

ANNUAL MEETING OF THE CONGREGATION



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MISSION STATEMENT

*Gathered in Love,
Centered in Christ and
Empowered for Mission*

MINISTRY OF 2021

THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE CONGREGATION AND CORPORATION

Sunday, January 23, 2022, at 9:30 AM

WESTMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

*Missionaries:
Inviting, Growing, Serving*



2821 N. BELL SCHOOL ROAD
ROCKFORD, ILLINOIS 61107
www.westminsterchurch.cc

MODERATOR
The Rev. Michael Hafele

CLERK OF SESSION
Thelma Busker

Lead Pastor Report

Lead Pastor's Annual Report- 2021

"I give thanks to my God always for you because of the grace of God that was given you in Christ Jesus."

-1 Cor. 1:4

The word "grace" implies the miraculous. The unmerited favor of God to humanity through the divine work of Jesus Christ is miraculous. In the midst of all the hoopla and chaos the past couple of years, we could use a bit of the miraculous. As a Church, God has met us in that need for God's divine work. God has met us in loving hope when words like "variant" have reared its head. God walks with us when the cadences of our daily lives are continually being moved like a metronome continually changing its rhythm. The Lord calls us to perseverance when the cups of both our patience and our strength are bone dry. Yet, the grace of the Lord continues to wash over parched souls and dry spirits so that our cups are overflowing. The Church are the bearers of that divine grace, that miraculous work of Christ that satiates even the deepest need. This year gives witness to God's miraculous work and we give thanks to the Lord.

When we started 2021, we were still recording and worshipping solely online until we had the opportunity for us to regather in the sanctuary together in March. This was a titanic labor of love on the part of staff and congregation members as we shifted modalities, navigated new protocols, all while welcoming the congregation into a sacred and safe space for the worship of the Lord. Countless personnel hours were devoted to planning multiple permutations of worship and programming to respond to the changing requirements of Health agencies. The ministry agility offered by the entire church staff, the session and deacons, as well as Commission leaders is absolutely astounding. Without their ability to pivot, sometimes on a moment's notice, the Church would not have been able to effectively worship and minister. The support staff, the pastoral/program staff, the music staff, the Nursery Preschool staff, and the lay leadership all are to be commended for their ability to literally offer essentially a completely new church ministry dynamic while planning on returning to the previous.

Sometimes it is challenging to see grace in the midst of difficult times; even more when the Lord offers insight into the Church's need. In times when the Lord casts a light on us, sometimes what is discovered are opportunities to grow and to lean into ways in which we can be more faithful and fruitful disciples. For decades, Westminster Presbyterian Church has maintained strong lay leadership who were equipped for the ministries God has called them to. In time, however, the Church relied too much upon the faithful witness of these leaders at the cost of equipping new leaders to journey alongside them. Though faithfulness does not have a shelf life, energy does. Faithful leaders are at a point where the energy demands of leadership are too robust for them to maintain as they once did. New leadership is so critical for Westminster to be effective into the future. Left unchecked, there will continue to be a growing leadership vacuum. The grace afforded to Westminster is that there is still time to equip and raise up lay leadership to lead Westminster into a faithful and fruitful future. This is, by far, the most pressing and critical need for Westminster Presbyterian Church outpacing any financial or property need. For new leaders to be effective, they must be equipped. So, through 2022, I will be leading training and equipping opportunities for those interested in being a leader here at Westminster. It is time that we welcome and equip new spiritual leaders to share alongside our current faithful in the grace of God's continuing work here at Westminster.

This past year has welcomed us to cling to that which is life giving, the traditions of meaning and purpose, the hopeful expectation of the God who is with us in every and all challenges as well as our joys. We cling to the grace of Jesus Christ who called this group of God's people into faithful witness of Christ in the Rockford community. To God be the glory today as yesterday and into tomorrow.

Grace and peace in Christ,



The Rev. Michael K. Hafele
Lead Pastor, Westminster Presbyterian Church

Statistical Report



Year	Members	AWA	New Members
2007	908	430	50
2008	867	443	58
2009	896	435	55
2010	931	447	61
2011	937	422	44
2012	984	460	68
2013	989	454	38
2014	995	430	40
2015	859	416	31
2016	897	401	42
2017	817	374	37
2018	794	326	22
2019	785	300	8
2020	758	*	8
2021	745	*	7

Statistical Report

Communicant Members 12/31/2020	765
GAINS - 2021	
Affirmations/Reaffirmation of Faith	7
Youth Professions	8
TOTAL GAINS - 2021	15
LOSSES - 2021	
Transfer	5
Request	14
Death	16
TOTAL LOSSES - 2021	35
Communicant Members 12/31/2021	745

* Attendance numbers remain difficult to ascertain during the Covid 19 pandemic due to the addition of online services, including live streaming.

