

Mission and Community Service
2020-2021



Westminster Presbyterian Church
Springfield, Illinois

Mission and **Community Service** are inextricably intertwined in the Christian life. Our calling as followers of Christ is to share the Gospel through both word and deed, loving our neighbors after the example of Jesus.

Every person called by Christ is called to mission and service. It is our hope that together all of us will find and engage the particular ideas, passions, and causes God has placed on each of our hearts, joining with one another to multiply our efforts and encourage each other.

The church is a people told to go, to meet and know our neighbors and care for them, across the whole world that surrounds us, from the local community to the furthest reaches of the earth. It is our hope that we will engage, learn, and listen, that we might continually grow in our understanding of the cares and needs of persons both nearby and far away, and meet them in love, humility, and service.

This booklet describes the mission and community service efforts which are recent or ongoing at WPC. You are invited to peruse it, find things that interest and excite you, roll up your sleeves, and get involved. And when you feel the stirring of the Holy Spirit at work, showing you something new, not yet found in these pages, you are invited to imagine, to dream, and to offer up your own ideas for how we, jointly, as the body of Christ, can live out our mission of service in our Lord's name. Come, and be a part of this church's mission to the world!

Mission and Community Service Committee 2020:

Kathy Germeraad (Chairperson), Roe Stone (Vice Chairperson), Rance Carpenter, Rachael Hickman, Nancy Huston, Bob Leffler, Becky McDonald, Mary Caroline Mitchell, Mary Peura, Peter VanGieson, Alan Wallace.

Staff Liaison: Rev. Trajan McGill

Head of Staff: Rev. Dr. Blythe Kieffer



Outreach Foundation

A Westminster mission team traveled to Kenya in January 2020, assisting in church and classroom construction and developing cross-cultural ministry connections, as well as building international mission experience within the Westminster church family. Mission grants of over \$20,000 and additional congregational contributions of over \$31,000 funded the project, which was coordinated through the **Outreach Foundation**.

- Regional
- National
- Worldwide



Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Mission

Westminster supports numerous denominational mission projects and the worldwide ministry of the Presbyterian Church through *PC(USA) Mission Giving* and *Per Capita* contributions, (\$17,000 and \$37,190 respectively for 2020). These funds sustain work at the Presbytery, Synod, and General Assembly levels, and come from WPC's Operating Fund and individual *per capita* giving. Westminster also provided \$1,000 to a neighboring PC(USA) church in 2020 to help sustain their operations after an accident rendered their sanctuary unusable.

- Regional
- National
- Worldwide



Pentecost Offering

This denomination-wide special offering, collected in June, "helps the church encourage, develop, and support its young people, and also address the needs of at-risk children," locally and around the world. Members contributed \$395 in 2020.

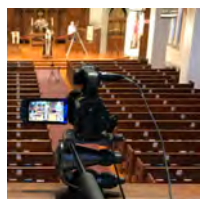
- Regional
- National
- Worldwide



Presbyterian Women Mission Giving

Presbyterian Women directly support and participate in efforts and organizations including Church Women United, "a racially, culturally, theologically inclusive ecumenical women's movement," and other projects including clean water and domestic disaster relief. PW mission giving to these programs totaled \$5,398 in 2019, supplemented by \$675 from the Westminster Endowment.

- Regional
- National
- Worldwide



Worship Mission

The need for outreach to people unable to worship in person grew tremendously with the onset of worldwide pandemic. Approximately \$40,000 from WPC's Support & Endowment Fund has been invested in 2020 in building the equipment infrastructure to support recording and online streaming of worship services and other events.

- Regional
- National
- Worldwide



Blankets+

Presbyterian Women hold an annual fundraiser to support the **Church World Service Blankets** program, which provides needed emergency supplies and home necessities to people worldwide in times of need, particularly moments of emergency and disaster. WPC members contributed \$1,045 in 2020.

Regional

National

Worldwide



Fair Trade

Equal Exchange coffee, tea, and chocolate are sold monthly in the West Narthex after services, supporting economically just, environmentally sound products, and small, independent producers.

Regional

National

Worldwide



Heifer Project

WPC children support Heifer International with Sunday morning offerings. This goes toward purchasing animals with which people around the world can gain sustainable income and independence. In 2019-20, WPC children gave \$360 to purchase 18 flocks of chicks to help families develop food production for themselves.

