

the westminster WINDOW



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A Publication of the Westminster Presbyterian Church

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Matthew 25 Certificate of
Commitment

A MATTHEW 25 CHURCH

Pastor Denise Clark-Jones

At the June 8 meeting, the Westminster Session voted to register as a “Matthew 25” church. For several years, the Lead Presbyter for Transformation of Great Rivers Presbytery, Rev. Ryan Landino, has urged me to have Westminster join 16 other churches in the presbytery as well as the Synod of Lincoln Trails, as a designated Matthew 25 church. I did not pursue it because, in my mind, Westminster has always been a Matthew 25 church. After the lockdown, we began to be a church with a larger congregation online. Not everyone who participates in worship with us online knows the history of Westminster’s commitment – past and present -- to Jesus’ call to his disciples to ‘do for the least of these who are God’s children, as we would do for Christ.’ This public affirmation of discipleship identifies Westminster’s mission to the poor, especially those in our local community. We hope that others will want to join us in worship and mission.

What is a Matthew 25 Church?

“The Matthew 25 vision of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) began with an overture from Cascades Presbytery to the 222nd General

WE ARE A MATTHEW 25 CHURCH



- Building congregational vitality
- Dismantling structural racism
- Eradicating systemic poverty

www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/matthew-25/

Actively engaged in our community, city, and in the world



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 Phone 309-673-8501 Opt. 5 / Ext. 5
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Westminster Infant Care Center
 Director..... **Valerie Sager**
 Phone 309-674-6701
 Hours Monday-Friday 6:30 to 3 PM
in accordance with Peoria school calendar
 Email WICC1973@gmail.com

THANK YOU TO OUR VOLUNTEERS

Editing/Proofing
 Peggy Carter

**ARTICLE
 DEADLINE**

**Friday, July 16 for the
 August newsletter.**



MINISTRY UPDATES

Assembly (2016). This overture called Presbyterians to be a missional people, actively engaging the world in the name of Jesus Christ. The 223rd General Assembly (2018) reaffirmed this commitment, distilling a number of other overtures into a sharper focus on three areas:

**building congregational vitality,
 dismantling structural racism and
 eradicating systemic poverty.**

These actions of the General Assembly are consistent with our belief that we are “saved to serve” — delivered from sin and death in order to show the love, justice and mercy of Jesus in our words and deeds.

The themes of the Matthew 25 invitation are grounded in the gospel. Jesus calls us to serve with and for “the least of these” (Matthew 25:40) — not as a group to be pitied, but as people who are deeply loved by Jesus. They de-center our assumptions about what it means to be a beloved child of God. They challenge the authenticity of our faith and remind us that what we do matters to God. The tenets of the Matthew 25 vision are also embedded in our denomination’s spiritual DNA. The Presbyterian/ Reformed tradition is marked by a deep concern for the flourishing of all people. Our confessions make this clear. For instance, the Confession of 1967 condemns the evil of systemic poverty in our world. The Confession of Belhar challenges us to confront racism in church and society. A Brief Statement of Faith imagines congregations fully alive in the glory of God. These themes are evident in the life of the PC(USA) today, as many people and congregations are already involved in Matthew 25 ministries, addressing poverty, racism and congregational vitality.” -- [The Presbyterian Church \(USA\)](#)

Why has Westminster pledged to be a Matthew 25 Church?

Although all three goals of Matthew 25 churches are part of our mission, we have selected “Ending systemic poverty” as our primary initiative because that has been the driving force behind the mission of Westminster for decades, at least. In 1974, the West-

Westminster Presbyterian Church Notable Numbers for May 2021

	Year to date		
	May	Actual	Budgeted
Receipts	\$ 23,861	\$ 115,555	\$ 78,875
WDF	\$ 586	\$ 72,420	\$ 109,140
Total	\$ 24,447	\$ 187,975	\$ 188,015
Expenses	\$ 29,865	\$ 164,085	\$ 188,071

