



Listening, Praying & Discerning

We are coming together to open our hearts, minds and spirits – to allow God’s Spirit to speak to us and through us. **How is God calling Westminster United Church at this time?** The journey of discovery depends as much on us being personally transformed as it does on the congregation being transformed together. We enter our final week in this season of prayer...

Week 5 – Prayer for Wisdom

Wisdom can often feel far away. How do we find the way forward – especially when we are in unknown territory? When the church (or any of us individually) seeks renewal, we typically look for wisdom to guide the way. The problem is that renewal depends on the openness to be transformed and to be changed – something that is very difficult to do until transformation and change are thrust upon us (and even then, it can be difficult.) During this pandemic, we have been forced to change – how we do church, how we celebrate special occasions, how we relate to one another... For some of us, embracing this change will have been easy. For others, it will have been difficult, for multiple reasons. And for many of us, we will have experienced this change like a series of waves – sometimes easy and sometimes tough. During times of transformation and change, we are invited to lean on God for wisdom, assured that God gives both generously and ungrudgingly.

“If any of you is lacking in wisdom, ask God, who gives to all generously and ungrudgingly, and it will be given you.”

James 1:5

PRAY

This week try to spend anywhere from 2 to 20 minutes per day in intentional, contemplative prayer. Repeat or hum the psalmist words as a way of entering into prayer “Be Still and Know”:

- Sit comfortably
- Decide how long you wish to be in silence—2 min, 5 min, working your way up gradually to 10, 15 or 20 minutes—you may wish to set a timer.
- State your intention (to be fully present to God); ask for God’s help.
- Breathe in. Breathe out. Focus on your breathing while you enter a time of silence.
- Your mind will wander! Be gracious and do not judge yourself! A wandering mind is a gift—it gives you multiple opportunities to practice returning to God.
- When your mind wanders, focus on your breath, or use a word or very short prayer to return to God. “Be Still and Know” “God, I give this time to you” or “Trust” or “Peace.”



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- Your mind will bring up all manner of things, from grocery lists to old wounds to great insights. Accept and release all of these. If it is of value, it will still be there for you when you leave your time of silence. The goal is to practice returning to God.
- At the end of your time of prayer, give thanks to God for being with you. Breathe deeply and close your time of silence.

(Note: For a helpful prayer app, please see the following:

<https://www.contemplativeoutreach.org/centering-prayer-mobile-app>)

REFLECT

Outside of this time of prayer, when you meet with your small group or are reflecting on your own, consider the following questions:

1. How have you experienced the changes brought on by the pandemic?
2. How have you leaned on God during this time?
3. What wisdom is emerging for you personally during this time of change?
4. As you reflect on the overarching questions for WUC (noted below) what do you notice God saying?

Overarching questions that Westminster United Church is asking:

- *God, what type of world are you seeking to call forth?*
- *What are you (God) asking us to let go of? What are you asking us to take on?*
- *How do we nurture a deeper relationship with you?*
- *What practical next steps are we invited to take as a congregation?*

Notes:



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