

Musings from Mark . . .

Happy New Year! What will 2024 look like to you? What will 2024 look like for Westminster? There are a number of things we know for certain about the coming year. However, there is a great deal more that we do not.

Reflecting on this reality, recalls one of my least favorite Advent/Christmas songs. “Mary Did You Know?” My issue had to do with the questions asked of her. Mary knew an awful lot that was going to happen. She knew that God was at work in the world in new ways. She knew that it might mean trouble for the status quo and good news for the oppressed. However, there was much more she did not know.

Mary did not know that she would have to travel late in her pregnancy. She had no idea that her newborn would be placed in a feed trough. Mary did not know that shepherds and Magi would come to celebrate her child. And Mary did not know that she would have to flee from a murderous politician and become a refugee in Egypt. But what she did know was enough to sustain her through all the uncertainty. She knew that the future was in God’s hands. Whatever was going to come, she was not alone. And that was enough for her to say, “yes,” originally and to keep saying, “yes,” each step of the way.

Westminster knows for certain that 2024 means an end to our current form of ministry. While this is an end in one form, it is not the end of our calling. The calling that brought us to this place, which has led us over the years, has not gone away. Of all that we do know for certain about this change, there is much more that we do not. There are still all sorts of decisions yet to face. The work to which we been called will go on in its current form until our final service together. But from that ending, a new future, yet known, will emerge.

When Mary and the family ran for their lives to Egypt, they must have wondered what God was up to with all of this. Our journey is a lot less perilous. We will be joining with other followers of Jesus, Presbyterians, who are seeking to be about the healing of God’s world. What that will look like is beyond our knowing. In the end, there are a lot of unknowns about our future. But like Mary, we know who holds the future – and that will be enough for us to keep saying, “Yes,” along the way.

We still have much to do together in the coming months. So, I want to encourage you to remain engaged, in worship, in study, in our pledges, and with your energy, intelligence, imagination, and love. If we do this, whatever unfolds in the coming year will be part of our legacy and part of the great tradition of faithful followers who have gone before us.

Peace and Grace,
Mark

A Glimpse of God’s Love on the Delmar Divide

Session Meeting Highlights

December 17, 2023

The Session meeting was opened with a prayer by Pastor Mark Miller, Moderator at 12:37pm.
Pastor Mark by Zoom due to COVID.

Six of Seven of Elders were in attendance.

Adoption of the Agenda -The agenda was adopted.

CONFIRMATION MEETING

Lacy Miller 18 and Dylan Miller 14. Both were examined by the Session. The Session approved for full membership.

REPORT OF CLERK OF SESSION

Approval of minutes of November 19, 2023
Roles and Registers
Correspondence

REPORT OF THE TREASURER -will refer for audit.

Statement of Accounts

Calendar year 2023 year to date budgeted and actual pledged contribution data: Ten (10) donor units have submitted written 2023 pledge declarations.

Total 2023 Donor Pledge Commitments received as of Nov 30, 2023, \$ 77,360.00

Actual 2023 Pledge Receipts as of Nov 30, 2023, \$ 29,423.00

** Per Cent of 2023 Pledged amount. Received 38%

**Some pledged donations are given to Westminster at or near the end of the calendar year.

The Pledge data presented herein is the data extracted from 2023 pledge cards received from donors.

Non-Pledged data is the contributions received with no corresponding 2023 pledge card declaration.

2023 YEAR-TO-DATE (Nov 30, 2023) member, non-member, and adherent contribution data:

	YTD 2023	PLEDGED	NON-PLEDGED	LOOSE	MISCELLANEOUS
YTD Income	(A)	\$ 29,423.00	\$ 28,089.47	\$ 10.00	\$ 2,351.43
YTD Budgeted	(B)	\$ 50,416.67	\$ 18,333.33	\$ 229.17	\$ 916.67
Difference	(A-B)	-\$ 15,947.00	+\$ 9,756.14	-\$ 219.17	+\$ 1,434.76

Calendar year 2023 monthly WPC Endowment Fund transfers into the WPC US Bank account to supplement operating expenses through Nov 30, 2023, is \$ 297,000.00.

A money market fund was established with Edward Jones and the \$50,000.00 anonymous donation was transferred from US Bank checking into the new Edward Jones account. The current Edward Jones account statement for the period Oct 28, 2023, to Nov 24, 2023, lists a current balance of \$51,735.74.

BUILDING MANAGER REPORT-reviewed and accepted.

WORSHIP MUSIC AND THE ARTS COMMITTEE- reviewed and accepted.

BUILDING SALE UPDATE

Mark Miller, Moderator shared the following information:

A new agreement between the Schlafly Corporation and Westminster has been signed. No changes were made to the original other than the date. It will remain in effect until June 15th or as such time as the congregation closes (assimilates). They do not recommend lowering the price and have shared that there are other church buildings comparable to Westminster which are listed for higher amounts.

