**Dear WPC Members and Friends,**

“It takes a village,” the African proverb says. It has never felt more true, as we trekked through yet another year of the COVID pandemic. As this annual report attests, our congregation has stepped up in countless ways to fulfill our mission: to do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with our God (Micah 6:8).

Each person’s gift has made a difference to help this “village” thrive. Sunday morning ushers and greeters offering a warm welcome. Finance committee members tracking expenses. Deacons checking up on our homebound, ill, or stressed members. Personnel committee conducting the search for our new executive associate pastor. Preschool leaders creating a safe and joyful community. Staff and pastors staying faithful and creative through challenges and change – including Rev. Jones’ injury, and Rev. Mann’s calling. Donors giving as generously as they could, Reopening Task Force prioritizing both safety and welcome. Membership and Nominating committees engaging everyone in ministry. The WPC Hatch Batch, our Softball Team, joining in fun and fellowship. Worship leaders helping us all “make a joyful noise to the Lord” (Psalm 100). All of our ministry programs – Children & Family, Student Ministries, College & Young Adult, Spiritual Formation, Adult Education – offering ways for us to grow in faith and fellowship. And Mission & Outreach ensuring that our care moves far beyond our walls.

And through it all, we have found ourselves called to deeper questions. Who are we as Westwood Presbyterian Church? Why are we here? What is our calling? What really matters from our traditions, and what, in the end, does not? What do we need to do more of, or differently?

It is so fitting that these holy questions have emerged for us in this last year – for the year ahead will urge us to explore them even more. Four different opportunities are already inviting us to deep discernment: our Vision and Planning process; October’s inter-disciplinary Earth Care Project; November’s 75th Anniversary celebration; and the unfolding property development endeavor.

But above all, we have already learned this: each of us matters. Whether you are a long-time member or first-time visitor, your faith and questions, gifts and needs, passion and doubts matter. I thank God that you are a part of this “village” – the beloved community of Westwood Presbyterian Church.

- Rev. Dr. Christine Chakoian  
*Pastor/Head of Staff*
Dear WPC Members and Friends,

I am so grateful to be a part of this community of faith. The staff, members and friends of this church have all been very gracious. My learning curve is steep and I appreciate the support and patience that you have provided.

It is good to be here and I am especially encouraged after each committee meeting or gathering. WPC family and friends are engaged, enthusiastic, and knowledgeable about what is happening within our community. I am excited to see what the Vision & Planning Process will uncover and develop for new ways of doing and being church. The Building Commission work may seem invisible but there are actions happening and I know that activity will be picking up in the new year.

Personnel and Finance are the two other committees that I support. These are committees whose work may not be seen by many but, again, these two teams of people are hardworking and looking out for the best for this worshiping community. Much of Personnel’s work supports that staff that makes so much happen throughout the week.

Please feel free to stop by so I can get to know you. I am on the Side Porch most Sundays and in the office Tuesday – Friday most weeks. As the pandemic fades and the church opens up more, I look forward to being able to engage more with everyone.

-Rev. Paula Mann
DEAR WPC MEMBERS AND FRIENDS,

What an incredibly bizarre 2021-2022 this has been for me! A year almost exclusively lived spectating from the bleachers and in the margins between pandemic sequestration and compliance with the directives of a cadre of attentive and compassionate physicians and physical therapists and what I affectionately refer to as my team of “Attila the Honeys” led by my loving wife Romana (The Chief Honey!) This year, an arduous and unpredictable journey to recovery from bilateral subdural hematomas, suffered from an assault by a homeless brother whom I offered to assist as part of WPC’s outreach ministry. I continue to improve daily thanks to your prayers, admonitions, and exhortations to self-care and compliance.

Ministry conducted by the WPC Board of Deacons (BoD) and the Mission & Outreach Committee (M&O) which I staff, was not intended to be spectator activities observed from “the dugout while riding the bench” as the past year has felt. I experienced firsthand, the unparalleled love, care and encouragement of members of the Board and Committee, for both me and Romana, especially the incredible support from our incredibly talented and faithful WPC Pastors & Staff. I cannot say enough about the authenticity of the faithful discipleship they share with WPC members and friends and the larger community. I am grateful beyond my ability to express it here.

Despite having to continue the benevolent ministries of the M&O and the BoD under what became new norms in 2020, I have observed enthusiastic creativity and selfless service second to none. The growing interest in the collaboration between WPC committees and discovering more ways to engage the entire WPC family in missions and ministries is inspiring. We have not been deterred by virtual meetings and in fact, have increased participation and intergenerational inclusiveness as we believed we would.

