



WESTMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

WPC Westlake

THE COMMUNICANT

LISTENING FOR OUR FUTURE

"Over the last fifty years our church has been an important part of the Conejo Valley. A few weeks ago I was talking with the founding pastor of another prominent church in our community and he said, "I pray for your church every time I drive by. You all planted the seeds for a lot of what God continues to do in this area." He went on to share about his relationship with Bob Bos (WPC's founding pastor), and how WPC helped to pave the way for his church to be planted eight years after ours.

In 2019 we're focusing on the next chapter for Westminster Presbyterian Church. While recognizing the *MANY* ways God has used this community in the past, we're listening for what God intends for us in the future.

In February a group called the Vision 2020 Team was put together to lead in that listening process. Our common goal is to articulate the unique identity of WPC and to provide a framework for how we live into that identity.

The Vision 2020 team is comprised of staff, serving elders, and church members. Our role is to listen—to what God might be saying and to what our community is thinking. Your role, as people who belong to this

community, is twofold. We ask that you'd pray, and we ask that you'd provide honest feedback when members from the team ask a question.

God planted this church in a specific place at a specific time, and, along with other churches in the area, we've been given a charge to introduce people to Jesus. The world looks different today than it did when Jesus gave the Great Commission to his first followers. It even looks drastically different from the world where WPC was planted fifty years ago, but our charge remains the same. I'm looking forward to seeing where this journey takes us, and am thrilled to be on it with you all!

Pastor Dave Rohde

Spring 2019

2020
VISION



WPC Westlake Calendar

- **April 13:** "Wonder and Joy" Women's Outing
Norton Simon Museum, Pasadena
Explore the wonder and joy that surround us. Our April Women's Outing will highlight artistic expression, particularly painting and sculpture. Space is limited.
- **April 14:** Palm Sunday
One service, 10 am
Followed by the *Fabulous Festival of Faith*, including brunch and activities. Bring a casserole to share!
- **April 18:** Maundy Thursday
Service at 7 pm
- **April 19:** Good Friday
Prayer Garden and Sanctuary open for reflection, noon – 6pm
Service at 8 pm
- **April 21:** EASTER SUNDAY
Services at 8, 9:30 and 11 am with Egg Hunt following each service
- **April 23:** Junior High Youth (JYF) trip to Dojo Boom
- **May 19:** Last Sunday of *The Story*
- **May 28:** Junior High Youth (JYF) trip to Boulder Dash
- **June 2:** Children/Teacher Appreciation Sunday
- **June 9:** Pentecost and Youth Sunday with Mission Trip Bake Sale
Youth Sunday is a worship experience led by our students. They will participate in all aspects of the service from greeting, scripture reading and offering the sermon, to serving communion. The annual mission trip bake sale will be on the courtyard between services.
- **June 19:** Westminster Youth Leader Training
- **June 23:** Music Sunday
One music-filled service at 10 am
- **June 24 through 27:** Vacation Bible Camp
- **June 25:** Junior High Youth (JYF) Pool Party
- **Tuesdays in July:** Terrific Tuesdays, 4:30 pm (outdoor fun for kids)
- **Fridays, July 12, 19, 25:** Art Cart (elementary age children)
- **July 21:** Special Offering for Senior High Mission Trip
- **July 21 to 26:** Junior High Youth (JYF) Summer Camp
- **July 27 to August 3:** Senior High Mission Trip
Our SYF—Senior Youth Fellowship—students will be returning to Philippi, West Virginia this year to continue a ministry our church has been supporting since 2003. The trip is available to incoming 9th grade through 12th grade students.
- **August 13:** Junior High Youth (JYF) Yuck Olympics
- **September 8:** Fall Flapjack Festival and Sunday School Fall Kickoff
- **September 17:** Fall KFC
Kids Fellowship Club Session begins
Continues 5 Tuesdays at 4:30 pm
- **September 29:** Bible Presentation Sunday



COMING SOON

RED LETTER Riddles

Summer Sermon Series

Jesus used all kinds of methods to teach his earliest followers. He led by example, he engaged in common conversations that they could hear, he performed signs and wonders, he preached sermons, and he told parables. During our worship services this Summer, we'll unpack some of these parables together.