Other church buildings for sale in the area comparable to Westminster

6901 Washington Ave	2000 Benton St	4101-4125 Humphrey Street	5300 Delmar Boulevard
21,884 SF	30,700 SF	16,988 SF	29,500 SF
\$1,700,000	\$600,000	\$2,249,000	\$935,000

STORYTELLING PROJECT

Westminster Presbyterian Church Storytelling Project The goal of the Westminster Presbyterian Church Storytelling Project is to capture the stories of the long, rich history of the congregation. Stories of approximately thirty congregants will be captured, compiled, and formed into a book.

The Process each story will consist of a scheduled interview (typically one hour) and a photography portrait session with the interview subject at the church unless otherwise indicated. Portraits can also include significant objects, historical photographs, etc. that help to visually demonstrate the story. After interviews take place, they will then be transcribed, and edited into photo stories modeled off of Humans of St. Louis. All subjects will have the opportunity to review the stories and approve them. Once the interviews and photo stories are complete, the compilation will be formed into a book. Cost Each individual that is interviewed and composed will cost \$325. The Session approved the cap of \$10,000.

BUDGET

Severance Planning

The session voted to extend severance to the remaining employees to equal one month's pay for every year of service. This is contingent upon them remaining until the church closes and will be paid in one lump sum.

The session also included in the budget for six months of severance from current reserve. Upon the sale of the building the session is recommending that a full twenty-one-month severance be paid to the pastor. This will NOT be paid in one lump sum. It will be paid in the manner of the current payroll until the end of twenty-one months total from the date of closure or until the pastor receives another call. If he receives another call before the end of twenty-one months, the remaining money will go to the receiving congregation. This plan will need to be voted on by the congregation on Sunday December 31, 2023. The 2024 Budget was approved using the year 2023 budget with some modifications of utilities and insurance, etc.

TERMS OF CALL

The Pastors Terms of Call will not change from 2023 which will be presented to the congregation on Sunday December 31, 2023.

NOMINATION COMMITTEE

Members of the committee: Shirley Kyira and Sheila Cawns, from the congregation; and Katie Kaufman (chair) from the session, Mark Miller ex officio. The committee presents the following slate of Officers Janice Tharp and Mary Dibol for 2024 Class. This recommendation will be presented to the congregation on Sunday December 31, 2023.

ASSIMILATION PROCESS

STATISTICAL DATA

The Session reviewed the report on the three churches of their income and expenses from year 2014 to 2022. Also reviewed the Active Membership data beginning 2014 to 2022. It revealed the membership for year 2022:

First PC 123 2ND PC 192 Trinity PC 186

QUESTIONS OF THE THREE CHURCHES AND RESPONSES

The Session reviewed the designated established assimilation process and the review of the responses sent back from Rev. Bill Perman, First PC, Rev. Travis Winckler, 2nd PC, and Rev. Melanie (Mel) Smith Trinity PC sharing with them the assimilation process and asking if the Session is willing to participate in this process if WPC select their church to assimilate.

PASTORS REPORT – Hired Eric Anthony as Interim Music director to serve from Dec 17 through March 31st (He will not serve on the first Sunday of the month, or Joint Services– another musician will be hired to play prelude, postlude, hymns, and responses on the first Sunday of the month) Primary tasks Lead the choir on two Sundays of the month – and soloist on the other Sundays Arrange for additional musicians as needed and as the budget allows plan for and choose music for the choir and run rehearsals. Choose and play preludes and postludes and play hymns, and responses. The section leaders are being asked to continue through the 31st and will serve on the Sundays the Choir sings. Weekly pay – \$305 (Mark Brooks was (\$340) – and he will be paid as an independent contractor. He will only be paid during the weeks he is in worship.

CLOSING PRAYER AND ADJOURNMENT

Prayer by Mark Miller, Moderator, and adjournment at 3:02pm.

Next Stated Meeting of the Session: Sunday January 17, 2023, at 12:30pm

Lawson Calhoun, Clerk of Session



The 2024 Members and Friends Directory is in the process of being compiled. If you have any corrections or changes to your entry, please notify the church office, preferably by email at lisamack@westminsterstl.org or leave a phone message at 314-367-0900.

- January 01 - Mary Diboll**
- January 08 - Fred Stover**
- January 16 - Sandra Morgan**
- January 19 - László Szilágyi**
- January 26 - Dylan Miller**

PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN

Presbyterian Women will meet on Tuesday, January 9 at 10:00.

If your birthday is in January and does not appear on this list, please contact the church administrative assistant by email at lisamack@westminsterstl.org.



January Sermons

January 7

Communion Sunday
Baptism of the Lord Sunday
 Scripture: Mark 1:4-11
 Title: "Torn Apart"

January 14

Joint Worship at Union Ave Christian
Church In honor of
Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

January 21

Scripture: Mark 1:14-20
 Title: "Immediately???"

January 28

Scripture: Mark 1:21-28
 Title: "What is This?"

