



Sailing into a New Year



I pray you enter 2023 full of curiosity, wonder, and hope. I have two metaphors in my head as I pray that blessing upon you. One comes from the book we are all reading as part of our Project Regeneration, *Sailboat Church*, by Rev. Dr. Joan S. Gray. In this book, we learn what it means to become a sailboat church; that is, a church powered not by our own rowing, but by the power of the Holy Spirit filling our sails. I pray this for you and for us. That we will be people individually and a church together who are on a Holy Spirit powered adventure in 2023.

The second metaphor is also boat-related. I'm thinking of ships of the desert, a nickname for the great beasts of burden, camels, who traversed the deserts of Africa and Asia bearing passengers and cargo. During the season of Epiphany, we remember those travelers from the East who sailed across the desert on camel back, following a star until it brought them to the One they were seeking.

Epiphany means an encounter with God. I pray that we will be like those travelers of old, aware that God is calling us out of our comfort zones to new places where we will meet God face to face. I pray that we will embark on the adventure of this new year curious about how God will be revealed to us, wondering where God will lead us, and hopeful that God will use us.

The Magi had a star to guide them. Sailors of seas and deserts and space have all used—and still use—stars to guide them. For the sailboat church, our star is God's word.

In the first chapter of her book, Dr. Gray offers her readers two scriptures to hold as they sail into the future with God. The first is, John 15:5, Jesus' words to his disciples, "Without me you can do nothing," and the second, Luke 1:37, is Gabriel's response to an incredulous Mary, "with God nothing is impossible." May these words be our guiding star as we go with God into the adventure of this new year.

Without me you can do nothing.

John 15:5

With God, nothing is impossible.

Luke 1:37

Ready to set sail on an adventure of discovery, I am your pastor and friend,

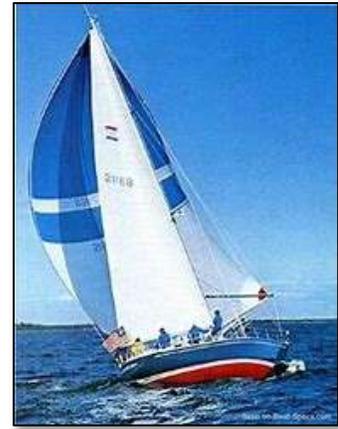
Caroline

Sermon Series for January: Setting Sail

When we study scripture, there are three questions we can always ask:

- What does this scripture tell me about God?
- What does this scripture tell me about myself?
- And what are we going to do about it?

These are the questions we will be asking during the Epiphany Season. As we read texts from Jesus' early ministry, we will learn more about God and more about ourselves. And we will consider how these scriptures call us to respond as individuals and as a church.



In her book, *Sailboat Church*, Dr. Joan Gray tells us that sailboat churches are shaped and guided by interaction with scripture. Let us begin the New Year interacting with God's word and allowing it to guide us as we prepare to set sail and embark on a Holy Spirit-powered adventure.

January 1: Don't be Afraid. Be Led

New Year's Day/Communion

- † Isaiah 63:7-9
- † Matthew 2:1-24

January 8: Remember Who and Whose You Are

- † Isaiah 42:1-9
- † Matthew 3:13-1

January 15: Set Your Sights on the Horizon

- † Isaiah 49:1-7
- † John 1:29-42

January 22: Gather a Crew

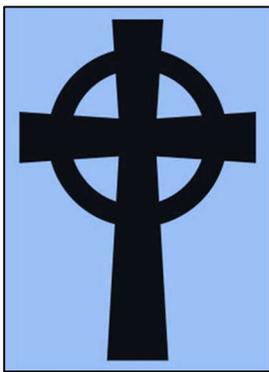
- † Psalm 27:1, 4-9
- † Matthew 4:12-23

January 29: Listen to Your Instructor

- † Micah 6:1-8
- † Matthew 5:1-12

Nurture & Christian Education News

Both adults and children will learn about the visit of the Magi on January 8. Adults will read and discuss the last chapter of Adam Hamilton's book, *Faithful: Christmas through the eyes of Joseph*. The children will conclude their lessons on the Nativity by adding the wise men.



By mid-January, both groups will return to stories from the Old Testament:

- Adults will continue their study of *The Mighty Acts of God*. Teaching duties will rotate among Bill Jacobs, Claire Kuhl, and the newest member of this terrifying trio, Phillip Dennis.
- Children will learn about God's Promises through stories about Noah, Abram, and Moses.

