

# Westminster Chimes

Coming in to be nurtured, going out to serve

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## Two Services for Summer



Beginning Sunday, June 21, Westminster provides two different worship experiences through Labor Day weekend, Sunday, September 6. We hold worship at 10:30 a.m. in the sanctuary year-round. This service is livestreamed.

On June 21, we will host a summer service in the Great Hall at 9 a.m. The most significant difference between the 9 a.m. and 10:30 a.m. services is that at 9 a.m., the pastor leading the service does not preach a sermon. The scripture being used that Sunday in both services is read, and then the pastor helps lead a conversation regarding the scripture chosen. We try to have as many voices as possible speak. It's a way to ask questions of the community, share insights, and experience and reflect on a particular scripture from many points of view.

In the Book of Order, there is a "Directory of Worship." This is what it says about form and freedom:

### W-2.0102 Form and Freedom

"Fixed forms of worship are valuable in that they offer consistent patterns and practices that help to shape lives of faith and faithfulness. More spontaneous approaches to worship are valuable in that they provide space for the unexpected insight and inspiration. In whatever form it takes, worship is to be ordered by God's Word (scripture) and open to the creativity of the Holy Spirit."

Gifted musicians Teresa Wilhelmi and Michael Barnes help lead worship. Teresa is on the piano at 9 a.m. and Michael is on the organ at 10:30 a.m. Communion takes place on the first Sunday of every month at both services.

There are a few people that worship at both services on the same day. When asked why, most people say something like, "I like hearing what many of us think about a particular scripture at 9 a.m., and then at 10:30, I like hearing the direction the preacher takes."

You are invited to attend worship and to bring others with you throughout the summer.

## Ice Cream Sunday!

On Sunday, June 14, during fellowship time after worship (around 11:30 a.m.), Westminster will hold Ice Cream Sunday! Please join us as we enjoy ice cream with all of the toppings (and non-dairy options, too) and celebrate the start of summer. We'll be in the courtyard or the Great Hall, weather depending. We hope to see you there!



# Welcome to Our New Members



## Reid Kostek

Reid Kostek is a 16-year-old sophomore at Grant High School. His favorite part about church is the community. He wants to learn more about how to do good in the world.



## Autumn Cox

I'm Autumn, I'm 15 years old. I'm a freshman at Grant High School and I'm pretty dang pumped to be an official member at Westminster Presbyterian Church since I have been going here for forever. I have three dogs, Lupo, Melo, and Lily. I also



**Also Joining, Not Pictured: Leo Lillard, age 15.**

## Vision and Strategy Task Force Findings

The Vision and Strategy Task Force is wrapping up our year of research and reporting and celebrated with a presentation and cupcakes after worship on May 17. We will send a final report to Session in June.

We shared the need to work toward being Beacons of Light. In a Beacons of Light future, we can focus on filling in age gaps within the church and engage the external community—these are the two focuses we distilled down from multiple months of listening to your hopes and concerns. We shared how the other eight focuses we presented earlier in the year (arts and music, the building, the budget, assessment, core values, technology and communication, our internal community, and social justice) would also be addressed by focusing on filling in age gaps and engaging our external community.



Our task force also identified three scenarios WPC needs to avoid.

- Flashlight: If we fill in our age gaps but we don't engage the external community, we will become like a flashlight. It gives light, but only in one direction.
- Fading light: If we neither fill in age gaps nor engage externally, we will only be a comfortable place for ourselves, as we slowly fade.
- Lava lamp: If we engage externally, but we don't fill in our age gaps, we will be like a lava lamp. Beautiful, but dated.

We were able to share our materials over the two weeks following our presentation, but if you'd like to explore more, please visit the website: <https://westprespd.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/05/Vision-and-Strategy-Task-Force-Presentation.pdf>

Thank you for joining with us in this journey. This has been meaningful work for us, and we hope it will continue to be meaningful to Westminster as we conclude our tasks together!  
–Lindsey, Marcia, McKenna, Peggy, Ted, and Thomas

## Pastor's Column

The Rev. Lindsey Hubbard-Groves at 503-287-1289, ext. 115

From the Reverend Lindsey Hubbard-Groves' letter to the church dated May 21, 2026:

It's hard to believe it's been over three years since I interviewed here. I have a fondness for the conference room where my first in-person interview took place, and for each of the folks who were in that room. The Vision and Strategy Task Force has met there as often as thrice a month in the last year—and we've realized thrice over there's more work we could do—but we must focus on the tasks we have been called to complete and within the resources we have. With a similar feeling, though a more difficult one, I've realized that it's time for me to end my service here as an associate pastor.

