

WESTMINSTER
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

MARCH 2024



WESTMINSTER NEWS

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF
WESTMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

RESURRECTION HOPE

We will enter Holy Week, Palm Sunday, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, and Easter this month. Easter is the most important holiday for Christians. Because of the resurrection, we have victory over death. We have LIFE! We have HOPE! Yet many in our society have lost hope, let alone life.

In the Dennison forum, they mentioned how a simple question generated global headlines. That question was "How is everybody doing?" and was asked by Elmo from Sesame Street and posted on X last week: "Elmo is just checking in! How is everybody doing?" He got an earful. Some examples:

"Elmo, I'm depressed and broke."

"I'm at my lowest, thanks for asking."

"Elmo, I've got to level with you, baby. We are fighting for our lives."

"Every morning, I cannot wait to go back to sleep. Every Monday, I cannot wait for Friday to come. Every single day and every single week for life."

Scanning the news, it's not hard to see why. We will hear of political unrest, wars and rumors of wars, economic concerns, crime going unchecked, STDs soaring in the US, and today's teenagers are anxious about their future and disillusioned by politicians.

Harvard theologian Harvey Cox observed:

We now live in a "post-Christian" America. The Judeo-Christian ethic no longer guides our social institutions. Christian ideals and values no longer dominate social thought and action. The Bible has ceased to be a common base of moral authority for judging whether something is right or wrong, good or bad, acceptable or unacceptable.

Why is this such an urgent crisis? In Man—The Dwelling Place of God, A. W. Tozer stated:

"I am among those who believe that our Western civilization is on its way to perishing. It has many commendable qualities, most borrowed from the Christian ethic. Still, it lacks the element of moral wisdom that would give it permanence. Future historians will record that we of the twentieth century had enough intelligence to create a great civilization but not the moral wisdom to preserve it."

G. K. Chesterton observed: "What we all dread most is a maze with no center."

But that's where we are.

Yet, there's hope beyond the headlines if we look in the right direction. I wonder, during March, what direction people will look. Will they look towards resurrection hope or the news? Like everything else, it depends on our choices as to what direction we will decide.

I have listened to and read many articles on the changes taking place and advice on how to handle it, some good, some not. As I navigate the changes and set a direction for my life every day, I have three primary goals:

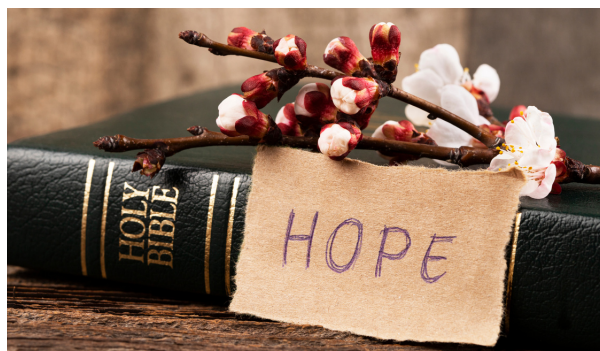
1. I want to embrace the present fully and not let competing worries and fears rob me of hope in Christ. I want to live in resurrection hope and joy. I don't want to deny the reality and the seriousness of what is happening, but I don't want to be robbed of the hope I have, and my life in Christ. We are reminded of 1 Peter 1:3: "According to God's great mercy, He has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead."

2. I am being impacted by what is going on around me. How I will be affected, what that looks like, and what I choose to surrender to are up to me. I want to live my life focused on the hope of resurrection, not the news. *"May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in Him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit."* Romans 15:13

3. The day's events remind me that God's future is more significant than mine. God reminds me: *"For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope."* Jeremiah 29:11

So, I can trust God with my life, which means that I know He is working in ways I cannot see to lead me into a future I cannot imagine that provides me with hope. Therefore, having such a great hope, I don't let anything destroy the firm foundation upon which that hope rests.

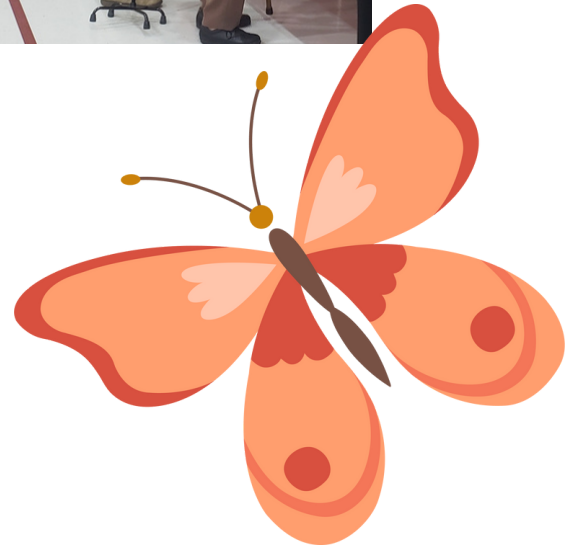
Andy



WPC POTLUCK

"Lovin' WPC" was the potluck theme on February 18th. 72 members of our congregation sampled delicious dishes and shared favorite ideas, people, and activities of our church that we all love. Be sure to check out the bulletin board in the narthex to see what they shared!





