

Westminster Presbyterian Church

103 E. Midland Street  
Bay City, MI 48706

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**Visit us on Facebook:**  
**Westminster Presbyterian**  
**Church - Bay City**



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Office Hours:  
Monday through Thursday  
8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.  
(Closed for lunch noon - 1 p.m.)  
Friday  
8:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

- Rev. Linda Williams (ext. 203)  
Parish Associate
- Judy Harrelson (ext. 201)  
Church Secretary
- Heather Heidtman (ext. 206)  
Treasurer
- Christian Education  
Nikelle Johnson (ext. 208)
- Custodian  
Harold Miller (ext. 205)

THE WESTMINSTER LOG

THE WESTMINSTER LOG



I was watching some of the inaugural coverage on January 20th and heard former Secretary of State, Madeline Albright say something that struck a chord with me. She said she was an "optimist who worries a lot". It resonated with me, simply because, for the first time, I heard someone put into words the feelings I feel almost every day. I'm always optimistic things will be better. I'm hopeful. I try to stay positive, but (and this is a big BUT) I'll worry right up until that good outcome comes to fruition. The optimist in me also tends to find the good in even the most trying situations. I'm most certainly a glass is half-full kind of person. During these months of transition, coupled with Covid-19, it was hard not to get discouraged, but I can still see a lot of good in and around Westminster.

Transitions can be hard for any church, adding a pandemic in the middle of this, increased that exponentially. I firmly believe the Holy Spirit was at work when Pastor Ewen came on as our transitional Pastor. Nothing seemed to rattle Ewen. His calm demeanor, his confidence, and his funny stories were a great comfort. He was exactly what we needed to lead us and help us navigate through this uncertain time.

I love all the ways we've worked to stay connected. It's wonderful to hear about members reaching out to each other, with phone calls, cards, meals and our newly formed Masked Singers (I'm so glad this is continuing)! And I can't believe I'm saying this: I can even find the good in those awful Zoom meetings! For a while there, it was the only thing we had to help the staff, Session, and ministries keep things

running smoothly. It also played a large role in allowing us to introduce Pastor Jamie Milton and his family to the congregation.

Which brings me to the Pastor Nominating Committee. For those of you who have served on a PNC in the past, you know what an incredibly time-consuming, at times stressful, but overall, fulfilling job that can be. I know I'm not alone when I share my gratitude to our recently dissolved PNC. The job they did! In the middle of a pandemic, no less! We're all excited for Pastor Jamie, Katie, Harper, and Isaiah to join our church family. What a great lift this will be for all us!

I know the transition has been long and no one predicted what 2020 had in store for us. Even now, there is continued uncertainty. We're not sure when we'll be able to worship all together again. We're not sure what lies ahead. I wrote a Log article just after Pastor Matt left, with similar themes. We were sad and worried, and just like now, a little unsure of our path forward. However, I ended the article with the belief that good things were on the horizon for Westminster. I still believe that. Our new Pastor and his family are joining us soon! Look at the new and innovative ways we've stayed connected! Look at how hard we've worked to get through these last 11 months. That gives me so much hope. The glass is still half-full (and rising!). God has a plan for Westminster...you can't help but feel optimistic about that!

Peace and blessings,  
*Heather Heidtman*



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday
February	1 7:00 p.m. Deacon Meeting	2 10:00 a.m. Staff Meeting 6:00 p.m. Personnel
7 10:30 a.m. Worship Service (Annual Meeting of the Congregation via Zoom following the worship service)	8 6:00 p.m. Finance Meeting	9 6:00 p.m. Spiritual Growth
14 10:30 a.m. Worship Service 3:00 p.m. <i>The Antidote</i> Movie via Zoom	15	16 7:00 p.m. Session Meeting
21 10:30 a.m. Worship Service	22	23 6:00 p.m. Book Club via Zoom 7:00 p.m. Deborah Circle Meeting via Zoom
28 10:30 a.m. Worship Service		

Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
3 1:00 p.m. The Wired Word Bible Study via Zoom 6:00 p.m. Property Meeting 7:00 p.m. Mission Meeting 8:00 p.m. Worship Meeting	4 5:00 p.m. Food of Faith at Messiah Lutheran 7:00 p.m. Adult Bible Study via Zoom	5	6
10 1:00 p.m. The Wired Word Bible Study via Zoom	11 5:00 p.m. Food of Faith at Messiah Lutheran 7:00 p.m. Adult Bible Study via Zoom	12	13
17 1:00 p.m. The Wired Word Bible Study via Zoom 7:00 p.m. Ash Wednesday Worship Service	18 5:00 p.m. Food of Faith at Messiah Lutheran 7:00 p.m. Adult Bible Study via Zoom	19	20
24 1:00 p.m. The Wired Word Bible Study via Zoom	25 5:00 p.m. Food of Faith at Messiah Lutheran 7:00 p.m. Adult Bible Study via Zoom	26	27
<u>Office Hours</u> Monday – Thursday: 8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. Closed for lunch 12:00-1:00 p.m. Friday: 8:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. website: <a href="http://wpcbc.org">wpcbc.org</a>  <u>Join us on Facebook</u> Westminster Presbyterian Church - Bay City		<u>Happy Birthday</u>  Richard Hebner Richard Talbot Gerald Wachowiak Joyce Wachowiak Leslie Frontjes  Ann Morse William Auger Robert Hanson John Young Mary Lou Higgins Donna Horn	

\*Birthdays listed are for our 75+ Members



## Treasurer's Report

### Building Improvement Fund

November Balance:  
\$25,078.70  
December Income:  
\$1,153.05  
December Expense:  
\$0.00  
December Balance:  
\$26,231.75

### Operating Fund

December Income:  
\$23,062.01  
December Expense:  
\$58,759.81

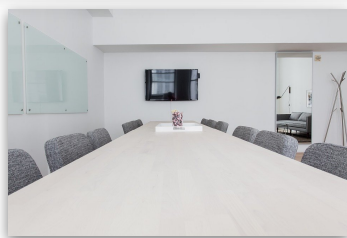
### Major Repairs Fund

\$38,985.95

### Capital Campaign Fund

December Income:  
\$2,471.20  
Dec. Interest Expense:  
\$1,394.92  
Loan Balance at end of Dec.  
\$432,287.43

Donate online at  
[www.wpcbc.org](http://www.wpcbc.org)



### In-Church Meetings

Please coordinate all in-person church committee meetings with the church office. Thank you.

Envelopes for 2021 will be available for pick-up here at the church. The church is open Monday - Thursday 8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. (lunch at noon) and Friday 8:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

Per capita for 2021 is \$28.76. This is per active, confirmed member.

## OFFERING ENVELOPES

Dear Members of Westminster:

We would like to thank the ladies who fixed food for Dale and me while we were ill. It came in handy, and you all are good cooks! Thank you also for all of the prayers. Prayers do count! We are doing fine now, and look forward to when we can all go back to church again.

*R. Dale & Joyce Grigg*



### ADULT BOOK CLUB

Tuesday, February 23  
6:00 p.m. via Zoom

The Adult Book Club meets monthly on the 4th Tuesday of each month from 6:00-7:00 p.m. via Zoom.

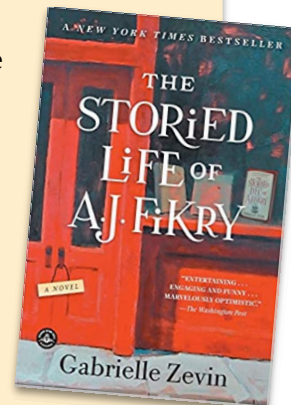
On Tuesday, February 23 we will discuss the book *The Storied Life of A.J. Fikry* by Gabrielle Zevin.

*"A. J. Fikry's life is not at all what he expected it to be. He lives alone, his bookstore is experiencing the worst sales in its history, and now his prized possession, a rare collection of Poe poems, has been stolen. But when*

*a mysterious package appears at the bookstore, its unexpected arrival gives Fikry the chance to make his life over--and see everything anew."*

Books are available at church this month for check-out. You may pick one up in the church office during regular business hours.