The children's program is celebrating the need for a larger table and extra chairs to accommodate more children in our Sunday School classroom. Thank you to Dave Hammond for helping with that!

Westminster Happenings

No Sunday School

Be Led—conclusion of the “Fear Not” Sermon Series

New Year’s Day/Communion

Worship at 10:00 A.M. in person or via live streaming.

Start the new year right by worshiping Christ the Savior of the world.

**Sunday
January 1**

Traditional New Year’s Day Lunch

Bring your appetite to the Fellowship Hall at 11:30 A.M.

Store up some Southern-style good luck with a traditional lunch of ham, black-eyed peas, greens, cornbread, and sparkling cider. Yum!

Undecorate the Church

Immediately following lunch, return to the sanctuary to pack away decorations and prepare our worship space for sailing into 2023.

**Monday
January 2**

Church office closed January 1 through January 5th.

Call or text 317-777-1487 with any pastoral emergencies.

**Saturday
January 7**

Board Game Day

Have tons of fun in the Fellowship Hall from 1:00 P.M. to 5:00 P.M.

Learn new games and make new friends—no experience required!
See page 6 for more information.

**Sunday
January 8**

Sunday School

Gather at 9:00 A.M. in the choir room.

Wrap up the *Faithful* study with a celebration of the magi and their gifts.

Remember Who and Whose You Are

Epiphany Sunday

Worship at 10:00 A.M. in person or via live streaming.

Put God at the center of your life and let His light shine through you.

Session Meeting

Meet in the parlor at 11:30 A.M.

Examine incoming elders and prepare for 2023.

**Monday
January 9**

Presbyterian Women

Come together in the Choir Room at 10:00 A.M.

“Celebrate Sabbath” by discussing chapters 4 and 5.

**Tuesday
January 10**

Mindful Greenwood

Gather in the Branches Sunday school room upstairs at 6:30 P.M.

Experience the power of mindfulness meditation.

See page 10 for details.

Westminster Happenings, *continued*

**Wednesday
January 11** | **Wednesday Night Study: Sailboat Church Discussion Session I**
Convene via Zoom at 7:00 P.M.
Share your ideas as we launch the next step of Project Regeneration.
See page 8 for details.

**Thursday
January 12** | **Crossover Contemplatives: Interfaith Discussion and Book Club**
Meet with other knowledge-seekers in the Youth Room at 6:30 P.M.
Explore how Christianity and Buddhism intersect.
See page 10 for more information.

**Sunday
January 15** | **Sunday School**
Gather at 9:00 A.M. in the choir room.
Jump back into the *Mighty Acts of God*, led by Bill Jacobs.
Set Your Sights on the Horizon
Installation of Elders
Congregational Meeting
Worship at 10:00 A.M. in person or via live streaming.
Look ahead and prepare for the journey God has planned for you.
Sunday Sustenance with Chef Rob & Friends
Feast in the Fellowship Hall immediately following worship.
Bring little ones up for a Sunday sing-along, led by Denise Waldrep.

**Tuesday
January 17** | **Mindful Greenwood**
Gather in the Branches Sunday school room upstairs at 6:30 P.M.
Practice techniques of mindfulness meditation.

**Wednesday
January 18** | **Wednesday Night Study: Sailboat Church Discussion Session II**
Convene via Zoom at 7:00 P.M.
Come prepared to discuss chapters 4-7 of *Sailboat Church*.

**Thursday
January 19** | **Annual Presbyterian Women's Joint Dinner**
Dine with fellow PW members at First Presbyterian at 6:00 P.M.
Enjoy a delicious dinner, fabulous fellowship, and a powerful program.
See page 6 for details.

Crossover Contemplatives: Interfaith Discussion and Book Club
Meet with other inquiring minds in the Youth Room at 6:30 P.M.
Consider how Christianity and Buddhism align and diverge.

By this everyone will know that you are my disciples,
if you have love for one another.