WESTMINSTER SESSION

Clerk of Session	Jim Burnham
	Class of 2021
Christian Education	Peggy Bragg
	Class of 2021
Church Life	Open
Finance.....	Brian Hakes
	Class of 2022
Membership.....	Kim Mitchell
	Class of 2022
Missions/Outreach.....	Jan Leonard
	Class of 2022
Personnel	Larry Hicks
	Class of 2022
Properties	John Jackson
	Class of 2021
Worship	Open

DEACONS

Moderator	Jeanie Olson
	Class of 2019
Sue Burnham.....	Class of 2021
Phyllis Rafferty	Class of 2021
Marge Willadsen	Class of 2021
Laura Van Riper	Class of 2021
Alice Nash	Class of 2022
Bonnie Jackson.....	Class of 2023

minster Infant Care Center was opened to provide daycare for teenage mothers so they could complete high school. Since that time, more than 90% of the mothers completed high school and went on to college or additional vocational training. When the old church building, built in 1898, burned down in 1985 the congregation was faced with the decision to build at its existing location or move to the suburbs as so many of the downtown churches had. Because the congregation was committed to local mission, they decided to stay on Moss Ave., close to neighbors in the greatest need in Peoria. The WestMark Food pantry, housed at Westminster and operated in conjunction with St. Mark's Roman Catholic Parish, has been operating for many years. Other programs to address the issue of systemic poverty, such as a summer school for children of migrant workers, have operated when the need was not being addressed elsewhere in the city. This year, during the pandemic, when the Peoria Public Schools were on the hybrid schedule of two days in person and two days with virtual learning, Westminster housed a virtual learning center for Whittier Elementary School students whose parents were not available to oversee their schoolwork at home. A much higher percentage of Westminster's budget goes to mission, particularly local mission, than the average church budget. We continue to seek more ways Westminster can address the problems of those in need. Currently, we are focusing on future uses for the Parish House that will help others live the abundant life God desires for all to share. May God guide and bless our work! - Pastor Denise

WESTMINSTER'S MISSION STATEMENT UPDATED


Pastor Denise Clark-Jones

At the last meeting of the Westminster Session, a few changes were made to our public mission statement. There was no substantive change, only details added for clarification. The idea for this started when I attended a function at another church in the presbytery. A speaker made the comment that the host church was the only Presbyterian church in the city that affirmed the welcome of LGBT people. I looked up that church on the internet to see if they had an official designation, such as a Matthew 25 church for mission focus, and they did not. The only difference, in print, from Westminster's mission statement online, was that church specifically stated their welcoming of identifiable groups, which historically have not found as warm a welcome or been excluded from churches. To make public what is already understood and practiced at Westminster, the session voted to add words to our Mission statement. Also added were specific programs Westminster offers to help the needy. Our revised Mission Statement is as follows with the words identified for you in *italics* that have been added:

“Our Mission Statement”

Westminster Presbyterian Church's mission is to serve God with open mind, hands, and heart.

continued on next page . . .




We are a Matthew 25 church.


We pledge to act boldly and compassionately to serve people who are hungry, oppressed, imprisoned or poor.

Matthew 25:31-46 calls us to actively engage in our community and the world around us. We will do this by embracing one or more of these areas of focus:

- Building congregational vitality
- Dismantling structural racism
- Eradicating systemic poverty

pcusa.org/matthew25

 MATTHEW 25

 Westminster Church of Christ
Presbyterian Mission

MINISTRY UPDATES

Our **minds** are open to:

- Sermons that are intellectually challenging and help us understand what God is doing in the world;
- Educational opportunities to learn from God's Word and great thinkers in the rich Reformed tradition; and
- An understanding of how God is expressed through artistic expressions and different faith traditions.