Regional

National

Worldwide



One Great Hour of Sharing

This Lenten, ecumenical offering goes to the Presbyterian Hunger Program, Presbyterian Disaster Assistance, and self-development of people. Members contributed \$10,181 in 2020.

Regional

National

Worldwide



Peace and Global Witness Offering

This fall denomination-wide special offering supports worldwide peacemaking work of the PC(USA) in areas of deep conflict. Members contributed \$940 in 2019.

Regional

National

Worldwide



Presbyterian Disaster Assistance

Every year brings natural disasters to communities both near and far, in multiple regions of the United States and other nations. Westminster members have responded in 2020 with \$1,300 in congregational giving and \$800 in memorial gifts to support relief efforts.

Regional

National

Worldwide



UNICEF Offering

Offerings taken at Presbyterian Women events, DMA, and Harvest Fest support the United Nations Children’s Fund, providing humanitarian & development assistance to mothers and children in developing nations. \$392 was donated in 2019.

Regional
National
Worldwide

Development...



Earth Care Certification

WPC is an **Earth Care Congregation**, committed to caring for God’s earth in worship, education, facilities, and outreach, promoting environmental stewardship in property decisions, administrative practices, and teaching.

Regional
National
Worldwide

Earth Care

Get involved: See our bulletin board for ways to be environmentally conscious! If you are interested in joining our Earth Care Team, we’d love to hear from you.



Blackburn
COLLEGE
Learn. Work. Earn.

Blackburn College Chaplaincy

WPC provided \$1,000 from the Support & Endowment Fund in 2020 to support the chaplaincy at **Blackburn College**, a Presbyterian school in Carlinville, IL.

Regional
National
Worldwide



Christmas Joy Offering

This special offering, which brought in \$3,204 in 2019, brings assistance to church workers in times of need and provides leadership development and education at PC(USA)-related racial/ethnic colleges and schools.

Regional
National
Worldwide

Education



Compass for Kids

Westminster hosts this weekly after-school program of homework help, life skills, and hot meals for at-risk children from Graham Elementary, partnering with Central Baptist and providing numerous volunteers. Participating children are also supplied with nutritious food for each weekend.

Compass has continued in adapted form during the pandemic, meeting children’s academic, social, and nutritional needs despite the inability to gather in person. Westminster has also provided \$5,000 in supplemental funding during the crisis.

Regional
National
Worldwide

Get involved: Opportunities include the chance to be a Classroom Helper / Leader, Reader and Book Club Leader, or food and supplies delivery volunteer.



Kemmerer Village

Kemmerer Village is a Presbyterian Child Care Agency which helps children and youth facing stress and turmoil in their lives to attain skills and dignity and become well-adjusted members of family and society. WPC funded Kemmerer with \$2,000 in 2020, and several members are directly involved with this ministry. We also collect box tops to contribute to their educational programming.

Regional

National
Worldwide

Ready 4 Success

WPC members donated approximately 180 backpacks in July and August to this annual back-to-school giveaway of Contact Ministries.

Get involved: Bring new, child-sized backpacks for the summer collection.

Regional

National
Worldwide

Scholarships

From endowment funds designated for that purpose, WPC provides scholarships annually, usually for minority students. The 2020 Support & Endowment budget allowed us to provide \$3,000 in such funds.

Regional

National
Worldwide

Vacation Bible School Offering

VBS children and their parents in a typical year donate numerous packages of goods and useful items to the community. For example, in 2019, the VBS donated 94 containers of Clorox wipes, 42 packages of baby wipes, 42 tissue boxes, 800 Zip-loc bags, 6 packages of copy paper, and 37 dry erase markers for the children and teachers of Harvard Park Elementary School.

Regional

National



Westminster Cooperative Preschool

Westminster offers funding to assist families who need help with tuition at our WPC-hosted preschool.

Regional

National
Worldwide

YMCA / Matthew Project

The **YMCA** annually hosts summer programming for the **Matthew Project**, a Springfield agency serving homeless children. Westminster provided \$1,000 in funding toward this endeavor in 2020.

Regional

National
Worldwide



Adopt-a-Family

This ministry works with **Contact Ministries** to provide 200+ Christmas gifts for area families living in their shelter and working to transition from homelessness.

Regional

National
Worldwide

Get involved: Look for the signup or gift tags during Advent to see requests that you may be able to fulfill!



Christmas Distribution

Our Parish Hall hosts the **Contact Ministries** annual Christmas Distribution, in which over 400 area families are provided with numerous household needs, Christmas gifts, and holiday food.

