

# The newsletter of Westminster Presbyterian Church

17 William Street  
Auburn, NY 13021  
315-253-3331

July and August 2023

Worship 9:30am Sundays

office@westminsterauburn.org  
www.westminsterauburn.org

## Congratulations, graduates!



On Baccalaureate Sunday June 18, we recognized two Westminster members who completed their degrees this past year. Kate Brundage graduated from Dartmouth College in

January, and Paul Dungey earned his bachelor's degree in business marketing from Empire State University.

## Gilchrist Scholarships



Three Westminster members were awarded Douglas J Gilchrist scholarships to support their higher education in 2023-2024. The church is happy to support Claire Brundage (Bucknell University), Lydia Marteney (University of Copenhagen graduate program), and Leo

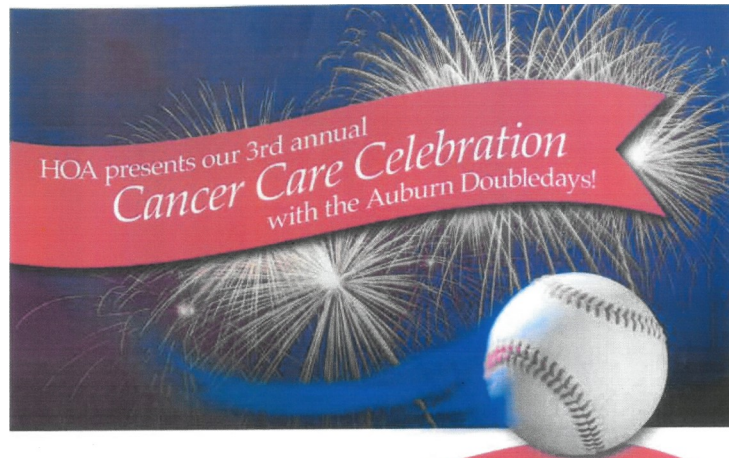
Araujo (Cayuga Community College) as they pursue their educations, find their God-given gifts, and pursue their dreams for the future.

## Summer forums: Listening Sessions

Join Catherine Fessenden and Jill Fandrich in the social room following worship on four Sundays this summer—July 9 and 23, August 13 and 27—to review the church's mission and vision statement Holy Conversations, and to talk about the type of leaders Westminster needs to walk with us into that vision. The Holy Conversations report and your input will help the Pastor Nominating Committee search for the right person to be our next called pastor. Please attend any or all of these listening sessions so your voice is heard.

## Take me out to the ball game!

Westminster Church is promoting an Auburn Doubledays outing on Saturday, July 8, courtesy of Hematology Oncology Associates of Central New York, who are sponsoring their 3rd Cancer Care Celebration. We have a block of free tickets to distribute to our members and friends who wish to join us for the game. Current cancer patients and cancer survivors are invited to join their peers on the field pre-game and will receive a special gift (registration for these folks is recommended). To reserve tickets, sign up on the clipboard in the narthex or call Melanie in the church office. See Coylynn Cator or Audrey McNally if you have questions.



**Saturday, July 8**  
Baseball game followed by fireworks!  
(Rain Date: Saturday, July 15)



Scan for tickets!

FREE admission to ANYONE who registers with this QR code or picks up a ticket at one of our HOA offices. Fun for all ages, with...

- Gates open at 6 p.m.
- Game at 7 p.m. followed by fireworks
- Recognition ceremony & gift for cancer survivors
- Gift for first 500 guests

**See you at the game!**

## Steps in the Journey

By Jill Fandrich



The last few months have been a whirlwind of activity and emotions as we said goodbye to Pastor Patrick Heery. The farewell dinner and his last service were beautiful, and we are grateful to everyone who planned these goodbyes and came to wish Patrick, Jenna, Emerson, and Josephine blessings on their next steps.

Now come the questions... what's next?