John 13:35

Westminster Happenings, *continued*

Sunday January 22	Sunday School Join the conversation at 9:00 A.M. in the choir room. Learn more about the <i>Mighty Acts of God</i> , with Bill Jacobs. Gather a Crew Worship at 10:00 A.M. in person or via live streaming. Connect with fellow travelers to share both gifts and burdens.
Tuesday January 24	Mindful Greenwood Gather in the Branches Sunday school room upstairs at 6:30 P.M. Find your focus with mindfulness meditation.
Wednesday January 25	Wednesday Night Study: <i>Sailboat Church</i> Discussion Session III Convene via Zoom at 7:00 P.M. Conclude our preliminary conversations about <i>Sailboat Church</i> .
Thursday January 26	Crossover Contemplatives: Interfaith Discussion and Book Club Gather in the Youth Room at 6:30 P.M. Consider how Christianity and Buddhism are related.
Saturday January 28	Session Planning Retreat Pray and plan, worship and work as we sail into 2023.
Sunday January 29	Sunday School Join the conversation at 9:00 A.M. in the choir room. Delve further into the House of David, with Claire Kuhl. Listen to Your Instructor/Guest Preacher: Dr. Raj Nadella Worship at 10:00 A.M. in person or via live streaming. Trinity Presbyterian Western Cluster Fifth Sunday Gathering Deepen your understanding of the Bible by learning about the history of Biblical translation, taught by Dr. Raj Nadella: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 4:00 P.M. Lecture—in the Sanctuary• 5:30 P.M. Dinner—in the Fellowship Hall• 6:30 P.M. Seminar—in Branches Sunday School Classroom upstairs <i>See page 9 for more information</i>

For whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction,
that through endurance and through the encouragement of
the Scriptures we might have hope.

Romans 15:4

Presbyterian Women Gather for Joint Dinner

Calling all Women of Westminster! Women from all local PC(USA) churches are invited to the annual joint dinner at First Presbyterian-Greenwood on January 19 at 6:00 P.M.



In addition to enjoying great food and fellowship, you'll be inspired by keynote speaker Kathy Woodbury: social worker, counselor, college instructor, and witness.

The cost of the dinner will be \$12.00 per person. Please get your reservations and payment to the church office no later than Monday, January 9.

It's Time for Fun & Games!

On Saturday, January 7, Westminster is hosting its first ever Board Game Day! Josh Wicker is our Master of the Games, and he's providing an astonishing assortment of games for everyone from age 8



to 108. Don't worry about knowing the rules—Josh will provide instructions and equipment.

The event runs from 1:00 P.M. to 5:00 P.M. in the Fellowship Hall. Drop in for a game or two, or stay for the whole time. Game groups will be formed on a first-come/first-served basis to help avoid waiting. Come and bring your friends and neighbors!

Stewardship Snapshot

The Stewardship Snapshot is a regular report from the Session to the *Westminster Times* newsletter. Please note that because of the newsletter publication schedule vs. timing of month-end close, these reports will typically be about six weeks behind.



November 2022

	October Actual	Monthly Budget	Year-to-Date Actual	Year-to-Date Budget
Total Income	\$19,491	\$16,074	\$156,132	\$173,316
Total Expenses	\$13,504	\$18,870	\$199,493	\$201,488
Net Gain/Loss	\$5,987		-\$43,361	

We currently have a high balance in the checking account due to some pre-payments of pledges. A portion will be moved over to the investment account in January. The amount depends on how December tithes and offerings come in.

Many thanks to everyone for responding so generously in Our Grateful Response to God's goodness. The Session worked extremely hard to build a sound budget. That budget, along with proposed new terms of call for the pastor will be presented at the congregation's annual meeting during worship on Sunday, January 15th.

Please direct any questions about church financial matters to our treasurer, Len Bornemann, or any member of the Business Affairs Committee.

New Year/Epiphany Traditions

Chalking the Doors

An old Epiphany tradition involves using chalk to write the letters CMB and the numbers of the current year, separated by crosses (+), over the doors of congregations and Christian homes: 20 + C + M + B + 25 or CMB + 2025. The letters CMB are said to stand for the traditional names of the Magi (Caspar, Melchior, and Balthazar) or the Latin phrase *Christus mansionem benedicat* (Christ bless this house).



Before or after chalking the doors, the following or a similar prayer may be said:

God of doors and homes,

Bless this home this year and every year.

Bless all who come and go through this door, both those who live here and those who visit.

May all who enter through this door come in peace and bring joy.

May all who come to this door find welcome and love.

May the love and joy in this home overflow and spread into the community and the world.

And may Jesus the Christ watch over us all. **Amen.**

From the Presbyterian Book of Common Worship, 2018

Star Words

In many churches, it has become a tradition to receive or choose a word on Epiphany to be a guiding word for the New Year. This word becomes a focus of study and intention. Over the year, the word gains meaning and depth, similar to the way the Magi's star began as a curiosity, then a quest, then a revelation.



