

Westminster Presbyterian Church

zephyrs



"How wonderful it is to see a messenger coming across the mountain, bringing good news..." Isaiah 52:7

February 2010



A Pilgrim's Journey

"I've never seen this thing before! Death is everywhere around me!"

Haiti earthquake survivor on CNN

The earth quakes in Eureka or Haiti, San Francisco or LA. Are you ready? You need to be! To do it right, you must minimally have the following:

1. Earthquake kits that are fully stocked so that each member of your family is minimally supplied for 4-5 days with food, water, first aid, radio, batteries, flashlight, shelter, warm clothing, rain gear, sleeping gear, outdoor thermal blankets, utensils, prescriptions and pet supplies. Your supplies should be in sealed, water-proof containers (clip-shut garbage cans work well) and placed in a safe place outside your residence.
2. A fold-up shovel, rope, fire extinguisher, axe, sturdy knife, and utility shut off tool.
3. A 'Go Bag' in your trunk of your car(s) for each family member with 48 hours of the supplies above.
4. A clear plan for meeting-up at a specified place if the family is separated (and waiting at that place until assisted by police or fire).
5. Certification in your local CERT program.

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Merciful Moments

"For this is our God, and we are the people of God's pasture and the sheep of God's hand."

Psalm 95:7

It has been one year since February 8, 2009—that wonderful drizzly day filled with warmth and light when we celebrated the beginning of our shared worship space with Congregation Kol Shofar. Westminster folks paraded up Blackfield Drive carrying a welcome banner and Kol Shofar folks paraded down carrying the Torah; old friends and new friends joyfully joined together and returned to our Sanctuary for introductions and blessings. It was a great day!

In a very smooth and respectful relationship, Kol Shofar uses the Sanctuary primarily on Saturday mornings with Bar/Bat Mitzvah parties in the early afternoon in Findlay Hall; Westminster worships and celebrates on Sundays. We all envisioned and hoped for ways for the two communities could know each other and work together to build deeper relationship and it is happening!

In July 2009 and January 2010, an interfaith team led by Liz Arnold and Mark Swoislin painted and decorated the Family Emergency Shelter (the old Litchfield Hotel) in San Rafael. Each work day began with a pot luck meal shared with the residents.

As soon as it can be scheduled, we will have a great opportunity to worship with Kol Shofar in the Sanctuary. We will be invited to attend worship with Kol Shofar on a Saturday and Kol Shofar will join us at our 10 am service on a Sunday. After worship, we will enjoy a light vegetarian meal and share reflections, ask questions and learn more about our respective traditions and their meanings from congregants, rabbis and pastors.

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Call your local fire department and enroll. It's best to have neighbors attend together, develop a neighborhood plan and gain the skills to work together as neighbors. WPC will offer a "Get Ready Emergency Preparedness" class from 2-3:30 pm on Sunday, March 14, including a manual for each attendee.

Nancy and I have done all of these things; indeed, we went beyond the minimal lists above and used the extensive lists distributed in church several years ago. We each have Go Bags in our respective cars and a Go Bag for our puppy.


Clearly, a Haiti-level disaster here will mean that we have to care for ourselves and for those around us for 4-5 days, perhaps longer, until relief can be mobilized and deployed. Our neighborhood CERT group of four families is prepared to respond and support 25 neighboring households. There is CERT training in all Marin cities. The Southern Marin and Tiburon Fire Departments have superior programs. It takes two Saturdays to be certified, and it will be worth every second of the time invested when a disaster strikes.

The earthquakes in Eureka and Haiti remind us not only of our vulnerability but also of the biblical mandate to care for our neighbors. Damage to Eureka churches was minimal and easy to repair, and they did not call for any physical or financial assistance, but we are in direct contact with the ministers and the presbytery disaster response program.

Haiti is another story. Westminster had a number of medical missions to the capitol before our Guatemala missions. Several church families have friends or relatives working in the city. The human toll is almost beyond comprehension. The devastation is staggering. The complexity of any response is massive and can be best handled at the highest levels of governments and NGO co-operation.

Given the organizational problems within national, international, and denominational aid organizations following the hurricane disasters in the Southern U.S., the church staff is carefully monitoring which aid groups are using all designated funds for the stated purposes. Too many groups are still holding funds earmarked for Katrina relief and that is intolerable.