Necrological Report

Westminster Presbyterian Church

The Necrological Report - 2021

<u>Deaths</u>	<u>Date Joined</u>	<u>Date of Death</u>
Lloyd Gray	January 18, 2006	January 9, 2021
James Tarr	June 23, 2019	January 12, 2021
Elizabeth Henriksen	August 21, 2007	January 17, 2021
Wilson Sadowsky	May 17, 2005	January 21, 2021
Percy Muender	July 1, 1997	February 4, 2021
Jane Kelley	October 12, 1958	February 24, 2021
Barbara Johnson	March 15, 2011	May 2, 2021
Karen Moore	February 1, 1992	May 22, 2021
Herbert Schroedl	April 20, 2014	May 29, 2021
Brian Rice	May 19, 2002	June 4, 2021
James Smith	February 27, 1977	September 30, 2021
Genevieve Gerretson	October 13, 1957	October 29, 2021
Allen Holden	March 22, 2015	December 16, 2021
Carol Noonan	January 18, 2006	December 19, 2021
Shirley Holzwarth	March 4, 1962	December 23, 2021
John Oehler	October 18, 2005	December 25, 2021

Baptisms

Nora Everly Merema, daughter of Steve and Rachel Merema	January 28, 2021
Ethan Thomas Monk, son of Ashley Losure Monk and John Monk	May 9, 2021
Lennon Reid Smith, daughter of Krista Bartelson and Zachary Smith	May 23, 2021
Colin Robert Belle	June 20, 2021
Linden DeeAnn Belle, daughter of Colin and Jesse Belle	June 20, 2021
Alec James Timke, son of Brett and Stacy Timke	October 13, 2021
Adelyn Jean Timke, daughter of Brett and Stacy Timke	October 13, 2021

New Members

Paul Zeien Reaffirmation of Faith	May 18, 2021
Jane Zeien Reaffirmation of Faith	May 18, 2021
Rev. Cary Winn Letter of Transfer	October 19, 2021
Elizabeth Winn Letter of Transfer	October 19, 2021
Lois Lundgren Reaffirmation of Faith	October 19, 2021
Brian Koehn Letter of Transfer	December 12, 2021
Valerie Koehn Letter of Transfer	December 12, 2021

Traditional Music Ministry

Report for Traditional Music and the Organ

It was a year of revival for our traditional music program. As vaccinations rose and we were able to relax mitigations, we welcomed the Chancel Choir back after a year-long hiatus. The Glenn Ringers also made a swift comeback. I cannot put into words how moved and proud I am of all of our musicians, and of the burgeoning musical talent that is a part of our congregation.

Chancel Choir began after the summer under the baton of Ms. Martha Bein as interim director. I stepped in as the permanent director of traditional music shortly thereafter. In that time, we have explored many aspects of sacred music including, ancient melodies, traditional favorites, contemporary settings, and unusual pieces alike. I am proud that the membership has grown, and that both younger and more experienced voices are taking part.

Unfortunately, COVID has reared its ugly head and the Choir was temporarily suspended at the end of the year following renewed mitigations.

As to the Glenn Ringers, again, I cannot say how proud I am. These dedicated individuals have met weekly to rehearse difficult, yet amazing pieces. Every service, these musicians add so much to our spiritual life. Our Choir has grown from 11 ringers when I first took over to a full complement of 13. We are laying the foundation for an excellent group who will be at the forefront of the music ministry in Rockford. Look for exciting things.

The most exciting service, in my humble opinion, was Christmas Eve this year. A selection of the Glenn Ringers, the Chancel Choir, professional singers, and a 17-piece orchestra joined us to welcome the coming of Christ's birth. Our musical groups performed several pieces, large and small, difficult and diverse. In all, it was a moving spectacle, with grand participation from everyone.

In closing, though COVID continues to give challenges to our music ministry, our brightest days are yet ahead. The reason is because of dedicated artists who take time and give their fullest energy to the endeavor of glorifying and worshiping God. In that endeavor, the past year has been most fruitful.

Yours in Music,

Andrew J. Mertzenich
Director of Traditional Music
Westminster Presbyterian Church
Rockford, Illinois



Christian Life and Service

Christian Life and Service **Formerly known as:** **Evangelism & Hospitality Report**

Evangelism & Hospitality Vision Statement: To create an inviting culture which reaches out and engages our community by praying for the lost, building authentic relationship with people while sharing about Jesus, as well as actively and positively inviting them to faith in Jesus Christ.

Christian Life and Service Commission Members: Sue Williams, Joy Jordan, Margi Forss

The commission is very small but active commission. With only a few members, the commission works as a unit on all areas of Evangelism and Hospitality and recruits assistance when programs need additional workers.

The following is a list of responsibilities for this commission:

Evangelism: responsible for the following

1. Providing ongoing evangelism training
2. Developing evangelism projects and outreach opportunities
3. Focus on first impressions

Hospitality: responsible for the Fellowship Hour following all 3 services.

Marketing: responsible for promotion of the church within the community through media outlets as well as name branding and recognition

Special Events: include events such as the Annual Church picnic in June and any other special events for the church

Due to the continues concerns with Covid-19 all events for 2021 were cancelled. Once the church opened again, it was determined by the Session and the Commission that we would continue on with the Coffee Hours. We had to shut that event down for a couple of weeks due to the rise of the Covid rates in Winnebago county. Once the rate started to drop again we then returned to the Coffee Hour.

In April 2021, the commission requested and was granted by the Session to change the name of the Commission from Evangelism and Hospitality to Christian Life and Service. This was requested as we felt that it better explained what the Commissions job is.

In 2022 the Commission will be undertaking a new vision and focus. As a Commission will focus our attention on working along side the other Commissions as well as the Deacons in promoting volunteer opportunities within the church and as well as the community. We will still continue the coffee hour following the church service. We hope to start up the Annual Church Picnic once the Session and the Commission feel it is safe to gather in a large number.

Respectfully submitted, Sue Williams



Faith Formation Report

Faith Formation Commission 2021 Annual Report

Members: Phil Thompson, Elder Moderator
Val Kryder, Jean Lisk, Steffane Thompson

2021 was another challenging year! We began the year under quarantine, but by the Grace of God and the wonders of technology, we have managed to keep moving forward. The leaders of each group did a wonderful job of keeping things going through virtual meetings, then hybrid meetings, and finally in person meetings.

