

WESTMINSTER
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

APRIL 2024



WESTMINSTER NEWS

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF
WESTMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

RESURRECTION HOPE

Hello friends,

We have just celebrated Easter and the Resurrection Hope. However, the question remains: how do I live daily, week to week, month to month, with Resurrection Hope? It is so easy to allow the events that go on around me and the joy robbers that sneak into my life like thieves in the night to impact how I look at life.

According to Oswald Chambers, “The things we are going through are either making us sweeter, better, and nobler men and women, or they are making us more critical, fault-finding, and insistent on our way.”

Again, according to Chambers. “The things that happen either make us evil, or they make us more saintly, depending entirely on our relationship with God and its level of intimacy.” The more we sense God’s love and purpose, the less small-minded and cynical we become.

Proverbs 23:7 says, “As a man thinks in his heart, so he becomes.” For anything to grow, it needs to be fed. That is true in every area of life, including our emotions. If you want to feel angry, feed your anger. If you want to feel fear, feed your fear. If you want to feel hopelessness and suffering, feed those emotions. But if you want to feel compassionate, loving, and hopeful, feed those emotions.

No one can deny that the world has shifted, and the pain and sacrifice are real. That change is hard. I do know that life hasn’t stopped, and God is still in charge and the author of hope. Even though many things have changed, faith, hope, and love have not.

The movie *The Shawshank Redemption* is about hope in a hopeless place. Three scenes in the film explicitly focus on hope.

The first scene comes after Andy endures two weeks of solitary confinement for locking himself in the warden's office and playing Mozart over the prison loudspeakers. When Red asks why he would do that, Andy explains to Red that music fuels hope: "You need it so we don't forget ... that there are places in the world that aren't made out of stone, that there's something inside that they can't get to, that they can't touch—it's yours."

For me, that would be praise. Praise fuels hope, and hope gives meaning to the events in life.

The next scene comes after Andy's escape and Red's parole. Red reads a letter from Andy: "Remember, Red. Hope is a good thing, maybe the best of things, and no good thing ever dies. I will be hoping that this letter finds you and finds you well."

Finally, the last scene dealing with hope is the end of the movie and the end of Red's narration: "I find I am so excited I can barely sit still or hold a thought in my head. I think it is the excitement only a free man can feel, a free man at the start of a long journey whose conclusion is uncertain. ... I hope I can make it across the border. I hope to see my friend and shake his hand. I hope the Pacific is as blue as it has been in my dreams. I hope."

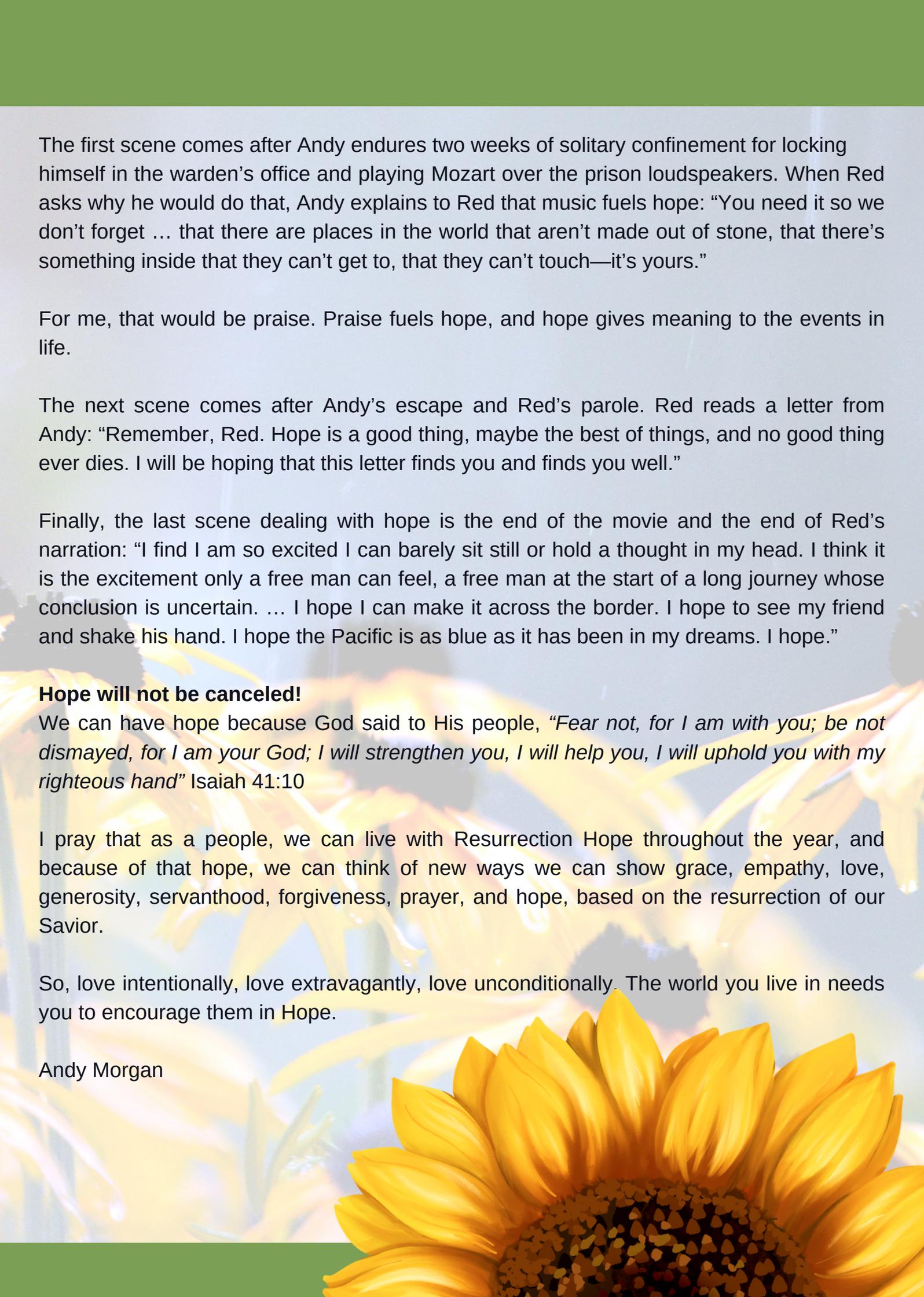
Hope will not be canceled!

