

Westminster Chimes

Coming in to be nurtured, going out to serve

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Growing Up

By the Rev. Junha Kim, jkim@westprespd.org
Associate Pastor for Youth, Mission, and Community Engagement

People were bringing children to him in order that he might touch them, and the disciples spoke sternly to them. But when Jesus saw this, he was indignant and said to them, "Let the children come to me; do not stop them, for it is to such as these that the kingdom of God belongs. Truly I tell you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will never enter it." And he took them up in his arms, laid his hands on them, and blessed them. —Mark 10:13-16

We were all once children and youth.

Then, somewhere along the line, we learn we suddenly aren't children or youth—we've "grown up." And "growing up" has meant more responsibilities, more people for whom we're responsible; it has also meant greater freedoms to pursue dreams, adventures, passions, dreams, and families. Growing up is just a matter of time.

Somewhere else along the line, when we do "grow up" and are no longer children or youth—with jobs to do, bills to pay, and lives to build—we often lose our sense of imagination and wonder, no longer enjoying grand adventures where the floor is lava; we reshape our understanding of right and wrong, no longer questioning why our neighbor doesn't have lunch; we adopt the values that the grown-ups around us taught, now thinking that boy who wears dresses, or that one student who wore the same shirt every day, are people we need to fear.

It matters how children and youth "grow up" (some never do!), and it matters the values that the "grown-ups" around them teach. They can "grow up" believing they need to achieve the most and do the best, or accomplish X or Y, or reach this height or that one, just to be satisfied. Or they can grow up holding onto their childlike curiosity that says learning is more important than winning, holding onto their gratitude and sense of accomplishment when meeting whatever goals they've set for themselves, and never letting go of the childlike wonder and love with which they go out into the world.

Children and youth ministry is about cultivating a space for them to trust in who God has called them to be, in how God has created them, and in the path towards thriving that God has prepared for them. So that when they do all grow up and experience the inevitable things of human life—like when life gives us things to grieve, or shakes our sense of self, or stirs confusion about our identity, or breeds uncertainty about the "point of it all"—they can meet these experiences trusting that God is with them and trusting that God does not cease in leading them towards thriving.

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Growing Up

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If it is only those who can see, hear, and receive the kin-dom of heaven as a child who will see, hear, and receive the kin-dom of heaven, then it should be children and youth from whom we learn how to see, hear, and receive the kin-dom, and children and youth in whom we invest to ensure each child has the tools and resources for thriving.

West Habitat Pope Leo Village Status Report

On June 26th, the Mission and Service Committee approved our Pope Leo Village Partnership with Habitat for Humanity to build 17 low-income housing units for Portland families. We—Melinda Hinkley, Louise Jones, Caroleigh Robinson, and I (Jack Robinson)—reviewed Westminster's partnership status with Habitat and their anonymous donors, who made it all possible. The donors were given a tour of the Pope Leo Village site, which is making great progress with all 17 units nearing completion on schedule.

I had a chance to review our commitment, current status, and targeted goals for the partnership. It was a good story. During the presentation, Louise gave Habitat three quilts from the 17 her group has already completed.

Activity	Commitment	Current Status	Year-End Target
Build Days	3	4	8
Quilts	17	17	22+
Cards	17	15	32

Financial Support	Commitment	Current Status	Year-End Target
Mission Budget	\$1,500	\$630	\$1,260
Hope Builder Lunch	\$7,500	\$17,210	\$17,210
Gifts that Build	\$8,000		\$8,000+
Total	\$17,000	\$17,840	\$26,470

In summary, we have already exceeded our commitment and have a chance to double it in all areas by year end. Habitat and the donors were very appreciative. They were also impressed that 73 members of Westminster participated in one way or another. Thank you for the phenomenal response. Our major activities for the rest of the year are four more scheduled build dates, five-plus quilts, another Sunday School card party, and the Gifts that Build campaign held during Advent.

Thank you, landscape fund donors!

As of press time, we are happy to report Westminster has raised \$9,880 from 34 donors, exceeding our goal of \$7,500 for the "Living Memorial Landscape Fund." Thank you all! The donors are shown in the list below. Please note: If you see any error in your dedication, please alert the church office so we can update our records.

The fund's purpose is to enhance Westminster's welcoming appearance and community outreach. Several projects have already been completed: potted shrubs and flowers at each entry, a new front entry rose garden (under the sanctuary window), tree roses in the parking lot rose garden, replacement of the messy "stinko ginkgo" tree in the northwest parking lot corner with an incense cedar (southeast corner).

Next steps include installation of a memorial art piece, "Wayfinders," in the southwest corner of the parking lot; spring bulbs and enhancement of the courtyard and the front, particularly the first view from the southeast corner of Schuyler; and various shrub additions throughout the grounds. If you have further ideas or suggestions, please contact John Barker. (Call or e-mail the church office if you need John's contact information.)



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Welcome, New Member!

