In just one week I will step into the pulpit for my final Sunday at West End. As I think about my time with all of you, one word comes to mind: blessed. I’ve been blessed to be a part of such a loving community. I’ve been blessed to have such caring friends. I’ve been blessed to see faith blossom in people’s lives. And I’ve been blessed to have my own faith strengthened. “Blessed” best summarizes my experience at West End.

Because of this, even though I am leaving, I will still feel a spiritual bond to all of you. I know that, in the words of the Apostle Paul, “I will thank my God every time I remember you, constantly praying with joy in every one of my prayers for all of you, because of your sharing in the gospel from the first day until now” (Philippians 1:3-5).

I leave having one wish for you: that you will continue to be blessed in all that you do. The words of blessing are used frequently in scripture, and they represent all that makes our lives possible and full. To be blessed means our lives are filled with those things that make life worth living. It doesn’t mean life is always easy or it won’t be filled with challenges, but to be blessed is to know our lives mean something.

As I consider what closing words to use, unsure of exactly what to say, I am reminded that Aaron struggled with the same thing, wondering how to offer a blessing to people as they made their way to the Promised Land. In that moment, God said to Moses, “Tell Aaron..., This is how you are to bless the People of Israel.” And so now I offer these same words of blessing to all of you:

God bless you and keep you,
God smile on you and gift you,

Blessings to you all, now and forever, Pastor Michael

April 2018

1 — No Adult Christian Ed
EASTER Worship, 11 a.m.
Wholeness Center, 1 p.m.
2 — Church Building Closed
for the Easter holiday.
3 — Church, 4 p.m.
A Taste of Heaven, 4:30 p.m.
AA, 6:30 & 7:30 p.m.
Yoga, 6:30 p.m.
4 — Men’s Group, 7 a.m.
AA, 7 & 8:15 p.m.
Taizé, 7 p.m.
5 — Kids Club, 5 p.m.
Youth Group, 6 p.m.
6 — Adult Christian Ed, 10 a.m.
Worship, 11 a.m.
Wholeness Center, 1 p.m.
Farewell Lunch, 12:30 p.m.
Crime Victim’s Vigil, 2 p.m.
7 — Church, 4 p.m.
A Taste of Heaven, 4:30 p.m.
AA, 6:30 & 7:30 p.m.
Yoga, 6:30 p.m.
8 — Kids Club, 5 p.m.
Youth Group, 6 p.m.
9 — Adult Christian Ed, 10 a.m.
Worship, 11 a.m.
Wholeness Center, 1 p.m.
10 — Church, 4 p.m.
A Taste of Heaven, 4:30 p.m.
AA, 6:30 & 7:30 p.m.
Yoga, 6:30 p.m.
11 — Taizé, 7 p.m.
AA, 7 & 8:15 p.m.
12 — Kids Club, 5 p.m.
Youth Group, 6 p.m
13 — Adult Christian Ed, 10 a.m.
Worship, 11 a.m. w/communion
Wholeness Center, 1 p.m.
14 — Church, 4 p.m.
A Taste of Heaven, 4:30 p.m.
AA, 6:30 & 7:30 p.m.
Yoga, 6:30 p.m.
15 — AA, 7 & 8:15 p.m.
Taizé, 7 p.m
Pub Theology, 8 p.m.
16 — Kids Club, 5 p.m.
Youth Group, 6 p.m
Book Club, 7 p.m.
17 — Church, 4 p.m.
A Taste of Heaven, 4:30 p.m.
AA, 6:30 & 7:30 p.m.
Yoga, 6:30 p.m.
18 — AA, 7 & 8:15 p.m.
Taizé, 7 p.m
19 — Kids Club, 5 p.m.
Youth Group, 6 p.m
20 — Adult Christian Ed, 10 a.m.
Worship, 11 a.m.
Faith Forum, 12:30 p.m.
Wholeness Center, 1 p.m.
21 — Church, 4 p.m.
A Taste of Heaven, 4:30 p.m.
AA, 6:30 & 7:30 p.m.
Yoga, 6:30 p.m.
22 — AA, 7 & 8:15 p.m.
Taizé, 7 p.m.
23 — Kids Club, 5 p.m.
Youth Group, 6 p.m
24 — Adult Christian Ed, 10 a.m.
Worship, 11 a.m.
Wholeness Center, 1 p.m.
Melody Concert, 3 p.m.
25 — AA, 7 & 8:15 p.m.
Taizé, 7 p.m.
26 — Kids Club, 5 p.m.
Youth Group, 6 p.m
27 — Adult Christian Ed, 10 a.m.
Worship, 11 a.m.
Wholeness Center, 1 p.m.
28 — Adult Christian Ed, 10 a.m.
Worship, 11 a.m.
Wholeness Center, 1 p.m.
29 — Adult Christian Ed, 10 a.m.
Worship, 11 a.m.
Wholeness Center, 1 p.m.
30 — Church, 4 p.m.
A Taste of Heaven, 4:30 p.m.
AA, 6:30 & 7:30 p.m.
Yoga, 6:30 p.m.
31 — AA, 7 & 8:15 p.m.
Taizé, 7 p.m.
Musical Notes by Cynthia Powell

Easter falls early - on April 1! We’ll have our traditional brass quartet, along with West End members Bill Hayes, percussion, and Bill Ellison, string bass, providing the exquisite music that celebrates the resurrection and welcomes the season of spring.