BETHEX EMBRACES NEW MEANING OF A COMMUNITY CHRISTMAS

The Bethlehem Experience ("BethEx") has been a staple of holiday traditions for the Conejo Valley and beyond for decades. But this year was the first time it followed local tragedies that yielded a community deep in mourning for lost loved ones and homes. With areas near Westminster Presbyterian at 100% evacuation levels, residents had dispersed far and wide to escape the fast-moving fires, which occurred within a day of the Borderline random shooting and just a few weeks before BethEx.

That is why BethEx took on a new importance this year. A fearful community that had recently split in every direction now had a reason



to reconvene in a spirit of joy and love for an event honoring the birth of our Savior. It was a vivid reminder of what Westminster Presbyterian has always stood for as a beacon of hope to people seeking answers to life's biggest questions in an unpredictable world.

While Westminster had to postpone its 50th anniversary celebration indefinitely because of the fires, we knew that delivering our traditional gift on time to a hurting community was a higher calling. We worked hard to do our best with an army of volunteers, storehouse of Nativity set components, live desert animals and a whole lot of prayer.

Leading the way was Jeff Covert with exuberant assistance from Michelle Nash, who lent countless hours to ensure success. It was our Pastor Dave Rohde's first BethEx and he found new ways to support it, including being featured in "The Story of Christmas," an informational video written and produced by Mark Lang's company, Mark One Marketing.

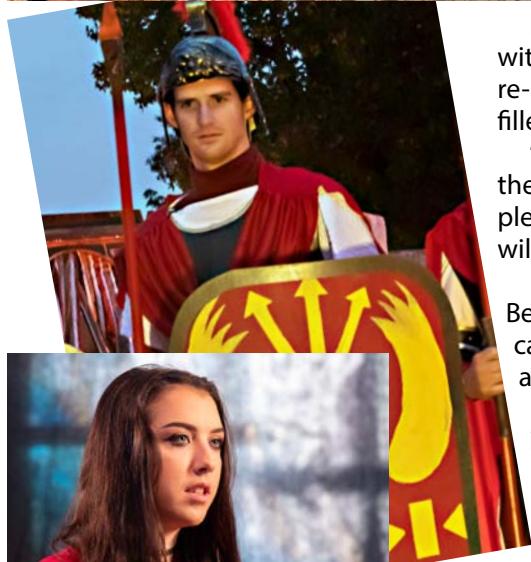
Held on the evenings of December 14 and 15, 2018, our pre-promotion, along with the event's reputation, attracted hundreds of "chariots" driving through the re-enactment of Biblical Bethlehem. They brought visitors of all ages with eyes filled with wonder and simultaneous smiles.

"We put on an amazing event while having fun, laughing often and celebrating the birth of Jesus," said Michelle Nash. "Everyone was overwhelmingly enthralled, pleased and felt the wonder of Bethlehem! I know that many guests and villagers will never forget this experience."

From a participant standpoint, opportunities for involvement were endless. Behind the scenes, set builders, publicists, costume helpers, photographers, caterers—all had plenty to do. The aroma of the proverbial sawdust left behind any great work was evident throughout.

At the events, whether dancing, offering bargains in the marketplace, training carpenters, walking braying goats, directing crowds, or simply admiring the newborn King, there was a place for everyone. Just as there continues to be at Westminster Presbyterian Church every Sunday morning. (more BethEx photos on page 8)