Ongoing Programs

- Adult Sunday School meets from 9:45 to 10:45 every Sunday. Dr. John Nastari leads this in depth look at Scripture.
- Bible Online – meets via Zoom on Monday evenings from 6:30 to 7:30. Rev. Michael Hafele leads participants into a deep dive of the Scripture selection for the upcoming week from the lectionary.
- Women's Bible Study – meets Tuesday mornings from 10:00 am to Noon. Various programs from different authors combine reading materials, videos and Scripture. We would like to thank Dail Stutsman and Donna Manzer for their past leadership of this program; they retired at the end of 2021.
- Men's Bible Study – meets Wednesday mornings from 6:30 to 7:30 am. The men explore various books of the Bible and how it relates to them today. Class is led by Wayne Johnson and Connie Hawkins.

New or Special Events:

- A new program was started for older adults called "Third Thirty". This program led by Pastor Gretchen Hammeke focuses on the needs of people 60 and over as well as providing fellowship.
- Several new member classes were successfully completed. We are looking to involve more Ruling Elders in leading future classes.
- Rev. Michael Hafele led a class based on a book called "I Am A Church Member" which focused on what it means to be a church member.
- Rev. Michael Hafele led a class on Advent devotionals based on Walter Brueggemann's book "Celebrating Abundance".

Respectfully submitted, Phil Thompson

Women's Bible Study

The Tuesday Women's Bible Study (which began in 2010) covered the following studies during 2021: "Daniel" by Beth Moore, "Colossians" by Gloria Furman, "The Faithful: Heroes of the Old Testament" by multiple authors, "Mark" by Lisa Harper, "Seamless: Understanding the Bible as One Complete Story" by Angie Smith, "The Me I Want To Be" by John Ortberg, "Gideon" by Priscilla Shirer, and "Second Timothy" by Beth Moore.

Most of the studies were led by Donna Manzer, but Maureen Nutley, Jean Lisk, Sue Williams each led one. Prior to the pandemic, we were a group of 40. Now, due to the length of the pandemic and the continuing mandate of masks, we are down to a dozen or so, with a few attending class through ZOOM.

Donna Manzer and Dail Stutsman, co-chairs of the Tuesday Women's Bible Study since 2013, retired from their positions at the end of 2021.

Respectfully submitted, Dail Stutzman

Worship Commission Report

Worship Commission

Members: Sue Christensen, Elder Moderator; James Marshall, Elder; Gene Fann; Patti Werckle; Elizabeth Werckle; Sheila Felder

Advisors: Becky Boyland, Andrew Mertenich

Staff Liaison: Pastor Gretchen Hammeke

In a year of uncertainty, challenge, and transition at Westminster, this truth remained unchanged...

We serve a loving God, who calls us to worship Him in Spirit and in Truth.

For 2021, the charge of our Commission was to provide, maintain, and facilitate all aspects of Worship at Westminster. Led by God, working alongside the pastors, musicians, and technicians, we strived to provide a safe, welcoming "space" (on-line or in-person) to hear God's word, pray, praise and worship, and be sent to "carry the light".

WORSHIP, 2021

January, 2021: On-line blended service (Contemporary and Traditional) at 9:45 continued, as it had since March, 2020.

Feb. 21, 2021: On-line and first Live-stream service at 10:00. Return to **in-person worship** by reservation, and check-in.

March 22: Palm Sunday with Children's Palm Parade. On-line and Live-stream.

March 25 and 26: Maundy Thursday and Good Friday Services.

March 29: Easter Service – 10:00am, In-person, On-line and Live-stream.

May 23: Reservations no longer required for in-person worship. On-line and Live-stream blended services continue Sunday mornings at 10:00am.

August 15: Blessing of the Backpacks.

Aug. 22: Choir returns to 10:00 service (under direction of Marti Bein, interim director)

Sept. 5: Last blended service format.

Sept 12: Two-services: Return to two-service format: **8:30 Traditional** (Organist, Andrew Mertenich, welcomed). **11:00 Contemporary.** (Music provided by Praise Band). **Acolytes** served lighting of the chancel candles.

Oct. 17: Bell choir returned.

Oct.31: Remembrance of members who had died in the preceding year and **Honoring** of 50-year members. (Both 8:30 and 11:00am).

Nov. 26: First Sunday of Advent – First candle of Advent lit. (Families to light the Advent candles.)

Dec.19: Fourth Sunday in Advent:

8:30 Traditional Service, 11:00 **Children and Youth Service**

Worship Commission Report Cont'd

Dec. 24: Christmas Eve Services

5pm Children and Family Service (Praise Band)

7pm Lessons and Carols Traditional Service Choir and Bells plus guest musicians and vocalists.

*Thank you to everyone who donated over the years to the Special Music Fund which was used to pay the gifted Musicians who served that evening.

Dec. 26: Single 10am Service (on-line and Live-stream)

Dec.30: Due to climbing COVID rates, the choir temporarily suspended rehearsals and performances for the month of January, 2022.

Jan. 2, 2022: On-line and Live-stream services. 8:30 Traditional (organ and solo music) and 11am (Praise Band)

Worship Format (In-person) and safety procedures* determined by recommendations of Westminster COVID Task Force, CDC, IDPH, WCHD, and Session approval.

OTHER WORSHIP ITEMS

Ushers: All ushers have been instructed in safety protocols and all are faithfully serving.

Communion: 2021 continued with the practice of celebrating the Lord's Supper using single-serve communion wafer and juice cups. That is the plan for the foreseeable future.

Baptism: Baptisms have been happily conducted and celebrated both on-line and in-person (before and after opening.) We joyfully welcomed the youngest members of the Church family, along with one adult baptism.