I continue my work as West Region Representative of the National Presbyterian Black Caucus and a member of the Pacific Presbytery’s “AntiRacism Task Force” albeit limited. I thank God for Session approval for becoming a Matthew 25 Congregation and the solidarity it enhances in the PC(USA).

After a year of spectating that began on August 20, 2021, on June 7, 2022 I was allowed by my doctors to return to active ministry for 8 hours per week. That number has now been increased to 12 hours per week to include Sunday worship. Praise God! And I look forward to a progressive return to normalcy...soon!

Writing this report was challenging from a spectator perspective. Thanks be to God, for your prayers and support that inspire the BoD and M&O in their ministries. Please be sure to read their Annual Reports and enjoy the blessing you are for many, because we are ALL in this together!

In Christ’s service and yours, ~ Pastor Mark
The governing constitution of the Presbyterian Church (USA) holds Session responsible for guiding and governing the life of the congregation. Session leads the congregation in fulfilling its responsibilities for the service of all people, for the uplifting of the whole church, and for the glory of God. Entering Year Two of the COVID-19 pandemic, Session has remained nimble and ready to respond to the needs of the church.

In September, Session approved the hiring of an Executive Associate Pastor as well as an Administrative Assistant, and has been delighted that God brought Rev. Paula Mann and Jacquelin Schofield to WPC; their gifts have been a blessing and have helped streamline the work of the church. When the Omicron variant briefly closed WPC’s red doors, Session worked with the Reopening Task Force to create a COVID Decision Tree that would allow for quick decision-making regarding church occupancy and mask requirements, based on current city and county statistics. Session began holding hybrid meetings in April, with an in-person celebration hosted by Rev. Chakoian in June. It was at that meeting that Session approved Mission & Outreach’s recommendation that WPC become a Matthew 25 church, committed to building congregational vitality, dismantling structural racism, and eradicating systemic poverty.

In January, Session and staff had a retreat with the Discernment Task Force for a deep dive into the report on the congregational survey, which was presented at the September meeting of the congregation. The results of the survey indicated that WPC’s core identity has remained the same, that our congregation continues to treasure and seek opportunities for community building, and that our congregation is passionate for local hands-on justice and mission work. As part of Zoom breakout rooms, elders and staff discussed what the congregation wants committees to focus on over the next few years, any current limitations we have on implementing new programs or initiatives, and what other committees could be partners in future efforts.

Session unanimously voted to create the Vision and Planning Committee, which is tasked with taking the Discernment Task Force’s report and making any and all suggestions to move the congregation where we want to go. The committee will be grounded by the report, but is otherwise free to make suggestions to Session as they see fit, with Session responsible for approving the suggestions. Co-chaired by Jann Williams and Caryl Carothers, the committee has hit the ground running, having already started regular meetings in April; Session is excited to hear what recommendations they make.

- Anna Winkenbach, Clerk of Session

The Presbyterian Church (USA) Book of Order charges, “The Session shall have responsibility for governing the congregation and guiding its witness to the sovereign activity of God in the world, so that the congregation is and becomes a community of faith, hope, love, and witness.” [G-3.0201]

Moderator:
Rev. Dr. Christine Chakoian

Ministers of the Word and Sacrament:
Rev. Paula Mann (April 2022—)
Rev. Mark Jones

Ruling Elders:
Janet Bishop
Ellen Caldwell
Jan Clode
Casey Crouch
Elizabeth Evans
Breen Frazier
Lisa Goalen
Cami Hamilton
(October 2021—December 2021)
M.C. Haslett
Rose Helm
Con Howe
Martha Kadue
David Reinert
Steven Shepherd
Kelly Sheridan
Michael Sohigian
Anna Winkenbach (Clerk)
“The ministry of deacon as set forth in scripture is one of compassion, witness, and service, sharing in the redeeming love of Jesus Christ... It is the duty of deacons, first of all, to minister to those who are in need, to the sick, to the friendless, and to any who may be in distress both within and beyond the community of faith.”  
– Book of Order

**BOARD OF DEACONS**

We had another year of adapting as we started coming out of the pandemic. Our protocols were adjusted as the year went on as we tried to balance safety and our work as Deacons. We continued to meet via Zoom this year. As we have done in the past, we checked on the congregation of members and friends via visits, calls, and cards and to also get any needs addressed. That is how God works through us. Each Sunday, Deacons delivered one bouquet of flowers and ensured that the second bouquet in the Chancel was given to someone in attendance at church services along with a rose for new parents. We hosted at the door and made connections there. Home Communion was still on hold for this calendar year but should be re-started soon. In November, we had our first Deacon Sunday in years and found this to be a positive experience.

