

THE WESTMINSTER
WORLD



Let your hearts be glad,
shout with joy and celebrate
this great day!

Easter is here, and so is
new life and hope.



Have a blessed

Easter

An Easter message from our minister:

This season, as we go through Lent and look forward to Easter, there's a feeling that echoes what happens in nature. I notice it every year.

The shift toward spring feels like **a journey that requires patience and trust**. New life doesn't burst forth loudly but instead arrives quietly, like the buds forming on trees, the ground beginning to thaw and the birds returning. One day it's warmer, the next we're showered with freezing rain.

I'm finding it hard *not* to feel overwhelmed these days and I know I'm not alone. We're grappling with political divides, and the tensions between nations continue to grow. People are navigating financial struggles, personal loss, and that overarching sense of "things aren't right". The weight of it all can sometimes feel unbearable.

But it is precisely at this moment - amidst the chaos, the exhaustion, the worries - that we are called to remember the message of Easter. It is a message that does not deny suffering or fear or pain but acknowledges that even in the hardest moments, there is a hope. There is renewal. There is resurrection.

In **Holy Week**, we will be invited to walk through the sacred story of Jesus entering Jerusalem, his arrest, death and resurrection. **It's a story that encompasses the full range of human experience: hope, dread, fear, sorrow, disbelief, joy and triumph.** We can see our own lives reflected and be reminded that we're not just observers of this story but actively in it. We are not alone. Christ is with us, even in the loneliest hours.

Our **services during Holy Week - starting with Palm Sunday and moving through Maudy Thursday (service at 7pm), Good Friday (7pm), and Easter (8:30am/10:30am with breakfast in between)** - give us time to reflect on waiting, grief, God's unwavering love, and the deep joy that Easter brings.

As you notice the earth awakening around you, see it as an invitation to join in ...to wait...trust...grow...find new life. The hope of Easter is that we, too, are being renewed.

May you embrace the spring and its promise of warmer days, and may it remind you, with all its beauty and grace, that new life is on the way. That indeed, friends, Christ is risen.

In Love and Light, *Rev. Michelle*



Palm Sunday

April 13 at 10:30am

“Shouting and Silence”

Luke 19:29-40

Triumphal Entry: Beginning of Holy Week

Maundy Thursday

April 17 at 7:00pm with communion

Luke 22:1-27 The Last Supper

Good Friday

April 18 at 7:00pm

Luke 23:32-47

Early Morning Easter Service

April 20 at 8:30am

Outdoor service, weather pending
with participation by our Confirmation Class.

Easter Sunday Breakfast

Join us for a lovely Easter breakfast between the 8:30am and 10:30am
Easter services made by the Food Guys!

Easter Sunday

April 20 at 10:30am

Luke 24:1-12

“Grief and Hope”



SHROVE TUESDAY



PANCAKE SUPPER!!



What a great pancake supper we had at Westminster this year on March 4th. We guesstimate that 130 people came to enjoy the food and fellowship.



Many thanks to our team of dedicated volunteers. We had a set-up crew, servers, shoppers, flippers, buses, decorators and a clean-up crew.

The children were kept busy, not only with eating the yummy pancakes smothered in butter and syrup, but also with doing various creative activities, leaving the adults to eat and chat. (Thanks, Crystal!)



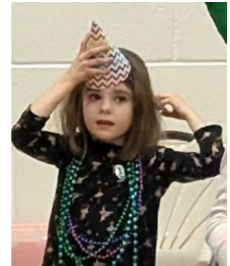


PANCAKE SUPPER!!

Thanks again to all who helped to make the evening such a smashing success, and of course, to all who came out to enjoy it!



We were filled with gratitude by the generosity of our diners, having collected a little more than \$800 at this gathering! These good-will donations will help fund future events.



Here's to Pancakes Forever!



C.A.R.E. (*Christians Acting with Respect for the Earth*)

Thinking of growing a vegetable garden this summer? Why not plant a little extra to donate to Westminster's Food Pantry? Inspired by the "Plant a Row, Grow a Row, Share a Row" movement, Westminster's *Climate Disruption Mitigation Committee* is inviting our congregation to plant, grow, and share produce from our gardens. Gardening can be a great way to capture carbon, help address food insecurity, and reduce the need to purchase food that has travelled thousands of kilometres generating excessive amounts of GHGs.



What better way to help people in need and help fight climate change!





As we move into the promise of Spring, let's look back at a few activities in *The Pantry* during the colder months of 2025.

