make homes warmer, safer, and drier. Unfortunately, we were unable to take an adult mission trip to Guyan Valley this year due to ASP's need to suspend work efforts at that site because of operational considerations. We did continue our financial support of ASP and will continue to coordinate efforts for potential future adult mission trips with ASP.

GLEANING TRIPS

Good company makes for easy gleaning—or collecting usable produce left behind when a field is harvested.

Although we had a late start on our July morning due to muddy conditions and our truck getting stuck, we still had a good haul of corn in Colonial Beach, Virginia, with the Healthy Harvest Food Bank. Healthy Harvest Food Bank facilitates the gleaning of farms on Virginia's Northern Neck and distributes the produce to food banks in central Virginia.

On a cooler Saturday later in October, Westminster members, including a number of children and family members visiting from out of town, helped glean over 538 bags of apples at Marker-Miller Orchard in Winchester, Virginia, with the Society of St. Andrew. The Society of St. Andrew is a national organization that coordinates a multi-state gleaning network and distributes 25-30 million pounds of gleaned produce to charities every year. Westminster also continued to provide financial support to the Society of St. Andrew and Healthy Harvest Food Bank in 2019.

CENTS-ABILITY COLLECTION

Our quarterly Cents-Ability collections of loose change for hunger raised a total of \$1,205.48 in 2019, which exceeded 2018 donations. We used a significant portion of the amount raised (60%) to support the Adopt-a-Turkey program run by the Local Mission Committee, while the rest went to Presbyterian Church (USA) hunger programs.

INTERNATIONAL MISSION

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

UNITED ORPHANAGE & ACADEMY

For more than 15 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 supported by the orphanage, ranging in age from 4 to 18. There are almost 200 students attending the Academy, which goes from primary school through 8th grade. In addition, living expenses and tuition are provided to UOA orphans attending college and university.

It is our goal to give the children of the orphanage every chance to succeed in making the transition from youth to adult. This year's ministry was highlighted by two important events.

In March, WPC hosted the multi-day Kenya Mission Network conference, bringing together ministry partners from across the country and Kenya. It was an all hands on deck effort, with WPC members and staff providing housing, hosting and logistical support. The conference deepened our ties to the broader efforts underway in Kenya.



In June, 17 WPC, OPMH and Lewinsville members and staff visited the Orphanage and Academy, where we celebrated another anniversary of the mission's founding, grew in relationship and care, and some good painting work as well. Most of the trip participants were there for the first time, and it was a meaningful introduction and deepening of our ties to the children and staff of Moi's Bridge.

EAST AFRICA MISSIONS

In 2019, Westminster continued to provide scholarship funds to support a seminary student at Justo Mwale Theological College in Lusaka, Zambia. This is the second year that Westminster has supported the studies of Rev. Goliath Munthali. In addition to its scholarship support at Justo Mwale, Westminster also provides financial support for Chasefu Theological College, which is a newer college in rural eastern Zambia.

The International Mission Committee continued to provide financial support for Paula Cooper, the recently installed PCUSA Regional Liaison for East Central Africa. Paula visited WPC as part of the aforementioned Kenya Mission Network Conference.

HAITIAN MISSIONS

Westminster continues its long-standing support of Haitian missions through the Community Coalition for Haiti. Although there were no trips by WPC members to Haiti in 2019, we were able to provide matching grant funds for their #GivingTuesday efforts. Given the turbulence in Haiti over the last year, we will monitor with CCH opportunities for future visits.



OTHER MISSION SUPPORT

MEXICO. In 2019, Westminster continued its long relationship with Faith Ministry in Mexico, where we provided scholarships for two school-aged children in Reynosa: Eduardo Santiago, a 9th grade student and Oswaldo Ramirez, a 10th grade student.

CONGO. Westminster continued to support the work of the Sheppard and Lapsley Presbyterian University of Congo (UPRECO) by contributing to salaries of their professors.

WORSHIP & MUSIC

The Worship and Music Committee coordinates with the church staff in all aspects of organized worship and represents the Session in these matters. Regular activities include: recruiting volunteers for and arranging logistics of the Lord's Supper; sanctuary and chapel care such as organizing the sanctuary flowers, ushering needs and more for all services; and involvement in strategic planning for worship at Westminster. These procedures require weekly assistance from a host of stalwart ushers, a liturgical coordinator, and many others, for which we are incredibly fortunate and grateful.

