

The Westminster Presbyterian Church
Communicant

August 2017



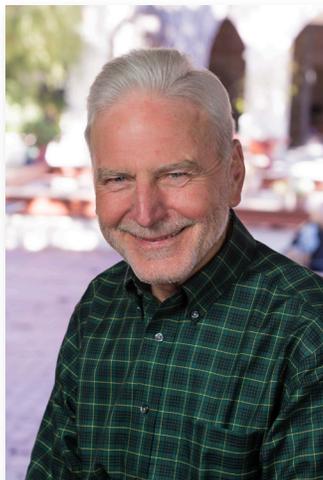
Stilling Storms

C On Sunday, August 20, we will be taking a break from our Summer Psalms II sermon series and the lectionary Gospel lessons. On that Lord's Day we will be considering the narrative of Jesus stilling the stormy sea. Our text will be Mark 4:35-41 and the story is told in the following way.

Evening had come. As the darkness was about to overtake the light, Jesus instructed his disciples that he wanted to go to the other side of the lake. Mark so writes, "And leaving the crowd behind, they took him with them in the boat, just as he was." Mark also tells us, "Other boats were with him."

Is there anything more draining than giving oneself intellectually, emotionally, physically, spiritually to a demanding person, let alone a demanding public? And that day in and day out? Jesus was exhausted. In the stern of the boat he went. Just as he was. And he fell into a deep sleep.

It must have been the mother of all squalls. The disciples were seasoned



Interim Pastor Charles Svendsen

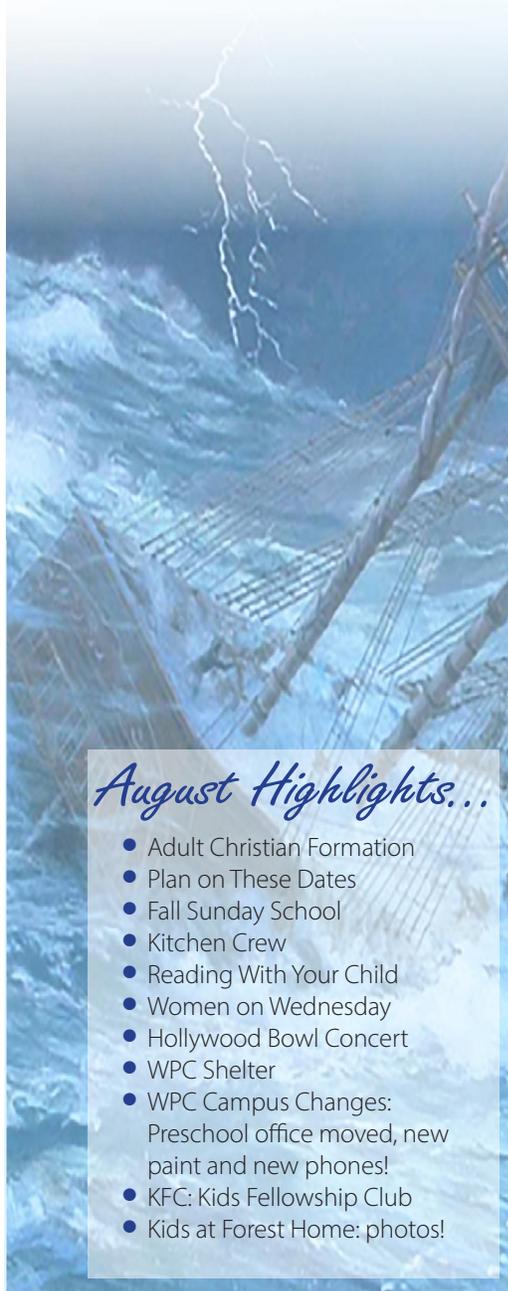
fishermen, and they were skilled in the art of dangerous waters. But this was a "red alert!" They were going to die. And the one person who might turn the situation was sleeping peacefully in the place of honor in the boat, in the stern. They woke Jesus with strident voices, "Teacher, do you not care that we are perishing?" Jesus turned from the frightened faces of his disciples, set his face into the wind and rebuked the wind. That was the word Mark used for Jesus rebuking demons in possessed people. Jesus "exorcised" the wind! And then to the sea, after the wind was without its demons, Jesus' calming voice said, "Peace! peace, be still!"

A "dead calm" followed. I wonder how long it was before Jesus spoke again? I'm sure in the dark quiet night in the boat Jesus was the next one doing the talking. Maybe the other boats listened in as he turned away from the wind and the sea, looked at his followers and gently, and I believe, compassionately said, "So, why are you afraid? Have you still no faith?" Those disciples could not talk to Jesus that night. They were dumbfounded, filled with awe, and instead they whispered to each other, "Who then is this that even the wind and sea obey him?"

