



# Westminster

## Presbyterian Church

### ZEPHYRS

LENT 2018



#### ENTERING LENT | Pastor Rob McClellan

By mid-February, Lent will be upon us. It offers us a couple of really important opportunities. Will you take advantage of them?

Lent comes from an Old English word for “spring,” and to be sure it does correspond to a time leading up to the spring equinox, and when new life “springs” forth in much of the world. Liturgically, as adopted by the church, Lent is the time that leads up to Easter, the springing forth of Jesus Christ from the grave and the new life it symbolizes.

Lent mirrors the 40 days Jesus spent in the wilderness, where he was tested, refined, and prepared for his journey ahead. Historically, Lent has *(cont...)*

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#### LENTEN PRACTICES | Associate Pastor Bethany Nelson

Every year during the Lenten season, I make the effort to simplify my life, as Rob describes in his article. I enjoy the extra spaciousness that provides, which offers me the opportunity to more intentionally focus on the life and ministry of Jesus. I find that Lent is always an important time to consider how I might follow more closely the teachings of Jesus, and how I might be a more faithful disciple.

In addition to paring down, however, I also like to add one specific thing to my life during Lent – intentional acts of service. Though Lent is traditionally about simplicity and self-reflection, I find it is also a time to focus on sharing God’s love with others. Of course, it is my goal to do this throughout *(cont...)*



## ENTERING LENT | Continued...

been associated with penitence. While this carries baggage for some Christians today, it can be seen more helpfully as a time of reexamination and reconsideration of one's direction (which is truly what "repentance" means).

The first opportunity, then, is to intentionally enter a wilderness time of sorts. We can use Lent to free ourselves of some of the usual distractions and busyness to consider our life, how in sync (or out of sync) it feels with Spirit, and envision what changes we might like to make. We can choose to spend a little more time in quiet, prayer, and more meaningful conversation. We can study. We can simply pare down – pare down our schedules, our closets, our commitments to things that do not bring life (to us or others), making necessary room for new life to spring forth.

The second opportunity is related to the first. In addition to removing extraneous things in our lives, Lent invites us even to pare down even further. This is tricky because sometimes the people most likely to accept this invitation are already too likely to deny themselves, their rightful place in the world around them, and the things and feelings they deserve to have. Done carefully, however, this is not about self-flagellation, but rather re-calibrating the senses in order to encounter the sweetness of this life anew.

A colleague and her husband once denied themselves of all sweet things during Lent. By that I don't mean just "sweets" (all too often we reduce Lent to dieting). They didn't eat anything that was sweet tasting, even fruit! The purpose was to have their taste buds shocked on Easter, at the first taste of something sweet, a physical reminder of the sweetness of the life Christ Jesus brings us.

Can we pare down, clear out, and get out into the wilderness? Are we willing to see what refining and preparing God can offer in order to birth something new in us as individuals and as a community? The church will be doing some visible things to remind us of the invitations of Lent. You'll notice no flowers in the sanctuary, the bulletin deprived of color, more time before and after the services for quiet and prayer. Let these be signals of God's invitation to follow Jesus into the wilderness, so we emerge more ready for whatever journey lies ahead.

God's Peace,  
Rob

## LENTEN PRACTICES | Continued...

the year, but I like to choose something especially for the Lenten season that I know will help to shine God's light.

This year, you might choose to get involved with a service opportunity at Westminster. Our Outreach and Society Commission will be assembling welcome bundles for newly arrived refugees. (See *Trigg McLeod's article for more details.*) Either on your own or with others, consider contributing some or all of a welcome bundle to those working to rebuild their lives in a new country.

Our Sunday School classes will once again sponsor a Lenten canned food drive. Every Sunday, you are encouraged to bring a specific canned good to be donated to the Marin Food Bank. The children will gather the cans during worship. The schedule for this year will be –

*February 18 – Canned Beans*

*February 25 – Canned Chicken*

*March 4 – Canned Fruit*

*March 11 – Canned Fish*

*March 18 – Canned Chili*

Our **Loving Creation** team has a whole list of suggestions of how we might be in service to the environment. Consider choosing a couple of ideas to do throughout the Lenten season (See page 7).

