



Mission Study Committee Members:

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Intro/Summary:

Westminster Presbyterian Church has been an important part of people's lives and active in the Rockford Community since 1856. Through the years, God's leading has blessed our church with great vision for growth as well as opportunity in times of challenge. The words from Proverbs 3:5-6 "Trust in the Lord with all your heart, And lean not on your own understanding; In all ways acknowledge Him, And He shall direct your paths", give us confidence to trust God's leading as we explore the future ministry of Westminster.

Defining the Mission and Vision of Westminster Presbyterian Church has been both a challenging and rewarding experience for the Mission Study Committee. In the many months since our kickoff, we have gathered historical data of our membership, programs, finances, and leadership. In addition, we have given the congregation an opportunity to reflect on elements such as core values, strengths and weaknesses within the church over time. Together with much prayer and thought, this information helped define the health of the congregation as well as the identity (Who we are) and our purpose (What is God calling us to do) at Westminster.

Trends in Westminster's performance are similar to what is occurring in other churches within our region/nation. Membership is shrinking, programs have been minimized, finances are challenged, and often leadership struggles to take the appropriate actions to meet the challenges we face.

As we envision the future, we must realize that in more ways than not, we are currently in *Survival* mode. While some programs and activities remain strong, most have lost focus, drive, and interest. Commission roles and responsibilities have become blurred and often we find ourselves just going through the actions with little or no direction. To go forward with our congregation, we must restore our basic values, rely on the faith that gives us strength to drive *Stability*, and then take *Steps in Faith* to once again become a *Thriving* congregation in our community/region.

Three key "takeaways" surfaced from the envisioning process that determines the Mission and Vision at Westminster. First, the actions defining our mission/vision should be simple and relatable to the congregation that is embracing them. (*We must walk before we can run.*) Second, no matter what mission or vision actions are defined, they must be visible/recognizable to the congregation and our leadership. (*See it, Say it, Feel it, Live it*). Third, every program, every leadership commission and every leadership decision should be aligned with the mission/vision statement. (*Focused and effective leadership*).

As we continued through the envisioning process, evaluating different actionable phrases, our mission study committee felt that God was leading us to the very statements that had previously been defined for WPC. God was leading us to embrace, recognize and align our ministry with these directional words.

The Mission and Vision Statements that define Westminster Presbyterian Church remain:

Mission Statement:

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

Vision Statement:

Missionaries: Inviting, Growing, Serving

Defining our Mission:

Who Are We? What is our Identity?

Our History:

Westminster Presbyterian Church (WPC) is rich in history dating back to 1856. Our founders started with 22 congregante members and a committed mission to minister to the Rockford community at the corner of Oak and 2nd St. Within 50 years, WPC had grown to 326 members, built a manse for pastoral housing, and remodeled the church building.

In 1941, a fire destroyed the church building leaving the congregation without a church home. Commitment and dedication to continue Gods calling, lead the congregation to a temporary location to worship while a new location (gifted by a member) was used to construct a new church building. The mission and vision to continue the ministry of WPC was realized in 1951 with the dedication of a new church location on Rural St.

During the next 40+ years, it was at this Rural St location that God's leading of a committed and united church family continued. Programs flourished, families and visitors were drawn-in, and the congregation expanded in size to 776 members.

By the early 2000's, God's calling continued to inspire and lead the Westminster congregation. The Rural St location was approaching capacity and Rockford was expanding east/northeast. WPC leadership could see Gods expanded calling for the future within the Rockford community.

The "Vision" seen by WPC leadership was centered on 80 acres of farmland in northeast Rockford (Bell School Road) - for a new church facility, preschool, gymnasium fellowship hall, with enough additional land for future growth within an expanding area of Rockford. In addition, WPC leadership identified a small congregation of the Reformed Church of America-RCA (already in that area) that would be interested in merging ministries. These actions led to significant WPC milestones which included breaking ground for a new church building in 2004, merging the local RCA ministry in 2005, and transitioning from Rural St to Bell School Rd locations in 2006. God's calling and leadership vision had become reality.

Our History (Cont.)

Westminster Presbyterian Church continued to thrive for the next 9-10 years. Strong youth and adult programs and activities served our congregation well as the new location and growing congregation inspired creativity and drive for expanded ministry. In 2009, mid-week programs for youth ministry were added. In 2012, WPC introduced a satellite ministry in a nearby community (Rockton/Roscoe) to explore ministry expansion in the area. By the end of 2012, WPC membership was approaching 1,000 members.

The pastoral leadership that had been instrumental in leading our congregation for nearly 20 years were called for other church ministry opportunities in 2010 and 2017. The transition that followed included a challenging interim experience and the Covid pandemic. These factors had a negative impact on the health, programs and membership of WPC. Westminster continues however to minister and serve at 2821 North Bell School Road.

In 2022, WPC leadership commissioned a Mission Study Committee to explore, review, and renew our church's mission and vision for the future.

Our Values:

In the past months, we have reached out to the congregation to better understand our strengths, weaknesses, and...our all-important values. Refer to page 23 in Appendix A for a SWOT (Strength, Weakness, Opportunities, Threats) analysis.

The values of a *Strong Church Community* (welcoming, engaging, involving) centered around four main concepts: *Growing in Faith from inspired worship, Acting within our ever-expanding Mission Field, Active Youth Programs* and *Effective Leadership*.

Building and maintaining a strong church community includes an openness to be welcoming and feeling welcomed by all. It is centered in church programs that attract others, engage and nurture all on their faith journey, and support and care for each other in this messy thing called life. A welcoming and engaged congregation, when united together and in Christ, possesses opportunity for growth.

Westminster also values an inspired worship experience. The challenges and distractions in today's world often overwhelm us. The worship experience (not just Sundays, but throughout the week) seeks to impart ways to get our lives and minds back on track and to better cope with today's challenges. Worship experiences that provide for prayer addressing real world issues from global down to community concerns. Simple actions such as youth and lay involvement within the service demonstrate depth and vitality within the church. Special music led by congregational talent (we have great internal talent) or local talent adds a special touch to worship. Lastly, a worship experience that includes promoting events/programs during the year such as new commission activities and stewardship.

Our Values (cont.)

Active, thriving, youth programs and youth involvement in church activities are an important element of Christian Education as well as establishing life-long connections to church. Visible youth involvement also injects vitality in an aging congregation. Youth involvement and satisfaction with church programs connect young families (25-45 year old's), whose attendance and involvement has been in decline in past years.

Our church, our community, and our world are a mission field. Visible actions that provide support in a growing mission field demonstrates how the power of many can make a difference in the lives of others. One of the scriptures, reviewed by the Mission Study Committee was Mathew 28: 16-20 "The Great Commission" reminding us of the power and value of discipleship and the strength that we gain by knowing God is with us in our journey.

Basic leadership elements such as open communication, listening, and team building are key to success of any group. Leadership cannot be a key attribute of a single person, but must extend from the Pastoral Staff, Session, Commission Leaders and within the Congregation. Leaders must have a clear understanding of their audience and their responsibilities.

Our Health:

The research and input data/trends within this report focuses on the last 7-10 years. It is during this period of time that Westminster experienced numerous challenges.

Between 2012 and 2017, lead pastors associated with years of growth left to pursue call opportunities in other cities. A challenging interim experience in 2018 challenged any progress and pursuit of stability. Although attempts to keep successful programs intact, membership regressed to the low 700s. A new lead pastor arrived in 2019, only to be met with the Covid pandemic within 4 months of his arrival. In early 2020, Westminster closed the church building in a precaution to prevent spread of the virus and to protect the congregation. Weekly on-line services and some on-line program activities were developed quickly and served the congregation until the spring of 2021 when the church was re-opened and normal programs were restarted. However, weekly worship attendance and participation since the re-opening has been lackluster. As of mid 2023, a revised membership assessment began and will be completed by end of 4th quarter.

Along with a reduced level of membership and participation, programs/activities as well as finances have dropped dramatically. Like many churches today, we are an aging congregation and struggle to attract members in the 25-45-year-old age range...younger members with youth. Relative to finances, we have experienced losses against our \$1M+ budget in two of the last three years. Financial reserves have been reduced and strategic actions are necessary for a viable future.

Since 2021, the elements which formed our basic values, have been stagnant and some even non-existent. Within the congregation, there is anxious hope that we can reignite the elements which

Our Health (cont.)

were once strengths. The atmosphere of welcoming, engagement, as well as opportunities to nurture each other seem no longer the strengths that used to flourish. The basic elements of “church community” are the foundation of the very mission we drive to serve.

It’s clear to many, that a change is needed to climb out of the low point of this challenging cycle. Leadership, planning, and management is required at all levels to reach a path for survival, build on the foundation of ministry and mission to establish stability, and take steps in faith for the longevity of Westminster Presbyterian Church.

Despite the challenges, there is a resilient core of members at Westminster that remain motivated and invested in turning this “down-cycle” around. Average in person Sunday attendance approaches 150-160 people seeking God’s word and leading. Two to three bible studies are available for members during the week. Approximately 60-70 member volunteers support 3-4 mission projects on a regular basis. Strong commitment in Christian Education supports an average of 30-40 adults and 25-35 youth each week during the school year.

Data Gathering and Analysis:

The Mission Study Team has gathered data from the last 10-12 years in areas such as Membership, Church Programs/Activities, Finances, Demographics, as well as Church Leadership. Review of this data is important as it defines trends and reflects on where the church has been, where it is now, and where the church may be in the future.

Our Membership

Refer to Figure 1 below showing our membership trend over time.

