We welcomed Pastor Will to WECC in grand style!
Mark your calendars for his Installation as Senior Minister here at West End on Sunday, October 28 at 4 p.m.

October 2018

2 — Church, 4 p.m.
   A Taste of Heaven, 4:30 p.m.
   AA, 6:30 & 7:30 p.m.
3 — Taizé, 7 p.m.
   AA, 7 & 8:15 p.m.
7 — Adult Christian Ed., 10 a.m.
   Worship w/Communion 11 a.m.
   Congregational Lunch, 12:15 p.m.
   Wholeness Center, 1 p.m.
8 — Building and Office Closed
   in observance of Indigenous People’s Day
9 — Church, 4 p.m.
   A Taste of Heaven, 4:30 p.m.
   AA, 6:30 & 7:30 p.m.
10 — Taizé, 7 p.m.
   AA, 7 & 8:15 p.m.
12 — Kids Space, 5 p.m.
   Youth Group, 7 p.m.
14 — Adult Christian Ed., 10 a.m.
   Worship, 11 a.m.
   Wholeness Center, 1 p.m.
16 — Church, 4 p.m.
   A Taste of Heaven, 4:30 p.m.
   AA, 6:30 & 7:30 p.m.
17 — Taizé, 7 p.m.
   AA, 7 & 8:15 p.m.
   Pub Theology, 8 p.m.
19 — Kids Space, 5 p.m.
   Youth Group, 7 p.m.
   Book Club, 7 p.m.
21 — Adult Christian Ed., 10 a.m.
   Worship, 11 a.m.
   BLESSING OF THE ANIMALS Wholeness Center, 1 p.m.
23 — Church, 4 p.m.
   A Taste of Heaven, 4:30 p.m.
   AA, 6:30 & 7:30 p.m.
24 — Taizé, 7 p.m.
   AA, 7 & 8:15 p.m.
26 — Kids Space, 5 p.m.
   Youth Group, 7 p.m.
28 — Adult Christian Ed., 10 a.m.
   Worship, 11 a.m.
   Wholeness Center, 1 p.m.
   Rev. Critzman’s Installation, 4 p.m.
30 — Church, 4 p.m.
   A Taste of Heaven, 4:30 p.m.
   AA, 6:30 & 7:30 p.m.
31 — Taizé, 7 p.m.
   AA, 7 & 8:15 p.m.

SERMONS

October 7 — The Tales We Tell
October 14 — Hide and Seek
October 21 — The Blessing of the Animals
October 28 — Reformed and Always Reforming

All creatures Great and Small will be welcomed. Please bring your pet in a carrier or on a leash.

Sunday, October 21 @ 11 a.m.


Brush-Up Your Bible Knowledge *by Reverend Jes Kast*

Have you ever read a Bible passage and thought…

…how do I pronounce this person’s name?
…why did Jesus say that?
…Wow! That is a confusing passage.
…that story really inspires me!
…why did God allow that to happen?

If you have ever thought these things, or had questions after you read a Bible passage, you aren’t alone. The Sacred Scripture is full of stories that inspire us, challenge us, and often confront us. There are some cherished passages that we memorize like Philippians 4:13 “I can do all things through Christ who gives me strength.” These are the passages we understand and they move our heart upon the initial reading. Then there are other passages and stories that cause us pause and we wonder, how did that get in here? Does it really say what I think it says?

The process of being a Christian is a lifelong position open to growing in faith. Faith is indeed a gift from God and part of our job with that gift is to tend to it like a garden so that it will grow.

One way to grow in your faith is through the study of the Bible. How did these stories become sacred and what do they meant to us today?

Each Sunday at 10 a.m. in room 6, we have a Bible Study on the passage which we will focus on in worship at 11. This class is a deep dive into the passage. Think of it like a good warm-up and stretch before working out. Not only is this time a good opportunity to grow in your faith, but it’s a perfect chance to get to know a small group of people who you can journey with, pray with and support.

Spiritual growth often happens in community. So please join us Sunday mornings for faith, fellowship and, of course, fun!

Grace and Peace – Pastor Jes

In Your Corner *by Pastor Howard*

This month when I climb into the ring for my ‘bucket list’ fight, I will be counting on my corner man, Jude, to be there for me.

Usually the corner man or woman goes unnoticed. Most of the time, he or she is out of sight. You see him briefly at a fight’s beginning and ending. You see him between rounds. He is the one who preps the boxer before the fight; who launches him or her into the ring with encouragement, a pat on the back, or an affectionate tug on the ear.

He is the one between rounds who, in a flash, appears in the ring to minister to his fighter. He is the one who gives the sip of water, wipes the boxer’s face, tends to his cuts, and massages his shoulders. He the one, who reminds the fighter to breathe and whispers in his ear encouragement and advice. All this takes place in only a minute.

Usually the corner man is also the trainer and intimately knows his fighter’s strengths and weakness. The corner man is one with the outside view of the fight, enabling him to see potential strategies the boxer, in the thick of it, cannot see.

And at the end, it is the corner man who hugs his fighter in victory and comforts him in defeat.

Who is your corner man or woman in life’s fight? Who is your helper and encourager? Who saves your wounds and often knows you better than you know yourself? Who rejoices with you in your life’s victories and stands by you in your life’s defeats and losses? Is it your parents? Maybe a grandparent or sibling? Perhaps partner or spouse, best friend, or mentor?

Someone who is always in our corner is God. Repeatedly in the Bible, God promises, “I will be with you.” and “I AM with you!” At our beginnings and our endings; in our joys and our tears; in our victories and in our losses; in our strengths and in our weaknesses, God is in our corner God is there for you and for me.