However you decide to mark this Lenten season, may it be a meaningful time for you.

Blessings,  
Bethany

“We can choose  
to spend  
a little more time  
in quiet, prayer,  
and more meaningful  
conversation.  
We can study.”



## YOGA FOR SPIRITUAL WELL-BEING

Erin Elliott

It's tough these days to meet someone who doesn't know anything about yoga. And yet it is most-often perceived as an ambitious fitness endeavor where one contorts oneself into impossible shapes. Yes, there are many yoga folks (called "yogis") that embrace these very challenging and attention-receiving poses. And yes, the poses are impressive. Yet the type of yoga I am drawn to and what I offer at WPC is a very different type of experience.

*I guess one might call it "Yoga for the Rest of Us"*

What holds my attention in this slower and less bendy style of yoga is that I engage with it in ways that challenge me in very different ways. Here are two examples.

First, I am constantly paying careful attention to my breath. Yes of course our body does breathe on its own. But with this type of yoga the breath becomes central to my yoga practice. So, when I move in ways that challenge me, I check in with my breath to see how I am doing. It becomes my main tool in my "tool kit" as I move through a yoga practice. This is an ongoing process throughout my sessions. In the classes I teach,

I share with my students on how to engage in this way. Second, when connecting with my breath I also pay closer attention to my overall well-being. As we know, a full life means lots of opportunities for excitement and of course an abundance of disappointments and hurdles. When I slow down and pay attention, I harness the ability to calm, to soothe, to surrender and to accept. On a physical level, I am engaging with my parasympathetic nervous system which by its nature is powerfully calms and soothes. Additionally, I am also accessing my "inner-caretaker." For me this is about my spiritual well-being. I am allowing myself to check in and remember what is most important to me and my growth. And endeavor to meet it with deep kindness and of course, self-love.

Curious to try out one of my Contemplative Yoga Classes? They are appropriate for ALL abilities, genders and ages. The next series will be on Monday mornings at 9:30-10:40am in Findlay Hall. Drop in anytime from February 26-April 30. Check the worship bulletin and WPC website for more details. You can also find details on my website, [erinelliottyoga.com](http://erinelliottyoga.com). I welcome questions at any time.

*NOTE: Please bring a mat if you have one. Extra mats and other yoga props are provided.*

## POETRY CORNER

Submitted by Debbie Dybsky

### THE OTHER ANNUNCIATION | by Amy Fryholm

What if there was another girl  
To whom the angel did not come.  
One who said, every day, "I am ready."  
She woke, she dressed,  
she went to the well to draw water.

Still no flutter of wings  
No gifts delivered in the dark.  
No sudden lights.  
Just ordinary grit and labor.

She knew the stories-Samuel, Miriam.  
The power of, "Here I am."  
She wiped sleep from her eyes.  
Readied the day. Waited.





## TREASURE TROVE | Ruth E. Wells, Music Director

I recently came across one of my compositions in the WPC music library... *"A Heart for Simple Things."* It is one of my first formal choral compositions, and was written while I was in the interview process for the music director job at Westminster. That was 10 years ago! Later that week I decided to catalog my list of compositions and found how profoundly being the music director here has inspired me to create music for worship.

Before coming to Westminster, I had dabbled in choral composition. I'd written two or three original pieces and one arrangement for the choir at St. Gregory of Nyssa Episcopal Church in San Francisco, but didn't really fancy myself as a composer. And in my early years here I wrote maybe one piece each year, but in 2010 I started to "hear" things as I read the worship plans each week and began to compose short Taize-style chants for the 8:30 service (also the year Jim Gibbs challenged me to write a couple of song parodies for the pledge campaign that sparked a new aspect of creativity). But the lights really came on in 2012 for choral and solo compositions, and I started to find my voice as a composer.

These 10 years with you have been a tremendous blessing to me! With your inspiration and indulgence, I have written 36 original worship chants, 24 original choral pieces and 17 arrangements for choir (both SATB and SSAA), composed 17 original solo pieces and 15 arrangements for solo voice, plus a dozen instrumental obbligatos and other incidental music.

