



THE WIND OF THE SPIRIT AT WEST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

# WEST WINDS

Peabody, Massachusetts

January 2018

## **NEW YEAR POSSIBILITIES**

I have been with you for just a short while and have observed the great spiritual qualities of your church.

Your commitment to God's word, your deep love for the gospel and foreign mission is exceptional. Your love for one another and service to West Church is commendable. You are a very committed group with great potential. We pray very soon that God will be leading our search team in the selection and calling of our new pastor. Transitions are exciting times as well as a stressful times for churches.

Transitions also provide time for us as Gods' people to think differently about the future. I am reminding our leadership that we at West need to celebrate our rich history and fully engage to envision a new dynamic future.

Transitions are also a great times for reflection. At our last combined Deacons and Trustees meeting I was able to engage our leaders in reflecting upon our strongest areas of church life as well as our biggest challenge. We used a simple exercise to read an article and then to reflect upon it to identify our strongest area of ministry and the area that we needed to grow the most.

Please find the article I shared with the team for their reflection and feedback. I utilized this article because it was solidly based on scripture. Our leaders celebrated our strong foundation on scripture as our strongest core value and identified as our greatest need for growth to be like the early church more involved in our local community as the area that needed most development.

Greg Stier writes, *"I love the church. She is Christ's bride and the key to cultural transformation. In that sense, every church is great. But let's be honest, there are a ton of churches that leave much to desired when it comes to truly making a difference in their congregations and communities. So when you plug into a church that is getting it done, it's a true blessing.*

*Of course, there are no perfect churches, but there are many that are pressing toward the high water mark we see in Scripture. Here are 10 signs you may be going to a great local church.*

*These are 10 signs you may be going to a great church. What are some other signs?"*

1. **It is lead by a team of godly leaders**, not a Lone Ranger pastor who gathers Tonto-type leaders around him to say “*Yes, Kemo Sabe*” to his each and every idea (Titus 1:5-9).
2. **The Gospel is central** to every sermon, program and meeting (1 Corinthians 15:3,4), and the advancement of it both locally and globally drive strategic initiatives (Acts 1:8).
3. **People are using their spiritual gifts**, not just watching the “*stage team*” exercise theirs (1 Corinthians 12:12-31), resulting in disciples being made and multiplied (2 Timothy 2:2).
4. **It, like the early church, is integrated**, fully representing the demographic of the community in which it resides (Ephesians 2:11-21).
5. **Love, demonstrating itself in friendliness, generosity, internal/external care programs** and community involvement dominates the atmosphere (1 Corinthians 13:1-8).
6. **Most likely there is a thriving small group program** where members truly can have great biblical conversations, share struggles and pray with/for each other (James 5:16).
7. **The people are being inspired and equipped to share their faith relationally**, resulting in more and more new believers being added to the church (Acts 2:47).
8. **The teaching/preaching is biblical, theological and immensely practical** (2 Timothy 3:16-17; 4:1-4).
9. **Ministry to children and teenagers are top priorities, not afterthoughts** (Titus 2:1-8; Deuteronomy 6:4-9).
10. **Intercessory prayer fuels everything. It’s the engine, not the caboose**, of how the church rolls from top to bottom (1 Timothy 2:1-8).

At the December meeting of the Boards the members formed groups of three to discuss the marks and select which mark in their opinion was West Church’s strongest and weakest. Below are the results of what the groups selected. Do their answers match your selections?

**STRONGEST:** #8 - The teaching/preaching is biblical, theological and immensely practical.

**WEAKEST:** #4 - It, like the early church, is integrated, fully representing the demographic of the community in which it resides.

What do you think are our strengths and our greatest challenge for spiritual growth? I would love to hear from you.

Growing In Christ,

Pastor Gene

## **TRIBUTES TO AN AMERICAN THEOLOGIAN: RC SPROUL**

On December 14, 2017 the Church lost a great man who influenced greatly the minds and hearts of both pastors and parishioners alike. RC Sproul, the founder of Ligonier Ministries, helped defend and articulate the great doctrines of the Reformation. I would encourage all of you to listen to his memorial service (<https://rcsproul.com/memorial-service/>) and hear personally the tributes of so many whose lives were shaped by the ministry of this man. Simply Google 'Tributes to RC Sproul' and you will see.