We happily did a modified delivery of lilies and poinsettias this year as well as an Imaginary Lilies and Poinsettias campaign for Easter and Christmas that raised pastoral care funds for those in need. Additionally, many Deacons participated in the monthly food drives throughout the pandemic and volunteered at a blood drive here at WPC. We continued Communion in a revised way with single-serve Communion kits that we passed out at the Sanctuary entrance. We did a modified set up in the front of the Chancel for the pastors. God has been guiding our work of attending to the congregation and allowing us to flexibly adjust to the demands of this pandemic.

We continue to deepen our understanding that physical church presence and in-person fellowship is important but we can also broaden connections electronically and/or in simple phone conversations. As a result of the pandemic, virtual interactions will remain and flexibility is important as we work to keep people connected. We have begun work on a Deacon tech help sub-committee to help those who want to participate electronically and need some assistance on how to participate in church events this way.

We learned that being a presence in church is important as Deacons so people have someone to reach out to if they need it especially after our fifteen month church shutdown. We hosted a Deacon Sunday and stressed this to the Congregation. It is important for Deacons to let those in the congregation know of our role and to encourage those inclined to become Deacons. We will be working on ways to encourage all Deacons while also developing a “bench” of previously ordained Deacons not on the current board but able and willing to help.

Deacons also learned it is important to work in conjunction with other committees. For instance, this year Deacons worked with Mission and Outreach on a very successful book drive benefiting PATH and Esperanza Elementary. We plan to deepen this connection in the next year. Deacons must continue to grow and be flexible in how we reach out and keep people connected. It is important to keep up to date with homebound members and let the congregation know we are there for them.

- Kelly Sheridan, Elder and Deacon Moderator
The Adult Education Committee offers education and feeds the life of the mind, providing regular and periodic opportunities for Christian learning that bring faith to bear on contemporary issues.

**ADULT EDUCATION**

We have been blessed to be able to offer diverse Faith Conversations throughout the year. Jim Louie began with a presentation on "Healing Through Art." Due to a growing need from some of our elderly members to address their concerns relating to decisions about end of life arrangements, Elder Attorney Cynthia Cox presented resources relating to estate planning, probate, special needs trusts, and planning for public benefit programs. Carol Bakhos, UCLA Professor and Director of the Center for the Study of Religion, returned with a presentation on Old Testament Prophets. In collaboration with Mission and Outreach, we welcomed PATH CEO Jennifer Hark-Dietz who presented PATH’s 3-Year Report with updates on its strategic plan for combating homelessness in Los Angeles and beyond.

Lastly, Marshall Wong, who serves on the L.A. County Commission on Human Relations as the principle editor of the Commission’s Hate Report, provided an invaluable presentation relating to ongoing pursuits of equity and justice. Each week, Adult Education supported the work of Adult Bible Forum, led by Elizabeth Evans, and Faith, Search, & Support, led by Rev. Dr. John Crossley, Dr. John Quiring, and Dr. Luke Landers.

The committee feels strongly that it is important to provide education that not only addresses our faith, but also that pertains to the broader aspects of being good citizens in our communities and the larger world around us. During this current climate of challenges and history-making decisions within our country and with the increasing need to address climate change, October 2022 has been designated as Creation Season with Adult Education taking an active role in presenting Faith Conversations with climate change experts, as well as a representative from the Presbytery’s Earth Care Team.

- Janet Bishop, Adult Education Committee Chair

Committee Chair
Elder Janet Bishop

Committee:
Carlton Bailey
Elizabeth Evans
Matthew Gallant
Abraham Kim
Patty Kurtz
Jim Louie
Jeff Snell
Doug Van Sickle

Staff Resource
Jake Putich

Dr. Jim Louie
Jennifer Hark-Dietz
Carol Bakhos
The Children and Family Ministries Committee carries out the church’s commitment, made in the vows of baptism, to assist parents in raising their children to a deep and loving relationship with Jesus Christ, by providing infant through elementary school age children opportunities to grow in faith.

**Children & Family Ministries (CFM)**

This past program year, we’ve seen the constant hard work and contribution of so many parents, teachers and church members willing to make programs and opportunities for children and families. We also saw God through the participation of our families as we were still coming out of pandemic.