Contact Nikelle to receive Zoom login information. Nikelle's email is [cedirector@wpcbc.org](mailto:cedirector@wpcbc.org).

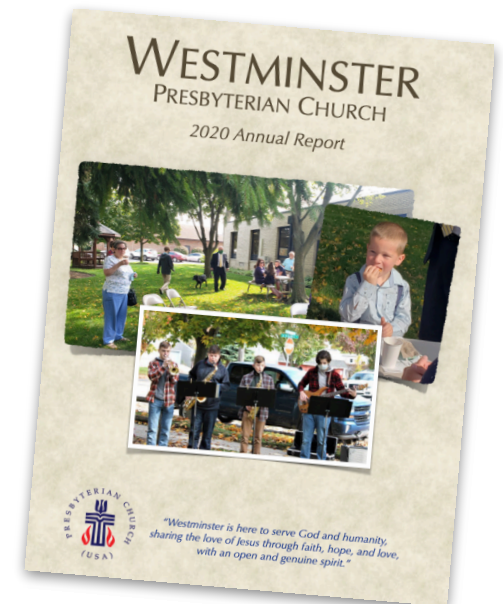


## Annual Meeting of the Congregation

The Annual Meeting of the Congregation will take place via Zoom on Sunday, February 7, 2021 following the worship service. Watch your mail for a letter explaining the details, including log-in information for Zoom.

A hard copy of the annual report is available in the church office, or view it online on Westminster's homepage at [wpcbc.org](http://wpcbc.org).

Any questions, please call the church office at 989-686-1360.



## SOUPER BOWL OF CARING

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 7, 2021

For many years, Westminster's Youth Group has hosted its annual Souper Bowl of Caring Luncheon during the Annual Meeting of the Congregation.

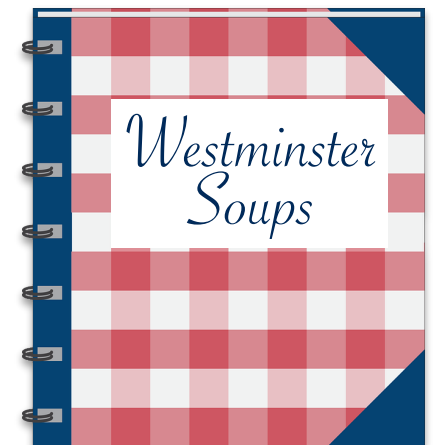
Everything has been different this past year, and the Souper Bowl of Caring is no different. That doesn't mean we can't still enjoy some delicious soup AND attend the Annual Meeting.

This year Annual Meeting will be held virtually, so we thought we would hold a virtual Souper Bowl.

**Make your favorite soup and share a picture of your family enjoying it during the Annual Meeting.**

Now for the twist. If you are willing, share your recipe with us and we will create a Westminster Soup Cookbook. Email pictures and recipes to Nicole Rezler at [nicolerzler228@gmail.com](mailto:nicolerzler228@gmail.com) or the church office at [office@wpcbc.org](mailto:office@wpcbc.org).

Any questions, please reach out!



*As in past Souper Bowl of Caring events, we welcome donations to Westminster's Food Pantry!*





Ann Weems in her book, *Kneeling in Jerusalem*, writes about the Lenten journey that we take each year:

*"Forty days stretch before us,  
forty days of hungering after faithfulness,  
forty days of trying to understand the story...  
These forty days stretch before us,  
and those of us who believe  
yearn to feel Your presence,  
yearn to be Your people  
And yet, the days fill with ordinary things  
with no time left  
for seeking the holy."*

She concludes this poem, *The Holy in the Ordinary* with these two questions:

*"Where, O Holy One, can we find You in this unholy mess?  
How, O God, can we find the holy in the ordinary?"*