PERSISTENCE

I don't believe it! How did that happen? How *could* that happen? It usually lasts a week, and for the last month or so, I thought I had finally outsmarted them. But no! I guess they caught on to me again! Those squirrels! What good are they?!!

I had tried putting up a baffle and watched many times as they climbed up my shepherd's hook, curled around the baffle, then got to the bird feeder and nibbled away to their heart's content, enjoying the feast meant for the birds. UGH!

Then, one year, I got the brilliant idea that if I greased the pole, it would be too slippery for them to climb. So, I greased it up and waited inside for the show to begin. Ah hah! Here he comes. He looked up at the bird feeder hanging over to the shepherd's hook. Then he jumped onto the greased pole, paw over paw, but he slid back down.

"Yeah, whoopee," I cheered; it worked. But he tried again and again and again, and he finally made it to the top. Each time, he rubbed off a little more grease until the pole wasn't slippery anymore. Why that persistent little critter, I thought!

This winter, I thought of a different strategy. I strung a wire from my shepherd's hook across our patio to a strong branch on a bush on the opposite side. It would be about 30' across and about 5' above the ground. No way the squirrel is going to get to the feeder now. I watched as he surveyed the set-up from atop the shepherd's hook, then from the bush, and then from different places on our deck. Once, I saw him launch from our deck, but he missed everything and landed on the patio. Everything went well for quite some time until one morning when there! On the feeder!! What is that?!! It can't be!!! OH my gosh!!! How is that possible?!??? Yep! There was the squirrel, surrounding the feeder, nibbling away again in seventh heaven.

Away to the window, I flew in a flash! I threw open the door, clapped my hands, shouted, and stomped my feet; away he ran. I turned to see if any neighbors were watching or had cameras. No, and I skulked back inside, trying to figure out how he did that. Oh well, it must have been difficult for him. The birdseed had lasted much longer than before. So, my persistence had paid off. But that squirrel is certainly very persistent also.

All this made me think, though, of how persistent God is. He is always pursuing us humans no matter what barriers we put up. God is like the squirrel in the way that He won't give up on us. But we must also be persistent in seeking God. Sometimes, we must notice those things that are getting in our way of pursuing God and see if there is something we need to change in our daily routine to add more God time or delete distractions or obstacles that cause negative emotions or stress. It takes some persistence to do this.

Or we can be like the sparrows and just wait patiently and faithfully until all the excitement is over. They will come back to the feeder knowing that there will be birdseed left on the ground under it, or that the feeder will once again be refilled by the one who loves watching them every day. God cares for each little sparrow. But we are of more worth than many sparrows, for "His eye is on the sparrow, and I know He watches me."

Dian Poochigian,
Prayer Deacon



CUB SCOUT PINEWOOD DERBY

On February 17th, WPC welcomed Cub Scout Pack 326 for their annual Pinewood Derby. The excitement was high, and the fans were so supportive! The boys were great sports about the competition, cheering on their friends. Parents and Grandparents alike enjoyed a great afternoon!



MARCH WPC BOOK CLUB

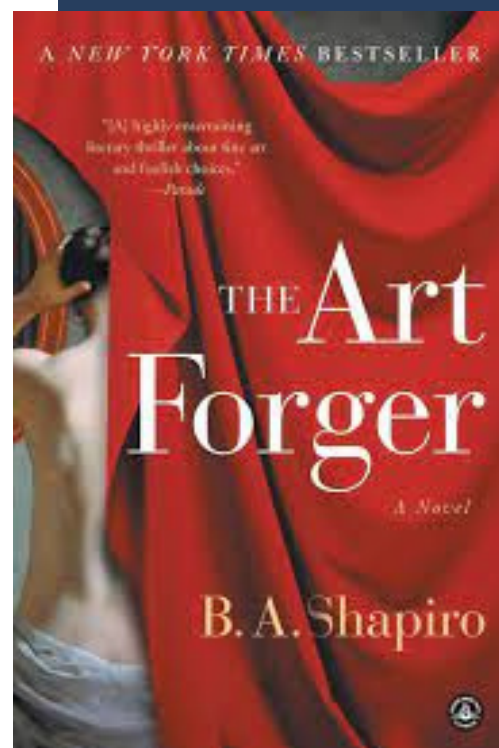
The WPC Book Club will meet on Tuesday, March 19th, at 1:30 PM in the church's West Conference Room. Our book for discussion will be *The Art Forger* by B. A. Shapiro. You may pick up a copy of the book in the church office so you are able to read it before the meeting. All are welcome to join the discussion.