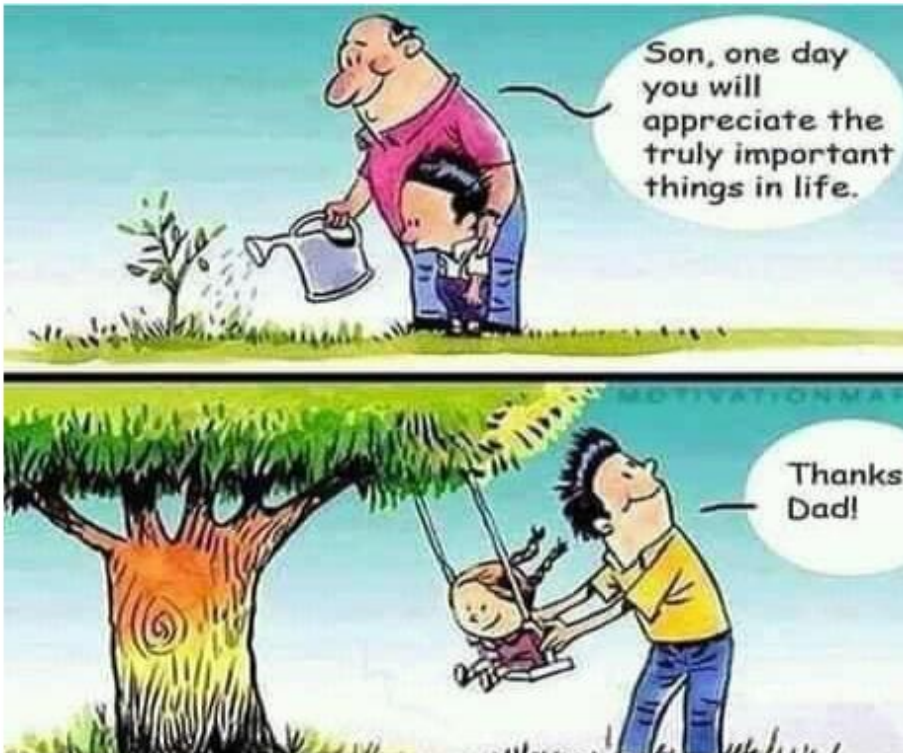
Our **hands** are open to:

- House and support the Westminster Infant Childcare Center (WICC) which enables teen mothers of infants to complete high school;
- Give food to the hungry at our WestMark Food Pantry and the Whittier Elementary School Little Free Pantry
- Offer financial support to local and denominational missions.

Our **hearts** are open to:

- Honor God by modeling our behavior after Christ's;
- Affirming all people as children of God, made in God's image irrespective of age, race, ethnicity, abilities, socio-economic status, sexual orientation, gender identity or marital status.
- Love God with our hearts and souls; and our neighbors as ourselves."

This new and improved edition of Westminster's Mission Statement will serve to inform potential visitors (and hopefully members!) that Westminster strives to 'walk the walk' of our Christian faith and is truly welcoming to all God's children.



