



January

WEST HEMPFIELD PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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Hello to all the newsletter readers of West Hempfield Presbyterian Church!

Psalm 89

*¹ I will sing of the Lord's great love forever;
with my mouth I will make your faithfulness known
through all generations.*

*² I will declare that your love stands firm forever,
that you have established your faithfulness in heaven itself.*

*³ You said, "I have made a covenant with my chosen one,
I have sworn to David my servant,*

*⁴ 'I will establish your line forever
and make your throne firm through all generations.'"*

I am reminded again that I do not read the Psalms as much as I should. Not just because it is the book of Scripture with the most chapters. Not just because of the beautiful poetry. But also because this book has so many wonderful lessons for us tucked away in the profusion of pages of prose.

*I will sing of the Lord's great love forever;
with my mouth I will make Your faithfulness known through all generations.*

What a wonderful reminder of who should be at the center of our lives!

In today's age of social media, many will spend great effort crafting the perfect tweet or getting just the right photos to share with all of our followers, letting them know just how talented, funny, compassionate, or clever we are. Look at me! Give me "likes."

The psalmist says, "Look at God! Give God the glory!"

In today's age of celebrity worship and consumerism, many will shout the praises of this person or that person, of this brand or that brand, cover ourselves and our things with slogans and logos. We put our trust and salvation in other humans or things we can buy (or wish we could buy).

The psalmist says, "The Lord will establish your line. The Lord will provide a sturdy foundation for your life and legacy. The Lord will be your salvation."

As I write this we find ourselves at the beginning of a new year. For some there is optimism. For some there is fear. Maybe a complicated mixture of both. But the psalmist reminds us of the Lord's great love and faithfulness. Through it all, come what may, God's love stands firm forever. If we can keep our focus on that, then I can say with confidence ...

Blessings, Rev. Andrew Wirt

Happy New Year!

WHPC UPDATE

The Session of WHPC met 1/5/21 over video conference. **Both the 8:30 and the 11:00am in-person Sunday morning services will be available this Sunday, January 10 alongside all of the worship at home options which we continue to offer as well.**

The decision to close the in person services from 12/20 through 1/3, made on 12/15, was not an easy decision. The conversation has never been, “should we provide worship?” We all agree the answer to that question is “Yes.” The question was, and continues to be, “Can we assure, with reasonable certainty, that we are providing a safe place to gather, that those who come here are not in danger?” The answer to that question mid-December was determined to be “No, not right now.” Much like in the event of snow and ice, we believed, at the time, that we could not guarantee the safety of those who would come to gather in our building.

That decision was not unanimous. But after respectful, thoughtful conversation, the motion passed with a majority and the whole group agreed that we would respect the decision as a response to increased community spread in a season that would normally also be increased holiday church attendance.

Now that the infection rate is going back down and the busy holidays are past, the Session was in agreement once again. No one made a motion to extend the closure, no vote was called, in person worship reopens. Neither closing nor reopening was done carelessly, nor in response to outside pressure. We continue to watch statistics like infection rate and community spread. We continue to encourage everyone to follow appropriate safety guidelines. We continue to be committed to providing worship at home for those who would choose it. The position of the Session is that if we work together to keep one another safe, we can safely provide in person worship for those who need and/or prefer it.

We started the January 5 meeting by sharing, reading, and listening to the reactions, concerns, suggestions, thoughts, and feelings of many congregation members regarding our COVID responses over the last several months and particularly the last few weeks. Clearly, we are not all of one mind about this. We heard all manner of responses. From “thank you for closing” to “we should never have closed” to “why didn’t you close sooner.” From “the safety measures are appropriate and helpful” to “the rules are ridiculous and pointless” to “I wish the tape was still up on the pews” It becomes obvious quickly that we can never make everyone happy, but we want to make sure everyone feels heard and respected. We are planning to put together another congregational survey. Please take the time to share your thoughts with us. We want to hear from you.



