



Westover Reflections - February 2026



“They were completely amazed and said again and again, ‘Everything he does is wonderful. He even makes the deaf to hear and gives speech to those who cannot speak.’

-Mark 7:37

Mo and I are into watching **Acorn TV**, which primarily broadcasts shows produced in Canada, Great Britain, Ireland, New Zealand and Scotland. Most of the time we do pretty well with the Canadian and Great Britain programming, but the ones from New Zealand and Scotland can be a bit difficult. We generally watch those upstairs, as opposed to downstairs, because the television upstairs enables me to hear better the clarity, as I am, if you didn't know by now, hard of hearing.

The New Zealand show, **The Brokenwood Mysteries**, I love. However, I sometimes wish that there was a universal translator who could open my ears to discern, to hear, this dialect of the English language a bit better than I do.

Then, again, I am often praying to be open to God's word, though I wonder if what I am really praying for is an openness that comes easily, like the doors that swish aside when I walk up to them at more than a few Raleigh hospitals. Of course, I wish the same for everyone of you and the world around me; for I am certain that were more of the world open to truly hearing God's word we would not find ourselves so easily misled by those who pretend to know what God is saying, while they speak a language that is anathema to this **Holy Writ**.

Our Gospel reading (and I would encourage you to read that whole section of **Mark 7:24-37**) reminds us that to be open to God's word might require Jesus getting closer than I/we might wish...and in ways that will sometimes make me/us uncomfortable.

I am pondering: What might Jesus see in **me/us** if He comes that close? If my ears are truly opened, what will **I/we** hear? To be sure, not the choir of angels every single moment praising **my/our** faith, but I certain the cries of The hungry and the displaced. And if **my/our** tongue is truly free, what will come out of **my/our** mouth? Surely not **my/our** voices but the voices of those on the margins...those who routinely go unheard. (If you are one who disagrees with that I am saying, then **show me where I am wrong**; for I am merely calling the world around me and those who dwell in it to be more holy.)

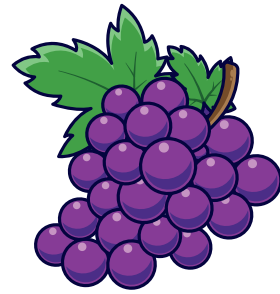
My friends, we need to take note of the signs of the Kingdom around us, and the one that is to come. And we preachers in the pulpit are called to encourage God's people to have the **heart and mind of Christ**. Anything less is unworthy of our calling.

**Still in His Peace,
William**



First Fruits of Worship

by Bruce Smith
Director of Music Ministries



Hymn Story: “This Is My Father’s World”

“This is my Father’s world, and to my listening ears, all nature sings and round me rings the music of the spheres.”

We often take nature for granted. The sound of leaves rustling in the wind, the sight of a warm sunset, the smell of fragrant flowers blooming nearby, the touch of soft rain drops on our skin, and the taste of a fresh strawberry, ripened to perfection. These are not just “Mother Nature” at her best, no, they are God’s hand upon the world in which we live, set about to remind of His dominion over nature. Maltbie Babcock, a New England Pastor from Syracuse, NY set out to capture the wonder of God’s creation in this inspirational hymn of the church, “This Is My Father’s World”.

Maltbie was born in Syracuse, NY on August 3, 1858 to a socially prominent family. He was a successful young man at everything he attempted. He was a champion baseball player and varsity swimmer at Syracuse University. A born leader, so much so that within a few years after graduation, he was ordained into the Presbyterian Church. His life would be cut short, unfortunately, at age 43, while touring Naples, Italy. He might be a forgotten man, but for the accomplishment of composing one of Christendom’s most beloved hymns.

Besides being an accomplished musician, he was a lover of nature. He would tell his wife as he headed out the door each morning “I’m going out to see my Father’s world”. The inspiration for “This Is My Father’s World” came to him one day, living in Lockport, NY, as he set out to take his morning walk to the top of the hill north of Lockport where he had a stunning view of Lake Ontario and the surrounding countryside. He understood that nature reflects God’s creative ownership of the world, but he also understood that the Lord control’s man’s destiny:

“This is my Father’s world, O let me ne’er forget, that though the wrong seems oft so strong. God is the ruler yet. This is my Father’s world! The battle is not done, Jesus who died shall be satisfied. And earth and heaven be one.”

As we, His children, worship Him by singing this great hymn, let us remember the sights, the sounds, the smells and taste of His creation around us and declare with vigor-this is, indeed, our Father’s world!

Souper Bowl Lunch



Super Bowl Sunday is February 8. Let's have our own Westover "Souper Bowl" lunch celebration for a good cause!

Bring a crock pot of soup or chili to share so we can enjoy lunch together on game day. (Please bring your crock pot to the Fellowship Hall before the 11:00 AM service so that we can have everything ready by noon.)

Also, please bring a few cans of ready to eat soup for our Blessing Box. Soup is a very needed item, especially in the cold weather. What a great opportunity to be of service and enjoy great food and fellowship.