EPIPHANY

Last year I chose a word for myself. I chose **prayer**. I chose this word because I felt like I needed to learn more about prayer and to practice it more intentionally. I studied the word in scripture and in other texts. I practiced prayer as a regular daily practice and in groups. As a church, we had a summer practice of prayer at a set time, and in the fall we studied the Lord's Prayer together. This has been a year of growth for me around my chosen star word. My prayer life has become richer over the year.

On the first two Sundays in January, you will have a chance to receive or to choose a star word for the year. You can keep your word private, tuck it into your Bible, and work with it on your own. Or you can share your star word with a friend, with family, or on social media. That's a good way for some to be intentional about exploring their word. Or you may wish to gather with others who will spend some intentional time this year working with their star word.

If you'd like to join such a group, Phillip and I will host a star word discussion group at 7:00 P.M. on the first Sunday of each month, starting January 1. We'll explore our words in scripture, through art, music, literature, and life experience. It will be fun to see how our words provide a guiding light for us through the year and to see how others' lights illuminate ours. If you would like to join this Star Word Discussion Group, reach out to me by text 317-777-1487 or email me at cvdennis.wpcgwd@gmail.com

Reaching the Unchurched: Project Regeneration Update

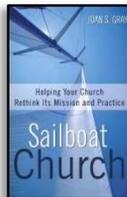
Treasurer Len Bornemann, with help from Kathy Felder, compiled and delivered to our Project Regeneration consultant, Paul Grier, WPC's responses to a lengthy standard questionnaire about our fiscal health. Paul has prepared his analysis, and will present his findings to a small team of church leaders. Once they have confirmed and digested the material, presentation to the Session and other interested parties will be scheduled.

See also related stories this page, "*Sailboat Church*" and "Explorers Needed."



Sailboat Church Discussions Scheduled

To give us a head start on our "official" work with facilitator and consultant, Olanda Carr, Pastor Caroline and Claire Kuhl are hosting a Wednesday night discussion series on *Sailboat Church* beginning January 11 via Zoom at 7:00 P.M. Books are free and available in the narthex and church office.



Each session will start with a *very* brief recap of key points from the week's readings. The majority of the time will be dedicated to full group discussion and debate. Beyond just considering the author's springboard questions, our primary goal is to fully engage with the potential and the challenges facing Westminster as we seek to reach the unchurched and become the church God has called us out to be.

Please plan to participate! Frank, honest conversation conducted with love is key to hoisting our sails for the Holy Spirit to fill.

Explorers Needed for Digging into the Data

PC(USA)'s Research Division has provided, at no cost to us, three reports that can really enlighten us about the needs and preferences of our true neighbors—people living within a 6-mile radius of our church building. The reports are:

- **Full Insite**—a complete demographic portrait; integrates 2010 Census Data, the latest American Community Survey data, and the Experian Mosaic Cluster System.
- **Religious Insite**—provides a projection of a community's likely religious beliefs, preferences, and practices for the defined study area.
- **Ministry Insite**—focuses on practical applications of the survey data. It includes life concerns, reasons for non-participation (or considered non-participation) in a religious congregation or community, and a list of preferred ministries or programs.

Religious Insite and Ministry Insite reports are based on the American Beliefs Study national survey, which Mission Insite conducts every 5 years.

Of course, data by itself isn't of much use. It has to be put into context, analyzed, understood, and applied if it is to be transformed into actionable knowledge.

Westminster needs a team of data diggers and divers who are willing and able to invest their time and talents in wrestling with these reports.

If you are interested in participating, or would just like to have copies of the reports, contact Claire Kuhl by email at Claire@TransformYourVtoR.com

Westminster Hosts Western Cluster Educational Event: Exploring the History of Bible Translation

To promote community and strengthen area congregations—especially the smaller ones—Trinity Presbytery formed church clusters, based largely on geographical proximity. Westminster is a member of the Western Cluster, which also includes Ware Shoals, Hodges, New Faith, Abbeville, Ninety Six, Little Mountain, Upper Long Cane, Loundes, and First Presbyterian-Greenwood.

Representatives from the cluster churches meet regularly, and have agreed that, in months when there are five Sundays, the PC(USA) churches in our area will gather on that fifth Sunday. Sometimes for fellowship, sometimes for learning, always for worship.

On January 29, Westminster will host the cluster gathering, featuring our guest speaker, Dr. Raj Nadella. The events are open to all cluster churches and the community at large.

Dr. Nadella is the Samuel A. Cartledge Professor of New Testament Studies at Columbia Theological Seminary in Decatur, GA. Dr. Nadella will be preaching at Westminster on Sunday morning. At 4:00 P.M. in the Fellowship Hall, Dr. Nadella will present a lecture on the history of biblical translation, particularly offering a focused look at the updated edition of the New Revised Standard Version of the Bible.