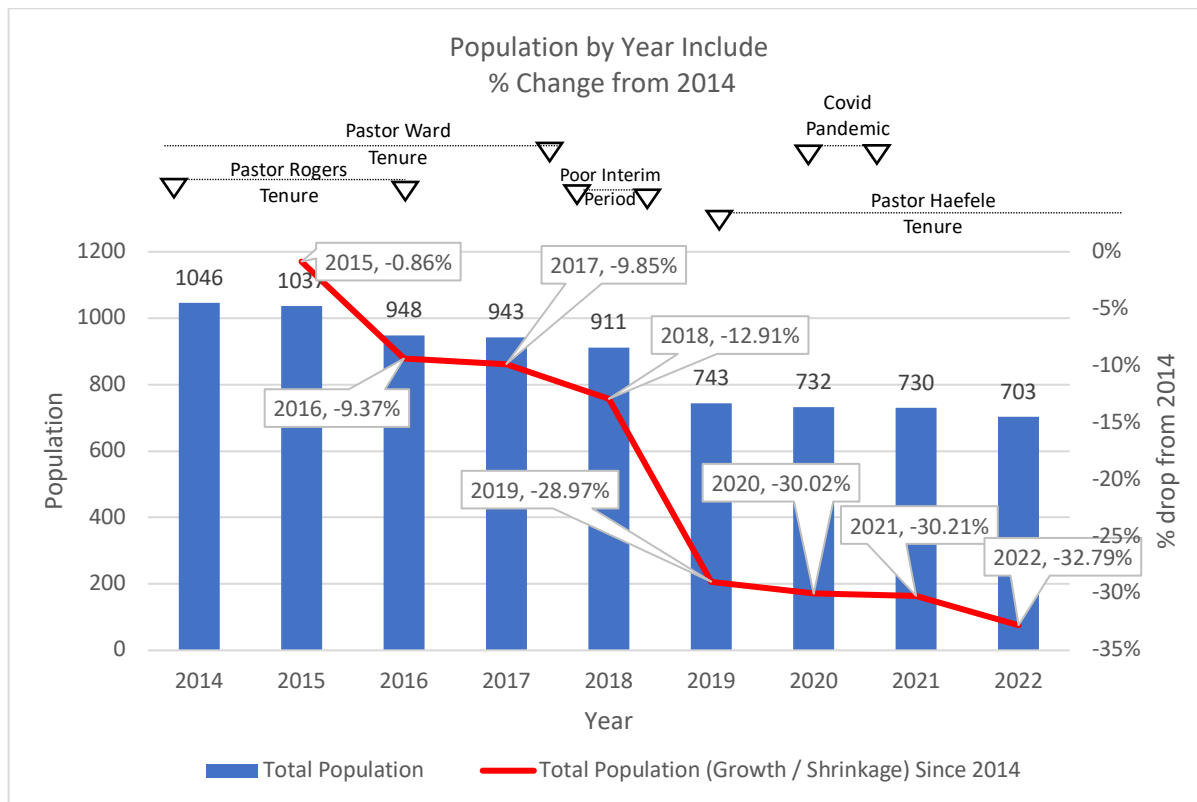


Figure 1

Data retrieved from Westminster's "Shepard's Staff Database" may differ slightly from year-end Presbytery Reports, but still shows the same trends. Membership has declined 30+% since 2014 and 18% since 2018.

In the quest, to really understand who our membership truly is, efforts are underway in 2023 to audit membership rolls. A revised membership roll will be completed by year-end.

We do have a good understanding of the ~150-160 consistent members of the congregation who attend worship and programs each week.

Our Membership (cont.)

The member population of Westminster is aging as can be seen in the Population by Age Group chart shown in Figure 2, below. In 2012, 41% of our congregation was above 60 years old with 59% below 60 years old. Today we find a reverse of that metric showing 53% over age 60 and 47% under age 60. When the membership roll audit is complete, it is thought that the biggest downward changes will be seen in the 20-59 age range.

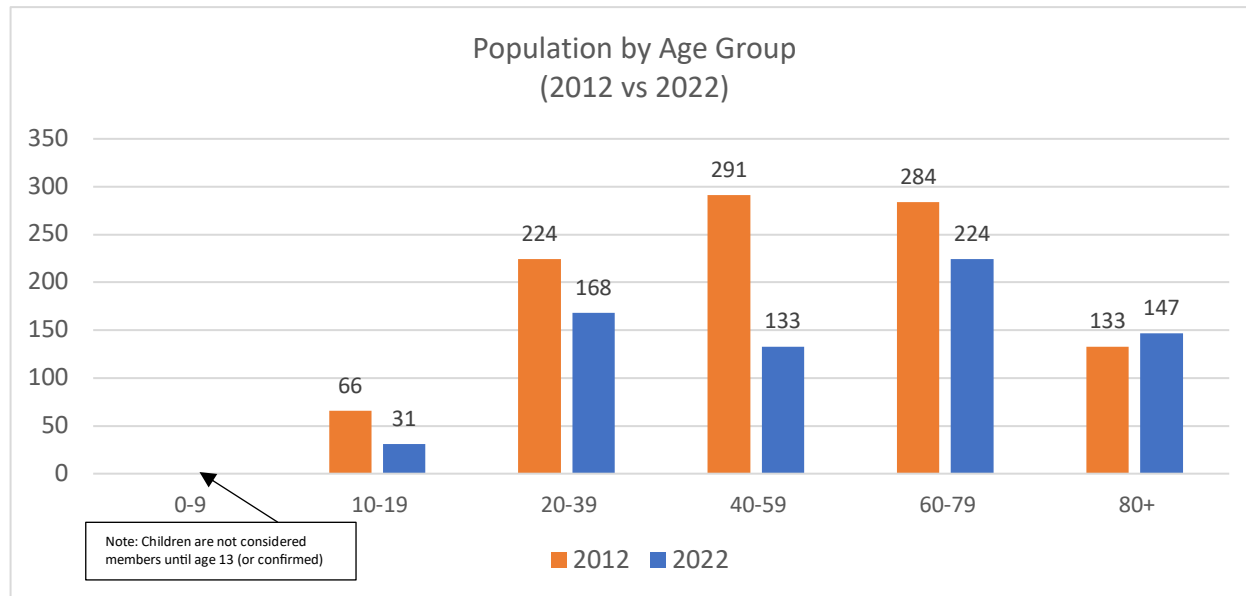


Figure 2

Our Church Programs/Activities:

See chart showing our active church program and activities trends (Page 24, Appendix A).

Westminster continues to offer and support programs for all ages of membership. The chart referenced on page 24 shows program trends and offering for the last 13 years. Programs have been organized into targeted need areas. Text boxes below the chart show the specific programs with those highlighted in blue still offered today.

With reduced membership and participation, the number of programs being supported have fallen 14% since 2018. During 2020, Westminster was able to keep several programs via on-line offerings to attendees. Since 2021, additional programs are restarting.

Three elements are seen as drivers that challenge WPC programs. (1) Just because a program was successful 5-10 years ago, does not mean that its attraction and draw will be effective in 2023 and beyond. Many seem to view church involvement differently today than they did in previous years. People, especially families, have many activities that compete with time at church. (2) As leaders, we

Our Programs (cont.)

must continue to drive a high-level of creativity that would initiate opportunities for effective programs. (3) We must understand and see that change can be healthy. We must continue to re-assess the programming WPC offers to make sure we are meeting the needs of the congregation and find ways to better involve and serve young families.

Our Demographics and our Location:

Westminster Presbyterian Church serves many in the Rockford and surrounding area. Winnebago and Boone Counties are where the majority of membership draw occurs. Our demographics study, using membership data from ~2015 found that active/inactive members as well as visitors (population of ~690 family names) were drawn from the surrounding 33 zip code region. Approx. 70% of the active members (530 family names) live within a 10-mile radius of our current Bell School Rd location.

See chart showing demographics data for a 4-mile radius of WPC (Page 25, Appendix A). This data is offered by the Presbyterian Mission Agency (maps.nazarene.org/DemographicsPresbyterian) from year end 2019. This data provides a base view of our area community. It should be noted that the ethnic diversity at WPC is not representative of this area. WPC membership is 97.5% white with other ethnic races approximating 3%.

Presented on page 25 is a “heat map” of our regional draw of our current membership. Red and blue coloring of varying intensity shows the concentration level of any person that has attended Westminster, as an active/inactive member, a prospective member, and visitor. Six-hundred ninety family names from 33 zip codes have attended our church.

One recent takeaway to our demographic’s centers on the opportunity for “facility use” in our northeast Rockford location. Preliminarily entitled “Building and Location Ministry”, we have discovered that a few organizations are seeking northeast Rockford exposure and interested in using our 60 acre well equipped facility. Is this a big step? Surely it is, and it is a step-in growth that we can take together. Westminster has started to investigate how we can better use our location and building as a mission ministry to serve others. This future action could be a viable part of our future.

Our Church Finances:

While our core membership still commits to solid “grace gift” pledges and giving, giving as a whole has steadily declined in the past 5-6 years. Two contributors include (1) a steady reduction in active membership (and resultant giving) and (2) stewardship campaigns that have not been strong and have not reached the congregation.

Data showing 6-year Revenue/Expense trends is presented on Page 26, Appendix A.

Revenue is trending down. Expenses are trending up. In 2019/2020, COVID injected some chaos and uncertainty in these numbers, but taken as a whole since 2017 the trend is unmistakable. The uncertainty is the extent of the change, not its direction.

Our Church Finances (cont.)

Pledges at WPC are substantially down, roughly 60% of pre-pandemic levels.

This schedule at the bottom of page 26, focuses only on “Grace Gifts” and does not include Preschool (which is almost self-funding), smaller amounts such as plate offerings, and PPP loan amounts which will not repeat.

This financial picture has initiated many actions to bring our congregation out of survival mode.

Monthly financial reporting has been made more visible, a plea to the congregation to restore pledge giving, and plans for a solid Stewardship Campaign are in progress.

Our Pastoral Leadership:

Figure 3 below illustrates the pastoral leadership over time at WPC.

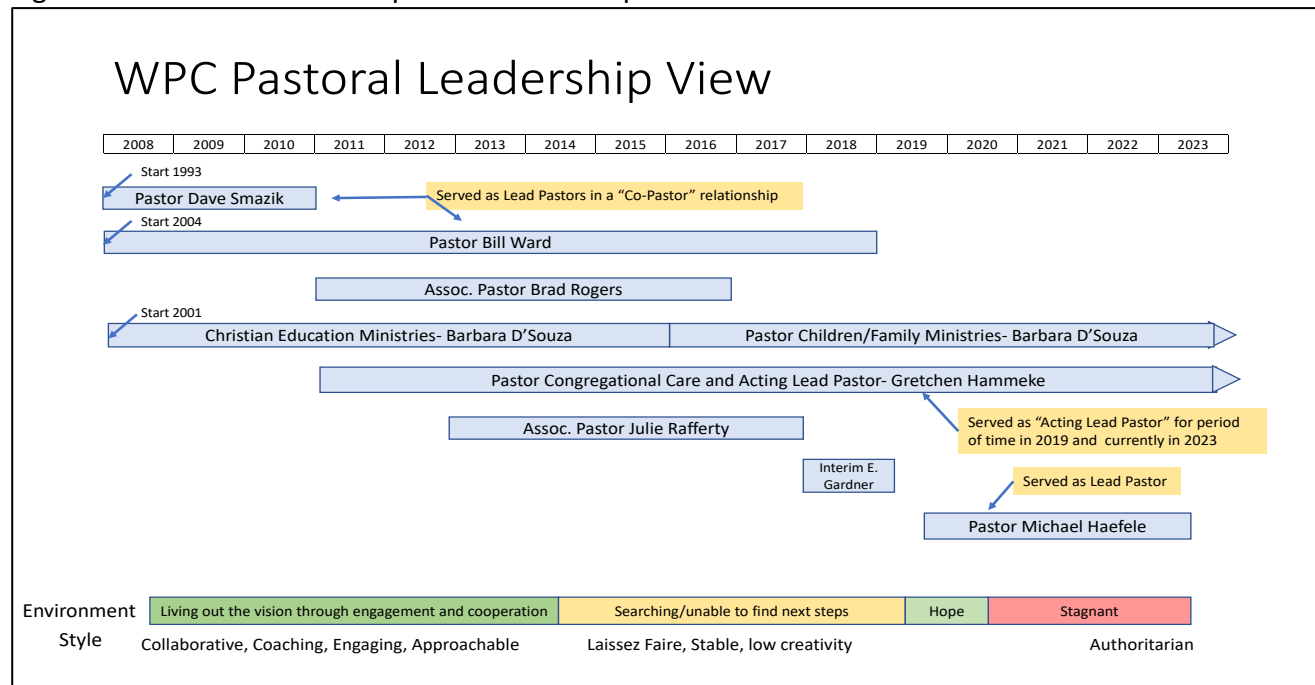


Figure 3

Referring back to the “Our History” part of this document (page 4-5), the early 2000s were exciting times for Westminster as strong effective leadership lead to the opening of a new church campus with an expanded, energetic congregation. Collaboration and trust provided for a very effective leadership team. Westminster grew strong during this time.