The committee also coordinates with the music ministry at Westminster. During 2019, Dr. Ben Hutchens continued growing our music programs, adding a number of volunteer adult singers to the Westminster Choir. Dr. Hutchens continues to direct Westminster Ringers, an advanced group of handbell ringers who play in worship six-eight times annually. Additionally, the Westminster Presents services on Friday and Sunday evenings showcased the substantial gifts of Westminster's own musicians and provided a space for collaboration with guest musicians.



This year, Westminster hired Yeri So as Assistant Director of Music Ministries. In this role, Yeri assists in the preparation and accompaniment of all of Westminster's choirs, plays organ for services, and more. Additionally, a Pre-K music program continued this fall under the direction of Associate for Children's Music Molly Roden. Additional items of interest this year:

Sue Aland continued as Liturgical Coordinator. In this role she oversees logistics, changing of the paraments, providing water for baptisms, setting out the flowers for the 11a services, and more. We are grateful for her attention to detail!



CHILDREN'S MUSIC

Westminster's choral program for children and youth, the Westminster Music Academy, serves more than 50 children. Programs foster confidence in singing and enhance musicianship for young choristers with an expanded Wednesday afternoon that incorporates basic music theory workbooks and Orff instruments into regular rehearsals.

Westminster bell choirs participated in the Alexandria Handbell Festival at Fairlington Methodist in March.

Small vocal ensembles led Evensong services each Wednesday during Lent.

Singers and ringers enjoyed a 10-day concert tour in Estonia & Latvia in July, offering concerts and served as the service choir for churches. The music director from Fairlington Methodist joined us as organist.

Westminster's tradition of presenting special music for Remembrance Sunday continued with the adult choir partnering with our neighbors at Trinity Methodist to present the Faure Requiem. The choirs combined to present the work at Trinity during their worship service on November 3, and at Westminster on November 10.

We hosted a Service of Installation for Rev. Jacob Bolton on December 18.

The Worship and Music committee, in partnership with church staff and members of the congregation, developed a weekly Advent Devotional booklet and blog featuring content related to scripture, devotionals, music, mission and formation. The committee is especially grateful to Bill Tate, Dr. Ben Hutchens, Jessica Thurnes and all those who provided ideas, text, art, and layout for these pieces.

Westminster's Advent "Lessons and Carols" services in December included a well-attended Friday night service led by Dr. Hutchens and all our vocal and bell ensembles.

On Festival Sunday, December 21, all Westminster Choirs (children, youth, and adults) debuted new robes thanks to the generous music bequest of Gloria Horning.



BUILDING & GROUNDS

2019 was an active and energetic year for B&G in its efforts to provide oversight for the maintenance of the Church's facilities and infrastructure and to support the Church's activities, events, and mission. The most significant project for 2019 was the renovation of the northeast entrance to Fellowship Hall, using funds generously donated by a former, longtime Westminster member. The Fellowship Hall entry construction enlarged the doorways, provided a more inviting approach to the building, created an entrance plaza, built a new set of stairs leading to the northeast entrance to the Sanctuary, and fixed several issues within the mechanical room outside the Fellowship Hall kitchen. The project was supervised by a subcommittee comprised of both B&G Committee members and non-Committee members.

In addition, many other Building & Grounds projects were completed in 2019 some of which include: Church-wide Spring Cleaning, New Water Fountains, Updated Blomberg Courtyard Landscaping, Sanctuary Entrance Railing and Lantern Repair, New Fellowship Hall Hot Water Heater, New Parking Lot Signage, New Courtyard Landscape Lighting, Repaired Steeple Lighting, Sundial placement in the Blomberg Courtyard, Replacement of Church Corner Sign, Renovation of the Elevator, and in coordination with the Congregational Life Committee, the purchase of additional chairs for Fellowship Hall activities.

As stewards of Westminster, the B&G committee continues to plan and budget for maintenance, repairs and renewals for the Church complex. The Capital Maintenance Reserve Study, which the committee commissioned, allows for the projection and planning of future work and efforts.

