

WESTMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

3208 Exposition Boulevard

Austin, TX 78703

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www.wpcaustin.org

Connections @ Westminster

March 7 – 21, 2010

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Weekly Word

Dear Fellow Followers of the Way:

This past Sunday night the world watched as the XXI Winter Olympic Games came to a close in Vancouver, Canada. I love the Olympic Games both summer and winter. Athletes come together from around the world to compete at the highest level. Yes, they all have dreams of walking away with Olympic gold, but as the Olympic creed states,

“The most important thing in the Olympic Games is not to win but to take part, just as the most important thing in life is not the triumph but the struggle. The essential thing is not to have conquered but to have fought well.”

The Games are about taking part, about giving your best effort, about following your passion and your dreams. This was most clearly seen Sunday night as the U.S Hockey Goaltender Ryan Miller who, hours after earning the silver medal, was a part of the closing ceremonies. He had engaged in the struggle and had fought well.

The opening ceremonies feature a parade of nations as athletes of each competing country enter in alphabetical order following the athletes representing Greece where the games were founded. At the closing ceremonies however, the athletes come in as one body following all of the flag bearers. This blending of the athletes during the closing ceremony was first observed in the 1956 Olympics when a schoolboy from Melbourne, Australia thought it would be a way to bring the athletes of the world together as one nation.

We too are called to engage in the struggle and to also be a part of one body. Our spiritual paths are often bumpy and rugged. There are unexpected twists and turns but the important thing is the journey. All the obstacles we encounter shape us and we grow stronger as we continue to struggle.

We do not struggle alone. There are others who journey beside us at different times in our lives. They do not walk the same path as we do, but we may meet them on the road for a time. We, like the athletes at the closing ceremonies, become one. There is no distinction. We are simply fellow travelers on the road.

As we continue this Lenten journey, may we remember that the important part of life is to take part. What is important is the struggle, not the triumph. It is our journeying together, helping one another. Cheering each other on, lifting each other up, finding joy in being a part of one another’s lives. May we be blended together as the body of Christ each doing their part to bring about the Kingdom of God here on Earth.

Grace, Mercy and Peace,
Karen

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Calendar

Mar 7 - Sun	08:30 AM	Worship / Communion	Sanctuary
	09:40 AM	Church School (for all ages)	
	10:40 AM	Fellowship	Fellowship Hall
	11:00 AM	Worship / Communion	Sanctuary
	04:00 PM	Children's Choir	Room 14
	05:00 PM	Youth Fellowship	Annex
	05:00 PM	Lenten Spiritual Formation Group	Library
Mar 8 - Mon	05:45 PM	Fellowship Committee	Fellowship Hall
	05:45 PM	Diaconate	Fellowship Hall
	05:45 PM	Congregational Care Committee	Fellowship Hall
Mar 9 - Tue	10:00 AM	Staff Meeting	Pastor's Study
	10:30 AM	Tuesday Circle	Library
	12:00 PM	WPDS Staff Meeting	Room 10
Mar 10 - Wed	01:30 PM	Lifetime Learning Class-Great Decisions	Room 10
	06:00 PM	Lenten Soup Supper	
	06:45 PM	Lenten Worship Service	Sanctuary
	07:00 PM	Adult Choir	Choir Room
Mar 11 - Thu	12:15 PM	Mid-day Prayers	Sanctuary