IN PERSON WORSHIP SCHEDULE

January 10—Regular Services 8:30 & 11am

January 17—Regular Services 8:30 & 11am

January 24—Regular Services 8:30 & 11am

January 31 – Regular Services 8:30 & 11am

Sunday School 9:45am every Sunday



AT HOME WORSHIP SCHEDULE

There are several ways to worship with WHPC ...

- You can listen to the service over the phone at 11:00am (instructions below).
- You can watch the service on Facebook – www.facebook.com/westhempfieldpresbyterian

The same video will be also be available on the church website www.westhempfieldpc.org
After the video on Facebook has finished, it will continue to be available on Facebook as well to watch any time, at your convenience.

For call in: Dial (312)626-6799 [warning: this is a Chicago # and may be a long-distance call depending on your phone plan]. When you are asked for a meeting ID dial this number 281 732 7095 then hit the # symbol. You will be put in the “Waiting Room” and then you will be brought into the call where you can listen to the 11am service live from start to finish.

For those who have Zoom on your computers or smartphone, another option for anyone with a computer and internet access would be to request a Zoom link from the office. A link would then be emailed to you. You do not need to have a Zoom account.

2021 GIVING ENVELOPES

The Stewardship and Finance Committee will continue to not distribute giving envelopes. To avoid waste and *decrease costs*, in 2021, **we will continue not** issuing boxes of giving envelopes to each congregant.

If you give by check, you **do not** need to use any envelope at all, simply put your check in the offering plate or mail it to the church. You can also **pay online through your bank or** Online offering continues to be available on the church website or by texting WHPC to 73256 (you will not receive any marketing as a result of using this service). **You can set up automatic withdrawals from your bank account as well as on the church website.**

We will continue to provide you with periodic giving statements. The deacons, coat drive and other special envelopes will still be available. Thank you for your continued support of WHPC.

DECEMBER SESSION HIGHLIGHTS

The Session of West Hempfield Presbyterian Church held a special called meeting on December 15, 2020

After opening with prayer and much respectful conversation regarding the state of the pandemic and the most recent recommendations from the state, the Session voted to go to “At-Home Worship” only through the duration of the state’s heightened security measures, which means through January 4, 2021. This motion received two “No” votes, and passed with a majority of those present. A special called Session meeting was scheduled for January 5, 2021 to reevaluate the situation. The Session made a motion and approved unanimously the creation of a parking lot radio broadcast service for Christmas Eve at 5:00pm. All at-home service options will be timed to be available simultaneously at 7:00pm—whether watching online or listening on the phone, participants will all be united in hearing the message and music at the same time. The meeting was closed in prayer.

The Session of West Hempfield Presbyterian Church had a regular scheduled meeting on December 22, 2020

Opened in prayer and reflection upon Scripture

Minutes approved from the November regular scheduled session meeting and the December 15 special called Session meeting.

Pastor Andrew reported (among other things) that he completed the required Boundary Training offered by Redstone Presbytery.

A motion was made and unanimously approved to allow Stewardship Committee continued access to a small savings account in the case of emergency needs through the end of 2021. This was first established in early 2020 as a response to the global pandemic and uncertainty about how it would affect the church.

Date of the congregational meeting was rescheduled to allow for a number of delays related to the global pandemic. By unanimous vote, the congregational meeting to review the church budget, approve the pastor’s compensation, and approve new church leadership will be held on Sunday, January 24, 2021 at noon, with a backup date of January 31.

Received committee reports from committee chairs.

The meeting was closed in prayer.



The Session of West Hempfield Presbyterian Church held a special called meeting on January 5, 2021

After opening with prayer and much respectful conversation, all active elders were present and no motions were made to continue the cancellation of in-person worship. In-person worship will resume on January 10, 2021 in the same fashion as in the fall. The meeting was closed with prayer.

ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

The Annual Congregational Meeting will be held on Sunday, January 24, 2021 at noon with a rain date of Jan 31.

All worship opportunities will continue to be available — in-person services at 8:30am and 11am, call-in service at 11am, and online worship at your convenience.