ADULT STUDY Group

Sundays at 9:30 a.m. in the Library and via Zoom

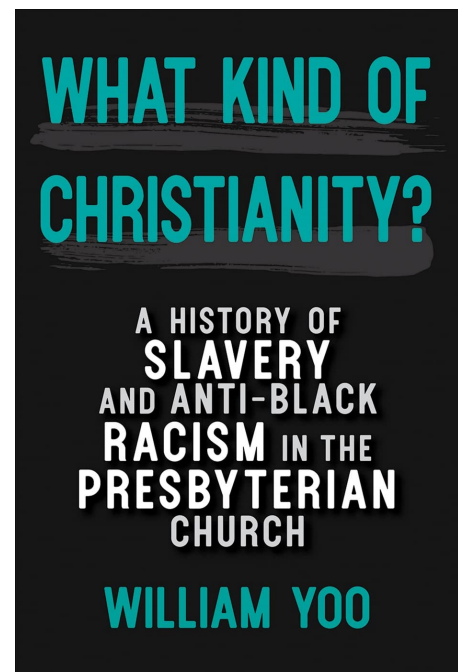
What Kind of Christianity: A History of
 Slavery and Anti-Black Racism in the
 Presbyterian Church

[https://zoom.us/j/99195541873?
 pwd=c3lIa2hSRlRZQU12VzNhdm9sVmFUDz09](https://zoom.us/j/99195541873?pwd=c3lIa2hSRlRZQU12VzNhdm9sVmFUDz09)

or call 312-626-6799

Meeting ID: 991 9554 1873

Password: 485781



WEDNESDAY ADULT BIBLE STUDY

Via Zoom

Wednesdays at 12:00 noon.

The Authentic Letters of Paul
 The Book of Romans

[https://zoom.us/j/94739016002?
 pwd=YWYwa0R6cUUxcEJYUUhSV0tSQjZ4Zz09](https://zoom.us/j/94739016002?pwd=YWYwa0R6cUUxcEJYUUhSV0tSQjZ4Zz09)

or call 312-626-6799

Meeting ID: 947 3901 6002

Password: 843849

(Class will not meet January 17th or 31st)

STAFF

Westminster Congregation
Ministers

Rev. Dr. Mark R. Miller
Pastor
markmiller@westminsterstl.org

Eric Anthony
Interim Music Director
ea570625@gmail.com

Fred Fairbanks
Building Manager
fredfairbanks@westminsterstl.org

Lisa Mack
Financial Services
Church Office Assistant
lisamack@westminsterstl.org

SERMONS

Sermons from Sunday are now online!
<http://goo.gl/FDfYO4>

PASTORAL CARE

If you or a family member goes into the hospital or has other pastoral care concerns, please contact Pastor Mark directly at 314-255-5598. Thank you.

OUR MISSION

Westminster Presbyterian Church seeks to know Christ and to make Christ known. We are a diverse congregation, crossing cultural, racial, age, and class boundaries. We support each other in our journey of faith with joyful worship, engaging education, and caring fellowship. We strive to partner with our neighbors in this urban community through ministries of justice and compassion.

CHURCH OFFICE HOURS

Please contact the office to make an appointment.

CHURCH CALENDAR

To see the most current information, take a look at the calendar online at our website. Go to www.westminsterstl.org. In the upper right corner, click "More" and then "Our Calendar." You will then be able to scroll to whichever month you choose. For more detailed information on an event, simply click on the calendar entry and the details will appear. This calendar is updated frequently, so it is the best source for current and correct information.

Westminster Presbyterian Church

Phone: 314-367-0900

Church Office E-mail:
lisamack@westminsterstl.org

Facebook:
WestminsterPresbyterianChurchInStLouis

Website:
www.westminsterstl.org

Twitter:
Westminster Church (@5300delmar)



January 2024 Westminster Happenings

Check the calendar on the church website for the most current information.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 Office closed	2 1:00 p.m. Administrative Team	3 12:00 p.m. - Bible Study			
7 9:00 a.m. - Prayer Time 9:30 a.m. - Adult Study 11:00 a.m. - Worship 12:00 p.m. - Fellowship	8	9 10:00 a.m. - Presbyterian Women 1:00 p.m. Admin Team	10 12:00 p.m. - Bible Study			
14 11:00 a.m. Joint Worship at Union Ave Christian Church 12:00 p.m. - Session Mtg	15	16 1:00 p.m. Administrative Team	17 3:00p.m. - WMA	18	19	20
21 9:00 a.m. - Prayer Time 9:30 a.m. - Adult Study 11:00 a.m. - Worship 12:00 p.m. - Fellowship	22	23 1:00 p.m. Administrative Team	24 12:00 p.m. - Bible Study	25	26	27
28 9:00 a.m. - Prayer Time 9:30 a.m. - Adult Study 11:00 a.m. - Worship 12:00 p.m. - Fellowship	29	30 1:00 p.m. Administrative Team	31			



5300 DELMAR BLVD.
ST. LOUIS, MO 63112-3102

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