

THE WITNESS

The quarterly newsletter of Westwood Christian Church



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At a Glance

This quarter we have so much to celebrate, and so much to look forward to! In this quarter's *The Witness*, you will find a reflection on Holy Week and Easter, an opportunity we have to support one of our own on a mission trip, and an article answering some questions about the work day and our renovation plans in the lobby. You'll also find a financial snapshot.

At the end of *The Witness* you can find some books I read, along with a calendar of the next few months, and pictures throughout of the last few months!

Holy Week

From Palm Sunday to Easter, things were very busy around Westwood. It was an exhausting week, but it was also awesome.

As we did last year, we added an element to our Palm Sunday worship where people were given palms to wave and shout with as the people we read about in Scripture, and we also had palms laid on the ground. It's neat to give people an opportunity to touch the story in ways they may not have done before. Also, I take those palm branches, dry them out over the next year, and we use them for Ash Wednesday. Following our Palm Sunday service, we had a number of people stick around to help us fill Easter Eggs with the candy you had donated to get ready for our Egg Hunt.

That Egg hunt was well attended. We had over 30 attend, and 21 children attend! Of that number, 12 children were not from our church, and a few of them were neighbors who have never been in our church before! Would you join me in praying that those families come to check us out on a Sunday? May we continue to find ways to spread the Gospel to our neighbors!

Our Holy Weekend services were awesome. Good Friday was well attended and I hope that for those who came it was a meaningful reflection on Jesus' death. Good Friday is always a helpful time to keep us from jumping too quickly to Easter, instead reflecting on the disorienting reality that the Messiah, the Son of God, actually died and this was not easy on his disciples or his family and it shouldn't be for us either.

And then of course was Easter Sunday. If you were unable to be with us, you missed an awesome service. It was a joyful celebration of Jesus' resurrection and it was the biggest service we've had since our Covid shutdown! It is so exciting that we are growing and people are experiencing life change here!



Church Work Day and Lobby Renovation

Thank you to everyone who came out to help with our church work day! I was so busy working that I forgot to take pictures of people serving! I am grateful for all the help decluttering our kids area, cleaning toys, straightening kitchen, cleaning gutters and removing trees, and of course, the help cleaning out the Library. I have received a number of questions about the future of the library space and what our plans are, so I wanted to tell you what we're going to do.

First, I know that I told you the books would be gone a few weeks ago. I wasn't intending to lie, but it's proved harder to get them taken away than I initially thought it would be. They *are* going away soon though. I culled the library before we cleaned it out for all the material that I thought was still valuable and we moved it to the church office, where it will stay. If you are looking for material to help you study the bible, answer a question, or just want to read, you're welcome to stop by and grab something. We moved some of the children's material downstairs as well, to make it easier for kids and families to access.

As for the library space, we have some exciting plans to expand our lobby. The plan is to take down the wall which separated the lobby from the library in order to turn the library into part of the lobby. In addition, we hope to install a kitchenette (sink, cabinets, perhaps even mini-refrigerator) so that coffee and communion can be prepared and disposed upstairs. This will allow us to have 1) a much roomier and more inviting space (it will be much brighter!) for people to hang around, chat, and get coffee and 2) will allow us to explore a more robust welcome space for guests, a new missions wall, and perhaps even a space that can better be used mid-week for meetings, co-working, etc.

While we are renovating that area, our plan is also to make some changes to the accessible bathroom. Since it was built, codes have changed and it no longer is as big as it needs to be. We hope to make it bigger, better allowing people with wheel chairs or the like to use the space, and hopefully fixing some issues we've had in there.

I know this is a big change, but we are eager for what this will do for our welcome space. If you have questions, please ask!



**GETTING EASTER EGGS READY AND
PRAYING FOR THE PEOPLE WHO
WOULD GET THEM**

Beyond Beauty for Survivors

Below is a letter from Karen Sippy about an opportunity she has this summer to go on a mission trip to Uganda. She presented at a Missions meeting earlier this year, and we wanted you to have the chance to support her mission if you feel so inclined!

I am so excited to share with you that this summer (June 29-July 9) I have the amazing opportunity to go to Uganda along with 5 other individuals. We will be going with Beyond Beauty for Survivors, a nonprofit dedicated to helping women and children effected by human trafficking in Uganda. Human trafficking in Uganda is among the highest in Africa, affecting thousands of women and children. Many children have been abandoned and orphaned. The orphanage we are visiting in Mpigi, Uganda is in much need of support, supplies, and necessities. One of which being a kitchen, which we plan to build for them, depending on funds raised. We will also be serving the community in other ways, such as evangelism, a shoe drive, education, and more. This is something that I feel very passionate about. I feel that God has called me to go and help those in need in Uganda and shine His light. I do ask for your prayers, for safety for our team, and that we would raise enough funds to provide help and support for this community in Uganda. If you are interested in learning more about this organization and trip, please check out the Beyond Beauty for Survivors website: beyondbeautyforsurvivors.org or reach out to me at 608-698-9850.

Thank you so much for all your support. It means so much to me!

Karen Sippy

If you would like to support Karen directly for the cost of her trip, please issue your **check payable to Karen Sippy** and send it directly to her at the address below. If more convenient, you may give the check to her parents, Ann and Tom.

Karen's address
2092 S 102nd St., #135
West Allis, WI, 53227

**PALM SUNDAY
INCLUDED LAYING
PALMS AT THE FOOT
OF THE ALTAR**



Financial Snapshot

Thank you for your faithful support of Westwood as we continue to look toward the future and what God has in front of us to do! If you would like to set up regular monthly giving, you can do so at westwoodchristian.com/give.

