

BACK TO SCHOOL 2026

THE WARNER MEMO



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THE NEWSLETTER OF
WARNER MEMORIAL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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PASTOR'S MESSAGE

Dear Warner Memorial Family of Faith,

A new school year has commenced, and as I look out my office window I see kids with backpacks eagerly and happily heading off to school with fresh sneakers and new water bottles. I see a neighborhood full of families returning to a familiar rhythm of life—and I wonder: When the excitement of the new year wears off, will the parents feel lonely again? When the kids start bringing homework home again, when the routine of it all feels familiar again, will the parents remember again the pressures they are under? Will they go back to the routine of putting their head down, getting the work done, putting in the overtime so they can make ends meet each month? Will their sense of loneliness settle in once again?

According to the Public Health Advisory published by Surgeon General Vivek Murthy in 2024 entitled *Parents Under Pressure: The U.S. Surgeon General's Advisory on the Mental Health & Well-Being of Parents*, on average, women (mothers) are working 28% more on employed work or work-related activities than women did in 1985. Men (fathers) are working 4% more than men in 1985. In addition to the increased time spent working, parents are also spending more time providing primary care for children. Women (mothers) are spending 40% more time with their children, and men (fathers) are spending 154% more time with their children than parents in 1985 spent with their children. All of this increased time spent on work and children has been taken away from time spent nurturing intimate relationships, friendships, and personal leisure time. This reduction of personal time has led to an increased sense of isolation and loneliness for parents. And, whether the parents you know personally are experiencing this or not, the epidemic in our culture has affected us all.



As you know, Jesus calls us to care for the least, the lost, and the lonely. This church has a rich and meaningful history of caring for the least. For decades we have participated in ministries of feeding and food. We teach the youngest among us through the LCYC, we support the vulnerable clients of Rainbow Place, and we support families in Haiti. We have long ministered to the lost. Countless persons in recovery from addiction find sanctuary in our church. Not to mention that our church is home to several immigrant congregations who were searching for a safe place to worship. We can continue to participate in these ministries—but as we look ahead to our future, God is calling us to minister to the lonely.

Our neighbors don’t come to church the way they used to—but God’s love, and our love for them has not changed. Which begs the question: how can we love our neighbors in ways they can feel it today? How can we love our neighbors such that their loneliness, their sense of disconnection, might be eased? Well, we asked them. We asked our neighbors how they might better feel our love for them and they told us: **Be a place where grown-ups can connect, play, and find a sense of belonging.**

So, the Session and I looked around at our property—our building—and we thought, “We can absolutely do that!” The top floor of our building—a space that long-ago housed busy Sunday school classrooms, the bustling youth room, and the bountiful music library—is ripe for redesigning the space to be: The Upper Room – where neighbors become friends.

Our new ministry to the community will be a thoughtfully designed community recreation space!! Our current design includes a three-lane bowling alley, regulation dart boards, pinball machines, and a dedicated kid play-space. We envision our neighbors not only hosting parties and celebrations in this space, but playing together in leagues in the evenings and on weekends. We’re making space for game tables—we envision neighbors playing mahjong and bridge, board games and puzzles--people across generations playing together as connections are made. We envision hosting tournaments to benefit our mission partners and engage more of our neighbors in the good work of feeding the hungry and making welcome the stranger. We envision The Upper Room to be a place where our neighbors can connect with each other, have a bit of fun while playing, and to feel a true sense of belonging as they’re invited to bring their whole selves into the space.

This is the vision we, as a church, are called to and this is what we, the Session and I, are looking forward to talking with you, the congregation, all about on September 13. I do hope you can be there and encourage you to bring your questions with an open heart. God’s Spirit is among us, calling us to love and serve our neighbors, and that means all of us!

Peace,



WARNER CONNECTIONS and GATHERINGS

Time to Join a Choir!

The Warner Choirs will be gearing up for another season soon, and we'd love for you to join us for the fun and fellowship of music making!

The WARNER BELL CHOIR meets most Thursday nights from 7:00 to 8:00 PM. We would love to welcome some new ringers, which would allow us to play music that's written for 3 octaves of bells! Handbells are easy to learn as long as you have a little bit of music experience - we provide on-the-job training!

The SANCTUARY CHOIR meets right after bells - most Thursdays from 8:15 to about 9:15 pm. We are eager to welcome new singers from all ability levels and voice ranges - male voices (tenor and bass) are especially encouraged to try it out! No experience is necessary!

If you've ever thought about trying out one of the Warner choirs, now is the time! The first rehearsals will be held on Thursday, September 3. Hope to see you there!