ANNIVERSARIES

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- 31 Riley Fisher

WE ARE GOING DIGITAL

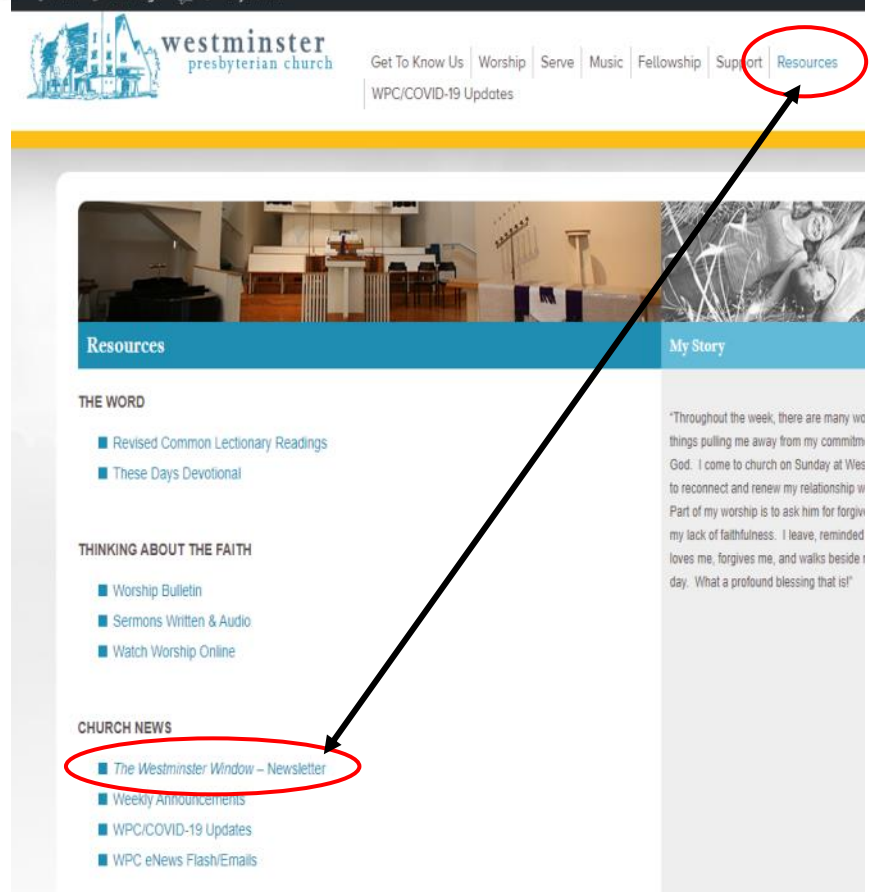


We will no longer be preparing a monthly mass mailing of the *Westminster Window Newsletter*, except to those who request it. If you would still like to receive a copy of the newsletter in your mailbox each month, please fill out the coupon below and mail it into the church office.

Everyone who is already receiving a weekly mailing from the church will automatically be added to the list to receive the newsletter by mail.

To find the newsletter online, visit the website at www.westminsterpeoria.org. Click on the "Resource" tab on the top right. You will then find the newsletter archive right under the "Church News" towards the middle of the web page.

Click on this and it will take you to the archive of the *Westminster Window*.



YES! I still want my newsletter mailed to me.

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY/STATE/ZIP: _____

EMAIL: _____

PHONE: _____

Clip and mail this form to:
Westminster Church
Window Newsletter
1420 W. Moss Avenue
Peoria, Illinois 61606

TOGETHER AGAIN!



On Sunday July 25, we had the pleasure of hosting a hamburger luncheon for 43 of our Westminster friends. It was a simple meal, but the fellowship was amazing. Many people told us how wonderful it was to finally meet in person with old and new friends again after many months of lockdown and watching the church service from home. The luncheon was a reminder to all of us how important our friendships with each other are.

We would like to thank those who helped with clean-up, including Laura Van Riper, Peggy Bragg, Abbie Alexander, Pastor Denise, and others who quietly helped tidy up without fanfare. We would also like to thank Dan Callahan for the lovely table centerpieces he provided. Thanks also to Steve Sager, who graciously set up the tables in advance.

- Bonnie & John Jackson



"I felt so blessed to be back at Westminster last Sunday after many months of viewing the service alone in my apartment. To greet and worship with fellow church members whom I hadn't seen in months was a joy. And then to share a lunch in Fellowship Hall! I was so impressed by how well cared for everything looked—the

grounds and plantings, the Sanctuary, Fellowship Hall. I felt so grateful to all those who have kept Westminster looking so fine during all these months." - Peggy Carter

Enjoyed spending time with everyone last Sunday. We felt very welcomed by all introducing themselves to us. The food was delicious and we greatly appreciate those who prepared it. Gathering two times a year would be fine, early summer and maybe in the fall. Thanks. - Dennis and Julie Herridge

I think everyone enjoyed seeing many of their friends and having time to visit with them. I thank Bonnie & John on planning a simple meal with very little work to be done & easy clean up. Maybe we can try another one in the fall. - Alice Nash

I liked it, and think it's a good idea to continue, as we used to! - Ann Stinnett



Fellowship should be offered once a month so members can visit with other members as well as prospective members! - Carol Borders

