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Connect Newsletter

Dear Friends:

Hebrews 12:1

“Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight and the sin that clings so closely, and let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us.”

People often characterize the life of faith as one of sacrifice. You have this wonderful thing, that you are willing to give up because you love God more than the wonderful thing. God should give us major bonus points because we have chosen God over the wonderful things.

I think of it as giving up something that is an unnecessary burden. Imagine that you have this rock that you really like. You think it beautiful and valuable. It weighs so much that it is a challenge to carry it everywhere you go, but you cannot conceive of putting it down and going off without it. It is your rock. It is part of how you understand yourself and how others understand who you are. If you left it somewhere it might get stolen.

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Then one day, you come to understand that if you have the love of God, you don't need the rock. You set down the rock and move through your life without it; and immediately you notice how much easier it is to get around, how much more energy you have for living your life.

Christ calls on us to set down our fears, our desires for more and more, our grudges, our hate and our belief that our value as a human being is measured in worldly success. It can be difficult to set these things down because we have carried them with us for our whole lives; but setting this burden down is not a sacrifice, it is a gift, a cause for celebration.

There are many problems in our world. There are many people who are suffering because of those problems; but many of the problems and much of the suffering is because we won't let go of our burdensome beliefs. If we were not afraid of scarcity, we wouldn't hoard, we could generously share the gifts of God's creation. We set aside our fear, and someone else sets aside their hunger. If we were not afraid of strangers, we could be more welcoming. We set aside our fear, and someone else sets aside lives lived as unwanted outcasts. We set aside our bias. We are no longer Democrat or Republican, no longer white or black, no longer citizen or immigrant. We are simply followers of Christ and love rather than conflict fills our days.

When we pray every week for God to forgive our debts as we forgive our debtors, we may miss the profound idea that debt is a burden for everyone, not just the debtor. To forgive someone is to free them and ourselves.

The life of faith is a life of freedom from fear. Thanks be to God.

Rev. Rich Gamble

Pastor



**Our children's singing club will perform
during the 10:15 a.m. worship service on
Sunday, August 10.**

Please join us!

The next Scrip orders will be taken Sunday, August 3, and Sunday, September 7. See page 11 for the order form. Some local retail stores will give our church 10 percent of the amount you spend for a gift card. See Becky Vogt, Kathy Froning, or Gretchen Farrell for details.

Dynamic Mission Committee Reaches Deep and Wide To Be Good Neighbors To the World

No one has asked our Mission Committee to choose a hymn as their theme. But if the request was made, the hymn below—familiar to millions of Presbyterians—might be the choice of Debbie Bandy, Laura Carder, Christy Eckert, Grethen Farrell, Kathy Rogers, and Sarah Spear.

*In Christ there is no east or west,
in Him no south or north;
but one great fellowship of love
through the whole wide earth.*



Our church in Washington has a long history of caring for others outside of our congregation. In 1910, these women formed the Ladies Missionary Society. They were making decisions 10 years before they earned the right to vote in U.S. elections. This month marks the 105th anniversary of Congress ratifying the 19th Amendment, granting women the right to vote.

Those words were written by William J. Dunkerly (1852-1941), a British businessman who owned a wholesale grocery company, wrote and published poetry and books (using the pen name John Oxenham), climbed mountains, and traveled extensively in Europe and the United States. Our Mission Committee is unlike the Presbyterian Board of Foreign Missions, which in its first year of operation in 1837, sent missionaries to India, China, Africa, Smyrna (now modern-day Turkey), and western parts of the United States. The focus then was to convert nonbelievers to become Christians. The focus now, in our congregation, is to reach people, regardless of their religious beliefs, and to demonstrate the love of God by providing them with something they need.

Such as diapers, an essential product for all households with babies. According to the American Academy of Pediatrics, families spend almost \$1,000 for disposable diapers the first year of a newborn's life. For some families, this expense can cut into their food budget, and Christy Eckert knows the impact of this because she works closely with two nonprofit organizations that have become designated Mission Committee projects. For the past several years, the committee members have decorated a small, artificial Christmas tree and placed it outside the sanctuary doors. Paper ornaments list items that are needed and PCW members can choose what they wish to donate. "This project began more than 15 years ago and was founded by Pamela Kellermann, and the former Parent's Day Out program teachers," explained Christy. "It benefits the Pregnancy Assistance Center in Washington, and we even continued this project during COVID. We receive hundreds of dollars of Christmas gifts for needy families. In 2024, we expanded the project and initiated a Giving Tree at Easter, and those donations benefit the Your Other Mother Pregnancy Center in Union."



This past April our church donated 1,582 disposable diapers to the Center, plus baby wipes, baby food, detergent, and other items. With diapers costing about twenty-nine cents each, the value of the diapers alone was \$460. “The Giving Trees at Easter and Christmas depend on the generosity of our congregation, and that generosity is overwhelming,” noted Christy (at left). “When we deliver these supplies, the heartwarming response we receive from the Center’s staff is worth any effort we have put forth.”