I treasure the way you nurture and encourage me. Trust me; I'm not going anywhere. I'm looking forward to what our next decade together will bring!

Blessings,  
Ruth E.

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## LEGACY FUND UPDATE

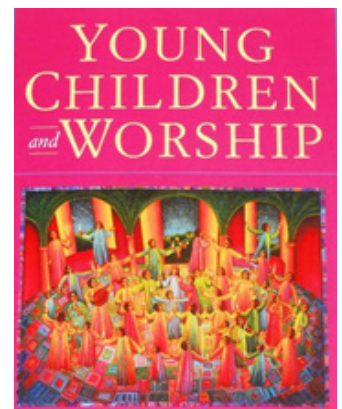
Westminster's Legacy Fund provides endowed support for both the church's operating budget and special projects. Annual disbursements are available in several different categories, including Mission, Children and Youth, Ministry, and Music.

Over the last year, in addition to supporting the annual budget, the Legacy Fund has helped to finance a variety of projects and speakers. The Outreach & Society Commission made a contribution of \$1000 to **BORDERLINKS**, a non-profit organization working to deepen public understanding of migration. Through this gift, the O&S Commission honored the thirteen Westminster members who spent one week in early 2017 in Arizona and Mexico with BorderLinks, witnessing nonprofit work on the ground and building relationships with those deeply affected.

The Legacy Fund has helped bring two guest speakers to Westminster – John Philip Newell, who preached in worship last January, and Bruce Reyes-Chow, who offered a two-session series for parents about social media. Later this year, supplies and training supporting a new curriculum for our younger children – **YOUNG CHILDREN AND WORSHIP** – will be funded in part by the Legacy Fund.

Thank you for your support of the Legacy Fund.

To learn more contact Ginny Quick:  
EMAIL: [ginnquick@comcast.net](mailto:ginnquick@comcast.net).





## WELCOME SHARON

At their January meeting, the Session voted to welcome The Rev. Dr. Sharon Burch as a Parish Associate at Westminster.

Over the past year, Sharon has worked with both Rob and Bethany to help expand our pastoral care and support. Under Sharon's leadership, a new "Westminster Cares" group has begun to support the pastoral staff and the Deacons in caring for our congregation. Thank you, Sharon, for offering your gifts and talents to Westminster in this way. Here is a little more about Sharon, in her own words.

I am a life-long Marinite. I grew up on Belvedere Drive, was a student in the very first sixth grade class at Strawberry Point School, and I now live in the San Rafael home out of which I went to high school.

I hold a Ph.D. in Systematic Theology and the Philosophy of Religion from the Graduate Theological Union and an M.Div. from Pacific School of Religion, both of which I got at mid-life. Before I began seminary, I was an experienced teacher, holding CA elementary and secondary teaching credentials.

I taught theology and religious education at Boston University School of

Theology, was the head pastor of First Baptist Church of Lexington, MA, an American Baptist congregation that dated back to 1963, and worked as a Pastoral Counselor at the Interfaith Counseling Center, located on the San Francisco Theological Seminary campus. I was the administrator there since its founding in 2009 before retiring from that profession in December.

My work at SFTS began what is turning out to be the Presbyterian leg of my spiritual journey. I have also had the privilege of working for the Seminary as an adjunct professor and have been invited to read D. Min. dissertation projects and advise students in that program.

I am deeply grateful for the opportunity to support the excellent pastoral team at Westminster. Being invited to work with a group of lay people who are dedicated to expressing support for congregational members who are isolated due to various limitations allows me to use my pastoral skills productively

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## REFUGEE SUPPORT PROJECT | Trigg McLeod



AN EASTER COLLECTION DRIVE WILL SUPPORT NEW BEGINNINGS FOR NEWLY ARRIVED REFUGEES.

Last spring, the Outreach and Society Commission collected almost 200 backpacks from our generous congregation full of essentials needed by immigrants upon their release from detention centers in the United States. That project was such a great success that Outreach has decided to turn our focus this spring to the

needs of the hundreds of refugees who resettle in the Bay Area each year.