Haiti, already a profoundly damaged society and nation, is going to require a long-term process of rescue, salvage, and rebuilding. Let's allow governments, NGO's and aid groups to get into place and do their work while we determine how to most effectively re-

spond. If you wish to make a donation now, you may write a check to WPC and mark in the memo line "Haiti Quake Relief" and we do our best to ensure that all of those funds are fully, properly and effectively deployed. If you have a trusted international aid group with recognized response capability, please donate directly to them. We can and will reach out and help. *Peace, blessings and preparedness,* 

Merciful Moments

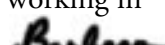
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On March 7, adults, children and youth from both congregations will walk from Westminster to the Richardson Bay Audubon to picnic, learn about environmental issues and help weed and plant to beautify this important community site, as organized by Judi Sachs and Hagar Ben-Eliezer.

At 5:30 pm every Sunday night through March, combined teams are providing a hot dinner and table conversation in Findlay Hall for the Men's Winter Shelter. Ellen Smoke and Mark Kaplan recruit volunteers who greet, serve and share a meal with the guests.

One Sunday night in January a young shelter guest who had been fighting drug issues shared his incredible music talent. We listened to him play jazz, rock and classical music on the piano and partway through his impromptu concert, another shelter guest pulled out a recorder and began accompanying the piano player.

At the same time, Kathy Martinez and her Girl Scouts settled on the steps nearby and spread out supplies for lanyard-making. Soon, guests gathered round and big guys with large hands were carefully twisting and braiding the cord. "I haven't done this since I was a Boy Scout," one said. A wonderful community is being built through respect, a growing trust and love. If you'd like to volunteer, please contact Ellen at ellensmoke@gmail.com.

The Lenten Season begins this year on February 17. The season's forty days are reminiscent of both Jesus' forty days in the wilderness after his baptism and the forty years Moses and the Hebrew people wandered in the desert. As a part of your Lenten practice, we invite you to examine where your life is wandering and reflect on where God might be leading you to new life. Join in building bridges of understanding and community and notice the ways God's love is working in your life. *Blessings,* 

Healing Prayers for:

Sharyn Babe, cousin of member Deb Babe and PC(USA) missionary serving in Port-o-Prince, Haiti, injured in the January 12 earthquake, and at last report, recovering in a hospital in Florida.

David Cross, in rehab at Greenbrae Convalescent after hip surgery.

Jim Obata, son of member Betty Obata, recovering from surgery.

Prayers of Celebration for:

The January 10 baptisms of **Alexis and Brooke Wangenheim, Katherine Hamphill, and Drake and Kent Goodman**

Hopital Ste. Croix

Hopital Sainte Croix (Holy Cross Hospital) in Leogane, Haiti collapsed in the January 12 earthquake resulting in many deaths and injuries. This hospital was the site of Westminster's medical mission trips in 1996 and 1997 and was a major focus of Presbyterian Church (USA) work in Haiti for decades. Our prayers are with the patients and staff of the hospital and our friends in Leogane.

Stewardship Campaign Update

The Stewardship Campaign would like to thank over 200 WPC households who have pledged \$508,000 for the 2010 fiscal year! We would also like to thank Sally Pasternack, Jim Gibbs, the Finance Commission members and the fantastic follow-up calling team for their tremendous work on behalf of the campaign. It would not have been a success without each of you.

Those wishing to contribute may still do so on-line at www.wpctiburton.org or via the green pledge card found in the pews.

Steve Anderson, Chair

WPC Legacy Fund

A growing number of WPC members have made provisions beyond their annual pledge gifts to include Westminster in their estate plans. These 'planned gifts' create an enduring legacy of support, offer additional church revenue and significant personal tax advantages.

WPC's Legacy Fund has been established to receive planned gifts, recognize donors and encourage future donations. Deferred gifts may be made via a will, trust or life income program and they can be directed to support the general fund or specific programs.

To learn more about planned gifts, or to let us know you have already included Westminster in your estate plan, please contact David Elliott at 381-1037 or David Hansen at 683-8400.

Rod Farrow

Spiritual Life Commission Spiritual Practice of the Month A = Attention

Our new series, *The Alphabet of Spiritual Literacy: To Spell Meaning in Daily Life* starts with 'A = Attention.'

What does it mean to you to pay attention or attend to something? We notice and give time to those things we feel are most important in our lives, at least this is our truest intention. We ask our children to pay attention to their teachers, coaches and the feelings of others. With mindfulness, we compose poetry, read a good book or set goals.

