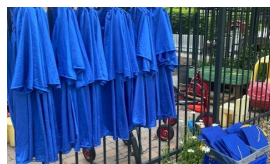


JUNE MESSENGER 2020



**PRESCHOOL
PARKING LOT
GRADUATION**



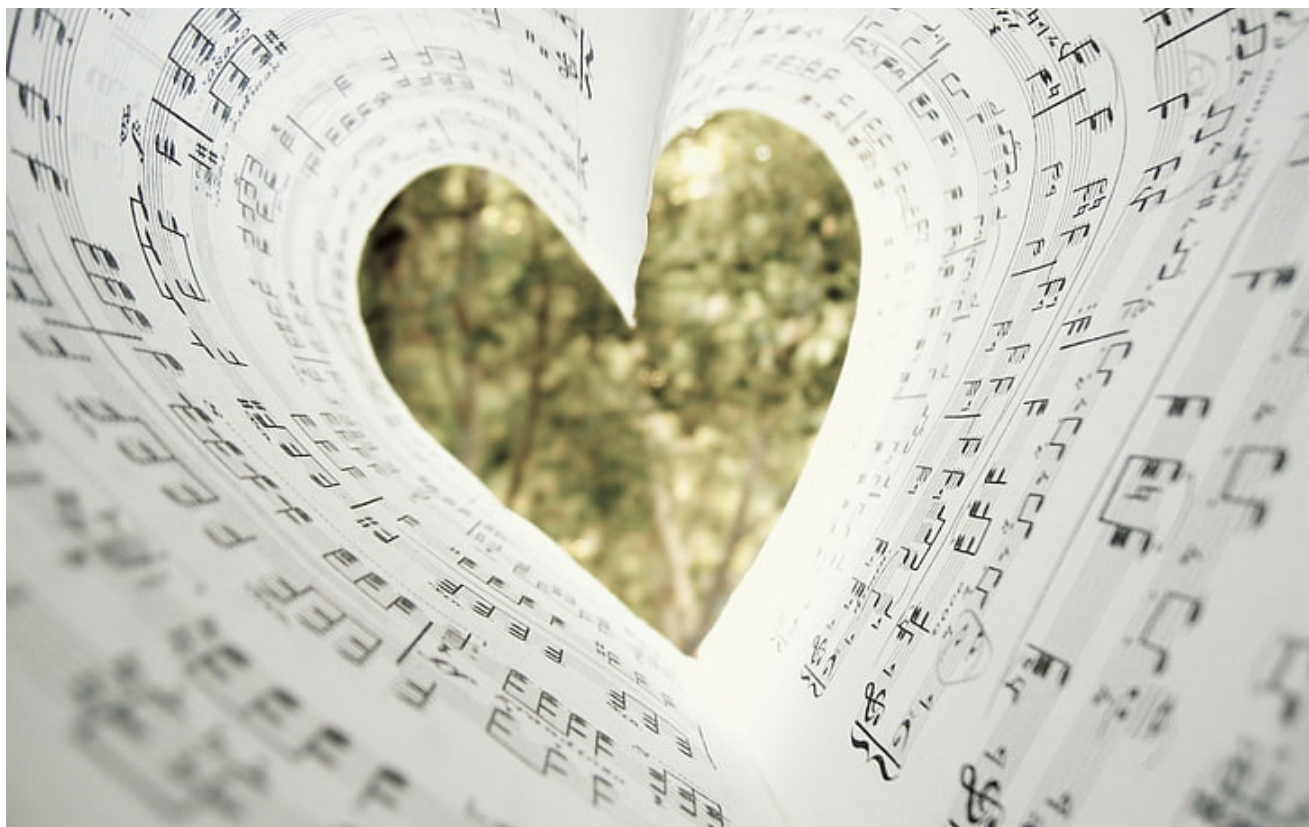
**WORSHIP VIRTUALLY
WITH US
SUNDAYS ONLINE**



**CONGRATULATIONS
2020 GRADUATES!**

THE MESSENGER

A Message From Rev. Dr. Shelbourn



Dear friends:

Are any of you, like me, feeling like these days are the doldrums? The other day one of the other members of the staff expressed momentary loss of what day it was. With the usual week's cycle completely altered by the pandemic, it is easy to start feeling like the character in the movie "Ground Hog Day."