I'm grateful for everything I've been able to do here, including welcoming new members and friends, groups at all ages and stages of life, ministering alongside our thoughtful deacons and Adult Education program... in long meetings, in coffee shops and hospital rooms. And my family is grateful for the ways our son has grown here. We've watched him grow to love the possibilities of the Church.

My departure from this role doesn't end that good work. And I hope one thing you've seen in my work is an affirming reminder that we are all the Church and all of us are in ministry. I have cared for you and your families, but I've witnessed a million more moments where you have cared for each other: planning, ushering, trimming roses, singing, poetry, prayer, and meals, driving and high fiving children, and accepting the care of others. We are all critical to this work, even though we won't all give and receive care the same way. I know you will continue to care for each other and find rest here.

We, the Church, are reformed and always reforming. Change is our tradition! And there's yet more good, and careful work, for Westminster to do. The Vision and Strategy Task Force has heard your hopes and concerns, as well as concerns from previous task forces, and will soon finish reporting on work that can be done going forward. I hope you see possibility for the Church in that work. I also hope you hear in that work, from a great group of Westminster people, that you are each, and together, beacons of light.

I have one memory from directly after I interviewed here, too. I remember thinking, "Whether this church calls me or not, it was lovely getting to know them and knowing they're there." The beauty of the connectional Church, as we call it, is that whenever we leave one church, we are still connected to each other in the greater Church, forever.

Thank you for making me a part of this.

Peace be with you,




## Congregational Meeting and Celebrating Lindsey's Ministry with Us

At a called meeting on Tuesday, May 19, the Session agreed to the Reverend Lindsey Hubbard-Groves' request to call a meeting of the congregation to ask the Presbytery to dissolve the pastoral relationship. There will be a meeting of the congregation in the sanctuary directly after worship (around 11:30 a.m.) on Sunday, June 7, to act on this request and to approve the terms of separation. On Sunday, June 14, we will celebrate with Lindsey in worship and following during our Ice Cream Sunday event. For more information, please see the letter from our Clerk of Session:

<https://westprespdx.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/05/Letter-from-Clerk-5-21-26-.pdf>

# BEHIND THE SCENES

*Behind The Scenes is an occasional article in the Chimes written to highlight ways friends of the church join in activities and services that are not always apparent. Interesting historical features and happenings may show up, too.*

## The Tower Room

By Jackie Farah

Twenty-three twisting steps to the tower. At the top, you may be inclined to continue turning right onto the balcony—but stop. Look left and see the small, octagonal, purple room inviting you in. Enter slowly; let your gaze take in the arched windows, the art glass along the fireplace, and the painting above it. Select a chair, feel your body settle, and take a few slow breaths. The colors and filtered light invite meditation.

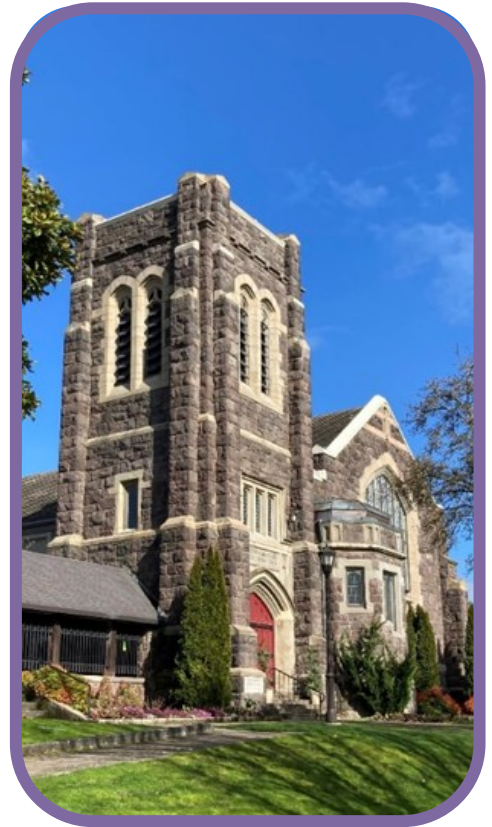
Humankind has used towers since prehistoric times. The oldest known may be the circular stone tower in walls of Jerico (8000 B.C.). When “Joshua led the battle of Jerico” it seems not all the walls came tumbling down.