A light dinner will be served, followed by a more in-depth seminar on biblical translation and its impact on worship and spiritual practice. The seminar starts at 6:30 P.M. in Branches Sunday School Classroom upstairs.

Deepen your understanding of the Bible and make new friends within our cluster group by participating in this outstanding learning and fellowship opportunity.

Missions Update: Angel Wishes Granted!

A big “Thank You” to everyone who participated in our Christmas Angel Tree. The tree in the Narthex was filled with wishes from a Meg’s House family of three. Every angel wish on the tree was granted, providing a lovely Christmas for a mother and her two daughters. When the gifts were delivered, the workers at Meg’s House were ecstatic and very appreciative.



As you know, Meg’s House is a non-profit organization here in Greenwood that provides assistance to victims of domestic violence. The needs of these victims are overwhelming, and providing a ray of sunshine at Christmas was certainly a welcome gift. On an everyday basis, gifts of personal care items, cleaning supplies, household items, are just some of the things needed for these precious people who have come to Meg’s House for help. Perhaps our congregation can think of ways that we can assist these people in the future.

Coming in February: Save the Date

Whether you are new to Westminster or have been Presbyterian forever, you can benefit from our upcoming study, *Presbyterian 101*.



We will have four sessions, starting on the first Sunday in February (the 5th) and continuing every first Sunday through May 7th. Class will meet from 11:15 A.M. to 12:15 A.M. in the Youth Room upstairs. Child care will be provided.

The curriculum will cover:

- History and Theology – Where do we come from? What we believe.
- Polity – How we operate.
- Worship – What we do together.
- Mission – Where do we go from here?

For more information, contact the church office (wpcgwd1@gmail.com).

Meditation and Interfaith Dialogue: a New Opportunity for WPC and Our Community

Beginning the second week in January, we have two new opportunities for folks at Westminster and in our community.

Ricky McCarson, a new friend of Westminster (husband to Nicole and father to Makena and Arabella) is also a Buddhist priest. Ricky will be leading a mindfulness meditation class on Tuesday evenings and leading an interfaith dialogue group on Thursday evenings in January.

Curious?

Check the calendar for dates and times, and learn more about the benefits of meditation from the Mayo Clinic: Meditation: Take a stress-reduction break wherever you are - Mayo Clinic



The Holocaust: Christian Responses and Faith Lessons

An invitation from First Presbyterian-Greenwood to their upcoming lecture series at Alexander Hall unless otherwise noted. The accompanying Holocaust Exhibit will be available at their church from Sunday, January 8th to Sunday, February 5th also in Alexander Hall.

- Sunday, Jan 15th, 10:00 A.M.—The Holocaust Event and Events Precipitating the Event
- Wednesday, Jan 18, 12:00 Noon, at Montague's Restaurant—Heroes of the Holocaust
- Wednesday, Jan 18th, 6:00 P.M.—The Longest Hatred: Antisemitism
- Sunday, January 22nd, 10:00 A.M., First Presbyterian Church--The Perpetrators: Who They Were and Why They Did It
- Wednesday, Jan 25th, 6:00 P.M.—The Role of the Church: Defiance and Compliance
- Sunday, Jan 29th, 10:00 A.M.—The Victims: A Focus on Anne Frank and Others
- Wednesday, Feb 1st, 6:00 P.M. —Why Resist?
- Sunday, Feb 5th, 10:00 A.M. —Lessons to be Learned

Dinner at 5:30 P.M. precedes the Wednesday evening 6:00 P.M. event for those who want to eat beforehand. Cost is \$8.00 per person.

New Member Spotlight: Oliver Gouldsmith

Oliver Gouldsmith first came to Westminster to be a paid nursery worker—a role that he fulfills with high energy and a caring spirit. However, once he got to know the Westminster family, he decided that he had found not just a job, but also a new church home!

Oliver is a sophomore at Lander University, majoring in Special Education. As a full-fledged theatre buff, he connected with the Dennis family and also our friend Laura Margaret Fennell backstage at the Greenwood Community Theatre.

Despite his very busy schedule, he managed to squeeze in a few minutes to answer our traditional silly...I mean, *significant*...questions. As you'll see, he loves to laugh!