Kid's Time: Both on-line and in-person (Barb D'Souza, David Hegge, Vicky Sherman **Acolytes.** **

Lay pulpit Supply: David Hegge (Seminarian), and Phil Thompson(Lay Pastor Student))

Music: Provided tirelessly through the on-line services by the Praise Band (Becky Boyland, Tracy Reese, Sheila Felder, Steve Dietz, Reed Strutzenberger, Jeff Haske, and David O'Connor, who also served as soloist and Cantor). Bob Bates was interim organist. (The organ was also serviced during 2021). Andrew Mertenich was welcomed as Bell Director, organist and choir director in the late summer. We are grateful to have him. In all its forms, music was thankfully part of the Westminster Worship experience.

Tech Team: Under the direction of Becky Boyland and Don Estabrook, the huge task of getting Westminster on-line and then live-streamed was enormously challenging. It has been a godsend for so many unable to attend in-person services. Equipment was purchased (working with Finance) and maintenance provided.

*WPC Pandemic Recommendations: Masking, Social-distancing, Seating, and Sanitation. (Reservations)

** The acolytes are students in grades 4 through 9.

Thanks to so many in the task of navigating these uncharted waters of 2021, for the patience and understanding of the church family, the guidance of the pastors, and most of all, **Thanks be to God!**

Respectfully submitted, Sue Christensen

Facility Management Report

FACILITY MANAGEMENT REPORT

Membership: Tom Felder, Bob Forss, Linda Hollman, Wayne Johnson, Roger Lundstrom, Dick VanEvera, Paul Werther, Dwight Ruston, Wayne Prindeville

During 2021, the Facility Management Commission oversaw the care of our property, both inside and out.

Personnel

Dave Lape, Operations Manager, continues to stay on top of repairs and ongoing projects here at Westminster.

Yoana Del Real, our custodian, has been doing an exceptional job.

Maintenance

Required building inspections were completed. Our kitchen has been upgraded to meet the new Health Dept. regulations.

Repairs to the roof and HVAC units have been an ongoing issue.

Fine Arts

Despite having a skeleton committee Fine Arts did an amazing job this year especially with the ongoing pandemic. We continued to change the seasonal decorations throughout the church. We ok'd the purchase of new rugs for the Praise Band in the Chancel. We also purchased two new Christmas Trees with stars for the chancel. In addition, we were able to have a very warm welcoming Christmas tea.

Rented Acreage

Our fifteen acres of farm land is being leased at a rate of \$200/acre through 2022.

Long-Range Planning

We are continuing research for all possible repair options according to cost.

Wednesday Warriors

We're thankful for the help of our members that were able to volunteer for our many projects. Covid 19 has reduced our amount of volunteers for this season. We hope this trend is short lived.

Grounds Beautification

We have a new group of volunteers who have taken upon themselves the upkeep of the plant care around the building.

Respectfully submitted, Tom Felder

Memorial Garden Committee

- 3 niches were sold in 2021; 5 inurnments were held
- 12 niches are available for purchase

For more information contact Alice Berman, Jessica Dannenmaier, Jennifer Kodl, Elizabeth Russo, or Sharon Werther

Respectfully submitted by Alice Berman

Children & Youth Ministries Report

Children and Youth Commission

For the Children and Youth Commission, 2021 was a year of revival as we emerged from COVID shut downs and brought many of our programs back online. Our commission and staff feel very blessed that we have been able to return to much of our mission of educating and equipping children and youth for ministry as they grow in Gods' grace and love. Highlights of the year follow below.

Children's Ministries

Children's Ministries oversees and administers the following areas and programs:

- Sunday Morning Ministries: Nursery, Preschool and Elementary Classes (Kids Kingdom), Acolytes
- Wednesday Night Kids Club
- Vacation Bible School
- SPLASH! program for newborns and their families
- Special Events in 2021 included the Palm Parade, Easter Morning Egg Hunt, Memory Work Recognition, Children and Youth Christmas Service and 3rd Grade Bible Presentation
- Sunday Morning Kids Time
- Mitten Tree

Kids Time and Splash! programs continue to serve our youngest members. Kids Kingdom Sunday school continues on Sunday mornings for grades preschool-5th. This year, grades preschool-12 began using Grow Curriculum, and that has been a great addition to ministry. The kids and teachers love the lessons! Our 2021 VBS was smaller, but despite COVID restrictions over 80 children attended as we joined The Knights of North Castle in a quest for the Kings Armor. The Children and Youth Commission continues to provide opportunities for Westminster families to spend time together and with each other. This year, our Families Ministries team hosted an outdoor movie night in September and a summer pool party in August. Sledding and a movie night are on the calendar for early 2022.



Family Ministries

Family Ministries came back slowly as we emerged from COVID shutdowns. Events included:

- A pool party in August.
- An outdoor Movie Night in September
- Sledding and an indoor movie night are planned for winter 2022!

Youth Ministries

Youth Ministries oversees and administers the following areas and programs:

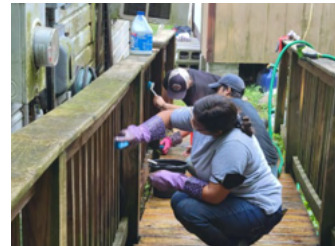
- Middle School and High School Youth Group
- Confirmation Retreat
- Sr. High Summer Mission/Retreat trip
- Small Mission Projects
- Summer Outings/Events
- Confirmation Sunday
- Fundraisers

Children & Youth Ministries Report Cont'd

Youth Ministries

Our mission for Youth Ministry at Westminster is to provide opportunities for youth to accept Jesus Christ as their Savior, apply the love of Christ to their own lives and to share that love with others. Our goal is for students to grow and develop their own personal relationship with Christ and to stand on a solid foundation of faith by honoring God, loving those around them through outreach, and by connecting with fellow youth in Christ through study and fellowship.