For questions or more info, please contact music director Peter Smeallie at einsteinstage@icloud.com.

Joy Circle– nurturing faith through Bible study and prayer

Joy Circle Bible Study is **returning to the Common Room** beginning Tuesday, September 8th and on second Tuesdays going forward. Gathering at 7:00 for set up and prayer, then the lesson at 7:30.

This year, we will be using the resource The Great Courses, with an online video class called "Searching for People and Places of the Bible." Each meeting, we will watch the video and discuss it. There's no cost to participate on Tuesdays and the downloadable study guide is free. If you want to see the videos at home and join us in a hybrid

Zoom discussion, you will need a subscription to the course for a monthly fee. Contact Lisa Smeallie for details on the course.

Find the study guide at this link:

<https://library.hoopladigital.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/10/Searching-for-People-and-Places-of-the-Bible-1.pdf>. You can also contact June Eakin and she can send it to you via email. We hope you will gather on second Tuesdays for an enriching study and a time of support with your Christian sisters. All are welcome (even guys!), spread the word!



From the study guide: “The Judeo-Christian Bible is, above all, a collection of stories about people: patriarchs and prophets, rulers and kings, mothers and fathers... *Searching for People and Places of the Bible* is a unique course that seeks to retrace the footsteps of the most

prominent people in the Hebrew Bible and the New Testament across the Near East. As such, the course unfolds over a large territory, filmed on location in some of the region’s most remote places rarely visited by tourists or pilgrims: Tanis and Tell el-Dab’a in the upper Nile Delta; Uyun Musa, Wadi Gharandel, and Wadi Feiran in the Sinai; and scores of archaeological sites in Israel, Turkey, and Greece. The result is a deeply immersive journey through the lands of the Bible. Each episode features presentations at the very location where biblical figures lived, vividly attested by the beauty of the area or archaeological excavations and further enhanced with dramatic 3D animation. From Abraham and David to Jesus and Paul, and from the book of Genesis to the Gospels and Acts of the Apostles, *Searching for People and Places of the Bible* is a unique way to experience the beauty of the Bible.”

Lively Discussions at Book Club, join the fun!

The PW Book Club has made its book choices and a new season of book discussions will begin Friday evening, September 25th, when we gather at the home of Susan Kline to discuss *The Guncle*, a best-selling 2021 humorous contemporary novel. For a complete list of the eight books we'll read, contact Lisa Smeallie, our book club coordinator.

Celebrate World Communion with IAPC!

Our friends of the Indonesian American Presbyterian Church will be worshipping with us for World Communion Sunday, on October 4. After worship in the sanctuary, we will enjoy fellowship together, followed by an opportunity for conversation about the IAPC and its members. If you would like to help welcome the IAPC and contribute to our joint fellowship, please reach out to anyone on 4C's.

On October 4, renew friendships and get to better know this congregation who also worships at Warner!

NCP – Presbyterian Women Fall Gathering

This year's Fall Gathering will be on Saturday, October 10th, from 10:00 am – 1:00 pm at Trinity Presbyterian Church in Herndon, VA. We will be hearing from General Presbyter Rev. John Molina Moore on the Missional Incubator program now underway at congregations in our presbytery. Rev. J.C. will be there to share Warner's experiences in this program. A registration link will be coming later in September. Contact June Eakin for more information about this and other PW-NCP programs, which are open to all.



BUILDING & GROUNDS UPDATES

We have had many issues with our elevator not working this summer, including several unfortunate incidents when someone was stuck inside. If you are stuck in the elevator, we have learned that the best approach if you have a cell phone is to call 911, and emergency personnel, who have access to the building, will release you promptly. If you do not have a cell phone with you, please use the call button in the elevator, and the monitoring service will respond. Also, please contact Susan Kline or June Eakin ASAP for all problems with the elevator.

The latest work done on the buildings and grounds:

- The main floor (except for the Trinity room) carpets were cleaned 7/13.
- The ground floor tile flooring was top-scrubbed 7/27 – 7/29.
- The ground floor bathroom floors were deep-cleaned 7/4.
- The Sanctuary AC outdoor unit # 1 got a new condenser fan motor and fan blade 7/16.
- Mark Eakin purchased and installed new rain barrel water diverter 6/22.
- Laura, Susan, & Steve Kline repaired furniture in the common room on the week of 7/21. There were many bolts missing in the furniture, so, if you see any on the floor, please let us know.
- Mark Eakin and Steve Kline repaired the light on the west wall, and Steve also replaced the emergency light in the 2nd floor elevator lobby.
- June defrosted the kitchenette refrigerator.
- Susan ordered, and Meghan installed new refrigerator shelf supports since one was missing.
- The low-hanging branches over the parking lot were trimmed in mid-July and 2 large branches that fell from the sweet gum tree by the LCYC entrance the week of 8/10 were removed.