Regional

National
Worldwide

Get involved: WPC youth participate in the fall Spud Bake fund-raiser, where everyone is invited to purchase baked potatoes for this cause. Funds raised (\$1,468 in 2019) purchase gifts to be provided to teens at the Christmas Distribution. Volunteers are also often needed to help staff the distribution event.



H.E.A.L. Fund

Helpful Emergency Assistance for Living funds are shared by the congregation and distributed at the discretion of the pastors to individuals and **Contact Ministries** for emergency needs. These offerings totaled \$3,972 in 2019, and the pace of giving has gone up significantly in 2020, with \$26,487 received since the pandemic began.

Regional

National
Worldwide

Get involved: Offerings may be specially designated toward this fund.



IL Coalition Against Domestic Violence

Westminster funded this organization with \$2,000 in 2020 to help supply emergency basic necessities to victims of domestic violence throughout the state.

Regional

National
Worldwide



Knit 2 Purl 4 Mission

This group of knitting enthusiasts gathers weekly at the church to share fellowship and knit numerous items to be donated to newborns, people served by the youth mission, and others. They also sponsor a Mitten Tree during Advent for donations to the community.

Regional

National
Worldwide

Get involved: Anyone who enjoys knitting—or would like to learn—is invited to join in!



Spring Coat Drive

Coats are contributed during Lent for Contact Ministries, which passes them on to people in need. 13 Coats were collected and given in 2020.

Regional

National
Worldwide

Get involved: [Bring nice, new or used coats, and add them to the collection!](#)



Brighter Tomorrow

The **Brighter Tomorrow Sober Living House** provides support to homeless men working through recovery from substance abuse addictions. A Westminster mission grant of \$3,580 in December of 2019 went toward the purchase of equipment for helping residents develop

work skills.

Regional

National
Worldwide

Contact Ministries

WPC was one of the founders of **Contact Ministries**, whose mission is “to daily serve the greater Springfield community by providing food, shelter, clothing, financial assistance referrals, and life skills education and training through Christ’s love & compassion,” with a broad array of services, including shelter for homeless women & children. WPC has two Board members, is providing \$9,500 in 2020, and takes part in many individual projects as described elsewhere. The PW Elizabeth Circle also typically volunteers monthly at their housing center.

Regional

National
Worldwide

Habitat for Humanity

Habitat for Humanity builds homes in communities worldwide to help people achieve sustainable, safe home ownership. Here in Springfield, the group also assists by constructing affordable wheelchair ramps. Westminster provides workers and financial sponsorship for new houses on a regular basis, including \$5,000 in funding for a 2020 home-building project.

Regional

National
Worldwide

Get involved: [Watch for info about taking part in construction projects.](#)



Helping Hands

Helping Hands assists people with shelter and financial management assistance. WPC provides \$4,000 annually, and members provide the shelter dinner monthly. In 2020, Westminster supplied the agency with an additional \$3,000 grant for emergency pandemic-related needs.

Regional

National
Worldwide

Get involved: [Monthly volunteers are needed to provide dinner.](#)



H.I.S. Home for Children

WPC has several times sponsored a bike ride to raise funds for this Haitian orphanage, giving \$500 from the Mission Endowment fund in 2020.

Regional
National
Worldwide

Housing...



IL Presbyterian Home

The Illinois Presbyterian Home Fair Hills Residence

seeks to provide seniors with quality care and affordable living. Westminster supplied the home with \$5,000 in 2020 to cover unexpected protective equipment needs during the pandemic. Presbyterian Women also volunteer regularly, and WPC members serve on the Board of Directors.

Regional
National
Worldwide



Central IL Foodbank

The **Central Illinois Foodbank** is the central source of food for numerous food pantries in the region. Westminster supports this organization's mission through **Give-a-Meal-a-Month**, holding an ongoing collection for particular food items. WPC mission grant funds also supplied \$2,500 in 2020 to help ensure a steady supply of more nutritious food offerings.

Get involved: Check in the West Narthex to find this month's Give-a-Meal-a-Month items!

Regional
National
Worldwide



CROP Hunger Walk

The **Church World Service CROP Hunger Walk** is an annual fundraiser to fight world hunger. Church members walk each fall, raising \$7,500 in 2019.

Get involved: Join the October walk or sponsor a walker.