	01:00 PM	Thursday Circle	Annex
Mar 12 - Fri	09:00 AM	WPDS	Room 10
	10:00 AM	AARP Tax Counseling	Fellowship Hall
	01:00 PM	Lifetime Learning - Jane Austen	Room 10
Mar 14 - Sun	08:30 AM	Worship / Communion	Sanctuary
	09:40 AM	Church School (for all ages)	Westminster
	10:40 AM	Fellowship	Fellowship Hall
	11:00 AM	Worship	Sanctuary
	04:00 PM	Children's Choir	Room 14
	05:00 PM	Lenten Spiritual Formation Group	Library
Mar 15 - Mon		WPDS Spring Break	
	05:45 PM	Human Resources Committee	Pastor's Study
	07:00 PM	Mission Committee	Library
	07:00 PM	Youth Ministries Committee	Room 9
Mar 16 - Tue		WPDS Spring Break	
	10:00 AM	Staff Meeting	Pastor's Study
	05:30 PM	Admin/Finance Committee	Library
Mar 17 - Wed		WPDS Spring Break	
	01:30 PM	Lifetime Learning	Room 10
	06:00 PM	Lenten Soup Supper	
	06:45 PM	Lenten Worship Service	Sanctuary
	07:00 PM	Adult Choir	Choir Room
Mar 18 - Thu		WPDS Spring Break	
	12:15 PM	Mid-day Prayers	Sanctuary
	07:30 PM	WPC Book Group	Offsite
Mar 19 - Fri		WPDS Spring Break	
	10:00 AM	AARP Tax Counseling	Fellowship Hall
	01:00 PM	Lifetime Learning	Room 10

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Ashes to Fire: Lenten Season at Westminster

Join us each Wednesday evening during the Lenten season for Wednesday night soup suppers and worship. Soup suppers will be served at 6:00 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall followed by 6:45 p.m. worship in the sanctuary. Preachers for the *Ashes to Fire* series are:

- March 10 **The Rev. Dr. Arun Jones**, Associate Professor of Mission and Evangelism at Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary
- March 17 **Karen Wagner**, Director of Christian Education, Westminster Presbyterian
- March 24 **Robert Quiring**, Westminster's student intern and senior student at Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary

Lenten devotional guides will also be available in the narthex.

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One Great Hour of Sharing

Dear Westminster Saints,

If you were in worship the first Sunday of Lent, you got to hear a little bit about the One Great Hour of Sharing offering and received a cardboard fishy bank from the children of our church. While these fishy banks are usually just given out to the children, we wanted to cast our nets wider this year and give everyone a simple reminder of the One Great Hour of Sharing offering. The One Great Hour of Sharing offering raises around 20 million dollars annually and the money is then split into thirds: one-third to goes to the Presbyterian Hunger Program, one-third goes to Presbyterian Disaster Assistance, and one-third to goes to the Self Development of People program. This offering therefore helps those who need food, need assistance after a disaster, and helps people with skills to support themselves.

I remember receiving the One Great Hour of Sharing fishy banks when I was in middle school and knowing that the money I raised would go to help other people in the world... not too specific, huh? Honestly, I did not know many of the specifics of this offering until Bill told me that he wanted me to be heavily involved with it at Westminster. Therefore, I wanted to share some of my newfound knowledge with you all. I started reading about the offering and downloading the reports of where the money has gone previously. I was blown away at the list of countries around the world that receive money from this offering and even more blown away by how much of the money actually stays in the States. If you would like to see these lists and learn more about One Great Hour of Sharing please visit www.pcusa.org/oghs.

During my year in Kenya, I often walked past the United Nations offices for Eastern Africa. Throughout the entire year, there would be a group of IDPs (Internally Displaced People) camped out there in hopes that they could receive any help from the U.N. As I would pass, hands would fly out at me begging for money. These people had experienced a disaster during the election violence, were hungry and in need of food, and needed more skills to be able to earn an income and start over. One Great Hour of Sharing is an offering that provides these things and more. One of the surprises I noted earlier was learning how much of the money stays in the States. When I hear disaster, I think about the recent earthquakes in Haiti and Chile and it's true that a good amount of the One Great Hour of Sharing offering will go to those places. However, I was impressed that One Great Hour of Sharing offering also helps people recover from fires, floods, tornadoes, and other disasters right here in the States. It was difficult and overwhelming to go through their lists and remember some of the disasters I had heard about on the news, but I was comforted that this offering had made its way to all of these places to help. So, I have put my One Great Hour of Sharing fishy bank next to where I keep my keys, phone, and wallet at night so that each day I am reminded of my opportunity to bring this fishy bank to worship on Easter Sunday with a check inside in hope of better a world.