For church members who enjoy the realm of food—from growing it to sharing it—the Mission Garden and Meals on Wheels are ideal places to find that experience. Our 60’x90’ garden, which has been documented in PCW newsletters with numerous articles and photos, continues to yield a wealth of fresh, organic vegetables. All the annual produce—one thousand pounds—is donated to the Loving Hearts food pantry in Washington. Kathy Rogers (at right) is a seasoned garden volunteer, working from March through October. “Getting my hands dirty while planting flowers or a vegetable garden is something I’ve loved to do since I was young,” she said. “When I joined the church and realized we had a garden, I was ready to help. It can be a hard, hot, and dirty job at times, but it’s satisfying to know that we’ve helped feed hungry people.”



It wasn’t until Kathy broke her ankle a few years ago and was confined to her house that she realized how much our Meals on Wheel program is appreciated by people who receive them.

“I’ve delivered meals for several years now, and look forward to seeing the people on my route,” she reflected. “We exchange a few words and a smile, and sometimes I am greeted by a friendly dog or have to watch out for the cat that tries to escape through the open door. Occasionally, on those very cold, very hot, or rainy days, I might wish I was at home, but I think of those waiting for the knock on the door and the voice saying, “Meals on Wheels.” I hope I bring some joy and comfort to those persons on my route.” In one recent 12-month period, Kathy and other church members delivered 1,300 meals for Meals on Wheels.



“The Meals on Wheels program is very important to my heart. We’ve lost two important people who led two cooking teams. We were able to get enough volunteers to fill these positions. The people we serve weekly depend on these meals, and the shopping, the preparing, the delivering of those meals is a true labor of love for those of us who do that work.”
— Sarah Spear

Another food-related mission project is Harvest Table, a Saturday evening meal at St. Peter's United Church of Christ in Washington. The program was founded 15 years ago by a small group of ecumenical women who wanted to provide "an open and free community meal to all who would like it." UCC member Karen Dawson, a retired art teacher at Washington High School, was a leading advocate for this project. She believed the experiment would be successful only if other churches and organizations supported the idea by pledging to provide volunteer servers. PCW was the first church to say "yes," and Gretchen Farrell has coordinated our volunteers ever since. Gretchen promotes the event four times a year in our church, finds about 14 volunteers for the designated four nights, and also makes sure that desserts for 150 guests are delivered whenever PCW serves the meal. "This is a wonderful event, and those who help serve the meals always have fun just being together and meeting the people who come for the meal. A lot of our volunteers sign up again and again."

Gretchen's excellent organizational skills are on display every spring for not only church members but the entire town. She's served as chair or co-chair of our Community Book Sale for 16 years, which is held in our Fellowship Hall on a weekend in April. "I joined this Mission Committee this past January because I wanted to get more involved in church activities now that I'm retired," commented Laura Carder (at right). "Missions were always important to my mom [the late Dorothy Leary], so joining the committee seemed like a way to honor her. I worked with the book sale for the first time, and was overwhelmed and impressed with the sheer volume of books we had. My job was to help with set up, and also be a cashier. That was fun! I enjoyed meeting the customers and saw some people I used to work with at the hospital. Gretchen did a great job of training everyone who worked at the sale."



"This year's book sale generated almost \$5,000," commented Gretchen (at left). "We also donated 48 boxes of books to many classroom libraries, and collected \$250 in our bucket for the YMCA Literacy Center. Plus, we tithe 10 percent of all sales to give to the YMCA Literacy Center, and add that to the collection tub amount. We spread the love of reading everywhere."

One of Debbie Bandy's favorite mission projects was the Heifer Project International during September 2024. "This is their mission statement," said Debbie. *Heifer International supports smallholder farmers to sustainably address hunger and poverty in their communities while caring for the Earth. We apply a food systems approach to helping farmers earn more income and to generate economic opportunity for rural women, youth, and Indigenous populations.*

"The Heifer Project gave us enough calendars for each family to have one, so we were able to include the entire congregation in this global mission," explained Debbie (at right). During the week, each church family read the calendar and made contributions. For example, one Thursday was designated as Chicken Day, and a photo showed families raising flocks for protein-packed eggs and meat. When sold at market, the chickens and their eggs can also boost incomes. The calendar had a question. What's in the fridge? Add 5 cents for every egg you find in your refrigerator, or 50 cents for every dozen. On Sunday, everyone brought the gathered contributions and filled the jars in the narthex decorated either with a bee, fish, cow, or chicken. The last Sunday we had a feast of foods from around the world! We were partners with our global community and gave tangible service to Jesus' mandate in Matthew 25: Feed the hungry, give water to the thirsty, make strangers feel welcomed, cloth the naked, visit those in prison. We contributed \$1,700 to this mission."



