

## Presbyterian Church of Washington

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February 2024

# *Connect Newsletter*

It's February. Love is in the air!! At least that's what the greeting card companies want you to believe along with the chocolate companies, florists, restaurants, and stuffed animal companies. If you don't do something special and give something special to your special someone on February 14, then by world standards you're a schmuck.

Now do you want to accept the world's standards or those of Jesus? He doesn't think you're a schmuck if you adhere to his standards. Whether it's February or any other month, Jesus tells us to love. He models love and talks quite a bit about love. Jesus used the word love in the New Testament 228 times. He said love one another, love your neighbor, love the Lord your God, love your enemies, etc. In short, love everyone!

In the months ahead, during the time of pastoral transition, tensions, anxiety, or stress may be just a few of the emotions that emerge in the congregation. This is why I think it is important to remember John 13:34 in which Jesus says, <sup>34</sup> "I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another." I call this the 13<sup>th</sup> commandment. Jesus gave this command to his disciples right before he died.

Jesus knew a pastoral transition was ahead, and he knew his disciples might not agree with each other on everything after he was gone. So, he gave them this command. Sometimes it can be easy to love others, yet hard to love each other in the congregation when tensions arise. So, I encourage you to love one another no matter what, thereby effectively working together to find a new pastor and continue to build the body of Christ in Washington. If necessary, hum, "Love is in the air" or "They will know we are Christians by our love." Jesus loves you unconditionally.

Blessings,  
*Stephanie Knopf*  
Pastor, Holy Trinity Lutheran Church



# PCW Prayer Requests

## Members with continuing needs:

John Bugele, Tom Seener, Shirley Coulter, Sid Thayer, Jean Weekley, Family of Kay Hazel, Ollie Whyte, Francie Turnure, Jocelyn VanBuskirk, Heather Miller, Scott McCracken, Jan Eade, Bill Kellermann, Barbara Hagan, Brian Hall, Jamie Tucker, Becca Brehe and Juliana and Gracelynn, Annette Bogdanor.

