

This Week at Westminster

March 8, 2020

Lord, Teach us to Pray: A Worship Series for Lent

Do you ever wonder how to pray? What constitutes a “good prayer”? Is there such a thing? Even the disciples wondered how to pray. They asked Jesus to teach them, and he taught them one special prayer, a prayer that has been prayed by the church for centuries. Throughout Lent we will be considering the Lord’s Prayer in worship: Why is this prayer so important? What’s up with the different versions? Why do Presbyterians say “debts/debtors” and Roman Catholics say “trespasses”? How can this prayer ground and deepen our practice of prayer throughout Lent?

Join us as we study and pray the Lord’s Prayer during this holy season.
Scripture: Matthew 6:8-13, Luke 11:1-4

March 8: LIFT Sunday - “Forgiveness”

March 15: Guest Preacher, Rev. Cari Pattison

“Give us today our daily bread.”

March 22: “Words Matter”

“And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.”

March 29: “Mercy!”

“Save us from the time of trial, and deliver us from the evil one.”

April 5: Palm Sunday

“For yours is the kingdoms, glory and power forever, amen.”

About our Guest Preacher on March 15 We Welcome the Rev. Cari Pattison

The Reverend Cari Pattison is a native of Kansas City and an ordained Presbyterian minister. Most recently she served as Associate Pastor at The Reformed Church of Bronxville in Westchester County, NY. After 12 years there she left to thru-hike the Appalachian Trail, trekking over 1200 miles before injury took her off. A long-time visitor and fan of the Hudson Valley, Cari has gratefully moved to the area, where she serves as clergy in residence at the Holy Cross Monastery in West Park, NY. In addition to her writing and work at the monastery, she teaches yoga in Poughkeepsie and works at an outdoor outfitter in New Paltz.

Greater Hartford Interfaith Action Alliance Updates

There has been a lot of talk about GHIAA over the past year! You might have shared in the excitement as Westminster officially became one of 35 founding organizations for this grassroots social justice community organizing group this past October. If you weren't able to join us, or you were but are looking for some updates, here is some information about two of the current campaigns:

- GHIAA has been working with the CT legislature toward a **clean slate** bill, which would empower Connecticut to expunge qualifying criminal records for people who remain crime-free for 3 years for most misdemeanors and 5 years for low-level felonies. Data shows that this would be beneficial to our economy, would help lower the poverty rate over time, and would contribute to creating a safer society by allowing people who were formerly incarcerated the second chance they've earned at accessing legal ways of supporting themselves and their families.
- GHIAA has also been working toward repealing the state's **welfare lien** system, which treats welfare as a loan by requiring recipients to pay back the financial assistance they've received. In 1973, when over 30 states had this system in place, a study concluded that the policy was archaic, prompting the Nixon administration to recommend that "Congress should prohibit all recovery in the federally funded cash assistance programs; the states also should repeal the requirement in General Assistance." Now, almost 50 years later, all but 2 states - NY and CT - have shifted away from this practice.

Interested in taking action? Look for these upcoming opportunities to participate in ways that are simple, free, have a high impact, and require very little investment of time:

- Look for a postcard at coffee hour that you can simply sign to show your support for clean slate legislation (GHIAA will mail them).
- Keep an ear out for an opportunity at church to participate in a letter-writing campaign in support of both the clean slate and welfare lien campaigns.
- **Commit to attending a public action event in support of the clean slate and welfare lien campaigns on Thursday, March 12 from 6:30-8:30pm at Union Baptist Church in Hartford.** GHIAA is working to get key representatives and senators in the room to lay out our position and the case for legislation and ask for their public support. A public action like this one is an important part of our campaign strategy and gives a visible show of power, so the more people who can attend, the more power we have to make change happen! Please speak to a Core Team member to sign up!

GHIAA Core Team members: Nicole Aronson, Peter Benner, Tom Buckley, Julie Emery, Cindy Kozak Buckley, Heather McBride, Nancy Souza.

Lent Devotional – A New Way!

The season of Lent is a time when many of us try to draw closer to God. Establishing a spiritual practice of meditating or praying each day can be one way to do this.

We're offering you the opportunity to start a prayer and meditation practice that might be a bit different than what you've experienced before. Praying in Color is self-described as "a new way to pray". This year this movement is offering several different templates, each with 46 small sections. You are invited to doodle in or color one section each day as you spend some time with God.

These templates, as well as some suggestions for how they can be used, are available at the back of the Sanctuary and in the church office. We invite you to take one (or more!) and challenge yourself to try a new faith practice this Lent.

Stewardship Update: Have You Pledged Yet?

We hope that if you are still discerning your pledge you will reflect on God's generous love and how you can reflect this generosity in a pledge to Westminster. To date, we have received pledges from 75 households for a total of \$282,452, which is a great response, but still below our goal of \$300,000. In addition, we are asking for members to also consider paying their portion of the per capita charge that every Presbyterian church has to pay on an annual basis. The per capita charge is \$50.05 per person. Any questions, please contact Cyndi Brown at scbrown11@mac.com.