Sincerely,
Robert the Intern

P.S. If you did not receive a fishy bank and want one there are more in the narthex or just ask Robert for one.
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Financial Update

Below is a short update on the general fund revenues and expenses. On a quarterly basis, we will provide the full income statement. Additionally, the full financial statements are always available in the church office on a monthly basis. We encourage anyone who is interested to pick up a copy or ask Jimmie to email you one.

Operating Revenues and Expenses As of January 31, 2010

Revenues \$62,026

Expenses 67,007

Net income (4,981)

Cash on hand – Operating Fund \$142,900

Fellowship Hall Debt \$1,150,000



Did you know? ...

Westminster is a sponsor of **Faith In Action Caregivers – West Austin (FIAC-WA)**, a local non-profit organization that provides support services for our older members, as well as neighbors in our community. The goal is to assist older adults (60 or older) to remain in their homes and live independently by providing rides to doctor appointments, the grocery store, beauty shop, and other errands, as well as help with minor home repairs, all at **no charge**. If you, or someone you know needs this service, please pick up a business card or brochure in the narthex, or call **512-472-6339**.

Interested in volunteering as a driver? Call **512-472-6339**.

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2010 Chili Cook-off a Success!

A huge thank you to the **Fellowship Committee** for another job extremely well done!

The chili was great.

The prizes were neat, and the judges were good sports.

The aprons look awesome!

The spirit was lively and creative.

There were lots of people (around 80, I think), including *lots* of children and youth.

The Westminster family enjoyed being together.

A good time was had by all.

2010 Chili Cook-off Winners (everyone was a winner, but these took home a prize)

Best All-Around	Papa's Louisiana Chili – Linda Tyler
Hottest/Spiciest	5 Serranos Chili – Bill & Jean Davis
Weirdest/Most Original	New Mexico Green Chile Stew – Roy Cotton
Best Presentation	Olympic Chili - Margaret, Scott, Sadie, and John Pass
Best Vegetarian	Daniel's "Just Give Me Veggies" Chili
Rookie	World Cup Chili - Heather Dyke

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From Previous Connections

Spiritual Formation Group: *Praying Through Lent with heart, soul, mind and body*

On Sunday afternoons, February 28 through March 28 at 5:00 p.m. a small group will gather in the church library to listen to each other as we journey through Lent sharing our stories, listening to God's Word, and praying together. Contact Linda Tyler at imt@ausitn.rr.com or call 452-8623.

Manos de Cristo is Grant Finalist! – VOTE to help them receive grant money

Manos de Cristo has been chosen as a finalist for Tom's of Maine *Dental Health for All* Project Sponsorship. As a finalist, they have the chance to get a **\$20,000 grant** to provide dental treatment to low-income individuals.

Through March 12, Once a Day Vote Here: <http://www.tomsomaine.com/community-involvement/dental-clinic-vote.aspx?proposal=30>

Were You Wondering? ...

... what to do with the vases that held your Valentine's flower arrangements? When those flowers have wilted, we could use the **vases** at Westminster. We deliver flowers every Sunday after church to various folks in the congregation and we are running low on our supply of **vases**. We could also use flower deliverers. If you are interested taking these flowers to someone on a Sunday afternoon, this is a wonderfully rewarding way to serve. It is a very simple process and Suzy Fields would be happy to walk you through it. Give her a call at 474-8412.

