



Christ is risen! He is risen indeed! Alleluia!

Time seems to go by so quickly. It seems like we just started the season of Lent and now we are already celebrating the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ.

March is over, let the April showers begin. And in April of every year, the church and society take a day to observe “Earth Day.” It falls on April 22 each year.

The church has always observed “Earth Day” so to speak because God called us to be good stewards of the earth and all that is in it as expressed in Genesis Chapter 1.

²⁶ Then God said, “Let us make humans^[c] in our image, according to our likeness.....

²⁸ God blessed them, and God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth.” ²⁹ God said, “See, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is upon the face of all the earth and every tree with seed in its fruit; you shall have them for food. ³⁰ And to every beast of the earth and to every bird of the air and to everything that creeps on the earth, everything that has the breath of life, I have given every green plant for food.” And it was so.

This stewardship call is eternal. God gave us this wonderful gift of the earth and all that is in it and told us to take care of it. Sometimes we do a pretty good job at this and other times, not so much. So, we need reminders that we are to be good stewards of the earth.

Each year, the PCUSA partners with Creation Justice Ministries to offer Christian education materials to equip faith communities to protect, restore, and more rightly share God’s creation. This year, the theme “Plastic Jesus-Real Faith in a Synthetic World” is designed to help us think more deeply about the ways that plastics impact our lives and God’s creation.

Continued on page 2



Plastic pollution damages habitats and interrupts natural processes, reducing the ability of ecosystems to adapt to climate change, directly affecting millions of people's livelihoods, food production capabilities and social well-being. Our waterways bear the brunt of this pollution, which interferes with navigation and disrupts commercial and recreational fishing.

Single-use plastics have become one of the most urgent environmental threats. These are too often buried in landfills or dumped untreated in our precious water sources. Even the manufacturing process itself has been identified as a major source of climate-warming greenhouse gas emissions.

Microplastics also pose a risk to human health. Increasingly, we are seeing these particles, defined as any plastics under 5 millimeters in length, end up not just in the ocean and other water sources but also on farmland, raising concerns over our food supply and our well-being.

As people of faith, we are not exempt from the overuse of plastics. Communion cups, nativity scenes and Easter eggs are just a few of the Christian staples that contribute to our single use plastics issue. So what can we do to be better stewards of God's creation?

1. Try engaging in a plastic-free summer. Simpler ways to reduce single-use plastics are to bring your own reusable bags to stores and swap out plastic straws for metal straws. Use your own water bottles rather than one time use plastic bottles.
2. Reduce shellfish consumption. Microplastics that end up in the ocean are ingested by bottom-feeding shellfish. When you consume the shellfish, the microplastics are then ingested by you. Reducing or avoiding your consumption of shellfish can help cut down on the amount of microplastics that get into your system.
3. Educate yourself on your personal plastic use. How much plastic do you use on a weekly basis? What happens to your plastic waste after you discard it? What percentage of recycling in your state is actually recycled?
4. Reduce the amount of reusable plastics used for community meals. For example, use paper or reusable plates instead of plastic or plastic foam. Use paper or glass cups and glasses.
5. Do a community cleanup in your neighborhoods or public spaces.
6. Donate to support communities impacted by pollution.
7. Advocate for the PCUSA and community to completely divest from fossil fuel companies and petroleum companies, which are some of the largest producers of plastic products. One way to do this is to have the PCUSA support the Fossil Fuel Treaty, which you can learn more about at fossilfuel treaty.org.

Last but not least, pray!

Creator God, thank you for the many good gifts you have given us — so much beauty and abundance in creation all around us. And yet we hear creation groaning and we have heavy hearts because we know so much of creation's pain is due to our actions. Forgive us for polluting the environment through our selfish deeds and greed, without considering the impacts on people and creation. The earth is yours, and everything in it, the world and all who live in it.

Give wisdom and soft hearts to those involved in the negotiations. We pray for each of the 20 million waste pickers around the world who do vital work. They collect plastics for recycling, and yet are often overlooked and underpaid. Let their voices be heard and their human rights and livelihoods protected. Oh, God, help us not to throw away opportunities to care for your creation.

We pray for the global church, for all the communities and people affected by plastic pollution, that you may keep them close to you. Help us to restore and care for this beautiful earth you blessed us with. The earth is yours, and everything in it, the world and all who live in it. Amen.

Stephanie Knopf, Moderator of the PCW Session
Pastor, Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, St. Louis

Community Book Sale

April 26 and 27, 2024

**8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. each day
in PCW Fellowship Hall**

4834 South Point Road in Washington

- ◆ Book donations are welcome April 14 to 24, 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Monday through Friday. Deliver books to Fellowship Hall please.
- ◆ Teacher Night is Thursday, April 25 from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.
- ◆ All teachers with ID get free classroom books on Teacher Night.
- ◆ We'll have a \$4 bag sale on Saturday, April 27.