"On March 18, 1990, thirteen works of art worth today over \$500 million were stolen from the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum in Boston. It remains the largest unsolved art heist in history, and Claire Roth, a struggling young artist, is about to discover that there's more to this crime than meets the eye.

Claire makes her living reproducing famous works of art for a popular online retailer. Desperate to improve her situation, she lets herself be lured into a Faustian bargain with Aiden Markel, a powerful gallery owner. She agrees to forge a painting—one of the Degas masterpieces stolen from the Gardner Museum—in exchange for a one-woman show in his renowned gallery. But when the long-missing Degas painting—the one that had been hanging for one hundred years at the Gardner—is delivered to Claire's studio, she begins to suspect that it may itself be a forgery.

Claire's search for the truth about the painting's origins leads her into a labyrinth of deceit where secrets hidden since the late nineteenth century may be the only evidence that can now save her life. B. A. Shapiro's razor-sharp writing and rich plot twists make *The Art Forger* an absorbing literary thriller that treats us to three centuries of forgers, art thieves, and obsessive collectors. It's a dazzling novel about seeing—and not seeing—the secrets that lie beneath the canvas."

(Goodreads.com)



MARCH BIRTHDAY LIST

1 Fred Jorgensen	17 Tim Turner
1 Eli Jeppesen	23 Paul Medgyesi
5 Donna Bredlau	23 Tim Mack
7 Kim Kirhofer	23 Linda Miller
9 Gayle Copenhaver	26 Miriam Helmen
9 Jim Cromer	26 Michelle Golembeck
10 Paula Withey	27 Lou Jacobs
11 Margaret Smith	29 Jeff Stutes
12 Kristi Szymanski	29 Marc Lindsay
	29 Doug Jeppesen



ANNOUNCEMENTS

Remember to order tulips for Easter Sunday. Forms are available in the narthex or church office. Orders are due by March 17th.

We are also participating in the Flowering of the Cross on Easter Sunday. Remember to bring a flower to adorn the cross on Easter morning.



Pastor Andy asked for prayer for Brendan Neis at the end of the service on February 11th. Brendan enlisted in the Navy and will head to California for language training after completing boot camp. Our best wishes to him and also his family.

HOLY WEEK/ EASTER SERVICES



March 24th

Celebrate Jesus' triumphant entrance into Jerusalem as Holy Week begins.

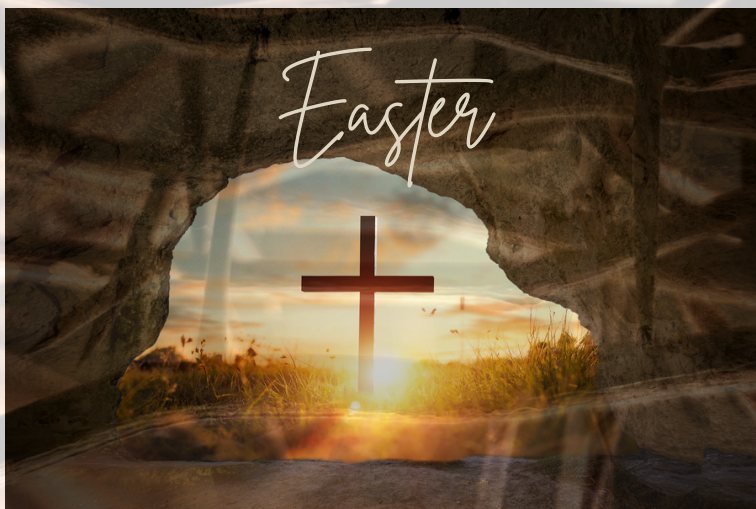
March 28th

We will gather for a combination Maundy Thursday and Good Friday Service celebrating the Last Supper and commemorating the passion and death of our Savior, Jesus Christ.



March 31st

**Come!
Rejoice and celebrate
the victory of Jesus
over death!**



WESTMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
10 NORTH EDGELAWN DRIVE
AURORA, IL 60506

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



Kerry Proczko- Newsletter Editor

Meredith Hill- Graphic Artist

Barbara Halsey- Proof Reader

Lois Sherpitis- Production