Thank God for all our lives’ corner people.
Thank God for Jude, who will be in my corner on October 25! — Pastor Howard

Follow us on

Want to keep up with what’s happening with your WECC family?
Go to Facebook: WestEndChurchNYC
and Twitter: @WestEndChurchNY
It’s a great way to stay connected to our community.
It’s wonderful to have the choir back. Our grateful thanks to our choir for inspiring choral music at West End!

Taizé services resume on the first Wednesday of each month at 7 PM, starting Wednesday, October 3, then every Wednesday until the end of May. With some of NYC’s finest musicians to assist, these services are a high point of the week for many folks. Our players for the first Wednesday are Kobi Malkin, violin, and Hassan Anderson, oboe.

Melodia Women’s Choir returns on Sunday, November 18 at 3 p.m. to perform a newly-commissioned work by award-winning U.K. composer Cevanne Horrocks-Hopayian. Accompanied by string quartet, this unusual work derives inspiration from the Native American writer Zitkála-Šá. Her books were among the first to bring traditional Native American stories to a widespread white readership, and she has been noted as one of the most influential Native American activists of the twentieth century. Zitkála-Šá wrote the libretto and songs for The Sun Dance Opera, (1913), the first American Indian opera, for which she never received credit (!) She was a co-founder of the National Council of American Indians in 1926 to lobby for for civil rights and the right to United States citizenship. Don’t miss the opportunity to hear this ground-breaking work free of charge with the special postcard we’ll provide to West End members and friends.

The Choir and I are thrilled that Pastor Will is with us at West End, and we look forward to many Sundays of exhilarating worship!

See you in church,
Cynthia Powell
Organist/Choirmaster & Director of Music Ministry

What Do You Know About the Bible? by Rebecca Stevens-Walter

What do you know about the Bible?

This is the question I asked the children during Children’s Worship Hour on September 23rd. Here are some examples of their responses:

- The Bible has an Old Testament and a New Testament.
- The Bible tells stories about Jesus.
- The Old Testament has Samson and Delilah.
- There are four Gospels.
- The last word of the Bible is “Amen.”

The children were so engaged in talking about the Bible that we agreed we would talk about the Bible a little bit each week. I told them that we wouldn’t just learn Bible stories, but we would learn why the Bible is so important to our Christian faith. We also agreed we would learn how we can use the Bible to understand God and ourselves more deeply.

In my experience, prescribed children’s Bible curricula often fall short of engaging children at the full dynamism to which they are capable. For example, lessons on Noah and the Flood from Genesis, which is a very rich Christian story, will typically tell of the noble Noah who is chosen to build an ark and load the animals “two by two.” Then it rained for 40 days and 40 nights. Then a dove brought an olive branch. Then God put a rainbow in the sky. The End. This is not the whole story, though. The story of Noah and the Flood is a foundational example of the complexity that is the relationship between God and humanity. After all, even though the animals and Noah’s family survived the flood, the rest of the human population did not. What does this Biblical tragedy mean for our current experiences with tragedy? Why would God do something so awful? The more I talk to children and learn from younger generations, the more I understand that children are eager to address the tough and challenging questions of religion and faith.

This year will be an exciting time for the children at WECC to dig deep into the Bible. The children at WECC will be asking questions and will answer some questions as well. Just as they demonstrated in September, they already know so much. Now is the time to strengthen that knowledge and celebrate our educational faith community as one of learning, curiosity, and exploration.

Rebecca
On October 19 at 7 p.m.
THE BOOK CLUB
will discuss

Exit West by Mohsin Hamid.

The November book is
Woman in the Window by A. J. Finn

Dear West End Community,

September ushered in a host of changes for West End, most importantly the welcoming of our new Senior Minister, Pastor Will. While the addition of Pastor Will falls into the category of exciting change, some of the other changes, such as the scaling back of Sunday lunches, are certainly more difficult to view in a positive or hopeful light. We understand that some of you are hurting and confused as to how a church with such a long history and the blessing of an endowment can be facing difficult financial choices.

As I hope the congregation can recognize, Consistory spent a great deal of time with this year’s budget looking to identify opportunities to balance our budget, while also maintaining the things that West End values so much (quality of worship, musical excellence, care for the homeless, strong youth programming, and community building and fellowship opportunities). No decision was made with ease or without care for our church community as a whole. The reality of our financial situation, and that of the larger Collegiate Church organization, is that we have much work to do to get back to a position of long-term sustainability.

I share this here, because I believe we are at a critical juncture for West End. We are a congregation with a history of not talking about money, and we have been blessed by the generosity of those who came before us to not have to talk about money. Yet it’s time we start talking about money and West End’s financial health so we can ensure it remains a vibrant faith community for generations to come. To that end, we will be hosting a State of the Church forum on Sunday, November 4th immediately following service.

As part of our work toward increased financial transparency, I also want to address questions surrounding the sale of the Collegiate School property and what that means for West End. I will provide a more detailed update at the State of the Church forum; however, in the interim, I wanted to clarify for our community that West End was not a direct beneficiary of the transaction. The Collegiate School property was an investment asset purchased and held by the endowment of the Collegiate Church Corporation, and all net proceeds from the sale (after debt-repayment on the property) went to the corporate endowment. We can get into the specifics of what that means for West End Collegiate Church on November 4th.

We are indeed in a new season for West End and, while there will certainly be bumps along the road, the opportunities I see in the resources and talent and spirit of community we share will far surpass the things that may trip us up along the way!

Together in Christ,
Andrea Steinkamp on behalf of the Deacons and Elders of West End Collegiate Church