

STEWARDSHIP 2024



Working Toward the Harvest

Dear Friends,

In 2023, Westminster Presbyterian Church emerged out of the pandemic to:

- a balanced budget,
- decreased reliance on reserves,
- first steps toward new initiatives.

It is this last one that is particularly good news. This year your elders, deacons, team leaders and staff have been working hard to position Westminster for the very best kind of future. We will begin this narrative with a “Look at the Past”, and while this list is not exhaustive, as I reflect on the collective total of Westminster’s life, I am blown away by the ways the Spirit is moving you—the members and friends—to action that is energetic and visionary. That does not mean that there were not challenges to work through or hard conversations to be had because we did that too, but it does mean that the congregation as a whole is leaning into its calling as a faith community. It is a joy to walk alongside you during this season of budding growth.

The stewardship campaign has asked you to consider prayerfully your support of Westminster for 2024. Please take some time to review the materials in this packet, including my “A Look at our Future” letter. Your pledge for 2024 is crucial for the ministry and work of Westminster.

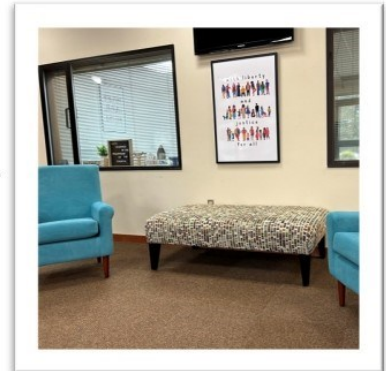
In harvest and in hope,

Pastor Kelly



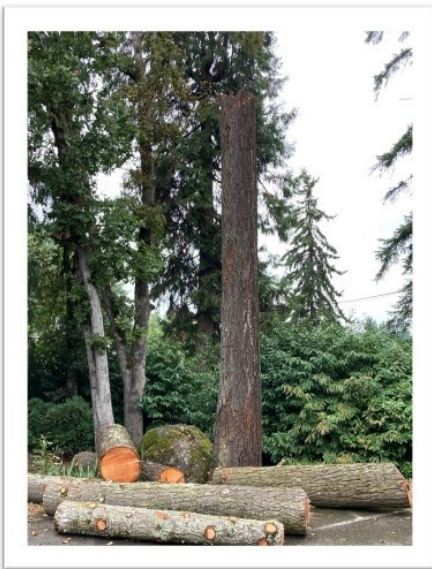
A Look Back

Our newly formed Events Committee has been hard at work exploring options to utilize our facilities in ways that will help cover on-going maintenance and repair costs as well as introducing Westminster Presbyterian Church to more people in our community. Our Outreach Committee turned the narthex into an inviting and welcoming space.



Vik has filled the position of Director of Community Organizing (in addition to her Youth Director role). Our church has taken on new partnerships with Salem For Refugees utilizing Winola House for interim housing and the YMCA renting our Scout Lodge for summer camps. In addition, we are now licensed to allow our facilities to be used as a childcare center.

We have made investments towards the maintenance and preservation of our church buildings. These have included the oiling of the beautiful wood paneling in our sanctuary and narthex, the major repairs needed to keep our heating and air conditioning systems working, and work at Winola House to make it comfortable for the refugee families that stay there. Finally, our beautiful park-like grounds continue to require regular maintenance and cleanup. A special thank you to our incredible Building and Grounds Committee for all the work they have done this year.



We have invested in new software tools for use by our office staff and committees that assist in scheduling facility use and volunteers and also help with record-keeping and document organization. Our soon-to-be-published photo directory is one example of how these new tools have been put to work.

Cost of Living raises were given to our hard-working staff.



A Look at our Continuing Mission & Ministry

Worship and Music

This year we did what some thought impossible! We seamlessly combined the traditional and contemporary services into a single blended 10:00 am worship hour complete with music from our Chancel Choir, our Hand Bell Choir, and our Contemporary Worship Team. Pastor Kelly continues to lead our worship experience with messages that encourage, inspire and challenge us as we strive to make scripture and faith relevant in today's world. Each Sunday we take time during the worship service to pray for and celebrate with each other, and we look forward to the first Sunday of each month when we celebrate Communion together. This summer we held worship services in Boulder Hall



while we waited for the air to clear in the sanctuary after the oiling of the wood paneling. Thanks to Faith Rockenstein for leading us in an intergenerational art project during one of our Boulder Hall worship services and to our audio/visual team for making this all possible. During the Advent season we look forward to Christmas programs including our choir's Christmas Cantata.