### ASH WEDNESDAY WORSHIP

#### **A SERVICE OF MUSIC, SCRIPTURE, AND REFLECTION**

**7:00 p.m. via livestream on Facebook**

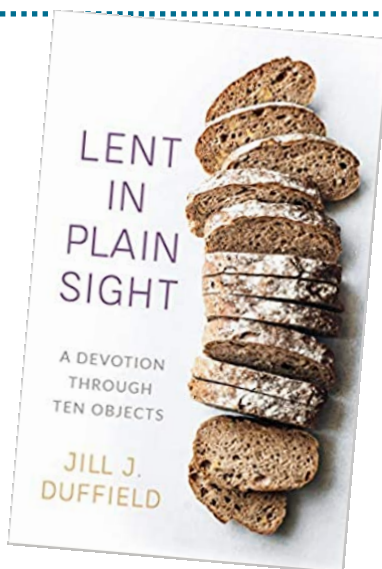
Each year during Lent we observe a 40-day season of worship, repentance, and contemplation that leads us to the cross and the empty tomb. This year at Westminster, even in the midst of pandemic restrictions, we will have several opportunities as a community of faith to take that Lenten journey. We will begin on Ash Wednesday, February 17<sup>th</sup>, with an Ash Wednesday Service of music, scripture and reflection. Details will follow in the next week and will be announced in early February. **Rev. Jamie Milton will be with us in worship for the first time on Ash Wednesday.** In addition to this service of contemplation and repentance, each subsequent Sunday will be an opportunity to reflect on "finding holy in the ordinary."

In addition to the Sunday morning worship services, we invite you to consider one of the Adult Faith Formation opportunities outlined below. The book, *Lent in Plain Sight: A Devotion Through Ten Objects*, is especially focused on the question — "How, O God, can we find the holy in the ordinary?" Together, let us commit to prayerfully live into this 40-day Lenten journey.

### **THURSDAYS AT 7:00 P.M. VIA ZOOM BEGINNING FEBRUARY 18**

Jill Duffield writes in the Introduction to her book, *"God works through the ordinary. Ordinary people, everyday object, things we bump up against moment by moment...God goes to great lengths to communicate with people, sending Jesus Christ, God's only Son, to unmistakably tell human beings about salvation, grace, and reconciliation. People of faith report epiphanies, revelations of God's word to them, sometimes in miraculous ways, but often and also through the mundane made holy due to timing and perception...the note from a friend arrived with just the right words and other similar personal examples."*

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### **SPIRITUALITY OF AGING** **Meets with a partner via telephone** **at your convenience**

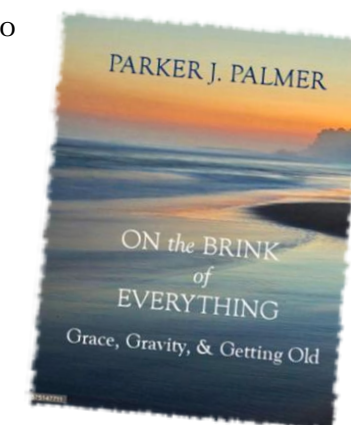
*"I yearned for something deeper and truer than a head full of religious ideas, no matter how sound."*

Who of us hasn't said that out-loud or written it in our journal or whispered/screamed it in a prayer?

Parker Palmer in his book, *On the Brink of Everything*, writes about that yearning. He notes that he had no problem embracing some of Christianity's key tenets, such as grace, forgiveness, incarnation, and life overcoming death. Nor did he have any problem taking a pass on the arrogantly judgmental parts of some streams of Christian tradition, or affirming the vital role of science in our live. I've always understood faith and reason to be partner, not enemies. He goes on to write that he came to understand that yearning through the phrase "Get a life!" He recognized that he already had one. It may have been a god-awful mess, but it is in a life lived that we find our spiritual path.

The spiritual journey is an endless process of engaging life as it is, stripping away our illusions about ourselves, our world, and the relationship of

the two, moving closer to reality as we do. That process begins with losing the illusion that spirituality will float us above the daily fray. Reality may be hard, but it is a safer place to live than in our illusion...



In February we will continue to explore the idea of *Living on the Brink of Everything* through our paired discussions — one-to-one — using the book and study materials (book excerpts and questions). The materials will be available through the church office or through email.