Anglo-Saxon church towers became common in the 10th -11th centuries and served religious and defensive purposes—homes for bells, lanterns, and refuge. One of the oldest buildings in Scotland is a tower dating from the 11th century (liberated three centuries later during the Protestant reformation). Gothic church towers, such as ours, developed in response to both architectural innovation and spiritual aspirations of the Middle Ages. Designed with arches and windows to “lift the eyes and soul heavenward,” they were architectural landmarks and symbols of community prestige.

All these considerations influenced the early planning for Westminster Presbyterian Church and its tower in 1912. The notion of using the tower for bells was scrapped early due to cost. Other than that, there is no record of how early church leaders expected to use the space. It did, however, become a meeting room for a men’s prayer group and later a regular gathering place for teens.

Decades of use by the teens and others took its toll on the interior of the room. In 2005, church friends, led by Sally Woolley, raised funds and applied their artistic visions to reclaiming the space. They ripped up “ugly, orange shag carpeting...filled with pizza debris and who knows what else.” They refinished the floor, stripped and painted, scrubbed and caulked. Having tossed the old furniture, they acquired new pieces and installed a new chandelier. Artists Caroline Greger (oil painting) and Carmen Vetter (glass work) created the art that adorns the fireplace. A watercolor painting by Sally Woolley features a Celtic cross. As you enter, read the invocation by the door. It is from the Isle of Iona. “Be still and aware of God’s presence within and all around.”

There are some mysteries regarding this room. Occasionally one hears bells ringing from the tower. Is this in fact a bell tower despite that 1912 decision? (Ask Michael Barnes.) And maybe a massage table? Really? Ask around or check it out yourself to see what else might be uncovered.



# Meet Your Elders - Lou Ann Tiedemann, Class of 2026

*In this column, we'll introduce you to the elders who serve on Westminster's Session. If you're a Westminster member who might be interested in being an elder, contact the Reverend Gregg Neel for more information. (gneel@westprespx.org).*

## **Which committee(s) do you serve on, and what do you do with them?**

I serve on the Congregational Life Committee and on the Nominating Committee as a representative from Session. I have served on Session several times and have been on various committees including Mission and Service, Children's, and Personnel.

## **How long have you been active at Westminster?**

I have been active at Westminster 43 years. I was raised in a Presbyterian church.

## **How do you like to spend your free time?**

I am grateful for retirement and all the free time it grants me. My sewing room is my happy place where I love to quilt and sew. I also enjoy reading hard-copy books and listening to Audible, which I do while I am sewing. I like walking, gym workouts, and cooking, too.

## **Do you have pets?**

I do not have pets but enjoy Finn, the dog next door, who has figured out if he pushes his ball under the fence, I will throw it.

## **What's something people probably don't know about you?**

Some people might not know that I served on the search committee that brought the Neels to Westminster. Even though that committee was a lot of work, it was also enjoyable and allowed me to work with some great people.

## **What's one thing you enjoy about serving on Westminster's Session?**

Being on Session forces me to stay involved in the Westminster community. I especially like the chance to know what is happening in the life of the church and to be a part of the decision process.



## You're Invited to the All-Church Retreat!

We are so excited about the 2026 All-Church Retreat, held Friday, July 17, through Sunday, July 19. This year's theme is "Joy in Community," and there's no better place to experience it than Menucha Retreat and Conference Center in the Columbia River Gorge. Just 30 minutes away, Menucha is a beautiful and comfortable setting for people of all ages. We'll gather Friday evening for dinner and singing, come together for community connection on Saturday morning, then spend Saturday afternoon choosing our own adventure: music, crafts, pool time, hiking, and naps. Don't miss our annual variety show on Saturday night—always a blast for participants and audience alike. Sunday closes with worship together before we head home, carrying a little more joy than we arrived with.

Registration uses a tiered pricing model; choose the level that fits your situation. Costs listed are per adult. All tiers include five meals and comfortable lodging. The tiers are: (1) Tier 1 — \$265: Reflects the true cost of the retreat, (2) Tier 2 — \$220: Slightly subsidized cost, and (3) Tier 3 — \$190: A little more support. Full scholarships are available for adults who need them, and children and youth 18 and under are automatically covered by our scholarship program when attending with an adult. Contact Gregg Neel or the church office with questions. To register, go to our website, here: <https://westprespx.org/connect/community-life/> and follow the instructions.