We've learned a lot about how to time events better (e.g. moving the family retreat to later into the year), how much to expect as a commitment (e.g. kids showing up to musical rehearsal) and how to do more with less (e.g. the musical again; if we can't have all the kids at all rehearsals, we'll take the kids we have at various Sundays and Wednesdays and stitch it together).

- Breen Frazier, Children & Family Ministries Committee Chair

**Committee Chair**
Elder Breen Frazier

**Committee:**
Megan Accordino
Stephanie Covington
Laurie Flennor
Suzann Hall
Peter Helm
Andy Kim
Jane Kinsey
John Langfitt
Camille Morris

**Staff Resource**
Jessica Place

WPC Easter Egg Hunt

Making Easter Baskets for FosterAll

WPC Family Hike
Throughout the College & Young Adult Committee’s inaugural year, we have been incredibly blessed by the faithful stewardship of Jake Putich and so many of our congregation’s rising leaders. Under their supervision, Ember—Westwood’s new young adult group—has grown in membership and made a welcoming space for open, thoughtful dialogue and bonding on the Westside.

Christmas Tree Decorating

We have recognized God’s presence in so many instances, ranging from Ember’s evening contemplative services to our fellowship outings and Christmas tree decorating. This group is a lot of fun, and we are grateful to be situated within the unique, progressive theological environment of Westwood Presbyterian Church.

We give thanks for the wonderful group of young people who have come together to shape this ministry via the guidance of the Holy Spirit and for countless evenings of laughter and spiritual reflection. During this process, we developed a compelling mission statement and established a plan to restructure Ember worship and fellowship programming in the coming year.

Ember Contemplative Service

We are excited to continue reaching out to student communities at UCLA, Santa Monica College, and other Westside locations. Over the past year, we have begun the process of learning how to organize a ministry that appeals to the interests and fulfills the needs of today’s young people, and we look forward to expanding the scope of this critical endeavor according to God’s will.

- Casey Crouch, College & Young Adult Committee Chair
Continued planned giving through pledges and extraordinary special gifts (non-pledge income, grants, and bequests) have blessed this church during the past year. The generosity of these donations has provided the Finance Committee with the flexibility to meet the demands of the on-going pandemic and the challenges presented by church staffing changes. The Finance Committee thanks all of those who have enabled by their contributions to further the varied mission of WPC (to do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with God).

WPC’s long-term investment strategy and our consistent policies and procedures have helped maintain general order in these turbulent times. They will also guide our faithfulness as we face new challenges when construction finally begins. Please see the next page for WPC’s detailed operating results for 2020/2021 and 2021/2022 and the operating budget for the upcoming fiscal year of 2022/2023.

- Elizabeth Evans, Finance Committee Chair

The WPC Budget is available on the next page. Detailed financial reports are always available for WPC Members. Please contact the church office at office@westwoodpres.org or (310) 474-4535.
### WPC Operating Budget: Sources and Uses of Funds

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</table>

(1) Our Preschool is part of WPC’s ministry, so overhead is not counted against income.

(2) The Session of WPC has authorized spending up to 4% of the principal of its Unrestricted Investment Fund (that is, the Westwood Fund) to support its operations. 4% of the Westwood Fund on March 31,2022 was $386,295.
The ministry of the Membership Committee is grounded in the belief that God created people to be in relationship with God and with one another in community. To this end we provide gracious, warm hospitality to all members and visitors, without exception, as they arrive at church. We continue this process of welcoming visitors into membership in our community of faith through regular contact with them, extending invitations to Membership Information Seminars, and offering services twice a year to join the church.

Even in the midst of COVID restrictions, we were blessed to receive 9 people into membership on March 27. We continue to follow up with our new members to confirm that they are connecting with committees and activities that align with their interests and gifts. We also provide opportunities for all the members to feel valued and included in the life of the church by recognizing and affirming their gifts and participation in the life of the community. The consistent message that our greeters and committee members convey to visitors and members alike is that God welcomes all persons to WPC and values their presence here.

We were thrilled with the joy and delight each of our nine new members expressed about the warmth, personal interest and inclusion they had experienced in being welcomed into the WPC community. We learned that communication with and care for one another are foundational for the growth and health of any community.