For me personally two books that shaped my understanding of God and my ministry were the Holiness of God and Chosen by God. The first book, Holiness of God, awakened me to the transcendent nature of the God who creates and saves. RC Sproul wonderfully contrasts God's pure, majestic, and undefiled nature in contrast to humanities' sinful, depraved, and impure nature. All believers need to see this contrast in its full power and light in order to understand the concept of godly fear, and appreciate the depths of God's mercy to us in Christ. The second book, Chosen by God, helped me grasp the difficult Biblical concepts of election, predestination, and foreknowledge, in God's plan of redemption. RC Sproul's ability to explain these Biblical truths in a manner that can be understood for the simple minded is amazing and a true gift to pastors and parishioners alike.

I encourage you to read either of these books for it will be edifying to your both your mind and your soul or to go the Ligonier's website and see massive amount of resources and works that Dr. Sproul contributed to the edification of the church over the years.

Kathy and I had the privilege of attending several of the annual Ligonier conferences in Orlando, Florida over the years and were so blessed by Dr. Sproul's teaching. Like so many we will miss his ministry deeply but know he is in Glory had has heard the sweet words of our Savior, '*Well done good and faithful servant*'.

I love you,  
Pastor Rick

## **CONGREGATIONAL TRAINING EVENT JANUARY 7**

On January 7 I have invited Dr. Dennis Reiter to preach in our morning service and hold a special training event on the subject of Church Polity. Polity refers to the governance structure of a church. There are three basic models of governance: Episcopal, Presbyterian and Congregational. There are also modified forms of each of the models. West Church has operated as a combination of several types of polity in the past.

The primary reason why Dr. Reiter is being invited to educate on this subject is twofold. First it is an area that has caused misunderstanding and conflict in the past and secondly, West Church has called me as your Intentional Interim Pastor to begin to examine the health and effectiveness of our structure as we select a new Senior Pastor. I regret that I will be preaching the dedication service of a new church plant from one of my previous pastorates in Wisconsin on January 7.

I am requesting that everyone that can attend please come out and learn about this important topic for our future. I am requesting that all Deacons, Trustees and Pulpit Committee team members attend as this subject is very important for our team work and unity. Please keep Dr. Reiter in your prayers and pray for me that I have a clear word for this new work of God in Wisconsin.

Growing In Christ,  
Pastor Gene

## **NEW ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASSES BEGIN JANUARY 7**

### ***Finding Hope and Strength in the Face of Suffering: Studies in 1 Peter***

Teacher: Pastor Rick McDonnell

Location: Lyons Hall

This general 'catholic' letter was sent around to small house churches. The apostle's objective is to encourage them how to stand firm and be hopeful when and if they are facing persecution and opposition because of their faith in Christ. Peter's strategy of helping suffering Christians is: first, to remind them of the many spiritual blessing that are theirs in Christ that are to be experienced now partially but fully when Christ returns; second, to remind believers to follow Jesus Christ's example of how He handled and endured suffering and learn from Him; and third, to teach believers to live 'honorably' before the unbelieving world while they are in the midst of their suffering.

### ***Spiritual Mothering, Being a Titus 2 Woman (Women's Class)***

Teachers: Women of West Church

Class Location: Upper Room

Course Description: This class will be using Susan Hunt's book, *Spiritual Mothering, the Titus 2 Model for Women Mentoring Women*. We will read and discuss the holy privilege and sacred responsibility we have as older women teaching, nurturing and encouraging younger women. This class is a continuation of the fall women's class.

## **HAVEN FROM HUNGER**

Due to the holiday following the first Monday in January we will not be serving a meal at Haven this month. Our next scheduled date for ministry will be Monday, February 5. If you would like to help provide dessert (brownies without nuts) for our February dinner, please leave your baked donation in the church kitchen on Sunday, February 4 or by noon, Monday, February 5.

## ***Congregational Training on Church Polity and Governance***

*Dr. Reverend Dennis L. Reiter*

Sunday, January 7, 2018

Following the Worship Service in the Upper Room

Presentation: 12:00 – 12:45 pm

Followed by an Optional Q&A Time

Child care available for children (nursery – grade 6)  
Please contact the office to sign up for child care.