We now are officially in the Interim Period between called pastors. The session is in the process of seeking a temporary pastor who will provide leadership and guidance during the interim period. In the meantime, experienced and skilled "supply pastors" are leading worship on Sunday mornings, and many leaders are faithfully doing the work of the church. If you have a question or concern, please speak to any church leaders or call the church office at 315-253-3331 to be referred to an appropriate person to help you.

The actual search for a new called pastor will be the responsibility of the Pastor Nominating Committee (called the PNC), a committee elected by the congregation to carry out this very important task. The PNC is intentionally representative of the congregation at large. Its first task is to write the Ministry Discernment Profile (the church's "resume") and upload it to a denominational database called the Church Leadership Connection (the CLC). Our profile will then be matched with Pastor Discernment Profiles, which are the "resumes" of pastors seeking calls. The PNC will follow up with pastors who might be good matches for Westminster.

The Pastor Nominating Committee was elected by the congregation on June 25. Its members are Elizabeth Dominguez, Jill Fandrich, George Fay Jr, Thomas Fessenden, Audrey McNally, Amy Sargent, Brian Teucke, Lilyana Thornton, Eli Hernández and Sarah Trapani.

The Holy Conversations Report which was adopted by our congregation in 2022 is the mission and vision study which will guide our search for a new pastor who will help us live into that vision. During July and August, we will hold four listening sessions following worship on July 9 and 23, August 13 and 27. Catherine Fessenden and Jill Fandrich will facilitate these discussions, which will refresh our understanding of the Holy Conversations report, provide an opportunity to evaluate how our trial period is going, and reflect on what kind of pastor will be best suited to walk with us on our walk. The congregation's thoughts and ideas are crucial to the work of the PNC, and we encourage everyone to attend any or all these listening sessions. They will each cover distinct topics.

If you're feeling a little apprehensive or unsettled, that's ok. This is a major time of transition for the church. But Presbyterians believe in taking things slowly and trusting the process. This process brought us Patrick, and many great pastors before him. It will work for us again.

## Summer Worship Leaders



This summer, we welcome a variety of voices to our pulpit to lead worship. Some will be familiar and some new, and we are excited to worship with them. Here is the schedule for worship in July and August:

July 2: Rev. James Moore (co-pastor at First Presbyterian, Auburn)

July 9: Shavonn Lynch

July 16: Rev. Steve Plank (retired presbytery Stated Clerk/Communicator)

July 23: Rev. Steve Plank

July 30: Shavonn Lynch

August 6: Rev. Sue Wonderland (retired Presbyterian pastor)

August 13: Shavonn Lynch and Audrey McNally (hymn service)

August 20: Shavonn Lynch

August 27: Steve Plank

## Nourish and Flourish

# Nourish and flourish

this summer at Westminster



June was a whirlwind of activities, events, and goodbyes, but the July/August Ministry Team managed to gather for three productive meetings to plan for the summer, our first season without Patrick. The new model of ministry leadership effectively emerged and the process continues to shape effective disciples of God.

The team explored the New Testament readings from the Gospel of Matthew and focused on the well known Parable of the Seeds (sometimes called the Parable of the Soils in Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23). The passage reveals to us that the conditions under which seeds fall determines whether they will grow, how long they will be sustained, and how fruitful the growth will become. The team chose “Nourish and Flourish” as its theme for the season. They pondered over the question, what does it take to maintain fertile ground at Westminster?

Jesus’s message to us uplifts our spirit, to nurture our relationship with God as a means to flourish and bear fruit. We nourish our faith through God’s word, so our lives will grow with a bountiful of God’s grace. We also till the ground at Westminster to be the church God wants us to be as we consider our future. In this newsletter, read about all the ways we will live out this theme in July and August.

The message was strengthened as we selected the passage from Luke 8:15 as our scripture for the summer, “But as for that in the good soil, these are the ones who, when they hear the word, hold it fast in an honest and good heart, and bear fruit with patient endurance.”