It was great! Bonnie and John did a wonderful job organizing it and getting all the food, which was delicious. It was so good to see so many people, most of whom I'd not seen since the start of the pandemic. Yes, I think we should do it again. - Peggy Bragg



JULY REVISED COMMON LECTIONARY READINGS (RCLR)

RCLR for Sunday, July 4, 2021, the Fourteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

[First Reading 2 Samuel 5:1-5, 9-10](#)

[Psalm 48](#)

[Second Reading 2 Corinthians 12:2-10](#)

[Gospel Mark 6:1-13](#)

RCLR for Sunday, July 11, 2021, the Fifteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

[First Reading 2 Samuel 6:1-5, 12b-19](#)

[Psalm 24](#)

[Second Reading Ephesians 1:3-14](#)

[Gospel Mark 6:14-29](#)

RCLR for Sunday, July 18, 2021, the Sixteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

[First Reading 2 Samuel 7:1-14a](#)

[Psalm 89:20-37](#)

[Second Reading Ephesians 2:11-22](#)

[Gospel Mark 6:30-34, 53-56](#)

RCLR for Sunday, July 25, 2021, the Seventeenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

[First Reading 2 Samuel 11:1-15](#)

[Psalm 14](#)

[Second Reading Ephesians 3:14-21](#)

[Gospel John 6:1-21](#)

USHER/GREETER SCHEDULE

Bonnie Jackson

Dear Westminster Friends,

Since we do not have a worship committee chair at this time, I have volunteered to set up an usher schedule for the coming months. I have created a schedule that I hope works for all of you and that will get us through at least part of this ever-changing landscape. I have included everyone's phone number so that, in the event that you cannot serve on the specified date, you can find a substitute or trade dates with someone else.

The duties are simple: Staff the two tables in the narthex and answer questions for people. Dick Helfrich will be there most Sundays to work the table that takes temperatures and keeps the contact tracing lists. The other table has the bulletins, Communion elements and hand sanitizer. Whoever staffs that table just needs to greet and remind people to take a bulletin and communion pod. A third usher should be available to help answer questions and usher people to their pews. After the service, look around and make sure all of the bulletins are picked up from the pews and discarded into the recycle basket. **Also, remember to light the candles a few minutes before the service and put them out as soon as the last hymn begins.** That's about all there is to it.

I thank you so much for being willing to help out at this challenging time. Many hands make light work and it is such a blessing to have people willing to pitch in. We will see what the future brings and what changes need to be made in weeks subsequent to the end of August. We are all in this together.

Sincerely,

Bonnie Jackson
309-696-1955

07.04.21 -	Abbie Alexander Dick Helfrich
07.11.21 -	Diane & Jeff Case Dick Helfrich
07.18.21 -	John & Bonnie Jackson Dick Helfrich
07.25.21 -	Alice Nash, Kim Mitchell Dick Helfrich
08.01.21 -	Laura Van Riper Dick Helfrich
08.08.21 -	Peggy Bragg Dick Helfrich
08.15.21 -	Phyllis & Bill Rafferty Dick Helfrich
08.22.21 -	Abbie Alexander Dick Helfrich
08.29.21 -	Diane & Jeff Case Dick Helfrich



WESTMINSTER
Presbyterian Church

Rev. Denise
Clark-Jones

JOIN US
SUNDAYS

IN-PERSON OR ONLINE
10 AM Morning Worship
No Registration Needed.



Our mission is to
*Serve God with Open
Mind, Hands and Heart.*

Certificate of Commitment



This acknowledges and affirms

Westminster Presbyterian Church Peoria, Illinois

is a Matthew 25 church, called to actively engage in the world around us.

Accepting the Matthew 25 invitation means committing to act boldly and compassionately by embracing one or more of three areas of focus: building congregational vitality, dismantling structural racism and eradicating systemic poverty. Congratulations!



Rev. Dr. Diane Moffett
President/Executive Director
Presbyterian Mission Agency

2021

Date



Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)
Presbyterian Mission