We can have hope because God said to His people, "*Fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God; I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with my righteous hand*" Isaiah 41:10

I pray that as a people, we can live with Resurrection Hope throughout the year, and because of that hope, we can think of new ways we can show grace, empathy, love, generosity, servanthood, forgiveness, prayer, and hope, based on the resurrection of our Savior.

So, love intentionally, love extravagantly, love unconditionally. The world you live in needs you to encourage them in Hope.

Andy Morgan



CELEBRATE OUR LIBRARY - 60 YEARS OLD!

60 years ago, the Session gave the Women's Association permission to organize a library. It would be funded by the church budget, the Women's Association budget, and special gifts.

The library's purpose was to be a reference library of selected informative and enlightening Christian reading and viewing materials for members and friends. Such materials included books, periodicals, pamphlets, leaflets, clippings, and audiovisual aids on all phases of Christianity, Bible Study, and Westminster Church's program. No fiction books were to be included. The library was dedicated to the service of Jesus Christ.

The original library was located at the east end of what is now the choir room. In 2000, it was moved across the hall to its current location.

Over 5,000 books, pamphlets, etc., have been purchased or gifted to the library. Books of fiction with a Christian message were added in the late 1970s. There are also books for teens and children, biographies, inspiration, and devotions. Some well-known authors include Billy Graham, Catherine Marshall, Anne Graham Lotts, Frank Paretti, Francine Rivers, Jan Karon, Charles Swindoll, and many others.

Our founders did outstanding work and service for our congregation, and the Women's Association has faithfully tried to carry out their plan. It's easy to check out a book using our title card. Stop in and look over our selections - there is something for everyone.

Norrain Phelps,
Women's Association



OUR NEW ADDITION

Meet Dawn Pulgine, our newest staff member at Westminster. Her official title is Discipleship Director meaning she will be helping out with adult education and on-boarding new partners. She wants to bring people to know Jesus, grow with Jesus, and live like Jesus. Westminster is excited for her enthusiasm and knowledge.

Dawn grew up in Aurora/Oswego and lives with her husband, Tony. She has three kids who have blessed them with three granddaughters and a grandson. Two wonderful German shepherds round out their clan. Word is that Dawn is quite the baker and loves a good chat!

In addition to her duties at Westminster, Dawn will be continuing her work with "Getting Real Ministries," partnering up with Pastor Andy's daughter, Anna McQuade, for a kickoff session on April 4th.

This is a women's ministry. The first session is entitled "Trustworthy," a study of 1 & 2 Kings developed by Lysa Terkeurst. The sessions are open to anyone, so watch the weekly bulletins and emails for more information.

Dawn considers herself a facilitator who helps people discover what their goals are and how they can best achieve them. Please stop in and get to know her! She is a delight!





W O M E N ' S
B I B L E
S T U D Y
B E G I N S !

All are Welcome!