Many successes continued in the following years with strong growth in Worship, Christian Education, Youth Programs, Missions, and even the exploration of expanding ministries (Stateline Ministries) in the nearby community of Roscoe.

Our Pastoral Leadership (cont.)

This Co-Pastor team during this time (Smazik/Ward) relationship exhibited strong abilities to seek a vision by coaching, collaboration, and cooperation. Trust was earned by being approachable and by being good communicators. Key factors that enabled big steps forward.

The years between 2014-2018 seemed to be spent searching for the next steps. Programs and processes established in the early 2000s didn't have the same traction as they had in the earlier time. Leadership in this time period was content to proceed as we had in the past. Although somewhat stable, energy and creativity during this time were minimal.

As Pastor Ward left in 2018 for a new call, Westminster began a new period with interim pastoral leadership.

In the summer of 2019, Westminster issued a call to a new Pastor. Referring to this period of time as "Hope", a year had passed in which we had a brief exposure with an interim pastor and Westminster was prayerfully hopeful for new church leadership.

Navigating through the Covid Pandemic was a true challenge that required innovative ways to maintain the worship experience. Although the church closed during this time, Westminster quickly developed quality on-line service capability and many Christian Education programs continued through ZOOM. As Westminster pulled out of the Covid Pandemic in 2021 we faced many challenges restoring services and programs to their original stature.

Although basic services and programs were restored, there seemed to be much resistance to new ideas and the collaboration, cooperation and communication that once existed. The basic values important to our congregation (identified on page 5) seemed constrained. The leadership at Session and Commission level grew stagnant and strained. This lead-pastoral leadership ended in 3Q 2023.

In an effort to understand improvement opportunities, the Mission Study Committee reached out to Session and most Commissions to understand challenges and solutions. Findings included:

- The need for better definition of roles and responsibilities
- Need for training and mentoring
- Improvements in communication
- Accountability
- Programs and activities that align with the Mission and Vision
- A cumbersome and lengthy decision-making process

Leadership was a very important theme and would be a focus for recommendations for our future.

Our Pastoral Leadership (cont.)

In many ways Westminster is a resilient congregation with a strong core base of membership. Our Christian beliefs know that God is with us, guiding us, and leading us into the future. God has a plan for us. To this end, we are so fortunate to have Pastor Gretchen (Pastor of Congregational Care) as an acting lead pastor. In the months since she has taken the lead, there is clear evidence of leadership and hope within the congregation.

As we look to our future, we are praying for pastoral leadership that exhibits the following attributes:

- Visionary Guidance
- Demonstrated Leadership Skills in Collaborating, Coaching, and Communication with Session, Commissions and the Congregation
- Being Open and Approachable
- Leading an inspirational and meaningful worship service
- Experience in guiding and building programs within the church
- Interest and Involvement in the Community
- Relate to and involved with Youth

Our Purpose/Mission- What is God Calling us to do?:

God is calling Westminster Presbyterian Church to provide a welcoming and nurturing environment where members and visitors can gather and grow in both faith and service to Christ and the community.

Together we are Gathered in Love, Centered in Christ, and Empowered for Mission.

Gathered in Love:

Psalm 133:1 says “How good and pleasant it is when God’s people live together in unity”.

There are so many challenges in our world, cities, and even our church. All too often we may feel that these challenges are our own to solve. All too often these challenges seek to divide us. Together as a congregation, through worship and program opportunities, we have the opportunity to help each other, establish a caring and nurturing community of faith.

Centered in Christ:

Proverbs 3:5-6 “Trust in the Lord with all your heart, And lean not on your own understanding; In all ways acknowledge Him, And He shall direct your paths”.

There is true strength to stay faithful to biblical principles. With relevant preaching and teaching faithful to scripture, we spend time with God, grow in faith maturity, and develop believers who are encouraged and equipped to serve the community and the world.

Our Purpose/Mission (cont.)

Empowered for Mission:

1 Peter 4:10 "Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms."

Gathering in love and being centered in Christ, provides for the strength, confidence, and the ability to care for those in need. We become the hand and feet of God in our church, our neighborhood, our city, and our world. It is service to others, not out of obligation, but as a way of living generously with our time, talents, and finances.

Defining our Vision: What we want to become...

The Vision of Westminster Presbyterian Church is to build a thriving church community, welcoming and caring for all people entering our doors or visiting us on-line ([Inviting](#)). At Westminster, there are opportunities to build relationships with each other and provide for both spiritual and leadership growth ([Growing](#)). Building on this foundation of ministry sets the stage for reaching out and being a recognized community/regional leader in mission service ([Serving](#)). We all are *Missionaries* and actionable steps in the areas of Inviting, Growing, and Serving fulfill this Vision both at Westminster and in our community.

Missionaries:

Inviting: "Opening up to serve others"

Christian Community is a foundation of welcoming, caring, and nurturing actions at Westminster. Whether a member or visitor entering our church or viewing our ministry website, we welcome you! You will be graciously greeted and have access to our Welcome Center. At the Welcome Center, you will find information about our congregation, our programs and our service to others and the community. Our mission is providing you an opportunity to connect with others and with Christ through programs and service.

Christian Community is further enhanced by the many programs and activities made possible within our multi-use facility on 40 acres in a growing area of northeast Rockford. Class rooms support Christian Education and youth programs. A large activity center provides for fellowship opportunities, event gatherings, and sporting events. An established Preschool Program provides for area families. There is much more that Westminster will offer utilizing our facility and property.

In today's world, improving our website's "Digital Presence" is an open invitation to display what we have to offer and also demonstrate our commitment to serving. This digital presence is a tool that we use to draw people to our ministry and the community.

Defining our Vision (cont.)**Growing- “Building People and Opportunities”**

Focusing on Christian Foundations builds faith, people, and leaders. Equipping them for service within Westminster and the community.

Christian Foundation committees, are structured in a manner that not only attracts visitors/members but also connects them in community with one another. Christian Foundations is designed to assist people on their faith journey. Inspired worship services, Christian Education, and Bible Studies support personal growth in learning and sharing for individuals of all ages.

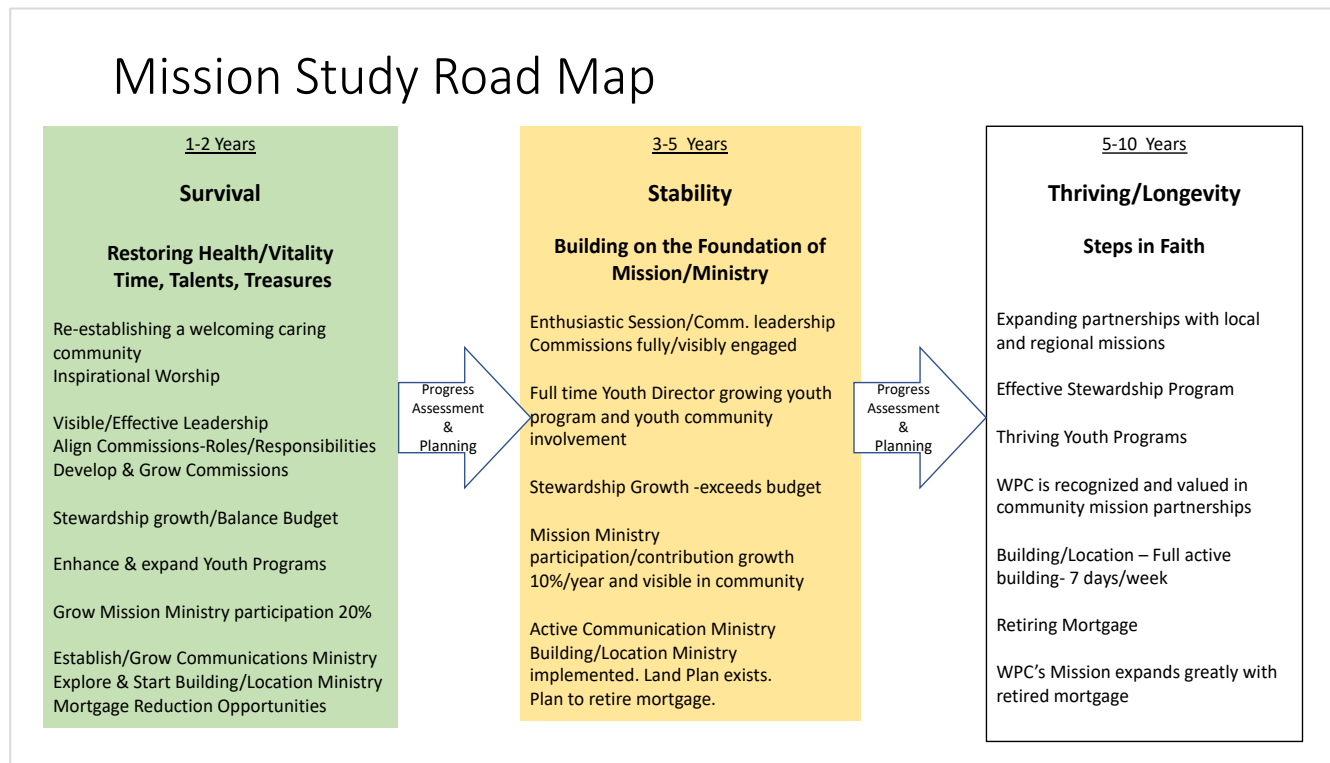
Growing Leaders is an important focus at Westminster. Every person has different talents and skills. We recognize that talent and skill diversity in our congregation is a strength and seek to grow a base of leadership that serves our vision actions. Whether it is welcoming, teaching, serving, there are opportunities to grow the next group of leaders.

Serving- “Stepping out to better serve our Congregation, Community and the Rockford Region”

The vision at Westminster is to continue to grow in service to our Congregation, the Community and the Rockford Region. As indicated earlier in this report, Westminster averages 60-70 people that volunteer on a regular basis to support mission activities within our church and the community. We are working to grow this mission ministry by 20% in the next 2 years and 10% each year thereafter.

As we retire our church mortgage in the next years, Westminster has the potential of having more impact as well as an increased visible presence in local/regional missions. This is a clear opportunity for greater study. By utilizing our empowered congregation or our location/church facility, we are able to expand our mission and vision even further.

Recommendations:



Our road map is in essence a strategic plan to revitalize our church and move us forward with positive momentum as we serve God's people. We are serious about getting stronger and getting out of our rut. We must be honest and recognize where we are. We must realize that in more ways than not, we are currently in *Survival* mode. While some programs and activities remain strong, most struggle with drive, and interest. Commission roles and responsibilities have become blurred and often we find ourselves just going through the actions with little or no direction. Commissions have communicated that they appreciate periodic guidance and input by pastor/leadership. To go forward with our congregation, we must restore our basic values, rely on the faith that gives us strength to drive *Stability*, and then take *Steps in Faith* to once again become a *Thriving* congregation in our community/region.

