



The Westminster Standard

NEWSLETTER OF WESTMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF HATTIESBURG, MS

115 N. 25th Ave. • Hattiesburg, MS 39401 • (601) 584-7574

From the Pastor's Desk...

November is a great month to give thanks. "O give thanks to the Lord, for He is good. His steadfast love endures forever!" (Ps. 118:1). My goal is to be like the Psalmist who said, "I give you thanks, O Lord, with my whole heart" (Ps. 138:1). This means remembering and reflecting on Who God is and What God has done to rescue, grow, and bless us. Westminster knows first hand what it means to be rescued. We are growing spiritually, and we are a blessed community. We have wonderful people, a great facility, a dedicated staff, a wonderful Savior, and a clear purpose. All these things, working together, give us a bright future. Please don't take these blessings for granted. This is a wonderful season of renewal and growth for Westminster, so we need to give thanks and, as my father used to say, "Make hay while the sun is shining." The Son is shining on us. He is blessing us so we can bless others and draw them to love and follow Him. I encourage you to make a list and read it in your prayer time. In addition to your prayers of intercession, say, "Lord, I am very thankful for _____, and _____ and _____." Ellen and I are very thankful to be your partners in ministry. You have opened your hearts and homes to us. You have prayed for us and made us feel loved and valued and a part of your lives. That's how it's supposed to work, and we are grateful. Finally, in this season of thanksgiving, let us express our thanks through faithful stewardship. God is asking us to step up our support for various ministries, and I encourage you to embrace this opportunity as, together, we continue to Trust God, Love All People, and Carry Christ into the World.

Blessings,

Steve



Stewardship

A couple of months ago 100 students from Nepal were sleeping on the floor. We helped buy and deliver beds and mattresses. One of them asked, "How does the church get its money?" When he was told that we are funded 100% by gifts, his eyes grew wide. "How many members do you have?" He assumed we must have 500 members. He was stunned to learn that 220 members support a budget of \$500,000 on a voluntary basis. It is stunning, and impressive, and very important! Westminster is a very generous congregation, and God has blessed our generosity with health, strength, growth, and opportunities to show the world that God is love. We must not take this lightly.

On November 6 we will meet and discuss the Goal Budget for 2017. This allows us to see the needs and priorities for the coming year. Pretty amazing. On November 13 we will dedicate our pledges and financial commitments for the coming year. This year is particularly important as we celebrate the retirement of our pastor, receive an experienced interim, and prepare to call a new pastor to provide vision, leadership, and energy. Please pray about what God is asking you to do to keep the work and witness of Westminster vibrant and effective. If you haven't tried tithing, this may be the year you grow exponentially in your faith.

ECUMENICAL THANKSGIVING SERVICE

This year Main Street United Methodist Church is hosting the annual Ecumenical Community Thanksgiving Service. It will be Sunday evening, November 20, at 6 pm. This service celebrates our unity in Hattiesburg and supports the Breadbasket ministry. This year Steve Ramp will be preaching. Please plan to attend.

A WORD FROM THE DIRECTOR OF DISCIPLESHIP

Many thanks to the Men of the Church and the Deacons for making our annual Trunk or Treat evening at WPC a great success! I would also like to extend a big thank you to Jeff and Judy Haydel for opening their home to the children, youth, and older adults for WPC's first Intergenerational Cookout and Bonfire. Both of these events were very well attended and everyone had a great time together!



As we enter into November, the regular Wednesday evening programming will be winding down so that we can gear up for the Advent season. Please join us Wednesday night, November 2, at 5:30 p.m. in Montague Hall for dinner which will be followed by our regularly scheduled children's and youth activities. Our adults will gather in the sanctuary with Steve and the men from Liberty Ministries for a Vespers service. November 9 will be our last scheduled Wednesday evening dinner and fellowship for 2016. Tom Sikes will be wrapping up his Jonah study in the parlor, and Tommy Suttle will close out his James study in the sanctuary.

NEW BEGINNINGS

New Beginnings is the name of our Older Adult Ministry at Westminster. On the third Monday of each month (November 21 this month), this group gathers in Montague Hall at noon for a hearty lunch and a program. Everyone is invited to attend.

Make sure to mark your calendar for the following dates:

November 6: At 9:30 a.m. in Montague Hall, in lieu of Sunday school for the adults, there will be a Congregational Meeting for a presentation of the challenge budget for 2017.

November 20: Immediately following the 10:30 worship service, please join us in Montague Hall for our annual Dinner of Thanksgiving hosted by the Diaconate.