Debra Monk will be in the pulpit extolling the news of new life and hope in her signature version of Feeling Good with our amazing band!

April 8 is our senior pastor, Michael Bos’ last Sunday with us. We’ll offer a musical homage to him at the service and in the farewell celebration being planned after the service that day. We will miss you, Michael!

Then there’s an exciting concert event ahead: Melodia Women’s Choir returns on Sunday, April 29 at 3 p.m. with The Harmony of Morning, an all-American program of works by Elliott Carter, Sally Lamb McCune, Christina Whitten Thomas and Paul Halley. With an all-women chamber ensemble of winds and strings and the fresh voices of Melodia, I’m particularly excited about these works, especially Carter’s The Harmony of Morning. Commissioned in 1955 by our neighbor Temple Emanuel of NYC to commemorate it’s 100th anniversary, this is a work with an all-women ensemble of vibrant intensity and sparkling instrumental colors. This concert is FREE to all West End members with the special postcard you can pick up in the back of the church.

See you in church,
Cynthia Powell
Director of Music Ministries

For the Kids By Pastor Howard

Many people do not like roosters. Roosters are loud: “Cock-a-doodle-do” (try it yourself). Roosters wake people up when they decide to crow at night. Roosters like to fight. They also can be bullies, especially the chickens. But roosters also have an important job: as the sun comes up, they welcome each new day.

Jesus talked about roosters. He knew ahead of time that his friend, Peter, who was not very brave, would pretend that Jesus was not his friend. Peter was afraid that the people who hurt Jesus would also hurt him. And when that happened, Jesus said, a rooster would crow.

Just as Jesus said, when Jesus was taken away by enemies, Peter pretended Jesus was not his friend because he was scared of what other people would think. Have you ever pretended not to be friends with someone because you were scared of what other kids would think?

And just then, even though it was night, a rooster crowed. I wonder what the rooster said. Maybe he said, “How could you have done that, Peter?” When Peter heard the rooster crow, he felt so bad, even though he was a grown up, he cried.

But the story of our rooster has a happy ending. After Jesus died, three days later he came back to life. Even though it was very early in the morning, Mr. Rooster crowed. He was the very first one to welcome Jesus back. So roosters aren’t so bad after all!
Confident of God in Us by Pastor Jes Kast

Confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.

– Philippians 1:6

Dear Beloved West End Collegiate Church,

I join the Spirit of Scripture in thanking God for you and our ministry together. A new day is forming for us. Days that will require us to all support each other. In the meal Jesus had with his friends before he died he looked at his friends and said, “If I have taught you anything it is that you are to take care of each other and love each other.” The church exists to be a sanctuary where we can practice loving each other. It is the place where we practice forgiveness. It is the place where we are reminded the grace of God is ours in Jesus Christ. Church exists to reach out to others in need.

During the period of transition from one senior minister to the next I am honored to serve you as Interim Head of Staff. I am confident in God, who has begun a good work in us, will continue that work together with us. We are all needed during these next months and I am looking forward to the joy of loving and supporting each other.

Join us for Sunday worship, Adult Education, Pub Theology, help serve at A Taste of Heaven, listen to the stories of faith at our Faith Forums, volunteer with our growing children and youth program, and come hear the words “the grace of God is yours.” This is a time of new life for us and you are needed! I look forward to our ministry together!

In Christ – Pastor Jes Kast

PUB THEOLOGY at The Dublin House 225 West 79th Street, backroom

April 11 - Pub Theology 8 p.m. Did Jesus really have to die on a cross? This month we will focus on the cross. For some it is the vehicle in which all our sins were put to death and for others it was a warning not to upset the system. We'll look at themes of atonement this month and what the cross means to us today as we prepare for Holy Week. Free pizza is provided and the drinks are on you.

We Are the Village by Rebecca Stevens-Walter

Maybe you’ve heard the colloquial saying “it takes a village to raise a child.” Never before have I appreciated this phrase until I had my own child. I knew very early on that if it were left up to only me and my partner to provide a wholesome life for my child, we would most certainly fail. Indeed it is our community that has been such an integral part of “raising” our son and ensuring his life to be full of love. At WECC we have the opportunity to also be a village for children. To simply speak kindness to child is integral to development and growth. Moreover, it is good for adults to interact with children, for our own health and well-being.

At the back of the sanctuary, there are now two opportunities for adults to be part of the lives of children at WECC. One is to offer a prayer on the prayer board. The other is to sign up to be a Children’s Worship Hour assistant. If you are interested in being a Children’s Worship Hour assistant, please contact Rebecca for details or simply sign up on the corresponding clipboard.