Annual members: Jill Fandrich, Paul Dungey, Audrey McNally, Susan Marteney, Linda Russell, Linda Mackay, Shavonn Lynch

Seasonal Members: Sue Ahner, Coylynn Cator, Charlie Cator, Dan Kuhn, Sue Kuhn, and Tina Barry

Advisors: Diane Lehner, Ann Wiley

Staff: Noel Cregg, Lori Pettit, Chris Patch, Melanie Toole

## We want you on a Ministry Team!

You are invited to join the September/October Ministry Team!



What does that mean?

We have been experimenting with the Ministry Team model of planning and doing the work of the church for about a year now. The Ministry Teams do everything the Worship, Christian Education, Mission, and Membership/Evangelism committees used to do, but on a seasonal model. The church year is broken down into 6 seasons, each lasting two months. The seasons are: Epiphany and Life of Christ (January-February), Lent and Easter (March-April), Pentecost (May-June), Life of the Church (July-August), the Story of God (September-October), and Advent and Christmas (November-December).

A ministry team is convened for each season to plan and implement the worship, education, mission, and membership & evangelism ministries of that season. Seasonal members are committed to two months of planning and two months of implementation. The seasonal members are then done and do not repeat consecutively. (The annual members, elected by Session, serve on all six teams to provide continuity, oversight, and guidance.) This allows for short term commitments, fresh perspectives, creative/innovative ideas, and training new individuals in the work of the church. We hope you consider joining the next team!

## REFRESH

*By Bronwyn O'Connor*

The Refresh women felt refreshed on Saturday, June 10 as Pat Kennedy, Judy Dilmore, Donna Riester, Barbara Bok, Catherine Fessenden, Tiffinny Chapman, Carolyn Hiza, Tina Barry and Bronwyn O'Connor met at the church. You can ask any of these ladies about Refresh, past and future.

Our June discussion was about Evangelism.

Evangelism can be an act of love. Don't be afraid of Evangelism, be a good listener, extend an invitation (church or other event) and share your story when the time is appropriate. Everyone left with elements to develop their faith journey story and a book called Holy Moments.

Refresh will not meet over the summer, but we will be reading the prologue of Holy Moments, then start discussions at our September meeting. Bronwyn has more copies of the book for anyone who'd like one.

# The Journey of Faith: Confirmation and New Beginnings

By Chris Patch

With immense joy and a spirit of gratitude, we commemorate the successful completion of our year-long Confirmation Classes. These past twelve months have been a journey of discovery, growth, and deepening faith for our young confirmands- Ryan Creighton, Cole Creighton, Enrique Hernández, Mariela Hernández, Macie MacKay Lilyana Thornton, and Oliver Jirousek. We are incredibly proud of their achievements and the spiritual maturity they have developed throughout this period.

This journey could not have been possible without the unwavering support and dedicated efforts of numerous volunteers. Their selfless service, passionate teaching, and the nurturing of our youth's spiritual growth has been an integral part of this journey. It is truly a testament to the unity and strength of our congregation that we have been able to provide this essential rite of passage for our youth.

Moreover, the support of our entire congregation has been instrumental in this process. Your prayers, encouragement, and participation have created a nurturing and welcoming environment for our confirmands. You have helped shape the faith and character of our youth, proving that it truly takes a village to raise a child.

As we celebrate this milestone, we also acknowledge the departure of Pastor Patrick. This is also a time of new beginnings and exciting possibilities. Let us celebrate his contributions and welcome the future with open hearts, embracing the changes that are to come. We look forward to the new blessings and opportunities that God has in store for us.

And now, a new chapter begins for our confirmands. You are the present and the future of Westminster Church, and we wholeheartedly embrace you. We encourage you to continue your spiritual growth, involve yourselves in the life of the church, and use your newly confirmed faith as a guiding light in your life's journey.