- Fountain of Mercy (FOM) pressure washed the LCYC sidewalk, ramp and brick wall on 7/11.
- FOM replaced the leaking pipe under the left kitchen sink 8/16.
- FOM cleaned the sump and sump pump + replaced the sump hole cover in the Calvert PI social hall window well on 7/6, and they replaced the sump pump 8/17 (see before and after photo below).



~ Susan Kline

4C's

Warner Mission Trip 2026 To Asheville, North Carolina

THANK YOU to everyone who supported this year's Mission Trip! I don't recall a larger team (nineteen) or a team that got more done in my 20 years of trips. We are indeed blessed.

It wouldn't be a mission trip without a few last-minute and in-the-field opportunities to pivot. Three members of our team had four flights canceled trying to get to Asheville. Huge shoutouts to Brian for driving alone on Sunday evening after a weekend wedding, JC for leaving DC at 4:00 AM and driving directly to the job site on Monday, and Ginny for catching a 5:30 AM one-stop flight on Monday. Craig, Graham, Marcus, Mark E. and I went a day early to scope and stock projects. It helped some, but I think every team made a trip or two to Lowes or Henson's. Clearly this work and this team meant something to each of us.

We learned from last year's trip and worked directly with Long's Chapel, a Global Methodist Church in Waynesville, North Carolina, and booked our accommodations directly at Montreat. Long's Chapel now has 340 active projects in greater Asheville. I think this is roughly 3 times more than they had last summer. While the effects of Hurricane Helene are subsiding, the needs of rural Appalachia continue.

We worked on a variety of projects:

- We installed a vapor barrier in a crawl space beneath a house. I don't know if Lena, Ty and Marc-Henri will ever forget those two days beneath that home with spiders and cobwebs.
- We finished a basement and replaced significant portions of a deck. This was a big team including Craig, Mark E., June E., Susan K., Steve K, Marc-Henri, Beatrice, Lena, Mark B. and others who worked all week. Craig, Marc-Henri and Beatrice didn't stop until after 10:00 PM on Friday evening.

- We did a large deck replacement - a three-day blitz with JC, Marta, Steve, Mark B., Ty, Graham and Brian finishing after 8:00 PM on Friday night.
- Mark E. and Ginny installed a variety of lights, ceiling fans and appliances at a home on Monday.
- We did several significant projects at 18 Oteen Church Rd., a home Oteen Baptist Church is renovating to host volunteer groups. Ginny, Susan, Steve, Lena, Ty, JC, Marc B., Marc S. and others installed ceramic tile, shoe mold, closet doors and shelves, exterior siding and molding.
- We replaced the metal roof on a shed. Marcus, Graham, JC, Brian and Mark B. made quick work of it in only two and one-half days. Aside from thousands of ants who were disturbed, killed or rendered homeless, this was a complete project success.
- We thought we needed to replace over 40 feet of handicapped ramp for a family, but the project turned into simply replacing the ramp with stairs and resurfacing the porch.
- A supposedly quick errand on Wednesday evening of unloading a POD into a home that Long's Chapel had built for a woman who'd been displaced since Helene was our Odyssey. Mark E., Lena, Graham, Brian and Mark B. drove for over an hour and slid through heavy rain and over mountainous, mud-filled roads to reach a moldy, mouse and rat-infested POD. Every item had to be cleaned and sanitized before it could be carried into the new home. Not work for the faint of heart or faith.

We were so very blessed and supported by the many gifts, cookies, and prayers from the Home Team. Clearly, Nancy's chocolate espresso cookies need to become a staple. Our daily devotion ended every day with prayers and expressions of support from Warner. We were never alone.

We welcomed a couple of rookies in Marc Schneiderman and Beatrice Winter. I heard Marc describing the trip as “Life Changing” and Beatrice was advocating to return to the basement fit-out on Saturday morning to finish the VCT. I feel like they are aligned veterans now.

We had a name anomaly, 25% of our team was named some variation of Mark: *Eakin, Dunn, Bocchetti, Schneiderman, and Winter*. We missed the opportunity to put them all on one project at one time. 😊



We outfitted our team with WMPC mission team branded Swag. Once again quick actions and a drive for success carried the day. JC designed, ordered and had the items delivered in less than a week.

Susan K., June, Susan B. and JC did a fantastic job at organizing the meals. I can’t speak for everyone, but I worked hard all week and didn’t lose a pound.