We are blessed to have a wonderful staff and a dedicated group of volunteers (worship committee, ushers, greeters, coffee hour crew) that work together to make worship at Westminster a central part of our church family life both for those that attend services in-person and those that attend on-line.



Next Generation

It is stating the obvious when we recognize that it is our children that are the future of Westminster. Sunday School is provided for our preschool and elementary age children during the school year along with special activities such as the annual Easter Egg Hunt and all-ages Advent Craft event. During the summer we host Vacation Bible Camp



that is attended by not only children from our church family but also other kids from our Salem community. Each year we take time during a worship service to present Bibles to our third graders and we look forward to the Sundays when our children's chime choir provides special music. Our Middle School Youth group meets weekly during the school year, and this past summer were able to enjoy a full week of City Camp including a sleep over at

the church and service projects. This year there were 26 middle schoolers both from Westminster and from three other churches at City Camp. Our High School



youth also meet weekly during the school year and this summer 11 of them spent 12 days in Puerto Rico cleaning up after hurricane Maria (our third trip to the island in the past 5 years). This year our youth group has joined the Salem



Youth Collective of seven mainline churches that meets monthly. Thanks to Vik (our youth director) and a host of adult volunteers that make all these programs and activities possible.

Congregational Vitality

There are a number of adult and intergenerational programs and activities that encourage us to connect with and support each other. These include adult education opportunities such as Bible studies, serving together on a variety of committees, working together to keep our grounds and buildings clean and well maintained, special events like our annual Westminster Festival of Fine Art, and numerous fellowship opportunities including Sunday morning coffee hour, the Spaghetti Youth Dinner, Swedish Pancake breakfast, and our first Country Hoedown coming up in November. Small groups like Women's Night



Out and Men's Night Out meet for discussion and fellowship, and we are always looking for new ways to connect like Michelle Hare did when she organized a Westminster bowling party. We also encourage intergenerational activities such as our annual



church picnic in July and the family barbecue at the end of the summer. Last year during Advent we held our first annual Christmas Journeys moving outdoors pageant where we celebrated the Christmas story complete with music, costumes, dancing, and a rideable



artificial donkey. A healthy church family also means that we support and care for each other through prayer and the dedicated work done by our deacons and Stephen Ministers.

Service (Mission/Outreach)

Westminster continues to make sharing our blessings and service to others a priority. A portion of our general fund budget is used to support local organizations including Table of Plenty, Meals on Wheels, Northwest Human Services, Salem Pastoral Counseling, Arches Program, Family Promise (formerly Interfaith Hospitality), Presbyterians for Earth Care, and Salem Peace Lecture. Outside of our community we support national and international organizations through our Partnership Giving



contributions.

Many of you make generous

contributions to

our annual special offerings (One Great Hour of Sharing, Peace and Global Witness, and Christmas Joy). We keep donation barrels for food (Table of Plenty) and clothing (Helping Hands) in our narthex, and at the beginning of each school year we donate backpacks filled with school supplies. We also donate the use of our facilities for quarterly Red Cross Blood Drives and meetings of mission-aligned community groups. And finally, many of our church family members volunteer at a number of different community organizations including Table of Plenty and Salem for

Refugees, and of course our youth make mission trips a central part of their activities. Thank you for your generous support of our mission to serve and care for others.



A Look at our Future



Dear friends,

2024 is gearing up to be a Year of Members & Friends. The 2024 budget is designed to support the initiatives that are emerging from the congregation itself, out of the hearts and creativity of people like you, and it includes:

- The *Events @ Westminster* initiative;
- Re-envisioned infant program;
- Outreach and nurture of new members;
- A second choral cantata and Palm Sunday community concert;
- Strategic planning including the Boulder Hall loan;
- Investments into outreach, pastoral care, and building operations;
- City-wide projects w/ ELCA, UCC, Methodist, Episcopalian and Presbyterian partners.

On November 19, 2023, you are invited to attend an Open Forum with the Elders: A look at the 2024 budget.

Thank you for your tireless dedication to the church, to one another, and to the work of God in this place.

In harvest and in hope,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Kellyn', is written over a light background.

Pastor Kelly



Prayerfully consider taking the Step Up Challenge to help us meet our financial goals