Jamie Bash is a mom, sister, daughter, and friend. Her sense of social justice and understanding of living out her faith stems from her upbringing in the Episcopal Church at a place where Sojourner Truth once spoke, in a town with several houses that were part of the Underground Railroad. She enjoys choir, backpacking, hiking, gardening, great food, and, complex as it can be, her career in public health crisis and emergency risk communication.



Adult Education Programming in October

Classes are held at 9:15 a.m. on Sundays in the chapel and on Zoom. To get on the Adult Education Program's e-mail list, contact Jonathan at office@westprespdx.org. Here's a list of what we have planned for October, below. For more detailed descriptions, visit our website at <https://westprespdx.org/connect/adult-education/>.

October 4: Update on Barbie's Village and Other Initiatives—Future Generations Collaborative

October 11: Oregon Law Center's Eviction Defense Project—Becky Straus, Managing Attorney

October 18: Issues on the Ballot—League of Women Voters

October 25: PIRC Communications and Outreach Support—Emory Mort

Pastor's Column

Two themes keep emerging in the ministry areas I have the privilege of serving at Westminster: simplifying our work and managing financial resources. Bringing these themes together—simplification and financial resources—can feel overwhelming. At a recent meeting, we decided to develop a way to generate additional income for Westminster's 2027 operating budget. We were pleased with the result, but someone observed that our efforts to simplify often end up making things more complicated.

This led me to consider that managing financial resources may never be simple—which makes simplification even more important. Westminster wants as many people as possible to understand our financial resources and how we use them. The greater the complexity, the harder it becomes to communicate transparently—not because we lack transparency, but because the systems themselves are so complicated.

Westminster has seven board-designated funds, each with stock and bond components, as well as more than 40 special-purpose funds. Each special-purpose fund tracks a donor-designated gift that must be used as intended. Many gifts pass through Westminster to another organization, such as the Northeast Emergency Food Program. Other funds remain active for years as money is received and distributed. For example, Angel Tree donations are collected annually to support families in the Albina Head Start program, and any remaining balance carries forward to the next year. Because these funds continue over time, we must track them separately.

I am beginning to realize that, both personally and in my ministry, I need to simplify my understanding of God's call to serve and to use the resources I have been given: imagination, love, hope, encouragement, administrative ability, and playfulness.

Life will be complicated. What remains simple is this: God is love, and I am called to love deeply as God has loved me. May you know the simplicity of God's love and find support amid life's complications.



Reformation Sunday

Westminster will celebrate Reformation Sunday during the 10:30 a.m. service in the sanctuary on October 25th. A bagpiper will join the choir as part of the worship service. Because bagpipes can be especially loud inside the sanctuary, families with small children may wish to plan accordingly.

Fall Festival



On Sunday, October 25, from 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., you're invited to our annual Fall Festival—this year, OUTSIDE! After the service, join us on Hancock Street between 16th and 17th avenues for fall-themed snacks, pumpkin decorating, a photo booth with fun accessories, and a BOUNCE HOUSE! The Children's Committee, Congregational Life Committee, and youth are planning this special day, and we'd love your help. If you'd like to volunteer, please contact Amanda Smith, Interim Director of Children's Ministries, at amanda@westprespdx.org.

Meet Your Elders - Mike Marsh, Class of 2027

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@westprespdx.org).

Which committee do you serve on, and what do you do with them?

I serve on the Mission and Service Committee where we respond to human needs by focusing on the priorities identified by our church—food insecurity, racial justice, houselessness, and poverty. As part of this work, we strive for partnerships with funded organizations so the congregation can develop relationships with service providers. Committee members have significant experience working with service providers, which has helped bring a solid focus to the giving. We also work with special offerings—One Great Hour of Sharing, World Communion, and Christmas Joy. Serving others is an important part of my life, and I identify with this focus on service to others, particularly given current government cutbacks.



I also serve on the Finance and Administration Committee, which oversees the finances of the church. The role includes tracking and managing revenue and expenses, as well as the coordination of budget development to best address our mission. Again, this committee is another excellent example of people bringing their experience to bear, resulting in productive outcomes for the church. I enjoy joining in the discussions of how we can best achieve our goals.

How long have you been active at Westminster?

I've been active in "a" Westminster for decades, having been raised and worked in Salem, where I attended Westminster Presbyterian (as well as serving on Session there). My wife, Char, grew up in Medford, attending Westminster Presbyterian there. We moved to Portland and then joined Westminster here in 2020, becoming active shortly after that.

How do you like to spend your free time?

My wife says I've failed retirement, but I enjoy contributing. That includes working with groups that seek to strengthen accountable, open, and ethical government; assist with athletic programs; and provide leadership instruction—here and overseas. We love to travel, learning about people and places. We also love being involved with our two daughters' families (four grandkids) in Portland and Bend. We think being grandparents is the best job around!

Do you have pets?

We have had three dogs during our marriage but don't have one now. We travel so much in helping with grandkids and for the experience of travel that we don't want to leave a pet so often—although we do have two granddogs!