So what may we say of "stilling storms" here at Westminster? Are there storms in your life? Are there storms lately in this congregation, in our presbytery, denominational storms, storms in our country and beyond? I am weathering storms of everyday life as are you.

Let's take note of three comforting truths. Notice first that Jesus began this

(continued page 2)



August Highlights...

- Adult Christian Formation
- Plan on These Dates
- Fall Sunday School
- Kitchen Crew
- Reading With Your Child
- Women on Wednesday
- Hollywood Bowl Concert
- WPC Shelter
- WPC Campus Changes: Preschool office moved, new paint and new phones!
- KFC: Kids Fellowship Club
- Kids at Forest Home: photos!

Stilling Storms

(continued from page 1)

night's adventure by saying, "Let us go across to the other side." This was not a diversion hatched up by the disciples to enjoy a time of leisure away from the crowds. Jesus took the initiative and the disciples followed at his direction. The disciples had every reason to blame him if the weather changed. After all, the journey was his idea. I believe that the Scriptures, not only here but time after time, affirm that the affairs of this world, of the church, good and bad, effective or lousy, that the events of our lives, joyous or disastrous, are all God's idea, God's journey, in God's hands. God initiates and permeates and orchestrates it all. That theology of God's sovereignty in the world, in the church and in our lives is a cherished truth of our Reformed faith. Scripture teaches that truth. "He's got the whole world and the little tiny baby in his hands." The calm and the squalls of your life and mine are lovingly held in the arms of a sovereign God – that is good news, comforting news.

Secondly, note that Mark wants us to know that the storm is frightful. The boat is in distress. "A great windstorm arose." "Waves beat against the boat." "The boat was already being swamped." The anguish of the disciples was real. They were not overreacting when they woke Jesus with the frantic cry, "Don't you care that we are perishing?" So too, our Christian faith takes fear, desperation and despair seriously. We don't minimize panic and trouble because the consequences are deep. Practically, that means that when we listen to our sister or brother's personal squalls we too take them seriously. We don't say unhelpful and hurtful things like: "It will get better." Or, "This too will pass." Or even a line heard over and over: "This is God's will for your family." Storms are real and require real care, real compassion.

Thirdly, notice that Jesus is sleeping in the boat. That's revealing. Disciples in chaos. Jesus is at peace. Is that the peace of God that we may have even amid a storm? How do we find that peace in our squalls? If we don't practice a life of prayer and nurture in the Scriptures and in the church in calm times, we will never find inner peace in stormy times. In panic, you go to what you have practiced all along. Practice prepares; ask athletes; ask pilots. Practice prayer and Scriptural reflection.

Our church, our denomination, our country, indeed, our world experiences the storms of life. Perhaps you are in a stormy place right now. The truths that God is in control of all things, that pain is real and that we can find peace amidst the tempest are the comfort and hope of our life with Jesus.

One final thought. In the second century, generations after the death of Jesus and the disciples, artwork began appearing on church altars and frescos. The ancient church was depicted as a boat, sometimes as a boat on a stormy sea. And as that art developed a figure often appeared in the boat. It was a picture of Christ in the boat, not on the land in safety, but in the boat in trouble. In the squalls of our lives, our church, our world, aren't you delighted that Jesus is "in the boat"? Aren't you and I honored that he is beside us in the storms of life? I take comfort in that. But it's not just any Jesus. The name Jesus was a rather common name in the first century, but Mark tells us that Jesus was, "the Christ, the Anointed One, the Son of the living God." Do we really believe God would swamp the boat with the "Anointed One" on board? After all this is the one who said once and says day by day to us, "Peace! Be still!"

Charles Svendsen
Interim Pastor

Looking Forward to New Fall Offering!

Adult Christian Formation Series

September 17 through October 22

The Reformation: Celebrating 500 Years

Gary Pate will give us some historical background and explore the beginning of the Reformation and the importance of reformer and theologian Martin Luther.

Adult Christian Formation classes are on Sundays at 10:45 am in the Fellowship Center. Everyone invited!





Sunday Worship Services

- 9:30 Traditional Service
- 11:15 Contemporary Service

For Children on Sundays

- 9:30 & 11:15 am
Children age 3 through 8th grade begin in worship with their families and are dismissed to Sunday School after the Children's Message.
Childcare is available for children from birth to 3 years from 9:30 to 12:30 each Sunday morning.

