

January 23, 2022



Westminster

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH



Baptism of Jesus by He Qi

Welcome Back the Rev. Julie Emery

A Message from Julie

Dear Westminster,

It feels good to return to this generous and loving community. I returned to my work at Westminster at the beginning of this past week, and I have been hearing about the ways that Westminster has grown and served in the past few months. As always, I am impressed by the talents within this community and the commitment and dedication of this group of faithful people.

I am so grateful for the grace and understanding given to me by the leadership and by you when I shared my need to take a break from Westminster. It was a scary and humbling thing to admit that I was at a breaking point. You offered me an amazing gift of this time, and your compassion, care and grace are astounding. Thank you for your notes of care and encouragement, for remembering me at Christmas with cards and sweets, and for keeping me in your prayers. I felt and still feel your love and concern.

I am delighted to share with you that I am indeed returning as pastor and head of staff at Westminster, and it feels good to be back. While I'm not sure a parent of teenagers will ever feel fully "rested," I do feel "recovered" as it were. And, I have found that the language of recovery fits my experience somewhat well. Whether one is recovering from physical injury or addiction or illness, there are practices and choices that help continue healing, strengthening and building up the body, mind or soul. And my continued recovery will depend on those practices and choices.

For my part, I have done some good soul-work in figuring out how I got to a place that required taking leave, and have been diligent in setting up structures that I believe will help me return to Westminster and stay in ministry, while staying healthy and grounded. You will learn and hear more about those, to be sure, and I look forward to learning how we might grow together in those new ways of being.

I am, truly, very eager to reconnect with all of you and to hear how you are and what has happened in the last three months. My plan is to spend the next week getting up to speed on the ministry teams and the work of the Session, and then will be setting up available hours for those connection times beginning in February.

Again, thank you. Thank you for offering me grace and space to heal and recover. Thank you for caring for me in the many ways you did over the last three months. I am grateful for you all, I cannot even express how much.

In faith,

Julie

Worship With Us This Sunday
ONLINE ONLY!

3rd Sunday After Epiphany

Scripture

Matthew 3:1-2, 11-17

Sermon

Humble Pie

The Rev. Julie Emery

10:00 a.m. Sunday Hybrid Worship
Link

Zoom Meeting ID: 822 3301 6989

Any questions, contact Becky Kimberly in the office
at office@westpresby.org.





South Park Inn Homeless Shelter Urgent Need for Food Donations

Due to the recent surge in COVID cases, South Park Inn homeless shelter in Hartford has had to house their residents in individual hotel rooms until the shelter is cleared of any positive cases. This means the staff at South Park Inn needs to provide individual meals to the 60 men, women and children who are scattered in several hotels.

They need our help. Each hotel room has a microwave and refrigerator. Westminster would like to hold a collection of the following non-perishable and microwaveable items to help feed the residents of SPI:

- **Microwavable, shelf-stable meal items including:** soups, ramen, mac & cheese, pasta varieties (like Chef Boyardee). **Remember, the ability to cook is limited so cans of soup or boxes of pasta can't be used. Items should come in a package that can be put right into a microwave.**
- **Fruit items:** applesauce, mandarin oranges, fruit cocktail (SPI already has access to fresh fruit for residents at this time).
- **Snacks and cookies:** Single serve packages of pretzels, chips, cookies and crackers
- **Breakfast items:** microwaveable oatmeal, individual-sized boxes of cereal
- **Financial donation:** If you'd like to make a donation towards the purchase of food, please make a check out to Westminster with SPI January food collection in the memo line.

We need to collect all the food items by Monday, January 24. Donations can be dropped off at the church anytime. Covered bins will be left outside the church door at the entrance by the office. Financial donations can be mailed or left in our locked, outdoor mailbox. Please contact Michael Seltzer at michaelbpd10@gmail.com or Becky Kimberly at 860-521-6240x100 or office@westpresby.org with

any questions. Thank you!

UPDATE: Westminster Worship Will Be ONLINE ONLY for the month of January

Due to the highly contagious Omicron variant of COVID-19 and the current surge of cases in our community, Session voted this week to confirm the following updated recommendation from the Way Forward Team:

The Way Forward Team is recommending, in consultation with the church staff and the Worship team, that all church services be virtual through the month of January, with the first in-person church service to be Sunday, February 6. The Team will be re-assessing the situation through the month of January to determine any changes in the schedule. Any need for a service before February 6, i.e. funeral, will be addressed on an individual basis.

The church will be open during the week (8:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.) and we still require masks for anyone who is in the building.