MEN OF WESTMINSTER

Men of Westminster sponsors a hot breakfast throughout the year on the second Friday of the month. During 2019, the speakers included:

former Director of the Research and Statistics Division of the Federal Reserve, David Wilcox; Chairman of the Board of the Aerspace Corporation and 22nd Secretary of the Air Force, Mike Donley; former U. S. Senator from Arkansas Tim Hutchinson; Department of Defense cybersecurity consultant David Aland; former Executive Assistant to the Chief of Chaplains of the Navy, Rv. Mark Smith; Acting Dean of the City University of New York (CUNY) graduate school and former President of Queens

College (CUNY) Dr. James Muyskens; and Assistant Secretary of the Army for Installations, Energy, and Environment, The Honorable Alex A. Beehler.

Men of Westminster also organizes and hosts an annual men's weekend retreat in late January at Hallwood Retreat and Conference Center in Frederick County, MD. The 2020 retreat leader was our Pastor, Rev. Larry Hayward. The retreat theme was Living and Working in a Place of Politics: The Case of Joab.

In 2019, Men of Westminster hosted Lemonade on the Lawn on Mother's Day for the sixth consecutive year.



PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN



Women of all ages and stages of life are part of our women's ministry programs here at Westminster. There are many opportunities to connect with one another and to deepen our faith as women.

Women's Circles meet monthly in small groups for Bible study, fellowship, and service projects. Each year, the Bible study program offers us opportunities for discussion of what scripture means in our daily lives. Circles also share joys and concerns with one another to foster friendship and support. In addition, our women also reach out to those in need through cards, prayers, and special offerings.

Each year we collect the Thank and Birthday Offerings as well as the Least Coin Offering which support mission projects benefiting women and children in the U.S. and throughout the world. We also maintain contact with the young women of Westminster during their first four years after high school to help them feel connected to their home church and the women of Westminster. Additionally, our circles joined together to highlight childhood hunger here in Alexandria during Fellowship Hour in October. We served food items like those sent home to needy children through the "Blessings in a Backpack" program to illustrate the need and what we can do to help.

In the 2018-19 program year, we studied "God's Promise: I Am With You." This Bible study explored how God spoke to those in Biblical times and how God speaks to us even today, assuring us that God will never leave us. In the 2019-20 program year, we are studying "Love Carved in Stone: A Fresh Look at the Ten Commandments." Each lesson looks at how Jesus, as the Word of God, embodies each of these guidelines for living in relationship with God and with one another.

Women's Pillow Ministry makes pillows and stuffed animals for children and heart patients at Alexandria Hospital. Our thanks go to Nancy McIver who started this ministry years ago which continues to make a difference to many patients here in Alexandria.

Women's Book Groups meet each month to discuss both fiction and non-fiction works selected and led by the group.

Shanghai Card Group enjoyed monthly meetings of fellowship and friendly competition!

Spring Gathering was a little different in 2019. Our "Women's Friendship Tea" was a proper afternoon tea where we enjoyed fellowship and friendship over scones and a good cuppa! Fall Gathering on "Prison & Post-Prison Ministries" brought in speakers who helped us understand the challenges and importance of ministering to those in prison and those transitioning back into society. We appreciated hearing from Curt Powell from Kairos Prison Ministry, Elizabeth Jones Valderrama from OAR: Offender Aid and Restoration, and Marisa Tordella from Friends of Guest House.



Women's Retreat: "Lean On Me: Cultivating Friendship" with Melynda Wilcox and Nancy Hall Berens as leaders. We explored what we can learn about friendship from the Bible and from people we know who nurture friendship well, as well as how different aspects and stages of friendship play out in our own lives.

A special "Thank You" goes to Janet Harris who lead us so well during her two years as Presbyterian Women Moderator. We truly appreciate the time, dedication, and love which you gave to our wonderful community of women here at Westminster. We now welcome Alison Griffin as our new PW moderator and Kera Winburn as our new PW vice moderator. All women are invited to get involved and meet other women at Westminster as we grow together in Christ's love.



ROADSTERS

The Westminster Roadsters enjoyed fellowship, learning, and fun during 2019. We started the year off with Lunch & Learn featuring Dan Judy, John McArdle, and Matt Viser for an analysis of the new Congress resulting from the 2018 election. We also visited the Museum of the Bible, the butterfly exhibit at Brookside Gardens, Glenstone Museum, and the crèche exhibit at the National Cathedral.

Additional Lunch & Learns took us on “armchair” travels to France and New Mexico, including slides of Notre-Dame Cathedral, Ghost Ranch Conference Center in New Mexico, and the famous cemeteries of Paris. Roadsters also continued to enjoy monthly performances at the Little Theatre of Alexandria.