Adult Christian Formation

Sundays, 10:45 am, Fellowship Center
(no offerings in August)

Weekly Bible Studies:

- ❖ **Monday Bible Study**, Mondays, 1 pm, WPC Library, contact Aubrey Grey
- ❖ **Wednesday Study**, 2:30 pm, WPC Library, contact Jim Mulick
- ❖ **Women on Wednesday**, Wednesdays, 7 pm, Library, contact Sue Minihan

Student Ministries

Junior High Ministry, Grades 6-8

Contact Matt Pardee
Matt@wpcwestlake.org

Sunday School, 9:30 am, Youth Lounge

JYF (Middle School Youth Group), Tuesdays, 6 – 7:30 pm, Youth Center
Girls4God, (Jr. High girls), Sundays, 4:30 pm, Youth Lounge. Contact Lisa Rush:
Lisarush3@gmail.com

Senior High Ministry, Grades 9-12

Contact John (JR) Robertson
JR@wpcwestlake.org
SYF (High School Youth Group): Sundays, 6:00 pm, Youth Center
CNA (Christians Non-Anonymous Midweek Bible Study) Wednesdays, 7:30 pm, off site

Chancel Choir

Rehearsals Thursday evenings, 7:30 pm
Resuming September 7
Everyone with a voice is invited!

Wednesday Koffee Klatch

For adults, Oakside Room, 9:30 am, conversation & sermon text preview, more!

Weekly Community Outreach

❖ WPC Winter Shelter, Wednesdays in the Community Outreach Center: overnight shelter (December–March), year-round dinner, showers, health care

❖ **Westminster Free Clinic**: Wednesdays, 5-10 pm, United Methodist Church, TO, contact Cindy Vinson

Upcoming Events

Spirituality of Fly Fishing Retreat

Sorry, cancelled. Watch for next year!

Evening at the Hollywood Bowl

September 6 (more on page 4)

Sunday School

Begins September 10

Annual Flapjack Festival

Sunday, September 10
9:45 – 11:30 am

Kids Fellowship Club

Begins September 12
Please see page 6 for details!

Bookworms

September 14, 2 pm

Pathfinders

September 16, 8:30 am

Communion

August 6, September 3, October 1
(World Communion Sunday)

Fall Sunday School for Children

Sunday School for Fall 2017 begins September 10. We offer Sunday School at the 9:30 and 11:15 service. Children begin in worship with their families. Classes are divided by age and grade.

We would love to have you join the Children's & Family Ministries Team. We need volunteers in the Infant/Toddler Room and in Sunday School. The ministries' success depend on the members of WPC who step in and share God's love with the little ones that join us here on Sunday mornings. If you are willing and able, we would love to speak with you. Please contact Julie Beth Martin (818.889-1491 ext. 28 or julie@wpcwestlake.org).

Kitchen Crew

WE WOULD LOVE TO SEE YOU IN THE KITCHEN, COME JOIN THE FUN!

We are called as the people of God to be folks who offer hospitality. We have a ministry for that! Our kitchen crew provides hospitality to members and friends by prepping meals, setting tables, cooking, baking, creating, and dishwashing. We need you. There's a job for everyone and the benefits are fabulous!

Join the team by popping by the Congregational Life table for more information or contacting Julie Beth Martin (818.889-1491 ext. 28 or julie@wpcwestlake.org).

Reading With & To Your Child

Every parent knows that it's good to read to kids when they're little. It helps babies, toddlers, and preschoolers develop spoken language, recognize letters and words, and get ready for kindergarten. In our faith community, reading stories from the Bible or stories about God's people to your children and discussing them, helps build a spiritual and faith foundation for your child. They are provided time and space to wonder and discover with you.

What many don't know is that the benefits to your child continue well after they are able to read on their own. Research shows continued reading aloud after age 5 (and well beyond) improves reading and listening skills and academic performance (and is also loads of fun!).

According to Scholastic's 2016 Kids & Family Reading Report -- a national survey of children age 6 to 17 and their parents that explores attitudes and behaviors around books and reading -- 59 percent of parents read to kids from birth to age 5, but only 38 percent read to their 5- to 8-year-olds, and a scant 17 percent keep reading to kids age 9 to 11.

Yet most kids age 6 to 11 (and most parents) report that they enjoy read-aloud time. Reading with your child: builds vocabulary, improves comprehension, intensifies bonding, improves listening skills, generates discussion about difficult topics, provides a portal into your kids' interests, sparks curiosity and a thirst for learning.

Set aside a little time to curl up with your child, their Bible or a good book. Reading to your child at any age is a win-win for you and your child!

Women on Wednesday

Elling all Westminster ladies and friends!! We hope you will consider joining us every Wednesday evening at 7 pm in the Library for our Women on Wednesday Bible Study. It is very thoughtful, interesting and offers pleasant fellowship! Hope to see you soon!

An Evening at the Hollywood Bowl

Wednesday, September 6, 8 pm

A fun group outing to hear "Quincy Jones: the A & M Years" Cost of \$70/person includes limousine transportation. Only 20 seats available. Contact Duane Hollinger: 805.358-0788.