2024 is off to a great start financially and that is because of your support. Year to date, we are \$5,197 under budget for expenses. Further, our giving has been nearly exactly what we expected. That means that we have a positive cash flow for the year of \$3,259.

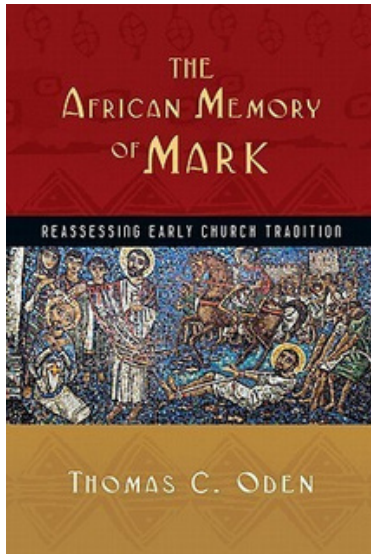
None of this includes the expected Family Minister salary that will be negotiated whenever we have that filled. However, our reserves are still healthy and prepared for that role. We have \$240,000 in CDs and ready access certificates as well as \$30,000 in our checking account. It is this money we will use to fund the position. Thank you for your investment in our future as a church.

Perhaps most importantly, our Easter Offering for this year was \$2,540. This money will be sent to Central Christian College of the Bible this month.



Book Ends

Below are some reviews of what I am reading. I would like to read more! Have something you think I'd like or get something from? I'm happy to hear it, even if I don't get to it soon.



The African Memory of Mark: Reassessing Early Church Tradition by Thomas C. Oden

Thomas Oden is well known in African Studies as well as Patristic (dealing with the Church Fathers and Mothers from 100-700 AD) and this book is a beautiful combination of those spheres. The premise of this book is that the identity of the author of the Gospel of Mark is well documented in the African Church to be John Mark (whom we read about in Acts) and the African Church has many aspects of his life that have been held as true since nearly his death in AD 68. Oden illustrates this with well documented texts from African Christianity. This book changed the way that I read Mark's Gospel and the way that

I understand John Mark as a person. The most incredible things I found were: John Mark and Peter were related through Peter's marriage (perhaps this is why Mark tells the story of the Mother in law). African tradition holds that the upper room where the Last Supper and Pentecost occur was John Mark's home. This means that while John Mark is not one of the 12, he likely is one of the 120 or at least was familiar with Jesus prior to Jesus' death.

Lead Your Family: 12 Ready-To-Use Steps for Spiritually Leading Your Family by Brian Jennings

I should have known that such a straightforward title wouldn't really deliver what I was looking for. I don't want to imply that the book was bad, but it wasn't very deep or helpful. If you are a parent with zero idea where to start with discipling your kids, I am sure this book would be helpful. But the book is lacking any substantive studies, research, or even ideas.

Don't get me wrong, Jennings' personal stories and practices are helpful starting places for any family, but, it didn't feel very timeless, ubiquitous, or helpful to me. A lot of it could be reduced to very simple "don't let your kids watch tv before lunch" kinds of advice. He does provide some provocative ideas as far as how to lead your family in studying and discussing scripture, but other than that, this book is a pass for me.



Next Quarter Calendar

Please note: some events may change

APRIL

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SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
31	1	2 Al Lynk Birthday	3	4	5 Ed Mooberry Birthday	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13 Men's Breakfast Mug 'n' Muffin
14 Paul Utley Birthday	15 Marilyn Greaser Birthday	16	17 Meg Schaeffer-Utter Birthday	18	19 Brianna Lee Birthday	20
21 Amy Calveti Birthday Potluck after Church	22 Seder Dinner For Passover	23	24	25	26	27 Rock River Work Day
28 Carolyn Cash Birthday	29	30	1	2	3	4

MAY

/ 2 0 2 4

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
28	29	30	1	2	3	4
5 Christian Odoi Birthday Potluck after Church	6 Fields Mooberry Birthday	7	8	9	10	11 Men's Breakfast Mug 'n' Muffin
12 Dennis Seman Birthday	13	14	15	16	17	18
19 Pentecost!	20 Evelyn Quarm Birthday	21	22	23	24	25 Ashley Crutcher and Paul Utley Anniversary
26	27	28	29	30	31	1

WOMEN'S RETREAT AT ROCK RIVER

JUNE

/ 2024

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
26	27	28	29	30	31	1
2 Potluck after Church	3	4	5	6 MMSD Last Day of School	7	8 Men's Breakfast Mug 'n' Muffin Christopher Odoi Birthday
9	10	11	12 Marilyn and Marion Greaser Anniversary	13 Jeremiah Lee Birthday	14 TEDDY BEAR CAMP (1ST - 2ND GRADE)	15 Merrlyn Schoville Birthday
16 Jeri Mooberry Birthday	17	18 Todd & Anna Marie Morra Anniversary	19	20 Arlyn Shields Birthday	21	22 Roy and Sue Ratcliff Anniversary
HIGH SCHOOL CAMP (EDGE) & 5TH-8TH GRADE EQUESTRIAN CAMP AT ROCK RIVER						
23	24	25 Kathi Seman Birthday	26 Christabel Odoi Birthday	27	28	29
JUNIOR HIGH CAMP (ELEVATE) AT ROCK RIVER						
30	1	2	3	4	5	6



**GRATUITOUS
BABY PICTURE**

Westwood
Christian Church

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Need Something? Let me know!

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