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## *Connect Newsletter*

Friends:

Despair can take a variety of forms. It can take the form of depression, a sadness or weariness that drains our energy. It can feel like following a routine simply because it is easier to guide your life if you stay in the well-worn rut. It can feel like passionately, even violently embracing a worldview even when that worldview has failed you time and time again.

We live in a nation of despair. We have been told by our culture that happiness is the goal of existence. We have been told that the pursuit of security in the form of profit, position, or popularity would make us happy. As a nation we were wildly successful in gaining the keys to security. We gained wealth and power over other nations and yet we were not secure. We stockpiled so many weapons of mass destruction that we can threaten the existence of humanity on this planet, and we do not feel secure.

As individuals, many of us have achieved the goals of adequate security. And yet, we feel anything but secure. We as individuals in this nation own more guns than any other nation of people on this planet because we feel less secure.

We no longer believe that things are going to get better. Now we wait for the inevitable disaster. We worry about our investments, we worry about our children and grandchildren's future, we worry about crime.

When I was looking for a home in this area over the internet from Seattle, I was amazed at how many houses here were equipped with "safe rooms." Years before, living in small town Iowa I was struck by the fact that nobody locked their doors but now, here, people build safe rooms in their homes.

*Continued on page 2.*



The despair of our world weighs heavily on those young people who grow up in the midst of this anxious age. I imagine this despair is there for most people, though many may not be able to articulate it as despair.

Many people believe that the role of the church is to put a happy-face sticker over this despair. That Church is about assuring people that God's got everything under control. Either God is happy with the way things are or God is getting ready to punish certain people and make things right or God has provided us with a flotation device through faith so that when the world sinks beneath a tide of war, pollution, poverty and hate when a well-deserved Armageddon comes, we will be secure in a place in a better world.

Notice that all these ideas about what the Church is supposed to be do not envision the Church as a force to change the beliefs and values that have brought us to this place of despair. The Bible shows us people living in despair in the slave pits of Egypt. It shows us people living in despair in Israel under the kings, and in Babylon as exiles, and inside the Roman Empire. The Bible also shows us that God calls people to take action to change their lives and their world. Our faith tradition has given us the keys to changing the world and it has given us the perspective to see that such change is not a one-and-done prospect. We are invited into a multi-generational struggle for a better world; and the gift of the struggle is hope for a better world.

People are abandoning churches for good reason. They can see the despair behind the smiles and handshakes. If we want a better world, we need a church that is strong in faith, strong in commitment, and strong in hope. We need to train ourselves to share the truth of our faith, the power of our faith, and the hope of our faith. We need to move our focus towards the places where people suffer and where decisions are made to alleviate or increase that suffering. We need to worry less about our survival and work more for our mission.

Walking down the ruts is easy. Making a new path is hard; but it is the only way that will take us to a better direction.

Rev. Rich Gamble

Pastor



# Celebrating 175 Years of Church History

Our church was founded in 1850 when the United States consisted of only 31 states. Roller skates, zippers, and typewriters had yet to be invented, and the world's first telephone call was 26 years in the future. But our founders had Bibles and believed that the town of Washington—just 11 years old then—was a solid spot to develop a Presbyterian Church. They had their first meeting on June 24, 1850, and we celebrated that milestone on June 22, 2025. In our **PCW Newsletter EXTRA July 2025** you will find Gerry Urban's engaging story of our early church history—the flaws, the challenges, and ultimately, a force of faithful members who have continued to serve God and enjoy Christian fellowship.







Members of the Brehe, Bounds, and Barnhart families filled their plates with delicious food provided by our congregation.



Linda Booher (left) kept busy at the ice machine while Gretchen Farrell (in blue) and Nancy Sebastian unwrapped the hot entrees on the buffet tables. Gretchen and Nancy were the event co-chairs.





Two large identical cakes anchored the dessert table. Tim Urban, Mauri Truesdell (center) and Jane Bugele cut the cakes to serve to each table.





Tom Farrell (left) and Pastor Rich raised their glasses with a sip of champagne to toast our church's founders and everyone whose life has been enriched by the Presbyterian Church in Washington.



