

Westminster Times



Greenwood, SC

Volume 1, Number 3

From the office by the fountain...

From my first conversation with the Session last summer, I was struck by Westminster's newly focused vision: "Each of us will have an active role in making a difference in our community and in bringing the grace and love of Christ to those among and beyond us..." For a church that has weathered ideological, denominational, and personal storms...that is a remarkable vision. Because it is an outward-looking vision. Because it focuses on community beyond the church alone. Because it focuses on the grace and love of Jesus. Maybe the most remarkable thing, though, is your vision of **doing**, rather than just *being* or *continuing*.

This post-Pentecost summer season, we focus upon stories from the heart of Luke's gospel: The Good Samaritan, Mary and Martha, The Rich Fool, The Wise Servants of the Bridegroom. All of these are about **doing**, which in every case means "bringing the grace and love of Christ" to others, **doing** for them and with them, as Christ has already done for us. The lawyer asks Jesus, "What must I **do** to inherit eternal life?" Jesus tells him the story of the good Samaritan and closes by saying, "**Do** this, and you will live" (Luke 10:28, 37).



Do what? The Samaritan *went* to the wounded man in the ditch; he *tended* the man's wounds; he *took* him to a shelter; he *paid* all the expenses; he *followed up*. By *doing* these things, the Samaritan was *living out* the greatest commandment, to love God and neighbor.

I see Westminster *doing* likewise, living out the love of Christ as you join an Apostles Build with Habitat for Humanity, as you open the north wing of the church to Greenwood Place, as you support Camp Fellowship, and lead Worship on the Water. And there will be more—more doing, as you welcome Caroline Dennis and her family to the neighborhood. Thanks be to God, the focus here isn't a fixation on numbers of dollars or members. The focus—the vision—is for neighbors. Neighbors, as "a communal category."* The focus is also on worship of the one true God, who calls us to do these things...and live!

I pray for you every day, always thanking God for you and for our time together, and always hoping for you Christ's peace...

Prayerful blessings,

Brad

*from Mary Hinkle Shore, in *Feasting on the Gospels*, Luke, Vol. 1, 301

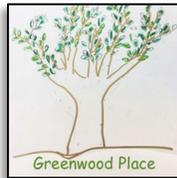
Moment for Missions: What are We Doing?

As Brad just highlighted, we at Westminster have publically and repeatedly committed ourselves to “making a difference in our community.” But what actually constitutes a community? And which community should we be seeking to serve??

It appears that God is gently (but persistently!) directing us to address the needs of a community that is not geographical, but rather the under-served “virtual” community of those in our area who live with persistent mental illness, and their families. Here’s an update on what we are currently doing to support for important local organizations: Greenwood Place and NAMI—the National Alliance for Mental Illness.

Greenwood Place

The staff and members of Greenwood Place are settling into their new space in our North Wing. They shared with us a photograph of the cake they enjoyed on moving day, and a group shot taken at a recent picnic.



Presbyterian Women Ramping

WPC Newsletter



Greenwood’s NAMI branch is an offshoot of the much larger group in Greenville, which is affiliated with the national organization (nami.org). NAMI began meeting on the Westminster campus during Stan Reid’s tenure.

Mary Linn Touchberry is a trained NAMI facilitator living in Due West, and the primary sparkplug for efforts in Greenwood and surrounding areas.

NAMI offers numerous programs and classes. The two centerpieces are Family Support groups for caregivers and family members, and Connector groups:

- Caregiver meetings often address resources and self-care, to help caregivers thrive despite the often-stressful experience of living around mental illness
- Connector meetings provide a *non-clinical* support environment for those with a mental illness diagnosis

NAMI also offers a variety of educational presentations about mental health issues. Stay tuned for information about using our partnership to build awareness in our across Greenwood.



PRESBYTERIAN
WOMEN

Up for a Banner Year

According to new chair, Louise Taber, planning is well underway for the coming PW year. One key element of the planning process is a member survey, seeking your input on ideas for activities, scheduling, and mission focus.