**Union Care Center:** George Peters, Ken Roetheli

**Group Home:** Lisa Conrad

## Friends of the church requesting prayers:

**Family of Bob Duemler** (brother of Richard Duemler)

**Family of Barry May** (U.K. cousin of Kathy Froning and Mauri Truesdell)

**Family of Julian (4) and Jamison (6) Kaiser, especially mother Evelyn and firefighters**

**Amelia and Debbie** (granddaughter and daughter of Jan and Bob Eade)

**Amy Stahl** (daughter of Sharon and Bruce Wiese)

**Bob Turnure** (husband of Francie Turnure)

**Eddie and Sarah McGurthy and Family** (daughter and son-in-law of Ollie & Virginia Whyte)

**Patricia Hucke** (daughter of Kay Hucke)

**Pam Evangelist** (sister of Sharon Fenner)

**Phyllis Rocco** (sister-in-law of Lois Kempf)

**Loyd and Louise Gordy** (parents of Beth Brehe)

**Betty Buerk** (cousin of Becky Vogt)

**Howard Thiesmann** (friend of Tom Kempf)

**Lauren Kellermann** (daughter of Bill and Pamela Kellermann)

**Dora Ficklin and Parents** (great-granddaughter of Gary and Beth Brehe)

**George Brehe** (brother of Gary Brehe)

**Sherry Shehan** (cousin of Kathy Rogers)

**Kelly Sewell** (son-in-law of Virginia Boren)

**Anna Niessen** (friend of the Grubers)

**Quinn Burton** (daughter of Kelly Burton)

**Sarah Rogers** (family of Lya and Randall Avery)

**Russ and Marian Schelich** (friends of Kathy Froning and Mauri Truesdell)

**Penny Toedebusch** (friend of Kathy Froning and Mauri Truesdell)

**Gertrude Treutel** (friend of Kathy Rogers)

**Gary Rustige** (friend of Kathy Rogers)

**Mary Whisonant** (sister of Barbara Duemler)

**Lainie** (friend of Vivian Marshall)

**John Holbert** (brother of Vivian Marshall)

**Family of Jane Lohmeyer** (sister of Barbara Hagan)

**Carl and Ketha Bounds** (parents of Aaron Bounds)

**Tom Pennington** (friend of many)

**Marsha Bolan** (sister of Aneeta Brown)

**Jane** (friend of Mauri Truesdell)







The Proclamation Brass will present a free Pops Concert on Saturday, February 3, at 2:00 p.m. in our sanctuary. A “free will” offering will be taken and the proceeds will be donated to the Bethel Hills Community. Bethel Hills is a neighborhood of homes in “Marthasville designed for the needs and aspirations of individuals with and without developmental disabilities.” Proclamation Brass rehearses at Faith Lutheran Church in Sullivan.

*Photo copyright by Meta.*

### **Scrip Orders Due February 4**

Our next monthly PCW Scrip order will be on February 4, 2024. Please get your orders and checks into the church office by noon that Sunday or contact Kathy Froning, Gretchen Farrell, or Becky Vogt. Scrip orders can be for physical cards, digital cards and reloads, which are just reloading more money onto physical cards you already have from this Scrip program.

### **Valentine Dinner February 10**

**February 4 is the deadline** to register for our elegant Valentine Dinner on Saturday, February 10 in Fellowship Hall. Doors open at 5:00. Dinner at 6:00. \$35 per person. All adults are welcome. Sign up at the corkboard by the church office or see the current issue of “What’s Up?” newsletter for registration and payment details.

*Save  
the  
Date*

**PCW Book Sale will be April 26 and 27  
from 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. each day.**

## **Easter Egg Ornaments Available February 18 For Gifts To “Your Other Mother Pregnancy Center”**



During Lent this year, our Mission Committee is collecting supplies for Your Other Mother Pregnancy Center in Union. This non-profit organization provides services to women with low income and support, and their children. They provide counseling, referrals, pregnancy testing and education, adoption services, and they also distribute diapers, formula, and other baby and children items.

Similar to our Christmas Giving Tree for the Pregnancy Assistance Center in Washington, we will have ornaments on the Easter tree indicating individual needed supply items. Pick an egg ornament or more, shop for the item, and return it unwrapped to church by Sunday, March 10. We will have a Pack and Play “crib” to store the collected items. There is no need to attach the ornament to the gift item as we do at Christmas time. The collection will begin February 18, 2024, and end Sunday, March 10. Questions? Please contact Christy Eckert at 314-703-5984 or [cfeckert45@gmail.com](mailto:cfeckert45@gmail.com).

### **February Birthdays**

**4 Kevin Carpenter**

**7 Janet Henderson**

**8 Francie Turnure**

**8 Laura Conley**

**13 Eliot Ritchey**

**14 Danielle Tucker**

**15 Annette Bogdanor**

**15 Robin Thayer**

**16 Pamela Schwarzen**

**17 Gerry Urban**



**18 Elizabeth Hucke**

**19 Sam Farrell**

**19 Pamela Kellermann**

**22 Peggy Otto**

**24 Olivia Mahon**

# Mission Committee Announces Six Major Projects for 2024

***We are on a mission from God!***

**“Brothers and sisters never tire  
of doing what is good.” 2 Thessalonians 3:13**

The Mission Committee is gearing up for a busy year. This church has always been mission focused and supported a large variety of mission projects as we actively do God’s work in this world. We are committed to maintaining a strong mission focus in the year ahead.

The primary Mission programs for 2024 are...

- Harvest Table
- Meals on Wheels
- Mission Garden
- Marion Medical Mission
- Giving Trees:
  - Christmas - supporting Pregnancy Assistance Center of Washington.
  - Easter - supporting Your Other Mother Pregnancy and Positive Parenting program in Union.
- Heifer Project

We will continue to support mission project opportunities from other PCW committees and the community at large including the Souper Bowl of Caring, Book Sale, Summer Backpack program and Bethel Hills.

