

# WESTMINSTER WITNESS



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## SEPTEMBER

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Dear Friends,

Prayer is the key to God's door. It opens the door to an unlimited supply of divine power and inspiration for living. To be effective in your growth in Christ, you must be a person who prays - and prays regularly.

As we stand on the precipice of a new church year, our Session is united in its desire to lead our congregation to grow in faith through prayer and a program of "ordered learning" - the formal teaching ministry of the church. We are committed to offering you quality opportunities for "faith development" or "spiritual growth."

Wednesday nights are going to be very important nights for us. Beginning on Wednesday, September 6<sup>th</sup> we kick off the new year with our first Taizé-style worship service at 7:00 PM. Many of you know that Taizé worship is built around flickering candlelight in a darkened Sanctuary; a single line or phrase from the psalms set to a simple and beautiful melody; and periods of silence to just sit and relax in God's loving presence. I appeal to you to attend a couple of Taizé worship service(s), not as another obligation in a life of obligations, but for yourself - to draw closer to God and gain peace of mind.

Today, as the church seeks to be the church, we find that more and more people come to church looking for what it might reasonably be expected to offer. On September 13<sup>th</sup>, Wednesday Nite Live returns to offer you biblical study, courses in Christian theology, and opportunities to develop spiritual practices such as prayer, discernment, and meditation.

On the first Wednesday of each month, Intercessory Prayer will be offered 15 minutes before the 7:00 PM Taizé service. On Wednesday, September 6<sup>th</sup>, we will pray together for the thousands of victims devastated by Hurricane Harvey. After this time of congregational prayer, we invite you to say for the 25-minute Taizé service. You will go home refreshed and inspired to live your faith after just 40 minutes in the presence of God's holiness and power.

Following each Taizé service, a 30-minute Prayer Vigil will be offered. Soft sacred music will play in the background, in our candlelit Sanctuary, and devotional reading material will be available as an aid to prayer.

Last (for now!), two people regularly pray for me and our worship leaders in my office on Sunday before the service. I invite you to join us to surround our service with prayer.

I anticipate a great year ahead here at Westminster as we surround our ministry and mission in prayer. Please consider stepping out in faith and committing yourselves to making prayer and worship and especially, your relationship to God a more important part of your life.

Pastor Joe

## WHATS NEW FOR FALL AT WPC

**Rally Day!!!**  
**Sunday, September 10<sup>th</sup>**



Sunday, September 10th is the beginning of the Sunday School year. The service will include a special Sunday School “Covenanting Ceremony” for our young people, parents, teachers and teaching assistants. After the service, we will celebrate with an Ice Cream Social in Harlan Hall.

**!!! New Mission Program!!! POW**  
**“PLAY ON, WESTMINSTER”**

Westminster is working together with the Middletown School District to host an exciting new musical opportunity for disadvantaged LOCAL children in grades 6-8. Erika Sayar and her colleague, Dan Martinho, will offer violin lessons on Thursday afternoons beginning, tentatively, in early October to between 10 and 20 local children. Westminster’s Mission Committee will also serve pizza to the kids to fortify them for their lesson.

## TEACHING GOD'S WORD EQUIPPING GOD'S PEOPLE

**Wednesday Nite Live 2017!!!**

**Beginning Wednesday, September 13<sup>th</sup>, 7:00-8:00 PM  
5 weeks**

### **What Presbyterians Believe**



It is often pointed out that the word “Presbyterianism” is a form of church government. But Presbyterianism is not only a form of government in the Church; it is also a well-defined system of beliefs or of doctrine.

In this 5 week class you will learn the basic doctrines of the Presbyterian Church which include the following: The Sovereignty of God, Election, Sanctification, the Sacraments, the Resurrection, and the Life Everlasting.

We will also study the meaning of the Lord’s Prayer, and the Apostles and Nicene Creeds.

### **AND THEN...**

### **The Protestant Reformation(s)**



**Beginning October 18<sup>th</sup>, 7:30-8:30 PM  
3 weeks**

The year 2017 marks the 500th anniversary of the Protestant Reformation. Throughout the world, there will be many commemorations of the Reformation remembering the important events and persons associated with this watershed event in the Western world.

Pastor Joe, fresh off his study leave to Germany and Switzerland where he will follow “The Luther Trail” in Germany, and the simultaneous spread of the Protestant Reformation to the cantons of Switzerland led by Huldrych Zwingli, John Calvin, and others, will lead an important discussion on how the Protestant Reformation(s) live on today in the church and in the world.



## **Worship Returns!!!**

**First Wednesday of each month**

**Beginning, Wednesday, September 6<sup>th</sup>, 7:00-8:00 PM**

Westminster offers an alternative worship service on the first Wednesday of each month at 7:00 PM. Taizé worship is being incorporated in a wide variety of churches, Protestant and Catholic, and its pattern of devotion is emulated in other communities of faith around the world.

A Taizé worship service involves informal prayers, meditation, periods of silence, and biblical readings. There is no preaching. The style of worship practiced at Taizé has attracted many worshipers from around the globe and from many different denominations.

We invite you to put it on your calendar and give it a try. You will likely leave the service with a deeper feeling of inner peace and nearness to God.