**We pray,
worship and
serve. We are
the church in
action.**

Sometimes, on a Sunday afternoon, Carol and I just take a car ride to break the routine a bit.

The word “doldrums” is a marine meteorological term. The Intertropical Convergence Zone, known by sailors as the doldrums or the calms because of its monotonous, windless weather, is the area where the northeast and southeast trade winds converge. It encircles Earth near the thermal equator, though its specific position varies seasonally.

So I am grateful for some of the new ideas and initiatives that we are seeing at Westminster Presbyterian Church to help alter the emotional doldrums of social isolation. The Rev. Ellen Davis has recruited persons to work on a project first envisioned by The Rev. Thomas Dummermuth of Eastridge Church: “Copy the Bible, word-for-word, as the ancient scribes did.”

The Adult Education Committee is sponsoring a virtual Bible read-through, guided by short videos which explain the themes of the passages assigned, followed by a Zoom conference to reflect on the readings.

Members who sew are setting to the task of making facial masks for the time when the Session decides we can return to a schedule of public worship . . . with the restrictions of distance and masking recommended by the Centers for Disease Control.

No one more than your Bridge Pastor yearns for a return to when we can worship in the sanctuary and greet each other over Mill coffee in the Garden Room. But the guidelines issued by General Assembly Council recommend strict measures to safely resume public worship, not merely distancing, but including *not singing*, even under a facial mask.

For Presbyterians, singing is so essential to our worship that – for now, I – frankly – would rather sing with gusto in my living room with the YouTube service than gather with trepidation and silence in our beloved sanctuary. We need to see the new infection rate decrease to safely open. Westminster Presbyterian Church will chart its own course, based on the decisions of the Ruling Elders.

The building is closed, but church is vital and very much open. People are worshiping virtually, they are passing the peace with a phone call or Zoom meeting, they are giving of their time, talents and treasures. As we care for our first responders, we are doing the mission of the church. As we support local restaurants with “carry out,” we are helping the economy for those hardest hit. We pray, worship and serve.

We are the church in action.

Jimmy Shelbourn, Bridge Pastor

The CARES Act P.P.P. ASSISTANCE | STEWARDSHIP & FINANCE MINISTRY

As an added layer of financial protection, the Session empowered our committee and church staff to apply for and secure a 100% forgivable loan under the CARES Act and its Paycheck Protection Program. This aid comes as a special type of federal Small Business Administration loan, and these funds allow us to support our church and preschool staff budget for up to eight weeks. So long as follow the terms of the program, the loan is 100% forgiven and thus no cost to the church at all. We moved swiftly with the assistance of Union Bank to secure this loan prior to the program funds being depleted. This is another resource we have to help stabilize our finances through these challenging times.

STEWARDSHIP & FINANCE MINISTRY

Appreciation and Generosity... at a Distance

The generosity of Westminster members is one of the ways to empower the mission and ministry of this church. Your response to the Power of Ten stewardship campaign was amazing and has provided us the means to start the year on a strong financial footing. Thank you! With us all distancing ourselves and missing the in-person calls to give and the stories of generosity we might normally hear weekly in worship, our committee asks that you please continue to keep Westminster in your thoughts while we are apart from one another. And if you have yet to explore the online giving options available to all members, we encourage you to do so. It is fast, easy, and can be done from any computer or smartphone. All you need is Realm account access. If you have questions on setting up your Realm account, simply give the church office a call.

PNC UPDATE Pastor Nominating Committee

Even though this COVID-19 time has slowed many processes, the Pastor Nominating Committee continues to meet weekly. We no longer talk across a conference table but have moved to discussing our candidates on Zoom. Like many groups, our “Brady Bunch” view of each other brings smiles as we begin each meeting. We want to share our current status with you:

- Active candidates make available their Pastor Information Forms (PIF) for consideration to churches across the denomination.
- Our initial batches of PIFs were, to be frank, not a good match for the experience and leadership skills we feel to be right for Westminster. That was a setback.
- However, the PIFs we received since the first of the year have been substantially better, and we continue to review any new PIFs sent to us.
- Because of the internet, trips to visit a pastor to hear him/her give a sermon and lead worship are not necessary. We view online worship instead...saving time and money.
- Each PIF is rated and we make appointments for video interviews with the highest rated ones.
- We have had Skype/Zoom interviews with 12 candidates.
- As a result of those interviews, we then select top candidates to visit us in Lincoln. This allows them to meet us in person, see our church, see Lincoln, give a neutral-pulpit sermon at a church outside of Lincoln, and inquire about things important to the candidates... housing options, school system, neighborhoods, etc

- Since education is so important to Westminster, we also ask the candidates to conduct a bible study with the PNC. This helps us evaluate their teaching during the on-site visit.
- Because we did not want to lose time during this COVID period, we have adjusted our schedule with our current candidates. After we have the initial Zoom interview and have decided we want to know an individual better, we now do the bible study online as a Zoom meeting. This has worked well.
- After the interview and the Bible study, we then request the candidate to provide us with written answers to about 10 questions. We ask about their thoughts on many topics—strategy and vision, communication, management style, collaboration, etc. This provides insight on their thoughts as well as writing skills.
- We have three pastors that have risen to the top of the 125+ reviewed.
- So far, we have hosted one pastor for a visit to Lincoln. That candidate was able to visit in person, give a neutral pulpit sermon, and conduct a bible study.
- We had a second pastor scheduled for a visit who is very excited to meet us, but that had to be postponed due to COVID. The Zoom bible study is scheduled.
- The third has provided a bible study via Zoom and is in the process of answering the questions. This pastor is also excited to visit Lincoln.
- We had to suspend our in-person visits not only for travel reasons but also the simple fact that we could not meet as a group with the candidate and spouse without violating the Governor's restriction on meeting size limited to no more than 10 in a room and/or the shelter in place orders in place in the states where some of our candidates reside.

We received an email last week from the Church Leadership Connection asking if our PNC was still active during this COVID time. Apparently many Pastor Nominating Committees have ceased activities but we definitely have not. As a result of the response that we are still an active PNC, we have 13 new PIFs that were sent on Monday, May 11. We will begin to review and rate these individuals immediately.

Obviously, there are limitations to how far we can go in our process during a COVID shutdown. No candidate will accept a call without first visiting Lincoln, and we need to respect their concerns regarding their willingness to travel at this time. So that really is the biggest limitation to completing our task.

Now that some restrictions are being lifted locally and nationally, we are optimistic that candidates can travel to us in the coming days. And that will allow us to complete our due diligence and select the best candidate to lead us.

Representatives from Homestead Presbytery initially let us know that PNC searches can take up to a year and most take about 9 months. We began our work in August 2019, so that puts us at the 9 month mark right now. Before COVID, we felt we were on pace to be able to welcome multiple

finalist candidates to Lincoln and then recommend to you the best candidate for your consideration by this past Easter. Obviously, COVID got in the way.

But rest assured that the work of the PNC continues in every way possible at this time. We are still very actively engaged in the search for the next Westminster pastor and head of staff. This is an important decision that we know will impact our congregation for the next ten years. We continue to work and make progress, but with COVID, our process is going to take a bit longer than we thought.

We appreciate your patience and hope you understand that we know how critical it is for us to both complete our work and to call the best candidate for our church.

Joyce Douglas, Andrew Finkner, Michael Gregg, Steve Hughes, Jim Kinkennon, Sandi Larson, Deb Schorr, Alisha Stokes, Allen Wachter.

Funeral Reception Ministry

As we look forward, we will be in need of volunteers... Are you called to this ministry?

Are you looking for a place to be a part of the Westminster Family? The Funeral Reception Ministry is looking for more volunteers. It is a ministry that has proven to be a blessing for so many in our church family and our community.

Members of the ministry volunteer to set up Fellowship Hall, serve at the reception, and clean up after the reception.

Usually it's 3-4 hours of your time. Depending on the size of funeral and type of lunch, we try to have 4-8 volunteers for a reception.

We will gladly add your gifts and talents to our list of volunteers. Contact Kathy Rohwedder at kathrohw@yahoo.com or (402)202-9889 to volunteer or if you have questions regarding this important ministry.