1. **What gives you joy?** I find that little things bring me a lot of joy. Things like my morning tea being the perfect drinking temperature on the first sip, realizing the book I'm reading does, in fact, get *much* better after the 1st chapter and, of course, beating Jacob Dennis in chess. I like to think of those moments as tiny little gifts God gives you to make you smile.
2. **What drives you crazy?** Clutter. I am a compulsive cleaner/organizer, and just can't relax if my space is not in order. I have found that the children I care for don't generally share this trait with me.
3. **What's your favorite kind of music?** I adore musicals. I love serious musicals, silly musicals, and even musicals that make fun of musicals. That being said, my all-time favorite is *Falsettos* by James Lapine and William Finn. It's a bit of a sad but very funny musical about a Jewish family navigating their relationships and faith during a divorce.
4. **What's your favorite thing to do when you have spare time?** When I have the time to do it, I love baking. As a college student, I rarely get the time or resources to make anything elaborate. But when I get the chance, I always get carried away and have to



Oliver (center) with the Wickers and Callie Watkins

run around town giving people leftover confections. I keep a stack of horrible "giftable" Tupperware for this reason.

entire plate full of them, drown them in gravy, and refuse to eat anything else. Young me had good taste, and I stand by that decision to this day!

5. **What's your favorite meal?** Kartoffelklöße or German potato dumplings. This is not so much a meal, but a really good side dish. As a kid, my German great grandmother would make these for us on Easter and Christmas. I would fill up my

Book Nook: Tips from Our Librarian

Submitted by Tina Corley

Books From the church library are on display in the hall between the sanctuary and the back wing. You are invited to browse and check out one that interests you.

- *Hand Rhymes*, by Marc Brown
A collection of nursery rhymes with diagrams for accompanying finger plays.
- *Jeremy: the Tale of an Honest Bunny*, by Jan Karon; illustrated by Teri Weidner
Rather than being mailed from England to the United States, Jeremy, a handmade toy rabbit, sets off to make his own way to a new home, with the toymaker's blessing to keep him safe through a series of adventures.
- *Gladys Aylward*, by Catherine Swift.
Biography of a small woman who was a missionary in China.
- *Just as Long as I'm Riding Up Front: More Stories I Couldn't Tell While I was a Pastor*, by Bruce McIver
- *The God I Love: a Memoir*, by Joni Earckson Tada
A diving accident left Joni Eareckson Tada a quadriplegic. Back then, she questioned how a loving God could condemn an active young woman to a lifetime in a wheelchair. Today, she is grateful.
- *Morning Glories* by Julia Lake Kellersberger. "Julia Lake Kellersberger—author, lecturer and former missionary to the Congo—is a special friend of orphan children and has written most interestingly of life at Thornwell Orphanage, Clinton, South Carolina. She has woven history and every-day happenings into meaningful messages."



Worship on the Water 2022 Report

Submitted by Beth Hammond

The third season of Worship on The Water (WOW) was quite successful. WOW is a summer worship series for residents and guests at Lake Greenwood. It is jointly sponsored by Westminster and Camp Fellowship and is held at the lakeside pavilion at Camp Fellowship.

2022 was special because many participants were able to remain on their boats and worship with us, thanks to our new portable speaker system. We averaged 20-25 people weekly and had many boats docked during our 10-week series. We hope to extend the series to 15 weeks this summer, running from Memorial Day weekend to Labor Day.



Hopefully, we can involve Lake District local churches to participate as well. Your prayers, presence, and gifts are welcome as we plan and resume this series in 2023.

COME

Submitted by Joyce Alexander

Come with us
On this journey,
We're searching for
The NEW.
Keep your eyes
Wide open,
Possibilities
May be in view.
Search through
The inspiration,
See what you might claim.
To allow you
To stretch and grow
Beyond what
You can name.
Come with us
On this journey,
Select a star
To guide.
Be filled
With expectations,
The gate is open wide.



Excerpts from *Sailboat Church*, by Joan Gray



“Early Christian symbols include a boat as a symbol for the church. ... For [the] early Christians, church was a God-powered, God-led, God-resourced adventure.”

“...the bedrock reality of life in the Sailboat church is that God ‘through the power at work within us can do abundantly far more than we could ever ask or imagine’ (Eph. 3:21). Sailboat churches tend to focus not on their own situation, resources, or limitations, but rather on discerning God’s unfolding will. They engage in intimate partnership with God, trusting God to provide and do what only God can do.”

“The Holy Spirit is the spirit of Jesus. ... Through the presence and power of the Spirit, we believers have a major role to play in creation’s transformation. Our ability to participate with God in [His] plan is absolutely contingent on the presence of the Spirit in and among us.”