- In 2021 our Middle School and High School Youth Groups combined and came together on one night. Our goal with this merger is to build a stronger relationship and sense of community between the two Youth Groups. The students come together for fellowship, snack, and worship while still having separate in depth discussions on the lesson so that we can make sure that age appropriate spiritual formation is still being fostered. Our youth now also experience small group games when having fellowship with their age groups or large group games when all youth come together once a month.
- In 2021 we welcomed with open arms the confirmation of 7 students from our youth group. These students met weekly through the academic year online. Despite the challenges that the pandemic put before us, these students grew wonderfully into their faith and understanding of Christ.
- In the Summer of 2021 four of our youth went on Mission to Leslie County KY. where they faithfully served Christ as they helped with some home renovations for a family in need. The projects included building a new set of deck stairs, digging a drainage ditch, and scrubbing an entire deck free of moss and mold.



Upward Sports Ministries

Upward Sports Ministries oversees and administers the following areas and programs:

- Basketball & Cheerleading League
- Basketball Camp
- Football League

The mission of Upward Sports is to develop the whole athlete in their personal growth spiritually, mentally, athletically, and socially as they participate in sports. This unique approach is known as the 360 Progression and is centered on Luke 2:52 – “And Jesus grew in wisdom and stature and in favor with God and man.”. The values of Upward Sports are: *The Expectation of God Moments, The Life of Integrity, The Discipline of Excellence, and The Priority of Children.* Upward Sports continues to grow at Westminster. Due to the ongoing Pandemic both our 2021 basketball & cheer league as well as our basketball day camp had to be put on hiatus. However, we were able to hold a small flag football training camp through the regular flag football season at WPC where 6 very excited and incredibly talented athletes joined in for the six-week program.



Children & Youth Ministries Cont'd

Westminster Preschool

“Our mission is to provide preschool children in our community with a loving, creative, secure environment equipping them to grow socially, cognitively and physically in a caring, Christian setting.”

We were excited to open our doors again on September 13, 2021 after an 18-month closure due to COVID. During this time, the preschool teachers worked diligently to comply with local and state health departments and the CDC to develop program specific COVID guidelines and plans to ensure the health and safety of the students and staff.

Preschool meets Monday – Thursday 9:00-11:30am with children ages 3-5. This year's class is taught by Alisa Fewell and Stephanie Konen. Stephanie was hired July 2020 and is a wonderful addition to our program and teaching team.

Preschool looked a bit different this fall with COVID guidelines and protocols in place but we were able to open with 19 children. Children and teachers wear masks in class, parents and visitors are limited in the building and the staff is continually working closely with the Winnebago County Health Department to ensure the health and safety of the students and staff. While the teachers and students were excited to return to the classroom, the reopening was met with challenges beyond their expectations. Despite vigilant preventative measures being taken, unfortunately the preschool experienced 3 brief COVID closures this fall. The preschool will start the new year with 14 students enrolled.

Some highlights of Fall 2021....

- Field Trip to Curran's Apple Orchard in October for a hayride, apple picking and cider and donuts.
- Socially distant visits with Miss Holly from Winnebago/Boone County Ag in the Classroom program. The children learned about Amazing Apples, Popular Pumpkins, Turkeys and Jolly Ol' Evergreens.
- Our first ever Halloween Trunk or Treat! Preschool parents and church staff decorated the trunks of their cars and set up in the parking lot to pass out treats as the class paraded car to car. In the words of one of the preschoolers, “It was the best day ever!” and may be a new annual event.
- North Park Fire Department visited during Fire Safety Week. The children were excited to meet the fire fighters, see the fire engine and go inside the ambulance.
- Playing Duck, Duck, Goose in the Activity Center.
- Making Gingerbread Houses in class.
- Mary's Market holiday pie and cookie fundraiser. This was the first time participating in this fundraiser. We were happy to support a local business and raised \$700 for the program.



Respectively submitted, Barbara D'Souza, David Hegge, Alisa Fewell

Finance Report

Finance Report

In January 2021, the Finance and Strategic Planning Commission presented to the Congregation an expense budget of \$1,283,686. This represented an increase of \$59,846 (4.9%) from the 2020 budget, reflecting plans to proceed (via financing) with improvements to the parking lot and installation of a live-streaming video system.

Estimates of giving received in support of 2021 (through Feb-2021) were \$529,760. This was a decrease of \$167,970 vs 2019 (\$697,730), received from 134 individuals and families (vs 165 in 2020). In addition, individual pledges decreased by 6.5% on average, from \$4,229 per year per household to \$3,953 per year per household.

One of our major objectives for 2021 was to refinance the mortgage on our church building. This was challenging enough, but made more so in April of 2021, when it became clear our financial condition and trajectory were not going to result in loan approval.

Building on a good start to the year from January through March, the Finance Commission made a special appeal to the congregation in Mar-2021, resulting in 5 additional estimates of giving and increases to some of the previous estimates. The resulting total was \$561,360 from 139 individuals and families, at an average of \$4,038 per year per household.

In addition to the special appeal for increased giving, the Finance Commission worked with our other commissions and Session to reduce planned spending and amend the budget for the remainder of the year. On 20-APR-2021, Session approved the amended expense budget of \$1,032,786, not including monthly mortgage principal payments, for a reduction of \$169,000 from our planned expenses. All commissions contributed to this effort, but special recognition is given our Deacons and Facilities Commission for their flexibility and creativity.