Watch for the Heifer Project Coins for Chickens bank which will be available during Fellowship Hour. This is a great chance to donate your spare change for a great cause. \$20 buys a starter flock of 10-50 chicks, which provides nutritious eggs as well as extra income selling extra eggs. \$50 will jumpstart a family towards a sustainable future with rabbits and a starter flock of chickens, along with farmer training and education.

**If you want to be involved with the Mission Committee or a particular mission project please speak to any of the committee members.**

*Debbie Bandy      Christy Eckert      Gretchen Farrell  
Lois Kempf      Barbara Mullins      Kathy Rogers      Sarah Spear*



# Clerk's Corner

*By Nancy Sebastian*

We are experiencing exciting times at Presbyterian Church of Washington. Recently, Session met with our Commission On Ministry representative, Rev. Carol Devaughan, to create a path for our next step in securing a Call Pastor. The next step is to assimilate a Mission Study Team who will be tasked with creating an extensive written report, which is a narrative that answers specific questions. The Mission Study Team will consist of Gerry Urban, Chairperson, Lizette Barnhart, Linda Booher, Pat Brown, David Brunworth, and Janet Carpenter. This project will be an assessment of our strengths, weaknesses, history, resources, and vision for future ministry. The Presbytery feels this well-done and extensive assessment permits the congregation to examine itself and its action considering Scripture and prayerfully ask for God's guidance as we seek the work that God asks of the congregation currently.

Every congregation has different needs so the scope and length of mission studies will vary from church to church. The team will be exploring history, demographics, and exploring thought provoking questions with our congregation. Some thorough mission studies can take 3-5 months to complete. Our team expects to create a very thorough document much sooner.

Our church has a beautiful history, and our Mission Study Team will begin by exploring old documents. There is so much valuable information that is a part of the history of our church.

The process starts with an organizing meeting for the committee and moves into the stage of gathering data. Current demographics will be a vital part of this process.

Upon completion, this study will be presented to the Congregation for adjustments, then to Session for approval. The next step will be approval from the Commission On Ministry. After the Commission On Ministry approves our Presbyterian Church of Washington Mission Study, Session will appoint a Pastoral Nominating Committee.

A congregational "Town Hall Meeting" will take place in the sanctuary after service on Sunday, February 4, 2024. There will be time to grab a snack and coffee and return to the sanctuary. The microphones will be used in the sanctuary which will make it much easier for everyone to speak and hear.

If you have any questions, please feel free to reach out to Gerry Urban or myself.

Blessings,  
Nancy



[Our church has cared for cemetery since 1854](#)

## Dedicated Cemetery Board Member Reaches a Milestone

Allen Vogt still remembers the invitation—and the advice—he received from our church’s Cemetery Board in 1968. “Once you get on this Board with us, you’re on it till you die.” Allen laughed, joined the Board anyway, learned every facet of cemetery management, and has done every job, including digging a grave. In 2008, he was elected chairman of the Board, and in 2021, he retired as an officer but remains on the Board. Allen has served 55 years, and to our knowledge, he holds the record as the longest-serving Cemetery Board member in church history. His fellow Cemetery Board members in 1968 were Wilbert Boehmer, Ed Brockmann, Kenny Krueel, Jack Lohan, Elmer Ronsick, Randolph Schafer, all now deceased.

“I’ve got lots of stories,” Allen said. “The church didn’t have a computer back then, so all of our records were written by hand, and I carried a lot of the material, plus a cemetery map, in my truck. You never knew when you’d get a call from a mortuary saying that they needed a grave dug tomorrow. When a family wanted a gravesite, part of my job was to take them to the cemetery so they could pick a site. Quite a few people chose a spot near a tree. The most unusual request was from a family that was burying a young man who liked basketball. They noticed a nearby house with a basketball hoop, and they said, *That is the spot we want. We can see that basketball hoop from here.*”



**CHAIRMEN OF THE BOARD.** Steve Sebastian at left, current chairman of the Cemetery Board, reviews the cemetery plot map with Allen Vogt, past chairman. The map is 25 inches by 40 inches.

