



WEST HEMPFIELD PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

8 West Hempfield Drive

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

In *Jeremiah 29:1-9* the people of Israel have been attacked. Many killed. Most survivors taken away into captivity. (If you want to know more about what that was like, read the first half of the book of Daniel.) The people want to hear that they will be saved, that they will be able to return to their homes, that the enemy will be destroyed for what they have done.

Enter the prophet Jeremiah ... and he says, "Get comfortable. You are going to be here for a while."

Not exactly what I imagine his audience had hoped for. He even seems to acknowledge this as near the end of our passage he warns them to beware of those who would tell them what they want to hear instead.

Today, many of us feel trapped by an overwhelming enemy as well. The COVID-19 virus has attacked our communities. Many have died. The rest of us are isolated in our homes or out risking our safety and that of our families to be of service to others in one form or another. We want to hear that we will be saved, that the virus will be destroyed, and that we can go back to life as normal.

Instead, we are told, "Get comfortable. It is going to be like this for a while."

But that is not all Jeremiah has to say.

In the middle of the reading, he says "Don't just think about yourselves." Verse 7 *Work for the well-being of the city where I have sent you to and pray to the Lord for this. For if it is well with the city you live in, it will be well with you.*

This is how we will get through the pandemic. This is how we will ALL prosper. By looking out for one another. Helping our neighbors. Praying for the whole world. Because if we are protecting the most vulnerable, then we will all be most blessed. Matthew 25:40 *"The King will reply, 'Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.'"*

When we start to think that the challenges we face in our own lives are too difficult to bear, we look to our neighbors. To help, to encourage, and to be encouraged. Be reminded of Jeremiah's audience and the challenges they faced. Think of Jesus himself (Hebrews 12 if you are looking for more reading and more encouragement). And know that *"No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it."* (Hebrews 12:11)

Blessings, Rev. Andrew Wirt

Pastor Andrew Recommends: "Visit" Some Other Churches

Many churches have shifted, like WHPC, to a worship online or worship-at-home model. This does present an interesting opportunity in this time of so many limitations. Usually, we can only attend one worship service on a Sunday morning, or maybe two if you scheduled things just right. But now, you could view several worship services each day if you have the time, and some of us have nothing but extra time right now.

Find encouragement in God's word wherever it can be found. Check out the online service of the church down the street. Look up a church you used to attend. Check out a service from somewhere in Minnesota, because why not?

Listen to the sermon of a friend's pastor.

And invite them to check out WHPC! It's never been easier.

MAY WORSHIP SCHEDULE



MAY 3	Worship at Home available
MAY 10	Worship at Home available
MAY 17	TBD
MAY 24	TBD
MAY 31	TBD

For now Worship at Home alternative continues, if anyone is having trouble, please let us know (we are happy to send a DVD or CD to your home)

APRIL SESSION HIGHLIGHTS

The Session of West Hempfield Presbyterian Church met on April 28, 2020

- Together we covered our church and congregation with prayer, read Scripture, and reviewed all that has been going on with the church and the world.
- Building closure continues at least until May 12, 2020.
- Worship at home alternative continues through at least May 10, 2020.
- We will continue to financially support all church staff through at least the end of May.
- Session approved the purchase of a church video camera for recording sermons.
- Approved minutes from March 24 & April 14 session meetings.
- Note: Pennsylvania Primary is now June 2, 2020

STEWARDSHIP

- Online offering is available for everyone as we worship off-site.
- Visit <https://onrealm.org/WestHempfieldPC/-/give/general>
- Donations to WHPC can always be made by making arrangements with your bank or by mailing your donation to 8 West Hempfield Drive, Irwin, PA 15642 made payable to WHPC and feel free to put in the memo; general fund, deacons, building, etc.
- You can even text-to-give, available by texting WHPC to the number 73256 and following the prompts.
- We have also started accepting donations of gift cards. These gift cards will allow us to respond quickly to anyone that may need some extra help. Giant Eagle, Aldi, GetGo, etc... If you want to participate in this ministry, you can send gift cards in the mail to the church.

MUSIC BY TONY

I would like to extend a personal thank you to all those who have continued to provide us with special music during this time. You are all wonderful. Again, thank you!

For those who are interested in sharing any special music, please send it via email to myself (gre0151@gmail.com) or to Pastor Andrew. I am also able to receive music via Facebook Message: **Tony Liberace Greendonner**.

(video or just audio)

Please include:

Your name(s)

The title of the music

Composer

If you are able, please send a copy of the music/sheet, words, etc.

As many of you are aware, the church has been gifted a very well maintained, almost show room new, piano made by Steinway and Sons from the estate of Carolyn Lenhart Weiss.

We will be doing the official piano dedication sometime around the end of June or beginning of July. (All is pending the status of the church being open.)