# Session Action in May

In its May 2026 meeting, the Session:

- Examined and approved for membership four new-member candidates: Laura Cook, Vicki Hunt, Jan Stover, and Glenn Taylor
- Heard an update from the Property Committee, which included a tour of the chapel; chapel demolition is completed and remodeling will begin soon
- Learned that all lighting in the building is being upgraded with LED lights and the cost is covered by an Energy Trust of Oregon grant
- Listened to an update on summer plans for the youth
- Heard a report from the Nominating Committee Chair that all is going well; prayers were requested that all positions will be filled soon

## 2026 Collins Lecture with John Fugelsang

Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon presents "A Conversation on the Separation of Church and Hate," the 2026 Collins Lecture with John Fugelsang. The event is Saturday, June 6, at 7 p.m. at Trinity Episcopal Cathedral. A virtual option is available. Tickets are \$30. For more information or to get tickets, visit EMO's website: <https://emoregon.org/event/2026-collins-lecture/>.

### June Birthdays



We rejoice with those members, friends of our congregation, and staff who celebrate birthdays in June:

6/1	Duncan Neilson	6/13	Gwen Newborg, Gary Moran,
6/2	Jane Rabe, Mike Carl		Jeff Lewis, Mike Marsh,
6/3	Jackie Farah, Carol Morgan,		Janet Patin, Katie Essick
	Harold Poujade	6/14	Donald Housley, Jan Youel
6/4	Jim Mackay, Betsy Mackay,	6/15	Sevard Wagenius
	Peggy Woolf, Beth Keys, Paula	6/16	Stan Stanford, Josh Pickens
	Watt	6/17	Carol Davidson
6/5	Jim Olsen, Joshua Curtis	6/18	Amelia Stabler
6/6	Easton Richmond, Julie Bonds	6/20	Abbi Dunham, Gail Kolden, Paul
6/7	Fred Locke		Mattson, Judy Rice
6/9	Lou Ann Tiedemann, Greg Lee,	6/24	Sandra Miller
	Louis Barker	6/25	Nancy Crean
6/10	Michael Barnes, Tricia Waineo	6/26	Lynn Spruill, J.T. Newcomb
6/11	Robin Rolfe	6/28	Anne Stevenson
6/12	Greg Moore, Ian Brown,	6/30	Mary Strickler
	David Hanson, Meshal Alajmi		

# A Message From the Nominating Committee

Dear Friends in Christ:

As the Nominating Committee begins its work, we are asking for your prayers. We have begun meeting to discern in faith whom God might be calling to serve as officers at Westminster.

The beloved community of Westminster provides opportunity to serve the body of Christ through the offices of deacons and elders, each with work guided by the mission and vision of Westminster. All that is necessary to serve is to be a member of Westminster, to be open to personal growth and change, and to be willing to make a commitment to a life of love in Christ. In purpose and in practice, we are to love our neighbors.

Think this over and pray. Over the next month, the Nominating Committee will be speaking with members of the congregation for possible nomination as a deacon or ruling elder. If you have an idea of someone who might make a good leader, please let us know by contacting Gregg Neel at [gneel@westprespx.org](mailto:gneel@westprespx.org).

You may also write a name or names of suggested leaders in the spaces below, then cut out this page and return it to the church office, attention Gregg Neel.

Suggested for deacon:

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Suggested for elder:

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If the opportunity calls you, we hope you will stand and say, "Here am I, Lord. Use me as You will."

Yours in Christ,

The 2026 Nominating Committee of Westminster Presbyterian Church:  
Janet Patin, Chair; Linda Dinan; Greg Houser; Scott Karn; Cari Olmsted; Beth Outterson; Christine Parno; Kris Sparks; Lou Ann Tiedemann; Chuck Wiley; Mary Ann Wish; Gregg Neel, Staff Liaison

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## Support for the Homeless

Bridge services for Portland's homeless provide a structured transition from street life to permanent housing. These services offer support, resources, and stability, helping individuals develop the skills and confidence needed to secure and maintain long-term housing. Westminster Presbyterian takes part in Family Promise with the hope of providing some of these services. The best part is you can participate--without committing to long hours. We are always looking for Westminster people like YOU! Contact Mark Niemann-Ross for a non-binding conversation about getting involved. (E-mail [info@westprespx.org](mailto:info@westprespx.org) if you need Mark's e-mail address.)



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Chimes articles are due by 5 p.m. on the dates listed below.

- ◆ June 10 for July 1-31
- ◆ July 15 for August 1-31

If you want to receive the monthly Chimes newsletter electronically, you can sign up for an e-subscription at this website: <http://eepurl.com/cCazsL>.

If you want to end your postal-mail subscription, please e-mail Jonathan at [office@westprespdx.org](mailto:office@westprespdx.org).