We successfully completed our refinancing in Sep-2021, securing a new loan from the Presbyterian Investment and Loan Program. Surveys of the property, insurance policies, and our bylaws were updated and certified as part of the process. Other requirements included reducing our principal balance to \$2.3M; funds were transferred from the Building Fund to accomplish this. The mortgage rate and terms were favorable, and our monthly obligation is lower than previously.

Final results for 2021 show income of \$1,011,060, including \$87,000 in proceeds from the Payroll Protection Program (PPP) Loan #1, which were released to our operating revenue upon confirmation the loan was forgiven. Actual donations and other income totaled \$924,060 (an increase of \$35,846 from 2020) and operating expenses were \$1,016,184 (an increase of just \$1,293 from 2020). Not included in the operating expenses are payments toward the principal amount of our mortgage loan. In 2021, these principal payments (from operating funds) totaled \$75,935. In summary, our total expenditures for 2020 were \$ 1,092,118, for an overall deficit of (\$81,058). Full details of our 2021 results and approved 2022 budget are provided separately.

In 2021, WPC applied for and received a PPP Loan #2 in the amount of \$102,841 from the federal government. WPC expects to meet the qualifications required for forgiveness of that loan, allowing us to use this amount for our expenses going forward. The 2022 Budget includes these funds as revenue, on faith and confidence that this obligation will be forgiven.

The Finance Commission appreciates your continued prayers and support in 2022.

Respectfully submitted by David O'Connor

Finance Report

Westminster Education Scholarship Fund Annual Report 2021

The Education Scholarship Fund was started in 1990 when David and Jeanne MacMorris established the David Wesley Memorial Scholarship Fund in memory of their son. In 2000, Alan and Elaine Hutchcroft established the Robert and Elizabeth Hutchcroft Memorial Scholarship in memory of Dr. Hutchcroft's parents. Because of those perpetual memorials, interest in supporting our youth prompted the session to establish the Westminster Education Scholarship Fund in 1991.

All applicants are required to be members of Westminster and their applications are considered based on church/para church activities, community involvement, faith statement, and the strength of the overall application. Applicants provide information on their college/university, college major, estimated education costs and current GPA. The students express an inspiring commitment to grow their faith, and it is undeniable that their Westminster family has played a key role in their spiritual guidance.

The Westminster Education Scholarship Fund committee appreciates the financial support of our congregation, especially during the second year of the COVID-19 pandemic and uncertain times. In all, we were able to award \$16,000.00 in scholarships to 19 students.

2021 Memorial and Endowment Funds

**David Wesley MacMorris Memorial Fund
Robert & Elizabeth Hutchcroft Memorial Fund
Karl Erickson Memorial Fund
Ed Liddell Memorial Fund
Grace Leighton Memorial Fund
Chuck Hutchins Memorial Fund
Carolyn Conrad Memorial Fund
Eunice & Gordon Hunt Memorial Fund
Margaret Van Nest Memorial Fund**

Respectfully Submitted,

Westminster Education Scholarship Committee

Kathy Lundy, Moderator

Barbara D'Souza, staff liaison

Committee: Warren and Marilyn Cade, Sherry Campbell, Jenny Lucido,
Carol Miller, Susan Swift, Mary Ann Wham

Human Resources Report

HUMAN RESOURCES COMMISSION REPORT

The Human Resources Commission is responsible for placement and oversight of those who lead the Westminster Presbyterian Church, both professional and lay.

2021 Highlights

Staff Positions:

During early 2021, staff returned to the office and regular in-person services resumed as the season of Lent began. During the 2021 calendar the HR Commission worked to fill the Office Coordinator, Bell Director, Organist, and Choir Director positions.

Office Coordinator- After completing continuing education goals, Marilyn Deane took a finance position at a company in the Rockford area. Interviews for replacement candidates found Lisa Coen, and she was hired in April.

Bell Director- Search and interviews found Andrew Mertenich hired in July to replace the position vacated by Dianne Londo.

Organist and Choir Director- Search and ongoing interviews lead to discover the qualifications and interest of Andrew Mertenich for both positions and was hired in August and September respectively, replacing Craig Deetz (Organist) and Andy Bruhn (Choir Director) who both left Rockford for positions in Champaign Illinois.

Westminster was so fortunate to have Marilyn, Dianne, Craig and Andy serving our ministry and we thank them for the excellent service. We wish them well. We welcome Lisa and Andrew to our WPC staff.

Staff Contact Meetings: These meetings held in the fall and winter of 2021, gave the staff an opportunity to have one-on-one time with Human Resources Commission members to share ideas and concerns.

Nominating Committee: Organized and facilitated the Committee to nominate three Elders with terms ending 12/31/22, and six Deacons and three Elders with terms ending 12/31/24.

Weekly Live Stream Service Production: The HR Commission budget also includes the effort to plan, set up and produce the online service for 52 weeks of the year. The WPC online services provide a window for local, regional, and national viewing of the weekly ministry at WPC. Sunday services (and special events, such as the Christmas Eve worship services) are streamed live to 3 platforms: YouTube, Facebook, and Church Online (which embeds our YouTube feed, and therefore shares data). With the launch of the new church website, YouTube is also directly embedded in the website for easy access. Although data on weekly viewing is subject to some limitations and interpretation, our livestreaming reaches an average of 349 viewers (or households) per week in addition to our in-person attendance, and has become a vital connecting point for those who are currently or consistently unable to worship with us on campus.