Approximately 120 persons attended our Celebration Lunch in the Fellowship Hall. Many members were involved in planning this very special event.

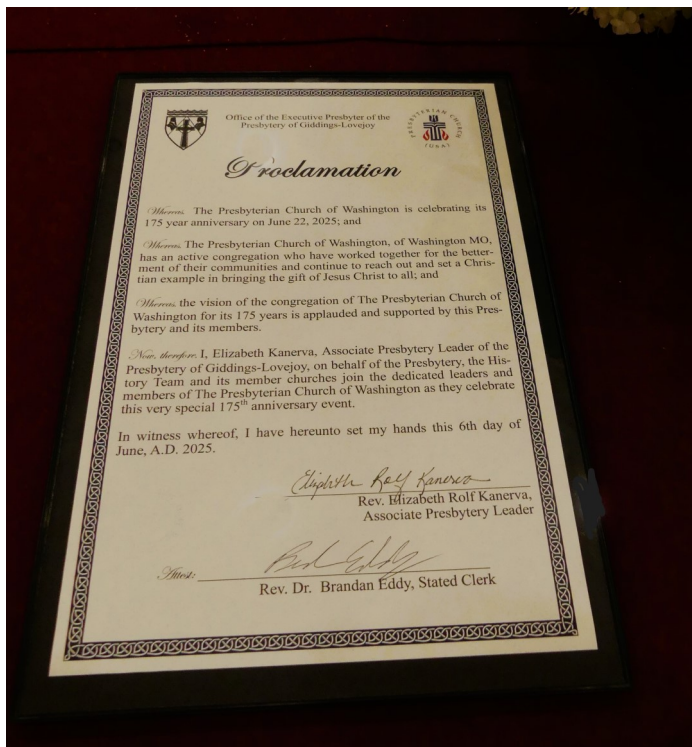


Former PCW Pastor Patrick Gruber (left) and Kevin Carpenter raise their glasses in a toast.





Presbytery of Giddings-Lovejoy presented a Proclamation to our church during the worship service, and it was on display at the luncheon, held here by Pastor Rich Gamble. The flowers above graced our communion table. They were grown and arranged by David and Diane Brunworth.







David Brunworth and Steve Sebastian presented the church's 1993 time capsule and then opened it in the presence of all luncheon attendees. In the photo below at left, Mary Eleanor Farrell pulled out a copy of the July 31, 1993, *Washington Missourian* newspaper, which detailed the historic flood that summer. In downtown Washington, the water rose to above the railroad tracks on Front Street. Other time capsule items were letters, notes, and children's artwork, all extracted from the metal tube and shared around the tables.



Our 175th anniversary was a time for friends and families to reconnect as well as those who were once a part of our church. In the photo at the right are Nancy Hooper Nolting and Ken Roetheli. Nancy was a longtime member (now living in Higginsville, Mo.) whose parents—the late Ed and Jerry Brockmann—owned the land where our church now stands. Ken recently retired after being our custodian for 36 years.



# 175 Years of Spiritual Leadership

<u>Pastors of The Presbyterian Church of Washington from 1850 – Present:</u>	
1850-1854	Rev. Joseph F. Fenton
1854-1857	Rev. John F. Cowan
1858-1864	Rev. Joseph F. Fenton (second time)
1857-1862	Rev. James H. Burch
(32 members under Dr. Burch withdrew to form The Presbyterian Church South)	
1862	Dr. Elijah McLean, Ruling Elder
(Preserved the Presbyterian Church Old School until reunited in 1879 as part of Presbyterian Church U.S.A.)	
1865-1867	Rev. E.P. Cowan
1869-1870	Rev. J.H. Clark
1872-1873	Rev. Shephard Welles
1873-1879	Rev. C.E. Schaible
1880-1882	Rev. A.B. Martin
1883	Rev. George Booth, SS
thru	Rev. F.E. Armstrong
1895	Rev. C.K. Elliott

