



Pastor Message
Ellen Gurnon

Can you believe it's been a year and a month since Westminster and First Presbyterian became yoked?! It seems like much longer than that, despite the small number of opportunities we have had to worship, serve, and fellowship together. For all the negative things we can say about 2020, I'd say that our new relationship with our sister church has been a good one, and I'm hopeful for a bright future.

For my part, I have settled in well at Westminster. I enjoy spending Tuesdays in the office, and I have been able to focus my attention on Westminster members and ministries on that day. The members at First Presbyterian have been very respectful of that boundary, and I have not felt as though the diminished time at FPC has hindered ministry with them.

Both congregations have enjoyed a few opportunities to be together: Ash Wednesday worship, Pentecost outdoor worship and picnic, Women's Bible Study, and work with the Semo Prom Mothers project. We are getting to know one another and forming new relationships.

To continue this positive trend, I would encourage us all to commit to a **Lenten practice of prayer with a person from the other congregation**. We will be using the Presbyterians Today Lenten devotional, *The Way to Shalom: A Lenten Journey to Peace and Wholeness*. We will be mailing a hardcopy to each household, and we email it as a link if you want to download it to your computer. The idea is for you to:

- invite someone from the other church to be your partner (let me know if you need help),
- agree to a time each day to connect by phone,
- share in the reading of the scripture, devotion, and prayer for that day,
- discuss your thoughts about it.

This should take no more than five minutes per day – depending on how long you visit, of course!

To further promote relationship-building and to facilitate this Lenten project, we are publishing a **church directory** that will include both First Presbyterian and Westminster Presbyterian members and friends. This idea was presented at Westminster's most recent Session meeting. The directory from your church will look much the same; it will just be bound together with the other church directory located at the back.

When congregations yoke, the pastor should not be the only thing that binds them together. Our ministries, our missions, our love for our neighbor, our faith in God, our desire to follow Jesus, and our reliance upon the Holy Spirit are the ties that bring us together and bind us together as God's people.

My prayer for 2021 is that we will all grow in shalom, in gratitude, and in a strong partnership with our brothers and sisters in Christ... to the glory of God!

Health and peace,

Ellen



Lectionary

Sunday, February 7

Isaiah 40:21–31
Psalm 147:1–11, 20c
1 Corinthians 9:16–23
Mark 1:29–39

Transfiguration of the Lord— February 14

2 Kings 2:1–12
Psalm 50:1–6 2
Corinthians 4:3–6
Mark 9:2–9

Ash Wednesday— February 17

Joel 2:1–2, 12–17
Psalm 51:1–17 2
Corinthians 5:20b–6:10
Matt. 6:1–6, 16–21

First Sunday in Lent— February 21

Genesis 9:8–17
Psalm 25:1–10 1
Peter 3:18–22
Mark 1:9–15

Second Sunday in Lent— February 28

Genesis 17:1–7, 15–16
Psalm 22:23–31
Romans 4:13–25
Mark 8:31–38

Ash Wednesday



Remember that you are dust,
and to dust you shall return.

E C C L E S I A S T E S 3 : 2 0


An excerpt from the *Companion to the Book of Common Worship* (Geneva Press, 2003, 148)

The Lenten journey from the ashes of death to resurrected life begins on the first day of Lent, Ash Wednesday, which signifies a time to turn around, to change directions, to repent. This first day of Lent reminds us that unless we are willing to die to our old selves, we cannot be raised to new life with Christ. The first step of this journey calls us to acknowledge and confront our mortality, individually and corporately. In many traditions, this is symbolized through the imposition of ashes — placing a cross on one's forehead. During the imposition of ashes the words: "You are dust, and to dust you shall return" (Genesis 3:19) are repeated again and again. We are to remember that we are but temporary creatures, always on the edge of death. On Ash Wednesday, we begin our Lenten trek through the desert toward Easter.



Calendar

February 7th

 Livestream Worship Service
10:45 a.m.
(Communion Sunday)

Transfiguration of the Lord
February 14th

 Livestream Worship Service
10:45 a.m.

February 16th
Women's Bible Study
9:30a.m.

Ash Wednesday
February 17th

 Livestream Worship Service
10:00 a.m.

First Sunday of Lent
February 21st

 Livestream Worship Service
10:45 a.m.

Second Sunday of Lent
February 28th

 Livestream Worship Service
10:45 a.m.



Justin Lane Feb. 2nd
Max Dale Feb. 7th
Bonnie Privett Feb. 9th



Missions

December mission spending:

FISH	\$400
Florence Project	\$250
Presby. Hunger	\$250
Baptist Student Ctr.	\$300
Safe House	\$400
Christmas Joy Off.	\$400
One Great Hour	\$350
Pentecost Offering	\$400
Peace/Global Witness	\$400

(Each of these listed above got \$500 total for the year 2020)

The People's Shelter	\$500
Salvation Army	\$500
SEMO Food Bank	\$500
Adult/Teen Challenge	\$500

We supported 18 missions total at \$500 each. (\$9,000)