Partnering with the Oakland office of the **INTERNATIONAL RESCUE COMMITTEE (IRC)**, we will collect and assemble "welcome bundles" that contain essentials for a new kitchen, bathroom, or baby. IRC will use these bundles to set up the first apartments for refugee families resettling in the East Bay. Having fled their home countries under threat to their lives, refugees often arrive in the United States with next to nothing. Our donation of household items will provide these families with the basic comforts of home as they work to gain their footing, restart their lives, attain self-sufficiency, and ultimately to thrive.

On Sunday, March 11 at 11:15am following worship, a representative from IRC will lay the groundwork for understanding refugee resettlement in the United States and IRC's role in that process. We will learn how refugees are selected for U.S. resettlement, what happens once they arrive, and how they integrate into our communities. We hope you can join us.

Together, we can help families restart their lives by participating in this collection drive, which will run March 11 through March 26th. During that time, look in the narthex and in the bulletins for sign-ups for the purchase of the needed goods. We will also need a few volunteers to help assemble and deliver the final "welcome bundles" to the IRC Oakland office.

*"I was a stranger and you welcomed me."  
Matthew 25:35*

**Contact Trigg McLeod:**  
**EMAIL: [findtrigg@gmail.com](mailto:findtrigg@gmail.com)**



## CREATING A POSITIVE SOCIAL MEDIA IMAGE

Jeff Shankle, Youth Director

I have a love/hate relationship with social media. If it were up to me I wouldn't be on any of those networks. I wouldn't own a cell phone. I wouldn't text people. I would live quietly with my record player and rotary phone (which we actually own) ... fast forward to my days of being a complaining old curmudgeon who sits on his rocking chair.

But none of that works for me and, (not to sound overly spiritual here), is not even what I'm called to do as a Christian. The world we live in today demands that I'm available on different platforms much of the day. So, you can find me on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat, LinkedIn, Pinterest, Strava, Blogger, Yelp, Skype, and I can even send you a personalized Bitmoji. You can also find our church on Facebook and Instagram because that's where the Presbyterians of the future will gather for committee meetings.

Recently I read an article about a group that has formed on Twitter called the White Nonsense Roundup. Their basic aim is to engage racist trolls on social media for people of color so the victims don't have to.

It can be exhausting trying to dialogue with the gutter dwellers of social media. I've tried before and gave up.

But this group inspired me about what it means to live out the Gospel message of good news in every space. We normally think of public spaces as malls, sporting events, churches, parks, etc. But today many of us, especially our young people, are "hanging out" online. Why isn't there greater attention and thought behind what it means to be a form of good news in online forums? Social media can be a very dark place. Why aren't we bringing Light into it?

When we go on trips with our youth group, I always tell our parents that you'll get to see what we're up to on the church's Facebook page and Instagram feed. Although people sign releases for this kind of thing let's be honest, most of us don't read those things. Saying it aloud to everyone is our way of making sure people know and can then have any questions or concerns addressed.

Here's my caution though... Whether we like it or not, our young people are going to craft a social media image of themselves. While many of us see Instagram, Facebook, and Snapchat as simply recreational things we do just for fun, these platforms are not just a part of young people's social lives; in some cases they're required for their collegiate and work lives. More and more colleges and universities are using Facebook as a means of connecting first year students in myriad ways. Furthermore, their colleagues at work are using social media as the first means of communication for work projects. Just yesterday I had

a meeting with 2 other people (both around 40) and all of the communication occurred entirely over Facebook Messenger with follows on Instagram and Facebook so we could see what each other's ministry looked like to establish trust.

The ship has sailed. And while there are outliers out there that we admire, teens who refuse to be a part of it all, this isn't about them. It's about the mass numbers that are sailing away into a new (virtual) world. With nearly 80% of young people using Snapchat with Facebook and Instagram following close behind, how will we meet the needs of these young people in these spaces?

Read part 2 of this article at [www.wpctiburon.org/our-blog/](http://www.wpctiburon.org/our-blog/) to learn more about how we make social media a more positive space.