2024-2025 Projects of Our Mission Committee

Alternative Gift Market
Community Book Sale
Harvest Table
Heifer International
Loving Hearts
Marion Medical Mission
Meals on Wheels
Mission Garden
Pregnancy Assistance Center
Turning Point Center
Warner Warm-Up Coat Drive
Your Other Mother Pregnancy Center

Heifer International, founded in 1944, is headquartered in Little Rock, Arkansas, and works with 300 local, regional, and global partners in the U.S., Africa, India, and South America. This nonprofit organization has received numerous awards and accolades during its long history of helping impoverished families.

To support its many projects, the Mission Committee depends on our entire congregation. If you have a suggestion or idea for an existing project or a future one, please contact Debbie Bandy, Laura Carder, Christy Eckert, Grethen Farrell, Kathy Rogers, or Sarah Spear.

A future CONNECT newsletter will feature the Alternative Gift Market, Marion Medical Mission, Turning Point Center, Warner Warm-Up Coat Drive, and Wycliff Missionaries.

Despite the blazing heat in July, our Mission Garden attracted bluebirds, hummingbirds, cardinals, sparrows, goldfinches, and even red-shouldered hawks that bolted in- to the trees too quickly for our photographer. Garden co-chair Katie Collins donated the bird bath below. Praise the Lord for these beautiful creatures!





Elmer Kellmann examines carrots he just pulled. Above: our garden looking east.

At right, new gravel paths eliminate weeding for volunteers and provide a level walking surface. Photos below show banana peppers, tomatoes, and Robert Van Laere picking onions.



Come help with the harvest! All produce is donated to the food pantry at Loving Hearts.



Our Mission Garden in July 2025



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

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Scott Marcus
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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 7/28/2025

PRESBY SCRIP PROGRAM ORDER FORM

Customer NAME: _____ Email (if new customer only): _____ Date: _____

Customer PHONE: ***All Sales are Final ** No Returns ** No Refunds

Merchant terms and conditions as well as additional forms are available at The Presbyterian Church of Washington.

Vendor	%	QTY	\$ Total
AUTOMOTIVE			
• BP \$50, \$100, (\$250, 2.5%)	1.5		
Fischer's Phillips66 \$25, \$30, \$100	2		
• Casey's General Store and Gas \$25	3		
CLOTHING/DEPT.STORES			
• JCPenny \$25, \$100	5		
• Kohl's \$25, \$100	4		
• Marshall's \$25, \$100	7		
• Macy's \$25, \$100	10		
• Maurice's \$20	7		
• Ross Dress for Less \$25	8		
• Sam's Club \$25, \$30, \$100, \$250	2.5		
• Shoe Carnival \$25	5		
• Target \$10, \$25, \$30, \$100, \$250	2.5		
• Walmart \$25, \$50, \$100, \$250	2.5		
DRUG STORES			
Schroeder Drug \$5, \$10, \$25, \$50	5		
• Walgreens \$25, \$100	5		
GROCERY STORES			
Williams Bros.Meat Mkt. \$25	5		
• Honey-Baked Ham \$25	12		
HOME IMPROVEMENTS			
• Ace Hardware \$25, \$100	4		
• Lowe's \$20, \$25, \$100, \$500, \$1000	4		
MAIL ORDER-ONLINE			
• Amazon \$25, \$100	1.7		
• Apple/iTunes \$15, \$25, \$100, \$500	5		
• Barnes & Noble \$10, \$25, \$100	8		
• Lands End \$25, \$100	15		
• Overstock.com \$25	8		
• LLBean \$25, \$100	16		
SPECIALTY STORES			
• Bass Pro Shop \$25, \$100	10		
• Bath & Body Works \$10, \$25	12		
• Big Lots \$25, \$100	4		
• Cabela's \$25, \$100	10		
Cinema One Plus \$20	5		
Designer Threads \$25	15		
• Dicks Sporting Goods \$25, \$100	8		
• Five Below \$25	2.5		
Fricke Photography \$20	5		
Great 8 Cine \$10	10		
Hillermann Nursery \$25, \$50	5		
I.B.Nuts & Fruit Too \$20	10		
• Jo-Ann Fabric \$25	6		
• Michael's \$25, \$100	4		
• Ulta Beauty \$25	7		
Wolf Hollow \$20	5		

PAYMENT METHOD

If Cash, Amount

If Check, Amount

If Check, check number _____

Make checks payable to The Presbyterian Church

[illegible]

TOTAL ORDER AMOUNT = \$

• (This DOT indicates a National Brand, no DOT indicates a Local Merchant.)

Sign when Receiving Order:

Filled by:

Date Received:

Scrip Order Form 11-3-2024