by Patricia Smart



THANKSGIVING BASKETS



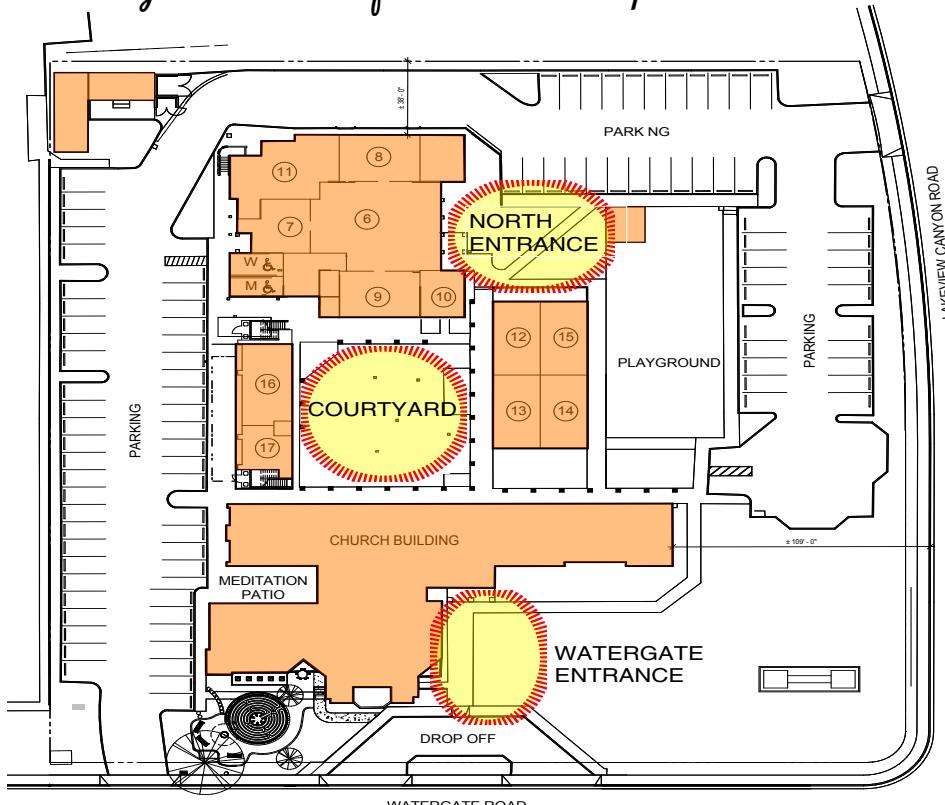
Thank you again for helping give hungry people in the Conejo Valley a more joyful Thanksgiving, and letting them know the Lord—and his people—care about them. Some of you helped fund the food, some of you decorated boxes, some helped pack the boxes, some helped deliver them, some organized... kudos to you all!



2018 CHRISTMAS DINNER & CONCERT

Our Chancel Choir was excited this past Christmas season to partner with the Conejo Valley Youth Orchestra Virtuosi for "A Night of Carols" on December 12. After a delicious pre-concert dinner in the Fellowship Center attended by about 80 people (thanks, kitchen crew!), everyone gathered in the Sanctuary for a festive holiday concert. The virtuosi (14 talented high school musicians on violin, viola, cello, bass and flute) began the concert, and then joined the choir for a presentation of "The Many Moods of Christmas," directed by Ed Smart, Director of WPC's Music Ministries.

Planning the Future of our Outdoor Spaces



The Property Committee invites you to participate in designing the future of our outdoor entry and gathering spaces. We are developing preliminary plans for our Watergate Entrance, our beloved Courtyard and our North Entrance (see graphic).

We welcome your participation at all or any of the following events:

- March 31: Advisory Team meeting to continue refining solutions. This is a small group setting where we look at the details.
- May 5: Advisory Team meeting to review and comment on developing designs.
- June 5: Quarterly Leadership Night at 7 pm. We will present the selected preliminary designs and provide tentative costs and next steps.

Contact Property Elder Bill Amador

WINTER SHELTER

Years ago, WPC made a commitment to serve the homeless and low-income people of the Conejo Valley. Each Wednesday from December through March we provide an evening meal, a chance to shower, overnight shelter, and a lunch for the following day. This winter, an average of 30 people slept over on the 17 nights of the shelter.

Our shelter is entirely staff by volunteers, under the auspices of WPC's Mission Committee. This year 15 sleepers, 11 laundry washers and 8 Thursday morning cleaners rotated duties. Boy Scout Troop 485, which meets at WPC, set up beds and bedding.

In addition to providing winter shelter, WPC also hosts an evening meal each Wednesday throughout the year. An average of 50 guests are served each week, again by faithful rotating volunteers.

Our volunteers have huge hearts! We thank them all for caring for our neighbors in need.