With the disruption caused by COVID in our ability to gather in person, our committee needed to be creative and intentional in our efforts to stay connected with WPC members, especially our newer members. We gathered a list of all new members from the past 5 years and called each of them. We inquired how they were doing during the isolation of COVID, whether they were able to worship online, if they were connecting with activities and committees in the faith community, and how we might support them. The overwhelming response to our calls was appreciation and gratitude. Our committee learned the importance of being proactive in maintaining contact with our newer members in the early years of their membership. This is a practice we intend to continue into the next year, beginning now.

- Shari Godbold, Membership Committee Chair (January 2022—June 2022)
Mission and Outreach has seen God at work by deepening the committee’s understanding of and relationship with our mission partners. The resurgence of Covid-19 and the limited availability of Rev. Mark Jones, challenged our ability to engage in “hands-on” activities. However, WPC’s generosity, and connections with the Presbytery and the community, allowed M&O to contribute financial and material support. In addition to the monthly donations to the Westside Food Bank, the committee contributed to PATH, Foster-All, and, with Session approval, entered into a 5-Year $5K pledge to Habitat for Humanity Greater LA. Wildfires, hurricanes, and the war in Ukraine brought a significant WPC response to support Presbyterian Disaster Assistance. WPC contributions included monthly food collections for Wilshire PC’s Food Pantry, pizza delivery to homeless youths at SPY (Safe Place for Youth), backpacks for the children of the St. Joseph’s Center, a birthday party sponsored by the Little Tokyo Business Association for children at the Union Rescue Mission, Welcome Home Kits for newly-housed residents of PATH, and a garden cleanup and bulletin board prep project at Esperanza School.

Mission & Outreach committee raised funds for 700 Christmas dinners through restaurants and grocery stores, providing financial support for local businesses. The Christmas gift drive, in collaboration with the WPC pre-school, provided toys and gift cards for the Foster-All Christmas party. Christmas contributions also funded gift and grocery cards for families at St. Joseph’s Center and the Salvation Army Transitional Village in WLA, and to continue our support of Mission Co-Workers: Rev. Shelvis & Nancy Smith Mathers in South Sudan; Ryan & Alethia White in Berlin; and Forman Christian College in Pakistan. Interactions with our partners revealed the human toll of poverty, hunger, and homelessness, but at the same time showed that God is faithful and we as Christians are privileged to be the hands and feet of Christ.

The total benevolence disbursed through M&O in FY 2021-22 was: $167,561.56.

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Mission and Outreach has learned that connection and collaboration within our own denomination, outside agencies, and with WPC committees enhances our mission work. Collaboration with the PCUSA and the Presbytery of the Pacific led to participation in the National Presbyterian Black Caucus, Mission taskforces on Homelessness, Immigration, and Earth Care. Growing awareness of these issues encouraged M&O to support a Ukrainian refugee family and, with Session approval, to be a Matthew 25 church. This affiliation with the Matthew 25 movement promises even stronger collaborations with other churches and with the PCUSA.

Membership in the Westside Coalition highlighted Supportive Service providers such as Meals-On-Wheels and Helping Hands Senior Foundation. Collaboration with Adult Education led to two extremely important Faith Conversations with Jennifer Hartz Dietz, PATH CEO, and Marshall Wong, Senior Editor of the LA County Hate Crime Report. Young adults helped M&O fill Welcome Home Kits for PATH and Children and Family Ministries participated in the Esperanza project.

The pre-school is an invaluable partner for many Mission & Outreach Mission projects. Such collaboration builds community within WPC that both informs and strengthens WPC’s commitment to these issues and the larger community.

- Ellen Caldwell, Mission & Outreach Committee Chair
The Nominating Committee had a higher than usual full throttle kind of year! After last year bringing into existence a new committee, College & Young Adult Ministries, this year brought the Vision & Planning Committee to ensure that the insightfulness of the Discernment Task Force brings faithful programmatic goals. The Nominating Committee was also active in choosing an up-and-coming new Clerk of Session to be present at Session meetings to learn the ropes before starting his term in July. All during our nominating process, our discernment process, our inquiring process, and our "asking" process ~ God is helping us with the puzzle! Where is everyone's special place within WPC? How are you being called to use your time and talents in the best way? We are blessed with a strong congregation of "doers" and "thinkers" and "planners" and "problem solvers" and God is always there to make a place for everyone!

As in the nursery rhyme, "Here's the church. Here's the steeple, Open the doors and see all the people", that's what the Nominating Committee does! We see all the people inside WPC!! We look at both the big picture and tiny details of each committees' needs. We recognize the breadth of personal and professional experiences of each current member and friend of WPC. We love to involve newer members, listen to all voices, and invest in the wisdom of long-term members. Without everyone's faithfulness to WPC, we would falter as a church. Each year seems more daunting than the last encouraging voluntarism or the use of persuasive nudging to actively complete the 17 boards and committees, but after it's all said and done, there is JOY! Faithfulness commences and blossoms as the church continues stronger than ever.