Together, as a congregation, let's continue to foster an environment of faith, love, and mutual respect. Let us face the future with enthusiasm, open to the exciting possibilities and the wonderful mystery that is God's plan for us. Here's to the completion of a significant journey, and to the many more that lie ahead. Onward, in faith and unity.



## July Loose Offerings: Matthew House



**MATTHEW  
HOUSE**

Matthew House allows its residents to reach the end of their life journey with peace and dignity. Respect and compassion are the hallmarks of the comfort care given to the residents as well as their families. Over the last 21 years, Matthew House has served 525 residents of Cayuga County and surrounding areas. Matthew House receives no insurance reimbursement or public funds. Services are provided free of charge and rely solely on donations, memorials, fundraisers and grants to carry out their mission. Westminster's July loose offerings will support Matthew House.

## August Loose Offerings: Soup Kitchen at SS. Peter & John By Tina Barry



The loose change offering in August will support the soup kitchen of Saints Peter and John. Your generous donations help feed those who are hungry in Auburn. There is also a need for volunteers! There are many volunteers that prepare nutritious lunches Monday through Wednesday and Saturday from 9am – 12:00pm at the church. Entry for volunteers is directly across from the Post Office. No need to call ahead to volunteer. You will be given a job that lets you meet, work and make new friends. Some are beginners, other have been helping for years. Director David Ward would be especially happy to have 5-6 volunteers from Westminster on Saturdays. Contact Tina Barry at 315-237-8592 with any questions that you may have.

## Sleep in Heavenly Peace Updates



The SHP shop is open on Mondays and Tuesday evenings from 5:30pm to 7:00pm for anyone to come in and help. Usually there is sanding or piecework projects to be done in preparation for an upcoming bed build day. It is also a perfect time for the curious to learn more

about Sleep in Heavenly Peace and see how the SHP workshop functions. The Sleep in Heavenly Peace workshop is in the Fingerlakes Mall on Clark Street Road – Auburn, NY.

SHP can always use help with deliveries. Volunteers assisting with bed deliveries meet at the SHP shop on Saturdays when there are no bed build days, at 9:00 AM, and Sunday afternoons at 2:00 PM. Typical deliveries take about 1 ½ to 2 hours.

Presently, there is a backlog of 50 kids on the bed waiting list, so volunteer support for bed build days and bed delivery days is crucial. The July bed build day is Saturday, July 15 from 9:30am to 1:30pm, and the August date is yet to be scheduled.

Watch for more information in the Westminstergram or follow Sleep in Heavenly Peace's Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/SHPAuburn> If you wish to support SHP with a contribution of bedding materials, visit their Amazon wish list: <https://a.co/isvXv1N>. Currently SHP needs bedding for boys ages 5-8 and older boys 9-13.

Thank you all for the continuing support of Sleep in Heavenly Peace!

## Will There Be a Fall Rummage Sale?



Westminster has historically held a Rummage Sale once or twice a year with proceeds supporting a local agency while

helping us all clean out our homes. If you are interested in being the Coordinator and organizing a Rummage Sale (fall 2023 or spring 2024), contact Susan Marteney at 315- 283-4181 for details and easy steps to make it happen!

## Contemplative Hikes continue!



Thanks to Brian Teucke, a new member of Westminster, the monthly contemplative hikes which have become a cherished part of many peoples' faith lives will continue! Brian has stepped forward (literally and figuratively) to

lead the hikes following Patrick's departure. Brian and Ashley (and now their infant son Ruairi) have been regular participants in the hikes over the past few years, and Brian led his first hike on June 25 in Bear Swamp, and it was a huge success.

As a way of introduction, Brian works as a union representative for SEIU Local 200 United. A native of NJ, he has lived in Germany, Kansas, and Virginia before settling in Owasco. Brian and Ashley love being in nature. She is an avid and skilled gardener, and he loves trail running, racing, and hiking. Both are fierce advocates for environmental and climate justice. Brian also performs in an Irish band, *The Connolly Column*.