Greenwood Place Update

Submitted by Fred Murphy, Executive Director



GREENWOOD PLACE

Here are a couple of additional Standards under which the Greenwood Place Clubhouse functions. The following Standards deal with the Clubhouse and its work-ordered day.

15. The work-ordered day engages members and staff together, side-by-side, in the running of the Clubhouse. The Clubhouse focuses on strengths. Talents and abilities, therefore, the work-ordered day must not include medication clinics, day treatment or therapy programs within the Clubhouse.
16. The work done in the Clubhouse is exclusively the work generated by the Clubhouse in the operation and enhancement of the Clubhouse community. Members are not paid for any Clubhouse work, nor are there any artificial rewards.
17. The Clubhouse is open at least five days a week. The work-ordered-day parallels typical working hours.



For the month of November Greenwood Place averaged 8 individuals coming daily. Our Social for November was a trip to Walmart for shopping and then lunch at Chick-fil-A. Our members enjoy this type of outing because for some of them there is limited ability for them to shop. It is also an opportunity for them to socialize outside of the Clubhouse.



One of our favorite events at the Clubhouse is our Thanksgiving luncheon. We had 15 individuals join us for turkey and dressing and the rest of our Thanksgiving meal. We thank the Turkey Wildlife Federation for their donation of our turkey.

The Clubhouse our Christmas party and lunch on Thursday December 22nd. As always, it was a festive and meaningful event for our Members.

As with any community of individuals, you celebrate the fun times like Thanksgiving and Christmas, but you also share the sorrows of each person. One of our members, Savanna, lost her mother this Christmas season. We are here to support her during this time and for her to know that the Clubhouse is part of her family and that we, too, feel her loss.

Thank you to everyone at Westminster Presbyterian for your continued support and prayers.

New Year's Resolutions Can Set You Up for Failure

Excerpted from <https://www.foundationwellness.net/mental-health/new-years-resolutions-harmful-to-your-mental-health-5-things-to-do-instead/>



When the clock struck midnight, and 2022 became 2023, perhaps you breathed a giant sigh of relief. A challenging year finally came to a close. Buoyed by this sweet goodbye and the best of intentions, you may be tempted to make some New Year's resolutions.

However, that may not be so good for your mental health.

A 1988 University of Scranton study found that 77% of people made New Year's resolutions. How many stuck to them is another story: only 19%, or one out of five, actually fulfilled them within two years. A 2018 Statista survey found that, of the 54% making New Year's resolutions, only a paltry 4% said they achieved all of them.

Why is it so hard to keep those resolutions?

Typically, it's because they are unrealistic and too broad. In fact, New Year's resolutions don't typically come from a positive mental place. Focusing on what you feel may be "wrong" with your life can be detrimental—especially if you don't fulfill those resolutions.

Given that most people don't make good on their resolutions, how healthy is it to continue making them? In a way, you are setting yourself up for failure. Why let your self-esteem take the hit? It could even bring on anxiety and depression...and you certainly don't need that!

What should you do instead? Build on your strengths rather than struggle to "correct" your weaknesses. Start with these tips:

- **Focus on what's right.** What are you grateful for? What do you have that is an advantage? Being alive for another day is something to appreciate—each day is a new chance to make your life what you would like for it to be.
- **See how far you've come.** Look back over the past year to see progress you've made. Reflect on your successes, and let them motivate you to keep moving.
- **Compare yourself to yourself *only*.** You will never be anyone else but you, and that's a good thing! All you can really strive for is to be the best *you* that you can be...not to be like your friends, a celebrity, or a sports figure. The best you is *more* than enough. Don't be fooled by the carefully curated versions of others' "perfect" lives on social media.
- **Set smaller, more attainable goals.** What can you do today toward your goal of exercising three times a week? Make one good choice today, and build on it tomorrow. Remember that baby steps still get you where you need to be. Doing too much too soon can backfire.

Remember, occasional slips are part of the process. Don't beat yourself up. Instead, think about everything you've done, how far you've come, and pick yourself up to keep going in the right direction.

Blessing for the New Year

By Kayleen Asbo

As the hours of darkness begin to slowly wane from the winter sky,
So too may the fearful places of your heart unclench their grasp on your life
As the presence of light begins to grow with greater sureness with each passing day
May your own courage blossom to open more brightly to truth and love.

Let this be the year that you turn off the television and silence the talk radio chatter
in order to pick up the writing pen, the paintbrush,
and watch the candle slowly burn.