- M.C. Haslett, Nominating Committee Chair

The 2021/2022 Nominating Committee

Committee Chair
Elder M.C. Haslett

Committee:
Mundi Fomukong
Scott Hartle
Jane Kinsey
Brooke Larson
Heather Leatherwood
Scott McDowell
Addy Olivier

Staff Resource:
Anne Cioffi
Rev. Dr. Christine Chakoian
The Personnel Committee serves as the church’s Human Resources Department, overseeing all aspects of employment, staff development, oversight and care.

PERSONNEL

The Personnel Committee’s primary focus during the past year was to handle unexpected or pandemic-related personnel changes and workplace issues in a strategic way that was consistent with the congregation’s discernment work. Rather than simply “plug holes” as they arose, we strove to think strategically with the future in mind, and solve problems deliberately and prayerfully.

To that end, and with significant input from Pastor Chakoian, we designed, posted, and filled a new Executive Associate Pastor position, with the Personnel Committee serving as the expedited search committee, and are thrilled to welcome Pastor Paula Mann to our community in that capacity. Pastor Mann has already been doing extraordinary work since her arrival in April, and we are thrilled to have her on board and to have the opportunity to work with her.

We have also focused on pandemic-related work conditions to ensure a safe and effective working environment, including in the pre-school, and have worked closely with the Finance Committee to balance fiscal realities with the need to compensate our staff fairly in a time of inflation.

We commend our entire staff for their hard work, flexibility, and commitment to the church and its mission despite several unexpected challenges over the past year. Staff accomplishments include revamping our in-person and online Sunday worship services, establishing new safety protocols in our church and pre-school, succeeding through temporary staffing shortages, and onboarding new staff. Through it all, and thanks largely to Pastor Chakoian’s steadfast leadership, WPC has continued to thrive, and we continue to be supported by a dynamic, dedicated, and cohesive staff.

Perhaps because we faced unexpected challenges over the past year, the Personnel Committee developed a practice of increased communication with staff leaders, staff members, and other committees. Many of the challenges we faced could not be resolved without having all-hands-on-deck, and we accomplished the most when we effectively communicated and collaborated with our staff and other lay leaders. It was common practice over the last year to have staff members and committee chairs appear at our monthly meetings, and we plan to continue that practice.

We saw firsthand the resiliency of our leadership, our staff, and the members of this committee, and are grateful for all.

- Dale Larson, Personnel Committee Chair

Committee Chair
Elder Dale Larson
Jan Cloyde, Co-Chair

Committee:
Barbara Allen
Terry Glennon
Sheila Lawrence
Keith Samuels.

Staff Resource
Rev. Dr. Christine Chakoian
Rev. Paula Mann
(April 2022—)
We saw God’s Spirit at work in the 2021-22 school year through the exceptional leadership of Preschool Director Brianne Naiman, who expertly guided her staff and families through ever-changing COVID-19 protocols. Although there were positive cases amongst students, families, and staff, God looked out for our community and the impact on individuals’ health and continuity of instruction was minimal.

Enrollment for the 2021-22 school year was at 94% as compared to 84% in 2020-21. Fundraising for the school year was $23,926 (89% of current families), with $1,520 coming from church donations. Staffing in this tight labor market continues to be a challenge, and the Preschool demonstrated its appreciation for the dedicated staff by providing retention bonuses and raises this year.

After experiencing more of a “normal year” with the preschool, we have determined as a committee that it will be preferable to set a cadence for our meetings around important decisions that need to be made (e.g. budget season, fundraising support, etc.) as opposed to holding monthly meetings and having lighter agendas. As always, we seek God’s guidance with how the Preschool Committee can further the connection between the Church and Preschool.

As we look to the future, we recognize that there may be additional challenges and opportunities associated with expansion of universal Transitional Kindergarten, the construction of the new building, and the addition of the infant program. We seek God’s blessings and guidance as WPCP enters into this next chapter.

- Rose Helm, Preschool Committee Chair
During the past year the Administrative Commission continued to oversee and guide the Church’s project to provide new facilities and a long-term endowment for the Church and its mission. The Church previously approved an agreement with Belmont Village Assisted Living to ground lease the Church property (except for the Sanctuary) for 99 years, making substantial monthly payments to the Church in order to build and operate an assisted living facility on the current surface parking lot.