The following are recommendations for action from the Mission Study Committee:

Year 1-2: Survival- Restoration of Health and Vitality:

Leadership Structure:

One area that was a recurring theme in many surveys was Effective Leadership - leadership across the board. Pastoral leadership, Lay leadership, Session, Deacons, Commissions and Committees. The

Recommendations: Year 1-2 Survival “Leadership Structure (cont.)

Commission Feedback supported this as well. They were vocal in their assessment of a need for better definition of roles and responsibilities, training and mentoring, communication, accountability, activities that align with the Mission and Vision and a cumbersome and lengthy decision-making process . . . Leadership was a very important theme.

As a result, specifically from commission feedback, we look at how this played out in a concrete way. Our current leadership structure (Figure 4 below) shows that all commissions operated fairly independently and it was easy for some to not know what the others were doing . . . a lack of defining roles and responsibilities often resulted in duplication, people working at cross purposes and worst, holes unfilled and with no accountability or support. Additionally, this stretched the ability of pastoral staff to serve all of them.

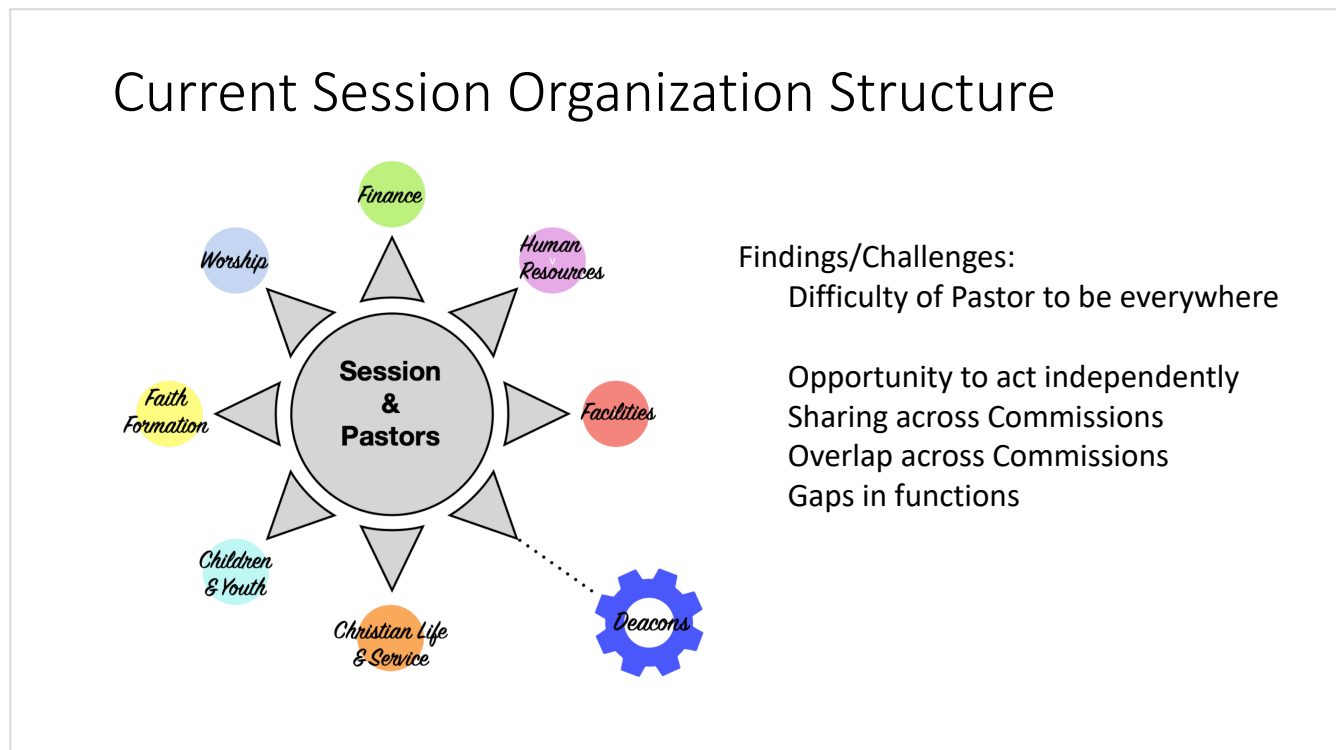


Figure 4

We needed to refine the structure.

The Committee spent much time and effort on this structure and alignment. First and foremost, we have generated a detail role and responsibility assignment for every Commission. It doesn't mean that all changed but some have been expanded on and some new ones created. This detail Roles and Responsibility document can be found in Appendix B, Pages 32-49.

The proposed leadership structure is as shown in Figure 5 on the following page:

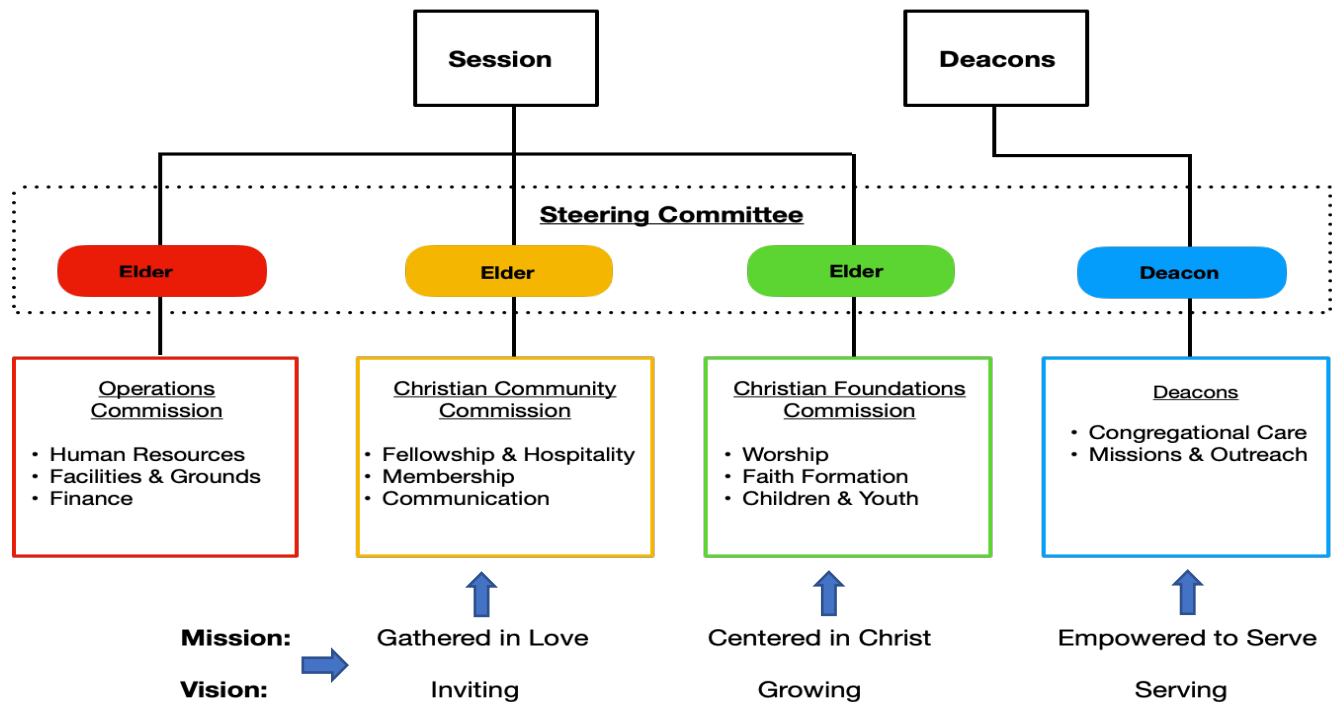
Recommendations: Year 1-2 Survival “Leadership Structure (cont.)

Figure 5

When you look across the colored boxes the only significant role changes are within Christian Community section. What was Christian Life and Service is now Fellowship and Hospitality. We have added two new commission committees, Membership and Communications.

Typical roles of Membership and Communications include:

Membership:

- Welcome Center
- Brochures: Handbook About WPC, Programs, Services
- Work to connect members and visitors to each other and to programs
- Assist with membership roll upkeep
- Assist with pew pad info collection and follow up with pastor

Communications Roles

- Determine strategies and policies for internal/external communication
- Keep website, social media current and informative
- Assist with mailings etc.
- Support e-info for Minute for Mission briefings
- Work with Membership for welcome center information

Recommendations: Year 1-2 Survival (cont.)

We have worked hard to address the concerns of commission lengthy decision making, how do we stay on track with Mission/Vision, and to help support the lead pastor's ability to get to all and stay current in all commission activity. The steering team role will support that effort and help with any planning and execution issues that surface in commission. There is a key accountability effort to this activity and role.

Training, Mentoring, and Planning: (Pastor, Session Leadership, Commission Leadership))

The roles and responsibilities (Appendix B) serve as a key tool for training and mentoring leaders. Training to both Session and Commissions are provided each year in January as new members join in leadership positions. Planning for all commissions becomes a key action as work begins to establish a yearly calendar and set of plans for each Commission (due-March). Commissions shall review progress to plans quarterly. As plans change and are often challenged, we must understand deviations and replan accordingly.

Church Community and Inspirational Worship: (Christian Community & Worship Commissions, Pastor)

After months of constrained interaction, establish methods to welcome, nurture and engage our visitors and our membership. Follow the path, taking the steps within the roles defined in the Christian Community Commission.

An inspired worship opportunity was a clear improvement need from the congregation. We received inputs asking for sermons founded within biblical scripture and prayer that are applicable and relatable to common challenges of everyday life. Additionally, prayer addressing real world concerns faced by our congregation, community, and our world. Implement opportunities for youth and lay involvement within the service. Special music using congregational talents as well as periodic concert offerings are seen as successful methods to drawing members and visitors closer to our ministry.

Stewardship and Capital Campaign: (Operations Commission, Pastor, Congregation)

Engage in healthy and effective stewardship campaigns and develop yearly budgets in a manner that balances the budget in 2024. Demonstrate the value of contributing *time and talents* within the church. Highlight the successes and strengths of time and talent contributions and how they grow commission activity within the church.

The 2024 objective will include balancing the budget. From this point, focus on opportunities for stewardship growth that can provide for improved support for church operations, program growth, and expanded WPC mission activity.

Define a plan to reduce mortgage by 50% in 5 years, retire mortgage in 7 years.

Expand Children and Youth Programs: (Christian Foundations)

Develop a focused effort that revitalizes the youth program by the fall of 2024. Benchmark trends and programs of other churches. In the meantime, review opportunities to combine programs with other churches, sharing cost and resources. By fall of 2024, evaluate the potential and establish plans for another full-time youth leader.

Find ways to make the youth activities more visible and active within the church and community.