Remember, this book is not for elders only. It was written to encourage adults of all ages to explore the way their lives are unfolding. It's not a how-to-do-it book on aging, but a set of meditations in prose and poetry that turn the prism on the meaning(s) of one's life, refracting new light at every turn.

If you have any questions or would like to learn more about our "two-by-two" discussion format, please call Rev. Linda at the church office 686-1360 X2 or email [parishassoc@wpcbc.org](mailto:parishassoc@wpcbc.org).

### **Family to Family Connection**



Are you looking to meet some new people from our church? Are you looking to reconnect with people in our church family? Are you missing being at church in person? Would you like a pen-pal or phone buddy from church to send you mail or call you to brighten your day? If you answered yes to any of these questions, please fill out the application so we can match you up with a family that will best suit your needs. We would love to make some intergenerational connections between some of our long time members and our new families so people could get to know one another. All it would take is a little time and you could end up with a brand new family connection!

We will provide suggestions for ways that you can connect with one another. Please complete the application online by visiting <https://forms.gle/kR9KbzWDEKYtMuveA> or contact Nikelle to receive a paper copy.





## In Remembrance of Me

In an effort to help our Westminster family and friends experience a greater connection to the church on Holy Communion Sunday, we have begun delivering the small Communion cups with juice and wafer for you to use when you watch the live-streamed worship service.

If you would like to have the Communion elements delivered to your home (socially distanced of course), please call the church office at 686-1360.



**Join us Sunday,  
February 14  
at 3:00 p.m. via Zoom**

Grab some popcorn or your favorite movie snacks and join us on Sunday, February 14 at 3:00 p.m. via Zoom to preview the movie *The Antidote*.

*Antidote.*

This documentary, created in 2020, was made in response to the times we are living in. *The Antidote* weaves together stories of kindness, decency, and the power of community in America. It's about everyday people who make the intentional choice to lift others up, despite fundamentally unkind realities in our society that contradict the founding ideals of our country. It's about who we are and maybe, who we can be. Please contact Nikelle to receive the zoom link. ([cedirector@wpcbc.org](mailto:cedirector@wpcbc.org))

## Deborah Circle

Ladies, you are invited!

Deborah Circle will be meeting by Zoom (a link is printed below for you to use). The meeting will begin at 7:00 p.m. on Tuesday, February 23. For the foreseeable future, Deborah Circle is planning on meeting the 4th Tuesday of the month by Zoom.

We will be using excerpts from books by Patsy Clairmont and Barbara Johnson to inspire our discussion. If you are unable to join using the internet, there is information on how to join by phone. If you have questions regarding joining by Zoom, contact Darlene Kusterer at 989-385-4062. She is using her subscription to host our meetings. If you have questions about what we are using for discussion inspiration, call Karen Schoeppach at 684-1322.

Darlene Kusterer is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting.

Topic: Deborah Circle  
Time: Feb 23, 2021 07:00 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting  
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87859096004?pwd=SG1qaklYSzdESUhmaG9nSVByM3JWdz09>

Meeting ID: 878 5909 6004  
Passcode: CIRCLE2021  
One tap mobile  
+16465588656,,87859096004#,,,,\*8294113055# US (New York)  
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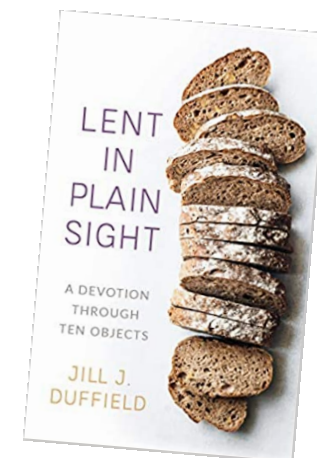
*"Often it is in hindsight that God's providence becomes recognizable and events previously considered mundane become evidence of God's presence and work in our lives. The questions for us becomes: Do we have the eyes to see God's near presence? Do we have the ears to hear the word of the Lord s, spoken in a multitude of ways and languages? Will we open ourselves to the holy not only in heaven but also on earth and right in from of us? Can everyday objects remind us to stay awake and pay attention?"*