Phase 1 of the project would be a new 2-story building in the rear of the Church’s property containing the pre-school, Church offices and meeting rooms and a meditation chapel. Phase 2 of the project would include a 12-story assisted living facility plus a new Fellowship Hall and other Church facilities, as well as underground parking. A presentation of the design of the project has been on the Church’s website throughout the year.

The most important progress of the past year has been the City’s approval of the project in its entirety. The lengthy approval process included support from various homeowner groups, approvals by two Neighborhood Councils, the Westwood Design Review Board, the City’s Zoning Administrator and Deputy Advisory Agency. This process culminated in the unanimous approval of the City Planning Commission in December, and the City Council’s unanimous denial of opponent’s appeal in February. In every public hearing in the process the Church was well represented and supported by the Pastor, staff, members of the Administrative Commission, Session and congregation and neighbors.

Unfortunately at the end of this long approval process some next-door neighbors filed suit against the City (and Belmont and WPC) claiming the City erred in approving the project. The Administrative Commission will monitor the litigation which should be concluded in the coming year. Under the agreement with Belmont, they are responsible for paying for the defense of the project and continue to make monthly payment to the Church.

- Con Howe, Administrative Commission Chair
The Re-Opening Task Force was formed to develop a strategic response to the COVID lockdown.

The Re-Opening Task Force grappled with two main challenges as COVID-19 continued into its first full program year at WPC. The first was to insure that worship could continue on a remote Livestream basis until vaccine development and other treatments eased the extreme health risks of gathering together again. The second was to design health protocols and operating procedures to allow for the eventual resumption of in-person worship. Inherent in both of these activities was a deep care and concern for both the spiritual and physical health of our community.

The Task Force was intended to be a temporary and relatively short term response to the Pandemic. As our work horizon extended throughout the 2021/22 timeframe (and continues to this day), we marveled at the care, loving concern and patience and willingness of the WPC community to protect themselves and each other over the longer term through their faithful acceptance and cooperation with health protocols.

When in-person activities were allowed to re-commence, the true measure of sacrifice made to protect others was clearly evident in the relief and joy experienced by all through reinstitution of in person worship, music and side porch fellowship. The human element of fellowship had been deeply missed.

- Ken Williams, Reopening Task Force Chair

WPC Deacons preparing Communion
The Spiritual Formation Committee provides opportunities to nourish the life of the Spirit and deepen one’s relationship with God through contemplative services and practices, and by enriching a sense of community with one another.

This committee's emphasis on finding ways to deepen our own spiritual connection with God as well as bringing those experiences to the congregation continues to allow a level of vulnerability among us that keeps us very present. God has reminded us of trying to find the balance between offering programming and being sensitive to a cumulative exhaustion that seemed to permeate everyone after two years of Covid--thus we learned to be discerning.

The Vespers services continue to be meaningful and attendance is growing, thus reaffirming our need for contemplative space. We offered 3 Vespers services this year--World Communion Sunday where we still could not sing due to Covid, our Advent Vespers, and the

Advent Vespers Service

Good Friday Vespers, where the addition of an acappella choir championed women composers and sang a beautiful rendition of Kyrie Eleison by Hildegard von Bingen that elevated the experience.

The Lenten Small Group series used the book Ordinary Grace by William Kent Krueger. It was our first fiction choice and was well-received as faith conversations around death, race, family and faith development were stimulated. A "safe space" to talk about death was a gift for many participants.

There is an increased need for contemplative opportunities mixed with how to carry our faith into community. We continue to look for opportunities to expand our reach to broader demographics within the church and meet a wider group of those seeking to deepen their faith development.

WPC A Capella Choir—Good Friday

- Lisa Goalen, Spiritual Formation Committee Chair
This year we were blessed by new additions to our committee while we said goodbye to long-term members. Our new members took on the challenge of the stewardship campaign with dedication and a fresh perspective. With God's help, we had great communication which led to a strong message and ultimately a successful campaign.

Our committee's work together has set the foundation for a stronger commitment to the church next year. As the church has flourished, we are finding new opportunities to support it through a new and different lens. We believe that Stewardship will play a more meaningful role in the life of Westwood Presbyterian next year and that the committee members will use that role to both grow as members of this faith community and to bring the congregation with us.