Human Resources Report Cont'd

Notes: YouTube reports "views," which generally means a user has pressed play and watched a video for at least 30 seconds. Facebook reports "people reached," a significantly more ambiguous metric. To the extent that viewers may encounter the videos on mobile devices and in a newsfeed (much more so with Facebook), the data would represent individuals. But due to the nature of a livestreamed worship service, it is important to recognize that, particularly in real time on Sunday morning, a "view" very likely represents multiple viewers within a household.

WPC Website Redesign: In 2021, the Human Resources Commission took on a task to help manage the redesign of the WPC Website. WPC was so fortunate to have a generous donor for this effort. The new website design was completed in October and rolled out in November. The new design is in alignment with today's technology and website navigation processes. This website is an important and ever-growing tool not only our congregation, but also visitors and the public searching for a ministry or mission.

WESTMINSTER STAFF DURING 2021

Lead Pastor/Head of Staff	Rev. Michael Hafele
Pastor for Congregational Care	Gretchen Hammeke
Operations Manager	Dave Lape
Financial Administrator	Chris Woods
Pastor of Children's Ministries	Barbara D'Souza
Youth Ministry Director	David Hegge
Custodian	Yoana Del Real
Director of Traditional Music	Andrew Mertenich (started July 2021)
Director of Contemporary Music	Becky Boyland
Preschool Director	Alisa Fewell
Preschool Teacher	Stephanie Konen
Digital Media Specialist	Anne Harris (thru July 2021)
Office Administrator	Lisa Coen

2021 HUMAN RESOURCE COMMISSION MEMBERS

Jan Bowman
 Thelma Busker
 John France
 Jon Brondyke

Respectively submitted, Jon Brondyke

Deacons and Caring Ministries Report

Deacons' 2021 Annual Report

I saw what you did, Westminster. And I'm proud of you, of us. More importantly God must be proud of us. That we should see a glimmer of God's possibility and act on it. In some ways, your Deacons feel it has been our best year. In a year of isolation, fear, anger we worked around needed restrictions to reach out to those in our church, in our community, in our nation, in our world.

How? We focused on getting very involved with 3 regional missions: Carpenters Place, Rock House Kids, Rockford Habitat for Humanity. We concentrated mission dollars and hours of volunteer time. At the same time we kept the unique Westminster projects including visiting shut-ins, road clean up, hot meal to homeless, youth mission trip, KATW meal prep, school kits, Christmas Food Baskets. And nationally and internationally we stretched out through our Presbyterian special offerings.

The Deacons organized these, all of you funded with more than \$60,000, and 200 of you put in hours or furnished goods for amazing outreach. E.g. The Presbytery school kits were sent overseas, but the overflow supplies went to Rockford students at Rock House Kids. Our Thanksgiving gift cards went to WPC families who had a challenging year, and to a caregiver for one of our church members, and to 2 families in the new Carpenter Place Family Apartments that we rehabbed. Knowing our community's needs better helped us focus gifts where they were needed and to crossover between projects, best use, full use. And other churches sent volunteers to our projects and funds. There were even a UPS team of 13 people volunteering to help us finish painting at our Carpenter Place project. YOUR LEADERSHIP WAS THE SEED GROWING BEYOND ALL EXPECTATIONS. (If it sounds Biblical, it is.)

The work of the deacons is the church's work. All members and friends of Westminster can and do find ways to make a difference in people's lives.

Deacons: There are 18 deacons who plan, coordinate, pray, visit, listen. We elect six deacons every year for a three-year term. Deacons may serve two terms in a row.

Team of leaders: Each ministry or project has a deacon and 3 or 4 others. You don't have to be a deacon. You do have to be open to what God's doing in the world.

Players. Step up to serve meals, comfort, teach, distribute, gather in.... all the things God's followers might be called to do in 2022.

Further interest? A note, phone call, tap on the shoulder and any deacon will gladly share the work and sheer joy of serving the living Christ.

THANK YOU FOR BEING GOD'S INSTRUMENTS IN SO MANY WAYS THIS YEAR.

Gene Jordan, Deacon Moderator

Rock House Kids Support

- Deacons and volunteers pack food bags once a month for kids to take home.
- Help with other needs on days when doing food bags, as time allows.
- Provide funding for the food bags.
- Purchase and deliver items on their monthly wish lists.
- Include road and alley cleanup when doing other properties in the area.
- Provide monthly funding for their general support.
- Provide funding for field trips more than once per year.
- Provide generous funding for annual Christmas party.
- Attendance and contributions for annual fundraiser.

Respectfully submitted, Conrad Hawkins

Deacons and Caring Ministries Report Cont'd

Caring Contacts

The Deacons maintain relationships with those who are unable to attend worship services, fellowship activities and/or have difficulty attending other program events of the church such as Men's or Women's Bible Study, or Presbyterian Women's Circles. Any member of the church can request to be a part of the Caring Contacts list. In person visits between these Caring Contacts and members of the Deacon Board have been a long standing tradition at Westminster, another of the traditions that had to be adjusted during the time of Covid. The Deacons have responded to these new restrictions and guidelines by using telephone calls, FaceTime calls, letters and cards, and even occasionally as the pandemic waned from time to time an old fashioned socially distanced face to face conversation. The Deacons continue to establish helpful contacts with those who are no longer able to get out and about. If you or someone you know from the church would benefit from such a Caring relationship, please contact Pastor Gretchen.

Celebration of Life

The Deacon Task Team responsible for offering the hospitality of food to a bereaved family and guests at a Memorial Service has worked to establish guidelines for hosting such events as they are able within the Covid restrictions. In 2021, such gatherings were not possible and regretfully this act of hospitality could not be offered. The team is prepared to honor the established guidelines and begin again to offer the Celebration of Life luncheons and receptions, as the pandemic restrictions allow. The Task Team is led by serving Deacons but the gift of hospitality is only possible with the teams of volunteers from the church for which we are most thankful.