**A portion of all proceeds
will be donated to the Four
Rivers YMCA Literacy
Program in Washington.**

*For more information, call
the church office: 636-239-3178.*



Our Mission Committee says THANK YOU to everyone who donated items to Your Other Mother Pregnancy Center in Union. Christy Eckert announced in church on March 17 that donations included 1,913 diapers, 1,484 baby wipes, and many other useful items. Above, Christy (left) is loading her vehicle with help from Betsy Greer and Kathy Rogers. Mission Committee members are Barbara Mullins (Chair), Debbie Bandy, Christy Eckert, Gretchen Farrell, Lois Kempf, Kathy Rogers, and Sarah Spear. The Pregnancy Center was overwhelmed with gratitude for the large number of items our church collected and donated.

Our Mission Committee Is Collecting Leftover Yarn

In the Spring of 2025, a domestic violence safe house under the direction of Turning Point Advocacy Services will open in Franklin County. Hand-knitted or crocheted blankets of two sizes are needed for clients to use and then take with them when they leave: 36" x 36" for children and 48" x 60" for teens and adult. The mission committee will collect yarn for this project for the next few months. Many of us have leftover yarn from previous projects or would like to donate yarn for the knitters and crocheters in our congregation. Bring **acrylic, worsted, size #4 yarn of any color.** There will be baskets outside the sanctuary ready for your donation. For more information about Blanket Partners, ask Debbie Bandy. Thank you!



Our Meals on Wheels Breaks a Record With 1,300 Meals Prepared and Served in Past 12 Months

Our church kitchen has produced meals for thousands of people in the past 30 years, but perhaps none as meaningful as the food that is prepared by our volunteers for Meals on Wheels (MOW). Mission Committee Chairman Barbara Mullins announced in March that the MOW volunteers had prepared and delivered 1,300 meals to local residents in the past 12 months.

“Meals on Wheels was a passion of Pastor Pat Gruber,” recalled Jolene Patterson, former chairman of the Mission Committee, which sponsors the project.

“Jolene is right,” concurred Christy Eckert, who was Mission chairman when Pastor Pat proposed the idea. “He really wanted this program to succeed. In the beginning, we cooked just one Saturday a month. Like clockwork, Pastor Pat would arrive on that Saturday morning with a box of donuts for whoever was cooking. He’d stay and visit while we worked. Those first cooks were Linda Booher, Wyonia Goebel, Sarah Spear, and Jean Weekly. Meals on Wheels was immediately accepted by those who worked on it, and the congregation in general. The only reluctance I remember was when we considered expanding it from once a month to four times a month. We wondered if there would be enough volunteers to shop, cook, pack, drive, and deliver.”

The Mission Committee wonders no more. With seasoned kitchen volunteers and consistent recruiting for new volunteers and substitutes, the MOW program has expanded. Our church cooks, packs, and delivers three Saturdays every month. Life Stream Church handles all the functions one Saturday every month, and in months with a fifth Saturday, Peace Lutheran handles the deliveries. To assist with the steady funding that is required by a program of this depth, Jolene wrote and obtained grant money that has enabled PCW to purchase groceries for four years.

MOW recipients are typically approved for eligibility by the Washington Senior Center and most of them are not members of PCW. Our volunteers prepare a meal for 25-30 households each week. One couple who receives the meals recently said, “Tell those cooks how much we enjoy the food. Every meal has been so good. Because of some physical problems we have, we cannot cook like we used to. We really appreciate getting a meal on Saturdays from the Presbyterian Church, and our grown kids are happy about it, too.”

Continued on page 6.

“I think that hunger, whether a result of crisis in a family, economic issue, or disability issue is one of the most common struggles people across many walks of life and in many communities in America face,” added Jolene. “I’m proud that our church has continually been there for our local community. We have talented chefs and home chefs that have donated their time and talents to these efforts, but there have also been numerous volunteers that have prepared deliveries and drivers that have delivered them. Our community garden, the passion of Dr. Brunworth, has supplied fresh food to Loving Hearts food pantry for years and is continually growing with the support of many hands. Thanks to a program started by Tom Fenner and Brady Ritchey, volunteers still pick up Panera’s unused products once a week and deliver them to Loving Hearts food pantry. We have also supported Harvest Table through the continued efforts of Gretchen Farrell and the Methodist Food Pantry through our youth’s Souper Bowl of Caring. It definitely takes a village to accomplish a project like this. I think we should be proud of everyone that has been involved in following our Matthew 25 (31-46) directive to feed God’s hungry people.”



Beth Bonney (foreground) and Jill Stallmann prepare to open bags of chicken for casseroles they are cooking for Meals on Wheels.



Tom and Lois Kempf have been Meals on Wheels volunteers from the beginning of the program at our church. On March 23, they bagged and delivered all the meals.



Clerk's Corner

By Nancy Sebastian

Congratulations to the Mission Study Team on the completion of the Presbyterian Church of Washington Mission Study! A tremendous amount of work went into this project and words are inadequate to thank them enough. This fantastic team worked feverishly to get the job done for our church in order that we might move forward in our search for a Pastor. Thank you to the Mission Study Committee consisting of Liz Barnhart, Linda Booher, Pat Brown, Janet Carpenter, Ian McCracken and Gerry Urban, Chairperson. The Mission Study was approved by Session March 21, 2024. A called Congregational Meeting to share with the congregation will take place Sunday, April 7, 2024, to review the Mission Study, with Rev. Bob Jensen moderating.