The Scouts toured *The Pantry* on January 20th and brought their questions with them. It was a great evening and provided the troop with an insight into this type of community outreach. They generously donated items for the birthday cake kits that are so appreciated by our clients – children and adults alike.



Our Fall 2024 community food drive continues to bless *The Pantry*. A neighbourhood resident received one of our flyers and has been donating food ever since then. On February 3rd, this generous neighbour donated his \$200 cheque from the Provincial government to *The Pantry*.

These are just two examples of ongoing support of *The Pantry* to enable us to support our clients.

There have been two recent tours of *The Pantry*: Rev. Michelle's Confirmation Class toured in March with a focus on inclusion, outreach and our church connection, and the support of the congregation. The Embers group toured on March 23rd. The group leader has arranged for a number of tours for the girls aged 7 and 8 years. On *The Pantry* tour, they experienced filling out the form to choose the items they would like, seeing how the food is stocked in *The Pantry*, and learning how the request is filled out for a client. The Embers also generously donated items for *The Pantry*.



Many thanks go out to Shirley Penny (*foreground*) on her “retirement” as Coordinator of the Cooking Class. Shirley has generously given her time over the years working with our *Pantry* clients. The wooden spoon has been passed on to Susan Pleasance (*background*) as the new Coordinator. More on our new Cooking Class volunteers in next month's newsletter.

Along with providing assistance to the clients of *The Pantry*, volunteering there provides opportunities to get to know other volunteers, learn new approaches to situations, and appreciate more fully that we will all need help sometime.

Thank you! Merci! Miigwetch!

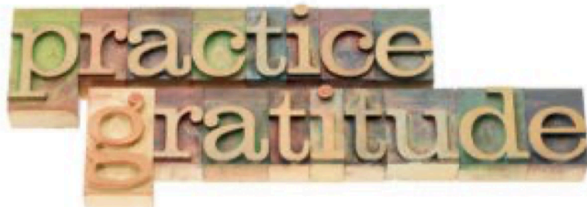


**We are
fragrance free**

**LET'S KEEP EVERYONE
BREATHING WELL!**

**FOR THE HEALTH, SAFETY
AND WELL-BEING OF ALL ,
PLEASE REFRAIN FROM USING
SCENTED PRODUCTS WHILE AT
WESTMINSTER!**

THANK YOU!



**practice
gratitude**



Diversity is a fact.
Equity is a choice.
Inclusion is an
action.
Belonging is an
outcome.

- Arthur Chan -

HOLY HUMOUR

HYMNS for ALL:

The Dentist's Hymn:
Crown Him with Many Crowns

The Climatologist's Hymn:
There Shall be Showers of Blessings

The Contractor's Hymn:
The Church's One Foundation

The Tailor's Hymn:
Holy, Holy, Holy

The Golfer's Hymn:
There's a Green Hill Far Away

The Politician's Hymn:
Standing on the Promises

The Optometrist's Hymn:
Open My Eyes that I May See

The Gossip's Hymn:
Pass It All

The Electrician's Hymn:
Send the Light

The Shopper's Hymn:
Sweet By and By

The Realtor's Hymn:
I've Got a Mansion, Just Over the Hilltop

The Doctor's Hymn:
The Great Physician



SUSTAINABLE GARDENING

There are many physical and mental benefits to gardening, but did you know that sustainable gardening practices can also help mitigate climate change? Here are five easy eco friendly ways to have a more sustainable garden.

1. Don't clean up your garden too soon. As soon as the nice weather comes, it may be tempting to get outside, clean out your garden, and prepare for a new season. However, many pollinators, such as bees and butterflies, overwinter in hollow stems of dead plants and underneath fallen leaves. Early cleanup can kill these pollinators. Instead, wait until the temperature is consistently above 10°C to give these pollinators a chance to emerge in the spring. Also, for your lawn, consider participating in “No Mow May” to give early pollinators a source of food and shelter.

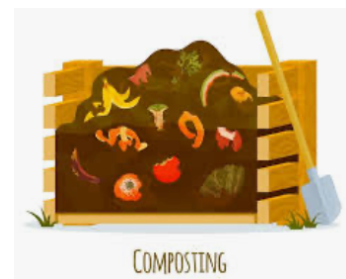


2. Use water wisely. Water conservation is a large part of sustainable gardening and there are many ways to reduce your water usage. Perhaps the most obvious way is to set up a rain barrel to collect rainwater that can be used on your plants. There are other ways to reduce water usage, such as mulching.



Applying a layer of mulch around your plants help to retain soil moisture so that you don't have to water as often. Added benefits of mulching include that it helps to sequester carbon in the soil and reduces the need to water your garden (and reducing your use of tap water means less carbon emissions!). Finally, water your plants early in the morning or late in the evening in order to reduce evaporation.