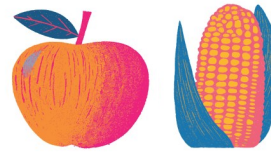
What's something people probably don't know about you?

Related to my last answer, I do love to travel! So much so that I've been to all 50 states. However, we did get a good start when I joined the Marines. We were stationed in six states in our first year of marriage! We also love to visit other countries and believe strongly in engaging with people in other lands. It's shared humanity. As Rick Steves says, "Travel is a political act."

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

I appreciate working with other people in finding solutions to challenges, including working out financial issues. I see the spirit of the Lord in how Session members talk with each other, respond based on core values, discern a problem, and find resolution together. It represents the community of Westminster—valuing people and relationships, belonging and purpose, service and love.

Session Action in September



In its September 2026 meeting, the Session:

- Heard an update from the Personnel Committee regarding staffing, including the two installed pastor positions for 2027. A budget proposal for staffing will be given to the Finance and Administration Committee by October 9th.
- Thanked Martha Wilson and her team for the final report of the Building Repair and Assessment Team (BRAT). Session immediately responded with a motion to update the sanctuary fire alarm system. Gregg Neel was instructed to appoint a team to implement this motion. Session voted to dismiss BRAT with thanks.
- Approved a method of using .5% of the legacy funds for the operating budget for a one-year experiment. This will add approximately \$15,000 to the income for 2027.
- Received the report of the financial review team for 2025.
- Shared joys and concerns.

Tai Chi

The Tai Chi practice group, which meets in a corner of the Great Hall on Tuesdays at 10 a.m., will be taking new members starting October 5th. If your physical therapist has been recommending Tai Chi for balance or mental sharpness, now's your chance! It is a gentle aerobic exercise that anyone can learn. Call Caroline Kurtz if you have any questions. (Contact the church office at 503-287-1289 if you need Caroline's number.)



October Birthdays

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

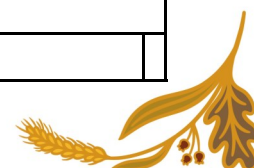
10/1	Sandra Parcel, Ray Kennedy, Carolyn Eastman, Terri Banasek	10/13	Jill Burrows, Melissa Olmsted, Glennis Lundberg
10/2	Christiana Douglass	10/14	Erik Huget, Martha Galloway
10/3	Nancy Freyer	10/15	Maddy Ross, Carol Hess
10/6	Matthew Lillard	10/16	Peggy Ellis, Linda Larkin, Dean Lillard
10/7	Leigh Wood	10/17	Troy Gabriel
10/8	Christine Douglass, Nancy Johns	10/19	Karen Lodine
10/9	Graham Ross, Ellen Haley, Margy Nesbitt, John Goff, Dan Fahrbach	10/23	Judy Immesoete
10/11	Mary Van Horton	10/25	Emily Howsley, McKenna Sherve
10/12	Jerry Dinan, Ellen Lodine	10/26	Carrie Housley
		10/27	Marcia Blasen
		10/28	Eric Wiley, Rick Lovett, Donna Haub

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Thank you, landscape fund donors!

Donor	In Memory of or in Honor of
John Barker	Bruce & Ann Huntwork
Marilyn Bergen	Esther Reback
Janice Best	Anne Taggard
Lee & Daniel Brixius	Dellie Stoll and Julia Brixius
Lee Ann Bourcier	John Barker
Diedre Cain	Virginia Wilder Cain
Nancy Freyer	Alice Thornburg
David Groff	Philip and Harriett Groff
Michael Haller	John George Haller
Karen & Scott Karn	Cloisters Art Studio
Melinda Kingsbury	William F. "Bill" Kingsbury
Curtis Kirkpatrick	Bible Students of WPC Toothmarks Practice and Tradition
Caroline Kurtz	Harold & Polly Kurtz
Cathryn Kurtz	Harold & Polly Kurtz
Christopher Kurtz	Harold & Polly Kurtz
Jan Kurtz	Harold & Polly Kurtz
Janie Kurtz	Harold & Polly Kurtz
Linda Larkin	Teachers here and gone
Judy Lyons	Burton Alvis
Larry & Bonnie Magura	Carolyn Zelle
Mike Moore	Lilla Mae Reiss and Emrie Quinn Reiss
Harold & Jan Poujade	Margi Brown
Lorin Rice	Dann Wonser
John & Caroleigh Robinson	Mary Beth Robinson
Michelle Schmidt	Archie Schmidt
Denise Spielman	Richard Spielman and Alaina Smith
Lewis Sprunger	Elaine Durst
Diane Terry	Kate Thompson
Lou Ann Tiedemann	Betty & Wayne Fry and Gloria Zeal Davis
Carol Turner	Audrey Doehne and Joanne Clements
Dan & Carmen Vetter	Walt & Ann Quiring
Janet F. Warrington	Lawrence F. Woelfer
Lynn Weigand	Hazel Wilmot
Liz Young	Margi Brown



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

- ♦ October 14 for November 1-30
- ♦ November 4 for December 1-31

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