Mission Ministries: (Deacons)

We have a strong Deacons ministry with historically good leadership and focus. As reported earlier, WPC has a mission volunteer base of 50-60 people. Develop a strategy for how we can challenge the congregation for increased participation to an increased level in 2024 and beyond. Lastly, begin to think and strategize about WPC mission growth as we retire our mortgage in 5-7 years. How can we expand our presence and impact in the community and the region?

Communications and “Digital Presence”: (Christian Community Commission)

The Communications Commission Committee (see roles on Appendix A) has a great opportunity to improve awareness of WPC and our presence in the community. Explore ways to expand our digital ministry. Our new website and our professional on-line service capability are two vehicles to use in this effort. Track viewership, develop methods/features that might draw viewers in more frequently, and allow participation in mission work and also stewardship programs. Possibly attach meaningful “blogs” or daily prayer/devotion links that draw people on our site on a more regular basis (then plug them into Christian Community Commission).

Building/Location Ministry: (Operations Commission)

Drive opportunities to develop and grow our land/building usage. Develop a “Land Plan” that defines opportunities for the 40 plus acres of WPC property. Continue to explore opportunities

Termed “Building/Location Ministry” this creates opportunity to draw individuals to our location/building. Activities in this area, also can provide revenue opportunities that may offset expenses in other areas. Truly, the use of our facility by outside groups is a ministry.

Year 3-5: Stability- Building on the Foundation of Mission and Ministry:

At the end of each year (December), prior to new Session members joining, Session shall review the years performance and Commissions effectiveness of meeting goals. Specifically, as we enter year 3, are we as a church progressing to a point of stability from the “survival” areas addressed in years 1 and 2? Define the evidence and successes and also next steps for areas still struggling. A report should be generated and made a part of the annual report.

Recommendations: Year 3-5 Stability (cont.):

Years 3-5 focus on the continued build of Mission and Ministry. Key elements include:

- Stability and growth in leadership on all areas (Pastoral, Session, Commissions). Evidence that all are engaged.
- Install full-time Youth Director that continues to develop a strong youth program and youth involvement in the community.
- Expanding the use of our building/location ministry in a manner that gains more utilization of the facility during the week.
- Solidify the plan to retire the mortgage.
- Stewardship Growth- Commitments exceed budget.
- Continued effort and support for success of our digital ministry.
- Growing our mission volunteer base 10% (individuals involved) year over year. (2023 is ~60 individuals)
- With visible successes toward our vision, are we growing attendance/involvement 5-10%/year?

Year 5-10: Thriving/Longevity - Steps in Faith:

This time period is important in the life of Westminster. After retiring the mortgage an estimated ~\$25,000 per month could help support our mission and vision for growth and expansion. In the 5 years prior, we have reconnected with our values, know and supported our congregation in areas of growth in faith as well as mission service. We have seen programs and processes flourish while we might still be working to improve some areas.

It is a time to revisit our Mission/Vision for the next phase of planning and growth.

- How can we better expand our partnerships with local/regional missions?
- How have our local demographics changed and are there exciting ideas that would transform our building and location ministry?

Miscellaneous Inputs/Feedback:

Collecting recommendations as a committee and from the congregational reflection survey was valuable as it offered different thoughts that were not ignored but shall serve as additional inputs to commissions for consideration as we move forward. Although presented in random order, they each define ideas brought forward from the congregation and or the committee. This listing of inputs is provided in Appendix A, pages 27-31.

Appendix A

Appendix A - Congregational Reflection – Inputs of Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, & Threats (SWOT)

Strengths:

- Interpersonal relationships
- Rock House Involvement
- Deacon efforts (food baskets, etc)
- Upward sports
- Deacons are engaged
- Our organ
- Our building, activity center, land, pre-school

Weaknesses:

- Lost/restricted opportunities to welcome people
- Member/visitor engagement
 - Leadership also
- Low census attendance- people spread out-poor visual queue
- Lack of community
- Leadership & communication with the congregation
- Identity within our community
 - D. Smazik model- Great!
 - Share-fest
- No young adult ministry
 - Post high school/college

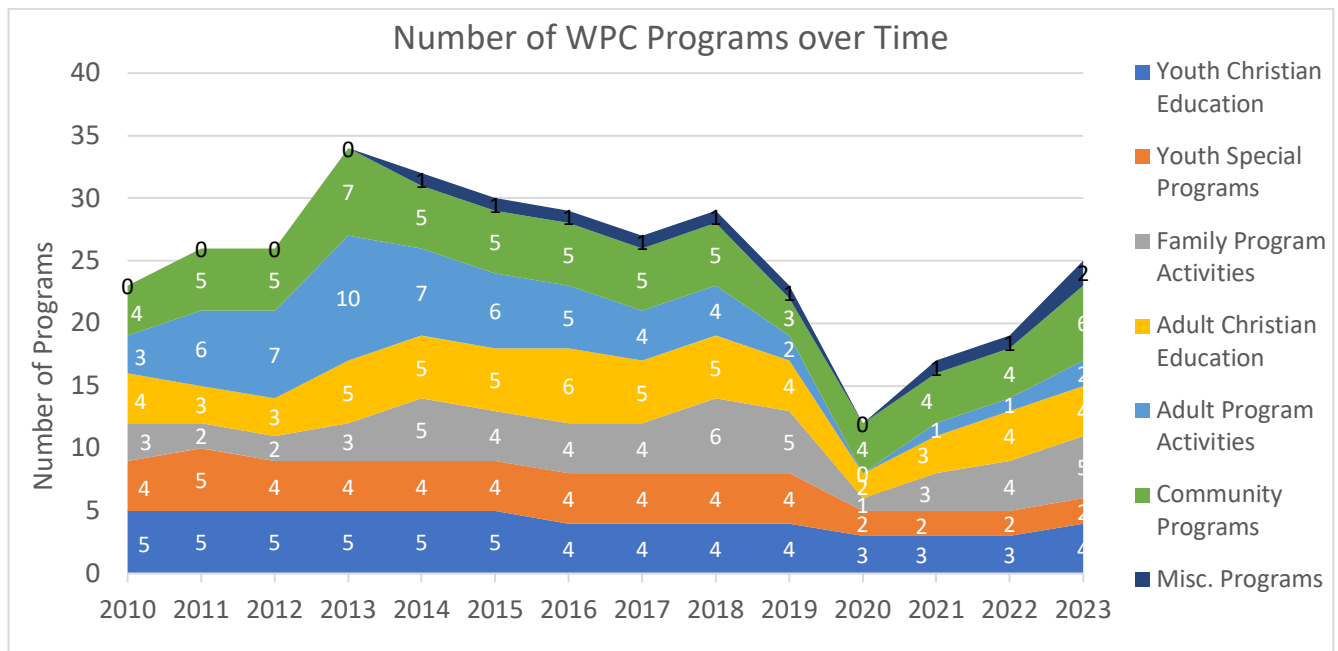
Opportunities:

- Initiate “Post Covid” reachout
 - Corn-boil type event
- Expand music concert series
- Adult Mission trips
- Young adult options/programs
- Engagement opportunities:
 - Potlucks (on 5th week of 5 week months)
- Active pastoral involvement in outreach and engagement
- Reach out to local colleges as a mission opportunity
- Concerted effort to partner with other churches to grow outreach (inter-church communication)

Threats:

- Volunteerism is ok, but not robust (same people)
- Burnout- limit terms for Session/Deacons
- Visual queues:
 - Low census in choir and post service fellowship (from past)
- Finances- ability to meet costs, expand benevolences
- Changing culture

Appendix A – Program Trends



Blue Text denotes current activity

Youth Christian Education

Sunday School
Logos/Kids Club/Sr High
Club 67
Stateline Kids Club
VBS

Youth Special Programs

Music & Drama Camp
Upward Sports
Work Camps/Mission Trips
Local Mission Activity
Sr High Confirmation Retreat
Dinner Theater
Great America Trip

Community Mission Programs

Corn Boil & Car Show
Attic/Basement Closet Sale
Christmas Food Baskets
Mobile Food Pantry
Jubilee Center Lunch Program
Kids Around the World (KATW)
Rockhouse Kids
Habitat for Humanity
Carpenters Place

Family Program Activities

Bonfire
Pool Party
Youth Dinner Theater
Easter Breakfast
Pizza/Movie Nights
Rockford Rivets Baseball Outing
All Church Picnic
Advent Family Fellowship w/Barbershoppers

Adult Christian Education

Sunday School
Bible On-Tap & On-Line
Men's Wed am Bible Study
Tuesday am Women's Bible Study
Women's Circle's Meetings
Officers Retreat
Ash Wednesday Lenten Service & Soup Supper

Adult Program Activities

Mens Basketball
Mens Forum- Sat Coffee
Women's Retreat
Stronghold Retreats
Special Music Programs/Concerts
All City "Choirfest"