The most ambitious project during Allen’s leadership was building the open-air chapel in the cemetery at the east end. Before its construction in 2005, people attending graveside services were at the mercy of wind, rain, mud, intense sunlight, and other weather elements. The chapel’s cost of \$20,258 was funded by donations, and its presence is considered an asset to persons who are looking to purchase a burial plot. “That chapel fundraising effort required a lot of time from the Board,” recalled member Barbara Schofield, who served as Board secretary for 20 years.

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“We also sent a letter to family members of those buried, and explained how the new chapel would be such a nice addition next time they visited.”

An unexpected construction project at the cemetery was initiated by the Special Road District of Washington, which is supported by real estate and personal property taxes. The Road District wanted to widen a section of Pottery Road, which runs directly in front of our cemetery. “Our Board worked out a deal with them where they could take a bit of our entrance property outside the gate, as long as they would build a nice brick wall to cover up the damage that resulted,” Allen said. “We also wanted the leftover dirt from the project to level the ground by the chapel. They agreed, and everything worked out well.”

All church committees have goals of “everything working out well,” but the Cemetery Board is unique for the span of its duties. When the Church Life Committee, for example, hosts a meal in Fellowship Hall, that project ends when the dishes are done, the floor is mopped, and the tables and chairs are put away. Mission accomplished...until the next project. When any person is buried in our cemetery—church member or not—the Cemetery Board is charged with caring for that person’s gravesite forever.

Our cemetery has required funding and attention for a very long time, since 1854 to be exact. That’s when Dr. Elijah McLean, one of Washington’s earliest physicians and most prominent citizens, sold the land to the church for ten dollars. The deed was registered in 1856 and is still in our possession. A family biography, published in 1888 by Goodspeed Publishing Company, stated, “He has been a member of the Presbyterian Church for thirty-five years, and has been an elder of the same for thirty-four years.” Elijah McLean died in 1898.

The McLean family gravestones are clustered together near the cemetery entrance and were once surrounded by a short picket fence but it was awkward to mow around so the fence was removed. While researching the history of the land deed, Steve discovered a curious twist. The land sale of 4.2 acres did *not* include the area where the McLean family is buried.

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**Cemetery Basics**  
1358 Pottery Road  
Washington, Missouri

**Cost of Burial Grave:** \$500 for PCW members, \$600 for nonmembers. Additional fees are charged for opening/closing of grave, and the marking and recording fee. Persons who buy a plot receive a deed that can be donated or sold to someone else, but the church does not buy back plots. Standard Graves are 4 by 8 feet.

**Cremation:** Cremains are buried in a 2’ x 2’ x 2’ vault in a standard grave. We do not have a mausoleum.



Operating expenses for the cemetery have always come from the sale of plots and donations. During much of the twentieth century, the interest from the invested endowment was adequate, and the church did not contribute money to the Board. “When interest rates really fell in the last few years, and were way below one percent, that really hurt us,” reflected member Paula Obermark, who was the first woman ever appointed to the Board and has served since 2000 as secretary and treasurer at different times. “We just didn’t have the money then to hire professionals for some of the maintenance work. Once a large tree needed to be removed and the Board members paid for it out of our own pockets.”

Since 2020, the church has budgeted \$4,000 annually for cemetery maintenance. To help remind the congregation of the need for cemetery donations, four designated offering envelopes are bound in each envelope booklet. Last summer the Board and the Church Life Committee hosted the first-ever picnic at the cemetery for the congregation, using tables in the chapel to serve the food. A few long-time members said it was their first visit to the cemetery.

Paul Henderson, who serves as co-chair and who is the youngest board member, is responsible for obtaining mowing operations, which are outsourced and cost about \$10,000 annually. “I help whenever it’s possible, though I’m the only Board member who’s working fulltime. Steve’s doing a great job as chairman, and I appreciate everyone who pitches in to work on the aesthetics of the property. The east boundary is an eyesore now because it overlooks that big construction project that is not connected to us. I’ve worked on various landscaping and clean-up projects in the cemetery.”