Brian is planning monthly hikes, with the winter months to be determined. He will begin the hikes with a short devotional, followed by a silent and contemplative first half, a reflective "half time," and a free second half as the walkers see fit to chat or share. Hikes will vary in degrees of difficulty, with some flat and easy and some more challenging. They will be between 2-4 miles and usually within an hour's drive of Auburn. Brian believes in "organizational democracy" and welcomes suggestions and new ideas about the hikes.

Summer hikes are:

**Sat, July 22<sup>nd</sup>, 10:00AM:** Green Lake State Park, Fayetteville- (likely the Farmer's Hill Loop- about 3.3 miles but only moderate incline)

**Sat, August 26th, 10:00AM:** Robert H. Treman Park in Ithaca- Rim and Gorge Loop (4.5 mile loop that is challenging but beautiful)

Reservations are important in order for Brian to relay last minute information (such as conditions, cancelations, or meeting spots). His contact info is (804) 955-9950 / [brian.d.teucke@gmail.com](mailto:brian.d.teucke@gmail.com)

## Children & Youth Summer News



The Children's Worship Center and Nursery will continue throughout the summer. There will be Sundays, however, that they will need to combine both age

groups in the Worship Center if there is a staff shortage or lack of volunteers. Your children are the heart of Westminster, and look forward to sharing stories, songs, prayer and fun this summer.

The theme for July and August is "Nourish and Flourish". The children and leaders will talk about what that means and how they can nourish themselves and love others. An outing is planned to visit a sunflower field in August at a date to be announced.

The children and youth will also hold their annual lemonade stand on Saturday August 12, during Auburn's Founders Day festivities. Proceeds will be donated to an organization determined by the kids. Details to come.

Miss Noel, the Children's Worship Leader, has been in contact with the Activities Director at Westminster Manor, a home for seniors on South St. They would be happy to have visits from the children to read to them, do a craft, or even help in their garden. If this is something that you think your child would be interested in, please let her know.

Dates and upcoming events can be found in the Westminstergram, as well as in the REACH Facebook group. If you'd like to be added to the group to see what they are up to please search for the group and click to join.

## Deacons News

The Deacons are looking forward to resuming visits bringing communion to those who are unable to come to church. If you or a family member would like this, please email the church secretary, Melanie Toole, to be added to the list at [office@westminsterauburn.org](mailto:office@westminsterauburn.org). You can also speak with Noel Cregg or email her at [Noelcregg7321@gmail.com](mailto:Noelcregg7321@gmail.com). They anticipate the first visits to begin August 6.

As always, if you are in need of prayer, information about the church's small groups, or anything else you have questions about or would like guidance, please reach out to one of the Deacons, and they will gladly help you.

## News from our Scout Troops

By Andrea Creighton

Westminster Church is both the charter organization and the meeting site of Cub Scout Pack 43 and Boy Scout Troop 43, having supported them in many ways for a number of years. They meet in the Education Building on Monday and Tuesday evenings, and we'd like the church family to know more about them!

Pack 43 can have boys and girls from Kindergarten to 5th grade. Currently we have 7 boys and girls who meet with us regularly. This year they have participated in 2 food drives to help our community food banks, attended Scout Sunday at Westminster Presbyterian, helped with yard clean up at Auburn VFW Post 1975, Morgan's Half Acre Produce, and at Westminster as well as made their own cars and raced them at their pack and district level Pinewood Derbies. They have also gone on a few hikes and marched in the Holiday Parade and the Memorial Day parades. They did this all while earning belt loops and rank patches

Troop 43 currently has 14 members, all boys. They also participated in both food drives, the clean up service projects and marched in both parades. In addition they volunteered at Sleep in Heavenly Peace with members of Westminster, went to Woodhenge, a sustainable living community, had a lock-in at the church where they stayed up all night playing video games, playing hide and seek, and watching movies. Several boys earned a new rank this year and many more will in the next few months. Some of the events that they are most proud of are the participation in the annual Seward Day ceremony, a Flag Ceremony at the VFW, and the annual Flag Day ceremony at the Elks Club. These ceremonies require the youth to stand respectfully for quite a bit of time sometimes holding flags. Even the youngest scouts were able to participate and remain still and respectful, something some adults find difficult. These kids really have gone above and beyond to support their community and its organizations.