“ But today many of us, especially our young people, are “hanging out” online. ”

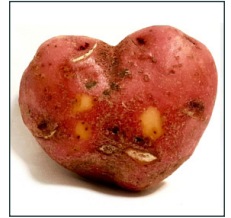




## LOVING CREATION

Here are some relatively-easy, cost-effective, eco-friendly actions to consider as a Lenten practice. These have been suggested by our Loving Creation team. If you have some others you are trying out, please let Mary Mossteller or Judi Sachs know and we'll add them to the list on our church website.

- **EAT ONE OR TWO VEGETARIAN DINNERS A WEEK.** Eating less meat is one of the most effective ways to reduce your carbon footprint. "Raising livestock produces 20% of global green house gases." It takes a lot more energy to produce a pound of meat than non-meat alternatives. If you have an easy, favorite vegetarian recipe, let us know and we will share it.
- **WALK OR RIDE YOUR BIKE TO NEARBY APPOINTMENTS OR ERRANDS.** Loving Creation team member Jeff Heely has set a goal of walking if his destination is within 4 miles; and at the same time he is keeping in shape.
- **SUBSCRIBE TO IMPERFECT PRODUCE.** "1/3 of the food raised does not make it from farm or factory to fork;" a good portion because it is not perfect in shape or size.
- **CHANGE YOUR LIGHT BULBS TO LED.** LED lights have come down in price, last a long time, use less energy and can substantially decrease your electric bill. "LED uses 90% less energy for the same amount of light as an incandescent bulb and half as much as fluorescent, without toxic mercury."
- **PLANT A TREE OR PLANTS THAT ATTRACT BUTTERFLIES OR BEES.**
- **DRY ONE FEWER LOAD A WEEK.**
- **BE MORE CONSCIOUS IN RECYCLING AND COMPOSTING.** This can be done both at home and at church. This year we plan to buy new food waste bins and create clear signage for disposal of our food waste at WPC with the goal of composting 90% of it.
- **DONATE CLOTHES, SHOES AND JEWELRY THAT YOU NO LONGER WEAR TO THE TIBURON THRIFT SHOP.** In addition to recycling, you are also donating to the church. The Women of Westminster group that staffs the thrift shop on Mondays has pledged \$14,000 to the church from their share of the Thrift Shop profits. You can leave items in the barrel at the church or take them directly to the thrift shop Monday through Saturday, 10-3.
- **SWITCH TO REUSABLE BOTTLE CONTAINERS FOR COFFEE AND WATER.** "Only 5% of plastics are successfully recycled." The relatively new double-walled stainless bottles such as those made by Hydroflask or Swell keep your drinks cold or hot for 24 hours, are comfortable to hold, and don't sweat.



*Quotes are from Drawdown, The Most Comprehensive Plan Ever Proposed to Reverse Global Warming by Paul Hawken.*

### DON'T FORGET TO REGISTER FOR THE WESTMINSTER WOMEN'S RETREAT!

Join facilitator Rev. Jan Reynolds as we reflect on being  
*"In the Presence" of God, self, and others.*

Jan will share with us practices that sustain and enliven. With large and small group time, as well as plenty of free time on the beautiful grounds of St. Columba's, this retreat will nourish your soul.

From March 16-17.

See Bethany for details or pick up a registration form in the narthex.



St. Columba Retreat House | WPC Women's Retreat 2018

## CAPITAL CAMPAIGN UNDERWAY

Our capital campaign, Westminster 2020: Forward in Faith, is officially underway. Though preparation for a renovation has been literally years in the making, the time is finally here to begin. From now until the summer, the Capital Campaign Leadership Team, chaired by Judi Sachs, will be sharing the vision and engaging with you so that we can build God's desired future for Westminster together.

**Very simply, this project is about growing three things:**

*the safety, utility, and ministry capacity of the main church building (with our beautiful sanctuary largely unaffected).*

Put even more simply, this is about caring for the ministry of Jesus Christ particularly entrusted to Westminster so

that another generation can have the types of experiences many of us have had and more. Pray for the campaign and our church. Stay tuned for more information, and look for how you can participate.