3. Make your own compost pile. Composting is sustainable because it reduces kitchen waste and can enrich soil so that you have healthy plant growth without the need for chemical fertilizers which are a significant source of GHG emissions. This may require some additional research, but you can start a compost pile with items, such as fruit peels, vegetable scraps, coffee grounds, egg shells, grass clippings and dry leaves. Just avoid meat products that might attract unwanted animals.



Continued ...

4. **Plant native plants.** If you are adding plants to your garden, use native plants. There are many benefits to planting native plants. First of all, native plants are best suited to our climate and soil conditions and require less watering and care. Perhaps the biggest benefit of native plants is that they are a good source of food for pollinators.

Some common native plants include:

Black Eyed Susan,

Purple Coneflower and

Wild Bergamot (Bee Balm).



5. **Start a vegetable/herb garden.** If you grow your own food you can save a lot of money and benefit from eating healthier produce. Did you know that growing your own food also helps mitigate climate change? It reduces packaging waste and decreases your carbon footprint because many purchased foods have travelled thousands of kilometres generating excessive amounts of GHGs.



There are gardening practices that can be used to mitigate climate change such as “*No Dig Gardening*” that requires no tilling. That’s right, do not turn over the soil. One of the best ways to sequester carbon in your garden is to not disturb the soil. If you turn over the soil, all the soil life (helpful bacteria, fungi, decomposed plants and moisture) are exposed to UV rays and erosion, which destroys your soil health. Instead, layers of mulch can be incorporated on top of your existing garden each new season.

Gardening is a hobby and passion for many people. *By following these five sustainable gardening practices you can contribute to mitigating climate change and ensuring a healthier world.* If you would like to know more about any of these practices, please talk to one of the members of the CDMC committee at Westminster. You may also enjoy reading the following articles:

<https://www.nwf.org/Our-Work/Climate/Climate-Change/Greenhouse-Gases/Gardening-for-Climate-Change>

https://www.gardeners.com/how-to/combat-climate-change/9584.html?srltid=AfmBOovrbXLO4rhulxL8_vAFWuxmCZpBk3TP4SndrUHth0YCqoSsC-Q

https://www.greenbelt.ca/gardening_in_a_changing_climate



HOLY HUMOUR

HYMNS for Those Who Speed on the Roadways:

45 mph/72 km h	God Will Take Care of You
55 mph/88 km h	Guide Me O Thou Great Jehovah
65 mph/104 km h	Nearer My God to Thee
75 mph/120 km h	Nearer Still Nearer
85 mph/136 km h	This World is not My Home
95 mph/152 km h	Lord, I'm Coming Home
Over 100 mph/160 km h	Precious Memories

Thanks to Helen B for this holy humour!

DID YOU KNOW ...

That Westminster United Church was recently featured in *Broadview*? In the March edition, there is an article about our community of faith. Written by our former minister, Reverend Christopher White, it is a tribute to our welcoming and inclusive environment. Please have a look ...

<https://broadview.org/westminster-united-whitby/>



Are you up for an Earth Month Challenge?

For Earth Month, the Climate Disruption Mitigation Committee has created an Earth Month Bingo Challenge for congregants. Each square in the card offers a simple climate-friendly challenge for you to achieve. Take a photo of you and your family members doing one or more of the activities and send them to wuc@westminster-uc.ca for the newsletter.

The Challenge Bingo cards will be available in the Narthex for the month of April or print off the Bingo Card that is below.

SEE WHAT ACTIVITIES YOU CAN DO TO HELP THE PLANET!!

See what activities you can do to help the planet we live on and mitigate the effects of climate change. Don't just cross off things you already do, though! Please email photos of the actions you take to the office at wuc@westminster-uc.ca for the newsletter.



EARTH MONTH

Challenge

B I N G O

 Talk about climate change	 Donate your old clothes or toys	 Use a reusable water bottle	 Shop at a local farmer's market	 Buy used books or borrow from the library
 Turn off the lights when you leave a room	 Compost food waste	 Take shorter showers	 Have a meatless meal	 Buy second hand items
 Ride your bike	 Recycle plastics, cans, glass & paper	EMAIL PHOTOS to the church. 	 Wash In Cold Water	 Grow something green
 Use a reusable straw	 Use green cleaning products	 Read about climate change	 Reduce your energy consumption	 Turn off the water while brushing your teeth
 Use a GO train or a bus	 Avoid single-use plastics	 Visit a local natural area	 Go for a walk	 Talk about Earth Day at home

Find out how to save on energy costs by using this link:
<https://durhamgreenerhomes.ca/retrofits/diy/>

In order to help the congregation better understand the work and the workings of the church, each month the Newsletter will be featuring one of the committees which make up the Church Council.