*The reasons why Dr. Reiter is being invited is to educate on this subject of church polity are twofold. First it is an area that has caused misunderstanding and conflict in the past and secondly, West has called me as your Intentional Interim Pastor to examine the health and effectiveness of our structure before we select a new Senior Pastor.*

*~ Pastor Gene Heacock*



## **WOMEN'S BIBLE STUDY**

**Resumes Wednesday, January 2 at 9:15 am**

How can knowing God personally change your life? Is the Bible relative to what you're going through right now? Do you want to experience a closer walk with the Lord? Then you are warmly invited to the Women's Bible Study that meets on Wednesday mornings from 9:15am to 11:15am. Refreshments are served. This January they will begin their study in Exodus 1.

## **CALL OF THE ANNUAL MEETING**

### **Saturday, January 27, 2017 at 10 am**

The Annual Business Meeting of West Congregational Church will convene in Lyons Hall at 10:00 am on Saturday, January 27, 2018, for the purpose of receiving the 2017 annual reports, electing officers for the coming year, adopting budgets for the year, and acting upon any other matters which shall come before the congregation.

### **ANNUAL MEETING**

Come early and enjoy an informal continental breakfast and time for fellowship. This will be available between 9:00 am and 10:00 am. Childcare for children (nursery through grade 6) will be available for the Annual Meeting.

### **ANNUAL REPORT**

The 2017 Annual Report will be available on Sunday, January 21 following the Worship Service in the Lower Narthex. On Friday, January 19 a PDF of the 2017 Annual Report will be emailed to those on our West Church Email Distribution List. If you currently are not receiving All Church Emails and would like to be added to the list please email the church office ([office@westchurchpeabody.org](mailto:office@westchurchpeabody.org)).

### **SNOW POLICY**

There will always be a worship service on Sunday morning at 10:30 am for those able to come to church. Sunday School is cancelled from time to time due to inclement weather and poor road conditions. Cancellation notices will be posted on: West Church's Facebook page; WBZ-TV; my TV38; [www.boston.cbslocal.com](http://www.boston.cbslocal.com); 7NEWS on Channels 7 and 56; and [www.whdh.com](http://www.whdh.com).

### **FLOWERS FOR SPECIAL OCCASIONS**

If you would like to have flowers in the chancel on a Sunday to celebrate an occasion that is special to you, please sign the Flower Chart on the bulletin board across from the office. The cost of each arrangement is \$45, which may be included in your offering envelope or pew envelope and designate "flowers" under the heading "Other."

### **TAX STATEMENTS**

Statements are available only for those who used Offering Envelopes. You may request a statement from our Financial Secretary using a Pew Card or by contacting the office: ([office@westchurchpeabody.org](mailto:office@westchurchpeabody.org) or 978-535-4112).

### **IRS TAX RECEIPT LAW**

The IRS does NOT accept canceled checks for any single contribution over \$250 as proof of charitable giving. The IRS will ONLY accept an itemized receipt from the non-profit organization confirming each gift that exceeds \$250. Using the Offering Envelopes is a good idea for those who itemize their tax deductions, no matter what the amount of your giving, since the church does NOT keep a record of Non-Envelope giving.



## FINANCIAL INFORMATION REGARDING TITHES AND OFFERINGS

BASICALLY TWO WAYS TO GIVE:

1. Using the church's Weekly Offering Envelopes.
2. Not using Weekly Offering Envelopes.

ADVANTAGES of using the Offering Envelopes:

1. Consistent and disciplined giving.
2. Ease in 'Designating' your gifts (telling the Church where to use the money you are giving).
3. A Church Record of giving that complies with IRS regulations.
4. The Church ONLY keeps financial records of giving for those who use Offering Envelopes.

DESIGNATING GIFTS (telling the church where to use your gifts)

By designating your gifts on your Offering Envelope (or, on your check, if you do not use Offering Envelopes), you can tell the church—

1. Which BUDGET to apply your gift to (the Current Expense Budget, or the Missions Budget);
2. Which FUND to apply your gift to (the Deacons Fund, Flower, Scholarship Fund, Memorial Gifts, Membership Assistance, etc.)
3. Which SPECIAL NEED or PROJECT to apply your money to.

IMPORTANT PRACTICAL POINTS TO REMEMBER:

1. ALL giving that is NOT DESIGNATED is automatically applied to the Current Expense Budget. This is the church budget approved at the Annual Meeting from which all Operating Expenses, Ministry Expenses (except for Missions items found in the Missions Budget), and salaries are paid.
2. ALL giving intended for the Missions Budget MUST be DESIGNATED for MISSIONS on your Offering Envelope or check.
3. Unless otherwise requested by the Missions Committee, it is best to DESIGNATE your missions giving to 'MISSIONS' rather than designating your missions giving to specific missionaries who are already in the approved church Missions Budget.