If you would like to volunteer, please contact Mission Elder Carol Spiegel,



WPC VACATION BIBLE CAMP: JUNE 24-27**LITTLE BIG THINGS**

Sign up early! For children 4 years through 5th grade!

The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed that someone took and sowed in his field; it is the smallest of all the seeds, but when it has grown it is the greatest of shrubs and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and make nests in its branches.

Matthew 13:31-32

The little choices we make have a BIG impact.

Following Jesus means showing love not only to our neighbors and enemies, but to all of God's creation; plants and forests, rivers and oceans, air and earth, animals and people. God graciously invites us to be on his team, making little choices that spread kindness, care and love. Join us as we take action to love and care by learning LITTLE BIG THINGS we can do to make a loving impact on all of God's creation. Our program will strive to be a model of sustainability.

Join in the fun! Registration begins May 1; discount for early registration. Scholarships available.



VACATION BIBLE CAMP
WESTMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Take Time to Read in the WPC Library

Over the past few months we have received small donations of treasured books from libraries that were ready to pass them along. I especially loved the children's classics, many of which were given to the children by their granny. Now grown, they decided to make room for their more adult titles, I expect. We all pass through many seasons of choosing different types of reading. Our hope is that you will find something that resonates with your current needs, whether that be books for pleasure, spiritual growth, or simply study. Visit the WPC library and borrow any time. The checkout box is always on the large rolling courtyard cart, or the checkout card may be left on the desk in the library.

Take time to read! Ruth Grey

CHRISTMAS PAGEANT 2018

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Something to look forward to this fall!

FALL SERMON SERIES

What does it mean to be THE church? How did the early Christians worship, organize themselves, and continue what Jesus started? This September we'll spend time talking through how the community that Jesus' first followers developed continues to shape us today, and how some of the challenges they faced continue to challenge us now...right here, in Westlake Village and the Conejo Valley.



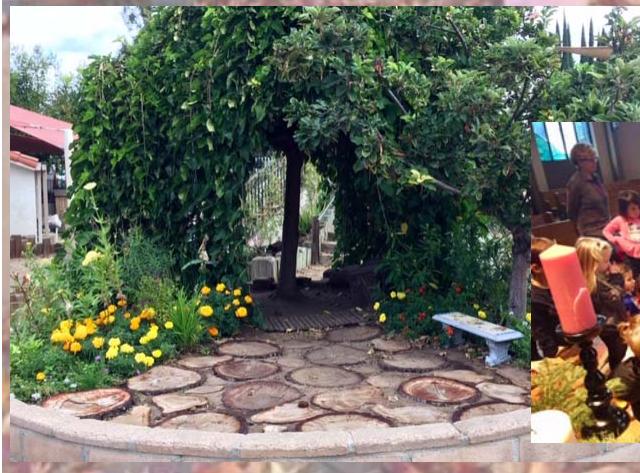
FROM THE PRESCHOOL POINT OF VIEW

Westminster Presbyterian Church Preschool (WPCP) has a long-standing relationship with this community. We are invested and families have invested in us. This September we are honored to recognize our 49 years of serving our community. Currently we have 24 children whose mom or dad attended here as preschoolers!!

The preschool is alive with children asking lots of questions and actively discovering answers. Families taking tours of our school witness engaged teachers and a wonder-filled environment. WPCP is a place that strives to preserve children's childhood.

WPCP continues to be a Certified Nature Explore Classroom, a demonstration site for the Outdoor Classroom Project, and a mentor school for students from Cal State Channel Island, Moorpark and Pierce Colleges. We were recently certified as a Monarch Butterfly Waystation. We have been preparing our planters for our upcoming Giving Garden where the children will plant and tend to veggies that will be donated to the Shelter Program that meets here on Wednesday nights.

We are looking forward to our summer program which immediately follows Vacation Bible Camp and will be offered from July 1 through August 2.



WPC Children's Ministries joins the WPC Preschool Christmas Party/ Snow Day with face painting and games on the front lawn.



BETHLEHEM EXPERIENCE 2018

Please see the excellent remembrance essay inside.