Jesus encouraged his disciples to stay awake and be attentive. As we go through our days, may we see with receptive eyes God's creation and discover a world of ceaseless wonders. *This month, ask yourself, "What is drawing my attention?"*

Debbie Dybsky

Share Your Books

Please share used books with WPC's Winter Shelter guests! They love mysteries, lawyer stories, history, etc. Bring books to the 10 am worship service any Sunday and give them to Meme Hurd. Thanks.

Nominations

The WPC Nominating committee invites church members to suggest their name or others for nomination as Deacon or Elder for the May 2010-2013 term.

The Deacons Board meets the second Tuesday of the month and acts as the church's outreach arm to the congregation and the greater community. Session meets the third Tuesday to review recommendations from its commissions that provide oversight to church operations. Elders serve as leaders and members of the commissions that meet on the first Tuesday of the month. All meetings are at 7 pm.

Questions? Contact Doug/Barb at 383-5272 or Judi Jensen at 370-5608 or judiajensen@aol.com.

Thank You!

Church and Society Commission warmly thanks the congregation for its Christmas Eve offering of \$3,337, divided between the Marin Interfaith Street Chaplaincy and the Afghans4Tomorrow Fuel Briquette Project.

The Chaplaincy provides spiritual and emotional support to the street community. Afghans 4 Tomorrow Briquette Project offers Afghans, especially children, widows and others at-risk, economic self-sufficiency through production of an alternative fuel source made from recyclable waste materials. Thank you for your generous support of these charities. **Marsha MacColl**



*Director of
Christian
Education
Nicole Trotter*



*Director of
Youth Ministry
Bethany Nelson*



*Music Director
Ruth E. Wells*

Children's Ministries

The first Sunday of Lent is February 21. That means a new season for the church calendar and Westminster Sunday school. We will welcome new and continuing teachers and begin offering families *This Season at Home*, a take home weekly instructional pamphlet suggesting ways to make the Sunday school connection at home. On February 21, we will also celebrate the beginning of the season of Lent with bagels after worship.

In *This Season at Home*, there are many rituals suggested for you to share with your children each Sunday. For example, Jesus often spent his reflective time in the wilderness. *This Season at Home* suggests you make a wilderness scene in the middle of your kitchen table, adding to it week by week. Accompanying family prayers are provided, along with questions to reflect on. Each Scripture focus for a particular Sunday is the same Scripture your children will have learned in Sunday school.

During the season of Lent you will also start to see 'fish boxes' coming home for *One Great Hour of Sharing*. Please remind your children that they are collecting coins to help Jesus 'feed his sheep.' Let your children know that Jesus' sheep are a symbol for people and that we can help to provide for others with something as small as loose change. A calendar comes with the box describing the many ways your change will help give others the things we take for granted—shelter, food, water and education. Small change adds up, and every coin collected by every child helps make a world of difference to those in need.

Thank you, **Nicole**
nicoletrrotter@comcast.net

February Youth News

Hope you'll join us for our special January events! We have some special activities planned. Don't miss out! Check your youth newsletter for more details.

Sunday School **Sundays, 10:00 am**

Middle and high school youth meet for class each Sunday morning during worship. Hope you'll join us!

Girls Choir Rehearsal **February 14, 11:15 am-12:30 pm**

After a break in January, we are back to singing! This group is open to all girls in grades 5-12. Even if you've never sung in a choir before, give this a try. We have a lot of fun! We'll be rehearsing music to sing in worship on February 28.

Middle and High School Youth Band **February 27, 4:00 pm**

Do you sing or play an instrument? This group is for you! We'll be rehearsing some music for our 'Saturday Night Alive' worship at 5:30 on February 27.

Pizza Lunch **February 28, 11:15 am**

We'll head to Round Table for some food and conversation. Please bring \$10 to pay for lunch.

Ski Week Events **Week of February 15**

If you have a break from school this week, join us for our special activities. More information will follow.

Questions? Ideas? Comments? Contact Bethany at 383-5272 x18 or bethany@juno.com

Bethany

Music in February

As the teaching series begins to contemplate questions of faith and why faith matters, my goal for the music program, as always, is to companion those questions with music from many sources. In light of that theme, I have a few questions of my own that I'd like you to consider.

Music for the church has a rich and complicated history. The church has historically been a generous patron of the classical arts, and more recently has evolved as a forum for expression of faith through music in every style. So, with that background, here are my questions:

What makes something appropriate (or not) for a worship service? Is familiar music comfortable because it's familiar? With an every-widening array of musical tastes, what constitutes what is traditional or familiar? Are long traditions comfortable or tiresome? Is newer music better or scarier?