Sunday Flower Delivery

The chancel flowers which are provided each Sunday at both worship services are, on most Sundays, delivered personally to members of the church who are hospitalized, in physical rehabilitation centers, or confined to home. A Deacon is assigned each Sunday to deliver the arrangements along with a note reminding the recipient that the flowers were present in worship and a greeting card. Many weeks in 2021, the flowers were left at the door or front desk of a facility since there were quarantine policies in place. Still the patient received the gift of floral beauty even without a personal Deacon visit. The Deacons are grateful to those members who donate flowers weekly.

Easter Lilies and Christmas Poinsettias

In order to bring the joy of a living plant to those who are hospitalized, shut in by quarantine, or who have in the previous season experienced a personal loss, Easter Lilies and Christmas Poinsettias are delivered by the Deacons a few days before the holiday. Again the delivery visits were limited by Covid restrictions and quarantines in 2021. The Westminster staff was happy to step in and make deliveries to the front desks of the facilities. The Deacons look forward to more personal contacts in 2022.

Caring Ministries

Grace Ministries – convalescent and home health care equipment is available at no cost. Please contact the Muzzarellis to schedule pickup or delivery.

Wesley Willows Van – 4 WPC members rotate Sundays to provide transportation to and from the 8:30 worship service. A 5th volunteer escorts the riders from the van to worship and back again. The van service was cancelled in March of 2020 and has not been re-established due to health concerns. Again we look forward to receiving permission for this service sometime in 2022.

Deacons and Caring Ministries Report Cont'd

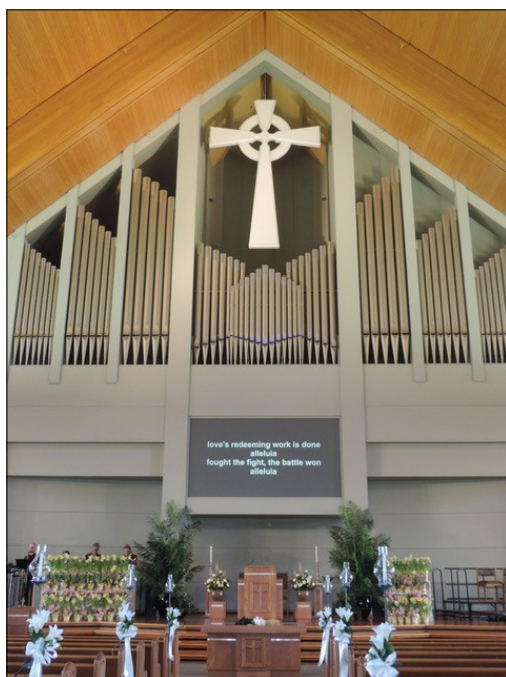
Stephen Ministries – a confidential one-on-one relationship between a trained care provider and someone who needs a healing presence during a difficult time. This ministry is adapted to observe pandemic mitigations. We are blessed to have a member who is qualified to offer training to any group of potential Stephen Ministers. If you are interested, please contact Sue Williams.

Prayer Squares – quilted squares provided to individuals in crisis. The quilting threads are left long so that they can be knotted by WPC worshippers on Sunday mornings. Those present for worship are invited to come to the communion table between services, say a prayer for the individual who will receive the prayer square and tie a knot in the threads. The knots will remind the recipients of the prayers for wellness and healing offered just for them. You may request a prayer square for someone in need of prayer but you must have the recipient's permission. After the knots are tied on a Sunday morning, you, as the sponsor, will receive the square to present to the person receiving prayer. Each square is personalized with the recipient's name and date of the presentation. They are made by members of the quilting team, led by Carol McQuinn.

Prayer Chain – prayer requests are shared confidentially by email with more than 65 members. Prayer requests begin with a call, text or email to Pastor Gretchen. You may also use the Prayer Request cards in the pews.

Care Notes – in the hallway near the vault drop box and just outside the entrance to the staff kitchen, you will find a selection of booklets designed to address a variety of issues surrounding daily life. These are free for anyone. Topics include death and dying, cancer and other severe illness, mental health issues, aging and caring for aging loved ones and many more. If you would like to suggest a topic, please visit with Valerie Kryder.

Respectfully submitted, Pastor Gretchen Hammeke



Westminster Presbyterian Church

Session

Class of 2021

Jon Brondyke

Bob Forss

Joy Jordan

Roger Lundstrom

David O'Connor

Class of 2022

Kevin Busker

Sue Christensen

Jan Bowman

Phil Thompson

Class of 2023

Tom Felder

John France

Jim Marshall

Peter Phelan

Sue Williams

Clerk of Session: Thelma Busker

Assistant Clerk of Session: Jean Lisk

Deacons

Class of 2021

Greg Boeke

Michelle Ponkratz

Martha Rolf

Ann Schneider

Cathy Strawser

Carrie Whitmire

Class of 2022

Connie Hawkins

Liz Hill

Cheryl Kammerud

Miguel Lobato

Brenda Townsend

Dianne Wallace

Class of 2023

John Conner

Gene Jordan

Mary Hutchins

Kathy Owens

Robert Reafler

Colleen Whale

Moderator: Gene Jordan

Corporation Officers

President: Sue Williams

Vice-President: Tom Felder

Treasurer: Alan Whale

Secretary: Joy Jordan

Clerk of Session: Thelma Busker

Photos



Photos Cont'd



Notes