*"This 40-Day Lenten devotional invites readers to open themselves to the kingdom of God, which is close at hand and in our midst. The days of Lent beckon us to a nearer following of Jesus and an awakening to the work of the Spirit in our lives and in the world. Each week the book highlights an object, something we encounter in our daily living — things like coins, shoes, and crosses — and asks us to consider through these objects the possibility, the promise, that God is present, speaking, seeking to be in relationship with us."*

The format of this Bible study will be similar to our recent Advent study (*An Uncluttered Heart*). There will be a brief Bible passage reading for each day, along with a brief devotional reading and questions that encourage both private reflection and weekly discussion when we gather on **Thursday evenings at 7:00 p.m. via Zoom, beginning February 18.** (Lent begins on Ash Wednesday, February 17.)

Some of you may recognize (Rev. Dr.) Jill Duffield's name — she has been the Editor of *Presbyterian Outlook* for five years, and in December of 2020 she became Sr Pastor at First Presbyterian Church in Greensboro, NC.

The book is available in the church office (donation appreciated). Study materials are also emailed out in advance earlier in the week. We will continue to meet via Zoom for the Thursday



**CURRENT EVENTS DISCUSSION VIA ZOOM  
Wednesdays at 1:00 p.m.**

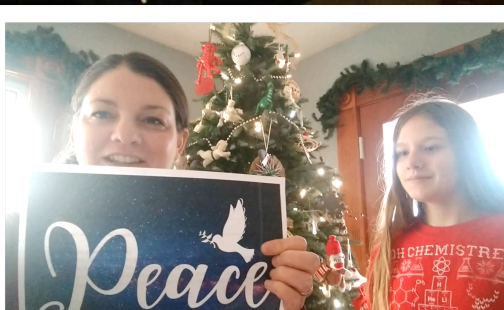
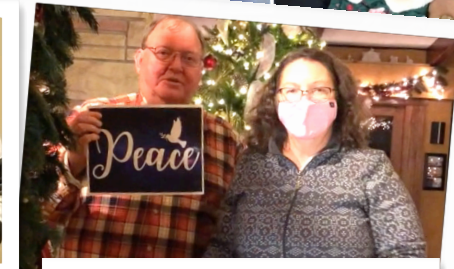
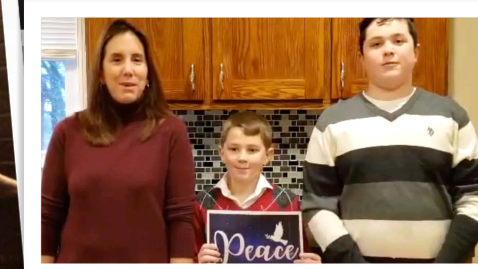
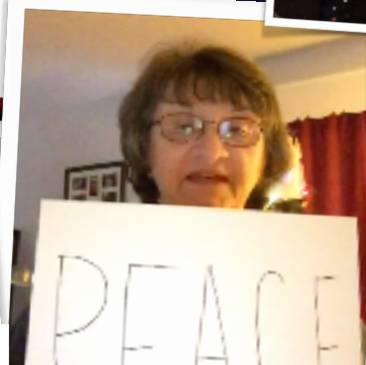
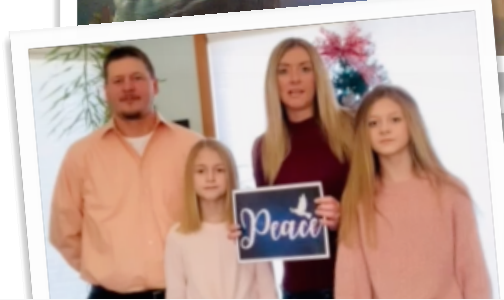
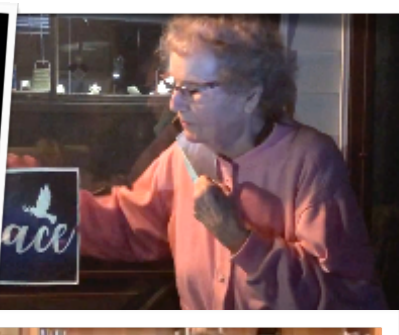
— A Place Where Faith and Current Events Intersect —