When we think about our legacy and when we talk about financial stability for the church that comes after us, is music a defining part of who we are and want to be remembered as being?

Clearly there are no 'right' answers, but I welcome your contemplation of the role of music in worship for you, whether from the choir (or instrumentalists), or the youth, or guests, or in hymns and responses or from any other source. As always, I am interested in your feedback!

Ruth E.

ruthewells@gmail.com

Wednesday Study Group

The Gospels

February 3–April 7

9:30-10:30 am, Fireside

Join the Wednesday Study Group as it looks at each of the four Gospels in depth and compares their sources, audiences and major messages about the life and ministry of Jesus. Each Gospel author communicated in a different way and emphasized different aspects of the story.

Could you explain the differences between the four Gospels? Why do we even have four? What is unique about Matthew? Who was Luke's primary audience? What stories are in only in John? You may join us for the entire series or for the 3-4 sessions on one particular Gospel. During the month of February we will study Matthew. Childcare available on request. **Contact Barbara Rowe at 383-5272 x16 or barbrowe@aol.com for details.**

Men's Group

Fridays, February 5-26

6:30 am, Fireside

Join a popular men's group for its early morning breakfast and discussion. **Questions? Contact Phil Economon at 924-6047.**

Women's Spiritual Discovery

Fridays, February 5-26

9:30-11 am, Library

Join us for quiet reflection and sharing. Newcomers are always welcome. **Questions? Contact Pat O'Neil at 332-4438 or P2on@aol.com.**

Faith Café

Sundays, February 7-28

8:30-9:30 am, Fireside

The Faith Café is a great opportunity for adults to study contemporary and spiritual issues and reflect on how our faith is impacted by each.

Topics for February 7 and 14 are concerns in our current culture and world. Beginning February 21 and 28, Rev. Lloyd Henderson will lead a six-week reflection on Spirituality during the Lenten season.

Grab your coffee and join in! Childcare is available. **Contact Barbara Rowe at 383-5272 x16 or barbrowe@aol.com.**

Mustafa and Family at Souper Bowl

Sunday, February 7

11:15 am, Findlay Hall

Please join the Church and Society Commission on February 7 after the 10:00 a.m. service as we enjoy a visit from Mustafa, his little brother Maahd, his father Ghazwan and mother Kawther, and also celebrate 'Souper Bowl' Sunday with vegetable soup made from Margie Wiegandt's recipe. Your donation will be used by the Marin Community Food Bank to fight hunger.

Last year, Westminster raised money to help provide speech therapy for Mustafa after cochlear implant surgery restored the hearing he lost during a bomb blast in Baghdad. Ghazwan, a journalism teacher, Kawther and Maahd recently emigrated to the US. We hope many church members, especially those with young children, will greet the family and play with the boys on the playground on February 7. See you then!

Liz Arnold

Joyful Noise!

Sunday, February 7 and ongoing

11:15 am, Sanctuary

Joyful Noise children's choir resumes rehearsals on February 7 immediately following worship. We will also visit with Mustafa as a group. All children grades K-6 are invited. **Questions? Contact Barbara Kessell at 388-0237 or bjkessell@hotmail.com.**

WPC Winter Shelter

Sundays, February 7–March 28
6 pm, Findlay Hall

Join with WPC and Kol Shofar volunteers to provide food and a welcoming presence to 30 men who need shelter during the winter months. We are thankful for the many wonderful volunteers who have served over the past two months, and we look forward to continuing this joint project with Kol Shofar for the remaining two months of winter.

The shelter has become a weekly highlight for the guests and warm connections are made with the guests and between WPC and Kol Shofar volunteers. Barbara Rowe describes one such night that included an impromptu musical concert and lanyard making (see page one for more details). Children have also enjoyed passing out food at the tables.

Our guests arrive by bus each Sunday for a 6 pm dinner followed by a movie. They especially like music, so if you play the piano or other instrument or sing, you might consider providing music or leading a sing-along from 6-7 pm.

To host, provide music or part of the meal, contact Ellen Smoke at 945-9560 or in the Narthex after worship on Sundays.