I am seeking the following for the dedication:

Individuals to play 1-2 songs each on the piano.

Individuals who need the piano as their accompaniment. Voice and or instrumental.

Please email me with the song(s) and who will be doing what.

As well as a copy of your music.

Email or Facebook message are both applicable.

Again, thank you to everyone who has in some way provided us with special music. I hope to see you all soon.

Malcolm Arnold: "Music is the social act of communication among people, a gesture of friendship, the strongest there is."

Musically yours,

Anthony (Tony) Greendonner





MAY BIRTHDAY'S

Ann Randolph	May 4	Bob Mihalko	May 23
Ainsley Pritz	May 5	Sarah Immel	May 23
Rachael Pritz	May 6	Noah Mackenzie	May 24
Katie Wirt	May 6	Gavin Hladek	May 27
Bob Lore	May 8	Connie Mertz	May 27
John Bankosh	May 12	Gillian Mihalko	May 29
Amy Graham	May 13	Judy Sturdevant	May 30
Nikki Mackenzie	May 19	Clara Kovacs	May 31

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

WEST HEMPFIELD PRESCHOOL

Dear Church Family,

For the West Hempfield Preschool the 2019/2020 school year ended on Wednesday, March 11. On Friday, March 13, the Hempfield Area School District decided to suspend the school for a time. It soon became evident that due to the coronavirus, the entire school year both for the preschool and neighboring school districts would be canceled. We have continued to stay in touch with our students on a weekly basis through technology. The students have received links to educational opportunities such as WQED.org, the Winnie Palmer Nature Reserve (WPNR.org), and to celebrate Earth Day through YouTube. For Easter, by mail, each student received an Easter book, a coloring page, and a springtime scavenger hunt. We anticipate continuing the same through the month of May. In the meantime, we have begun to make plans for the 2020/2021 school year and continue to accept registrations.

Stay well all!

Linda and Andrea





THANK YOU to our wonderful WHPC staff! We appreciate your dedication to our church during this difficult time of Stay-at-Home Orders, social distancing and closed businesses. You have kept us connected through online services with special music, prayers, scriptures, and messages! Thank you for answering our calls, keeping our church clean and sanitized, and preparing for our joyful return to in-person services.

Without your help, our church would be sitting vacant and empty; though we are still separated we feel connected through your efforts. God Bless you for your dedication. Until we meet again in person, stay safe and healthy.

In the deep abiding love of Christ,
WHPC Deacons and Elders

We are so impressed with the great job Andrew, Tony and everyone else involved has been doing with the online services. So proud of the wonderful presentation! Sending love,
Tom & Anita

Thank you for the prayers and generosity when Vivian was in the hospital. She is doing well and we hope to have surgery sometime over the summer.
Love,
The Wirt family

I am so grateful to be a part of such a loving and kind church family. Your prayers, concerns, lovely cards and notes, texts, visits to the hospital, and calls have lifted up my spirits. I am getting stronger each day. Hopefully in a couple months I will be back to my old self! It really helps knowing that people care. I am truly blessed to have you in my life. May the peace and grace of God be with you.

Carol Williamson

A warm and loving thank you to all the wonderful people who sent cards of sympathy. I am so blessed to be part of this church family.
Love,
Betty Greenawalt



*Thank you our dear ladies for the wonderful delicious funeral lunch that was served for my husband! Everyone said the food was great.
Love, Betty Greenawalt*



**Thank you notes for
Easter gifts to Sunday
School students:**

Thank you so much for putting together the Easter packages for the kids! This was so thoughtful and the boys love it!

Thanks for the Sunday school package for Easter. Kids are enjoying the activity books.

Thank you for sending out Easter goodies for the kids!! What a thoughtful and much appreciated gesture.

The boys were thrilled!

What a sweet surprise for the kids!

Thanks! It made the kids' day!!

Thank you notes for Worship at Home services:

Enjoyed the music, sermon, and being able to see the pictures of the church on Easter Sunday. Thanks for making our Easter memorable even without the personal fellowship.

Thank you for the work you have done in keeping the church and the message alive through our webpage, emails, and Facebook. In trying to find blessings that have come from these difficult times we look to how this event has helped us to develop other ways to reach the congregation, spread the message and grow the Church. When things return to a new normal we will have found ways to expand how we communicate and keep in touch.

We really appreciate your efforts and embracing the technology to help us all. As you know the church is far more than a building and you all have found ways to demonstrate that.

I just want to say thank you to Pastor Andrew, Tony, Heather, and anyone else who put the services together. They have been wonderful. In spite of the fact that the church is almost empty, there's a closeness that seems to connect all of us as I listen to the sermons and music.
Thank you.

Also ...

Thank you, Tony, for the great music.

Thank you, John, for keeping the building clean.