OUR 4-YEAR CAPITAL CAMPAIGN ENDS THIS DECEMBER

In September 2013, while we were at Parkway Heights, we started a capital campaign to pay for the expansion of our building that was struck by a tornado. You recall we were contemplating changes to our facility before the disaster. Then we got serious and developed a plan to rebuild and expand. We received \$2.9 million from insurance and pledges totaling \$1.3 million. That was amazing, considering our size. This fall people will complete their pledges and the capital campaign will conclude.

The great news is that we spent just over \$5 million to recover. Thanks to our contractor, Butch Nobles, and sound fiscal management, we have retired all but \$200,000 of the cost and debt. God has blessed us mightily on this journey, and we are exceedingly glad. Please finish your pledge in 2016 so we can close this challenging chapter in strength!

FROM THE CLERK OF THE SESSION

October's meeting was a quick one but the Session still handled a number of key issues that everyone should know about. The Administrative Leadership Committee has put together a solid goal budget for 2017. We are excited to present it to you and hope you will support us in helping to fund it completely. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to reach out to Althea Jerome, Robin Roberts, or Gene Owens who serve on this committee.

Following up on last month's news that the Session had created a committee to seek an Interim Pastor, Westminster has hired an Interim Pastor to start January 1, 2017. Mike Anderson is a professional interim minister with extensive experience. Mike and his wife, Monnie, will be moving to Hattiesburg in the near future, and he is currently wrapping up a successful interim'ship with First Presbyterian of Tuscaloosa. The Session feels strongly that he will lead our congregation well while the PNC continues and completes its search for our next installed pastor



HOW TO AVOID TAXES ON IRA WITHDRAWALS

Starting at age 70 ½, the IRS requires you to start withdrawing money from your traditional IRA. You will pay taxes on the withdrawal or face a huge (50%) penalty. One "loophole" allows you to avoid the tax: money directly transferred from your IRA to a qualified charity is not taxable income. This counts as part of your Required Minimum Distribution, BUT does not count as income!

Example: Suppose you are required by law to withdraw \$20,000 from your IRA: you can direct your IRA administrator to send \$10,000 to Westminster as a charitable contribution. You will pay income tax on \$10,000. This could keep you in a lower tax bracket and will benefit the church! Don't withdraw the money and donate it yourself. It must flow directly from the IRA to the church. It's a good deal.



PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN

By Althea Jerome

Presbyterian Women of the Presbytery of Mississippi has a new logo. Designed by Rev. Dr. Lynn Miller and stitched by Myra Cook of Jackson, the new logo was displayed at the cluster meeting in September, and again at the Pine Belt Quilter’s quilt show early in October. The image reminds us of the many hands at work in our churches, and the fact that each of us brings different and important gifts as we serve our Lord.

With the beginning of this new calendar year in PW, our own Martha Ann Hogrefe was appointed as the Mississippi representative of Mission Haven. Founded in 1951 and supported by PW groups in six southern states, Mission Haven provides a home away from home for missionaries of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) working in one of many countries around the world. Located adjacent to Columbia Theological Seminary in Decatur, Georgia it provides short-term lodging for missionaries on furlough, those studying in the area, or those who are in transition after retirement or the end of their term. Westminster’s PW has supported Mission Haven as a budgeted benevolence for many years. We are pleased that one of our own will serve as a member of the Board of Trustees. We look forward to the report she will make following her participation in the October board meeting.

YOUTH IN NOVEMBER

- 5 PARKING LOT FUNDRAISER • 11:30 A.M.**
- 6 YOUTH 5:00-6:30 P.M.**
- 13 YOUTH & GRADES 3-5 ACTIVITY TBA**
- 20 NO ACTIVITIES—COMMUNITY THANKSGIVING SERVICE**
- 25 PARKING LOT FUNDRAISER TBA**
- 27 NO ACTIVITIES—COMMUNITY THANKSGIVING SERVICE**

A big "Hee Haw" to Jeff and Judy Haydel and Tommy Suttle for a good time at the Cookout and Bonfire on Sunday, October 23, at the Haydel "ranch." The New Beginnings Class and children ages PreK-Youth enjoyed an evening of food, fun, sports, conversation, and a hayride.

MUSIC NOTES FROM CONNIE



The Choir is busy as always, preparing for some special services. November 20 we will join with singers from other choirs to provide service music for the annual Interfaith Thanksgiving Service at Main St United Methodist Church.

Then on December 4 we will sing our Christmas offering in the worship service. It's a set of three French carols (in English, never fear), in a very nice setting. It's not as long as our Christmas music usually is, because the next week we will be celebrating Steve's years of service and love to our congregation. For that afternoon celebration we'll sing the same anthem we sang at his installation. It's a beautiful piece by Ralph Vaughan-Williams entitled "The Call" and it is sure to please!