It is beautiful to imagine that perhaps the kin-dom of God is simply a village where folks are inclined to care for each other, show interest in each other’s lives, or sit next to a child and say, “How was your day? Will you tell me story? What are your challenges? What brings you joy?” – RSW

The Pledge Gratitude Campaign 2018

We are in the midst of our pledge campaign, which is focusing on the theme of gratitude. It is a time when we pause to count our blessings and also to prayerfully consider how we can make our blessings count through our giving to West End. At the time of this printing we 69 people who have pledged $125,320. It is through your generosity that we are able to touch and transform lives through the ministry God has entrusted to us all. In doing this we experience the reality of Jesus’s words: “You’re far happier giving than getting” (Acts 20:35, The Message). Therefore we ask that you prayerfully consider your commitment to West End in the coming year. You can fill out a pledge form, located in the back of the sanctuary, and place it in the pledge box. Or you can mail in your form or pledge online at westendchurch.org.
CONSISTORY CORNER

As we celebrate the new life that Easter brings, we will also begin exploring a new chapter for West End during the month of April. On April 8th we will wish a grateful farewell to Pastor Michael for his leadership and spiritual guidance these past eight years. Please join us for this special service, along with a luncheon to follow, to honor his time at West End and to wish him and Tena well on the next leg of their journey.

I am sure many of you are wondering what West End will look like on April 9th, and I am comforted to share that we will be well taken care of during our continued search for a new Senior Minister by Pastor Jes and Pastor Howard. Consistory is pleased to announce we have named Pastor Jes as West End’s Interim Head of Staff for the remainder of the transition period. Further, we have asked Pastor Howard to increase his presence at West End and provide as-needed support to Pastor Jes and the programming she leads given the increased administrative load she will bear. In addition, both Pastor Jes and Pastor Howard are dedicated to taking on more Sunday morning preaching, with periodic assistance from guest preachers, to ensure a continuation of our vibrant worship experience. We are grateful to both for their unwavering commitment to lead and serve the West End community.

We are also grateful for the active and inspired work the search committee has undertaken, with the assistance of Kevin Chase Executive Search, these past few months. Nearly fifty applicants have been screened to date and a dozen preliminary interviews have been conducted as part of this outreach and candidate development phase of the search process. In the coming weeks we will continue this work in order to remain on target to begin the in-depth candidate evaluation phase of the search by early May.

We ask that you continue to hold the search committee in your prayers so that their hearts and minds are open to the movement of God among us as they continue the important work of discerning the next Senior Minister for West End.

With Gratitude for our Community,

Andrea Steinkamp, on behalf of the Deacons and Elders of West End Collegiate Church
Another Way to Give to West End

We are pleased to announce that you can now make donations to West End via your mobile phone. It’s very simple to do. Just text “Give” to 917-259-3001 and then follow the instructions for the one time registration process. After you’ve registered your account and card, you can then make donations at anytime by texting the amount, with the dollar sign, and what it’s for. For example, you can text “$100 offering” or “$50 talent show.” You will receive immediate verification and a receipt will be emailed to you. That’s all there is to it! Thank you for your continued support of our ministries.

SERMONS

April 1 — Rise
April 8 — Blessed
April 15 — God’s Just Beginning with You
April 22 — Waiting for God to Speak Again
April 29 — God and Stuff

On April 20 at 7 p.m.
THE BOOK CLUB
will discuss
*Magpie Murders* by Anthony Horowitz.

April 4 at 7 a.m.
The speaker will be
the Rev. Michael Bos.
“Leaning into What Matters Most”

Men’s Group will meet to deepen
our faith and friendships while
we journey through life together.

Our May book is
*Eva Moves the Furniture* by Margo Livesey
Victims First
Expand the Circle

33rd Annual
New York Crime Victims
Candlelight Vigil
Sunday, April 8, 2018
2:00—4:00 PM
West End Collegiate Church
245 West 77th Street
at West End Avenue
New York City

Photos of loved ones may be displayed at the ceremony
Counselors and child care available on premises
Ramp access to sanctuary
Sign language interpreter
Simultaneous Spanish and Mandarin translation
Fellowship following ceremony

SPONSORED BY
The Office of the New York State Attorney General
The Downstate Coalition for Crime Victims
The New York County District Attorney’s Office

To add names to the book there are 3 options:
call: 212-416-6044 • Deadline: March 15, 2018
e-mail: bookofremembrance@ag.ny.gov
website: https://ag.ny.gov/bookofremembrance
For further information: (212) 335-9040
Charting the Course: Becoming Partners in Faith

Tuesday, April 17, 2018 at 6:00pm
the Marble Loft (274 Fifth Ave)

Cost: $20 *(dinner and program)*
Please RSVP by Sunday, April 15 by signing up at MarbleChurch.org
or contact Don Piper, DPiper@MarbleChurch.org

The Harmony of Morning
A concert by Melodia Women’s Choir

Saturday, April 28, 2018 at 7:30 pm
Holy Apostles, Chelsea

Sunday, April 29, 2018 at 3 pm
West End Collegiate, Upper West Side