Credit Card Giving

As we continue to improve the ease of giving to Westminster, please keep in mind that you can give through two automated platforms, the "Donation" button on our website (www.westpresby.org) and the GivePlus app. Also note that when giving via credit card you will be given the option to offset the credit card fee of 2.75% that the church is charged. Thank you for considering this option and your continued support of Westminster Presbyterian Church.

Equal Justice Initiative 2020 Calendar

Pick up a free copy of the Equal Justice Initiative 2020 Calendar: A History of Racial Injustice". The calendar is one of the tools used to "tell the truth about our history of racial injustice" before addressing its legacy. Free copies can be found on the front desk in the church office. If you have any questions, please contact Diane Smith at smithdiane2009@gmail.com.

Highlights of Our 2020 Annual Meeting

The Annual Meeting of the Congregation and Corporation of Westminster Presbyterian Church was held on Sunday, February 23, 2020 after the 10:00 a.m. worship service. We shared potluck lunch in the Fellowship Hall before the meeting. Rev. Julie presented an overview of a few of the major actions and activities we accomplished in 2019: helped to found the Greater Hartford Interfaith Action Alliance; became a “More Light Congregation”; and continued extending and affirming our commitment to welcome and inclusivity of many different community groups.

Each Elder chairing a leadership team presented some team highlights for 2019. A more complete summary of highlights can be found in the 2019 Annual Report, which can be found at the rear of the sanctuary or through a call to the church office.

Engage (Barbara Riihimaki): new logo; one new small group and 14 continuing small groups; pledged income surpassed pledged target amount; two new member classes; and increased visibility in the community.

Serve (Tom Buckley and Len Oshinskic): Puerto Rico mission trip; served meals in 2 Hartford soup kitchens; began our faith-based organizing through Westminster’s Core Team; and worked with Habitat for Humanity Hartford.

Care (Nicole Aronson): created Care Visitor Team; formalized our prayer ministry; and supported families in need through various acts based on their needs.

Flourish (Nicole Aronson and Heather McBride): continued our innovative and relational LIFT program; youth programming through CHAOS and town-wide WeHa Youth Group and regular mission opportunities; accepted five confirmands into membership; supporting our children in developing practices of faith.

Worship (Jenna Sheridan and Avery MacKellar-Noguiera): creatively utilizing our worship space; established team-based Usher/Greeter schedule; shared diverse music and congregational singing; and welcomed six guest preachers.

Sustain (Myles Altimus, David Hall and Anne Carney): cared for our building and grounds; annual staff reviews; audit our financial records and processes for 2014-2018; and re-established an Endowment Team.

Other highlights: We voted to approve updates to our bylaws, received the annual budget for 2020; approved the pastor’s terms of call which included a 2% cost of living raise; and recognized members who passed into the Church Triumphant: Mary Virginia Dumont, Shirley Taylor, Elaine Tilton and Kay Yale.

Save the date! – Sunday, April 26 Annual Chili Cook Off!



On Sunday, April 26, immediately following the service, we will be holding our annual cook off.

Do you love chili or are you more of a macaroni and cheese person? Would you like to support the CHAOS youth on this year's mission trip? We have the perfect opportunity for you – whether you like to cook, eat or socialize! The Westminster youth will be hosting and helping to run “Macaroni and Cheese takes on Chili!” but we need your help. Could you do any of the following?

- Cook chili
- Make macaroni and cheese
- Bake cornbread
- Prepare some salads
- Or just eat and judge!

If you would be able to cook or prepare any of these items please speak to the CHAOS youth after the service. They will be armed with clipboards and ready to sign you up! You may also contact Nancy Souza at 860-232-5639 or nancys5639@sbcglobal.net. If you can eat and judge, simply join us immediately following the service on Sunday, April 26.

Gathered Westminster 20's & 30's



Calling all Westminster 20's and 30's! Please join us on the 3rd Sunday of the month for Gathered. We will meet together for community and conversation from 11:15am - 12:45pm in the SMART room. Join us on Sunday, March 15 to dive into faith formation during times of transition in young adulthood. Feel free to bring a snack to share. Any questions, please contact Jenna Sheridan at jenna.sheridan@live.com or Callie Boone at callieboone93@gmail.com.

West Hartford Police Increase Presence at Houses of Worship

You may have noticed a police car parked in our parking lot on Sunday morning. West Hartford Police Department has increased security at all local houses of worship in our community. Westminster was visited by local law enforcement who explained their plan to have officers park in our lot when on duty and using downtime on their patrol to make calls or do paperwork, park in our lot during our worship service and do occasional inspections of our grounds in the evenings. We are blessed that Westminster is located in a town that has the resources to provide this additional security and are grateful to the members of law enforcement who put themselves at risk to protect us.

Prayers for Westminster Family and Friends

Prayer concerns are also available through our weekly e-mail. If you'd like to receive Westminster's weekly e-mail and other updates, or have prayer concerns you'd like to have shared, please contact Becky Kimberly at the church office at 860-521-6240 or e-mail office@westpresby.org or Nicole Aronson at nmachampagne@yahoo.com.

We pray for...