FLYING SOLO

Flying Solo Singles (50's and above) grew together in faith, friendship, and love through many varied events throughout 2019 focusing on fellowship, service, and learning. We enjoyed monthly Dine-Outs and Potlucks, Roundtable lunch and discussion, quarterly Book Group discussions, our annual Fall Retreat, and several special events and mission projects. Highlights of 2019 include:

Fall Retreat to Loyola on the Potomac with Evangeline Taylor as our retreat leader on the topic “Walking With God.” During our retreat weekend, we explored various ways in which we walk with God in our daily lives and the important role which scripture and prayer play in our journey with God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit.

A Roundtable with Vox journalist Dylan Scott on covering healthcare news.

Service projects included making sandwiches each month for the Bag Lunch program, decorating the Chrismon Tree in Johnson Parlor, and participating in the Holiday Sharing program at Christmas to provide gifts for a local needy family.

Book Group met quarterly to read both fiction and non-fiction works and to explore issues of life and faith. In 2019 we discussed Bonhoeffer for Armchair Theologians, A Gentleman in Moscow, Good News from North Haven, and Peculiar Treasures.

Special events included an outing to the Textile/GW Museum to see the Rockwell exhibit, a visit to Manassas Battlefield, and a trip to Glenstone Museum.

WPC member Kay Sidahmed continued to lead the group in Christ-centered chair yoga to stretch body and soul.

We enjoyed food and fellowship at Easter, Thanksgiving, and Christmas, and of course, our annual Super Chili Bowl party!

An important aspect to Flying Solo is the sense of community we share with church friends, reaching out to one another in Christian love and support as well as being an integral part of the entire church family.



ADULT CHRISTIAN FORMATION

also a series looking at government, politics, class, legal traditions, military and family structures through the Bible lens; and Whitney Fautleroy, who led an Advent class exploring exclusion and embrace anchoring our understanding of Matthew's Gospel.

In 2019 the WPC Adult Formation theme Embracing Transformation drew growing numbers of WPC members to Sunday morning classes, as well as other programs held during the year, including: the 4th Annual "Dessert & Dialogue"; the Congregational Book Read; a 5-week "Westminster Writing Series"; an "OCD Information Night"; an Advent "Centering Prayer" group; and a new Sunday evening series on "Safe Conversations."

WPC staff who taught in 2019 included: Ben Hutchens, Director of WPC Music, who talked of the ways music lives into our Worship and transforms mission and our experiences of our faith; Larry Hayward who taught not only his Old & New Testament Bible classes, but

Adult Christian Formation hosted: Dr. Victoria Barnett, who unpacked the historical challenges of the holocaust; Dr. Diana Bermudez who shared the latest brain research offering new understanding in early childhood behavior & learning styles. Dr. J. Gerald Kennedy, father of WPC Elder Ben Kennedy, shared his extensive research on our National history & literature that have transformed us over time and place. Our Lenten Series Why Be a Christian? was taught by Dr. Kathleen Staudt on what it's like to be Christian in a secular culture and how to embrace Jesus, the heart of Christianity. Finally, Dr. Paul Cho taught about trauma in the Old Testament and how we might embrace the difficulties in our lives.





One of the highlights of 2019 is in October 2019 we welcomed Associate Pastor of Christian Formation Jacob Bolton to Westminster after a long and successful search by the APNC.

And, another highlight goes to Elder Kathy Harkness, who is the longest, continuous teacher leading a WPC Faith Group that meets twice a year to study and discuss faith.

Additionally, Adult Formation sponsors, since 2015, a Small Mental Health Group which meets several times a year to plan and sponsor programs and speakers that increase our understanding and decreasing stigma of mental health challenges.

Common Threads of Shared Humanity: Living the Gospel, began in September. Amir Tibon providing us an insider's perspective about the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict, followed by Elder Dr. Jim Muyskens challenging our thinking on Interfaith Dialogue. Senator Gordon Smith gave personal testimony about the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and our own WPC members Dave & Amy Donselar talked about walking the Camino de Santiago.

Adult Christian Formation is meeting its goal to provide our members and guests a variety of opportunities for growth, education, community and conversation in the areas of biblical studies, health/wholeness, current affairs, and spiritual formation so that we may better serve and Worship God.