- David Reinert, Stewardship Committee Chair
This year, our committee prioritized the care and well-being of our students and families. We emphasized relationship-building events such as the Wednesdays at Westwood program, which was launched in July of 2021. Our intention with program was to offer directed, age-specific attention to our students by creating Middle School and High School specific gatherings. This effort helped plant the seed that blossomed into our Student Leadership Cohort: a small group of dedicated high school students who helped plan our many mission projects throughout the year. These projects included the PATH Welcome Home Project in October 2021, the Giving Spirit event in December 2021, the February 2022 Homeless Count, and the Esperanza Elementary Cleanup Day in June 2022.

Our student leaders have also been an integral part of the Earth Care Project Task Force which was formed in June 2022. On Sunday mornings, we continued to build relationships and grow in faith by walking through scripture, playing games, asking big questions, and talking about ways our youth can prioritize their mental health. We marked the end of the school year with our Move-Up Sunday event where we welcomed 8 new middle schoolers into the Westwood Youth Collective! All told, through joys and challenges, we saw God’s grace work through this committee and through our students in powerful ways, and we are filled with gratitude for the year to come.

We’ve learned to be patient as our families find their way in COVID’s wake, and that recovery is never a linear process. Growing in faith is a tender thing, and it’s our responsibility to structure our ministry to honor each person’s journey. These insights will be especially important both as we cultivate our 2022-2023 Confirmation Program and as we encourage our youth to engage in vitalizing ways with their community.

- Jake Putich, Director of Youth, College, & Adult Faith Formation

Committee Chair
Elder Michael Sohigian

Committee:
Brooke Larson
Robyn Paris
Brett Whelan
Michelle Whelan

Staff Resource
Jake Putich
God’s work is certainly evident in the thoughtful and insightful members of this committee. We are off to a great start, and it is very encouraging to listen to our discussions and feel the love these members have for their church.

We had our first meeting on April 6, 2022, and since then we have written a draft of our Statement of Purpose as well as come to know each other better. Our Statement of Purpose is:

“To discern and manifest God’s call for WPC and design a plan for action.”

We have been working on defining the direction for our work which we pray is with God’s direction. Our first objective is to interview the former chairs of all the WPC committees and the staff associated with each one. These interviews are ongoing at the time of this report and will conclude in September 2022. This information as well as the Discernment Task’s report will be the information, we will use with our prayerful commitment to review the life of WPC and move toward recommendations to ensure a healthy and purposeful future for this thriving congregation.

- Jann Williams, Vision & Planning Committee Chair

The Vision & Planning Committee seeks to discern and manifest God’s call for WPC and design a plan for action.

Committee Chair
Elder Jann Williams
Caryl Carothers, Co-Chair

Committee:
Ellen Caldwell
Lara Fedoroff
Scott Hartle
Peter Helm
Kathryn Howe
Anne Mathews
Brad Paris
Brett Whelan,

Staff Resource
Rev. Dr. Christine Chakoian
Rev. Paula Mann
2021/2022 was another difficult year with COVID-19 receding then returning with a vengeance. However, with God’s help and a wonderful Worship staff, we were able to continue to provide meaningful ways for our congregation to participate in worship through God’s Word, song, the Lord’s Supper, and the Sacrament of Baptism.

We continue to livestream worship services every Sunday. Anyone wanting the experience of a worship service can attend in person or worship from their own home. This is indeed God’s hand in inspiring us to provide these worship opportunities. As one committee member put it “I’ve seen God at work in our committee. We listen with open minds and respect and care for each other and the members and friends who attend worship and events. We all tried to do ‘something’.”

Sadly we are losing organist Stephen Karr to a teaching position in Tennessee but are blessed to welcome a very talented and experienced replacement in Gábor Lukin. Thanks to the Music staff and the Personnel committee for their prayerful and diligent efforts in this.

In addition we restarted our Musical outreach to the church and community with a wonderful concert tribute to our beloved Namhee Han in May. Another committee member comments: “Our committee’s fellowship was inspiring, especially as God’s hand guided working together to create a respectful, uplifting, and spirit-filled Memorial Concert in honor of Namhee.” The committee has learned once again that God will provide. God provided the committee with space and time to organize the concert honoring Namhee.

God provided Stephen Karr with a wonderful opportunity to teach and provided us with a wonderful replacement. When we pay attention, we see His hand in all that we do in our church and community. To quote a committee member. “We’ll have a chance to show greater faithfulness as more musical events happen.” We hope this happily applies to the 2022/2023 year.

- Steve Shepherd, Worship & Music Committee Chair