- George Dewey who will have leg surgery on Tuesday;
- Heather McBride's mother Diane who is recovering from surgery;
- John Larew who is recovering from surgery;
- Karen Wagner's cousin Diane who is having ongoing health issues;
- Janet Wade-Utay's brother George who is recovering from surgery;
- For those who are struggling with chronic illnesses;
- All those who struggle with mental health issues and depression;
- Those who are caring for aging loved ones;
- Communities affected by violence here at home and abroad.

We grieve with...

- Friends and families of those in recent months who mourn the death of loved ones.

We continue to pray for...

Bob Gillis; Diane Smith; Tony, Armand Johnson's brother; El and Elsie Harp's daughter Susan; Efren Rivera and his wife Athenit Vila; George and Nancy Dewey's daughter Beth; Janet Wade-Utay's sister Katheryn Atkin; Mike McElroy's partner Jane; El Harp; Jen Buffat; Susie Scoville's brother John; Muriel Sherman; Peter Benner's infant grand-niece Henley; Ron Buchanan; Dan Souza's mother Mariann; Rachel Lloyd's Aunt Katie; Ellie Brown, friend of the Hammonds; Anne Carney's cousin DeAnn; Roz Montgomery's family friend Jeff; Roz Montgomery; Marissa Torsiello; Jason Emery; Sara DeGraff's sister; Len Oshinskie's brother-in-law Greg; Russ Cormier's mother Jen; and Ann Osoba's mother Mary Jo.

THE CHANCEL FLOWERS ARE GIVEN TO THE GLORY OF GOD IN HONOR OF
MY MOTHER, SALLY WEST, ON HER 85TH BIRTHDAY BY JOLEE WEST.

Are You Smiling Yet?

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Did you know that if you purchase something from Amazon.com you can do so in a way that can benefit Westminster Presbyterian Church? If you make your purchases through www.smile.amazon.com, Amazon will donate 0.5% of the purchase price to the charity of your choice. There is no additional cost to you. Just by making your purchases through AmazonSmile you can help support the ministries of Westminster. On your first visit to AmazonSmile you need to select a charitable organization (Westminster Presbyterian Church, West Hartford, CT) to receive donations from eligible purchases. Amazon will remember your selection, and then every eligible purchase you make at smile.amazon.com will result in a donation. Any questions about AmazonSmile, contact Becky Kimberly in the church office at office@westpresby.org or 860-521-6240.



Chancel Flowers Donors Needed March 29 and April 19 & 26 Available

We have many open dates this winter and spring for donors to purchase flowers to decorate the chancel or Fellowship Hall during worship. They include Sundays March 29 and April 9 & 26 After the flowers are enjoyed during the service they are broken up into bouquets that are delivered to "shut in" members, those experiencing an illness, grief, celebration or in thanks. Our flower ministry is a powerful sign of the care we have for our members, and bouquets are always gratefully received. Please see the sign up form on the Care Bulletin Board or contact Nicole Aronson at nmachampagne@yahoo.com.

This Week's Church Activities

Sun.	Mar. 8	10:00 am	LIFT SUNDAY	
		12:15 pm	Movie: <i>Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dream Coat</i>	Fellowship Hall
Weds.	Mar. 11	11:00 am	Staff Meeting	Library
Thurs.	Mar. 12	6:00 pm	Handbell Choir Rehearsal	Handbell Room
		7:00 pm	Chancel Choir Rehearsal	Choir Room
Sun.	Mar. 15	9:00 am	Chancel Choir Rehearsal	Sanctuary
		9:00 am	Westminster Salon	Covenant Room
		10:00 am	Worship Service	Sanctuary
		11:15 am	Gathered: 20s & 30s	Smart Room
		1:00 pm	Director of Music Search Team	Smart Room

Westminster Presbyterian Church Vision & Mission Statements

Westminster is a vital, engaging, inclusive family of faith that serves God by: supporting each other on our spiritual journeys, sharing the gifts we have been given, and demonstrating the love and justice of Christ in our community and world.

Westminster offers living proof of a loving God.

Westminster Presbyterian Church Staff

The Rev. Julie Emery, Pastor/Head of Staff
Barbara Riihimaki, Interim Director of Music
Karen Hammond, Director of Faith Formation
Becky Kimberly, Church Administrator

Mike McElroy, Church Sexton
Paul D. Sigler, Church Sexton Assistant
Wanda Bender, Security Coordinator
Jeannine Stimson, Bookkeeper

Leadership of Westminster Presbyterian Church

Flourish

Nicole Aronson, Elder
Heather McBride, Elder

Worship

Avery MacKellar–Nogueira, Elder
Jenna Sheridan, Elder

Engage

Barbara Riihimaki, Elder

Sustain

Myles Altimus, Elder
Anne Carney, Clerk
David Hall, Elder

Care

Ashley Aronson, Deacon
Nicole Aronson, Elder
JoAnne Berry, Deacon
Marcia DeBolt, Deacon
Ma'Lynn Feingold, Deacon
Jean Summers, Deacon

Serve

Adam Bender, Deacon
Tom Buckley, Elder
Helena Offei, Deacon
Michael Seltzer, Deacon
Nancy Souza, Deacon
Nathan Souza, Deacon