Budget and Leadership

The 2026 budget and leadership positions are included in this newsletter. The format may be a bit tricky to read. If you have difficulty, please don't hesitate to ask for clarification

Mark your calendars:

Saturday, Feb 7 10:00 AM **Craft Circle**
Saturday, Feb 7 12:00 PM **Lunch**
Saturday, Feb 7 12:30 PM **UWF book study**
Sunday, Feb 8 12:00 PM **"Souper" Bowl Lunch**
Friday, Feb 20 6:30 PM **Dinner and movie night**

Craft circle and United Women of Faith

Due to unforeseen circumstances, we did not get to make blankets in January, so we will try again at craft circle on February 7.

We'll pick up with our UWF book study with chapter 10, "Phoebe, the unknown one." Bring your lunch and come join us for a wonderful morning of fellowship!



Movie night

In keeping with the football theme for Super Bowl month, this month's movie is "Facing the Giants." On Friday, Feb 20, dinner will be served at 6:30 with movie to follow.

Happy birthday to:

1 Bev Cappadonia
2 Arya Danica Phillips
3 Dis Ksor
11 Brandon Sargent
16 Edmond Proffitt
16 Nancy Cashion
21 Pastor William Holliday
27 Frank Caldwell
28 Jennifer Proffitt
28 Sherrie Watkins



Ideas , feedback or questions about the newsletter? Please contact Sharron at Sharron.Gibson9194@gmail.com

2026 Church Leadership Nominations

Current Leadership: Proposed for 2026:

One Board Chair: Laura Brooks
SPR-C Chair: Laura Brooks
Lay Leader: Lucy Walters
Recording Secretary: Elizabeth Holliday
Lay Member to AC: John Mitchell
Finance Committee Chair: Laura Brooks
Financial Secretary: Kent Gibson
Treasurers: Laura Brooks and Lucy Walters
Worship: Clara Worsley

Committee of Nominations:

2026	2027	2028
Clara Worsley	Mark Brooks	Sherrie Watkins

SPRC: (need five)

2026	2027	2028
Les Watkins	Sharron Gibson Barbara Epley	Laura Brooks (chair) Lucy Walters

Committee on Finance:

Laura Brooks (Treasurer,) Susan Denny, John Mitchell, Jennifer Proffitt,
Lucy Walters (Treasurer) and Kent Gibson (Financial Secretary)

Board of Trustees:

2026	2027	2028
Jennifer Proffitt	Kent Gibson Les Watkins	Preston Cheek Sarah Gibson

One Board Members:

Laura Brooks, Susan Denny, Sharron Gibson, Mo Holliday, John Mitchell, Jennifer Proffitt,
Bruce Smith, Lucy Walters, Les Watkins, Clara Worsley

Budgeted Accounts		2026 Budget	2026 Year-to-Date
Apportionments	501 - World Service & Connectional Ministries	21107	
	503 - Interdenominational Cooperation Fund	31	
	504 - Africa University Fund	66	
	505 - Black College Fund	294	
	506 - Episcopal Fund	1053	
Pastor's Salary	601A	31500	
Pastor's Travel	601F	3000	
Pastor's Housing Allowance & Utilities	601K	6500	
Office Administrator	602	11232	
Director of Music	604	30588	
Staff - Social Security/Medicare	608	5400	
Building Expenses	706A - Maintenance & Upkeep - Church & Education Buildings	6000	
	706B - Generator	0	
	706C - Landscaping	250	
	706D - HVAC	2000	
	706E - Equipment purchases	200	
	706F - Playground	1000	
Duke Energy	701A	12350	
City of Raleigh	701B	4130	
Dominion Energy	701C	1300	
Communication	701D	2000	
Exterminators	702-Economy Exterminators	1800	
Custodial Supplies	703	300	
Paper products	704A	500	
Basic beverage/condiment	704B	250	
Property insurance	705A-Guide One	13200	
Workers' Comp insurance	705B-Sovereign Insurance	500	
Custodial Services	707	12000	

Children's Ministry/VBS	804A/8001	1500	
Christian Nuture	812	250	
Upper Room	806I & 806J	400	
Music Ministry	810A - Software, sheet music & supplies	150	
	810B - Equipment repair/maintenance	3500	
	810C - Subscriptions	1065	
	810D - Guest/substitute musicians	1250	
Worship	811A - Worship	500	
	811B - Homecoming expenses/speaker	200	
	811C - Honorariums	500	
Office expenses	900A - General Office Supplies	1000	
	900B - Postage	250	
	900E - Copy Paper	100	
	901 - Computer Update/Repairs/Purchase	100	
Computer software subscription	903-Power church & QuickBooks	150	
Payroll processing	907-Stancil	1795	
		400	
Builder's class	900		
Craft Circle	104.35		
Pastor's Discretionary Fund	226.54		
Flower Ministry	0		
Movie night/blessing box	39.31		
Rents received	6,300		
	9186.47		