This summer both the pack and the troop plan to attend summer camp. They have several other fun outdoor activities planned. Who doesn't look forward to campfires and s'mores? They will be having a lot of fun.

Both the troop and the pack are always open to new members. If you know any youth who are interested in checking out scouting you can contact Aaron Creighton at [aaroncreight@gmail.com](mailto:aaroncreight@gmail.com) for boys and girls age 11 to 17.

## Korean Peace



The PC(USA) Office of Public Witness urges Presbyterians to answer the call of our General Assembly to support peace in Korea and suggests two actions: 1) ask our members of Congress to support a bill in the House of Representatives: "The Peace on the Korean Peninsula Act, H.R. 1369;" and 2) participate in the Korea Peace Appeal signature campaign, a global effort which began last year.

If you have not already done so, please consider supporting the movement to replace the armistice with a peace agreement by adding your name to one of the signature sheets in the church narthex, or by signing online at <https://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/peacemaking/korea-peace-appeal/> (be sure to fill in the Affiliation field with PCUSA). The KPA signature campaign ends soon! Signatures should be submitted by **September 3**, in time for KPA organizers to deliver them to the United Nations General Assembly this fall.

June 25 - August 15 is the "Season of Prayer and Reflection in the Korean Peninsula" in Presbyterian churches across the U.S. Please prayerfully consider how you will join the many voices around the world praying and acting for peace in Korea. For more information, contact Linda Russell, Co-convenor, Presbyterian Peace Network for Korea (PPNK).

## Tech Team

A small, dedicated group of individuals operate the cameras and sound system on Sunday mornings to livestream worship services to our online worshipers. We'd love to have a few more folks available to make this happen. "Training" starts by shadowing the regular operators, and no one is expected to go solo until they're ready. Talk to Jill Fandrich, Paul Dungey, or Jack Hardy any Sunday morning if you're interested in knowing more.



## Summer Worship

We'll be worshipping indoors most of the summer, with outdoor worship tentatively planned for August 6 and September 3. Outdoor worship is dependent on the weather forecast, the condition of the front lawn, and sufficient help to set up chairs, sound system, music equipment, and cameras.

## Property News

Property committee is so happy to welcome two new members George Fay and Mike Pantoliano. They will be valuable additions, since both have experience and skills that are needed! George has hit the ground running by fixing the garbage disposal in the kitchenette.

Rich and Gardner (the company that did the drainage work) has returned as promised and repaired and reseeded lawn areas damaged by their work.

Other routine tasks have been undertaken and accomplished in the maintenance of our buildings and grounds. Chandeliers in the sanctuary have been repaired and equipped with LED lights, additional folding chairs have been purchased, outdated signage on the education building has been removed, and an agreement between Westminster and the YMCA for their use of our playground has been drawn up, waiting for Session's approval, to name a few.

Many thanks to the hard working members of the committee: George and Mike, as mentioned above, as well as Jim Burlingame, Thomas Fessenden, Joe Runkle and Robyn Warn. Beth Salvage continues to serve as chair. Contact any of us with ideas or concerns.



**W**estminster welcomes everyone, no matter where you are on your faith journey or your life journey. In faithfulness to our understanding of Christ, Westminster affirms the full inclusion of all God's people in the life and ministry of the church. We welcome persons of every race, gender, age, sexual orientation, family status, and economic status into full participation in our faith community. We value questions as much as answers. We encourage curiosity, discovery, and honest struggling with questions of faith.

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