If you sang The Call with us before and want to come back just for the December 11 service, you are welcome to join us. As a matter of fact, if you just want to come sing the Christmas music you are welcome to join us at rehearsal for the next few weeks. It's not very difficult and will be fun to sing. If you don't have time to commit to the choir all year, just come get in the Christmas spirit with us for the next little while. No pressure. This group is such a fun bunch, it'll lift your spirits for sure.

WE INVITE YOU TO JOIN US
AS WE HONOR

The Reverend Dr. Steve Ramp

UPON THE OCCASION
OF HIS RETIREMENT AS
PASTOR OF WESTMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

INFORMAL PROGRAM IN THE SANCTUARY
SUNDAY, DECEMBER 11, 2016
3:00 P.M.

*With reception to follow
in Montague Hall.*

PLEASE SHARE THIS INVITATION WITH FRIENDS AND
COLLEAGUES IN YOUR CHURCH, AGENCY, OR
ORGANIZATION SO THAT THEY MAY

HELP US CELEBRATE
STEVE'S 15 YEARS
OF LOVE, LAUGHTER, AND SERVICE
TO THIS CONGREGATION AND TO OUR COMMUNITY!

WESTMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
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Kudos to our mission team's amazing efforts in Crosby, LA, in the wake of the devastating flooding that swept that area.



NOVEMBER

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1 9:30 AM PW Coordinating Team 12:00 PM Brown Bag Bible Study	2 5:30 PM Wednesday Night Supper Vespers following dinner in Sanctuary Circle 3 in Seekers Classroom 7:00 PM Chancel Choir rehearsal	3 6:30 AM Men of the Church Weekly Breakfast, Shoney's 12:00 PM ShareCare	4 6:30 AM Men of the Church Weekly Breakfast, Shoney's 12:00 PM ShareCare	5 11:30 AM YOUTH PARKING LOT FUNDRAISER
6 Communion Sunday 9:30 AM Congregational Meeting in Sanctuary 10:30 AM Worship Service 5:00 PM Youth	7	8 9:30 AM Circle 1 12:00 PM Brown Bag Bible Study 7:00 PM Circle 2	9 5:30 PM Wednesday Night Supper 7:00 PM Chancel Choir rehearsal	10 6:30 AM Men of the Church Weekly Breakfast, Shoney's	11 6:30 AM Men of the Church Weekly Breakfast, Shoney's	12 8:00 AM Men of the Church Breakfast
13 9:30 AM Sunday School 10:30 AM Worship Service 11:30 Diaconate 12:30 Session Youth & Grades 3-5 Activity TBA	14	15 9:30 AM Circle 1 12:00 PM Brown Bag Bible Study 7:00 PM Circle 2 @ Martha Davis' home	16 NO WEDNESDAY NIGHT SUPPERS UNTIL JANUARY 7:00 PM Chancel Choir rehearsal	17 6:30 AM Men of the Church Weekly Breakfast, Shoney's	18	19
20 9:30 AM Sunday School 10:30 AM Worship 11:30 AM Thanksgiving Luncheon 6:00 PM Ecumenical Service at Parkway	21 12:00 PM New Beginnings	22 12:00 PM Brown Bag Bible Study	23 CHURCH OFFICE CLOSES AT NOON	24 OFFICE CLOSED THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY	25 NEWSLETTER SUBMISSION DEADLINE	26 YOUTH PARKING LOT FUNDRAISER TIME TBA
27 9:30 AM Sunday School 10:30 AM Worship Service (Advent-Hope) 5:00 PM Grades 3-5 & Youth Activity TBA DEADLINE FOR BOSWELL GIFTS	28	29 12:00 PM Brown Bag Bible Study	30 7:00 PM Chancel Choir	BREAD BASKET WEEK		

NOVEMBER BIRTHDAYS

2 SARAH NOBLES

2 ELISA SUTTLE

3 ROB & PARK HOLLAND

4 SANDY NICHOLAS

6 BAILEY KATE MCDANIEL

9 CAROLYN BEDENBAUGH

10 MICHAEL GINN

12 BOB BUCKNER

16 CHAZZ SCHERTZER

17 MARY CROMARTIE

17 LONDON SCHERTZER

17 MARGARET SUTTLE

18 LINDA MCLAIN

19 KATHRYN CUMMINGS

19 CHRIS MAUL

20 JEANNE HERRING

20 MARGARET ROSE SHAW

25 ELIZABETH SUTTLE