1896-1899	Rev. James Lafferty
1899-1901	Rev. J.W. Shearer
1901-1903	Rev. Walter V. Johnson
1903-1908	Rev. G.L. Washburn
1908-1913	Rev. C.E. Paxton
1913-1919	Dr. M. H. Kerr
1919-1923	Rev. William N. Dewar
1923-1925	Rev. Joseph H. Coulter
1925-1939	Dr. G. Marion Hull
1940-1944	Rev. Antonio Ramirez
1944-1950	Rev. David T. Agnew
1951-1955	Rev. Wilmer H. Wernecke
1956-1963	Rev. Lloyd Fonken
1964-1966	Rev. Harold W. LeMert, Jr.
1967-1983	Rev. Kenneth B. Yerkes
1984	Rev. Ray Walther, SS (Interim)
1985-1994	Rev. Paul T. Bock
1994-1995	Rev. Michael Troutman (Interim)

1995	Rev. Mark W. Staub
1998	Rev. Carol S. Wood (Interim)
2000-2010	Rev. William S. Vincent, Jr.
2010-2011	Dr. John D. Barklind (Interim)
2012-2013	Rev. David Brune (Supply Pastor)
2013-2023	Rev. Patrick Gruber
2024	Rev. Bob Jensen (Supply Pastor)
2024	Rev. Stephanie Knopf (Bridge Pastor)
2025-present	Rev. Richard Gamble

Every Session committee participated in our Celebration Luncheon. Mauri Truesdell, chairman of the Personnel Committee, suggested that her committee create a complete list of our pastors from 1850-2025. Incomplete versions of this information were available in the church library and elsewhere, but this is the first historical list of its kind in many years. Thank you, Personnel Committee members and Pastor Rich.



*"For where two or three are gathered together in my name, I am there among them."*

*Matthew 18:20*

# John Anglin Directs the ECC Summer Musical Starring Patty Kellmann

Our own John Anglin, who was the director of theatre productions at East Central College for 31 years, retired in 2004. But almost every summer since then he has directed a musical at the John Edson Anglin Performing Arts Center on campus. This summer's production is *Once Upon a Mattress*, which runs July 24 through 27 (see below for ticket information).

*Once Upon a Mattress*, loosely based on a Hans Christian Anderson fairy tale, opened off-Broadway in 1959, then moved to Broadway and launched the career of cast member Carol Burnett. It was nominated for Best Musical in the 1960 Tony season, but lost—in a tie—to *Sound of Music* and *Fiorello*. Mary Rodgers, daughter of the famous musician Richard Rodgers, wrote the music for *Mattress*.



One cast member of the ECC production is Patty Kellmann, a member of our church and choir, and a very seasoned actress in ECC productions. “Once Upon a Mattress is the 52nd musical or play I’ve performed in at ECC,” said Patty. “I started about 30 years ago when John cast our daughter Leigh in his production of *Oliver*. John asked if any parents were interested in auditioning for future roles...and that got me started!”

Patty has also helped John with costuming for four summer shows at ECC, and she has appeared in three productions with the Riverside Players in Washington. “John’s summer shows are always so much fun for the actors as well as the audience,” Patty added. At left, Patty is shown when she performed in *Shreck*.

*Click here for ticket information to Once Upon a Mattress.*

<https://www.etix.com/ticket/v/26722/john-edson-anglin-performing-arts-center>



# Can You Help Pay the Per Capita Fee For Our Church?

The annual contribution of \$40 per member is the primary source to fund the work of Presbytery of Giddings-Lovejoy that serves the churches in its care, the national Office of General Assembly that brings us together to discern the Spirit's leading, the Office of Stated Clerk that provides leadership for Presbyterians nationwide, and the Presbyterian Mission Agency that oversees the work of the Presbyterian church for others here and around the world.



If every member contributes to the per capita fund, PCW would *reduce its operating cost* by \$5,720. That would allow more funds to do God's work here.