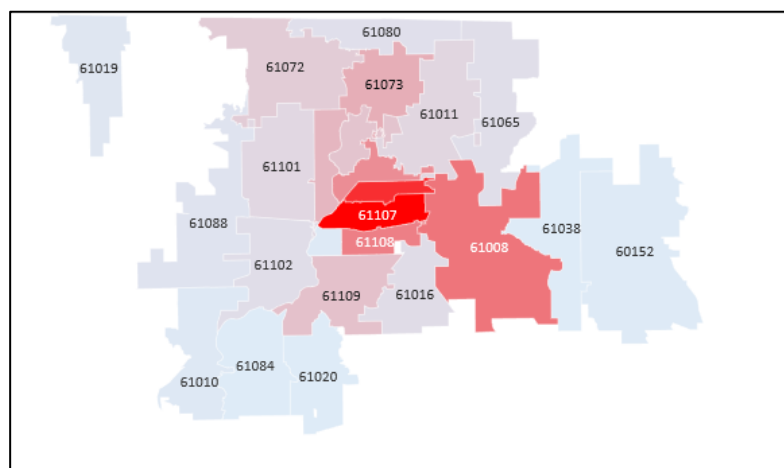
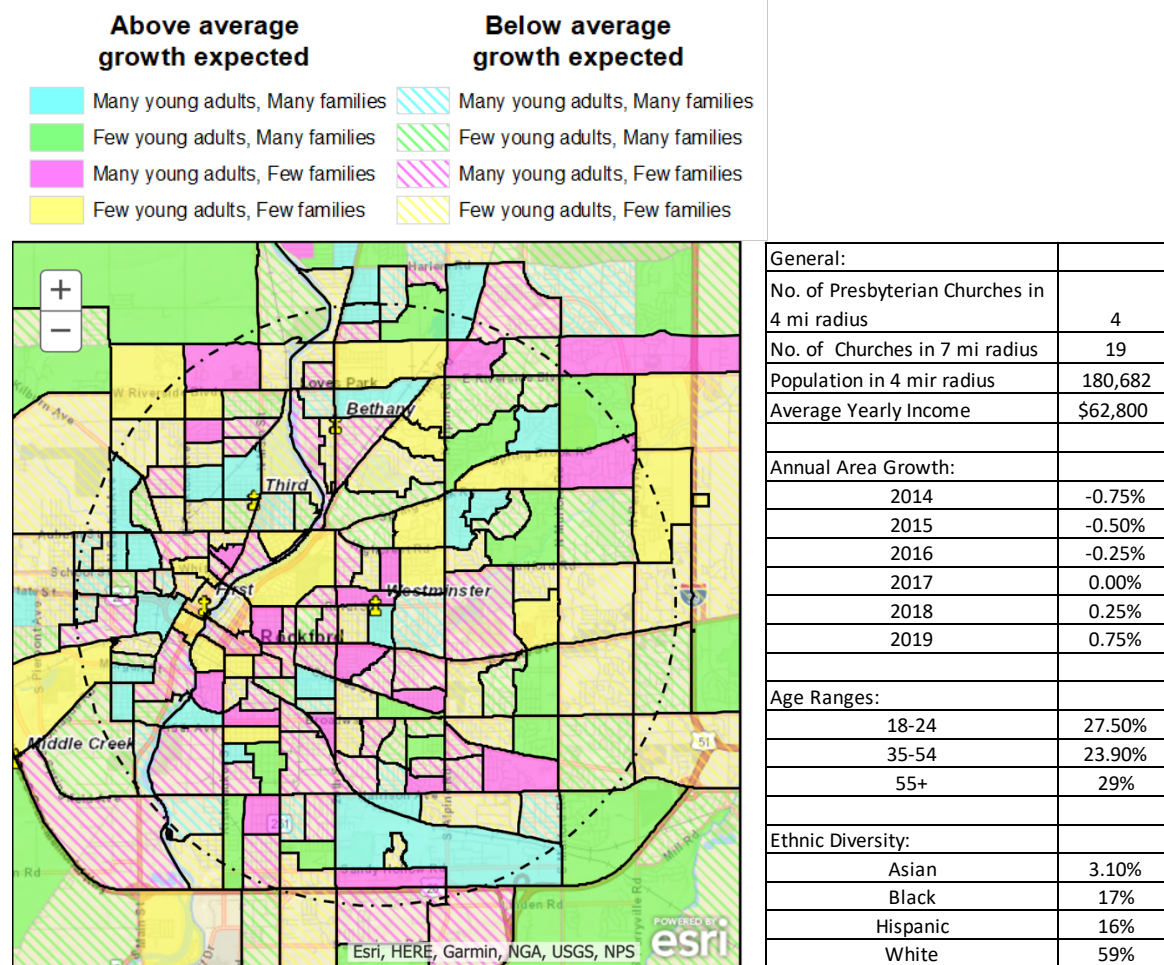
Caroling to Shut-ins
Christmas Shopping Nights
Women's Dinner
Primetimers
Third 30
Parents Night Out

Misc.

Adopt a Road
AA
Anger Alternatives
Community Bible Study
Rockford Barbershopper's
Healing Pathways
Christian Youth Theater

Appendix A - Community Demographics - Presbyterian Church (USA)

Summary Overview Report- 4-mile radius from WPC (2019 Data)



Membership roll contain 690 family names from 133 zip codes

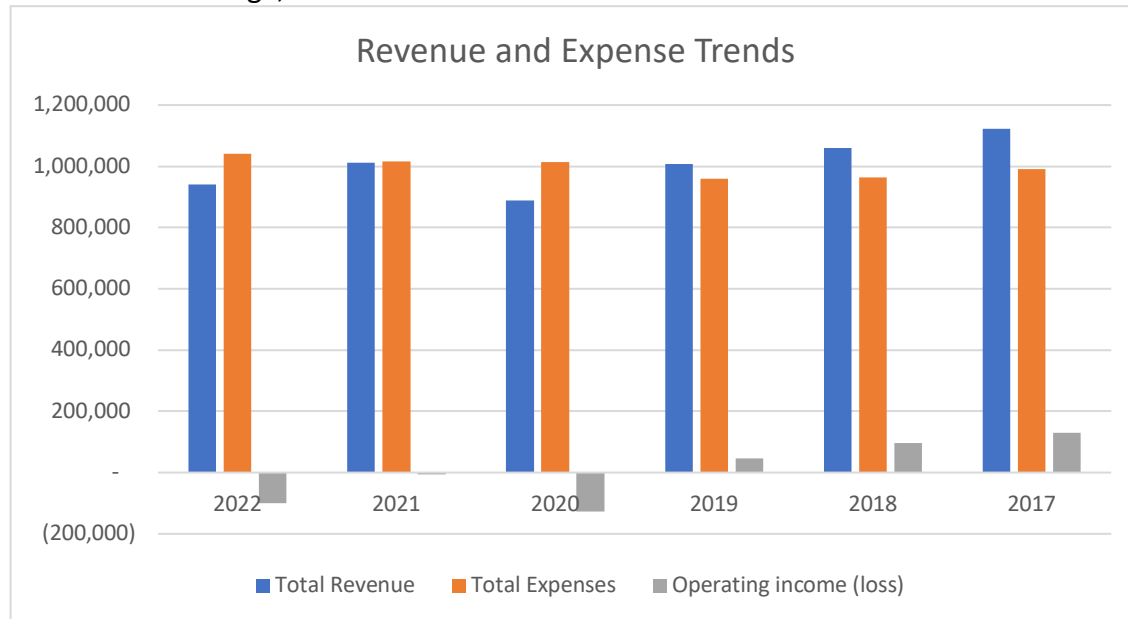
70-75% (530 members) live within a 10 mile radius

Regional Heat Map – WPC Membership by Zip Code

Appendix A- Financial Data:

Revenue and Expense Trends

Revenue is trending down. Expenses are trending up. COVID injected some chaos and uncertainty in these numbers, but taken as a whole since 2017 the trend is unmistakable. The uncertainty is the extent of the change, not its direction.



Revenue Trends

Our pledges are substantially down, roughly 60% of pre-pandemic levels.

This first schedule focuses only on “Grace Gifts” and ignores Preschool (which is almost self-funding), smaller amounts such as plate offerings, and PPP loan amounts which will not repeat.

	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017
	Budget	Actual	Actual	Actual	Actual	Actual	Actual
Grace Gifts	945,300	797,204	898,513	856,299	950,620	1,002,813	1,054,600
Pledges	485,470	506,530	565,760	697,730	649,336	788,295	788,013
Nonpledge	459,830	290,674	332,753	158,569	301,284	214,518	266,587
Percent Pledges	51%	64%	63%	81%	68%	79%	75%
Percent Nonpledge	49%	36%	37%	19%	32%	21%	25%
Pledge Units	122	133	165	160	201	218	221

Pledges are trending down

The current budget assumes large non-pledge income. Historically, that is

Fewer people pledge but some still give

Children/Youth Commission

Involve Youth with Musical Skills in worship service (both services)

Liturgical Dance in worship (sermon relevant)

Let youth promote their activities (announcements, etc.)

Scripture readings by confirmands

Video Screen – show kids at work and play, show involvement

Maintain children's sermon

Youth Director needs to be effective at all levels

"Plug kids in"

Benchmark other youth programs

- Merge youth programs with other churches
- Share resources and expenses
- Open up youth programs to non-Presbyterian churches
- Competitive programs (sports, etc.) with other church teams
- Interfaith conferences
- Get local youth directors together to develop stronger programs

Youth "Bring a friend"

Evaluate "partnering" with RVC and RU to help with youth (scholarship)

Area youth group conference (mix youth from different churches (sports, etc.))

Christian Community Commission

Seek high school/college youth to help fill gaps (choir, music, etc.)

Small group gathering (sharing, caring)

Establish groups "quarterly" with activities

- Circles, breakfast, exercise, Make it possible to sign up on WPC website
(What's available, who is it for?)

Plug in to mission service (time phased)

Seek involvement that's not external

"5th Sunday" blended service with potluck

Lay Committee that reaches out to people in need (Deacons)

Pew Pads

Welcome committee at doors

Events (bowling/midnight bowling, games, cookouts, movies, ballgame)

Survey to ID what people are looking for

Membership

Who are our members (audit rolls)?

New Directory

Process to reach out to members not attending

Miscellaneous Inputs gathered from Congregation/Committee (cont.)

Appendix A- Miscellaneous Inputs/Ideas from Congregation and Committee

Membership (cont.)

Visitor welcome bag

Name tag

Process to pick up shut-ins (people/bus)

Room at Wesley Willows that Livestreams (guest & members present)

Enhance our digital presence (website)

Monitor attendance

Local/regional mailing (Special events/services)

Christian Foundations Commission

Have programs that people want

More variety (especially 25-40 y/o)

Hands-on events (crafts)

Pre-advertised SS programs

Current topics

- Marriage and family
- Health and fitness
- Living single
- nutrition

Time phase volunteer efforts so they can participate

Coordinated effort for SS between pastoral staff and Faith Formation

- A plan
- Advertise
- Seek topics to discuss/why

Women's' retreat

- Regional draw
- Extended family
- Us of speakers for relevant subject matter

Human Resource Commission

Pastoral relations committee

- One member from Pastor
- One member from Congregation
- One member from Session

More approachable

More social, less controlling

More involved in community +

Staff- practice your Christian staff

Review terms of call, i.e. twice a year

Appendix A- Miscellaneous Inputs/Ideas from Congregation and Committee

Leadership

Job descriptions for deacons and elders

Expectations of elders and deacons

Sitting Elders and deacons to mentor new elders and deacons

Worship Commission

Rope off sanctuary wings in small services- encourage closeness

Reinvigorate music

- Diversity

Combine services on "5th" Sundays

Process to learn new hymns- "hymn of the month"

Lay scripture readers

Prayer list

Concert Series (gets people in the door and gets people connected)

Pray for community and world

Understand on-line viewers- to draw in-person

Application of Biblical scripture- relative to today

Understand "leaving the service unfulfilled"

Appendix A - Committee Discussion Points/Gaps/Parking Lot for Ideas:

- Reaching out to non-attenders and attendees
- Why aren't we following our current mission? (Serving, Inviting.....)
- Why do we think that people will come to our location?
- How can we serve people where they live?
- Membership rolls need audit? At least yearly.
- What is plan for pew pads? How do we restart and how is the data used for our mission?
- How do we start feeding, nourishing
- Membership database. Define ways and process we can use the inputs to be more proactive with membership, visitors, etc.
- Before we go full force in finding inactives, we need to strengthen our approach to reaching out to visitors weekly. Need enthusiasm to serve and hold who we are. Then reach out.
- Conscious decision to ramp up what we do for the community?
- Meet people where they are
- What are we doing to take the Lord out in the community
- Our tree is not bearing good fruit in all ways
- Talk to people- what do we want to look like
- Seek out people that come in the door
- Expand greeting time in services as required.
- Honoring our past traditions/foundations "gathered in live"
- Our Mission- it doesn't have to mean the same thing to everyone. It's how we apply it as a Church and in our leadership actions. In addition, it's how we apply it as individuals in our faith journey.
- Need ways to frequently remind all (congregation + visitors) what our mission is.
- "Signage" when leaving the parking lot "You are entering the mission field"
- Look at Website for First Pres. Joliet "This church identified "The 5 practices of fruitful congregations". "Radical hospitality, Intentional faith development, Risk-taking mission and service, Extravagant generosity, Passionate worship.
- Develop Community "grass roots"
- People need to feel valued before they can go on and feel committed.
- Need more lay people speaking.
- Both internal and community efforts to gather, bring people together.
- Ideas that might "join other community church efforts" in growing outreach and inter church communication*

Appendix A - Committee Discussion Points/Gaps/Parking Lot for Ideas (cont.):

Random Reflection Ideas: (captured during discussion)

Concerning our congregation, our discussion confirmed we need to revitalize several areas of engagement:

- Engage visitors, weekly. Embracing their presence. Starting a conversation with them, and providing a welcoming gesture
- Renew the use of worship “signature of friendship” pads. Manage/use the info re members, visitors, guests in a follow up action.
- Find a way to acknowledge attendees. Make calls to attendees, but, more importantly, those who are not attending.
- Find and develop a way to reach out to inactives, prospects, guests.