Please join Dawn Pulgine's women's ministry,
Getting Real Ministries, this spring as they
begin a six-week study
*Trustworthy, Overcoming Our Greatest Struggles
to Trust God*,
a study of 1 & 2 Kings by Lysa Terkeurst.

We will enjoy a kickoff on April 4th from 9:30 - 11:30
where we will spend the morning meeting and making new
friends in the lounge.
Of course, snacks will be served!

When: Thursdays, April 11th - May 16th

Where: Westminster Church

Time: 9:30 - 11:30 AM

Register in the church office!

Childcare is available.



APRIL BIRTHDAY LIST

- | | |
|---------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1 Susan Harrison | 12 Ken Perrin |
| 3 Lisa Riedl | 12 Irv Vickers |
| 3 Madeline Saunders | 12 Jan Medgyesi |
| 6 Linda Kolb | 14 Tim Hansen |
| 6 Karsten Jeppesen | 15 Tom Westerfield |
| 8 Jakob Saunders | 18 Katherine Rally-Saunders |
| 10 Twyla Marcum | 19 Staci Lockman |
| 11 Terry Samuelson | 23 Jason Drury |
| 11 Jane Gapinski | 24 Christina de Chaud |



ANNOUNCEMENTS



Join us in the FLC to celebrate **Cinco de Mayo** after church on May 5. The Fellowship team is planning a taco bar! More details will come in Sunday bulletins but mark your calendars now. Reservations are due by April 28th!

The Women's Club of Aurora will be having a flower/plant sale in our parking lot on May 11, 8:30-11a.m. Money will be collected the day of the event but orders must be turned in by April 16th. Stop in the church office for an order form. Geraniums, impatiens, beefsteak tomatoes, Roma tomatoes, basil, and parsley are available. Think summer!



The Aurora Animal Shelter is constantly in need of newspapers for their clients!!! There is a box in the church office where you can drop off old newspapers and we will get them to the shelter. Our furry neighbors thank you!!

MARCH WPC BOOK CLUB

The WPC Book Club will be meeting on Tuesday, April 16th, at 1:30 PM in the West Conference Room of the church. The book for discussion will be *“Where the Children Take Us: How One Family Achieved the Unimaginable”* by Zain E. Asher. If you were not able to attend the meeting on March 19th, you may pick up a copy of the book in the church office so you are able to read it before the meeting. Everyone is welcome, and we have an empty chair waiting for you.

"In this spellbinding memoir, popular CNN anchor Zain E. Asher pays tribute to her mother's strength and determination to raise four successful children in the shadow of tragedy.

Awaiting the return of her husband and young son from a road trip, Obiajulu Ejiofor receives shattering news. There's been a fatal car crash, and one of them is dead.

In *“Where the Children Take Us”*, Obiajulu's daughter, Zain E. Asher, tells the story of her mother's harrowing fight to raise four children as a widowed immigrant in South London. There is a tragedy in this tale, but it is not a tragedy. Drawing on tough-love parenting strategies, Obiajulu teaches her sons and daughters to overcome the daily pressures of poverty, crime and prejudice—and much more. With her relentless support, the children exceeded all expectations—becoming a CNN anchor, an Oscar-nominated actor (Asher's older brother, Chiwetel Ejiofor, won an Oscar for his role in the movie *“12 Years a Slave”*)—a medical doctor, and a thriving entrepreneur.

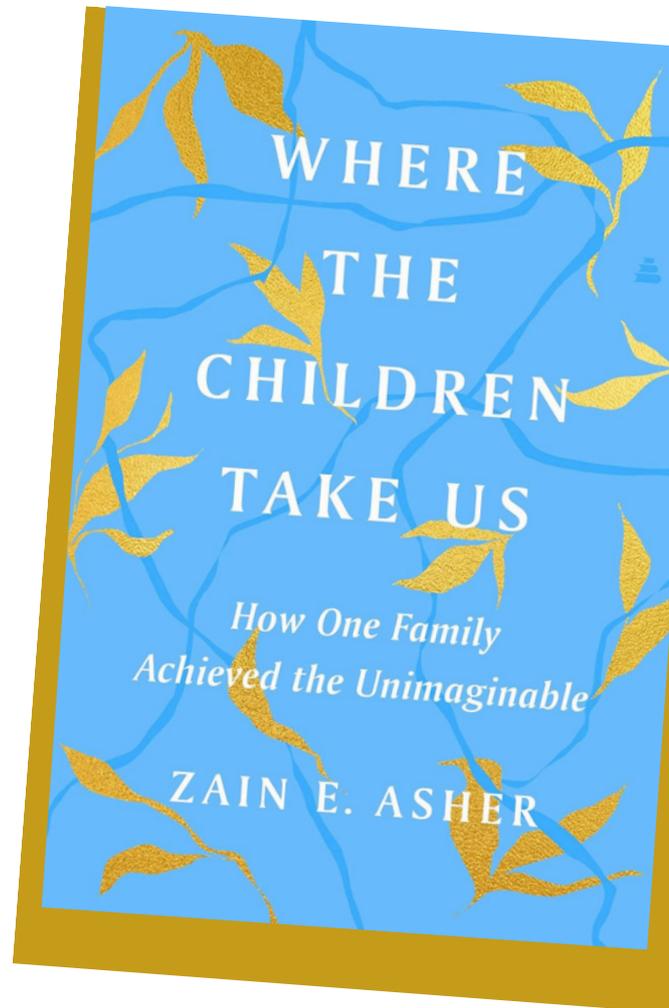
The generations-old Nigerian parenting techniques that led to the family's salvation were born in the village where young Obiajulu and Arinze met with their country on the brink of war. Together, they emigrated to London in the 1970s to escape the violence, but soon confronted a different set of challenges in the West.