32nd Annual CROP Hunger Walk

When: Saturday & Sunday, March 6-7, 2010

Sat. Registration, 9:30 am; Walk begins 10:00 am

Sun. Registration, 1:45 pm; Walk begins 2:30 pm

Where: *****NEW LOCATION-Walter E. Long Park*****

(6614 Blue Bluff Road, near Travis County Expo Center)

Haiti Relief Donations Qualify for Immediate Tax Relief

If you have given to relief for Haiti, including donations to the Presbyterian Disaster Assistance directly, or through Westminster, that donation may be deductible on your 2009 income tax return. Taxpayers who itemize deductions on their 2009 return qualify for this special tax relief provision, enacted January 22. Only cash contributions made to these charities after January 11, 2010, and before March 1, 2010, are eligible. This includes contributions made by text message, check, credit card or debit card. The new law only applies to cash (as opposed to property) contributions. The contributions must be made specifically for the relief of victims in areas affected by the January 12 earthquake in Haiti. Taxpayers have the option of deducting these contributions on either their 2009 or 2010 returns, but not both.

Need Some Help With Your Income Tax Return?

Friday, February 15, 2010 from 10:00 am - 2:00 pm will see the opening of 2009 US income tax return preparation activity in WPC's Fellowship Hall. Each Friday up to and including Thursday, April 15, volunteer tax return certified preparers will be working under the AARP's Tax Counseling for the Elderly program. **There are no income or age restrictions and no costs.** The general public is to be served, not just WPC members.

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Worship

Sunday, March 7

3rd Sunday in Lent

Preacher: Bill Clark

Liturgists: Kathy Anderson, Robert Quiring

Scripture: Isaiah 55:1-9; Psalm 63:1-8; 1 Corinthians 10:1-13; Luke 13:1-9

Those Serving as After-Church Elders, Greeters, Cookie Hosts, Acolytes, and After-Church Flower Deliverer:

After Church Elders: Grover Campbell, Lesley Fields, Jim Lockart

Greeters: South Door, Sharon Raab and Celia Bell; North Door, Corrinne Bowers and Tom Cockburn

Cookie Hosts: MaryAnne Ater and Sharon Raab

Acolytes: Annie Clark, Sam Clark, Allison Pettijohn

After-Church Flower Deliverer: Wynn Doughtie

Sunday, March 14

4th Sunday in Lent

Preacher: Bill Clark

Liturgists: Kathy Anderson, Robert Quiring

Scripture: Joshua 5:9-12; Psalm 32; 2 Corinthians 5:16-21; Luke 15: 1-3, 11-32

Those Serving as After-Church Elders, Greeters, Cookie Hosts, Acolytes, and After-Church Flower Deliverer:

After Church Elders: Stan Shaw, Todd Davidson, Lea Anne Porter

Greeters: South Door, Terry Allbright and Mike Rush; North Door, Marsha Hunt and Mary Moody

Cookie Hosts: Terry Allbright and Mike Rush and Marsha Hunt

Acolytes: Abigail Cain, Roger Cain, Eliza Cain

After-Church Flower Deliverer: Virginia Hill

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Adult Ministries

Adult church school, Sunday mornings 9:40 – 10:40 a.m. *For more detailed descriptions, please visit the WPC website!*

Forum Class – Fellowship Hall

March 7 Lenten Series: *The Wide, Wide Circle of Divine Love*

Gene March, Old Testament professor and Jean Brown Visiting Scholar,
Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary

March 14, 21, and 28 Lenten Series continues

Robert Quiring, Westminster Intern and Senior, Austin Presbyterian Theological
Seminary

Bible Study – Room 9

Interested in reading and studying the Bible? No prior knowledge is needed, just your willingness to read the Bible and reflect on it with others! Join us!

Meet with the FORUM class during the season of Lent

MYConnection Class – Room 10

This class will deal with a range of topics and issues related to parenting, family relationships, and being faithful Christians in the world

today. **Join us for the season of Lent!**

Sunday, March 14: Meet George Washington:

What did the "father" of our country believe about God?

In this study, we'll consider the faith of George Washington and its implications for society today. Participants will also name what makes us consider a political leader "religious" and whether or not a strong faith is a requirement for holding political office.