Green@Heart | Attention: Armchair Travelers



Have you set aside travel plans to wait out the pandemic? Travel offers us wide-ranging opportunities to understand human history and to marvel at the wonders of nature. But for now, Rick Steves, a travel authority regularly featured on NET television and radio, suggests we use the time to learn and plan. He also urges us to get involved in protecting these wonders for future generations.

Listen here to his most recent broadcast for suggestions about visiting Rome and some sobering thoughts about our climate: <https://soundcloud.com/rick-steves/601-looking-for-rome-the-end>

Congratulations to all of our 2020 Graduates!

No doubt these past few years have required an intense amount of study, hard work, and a commitment perhaps like you've never known before. The year 2020 will go down in our history books as one of the most trying years in the history of not only our nation but the world! So many of our schools have either shut down entirely or suspended. All of this has made your final year quite challenging, to say the least. So many of our traditions have been interrupted in ways we never dreamed possible. On behalf of the entire church family, we want you to know that we are so proud of you. You should be proud of your accomplishments, and look forward to all of the wonderful things that your future holds. We pray that you continue to use wisdom in all of your decisions that lie ahead and let God continue to guide your path.

Hello! My name is Marti Walstad and I am graduating from Lincoln Southwest with the class of 2020. My plans for the future include majoring in Finance at Miami University of Ohio. I'm also proud to say that I will be continuing my swimming career there as well! I was baptized and confirmed at Westminster and have been apart of the youth group for many years. I'm grateful to have had these program and the church as part of my spiritual journey. I want to thank the leaders that I've had the privilege of getting to know over the many years.



Hello! My name is Alexandra Douglas and I am a 2020 graduate from East High School and The Career Academy. Alexandra will attend Iowa State this fall, studying Biochemistry.

2020 GRADUATES Cont.

Shelby Lammers graduating from Lincoln North Star, planning on attending Nebraska Wesleyan University, interested in Exercise Science/Physical Therapy.

(Photo by Jenny Gegg Photography).



Sarah Baillie is graduating from Lincoln East. She plans to earn her Bachelors degree in Psychology at University of Nebraska, Lincoln.



Jenoa Bret Jurgens graduated from Norris High School
Future Plans: Attending University of Nebraska at Omaha, pursuing a degree in Computer Science with a focus on Artificial Intelligence and Math.



Preschool Parking Lot Graduation 2020

It has been an interesting, unforgettable spring at Westminster Preschool! The challenge to stay connected and engaged with families proved to be filled with joy, blessing and many new experiences!

Very quickly, the highlight of the week for Westminster Preschool staff became making doorstep deliveries to families. These deliveries included activities, pick-me-ups and greetings!

Facebook and YouTube became our new tools of the trade as we used both to reach out with lessons, stories and fun facts to support learning.



Any guess what the most viewed video was? Dr. Jimmy's Chapel Chat songs! The students and their families have been able to enjoy Chapel Chat at home with two episodes of their favorite songs and weekly Bible stories.



The Week of the Young Child was celebrated with daily challenges for families and culminated with a parking lot parade! Over forty families followed a route through the Westminster parking lot as the teachers lined the sides with signs, waves and big smiles!





As the school year comes to a close, some creativity was necessary to celebrate the important milestone of preschool graduation.

With an old Jazzercise mic, wonderfully willing photographer (Jenny Gegg), adventurous teachers and flexible parents, we celebrated our first ever parking lot graduation. We were able to broadcast our ceremony into the cars as they maintained a safe distance, ensuring everyone's health! A beautiful morning was the topping on the cake! It was a wonderful day that will not soon be forgotten!

The last big event of the year was our Scavenger Hunt. Our families had clues and an address and had to guess the teacher they would find as they arrived! They were also surprised with an end of the year gift at the end of each driveway!



The 2019-2020 school year has been one for the record books! We look forward to what 2020-2021 brings!

PRAYER REQUESTS, CONCERNS AND PRAISES

For prayer requests, concerns and praises, please send to the email

address: prayer@westminsterlincoln.org. Requests will be forwarded to the Prayer Ministry Group on a weekly basis, or more often if needed. If you would like to be a part of the Prayer Ministry Group, please email your name, phone number and your email address to: prayer@westminsterlincoln.org.