This month, the focus is on the Communication Committee.

C O M M I T T E E

O The **Communication Committee** meets once a month. Our motto is “*Communication Builds Community*” and our goal is to facilitate, promote and improve communication at Westminster United Church.

R We are responsible for the monthly newsletter – ***The Westminster World***, for maintaining the bulletin boards in the hallway and the kiosk in the Narthex, and for overseeing messages posted to the electronic sign.

N We were responsible for the new photo directory, which was published last year. It enables people in our growing community of faith to make connections – it’s nice to know the names of the faces we see in church.

E Two of our current projects are: helping to update the church’s website and improving and enhancing the front entryway – making it more welcoming, the sight lines more safe, and ensuring the effectiveness of the signage.

R We welcome all suggestions that will help us fulfill our goals. As well, we would certainly warmly welcome anyone to our tiny team.

Mary-Lynn F., Lori R. and Bev C.

GaMeS NiGhT



Board Games and Ice Cream Sundaes

We have a whole bunch of board games just waiting to be played! This fun night wouldn't be complete without some fun food to go with it ... so, join us on **April 24th at 7pm** and make your own Ice Cream Creation.

Pray, Praise, Ponder

A Prayer for the Future

God of renewal and new life,

Like the first snowdrops of spring,
Help us to be harbingers of a new beginning
Filled with light and warmth and love.

Like the yellow daffodils,
Help us bring joy to all that see us
As we do your work in the world.

Like the many-coloured tulips,
Help us meet different needs for different people
Doing what we can to bring hope and peace.

God of renewal and life,
May your spring come soon,
And may we help usher it on.

Amen

(UCC/M&S)



Our exciting Easter EGGstravaganza will take place at Westminster this year for our children 12 years and under on Saturday April 19 from 10:00am – 12:00pm!

We will have an Easter egg hunt, crafts and snacks! **Registration Required**

We're looking forward to an EGGcellent EGGstravaganza!

Interested in volunteering? Please contact the office.



Giant Indoor Yard Sale

April 26 - 8:00am - 12:00pm

Westminster United Church Women (UCW) Fundraiser

We are looking for good clothing items, gently used and usable items that can be resold including books, games, puzzles, good kitchen items, tools in good repair – things that others will find useful and may want to purchase.

Note: Please do not donate items such as knives, child car seats, out of date sports safety equipment (i.e. hockey helmets), or plush toys.

Donation drop off times are **Friday April 25** from
2:00pm - 5:00pm and **6:00pm - 8:00pm**

♥ ♥ ♥ Volunteer Opportunities ♥ ♥ ♥

-----> [Contact Ava Tomlinson](#) <-----

Friday April 25

- accept, sort and set up the items for the sale

Saturday April 26

- work at the sale
- pack and sort items not sold
- drivers needed for after the sale



We appreciate all volunteers! Chairs and refreshments will be provided. Come and work with Westminster. Thank you for all your support of this UCW fundraiser! We are looking forward to the **Giant Indoor Yard Sale** being a success.

About this publication ...

The Westminster World is our church's newsletter and is prepared by the Communication Committee.

Our newsletter has many functions: it details what we've been up to, notes upcoming events and celebrates special events and dates.

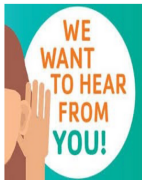
It informs our Community of Faith of all that is going on at Westminster - keeping us connected.

We have regular features, such as **C.A.R.E. (Christians Acting with Respect for the Earth)**, a column which provides hints on how we can be better Stewards of God's creation...



... and this month, we re-launched a column, "Committee Corner", which will provide you with information about the committees which make up our church council. Our hope is that you may be inspired to support the work of that team – with your suggestions, questions, time, talent...

The Westminster World is a wonderful way to share good news, such as special birthdays, anniversaries, and the arrival of newborns. We won't know about it unless you share it with us, so **SEND US YOUR NEWS!** (And include photos if you have them.)



Likewise, if you have an idea for an article or a feature you would like published, please send an email with your request to the Editor at: bcrumb@sympatico.ca by the **21st of each month.**



You're invited...

*...to join us for Worship,
In-person or Online*

*If you're new to Westminster,
we're so glad to meet you!*

*If Westminster is your church home,
we're so glad to see you again!*