For more information about the history and purpose of the per capita fee, click: <https://pcusa.org/resources/financial-information/capita>



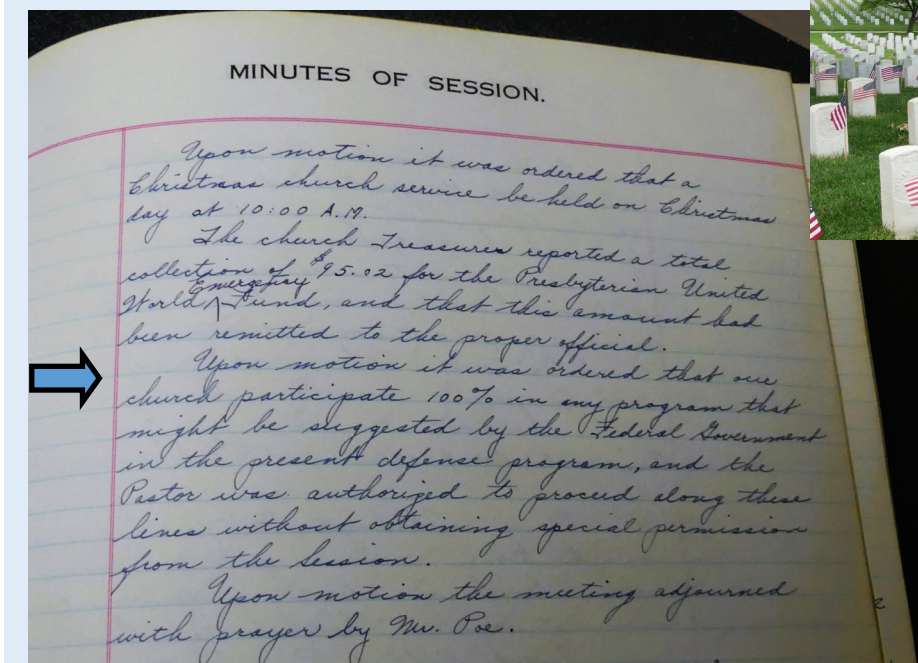
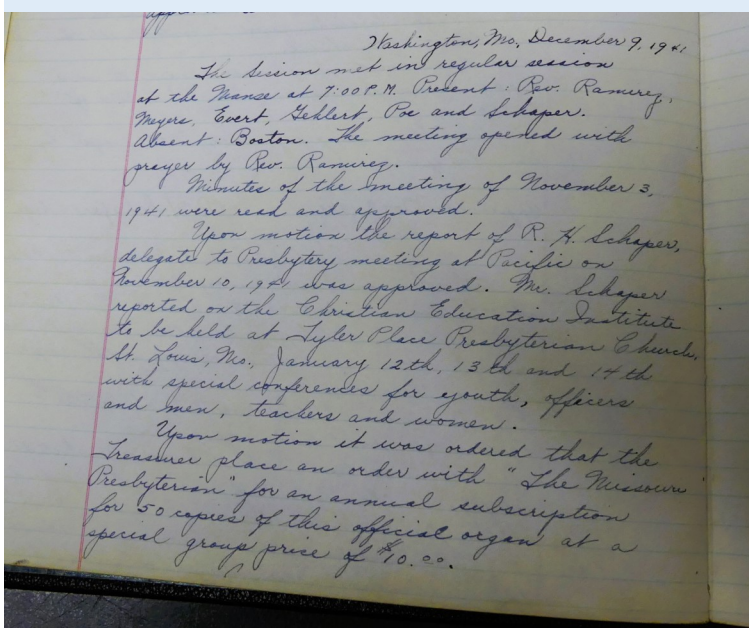
Emily Bounds, our organist and pianist, is sharing her full array of talents with the children in our church. She is now teaching them to sing! Emily earned a bachelor's degree in music education from Missouri State University and has taught choral music in Owensville and in the Rockwood School District. She is now a music teacher in Washington at Clearview and Campbellton Elementary Schools. Adults without children are welcome to attend and observe Sunday Singing Club.