*The Wired Word* continues to meet weekly via Zoom on **Wednesday afternoons at 1:00 p.m.** Our discussions are a good blend of current events that also trigger great faith and Bible reflection and discussion. A few of our recent discussions include: *A Congressman Kneels to Clean Up Mess After Capitol Riot*; *Words Have the Power of Life and Death: Senate Chaplain's Prayer Reminds Us*; *2020 in Hindsight*; *Self-Restraint for the Benefit of Others...* to name a few.

The news always raises questions about what we think and believe and gives us an opportunity to reflect on some of life's big questions, as well as reflecting on a variety of Bible passages from the Old and New Testaments that are relevant to the topic at hand.

Remember if you are interested in just one week's topic, and not another week's, you are always welcome to drop-in for that week. Or if you just want a copy of the week's discussion materials, please contact Rev. Linda either by email ([parishassoc@wpcbc.org](mailto:parishassoc@wpcbc.org)) or phone (686-1360 x2). To receive a Zoom invitation for the week's gathering please contact Rev. Linda.





Each month the Spiritual Growth Committee will share in the Log a few thoughts on the journey of grief that we all experience. We hope these brief thoughts will be of help and support to all.

*"No one ever told me that grief felt so like fear."*

C.S. Lewis

As we enter into this New Year, many of us might be thinking about new resolutions or changes we want to see ahead. I, for one, am certain there are no new ways to say that 2020 was an unusual year for most of us. For many, the past year represents a time of stress, confusions, and wandering deeply into the unknown. We have all carried our individual and communal grief experiences through this past year, both for feelings of normalcy and for our loved ones who are not here.

When embarking on a new year, it's natural to wonder how we can make this year different. You might feel hope. Hope that things will be brighter and warmer than they have been. You might feel fear. How can we move forward through the fog when we still don't know what comes around the corner? When we experience a loss, it's common to experience an increased fear of the unknown. We can feel a loss of safety and a loss of control over what happens to us. We might feel deeply aware of how little control we have.



It can be easy to feel lost when we don't feel empowered. Empowerment is the process of becoming stronger and more confident, specifically related to controlling one's life. This is an ongoing process that takes time, effort, and support to engage in. This is never more true after a loss when our feelings of control have been taken away from us.

How can we feel more empowered? Often empowerment comes over time, from lots of little acts that make us feel like we have choices and are free to make the choices that best serve our needs. This can give us a sense of control and greater peace.

So what can we control? Maybe we can control the way we make a meal, preparing it just the way we like it. Maybe we can reach out and call a friend. Maybe we can commit to going for a walk every day, even on the coldest days. Maybe we can decide to learn how to lower our anxiety with deep breathing. Maybe we can seek the support of a therapist and deepen our understanding of ourselves. The beauty of starting a journey of self empowerment is that it is an ongoing practice and it looks different on everyone.

I want to take this time to encourage us all to seek spaces that make us feel empowered and to ask ourselves the tough questions about how we can take on the enormous task of building lives that serve our hopes, rather than feed our fears.

### **New Year's Resolutions for the Bereaved**

**This year I resolve to:**

- Not put a time on my grief.
- Tell their stories, the happy and the sad, they will live on through me.
- Understand that crying or otherwise expressing how I'm feeling is natural.
- Recognize that asking for help from those who love us is really a gift we give them.
- Reaching out to others in pain might help me heal.
- Cry when I need to, laugh when I can, and not feel guilty about either one.
- Let go, bit by bit of the guilt, regret, and anger because I know holding onto these will damage me.
- Take care of my physical, emotional, and spiritual health.
- Reinvest in life a little bit each day.

— by Tanya Lord

Reprinted from St. Luke's Hospice Bereavement Program, Bethlehem, PA.