Concerning programs & activities, we need to:

- Drive and support activities and programs that nourish community building, and further our, and Christ’s, mission.
- Drive our community engagement to meet people where they are. Being active with the community (working in Rock House Kids or Carpenter’s Place). Make our outreach actions visible.
- Worship times- if congregation is fractured by Sunday AM commitments, i.e., sports, family get-togethers, consider other times for worship, i.e., Sat evening or Sunday evening worship, or Wed evening worship during LOGOS.
- On-line worship- would prefer not to discontinue it, a negative for shut-ins, travelers, etc. consider on-line only for traditional worship, as contemporary worship is a younger crowd, less likely to be limited in attendance options (big assumption re contemporary worshippers)

Appendix B

Roles and Responsibilities

Of

Elders and Deacons

Gathered in Love. - Centered in Christ. - Empowered for Mission

Westminster Presbyterian Church - Rockford, IL

The Session

The Session is the governing body in a local Presbyterian church, charged with the responsibility of maintaining the spiritual nurture and the governance of the congregation, and leading the congregation's participation in Christ's mission in the world.

A total of 15 session members, called Elders, are nominated in classes of 5. A class serves for three years. Each year, one third of the Session members retire from Session and are replaced by the next class of members elected from the congregation. This provides stability and continuity in governing the congregation. The Lead Pastor moderates the Session which is headed by the Clerk of Session, neither of whom are voting members of the session.

Each commission is chaired by an Elder. These 3 Elders form a Steering Committee along with a Deacon representative. All Elders must serve on a commission or committee. Session meets the 3rd Tuesday of each month at 7 PM.

According to the Presbyterian Church (USA) Book of Order, responsibilities of the Session are as follows:

- Provide for worship, including preaching, music, and communion.
- Provide for growth of our members through personal and pastoral care, educational programs, fellowship, and opportunities for service.
- Receive members into the church.
- Provide for administration of the church and management of church property.
- Delegate and supervise the work of the committees.
- Maintain relationships with higher governing bodies of the church.
- Provide stewardship of money, time, and talents given by the members.
- Lead the congregation in ministries of personal and social healing and reconciliation in the community.
- Lead the congregation in participation in the mission of the whole Church in the world.
- Lead the congregation continually to discover what God is doing in the world, and to plan for change, renewal, and reformation under the Word of God.

Steering Committee

The Steering Committee functions in the role of consultant, as an advisory body whose focus is the strategic direction of the church. It is designed to help keep projects and initiatives on track and in line with the mission and vision of the church. The members should have diverse perspectives and expertise so that a range of insights and solutions give rise to balance and better understanding. Additionally, they need to be able to work collaboratively toward the strategic direction, mission and vision to be successful and provide guidance. Steering committee leaders need to have proven leadership experience, be able to promote problem solving and open discussion where opinions can be shared,

The Steering Committee is comprised of 3 Active Ruling Elders, one for each Commission and 1 Deacon representative as leadership for Session to implement and maintain strategic plan.

- Set and evaluate direction of Session and Commissions as it pertains to achieving strategic plans of the church.
- Assess progress toward achieving strategic plans according to our mission and vision.
- Plan yearly calendar and evaluate progress against plan.
- Provide input and advice on budgets, facilities, timelines, risk, resource management and scope.
- Facilitate clear communication among committees, session and staff.
- Plan, organize, schedule and assist in training and on-boarding yearly for each new class of Deacons and Elders each January in cooperation with Pastoral leadership.
- Ensure succession planning and documentation in commissions for future success of the commission and its leadership.
- Promote accountability in each commission and committee, and their leaders, duties to strengthen the health and effectiveness of their commission.
- Partner with committees to function in a resource and support capacity for commission and committee leaders.

Nominating Committee

The Nominating Committee works diligently each year to help fill leadership positions for the Session and the Deacons. Decision makers bear major responsibility within our church by helping to formulate policies and guiding the direction of the church. Therefore, choosing these leaders is crucially important.

The Committee consists of active members to be chosen as per the bylaws of Westminster Presbyterian Church. The process ensures nominations be broadly representative of the constituency of the congregation.

- Nominate active members of the congregation who are called to be leaders and officers of the church in the roles of Elders and Deacons.
- Explore the problems, possibilities and priorities of the church and consider the general qualifications of a church officer and church leadership.
- Carefully consider the skills of individuals as it pertains to the needs of the church governance bodies.
- Seek out members of the congregation through mailings, invitations, phone calls and conversations to explore potential candidates.
- Develop and maintain an up-to-date list of eligible, qualified and capable persons to serve as candidates for Elder or Deacon.
- Create and revise committee process documentation to enhance consistency and efficiency and improve succession planning in order to ensure continuity and minimize disruption.

Operations Commission

The Operations Commission is the nuts and bolts commission for day-to-day operations of keeping the lights on and entity running. God reminds us in Luke 12:48 that we are to wisely use the resources entrusted to us individually and by extension, as a congregation. Operations is the group responsible for short-range and long-range planning, administrative costs, budgets, maintaining infrastructure, workplace environment and personnel matters helping us make the most of the resources we have been given.

This Commission is led by an Active Ruling Elder from the Steering Committee. Commissions meet the first Tuesday of each month at 7 PM.

The committees that report to the Operations commission are:

- Human Resources Committee
- Building & Grounds Committee
- Finance Committee

Sub committees can be formed as needed under the auspices of the three main committees in the Operations Commission.

Human Resources Committee

- Work in an advisory capacity with Session and Head of Staff.
- Ensure annual staff performance evaluation reviews are completed.
- Recommend salary adjustments and compensation in the form of paid benefits package through the Presbytery when appropriate.
- Recommend new and revised personnel policies and procedures.
- Develop and revise job descriptions, responsibilities and Terms of Call.
- Work with Head of Staff to fill staff vacancies as needed.
- Ensure employment contracts are written correctly.
- Support professional growth and development of staff.
- Create and revise committee process documentation to enhance consistency and efficiency and improve succession planning in order to ensure continuity and minimize disruption.

Finance Committee

- Works with Treasurer to oversee and evaluate financial health of church.
- Evaluate budgetary needs, fiscal resources and direction of financial operations of the church.
- Document an effective set of standard operating procedures and internal controls to ensure effective accounting, budgeting and reporting systems.
- Encourage and facilitate collaboration across commissions and committees and staff in development of annual plan and budget.
- Recommend a balanced annual operating budget to Session.
- Provide accurate and useful reports on financial activity to Session.
- Monitor progress vs budget and church financial position during year and identify need for action or changes to spending and plans.
- Be an active agent in evaluating proposed expenditures, appropriate analysis and assessment of risk.
- Procure auditor and facilitate annual audit.
- Communicate to congregation the annual budget and financial status of church.
- Conduct all aspects of annual Stewardship campaign to solicit member pledges to support church budget.
- Educate congregation how we use gifts and resources including mission in the larger worldwide community.
- Encourage generous giving of time, talents and treasure as a response to God's love and generosity to us.
- Distribute Time & Talents Survey as part of Annual Stewardship Campaign.
- Develop a planned giving program to support the Investment and Endowment Fund.
- Assist members in planning their gifts including through Endowment Funds.
- Recommend to Session annual distributions from various designated funds.

Finance Committee (cont.)

- Ensure that designated funds and Memorials are used for purpose for which they were given.
- Create and revise committee process documentation to enhance consistency and efficiency and improve succession planning in order to ensure continuity and minimize disruption.

Building and Grounds Committee

- Work in cooperation with Facilities Manager and staff.
- Oversee use and maintenance of all church property, facilities and equipment.
- Maintain grounds include parking lot, lighting, and landscape.
- Monitor costs including utilities and service contracts.
- Repair and maintain mechanical systems, heating, ventilation and air conditioning.
- Make capital improvement recommendations.
- Monitor and assist with general church maintenance including paint, equipment, and supplies.
- Consider and help assign space allocation for building use.
- Develop policies for building use.
- Ensure and manage adequate insurance coverage for property and facilities.
- Work to establish a land and facilities plan to forecast and ensure expanded use of both assets.
- Oversee development, maintenance and operation of Columbarium and Memorial Garden, and ordering of nameplates, urns and engraving.
- Create and revise committee process documentation to enhance consistency and efficiency and improve succession planning in order to ensure continuity and minimize disruption.

Christian Community Commission

We gather God's family in worship and fellowship because we are a community who desires connection and relationship. We move beyond mere attendance by sharing the experiences and the messiness of life through friendship, support and encouragement. Our role is to create a warm and inviting environment that encourages being involved in the life of the church and in the community in which we live. As we grow in love for Christ we share His love for others. We gather people in, welcoming and inviting them to join us in community and connection.

This Commission is led by an Active Ruling Elder from the Steering Committee. Commissions meet the first Tuesday of each month at 7 PM.

The committees that report to the Christian Community Commission are:

- Membership Committee
- Fellowship & Hospitality Committee
- Communications Committee

Sub committees can be formed as needed under the auspices of the four main committees in the Christian Community Commission.

Membership Committee

As the first point of contact for those who enter WPC, our role is to create a welcoming church home for members and visitors alike and help them find places to connect within the congregation.

- Organize welcome teams for Welcome Center and door greeters so those entering WPC feel invited into fellowship and worship. Maintain a welcoming presence from 30 minutes prior to service through 30 minutes post service.
- Maintain supplies at the Welcome Center including brochures and booklets, name tags, recent church newsletter, new member class sign-up.
- Create, update and ensure availability of congregational publications such as a "Welcome to Westminster Church" and those relating to membership.
- Create, update and ensure availability of a "Ways to Connect" pamphlet/booklet detailing ongoing activities such as commissions, committees, musical groups and small groups to encourage and promote engagement beyond Sunday mornings.

Membership (cont.)