Aged to Perfection Movie Group

Ratatouille

Friday, February 19

11:30-2:30, Fireside Room

Please join us for a wonderful comedy, Ratatouille, featuring Remy, its passionate PIXAR star who thirsts for a sip of the good life. Bring your brown bag lunch and join us for some fun! Coffee and popcorn provided. **Questions? Contact Betty Drake at 457-1270.**

Congregational Life and Education 6

Interfaith Worship

Saturday, date and time TBA

Sunday, date TBA, 10:00 am

WPC Sanctuary & Findlay Hall

Watch the bulletin for an upcoming opportunity to worship with Congregation Kol Shofar! As soon as it can be scheduled, Westminster folks will be invited to a Kol Shofar service on a Saturday, and Kol Shofar folks will be invited to a Westminster service on a Sunday.

Following the Sunday worship, we will share a light lunch with the Kol Shofar attendees and discuss the services, ask and answer questions, share insights and get to know each other on a new level. Watch the bulletin for the dates and times to be announced for this special event!

Drivers Needed

February 19 & 27

7:15 am, WPC to SFO

Consider offering your driving skills to take the Guatemala Medical Teams to the San Francisco Airport from WPC—the first leg of their journey to Guatemala.

Please contact Barbara Rowe at 393-5272 x16 or barbrowe@aol.com if you can help.

A Lenten Sunday Dialogue

Why Faith Matters

Sundays: February 21 & 28 and March 7, 14 & 21

11:15 am-12 pm, Library

Join the 'preacher of the day' to discuss a Sunday Teaching Series informed by *Why Faith Matters* by David J. Wolpe.

Topics include "Is Religion Good For You?," "Faith and Doubt," "Does Religion Cause Violence?," "Science and Religion," "Doctrine and Scripture: lessons in Reading and Living," and "Why Faith Does Matter?" Read the book, listen to the Teaching, and then share your soul and thinking!

Paperback copies can ordered from Amazon.com or your favorite bookstore.

Brown Bag Book Group

Acts of Faith

Monday, February 22

12:00 pm, Library

Bring a brown bag lunch and join a discussion of *Acts of Faith: The Story of an American Muslim, the Struggle for the Soul of a Generation* by Eboo Patel. Patel describes how he suffered the racist taunts of fellow youth, and, in response, alternately rebelled against and absorbed his parents' religion of Islam. He pursued interfaith work, not quite knowing his goal but feeling that interfaith understanding was the key.

This autobiography of a young activist captures how an angry youth can be transformed—by faith, by the community and, most of all, by himself—into a profound leader for the cause of peace. Eboo Patel is a member of President Obama's new Faith Advisory Council. He is founder and executive director of the Interfaith Youth Corp, a Chicago-based international nonprofit that promotes interfaith cooperation.

Copies of book are available (\$10) from Barbara Rowe at 383-5272 x16 or barbrowe@aol.com

Saturday Night Alive

February 27, 5:30 pm

Hope you'll join us at *Saturday Night Alive!* All ages are invited to a casual, upbeat worship, with music led by our youth band. Following worship, we'll gather in Findlay Hall for a dinner of make-your-own burritos.

Contact Bethany Nelson at 383-5272 x18 or bethany@juno.com

WPC and Kol Shofar Work Day

Sunday, March 7

11:30 am-2 pm, Audubon Center

Join WPC and Kol Shofar families and friends on Sunday, March 7 for a brown bag lunch picnic and restoration work day—removing trash and invasive plants or other projects—at the Richardson Bay Audubon Center and Sanctuary. All ages are welcome, including families with young children (12 and under must be accompanied by an adult). Work until 2 pm or as long as you are able.

Bring a brown bag lunch and re-useable water bottle and wear appropriate clothing, sun screen and closed-toe shoes. Gloves will be provided.

To RSVP/ask questions, contact Judi Sachs at 453-9123 or judi-jones@comcast.net.

Get Ready!

Sunday, March 14

2 pm, Findlay Hall

The Southern Marin Fire District will offer free emergency preparedness training at Westminster, including a manual for each attendee. Childcare will be available. See next month's *Zephyrs* for more details.

Guatemala Evening

Saturday, March 20

6:00 pm, Findlay Hall

Come on the evening of March 20 to hear about the Guatemala Medical Team's important work in February. There will be a photo presentation, music and singers, delicious food, silent auction and a special presentation by story-teller Kathleen Buckstaff. *Watch your bulletins and emails for more details or contact Karen Eaton at Kareneaton@earthlink.com.*

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zephyrs

published monthly, except for
 a combined July/August issue.

Upcoming Deadlines

March

February 10

April

March 17

Submissions subject to editing. Single space copy without formatting (indentations, title caps, etc.); let PC wrap text. Twelve-point Garamond font helpful. Email preferred to marirobinson@comcast.net