One change under consideration is to keep the second Monday of each month as the meeting date, but move the time to 11:00 in the morning, rather than later in the evening. Another possibility is to incorporate lunch into the agenda. Be sure to contact Louise or any current member to share your thoughts on these changes and to get your copy of the survey.

Westminster's Presbyterian Women are always active in their support for local and global missions. Right now, PW is getting together a basket to be auctioned at the United Ministries fundraiser. Save the date for the 5th annual Music for Ministry event on Saturday, August 24, 2019 at North Side Baptist Church.

Westminster Session

Questions, comments, or concerns about Westminster and its governance? Contact any Session member—we are always happy to hear from you!

Interim Pastor

Brad Christie - 864.378.4700

Stated Clerk

Bill Jacobs – 864.993.2522

Building & Grounds Chair

Rob Graves – 864.321.2845

Christian Education & Nurture Chair

Flora Hobson – 864.554.1101

Fellowship Chair

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Missions & Outreach Chair

Claire F. Kuhl – 864.344.1716

Music & Worship Chair

Deb Jones – 864.374.7124

Personnel & Finance Chair

Len Bornemann – 864.344.1946



Letters from the Lakeside

Now that summer camping season is drawing to a close, the amazing team at Camp Fellowship is preparing to host a **Fall Adult Retreat** on Friday, October 25 – Saturday, October 26.

Several Westminster families participated in this retreat in past years, and came back refreshed, recharged, and recommitted to their faith. Put the dates in your calendar, and be on the lookout for more details

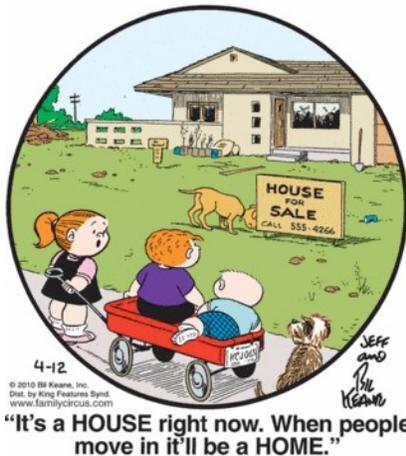


Congratulations to everyone who participated in the Westminster/Camp Fellowship joint **Worship on the Water** venture. Attendance was good, given that this is the first year that WOW has been offered. WPC and CF leaders will compile an “after action report” to glean lessons-learned for next year’s programs.

Coming and Going—Hello, Church!

Dear Westminster Friends,

In the next few days, the Dennis Family will be making a new home in South Carolina. This week while at Triennium, the every-three-year gathering of thousands of Presbyterian youth from literally all over the world, Jacob and I had a chance to meet some of our new neighbors—friends from First Presbyterian in Greenwood and Forest Lake Presbyterian in Columbia, as well as friends from Presbyterian College. Phillip has had a chance in recent weeks to meet friends from his new work place, Emerald High School. And of course, we have been getting to know our Westminster Church family, bit by bit, even before we arrive.



We thank you that you have been praying for us. We feel those prayers. And we hold you in ours. You are beginning to make a home in our hearts, and we in yours.

The bookend lines of my favorite translation of a familiar Psalm are these:

"The Lord is my Shepherd, I have everything I need....

...I know that your goodness and love will be with me all my life; your house will be my home as long as I live."

Psalm 23, Good News Translation

As we pack up way more than we need, we lean into the promises of the Good Shepherd, and thank God for the home we will make in your midst at Westminster and in Greenwood.

We'll see you soon!

Caroline

First in a series on myths vs. facts of mental health issues

Myth: People with mental health problems are violent and unpredictable.

Fact: The vast majority of people with mental health problems are no more likely to be violent than anyone else. Most people with mental illness are *not* violent, and only 3%–5% of violent acts can be attributed to individuals living with a serious mental illness. In fact, people with severe mental illnesses are over 10 times more likely to be victims of violent crime than the general population. You probably know someone with a mental health problem and don't even realize it, because many people with mental health problems are highly active and productive members of our communities.