- Create, update and ensure availability of congregational publications detailing programs for Children and Youth including mid-week programs.
- Provide clear and up-to-date information on Christian Education classes available on between services on Sunday mornings as well as upcoming fellowship opportunities.
- Train greeters in how to be welcoming (open doors, eye contact, direct to Welcome Center, introductions to other members who can engage them in conversation, answer questions, give tours, etc.).
- Plan, organize, schedule and promote new member classes and ceremonies such as a new member brunch for the new member and their “First Friend” or a coffee hour reception.
- Introduce new members to the congregation and support them as they become active members of our church family.
- Establish and implement a “First Friends” program to pair new members with a congregational friend to encourage involvement and connection with the missions and ministries of WPC and to whom they can direct questions.
- Collect and document pew pad information and disseminate names to Lead Pastor for a 5 minute follow-up phone call to acknowledge visit, answer any questions and invite them back.
- Work with staff to maintain and update member contact info.
- Contact friends and members who haven’t been seen recently to invite them back and try to discern what is keeping them away and how to draw them back into congregational life.
- Maintain and update membership rolls yearly, determining membership numbers for Presbytery purposes and Per Capita denominational dues.
- Disseminate a Time and Talents survey during new member classes to assess what people are interested in and where they have special talents.
- Provide reports 1-2 times per year detailing numbers of visitors, names of new members and those being dropped from membership rolls.
- Create and revise committee process documentation to enhance consistency and efficiency and improve succession planning in order to ensure continuity and minimize disruption.

Fellowship & Hospitality Committee

This is where the fun begins! This committee's mission is to create and promote opportunities where we can gather as a whole church family and engage in fun and fellowship. We desire to create an atmosphere of laughter and love to bring us together, share our life experiences and talents and strengthen relationships with each other and with God. Sitting down at a table with food is one of the primary ways we establish connection and relationship. Through good cheer, smiles and food, we participate in the milestones of life by providing a catalyst for fellowship and a reminder of God's spirit working in our midst.

- Plan, organize and schedule church-wide fellowship experiences such as the Annual Church Picnic, Breaking Bread, Corn Boil, Rivet game, etc., aiming for 1 event per quarter.
- Recruit volunteers necessary for holding a successful church wide event
- Create new opportunities for church wide fellowship and eliminate ones that no longer fit with our direction, mission and vision.
- Welcome guests and members during fellowship hour encouraging people to meet someone new and vary with whom they engage.
- Procure donuts and coffee supplies.
- Recruit and train volunteers for providing Sunday fellowship hour.
- Work cooperatively with Deacons, who specialize in Congregational Care to plan and implement onsite funeral luncheons.
- Welcome guests and members during funeral luncheons.
- Coordinate receptions and meals after funerals in support of grieving families.
- Recruit volunteers for funeral luncheons.
- Coordinate with and support other committees for special events, meals and celebrations involving the kitchen and food.
- Help keep the kitchen stocked with paper goods, utensils, and various sundries for Sunday Fellowship.
- Create and revise committee process documentation to enhance consistency and efficiency and improve succession planning in order to ensure continuity and minimize disruption.

Communications Committee

As we have moved into the 21st century we recognize that how we receive information has changed - we have become increasingly mobile and increasingly digital. In fact, it is common practice for churches to use video-conferences and social media. The purpose of the Communications Committee is to keep members, visitors, and the community informed by publicizing events and enhancing communication using a variety of available methods to reach all members and keep them informed with matters and activities related to life at WPC.

- Define strategies and policies related to internal and external communications of the church.
- Update and publish a church directory in a frequency determined in conjunction with Session.
- Maintain and update church bulletin boards
- Work with staff to keep website content and focus current, informative, easy to navigate and engaging
- Appoint a liaison for collecting pertinent information that needs to be disseminated and who can then work cooperatively with staff to ensure timely and up-to-date information distribution.
- Maintain and update social media to keep updated, informative and engaging content.
- Assist with mass communications to church members via email and regular mail.
- Assist with preparing newsletters.
- Coordinate with staff and other committees for Announcements and Minute for Mission on Sunday mornings.
- Coordinate and update street side reader boards with current and inviting messages, events and announcements.
- Work cooperatively with Membership Committee for publishing print materials for the Visitor Center.
- Create and revise committee process documentation to enhance consistency and efficiency and improve succession planning in order to ensure continuity and minimize disruption.

Christian Foundations Commission

The mission of Christian Foundations is to provide individuals in the church ways to encounter God through His Word, connect our faith with our life, study Scripture, develop a prayer life, and train, equip and encourage followers of Christ to growth deeper in faith and put that faith into action. Different age and stages of life have differing needs and interests and this commission seeks to promote the spiritual development of all our members and our community.

This Commission is led by an Active Ruling Elder from the Steering Committee. Commissions meet the first Tuesday of each month at 7 PM.

The committees that report to the Christian Foundations Commission are:

- Worship Committee
- Faith Formation Committee
- Children & Youth Committee

Sub committees can be formed as needed under the auspices of the three main committees in the Christian Foundations Commission.

Faith Formation Committee

The mission of the Faith Formation committee is to provide Christian education for the purpose of fostering faith and commitment, nurturing spiritual growth, and developing servant-leaders. We accomplish this by providing diverse, biblically based programs and learning opportunities for all ages. We seek to grow the faith of our church community through the Holy Spirit, to nurture knowledge in Jesus Christ, and to serve God.

- Coordinate Christian Education on Sunday morning and throughout the week.
- Assist in acquiring program materials needed for classes.
- Develop ideas and content for Sunday morning classes, working to create classes that span a wide variety topics and that will appeal to different ages groups and interests.
- Recruit and schedule teachers and classroom allocation.
- Develop and support mens and women's ministries bible studies, circles, etc.

Worship Committee

Worship is at the very heart of the church's life. All that the church does is rooted in its worship. The community of faith, gathered in response to God's call, is formed in its worship. Worship is the principal influence that shapes our faith, and is the most visible way we express the faith. In worship, through Word and Sacrament, the church is sustained by the presence of Christ and empowered by the work of the Holy Spirit. Jointed in worship to the One who is the source of its life, the church is equipped to serve God in the world. [The Book of Common Worship]

To this end, the Worship Committee is charged with the participation of the logistics and planning of the many elements that are part of a sacred celebration of God through worship. The committee encourages creative worship expression including the arts along with the Word preached and the sacraments celebrated in our sanctuary.

- Partner with staff in planning logistics of worship services.
- Decorate the worship space for the seasons of the liturgical calendar including banners and flower schedule.
- Procure pulpit supply when needed.
- Provides, sets up and cleans up communion elements.
- Scheduling & training of Elders to serve communion.
- Assist with planning and provision for special services such as Christmas, Easter, baptism/dedications, Youth Sunday, Memorial Sunday, Combined Services, All Saints Day, etc.
- Assist with the procurement and usage of a variety of arts incorporated in worship.
- Enlist, train and schedule volunteers as acolytes, liturgists and ushers.
- Ensure diverse congregational involvement as participants.
- Partner with staff for recruiting volunteers to be trained on screens and cameras.
- Partner with staff for music related needs including music, musicians, and maintenance of organ, pianos and bells.
- Assist with planning and logistics for funerals.
- Maintain wedding polices of the church and assist with weddings logistics including a wedding coordinator, sound operator and custodian.

Children & Youth Committee

Our charge is to develop and lead programs that are grounded in our beliefs and that engage children and youth in activities to build relationships, connect youth to our congregation, develop a sense of community, inspire volunteerism, and train our future leaders. We desire to build a strong spiritual foundation for our children that includes inviting, growing in faith, serving God and engaging in a community of faith, and that will help guide them in their adult life.

- Work cooperatively with Pastor of Children's Ministries.
- Acquire program curriculum
- Recruit and schedule teachers and volunteers for Sunday school classes
- Work with staff to plan and implement VBS
- Weekday programming such as Kids Club
- Develop ways to involve children & youth in the life and ministry of the church
- Encourage youth to assist and participate in WPC events, projects, missions and outreach.
- Work with staff to plan and facilitate special youth events such as Mission Trips and retreats
- Support staff in discipling youth through Confirmation class.
- Ensure background checks of adults working with our children.
- Develop and implement safety policies and procedures in cooperation with Operations to
- Ensures that quality child care is available on Sunday mornings and as needed for special events.
- Oversees, facilitates and supports the Preschool, an early childhood development program.

Deacons

The Deacons are the Mission & Care counterpart our identity. This important committee is responsible for raising awareness of our call to serve one another and to offer support, hope, and encouragement to a broad spectrum of people, both locally and worldwide. They help us live generously by being the hands and feet of God in the world around us by fulfilling the command to love thy neighbor and serving those in need. We recognize that we serve, not out of obligation, but as a response to a Savior who gave us so much.

Their focus is a two-armed ministry of love and compassion in caring for our congregation (internal) and for those around us (external). The two committees of the Deacons are:

- Congregational Care Committee
- Mission & Outreach Committee

A total of 18 Deacons are nominated in classes of 6. A class serves for three years. Each year, one third of the Deacons retire and are replaced by the next class of members elected from the congregation. This provides stability and continuity for the congregation. Each Deacon will be assigned a Caring Contact, a member who is homebound.

Meetings are held the first Tuesday of the month.

Congregation Care Committee

Caring for the needs of the congregation, specifically for those who need help in coping with illness, injury, death and other personal crises. It also acknowledges celebratory occasions such as birth, baptism, graduations, weddings, etc.

All members of the congregation are considered members of this committee in that we are called to recognize ways in which we can show God's love and provide care. Members can individually respond to a concern as well as notify the Chair so the committee can organize care and avoid duplication.

- Organize prayer chain and disseminate appropriate information and prayer requests.
- Flower delivery after Sunday services.
- Recruit congregational members to write cards and/or make phone calls to acknowledge someone's pain/joy, and to support and encouragement of those in need.
- Send a "thinking of you" card on the one year anniversary of a loved ones death.
- Recruit congregational members for hospital, assisted living and home visits.
- Provide light household task help or help with child care when the primary care giver is injured or hospitalized.
- Organize and provide rides to church for those unable to drive.
- Organize and recruit volunteers to make Prayer Squares for Prayer Square Ministry.
- Organize and recruit volunteers to make meals for new moms, injured, severely ill or others in need of Meal Train Ministry.
- Organize, recruit and train volunteers for Stephen Ministry.
- Organize, recruit and train volunteers for Grace Ministry.

Mission & Outreach Committee

We strive to be missional in all that we do. The Mission & Outreach Committee seeks to discover the mission needs and opportunities within God's community and to facilitate involvement of members and friends to promote God's love through service. This committee provides support, funding and volunteer time to many worthy causes and seeks to get to know our mission partners and together work to fulfill their goals.

- Inform, excite and involve the congregation about mission
- Update congregation monthly through Minute for Mission on needs and new opportunities for participation.
- Recommends the mission budget for the church
- Decides on mission funding allocation for organizations.
- Encourage congregational financial support
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- Researches and decides on which projects and partners will be the focus of our time and volunteer hours
- Promotes and facilitates denominationally supported mission activity such as One Great Hour of Sharing, school kits, clean up buckets, etc.
- Recruit volunteers to help staff mission project needs
- Management of volunteer base for local mission activities
- Host a Rally Sunday in September for the purpose of informing congregation, engaging volunteers and promoting opportunity to show God's love in our community.
- Organize, promote and facilitate participation in Mission Trip opportunities either through our church or in cooperation with other churches.