MARCH WPC BOOK CLUB, CONT.

When grief threatens to engulf her fractured family after the accident, Obiajulu, suddenly a single mother in a foreign land, refuses to accept defeat. As her children veer down the wrong path, she instills a family book club with Western literary classics, testing their resolve and challenging their deeper understanding. Desperate for inspiration, she plasters newspaper clippings of Black success stories on the walls and hunts for overachieving neighbors to serve as role models, all while running Shakespeare theatre lines with her son and finishing homework into the early morning with Zain. When distractions persist, she literally cuts the TV cord and installs a residential pay phone.

The story of a woman who survived genocide, famine, poverty, and crushing grief to rise from war torn Africa to the streets of South London and eventually the drawing rooms of Buckingham Palace, “*Where the Children Take Us*” is an unforgettable portrait of strength, tenacity, love, and perseverance embodied in one towering woman.” (Amazon.com)



“REDEEMING LOVE”

In March, I watched a TV movie that disturbed me to tears but also reminded me of what God’s love for us is and of how deep it is. The movie was about a very distasteful subject, girls and women living in brothels, and I almost turned it off several times, thinking I couldn’t watch it any longer, but somehow, I managed to stay with it until the end, and I’m glad I did. You might even think this is too distasteful to read, and if so, you can skip to the end and forget the storyline that follows.

This young girl named Angel was born in a brothel by her mother and grew up knowing no other life except what she saw there. After her mother died and she came of age, she lived the same life as the other ladies who had become her only friends. But a young Christian farmer living in the area had prayed to find a wife and happened to see Angel being paraded through town one day, and he knew she was the one he would marry. He bought her freedom from the brothel and took Angel to his farm, giving her the opportunity for a new life. But she didn’t know how to live this new life with a man she didn’t know and went back to the only life she ever knew. Twice he went and got her and waited for her to be ready to accept him as her husband, but she didn’t understand that kind of relationship with a man and, even though he was very good to her and patient, she left him again and went to another place where she was certain he couldn’t find her. He vowed this time not to go after her and that she had a free choice as to the life she would live. He prayed and suffered and wondered why God led him to believe that he should marry Angel. Should he go after her again? Should he let her go? Should he give her free choice? Had he misunderstood God? Should he seek another wife? And then there was Angel, who struggled with her own feelings of being unworthy of love.

While it’s hard to relate to the subject of the movie, I think all of us have experienced the same questions that the young farmer did, but under different circumstances. We may question whether God is listening to our heartfelt prayers or doubts or questions or if we have misunderstood God. But as the movie ended, I understood why God gives us the freedom of choice. I also felt the love and patience the young man had for Angel, as difficult as she was to love.

Are we always easy to love? Sometimes, we may feel as worthless as Angel felt because of things that have happened to us in our lives. God knows our innermost thoughts, and yet He loves us and is patient and yearns for our love, but He gives us free choice. That’s how much God loves us. Remember the two who hung on crosses with Jesus. It didn’t take much for one of them to be saved. That’s how easily God forgives. He gives us a choice. If you have read this far, please pray for God’s intervention with the problem of child trafficking for purposes of pornography and prostitution.

Dian Poochigian,
Prayer Deacon

SOUTHWESTERN ADVANTAGE RETURNS!

We are excited to announce that
the Southwestern Advantage
students
will be returning to Westminster
this summer!

THE GOODNESS OF GOD



WESTMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

AUGUST 8, 2023

We will have more information in the next few weeks.

WESTMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



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Barbara Halsey- Proof Reader

Lois Sherpitis- Production

Your Prayers
don't have to be perfect
God hears your heart.