Regional
National
Worldwide



Hunger Action Certification

Westminster is a newly certified **Hunger Action Congregation**, with many hunger-related ministries and now taking on a new level of commitment to fighting hunger by forming a member task force devoted specifically to looking at ways our church can grow its work against this problem in our community and all around the world.

Get involved: Watch for new educational opportunities and mission initiatives!

Regional
National
Worldwide



Kenyan Pandemic Hunger Relief

Building on relationships from a recent mission trip, WPC was made aware of widespread food deficiencies arising in Kenya from pandemic-related shutdowns and travel restrictions. WPC provided \$2,000 in assistance through the **Outreach Foundation**.

Regional
National
Worldwide

Hunger



Little Pantry

WPC built and maintains a micropantry at Graham Elementary School, offering food and basic supplies according to a “Take what you need; leave what you can” model. The pantry has sparked participation from the rest of the neighborhood and has seen heavy use. Westminster members visit the pantry at least 6 times per week and keep it clean and well-stocked. The church maintains a supply of food and reimburses purchases for the pantry. From May through September 2020, the church has provided \$2,365 in funding, on top of many independent contributions from members.

Get involved: [Sign up to restock the pantry, or donate needed items.](#)

Regional

National
Worldwide



Meals on Wheels

WPC takes on two weeks of deliveries each summer in service of **Meals on Wheels**, a **Senior Services of Central Illinois** program that supports independent living by delivering food to seniors with difficulty preparing their own meals. **Get involved:** [Sign up to help with summer deliveries.](#)

Regional

National
Worldwide



St. John's Breadline

Springfield's **St. John's Breadline** provides daily, hot, nutritious meals to anyone in need, giving people the opportunity to spend their time seeking jobs and education instead of food. Westminster raised \$554 in 2019.

Get involved: [Watch for the annual fall fundraiser to benefit this ministry.](#)

Regional

National
Worldwide



Souper Bowl of Caring

Youth members annually raise funds on Super Bowl Sunday, sharing \$737 with the Grace Lutheran and First Presbyterian food pantries in 2020.

Regional

National
Worldwide



Westminster Day Laborers

Members of the church annually donate land, seed, and time to planting and harvesting sweet corn used to supply local food pantries with much-needed fresh vegetables. **Get involved:** [Head to the fields with us and pick some corn!](#)

Regional

National
Worldwide



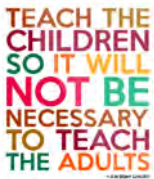
Adopt-a-Street

Westminster members head out on a quarterly basis to clean up streets in the church neighborhood.

Get involved: [Join our team and help keep our neighborhood clean!](#)

Regional

National
Worldwide



Children of Abraham

WPC joins with faith groups across ethnic & religious boundaries, bringing children and youth together to build mutual understanding and respect.

Regional

National
Worldwide



Faith Coalition for the Common Good

This faith-based group links community institutions and people to build power and change systems for fairness, equity and participatory decision-making. WPC is a member organization, has a staff member on the Board, has sent members to their annual week-long leadership training, and is contributing \$3,400 in 2020.

Regional

Regional
Worldwide



Historic West Side Neighborhood Association

Westminster Presbyterian Church is a member of this association, which since the 1970s has been involved in city planning, advocacy, and development of the residential character of the neighborhood in which our church sits.

Regional

National
Worldwide



Steadfast Neighbor Mission

Westminster has begun a new initiative to invest in the neighborhood immediately surrounding our church building. This is an exciting and growing area of our mission and outreach. Two major projects came to fruition in 2020:

Regional

National
Worldwide

- **Neighborhood Service Week** – Around 50 members of the Westminster family, including youth and adults, spent a week in the summer tackling home and property improvement projects on behalf of neighbors of the church, taking on numerous painting, fence-building, bricklaying, landscaping, power washing, and other assignments by request of the homeowners. Westminster funded the work as well, providing \$13,210 to cover equipment and supplies for the week.
- **Matching Grants** – WPC also offered nearby residents the opportunity to request grants to help them pay for other needed repairs and improvements to their homes. This was a popular offering, and WPC approved 20 grants totaling \$16,557.

Funded by the Support & Endowment Fund, this area of mission is only expected to grow from here, with the Steadfast Neighbor Mission budget increasing from \$30,000 in 2020 to \$45,000 in 2021.

Get involved: Join the next neighborhood service week, and watch for news of additional initiatives coming out of the Steadfast Neighbor Endeavor.

Let The Doors Of This Church Be a Way to Service



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