The timeline is:

- ◆ The Mission Study has been **approved** by Session, to be shared with the congregation April 7, and submitted to the Commission On Ministry for approval.
- ◆ Once approved by the Commission On Ministry (hopefully mid-April) we will be authorized to elect a Pastoral Nominating Committee.
- ◆ The Pastoral Nominating Committee is responsible for completing the Ministry Discernment Profile. This profile consists of basic church information and the answers to questions relating to what type of Pastor we are looking for. The answers to these questions will be taken directly from the recent survey conducted by the Mission Study Team. In addition, the Mission Study will be used.
- ◆ The Ministry Discernment Profile must be approved by Session and then by the Commission On Ministry. The Commission On Ministry meets monthly usually in the middle of the month.
- ◆ Once the approvals are completed, the Ministry Discernment Profile will be uploaded to the Church Leadership Connection as a job description and opening.

Continued on page 8.

The Pastor Nominating Committee

The Pastoral Nominating Committee will be representative of the whole congregation and elected by the congregation. This committee will have the ultimate responsibility for nominating a minister to the congregation for election as the next pastor. The responsibilities will include:

- ◆ Planning to attend regular meetings which will include time for prayer and Scripture.
- ◆ Building consensus and unity.
- ◆ Gathering materials, Bibles, and other resources.
- ◆ Reviewing the Mission Study and surveys to prepare to write the Ministry Discernment Profile.
- ◆ Working together with the Presbytery to complete the Ministry Discernment Profile on the computer.
- ◆ Entering the Ministry Discernment Profile via computer with the Church Leadership Connection. Church Leadership Connection (CLC) is the Internet-based matching and referral system of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).
- ◆ Receiving, reading, and evaluating Personal Information Forms in a spirit of prayerful openness to the movement of God's Spirit.
- ◆ Working together to narrow the field of prospective pastors through listening to sermons, reference checking (by both the Pastor Nominating Committee and the Presbytery), and phone or video conferencing platforms.
- ◆ Interviewing face to face the "short list" of prospective pastors, providing for a welcoming and hospitable visit to your church community.
- ◆ Regularly providing reports and updates to the congregation

If you have any questions on the process, please reach out to any Mission Study Committee member or Nancy Sebastian.





On a chilly Saturday morning in late March, several PCW members and friends cleaned up the litter on a stretch of church property that runs along Highway 100. Thank you everyone! From left (top photo) are Steve Sebastian, Tim Urban, Joe Hagan, David Brunworth, Kathy Rogers, Roger Westerhoff, and Katie Collins. Not pictured are Layne Becker, Gretchen Farrell, Katie Farrell, Jim and Jamie Glamann, Vivian Marshall, Brewer James McCarrick, Nicholas Smith, and Mauri Truesdell.





Beth Bonney and her sister Jill Stallmann get ready to place hot brunch casseroles on the serving tables on March 10, 2024, in Fellowship Hall. We had delicious food and a wonderful crowd for Spirit Day. Thanks to Church Life Committee for organizing this festive spring event.



Vivian Marshall (left) joins Church Life Committee Co-Chairs Sarah Spear and Linda Booher. The children deciding on which cake to choose are brothers Lucas and Ethan Farrell of Kansas City, the grandchildren of Tom and Gretchen Farrell.



Two longtime members who enjoyed the brunch were Shirley Coulter (left) and Anna Mae Boehmer. These birthday girls are the same age and their active lives inspire many in the congregation. Anna Mae joined our church in 1948 and Shirley joined in 1957.



We Welcome Ann Hart To Our Staff

Ann Hart is our new *Office Administrator/Financial Secretary*, who joined us in February. She manages our church office, which is open 8:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday (closed Wednesday). Ann is a Michigan native who attended college in Tennessee. She and her husband Troy have been Missouri residents for many years.

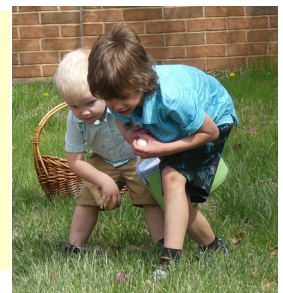


“I’ve had a lot of interesting jobs, but the most important was raising our two daughters and homeschooling them,” she said. Their oldest daughter is a dietician at a VA hospital in St. Louis and is married to a chemical engineer, and their youngest daughter is a college student. Ann comes to us with a broad background in finance. She was an internal auditor for McKee Foods (which makes Little Debbie products), and was also an accountant for a credit union and a firm that managed hospital pharmacies. Other employers that benefited from Ann’s treasurer/bookkeeping skills were two churches and a community center.

In leisure time, Ann plays the piano, cooks, reads, and likes yard work. “When I talk to people, I like to let them choose the topic and learn from them,” she added. “I especially enjoy hearing and sharing testimonies about how God has been working in our lives.”



**Our May issue will contain news
and photos of Palm Sunday
and Easter in our church.**



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