YOUTH

FELLOWSHIP & FORMATION

Youth fellowship highlights include a middle school trip to Kings Dominion, a high school beach retreat, overnight lock-ins for middle school and high school youth, and numerous fellowship gatherings including our annual pancake breakfast. Youth are also invited once a year to a class dinner with their respective graduating class. Middle school youth and their adult leaders continued to meet most Sunday mornings during the program year to explore faith and Scripture. About fifteen youth participated in Confirmation, culminating in many becoming members of WPC.

All youth led the congregation in worship on Youth Sunday in May, when they designed the order of worship and led in song, prayer, scripture, the children's sermon, and preaching.

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 gleaning opportunities, and the City of Alexandria Holiday Sharing program. Additionally, youth mission trips continue to be a highlight of the program. In the summer of 2019, our high school youth worked with the Appalachia Service Project and our middle school youth to Heifer Ranch in Arkansas.

CHILDREN

We welcomed Pastor Jacob Bolton in early October as our Associate Pastor for Christian Formation. In Creation Station, our rotation model for Christian Education for Kindergarten – Grade 5, we continued our Whole Family experience. Children and families learn the story through storytelling, art projects, drama, cooking, video, games, and puzzles.

The 4th and 5th graders hosted coffee hour. Each elementary grade participated in Milestones of Faith. The Children & Worship program continued to provide Biblical Stories to kindergarten and first graders during the 11:00 a.m. worship service.

The annual M&M Week, our music camp experience for elementary-aged children, was held in June. Children learned the story of Jesus feeding the five thousand with the musical “Table for Five....Thousand.”

The Palm Sunday Donkey Processional and Christmas Pageant continue to be a part of the lives of children and families.

The Family Retreat, focused on Keeping the Sabbath holy, was held in May at the Claggett Center.

Families were supported through a family picnic, parent education opportunities, and Family Mornings for preschoolers.



PERSONNEL

The purpose of the Personnel Committee is to provide for an orderly, focused and considerate means to build a healthy work environment for all Church staff. We work together to serve as a support group for the pastors and other members of the staff, as well as to develop and revise personnel policies, job descriptions, and evaluation processes. At Westminster, the Personnel Committee oversees 19 Church staff that includes full-time, part-time, and volunteer employees. Committee action in 2019 involved the following:

We revised our pastor evaluation process and completed evaluations of Rev. Patrick Hunnicutt and Rev. Whitney Fauntleroy. The new process incorporated feedback from more congregants than it has in the past, including the full Session and all members of relevant committees, including the Board of Deacons.

In May, Yeri So joined the staff as our Assistant Director of Music Ministries. Cambria Van de Vaarst left the role in February in order to more fully focus on her academic program.

On the Sunday morning childcare team, we said goodbye to Faith Woodhouse and Jennifer Villaroel and welcomed Ciarra Smith.

Jennifer had worked with the children of Westminster for six years.

In the summer, we supported the work of the Associate Pastor Nominating Committee in closing their search with an offer to Rev. Jacob Bolton. We were thrilled to join the congregation in calling him to serve at Westminster, officially beginning on October 6.

The committee's ongoing work in 2019 included updating position descriptions for a number of staff roles, and kicking off a thorough update of the Personnel Policy Manual.

NOMINATING

After soliciting recommendations for candidates from the congregation, the committee members began reaching out to potential nominees to gauge their interest and availability for service. At a congregational meeting in October, we presented the Deacons and Elders for the Class of 2022, as well as two Youth Elders for the Class of 2020.

The committee identified and presented new members to serve on the committee in 2020, and a trustee.

The committee wishes to thank all of those who considered or accepted nominations, and appreciates the blessing that is this active congregation whose members are so willing to serve.

MEMBERSHIP STATISTICS

1,025

*Members of Westminster
in 2019*

56

*New Members in 2019,
including 9 confirmands*

22

*Infant, Children & Adult
Baptisms in 2019*

18

*Births in Member
families in 2019*

The HOME committee continued its work with the New Member Committee to welcome new members to the church and identify places where members can get involved according to their interests.

In addition, the HOME committee began the process of modernizing the new member intake system, creating a new digital form for capturing the information regarding new members. Beyond, the HOME Committee hosted its annual new member brunch in November as well as three fellowship hours across the 2019 year.