Due to the global pandemic, there will be no refreshments available.

We will present the 2021 budget as approved by the Session at their regular scheduled meeting on November 24, 2020 and the 2020 Annual Report. Those present will be asked to approve the pastor's compensation and elect the new class of church leadership.

When the Annual Report is ready the church office will email it as a PDF to everyone we can. Copies will also be available in the lobby of the church. If you pick up a physical copy at the church, please take it with you or throw it away.

It will be possible to attend the congregational meeting without physically being present in the sanctuary. To be counted as present, you must be with us in such a way that you can hear and be heard live. To allow for this, we will use the phone-in from the 11am service. Follow the instructions for the worship call-in service and either attend the service via call-in and stay on the line for the Congregational Meeting or call-in just for the Congregational Meeting at noon. Another option for anyone with a computer and internet access would be to request a Zoom link from the office. A link would then be emailed to you. You do not need to have a Zoom account. You can click the link at the scheduled time and be brought into the Congregational Meeting. To conserve bandwidth, video may be disabled.



WEST HEMPFIELD PRESCHOOL



The preschool is currently accepting registration for the school year 2021-2022. This program is designed for 3- & 4-year old children. The child must be 3 by August 31 and potty-trained. The registration fee is \$30. If you would like more information, visit their website at www.westhempfieldpreschool.org, call the church office between 9am & 1pm or see Linda Simpson after service. Thank you!



On behalf of the Deacons and Mission committee....a great big thank you to everyone who donated food and gifts to this year's Deacon's Baskets and Angel Tree. In such a challenging year, it was heartwarming to see the outpouring of food items and gifts for needy families in our community. An additional thank you to those who came and helped sort food, pack the boxes, and help with the distribution. This year we helped 22 families, which included 45 children. Thank you WHPC family and friends!

Thank you to a generous Rolling Hills neighbor who receives a Target gift card every year for working there. She decided to donate her \$50 gift card towards the Food2Go4Kids program.

Thank you to all who gave their time to ring the bells for the Salvation Army in spreading the Christmas Spirit from WHPC to the community.



Cheryl Bookheimer	January 2	Leah Iwinski	January 14
Marcus Dawson	January 2	Owen Thomas	January 15
Richard Hazlett	January 4	Mona Ray	January 16
Jon Grinder	January 6	Keith Pritts	January 16
Robbie Potthoff	January 7	Donald Stewart	January 18
Simon Thomas	January 7	Joseph Smith	January 20
Rachel Weaver	January 8	Randy Greenawalt	January 20
Melissa Hladek	January 9	Marge Jackson	January 21
Neil Graham	January 10	Bob MacIntosh	January 22

*If you have a January birthday, and we've missed you –
PLEASE, let the office know!*

January 2021

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2
3 At Home Worship Communion Sunday	4	5 Girl Scouts, 5:00pm	6 Senior Cards, 11-2:30pm Men's Group, 7:00pm	7 Food2Go Distribution 3-5pm	8	9
10 8:30 & 11:00 Worship Sunday School 9:45 am	11	12 Soccer Shots, 5:30pm Deacons Meeting, 6:30pm	13 Senior Cards, 11-2:30pm Men's Group, 7:00pm	14 Food2Go Distribution 3-5pm	15	16 Audit Committee 10:00am Fellowship Hall
17 8:30 & 11:00 Worship Sunday School 9:45am	18	19 Soccer Shots, 5:30pm Stewardship & Finance 6:30pm	20 Senior Cards, 11-2:30pm Men's Group, 7:00pm	21 Food2Go Distribution 3-5pm Session Reports Due	22	23
24 8:30 & 11:00 Worship Sunday School 9:45am	25 Newsletter Deadline	26 Soccer Shots, 5:30pm Session Meeting, 6:30pm	27 Senior Cards, 11-2:30pm Men's Group, 7:00pm	28 Food2Go Distribution 3-5pm	29	30