# MARCH FOR LIFE



FRIDAY, JANUARY 19, 2018

## MARCH FOR LIFE

**Friday, January 19, 2018 | Washington, D.C**

One person can make a difference in the world, whether in the life of one person or many. Sadly, in the U.S. alone, 1 million babies are not even given the opportunity to live and change the world each year. Building a culture of life and ending abortion takes each and every person. Starting with your family or neighborhood, our collective efforts will change hearts and minds, save lives, and build a culture of life.

A group will be leaving from West Church on Thursday, January 18 to travel to Washington DC for the annual event and will return early in the morning on January 20. If you are interested in going, please contact the office:

([office@westchurchpeabody.org](mailto:office@westchurchpeabody.org) or 978-535-4112).

For more information on the event visit:

<http://marchforlife.org/>

## LOOKING AHEAD

**February 1 at 7:00 pm**

**Massachusetts Family Institute (MFI)**

**Pre-Lobby Training**

We again will be hosting this training event where participants will learn how to reach out to state representatives and senators on issues impacting families throughout the state and the nation.

MFI advocacy training sessions will help you prepare for their upcoming Lobby Day and inform you on issues including:

- Physician-Assisted Suicide
- Counseling Ban
- Repealing the Transgender Bathroom Law
- Sex education
- Banning Pot Shops

For additional information on MFI visit:

<http://www.mafamily.org/>

## JANUARY 2018 WEST WINDS CALENDAR

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
<b>31</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>COMMUNION</b> 8:30 am Prayer 10:30am Worship	<b>NEW YEAR'S DAY</b> <b>OFFICE CLOSED</b>  <b>No Haven From Hunger</b>	7:30 pm Pulpit Committee Upper Room	9:15 am Women's Bible Study  7:00 pm •CSB: <b>ALL 3 Groups</b> •Girls' Growth Group: Roy's •Pioneer Girls		7:30 pm Home Fellowship Roy's Home	8:30 am GAIN Sewing Ministry 2's and 3's Classroom
<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>
8:30 am Prayer 9:00 am Sunday School 10:30 am Worship * Church Polity Seminar 6:00 -7:15 pm Youth Meeting Branch Church at CCA	7:30 pm Pulpit Committee Upper Room	7:30pm •Board of Deacons •Board of Trustees	9:15am Women's Bible Study  7:00pm •CSB: Stockade & Battalion •Girls' Growth Group: Roy's •Pioneer Girls			7:00pm Marriage Builders Teal's Home
<b>14</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>
8:30 am Prayer 9:00 am Sunday School 10:30 am Worship	<b>MARTIN LUTHER</b> <b>KING DAY</b> <b>OFFICE CLOSED</b>	7:30 pm Pulpit Committee Upper Room	9:15 am Women's Bible Study  7:00 pm •CSB: <b>ALL 3 Groups</b> •Girls' Growth Group: Roy's •Pioneer Girls	7:00pm Missions Committee Upper Room  Evening: March for Life → <b>Washington DC</b>	<b>MARCH FOR LIFE</b> <b>WASHINGTON DC</b>  7:30 pm Home Fellowship Roy's Home	Early Morning: March for Life → <b>West Church</b>  6:00pm SALT Lyons Hall and UR
<b>21</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>SANCTITY OF HUMAN</b> <b>LIFE SUNDAY</b> 8:30 am Prayer 9:00 am Sunday School 10:30 am Worship  7:00pm Prayer Watch	7:30 pm Pulpit Committee Upper Room		9:15am Women's Bible Study  7:00pm •CSB: Stockade & Battalion •Girls' Growth Group: Roy's •Pioneer Girls			9:00 am Continental Breakfast 10:00 am Annual Meeting Lyons Hall
<b>28</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>31</b>			
8:30 am Prayer 9:00 am Sunday School 10:30 am Worship	7:30 pm Pulpit Committee Upper Room	7:00 pm Outreach Committee Upper Room	9:15 am Women's Bible Study  7:00 pm •CSB: <b>ALL 3 Groups</b> •Girls' Growth Group: Roy's •Pioneer Girls			