Shelter in Need of Meals

WPC's Shelter program provides dinner to the homeless of our community every Wednesday evening throughout the year. WPC is committed to providing meals on the first Wednesday of each month, and other church and community groups cover the other Wednesdays. We thank those small groups who have served, cooked and cleaned up so many meals over the years!

This year's calendar is full except for October 4 and December 6, when a meal still needs to be provided. If your community group/church small group/interest group/Bible study group would be able to fill the gap on either of these dates, please contact Katie Menees. Thank you!

Campus Changes: WPC Preschool Office Moved *You're Invited to Stop By*

There are several projects still to be launched in the coming months, so stay tuned!

Location, location, location...the days of our temporary "digs" are over. The Westminster Preschool office has officially moved from the portable trailer in the parking lot back into the church office building!!

We were approached by the elders of the property committee to consider moving out of the trailer and into the vacant office space in the church office wing. At first we had reservations, as we can be pretty noisy at times, and the existing office space was in need of a redo to accommodate two desks and two people. With the assurance that the church office was looking forward to the vitality that the preschool brings to the environment and the opportunity to repurpose the existing bookshelves and furniture to the Fellowship Center, it was all systems go!!

We are excited to share that we are now on the ground floor and ready to receive company. Please stop by and say hi or peek in...no more metal stairs to navigate so strollers are welcome! Also take the time to go into the Fellowship Center's Courtyard Room and see the transformation that room has undergone...a truly welcoming gathering place.



Big Thanks to Fix-It Crew!

The Property Committee would like to extend a big thanks to the Fix-It Crew for painting the first floor of Fellowship Center. All the rooms are brighter and inviting. Carpets will be cleaned this month and the crew will enjoy a much-deserved summer break!

The list of projects around campus continues to grow, so if anyone is looking to lend a hand on Thursday mornings, please contact Pieter DeVries in the church office. If you'd prefer to spare a couple of hours at a different time (after work, weekends), see Pieter DeVries or John Kayton. We have projects of all sizes and skill levels!

Campus Phone System Changes

The phone system that has served the campus faithfully for 20 years has been replaced. As some of you experienced, especially lately, the phone system did not always get you to the person to whom you wanted to speak. In late July the new system was installed, and the staff is getting used to the new functions and capabilities. The most noticeable change is that all extensions have a "1" in front. So everyone knows Kathy Josselyn's extension is 10, right? Well now it is 110. The second change you may notice is that we removed the wall phones from the meeting rooms. In talking with several of our committees and groups meeting on campus, it was unanimous that if a need arose to use a phone, they would use their cell phone. Not having as many phones actually saved us several thousand dollars.

Thanks to Our VBC Leaders!



Kids' Fellowship Club

Kitchen Capers

Begins September 12

Kids Fellowship Club begins this fall in the kitchen! We will be baking and cooking recipes of hope and hospitality each week as we learn how to serve others and offer genuine hospitality.

Kids Fellowship Club provides a safe, fun and affirming environment where children are invited to discover the love of Christ and how to share it-through, Bible lessons, hands on projects, interactive games, music and a community meal.

A few of the recipes the children will lovingly prepare will provide hope for our guests at our shelter, sustenance for the volunteer team at Westminster Clinic, and encouragement for folks who are unable to venture out of their homes. We will even be baking bread for our communion table.

Children ages 5 through fifth grade are encouraged to come join us in the test kitchen- the fellowship Hall-with an open, giving heart! A delicious time learning and applying the truths we uncover in God's word is guaranteed! Bring a friend.

Details:

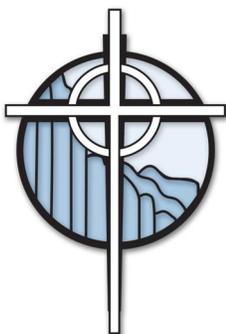
September 12—October 10
Tuesday Evenings 4:30 – 6 pm
Kids age Kindergarten through 5th Grade
REGISTER TODAY!

Cost: \$50 First Child, \$40 Second, \$35 Third and Fourth, discount with EARLY REGISTRATION
SAVE \$10 if you register by September 3 (Scholarships are available.)

Forms are online at www.wpcwestlake.org or you can pick up a registration form in the Children's and Family Ministry office.



Kids at Forest Home



The Communicant

A NEWSLETTER FOR MEMBERS & FRIENDS OF WESTMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

August 2017

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818.889-1491
www.wpcwestlake.org

Material for the September 2017 issue needs to be in the WPC office or sent by August 10 to Kathy@wpcwestlake.org
To submit late photos call Kathy Dahms.