The Thoughtful Christian Class – Library

Meet with the FORUM class on February 21, 28, and March 7

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Children's Ministries

Preschoolers: Preschoolers start in Room 14 for Song Time and the teachers will pick them up and take them to their classrooms. The children may be picked up in their room at the end of Sunday school. 2/3's will be in room 5 and the 4's/K's in room 4. Your child must be 2 by August 1st to be in the 2 year old class. Younger children may be taken to the nursery.

A **NURSERY** for our littlest members is in Room 2, staffed by a caring and trained team of child care workers. Children of all ages are welcome in worship at Westminster. The nursery, located in Room 2 of the Education Wing is available for infants through 5 years old.

Godly Play for Preschoolers on Sunday Morning

Children of all ages are welcome in worship at Westminster. We understand, however, that sometimes children grow restless, so during the 11 a.m. worship service, as a part of caring for our youngest saints, we offer a nursery for infants and Godly Play for 3-5 year olds. Godly Play will begin at 11:15, but children may join us at any time after the Passing of the Peace. We ask that parents wait outside Room 13 after worship for children to be dismissed.

Elementary Age Children: Dwelling Places meets in Room 13.

March 7-28th – Spiritual Disciplines/ Holy Week

VBS - SAVE THE DATE!!!!

WPC Vacation Bible School will be August 9-13
More information will follow.

Children's Choir has started!!!

Karen Wagner will be leading the children's choir this spring. They meet in Room 14 from 4:00-4:45 on Sunday afternoons. It is for children in Kindergarten through 5th grade. Let Karen know if your child is interested. The children will be singing for Palm Sunday, Maundy Thursday and Mother's Day.

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Youth Ministries

Church School classes for all youth meet each Sunday morning. in the Annex, located at the corner of Carlton and Hillview, just beyond the church parking lot.

Fellowship

March 7th – Crop Walk

March 14th – No Fellowship

Looking ahead – March 21st (end of Spring Break) – we are hosting a **PARTY** and inviting some other youth groups. More info soon.

Youth Sunday comes up in April. Be looking for emails about ideas for theme.

Save the Date

High School Mission Trip Summer 2010 – June 20th – June 26th – To Texas City for Hurricane Clean up with Presbyterian Disaster Assistance.

Still working on dates for Middle School to Hugo – mid July is most likely

Middle School (Grades 6 - 7)

Meets in the Annex Living Room

Topic: I Know My Bible

Senior High (Grades 9 - 12)

Meets in the Annex Red Room

Topic: A variety of resources focusing on our lives, current events, questions, and the role of faith in our lives.

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Fellowship

Thursday – April 8 -- instead of Thursday, April 1 (Maundy Thursday)

7 p.m. @ Opal Divine's, 700 West 6th Street

Topic: *Up!*

If you have a chance to watch the movies ahead of time, please do...but if you can't, don't stay away; there will be plenty to talk about.

Bring a friend, neighbor, or co-worker! **Opal Divine's is on West Sixth Street across from Katz's Deli. This is a great place; we have the upstairs room all to ourselves!**

Here's a link to the website if anyone wants to preview the menu:

<http://www.opaldivines.com/freehouse/index.html>

There is a parking lot in the back and lots of street parking as well within a block or two that is generally free. Suggestion: Why not meet at the church parking lot and carpool with others? Talk it up; ask around; the less vehicles we have to park the easier it will be.

Adventures meets Tuesday, April 6 @ Noon in Fellowship Hall. Come and share some favorite experience, thought, or memory on which you reflect with interest.

Come at noon.

Bring your lunch

Bring a friend.

Enjoy the fellowship.

Don't miss it!

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Mission

Bring Food for Manos de Cristo on Sunday, March 7 – Always the 1st Sunday of the Month!

Manos always needs food. Bring non-perishable food Sunday, **March 7.** And as we are fed at our Lord's table, we remember to feed others in need! Please remember to give for those who have less than we do.

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[Westminster Presbyterian Church](#), organized in 1947, is a congregation of [Mission Presbytery](#), the [Synod of the Sun](#), and the [Presbyterian Church \(U.S.A.\)](#).