Worship will be held in our traditional online format that has been part of our hybrid worship service every Sunday. The link can be found at the beginning of this email or on our website at www.westpresby.org.

Any questions about the recent Session decision, please contact Elder Tom Buckley, who serves on the Way Forward Team, at tbtrailrun@hotmail.com or speak to any Elder on Session.



Donations of Winter Clothing, Shoes and Bedding are Needed for Church Community in our Presbytery

During our Presbytery meeting held in November, we learned that our siblings of faith connected with the Hyannis Fellowship (Presbyterian Immigrant Ministries) are in need of **bedding and winter clothes** for



Elder Nicole Aronson: Abundant Gratitude for an Awesome Staff



Click the image above to watch Nicole's Stewardship Message on her Abundant Gratitude for Westminster's Awesome Staff

Nicole Aronson, an Elder on the Care Team, shared her gratitude for Westminster's fabulous staff members. Nicole is involved in almost every aspect of church life, so she works closely alongside each one of them.

"They take their duties as Christ's hands and feet, and not just their job titles, very seriously. And most importantly, it is incumbent on them to care more about the people they are serving than the task that needs to be performed."

"Westminster's staff has proven time and again how resilient and devoted to Westminster they are. They seek out opportunities to learn and grow. They are not content with a product that is just mediocre. They give of themselves selflessly and I rarely hear them complain."

The pandemic has challenged the staff to work in unique ways, demanding more of their time, with fewer volunteers to assist them. During this time of Stewardship, Nicole challenges the congregation to recommit themselves to sharing their time and talents.

"Many hands truly make light work, and in most cases makes it more enjoyable, too. Do you only have 30 minutes to assist with something? Our Elders and staff are eager to use that availability. Don't feel like you can physically do what others are doing? We'd love to take advantage of your brain and the thoughts you can share."

"God provides for us and our church. But, we as members, are part of that provision. Our treasure, but also our time and talents."



Callie Boone



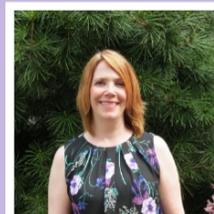
Julie Emery



**Karen
Hammond**



**Wanda and
Dan Bender**



**Becky
Kimberly**



Mike McElroy

**Abundant
gratitude for an
awesome staff!**



**Jeannine
Stimson**

2022 Pledge Card

Prayers of the People

We pray for those near and far:

- Former member, Rob Chamberlain who was recently diagnosed with cancer;

- Suzanne Atwood who is recovering from a broken arm and rib after a fall;
- Karen Wagner's son-in-law, Billy Calzada, who is recovering from a heart attack and surgeries to implant stents;
- Our healthcare workers during this recent surge of COVID cases and for their families;
- All who are sick or struggling with chronic illness in this time. May they be comforted;
- All who are worried for themselves or for the safety of their loved ones. May they find peace in God's presence;
- All those who struggle with mental health issues and depression. May they know God's steadfast love;
- Those who are caring for aging loved ones. May they be heartened and refreshed;
- Communities affected by violence and injustice. May they be sustained and strengthened.

We grieve with:

- Friends and families of those in recent months who mourn the death of loved ones. May they be comforted.

We celebrate with:

- Sandy Fry and Rick Thibodeau who were married at Westminster on January 8 (*see photo below*);
- Alyssa Mansolf, Abbey Downing, and big sister Nora who celebrated the birth of Maggie Rose Mansolf on January 10 (*see photo below*).

We continue to pray for:.

Rhoda Bannon; Barbara Riihimaki; Janet Wade-Utay; Karen Sprout's sister, Kathryn Johnson; Diane Smith; Jane Sebolt; Sally West; Rev. Julie Emery; Charles Griffen; Rachel Lloyd's Aunt Katie; Yvonne Smith; El Harp; Howard West; Doreen Springsteen-Gibbes; Ralph Sundquist; Karen Wagner's friends AJ and Ranjit; Helena Offei's husband, Yaw; Jenna Sheridan's friend, MaryElla; Marissa Torsiello; Ethan Amundsen; Stella Madjitey; Barbara Riihimaki's cousin Gordon; Peter Benner; Jen Buffat; Muriel Sherman; and Sara DeGraff's sister.



*Abbey Downing, Alyssa Mansolf and big sister Nora
with the newest addition to the family, Maggie Rose Mansolf*



*Congratulations to Sandy Fry and Rick Thibodeau
who were married at Westminster on January 8.*

Session Members (Teams)

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