May this be the year that you delight
in seeing how much joy you can extravagantly spread.
May you discover just how much beauty you can recklessly shower
upon this thirsty world.

May this be the year that you tune both the dusty piano in the corner
and the inner listening of your care-worn heart
So that both can play in harmony with the chorus of creation.

May you break the invisible yardstick of impossible expectations
and learn that just as you are, you are enough.
May this be the year that you cease trying to march to an imagined ideal
and instead, wrap your arms around the messy wonder your life really is,
hold it close and do the tango.

Let this be the year you befriend your soul in its radical particularity,
not forsaking it yet again for the bland demands and cravings of the masses.
Instead, may you elope with the wildness of your own true calling,
marry your soul to its deepest longings and invite the hungry world to the
wedding feast.



Let Us Pray...



For Those in Our Church

We share one another's joys and concerns:

- John & Mishie Bacot
- Mary Corley
- Mac & Holly Hubbard
- Kelli Lott & daughters Savannah and Gabby
- Laine & Lucia Horowitz
- Meg Templin Smith, niece of M. A. Wilson
- Denise Waldrep
- Ed Watkins
- Gail & Glen Yonce, and Georgianna
- Our pastor and her family, staff, elders, and elders-elect

"Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your request to God."

Philippians 4:6-7

We pray daily for our prayer partners and their special concerns. We pray for our sister churches: New Faith, Ware Shoals, First Presbyterian, Abbeville Presbyterian, and others.

We pray for the ministries of our church, especially:

- Presbyterian Communities of SC
- Prison Ministry
- Thornwell Home
- Presbyterian College
- Greenwood Place
- NAMI
- Pathway House
- Food Bank of Greenwood
- Meg's House
- Beyond Abuse
- Greater Greenwood United Ministries
- Camp Fellowship
- Community Initiatives/TLC



For Those in Our Hearts

We pray for these members of our wider community:

- Betsey Blimline
- Chris Brown
- Lib Colough
- Nancy Cooper
- Dean & Albert Fadden
- David Gillespie
- Lois Grice
- Beverly Grier
- Stephanie & Eve Horton
- Joan Herin
- Michael Knight
- Corrie Manis
- Terence Reese
- Trae Steelmon
- Dave Watson
- Karen Whitt
- Abigail
- Candy
- Diana
- Geri
- JK



For the World

We pray for our neighbors everywhere who we are called to love:

- For true peace on earth, good will toward all of humanity
- For wise leadership at every level in our community, country, and world
- For courage to fight for justice and mercy for all who are oppressed at home and abroad
- For those living with mental, emotional, and/or physical illnesses
- For all who experience exclusion, or who struggle to meet basic needs
- For those whose lives and well-being are at risk because of war or natural disasters
- For justice and mercy to prevail throughout the world—*thy* will be done
- For unity among Christians in every congregation, country, and corner of the world
- For those serving in the American armed services, especially those in harm's way
- For our enemies, that their hearts may be transformed by your love and truth

And God Saw That It Was Good...



Flowers honoring Kathy Felder on her retirement



Circle of life—sunflower seeds harvested from Arthur's lone "Joy in June" plant



Singing and spreading the Good News of Jesus' birth in Wellington Green

Toddler Learning Center is Becoming a Reality



December Open House



Same Table, Different Chairs

BREAKING THE SILENCE OF MENTAL HEALTH FOR ALL

*A Workshop with Rev. Dr. Sarah Griffith Lund
for South Carolina Presbyterian Pastors, Educators,
Youth Leaders, and Volunteers*



Reverend Dr. Sarah Griffith Lund majored in religious studies in college at Trinity University, graduated with a Master of Divinity degree at Princeton Theological Seminary, and also received a Master of Social Work degree at Rutgers University. She was ordained into Christian ministry by the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in 2002 and began serving as a local church pastor in 2003.

In 2011, she earned her Doctor of Ministry degree from McCormick Theological Seminary with a focus on revitalizing the local church. She has served large and small congregations in Brooklyn, Minneapolis, and New Smyrna Beach, Florida, and Indianapolis, Indiana. She currently serves on the National Staff of The United Church of Christ as the Minister for Disabilities and Mental Health Justice.

You may remember Dr. Lund as the author of *Blessed Are the Crazy: Breaking the Silence about Mental Illness, Family and Church*. We studied this book during Sunday school in 2019. And Dr. Lund was the featured speaker for a community event Westminster hosted to discuss mental health issues.

Please share this information with anyone who is interested in better understanding and embracing people whose lives are affected by mental illness.