# A Look Back...



Our church's Session held its regular monthly meeting on December 9, 1941, two days after Pearl Harbor was bombed. The catastrophic event was noted in the last paragraph of the Minutes at the bottom of this page. (blue arrow). According to the National World War II Museum in New Orleans, 416,800 members of the U.S. military died during World War II. The photo below was taken at Jefferson Barracks in St. Louis on Memorial Day weekend this year where Scouts placed flags on 250,000 graves. In our church cemetery, Steve Sebastian placed a flag on all known war veterans this past Memorial Day, but no photos were taken. We hope to have one next year to share with our readers.







For more photos of our 175th Anniversary, plus the full text of “The Brief History of the Presbyterian Church in Washington, Missouri,” please visit our website and click on [PCW Newsletter EXTRA July 2025](#).

Hundreds of photographs and items of historical interest were displayed at our Celebration Luncheon. We appreciate the members who shared these items from their private collections or helped arrange items owned by our church.



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**Editorial Review Board:** Rev. Rich Gamble,  
 Phyllis McElhinney, Nancy Sebastian, and Mauri Truesdell.

## 2025 PCW Committee Members

### Christian Ed. Committee

Gerry Urban, Chair\*  
Beth Brehe  
Micki Brehe  
Craig Matzes  
Ian McCracken  
Heather Miller

### Church Life Committee

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Sarah Spear, Co-Chair\*  
Beth Bonney  
Julia Brown  
Jane Bugele  
Shirley Coulter  
Barb Hagan  
Karen Ladd  
Vivian Marshall  
Francie Turnure  
Jean Weekley  
Lee Westerhoff

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Linda Booher, Treasurer\*  
Gary Brehe  
Ann Hart  
Karen Ladd  
Phyllis McElhinney  
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Elda Seener\*

### Mission Committee

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Laura Carder  
Christy Eckert  
Gretchen Farrell  
Lois Kempf  
Kathy Rogers  
Sarah Spear\*

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Alicia Brehe  
Katie Farrell  
Ian McCracken  
Heather Miller  
Nancy Sebastian\*

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Mary Ellenberger  
Gretchen Farrell  
Joe Hagan  
Nancy Sebastian\*  
Elda Seener\*  
Tim Urban

### Property Committee

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Kevin Carpenter  
Jim Glamann\*  
Joe Hagan  
Elmer Kellmann  
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Roger Westerhoff

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Mike Becker\*  
Aaron Bounds  
Emily Bounds  
John Bugele  
Scott Marcus\*  
Vivian Marshall

### \*Session Members

Nancy Sebastian, Clerk  
Mike Becker  
Linda Booher  
David Brunworth  
Tom Ellenberger  
Tom Farrell  
Jim Glamann  
Scott Marcus  
Elda Seener  
Sarah Spear  
Mauri Truesdell  
Gerry Urban

### MEETING TIMES:

Christian Ed.	2nd Sunday	11:30 AM
Church Life	2nd Tuesday	9:30 AM
Finance	2nd Tuesday	1:30 PM
Mission	1st Tuesday	10:00 AM
Outreach	2nd Thursday	6:30 PM
Personnel	2nd Tuesday	6:00 PM
Property	2nd Sunday	11:30 AM
Session	4th Thursday	6:30 PM
Worship	Every other 1st Tuesday	7:00 PM

Updated 5/20/2025



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•	Ross Dress for Less \$25	8		
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•	Shoe Carnival \$25	3		
•	Target \$10, \$25, \$50, \$100, \$250	2.3		
•	Walmart \$25, \$50, \$100, \$250	2.3		
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•	Walgreens \$25, \$100	3		
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•	Apple/iTunes \$15, \$25, \$100, \$500	3		
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•	Lands End \$25, \$100	13		
•	Overstock.com \$25	8		
•	LLBean \$25, \$100	16		
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•	Bath & Body Works \$10, \$25	12		
•	Big Lots \$25, \$100	4		
•	Cabela's \$25, \$100	10		
	Cinema One Plus \$20	3		
	Designer Threads \$25	13		
•	Dicks Sporting Goods \$25, \$100	8		
•	Five Below \$25	2.3		
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	Great 8 Cine \$10	10		
	Hillermann Nursery \$25, \$50	3		
	I.B.Nuts & Fruit Too \$20	10		
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	Wolf Hollow \$20	3		

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