For years, the Board held an annual workday for Board members and their spouses for weeding, mulching, planting, and some monument clean-up. One year, the couples or small groups were assigned to sections of the cemetery, and they recorded the names on every tombstone. This formal documenting had never been done and has since been expanded and modified as needed. The overall volunteer maintenance at the cemetery is sending some Board members to the medicine cabinet. “We’re all getting older, and lifting big bags of mulch is killing our backs,” laughed Paula. “I can plant flowers and wash the windows in the chapel, but we need strong people like Paul Henderson to do the heavy lifting. He is a godsend to the Board.”

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In an informal survey with Board members who have never been Chairman, the consensus is Steve and Allen are exceptional leaders and advocates for our church cemetery. Steve, who joined the Board four years ago, believes his professional background in golf course management has been helpful in strategic planning at the cemetery.

“There’s so much that we do, and should do, and want to do,” Steve stated. “Everything involves planning and usually an expense. “Last year’s biggest project was planting a dozen evergreen trees on the east side to help camouflage the construction work beyond the cemetery. The developers cut down some large trees near our property and totally changed the appearance for the worst. But it wasn’t just the tree planting. Other projects involved going to the city and inquiring when the developer might be required to install some sort of fencing on the north side where currently a cliff is exposed, creating a mound for drainage of the planted trees, seeding and watering, and creating a landscape bed. David Brunworth was a huge help on this. We have just one water faucet at the cemetery, so last summer’s drought was rough on the grass and all of the plants.”

When asked of Steve, “How are the trees doing?” he replied, “So far, so good. Ask me in June.”

### **Graves of Distinction at Our Cemetery**

*Presbyterian Church of Washington*

- ◆ The grave of the earliest born person belongs to John Stanton, who was born in 1794 and died in 1831.
- ◆ The two oldest graves mark the burials of children. Elizabeth Hamilton was born in 1811 and died in 1818, ten days before her seventh birthday. Daniel Hancock was born in August 1819 and died when he was two months old.
- ◆ One area of the cemetery was sold to a local mortuary decades ago, and the remains of several babies are buried there. No headstones were ever placed by the families, and despite extensive research, the names of the children have never been located.
- ◆ At least 58 veterans from every branch of the U.S. Armed Forces are buried in our cemetery. Some gravestones indicate military service. Many do not.
- ◆ We have two known Prisoners of War buried our cemetery.

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Steve spends a lot of time researching and writing about the cemetery so it would have dedicated space on our church website. For the first time, the public can see costs, photos, and history of our church cemetery.

“I want to beautify the grounds so when families visit loved ones at gravesites, they will feel comfortable to linger because the property is attractive,” he said. “Many of our Board members have immediate family buried in our church cemetery, so the commitment to the future of the cemetery is very strong. Since joining the Board, I have become fascinated with the genealogy of those interred in our cemetery and wish we had a biography of every person buried we could share with the public. Some of our Board members are doing that research, and a few non-members of the Board have offered to help, too. I’ve learned so much being on the Board and enjoy working with everyone who supports the burial grounds in any way. Bob Eade is a wonderful example. He’s retired from the Navy, and every year on Veterans Day he places an American flag beside the graves of all known veterans. All five branches of our military are represented by those buried, and I am very proud to be a small part of their recognition.”

**Cemetery Board Members:** Steve Sebastian, chairman; John Bugele, Bob Eade, Dan Greer, Paul Henderson, Paula Obermark, Barbara Schofield, Janet Thayer, Bruce Wiese, Allen Vogt, and Roger Westerhoff.

**Special appreciation to those who have assisted the Board:** John Anglin, Mike Becker, David Brunworth, and Kevin Carpenter.



This is the view of our cemetery looking west, with the open-air chapel at the left. [Click here to be directed to the cemetery section on our website.](#)





Our church has a great event space for weddings, showers, meetings, reunions, and other gatherings. These two photos are from a recent wedding. If someone you know is interested in renting Fellowship Hall, the sanctuary, or our commercial kitchen, please refer them to our website for pricing, parking, alcohol policy, and other details. [Click here to be directed to the Facility Rental information on our website.](#)



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