Reminder: All information for The Messenger is due to Tracy Hoffman at tracy@westminsterlincoln.org by the 18th of each month. All announcements for The Vine are due to Joanne Gabriel at joanne@westminsterlincoln.org by 5 pm on Tuesday of each week.

CELEBRATING WESTMINSTER LIFE GROUPS

FEATURED LIFE GROUP: “LADIES NIGHT OUT”

Westminster Ladies Night Out is held once a month throughout the year from 5-7 PM at various Lincoln restaurants and pubs to enjoy an after-work drink and appetizer (except not currently due to the Covid 19 Pandemic and social distancing restrictions).

We love to hang-out, talk, laugh, and of course, eat. All ladies are welcome and all are encouraged to bring a friend. These casual outings result in fellowship, connection with old friends and opportunity to meet new women. Feel free to bring a friend and drop in at your leisure. Let Robyn Uebele know if you want to be added to the e-vite list, or if you have any questions, robynu2@hotmail.com.

We did a little informal survey from people that attend and here's their replies when asked what some of their favorite things are about Ladies Night Out.

My favorite things about Ladies Night Out is the anticipation of eating out with all the ladies. Eating with others in laughter, story telling, sharing recipes, tasting special drinks, eating a wide variety of foods, and knowing ladies you worship with on Sunday. Sharing and breaking bread together is a gift.

Getting to know other women in our church in a comfortable, relaxing setting. No pressures, no “duties”, just fun conversation. Eating with others is special, somehow! It's great to visit new restaurants as well as familiar favorites. There are many women I would not have met without the opportunity of Ladies Night Out. I really, really am missing our gatherings!!



We learn more about who we are as sisters in faith - sharing joys and concerns-and I often come away from those two hours thinking, "Wow, I didn't know that about _____. I'm so glad we shared that time together." I'll be glad when we can be together again, and share more good times-with food and libation.

My favorite thing is watching our mother, Elly (93 years old), thrive with the group. Nancy and I are happy to accompany her to the gatherings and we all have a great time. It has been a highlight for mom where she can get out and socialize and just be herself. The food and conversation is always good.

I like the laughter. Our gathering has no particular agenda—pretty unusual in our programmed lives. And we're all relaxed and not taking ourselves very seriously. Good thing

because things can get out of hand. Like the night I ran into Nadar on the porch at Billy's and he warned me that "They're out of control in there. You better go settle them down." Sure enough, more than one thing had already been spilled and it was like a table full of little girls, all giggling.



Having the opportunity to really talk to at least three other women (sitting on each side and across from me) about whatever is on our minds. It's unlike any other Westminster gathering in that we have the time to get to know each other in a relaxed setting with great food.

It's nice to meet ladies I would not normally meet from all ages and backgrounds. I always meet someone with who I have something in common. Plus, who doesn't enjoy a good uncensored joke (Billy's/Nader)! It takes me away from my daily routine and the previous stress of my day.

LNO is one of my favorite times and I always hate when I miss it. We have such a variety of ages and backgrounds but when we're together,

we just enjoy the camaraderie. From college age to Elly, we laugh and enjoy great food, drink and fun. A new person is always welcomed and—hopefully—never feels like a newcomer.



Is there anything better than food, fun, and fellowship with our female friends? No! Together around the table we are a new creation.

I love hearing updates on everyone's family, including pets! I relish the information of stories from family far away or nearby. Grandchildren, nieces, nephews, cousins.....it's the best. You can walk in to Ladies Night at any time and people are so glad to see you and welcome you to the table. No matter how late, they are just glad you could come for any time. Precious moments.



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LADIES NIGHT OUT Continued

Ladies Night Out gives us an opportunity to get to know more about our church family. The food is always great and conversation is even better!



The best thing for me is the laughing.

Being with loving friends who I can just laugh with and at each other is a gift. My favorite thing about Ladies Night Out, as a relatively new member, has been getting to know the ladies.

What I like best about LNO is the fun I have with my church sisters sharing stories, tips, concerns and joys with no expectations except to have a good time.

Favorite thing is seeing friends and making new friends.

My favorite things have been getting to know ladies since I am new to Lincoln and Westminster as well as the laughter and sharing. It's a great group!