### **Monthly Intercessory Prayer**

**15 minutes before each Taizé Service; AND**

### **Prayer Vigil**

**(immediately after each Taizé Service; 30 minutes)**

Prayer is at the heart of our life together as Christians. Beginning on Wednesday, September 6<sup>th</sup>, you are invited to place prayer at the center of your life with two opportunities to pray sandwiched around a beautiful, meditative Taizé service of worship. Please take this opportunity to join together in prayer with your church family as we seek to grow in faith together and to deepen our commitment to Jesus.

### **Special Reformation Sunday Worship Service**

**Sunday, October 29<sup>th</sup> 10:00 Am**

**The 500<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Protestant Reformation**

Please join us for a VERY special service of worship as Westminster celebrates the 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Protestant Reformation. The service will feature a celebration of the centrality of the Word of God in our life together, a musical drama featuring Mrs. Martin Luther and her daughter, and the living hymnody of the Reformation leaders and those they inspired including Johann Sebastian Bach.

## The 500<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of The Protestant Reformation

On October 31, 1517 a stubborn monk and towering thinker, Martin Luther, nailed his 95 theses to a church door in Wittenberg Germany thereby launching the Protestant Reformation, a momentous religious revolution whose consequences we still live with today. This one event was the catalyst for one of the greatest religious revolts that Germany, Europe, and the world has ever seen.

Germany is inviting the rest of the world to visit and celebrate 2017 with a year full of exhibits, festivals and other activities. There is serious historical scholarship, such as three national exhibits looking at Luther's impact on the world.

*Our session has voted unanimously to grant our Pastor Joe two-weeks study leave (and a week of vacation too!) to follow the path of the Protestant Reformation(s) in Germany and Switzerland. Pastor Joe (and Lori) will report daily from the cities and villages where the Reformation took shape including Geneva, Switzerland, where John Calvin and the Reformed (Presbyterian) Tradition began.*

*The congregation is invited to follow Pastor Joe's journey on the Westminster Facebook page where he will post pictures and a brief paragraph daily, written in colorful and down-to-earth language, detailing the significance of the place, event, or person that will be highlighted. In following the journey, complete with a map, our congregation has a great opportunity to learn what it means to be a Presbyterian and a Protestant and why it is relevant today.*

## Faith Hope and Music Festival



Westminster's first annual Faith, Hope, and Music Festival was a tremendous success!!!! Thank you to all our volunteers who set-up and broke-down tents, tables, chairs; and all who staffed our loaves and fishes, and craft tables.

We are very happy to share that over 300 people attended the festival - a tremendous accomplishment for a first-time effort. We raised over \$700.00 from the 50/50 raffle and the Loaves and Fishes bake sale to benefit the continuing WPC music program. The money that we raised will help to support our music mission and ministry including the new Play on Westminster mission program (POW), our coffeehouses and the PAR Garden.



Planning is already underway to make the 2018 Faith, Hope, and Music Festival a major event in our community.



## Star 99.1 Care Pack

Who really Cares? WPC does! The church collected more than 50 back packs and a dozen bags filled with individually donated items for the Star 99.1 Care Pack project for foster kids. WPC was a Project Sponsor and collected items before and during its recent Faith, Hope, and Music Festival.

The response to the Care Pack Project was amazing. Not only our own congregation, but the entire community and so many Star 99.1 listeners were extremely generous with their donations. We received calls throughout the past month-and-a-half asking for directions to the church and people were stopping by to drop off their donations 24/7.

Partnering with Star 99.1 to support a ministry to help kids in the foster system was gratifying and inspirational. WPC is planning to build on the experience by starting its own projects for underprivileged youngsters Star 99.1.

Promotions Manager LuAnn Schafer picked up the donations from Pastor Joe on August 22nd.






# Annual Senior Citizens Dinner



The Deacon's will be hosting the Annual Senior Citizens Dinner on Saturday, September 23 from 5 PM to 7 PM. Please come out and join us. There are sign-up sheets on the bulletin boards outside the church office and in Harlan Hall. Hope to see you there.

## DEACON FOOD PANTRY Items for September

The Deacon's food pantry has a new and very needed addition, Hannah's Pet Food Pantry. Pet food for dogs and cats only are being accepted now. Canned and dry food (due to storage issues please no larger than 10 lb bags). Thank you for always being so generous to the Deacon's Food Pantry.

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|---------------------|---|--|---|----------------------------------|---|----------|
| Pancake mix         | Pasta/macaroni  |  | spaghetti sauce   | instant                          |  | potatoes |
| Knorr pasta or rice |  | tuna/chicken   |   | cereal                           | oatmeal   |          |
| Mayo                |  | canned chili,  |    | canned beef stew and baked beans |   |          |
| Stuffings           | Mac 'n cheese   | canned fruit (peaches and  |  | fruit cocktail)                  |   |          |

*He saith unto him, Feed my sheep. John 21:16 KJV*

### How to Access Our Food Pantry



The food pantry in Harlan Hall is kept stocked through the generosity of and for the benefit of Westminster members and the community at large. Should an emergency arise and a member or someone from the community needs food, call either Lori at the church office or Pastor Joe at 732.671.2585 (your call will be kept in complete confidence). They will notify the Moderator of the Deacons, Pam Wayde, and she will put together the parcels. The groceries may be picked up immediately in some cases or as early the next day by arrangement with either Pastor Joe or Pam Wayde.