As Rev. Rowles in Pearlington, MS taught me on the first day of my first mission trip following Hurricane

Katrina, “These trips rebuild our damaged community while building your own community. Take this chance to do both.” I feel like Warner, the team and the mission trip locations understand this. I hope we can continue these trips as part of our ministry for years to come.

Thanks,
Steve Dunn

Special Offering for World Communion – October 4, 2026

“What does the Lord require of you?”

“... to do justice and to love kindness and walk humbly with your God.” Micah 6:8

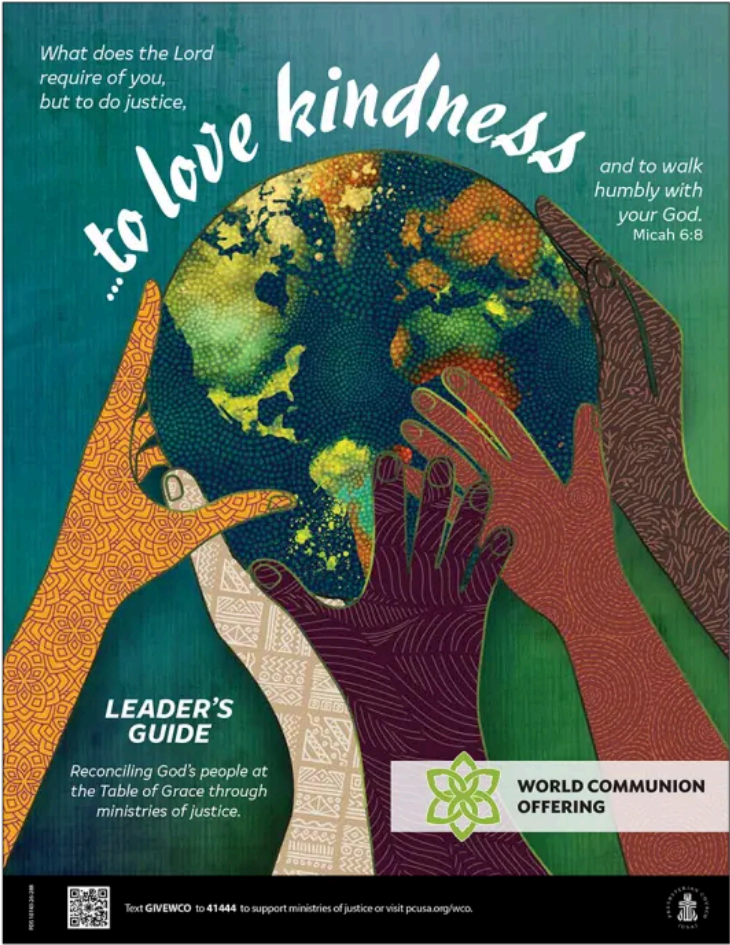
This year, as in years past, Warner is participating in three Special Offerings collected by PCUSA. The Christmas Joy and One Great Hour of Sharing offerings continue to be collected at the same times of year when they have been collected in the past. The Special Offering for World Communion replaces the autumn Peace and Global Witness Special Offering, and will be collected September 6 through October 4, when Warner will join the world-wide church in celebrating World Communion.

PCUSA encourages us to consider these days leading up to World Communion as “A Season of Preparation”: a new way for us to “love kindness,” through action, mercy, faithfulness and steadfast commitment. Special Offerings collected throughout the year now support important causes through grants for specific projects. The World Communion Sunday offering will support causes of racial justice, gender justice, global witness, and ecumenical and interfaith engagement.

As we prepare to celebrate World Communion with our sisters and brothers with whom we share our Earth, we can put our prayers into action by giving to the World Communion Special Offering. You may join others world-wide by contributing online through the Warner website [Donate page](#), or by cash or check made out to WMPC and noting it is for World Communion offering. Donation envelopes will be available in the Sanctuary.

You can find more details and information about these Special Offerings on the [PCUSA website page](#):

<https://pcusa.org/giving/special-offerings>. With grateful thanks from the 4C's.



~ Nancy Recchia

ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP TEAM

PC(USA) General Assembly Votes to End Fossil Fuel Investment

With approval of the overture CLJ-02 “Changing Course for a Green Future” at the 227th General Assembly, the PC(USA) has made an historic decision to remove the great bulk of its investments from the fossil fuel industry. In acceptance of all Climate and Environmental Justice items in the consent agenda, including two other Presbyterians for Earth Care (PEC) overtures on regenerative farming and a green transition and reparations fund, the commissioners, who gathered in Milwaukee, WI, have taken decisive action to call on the denomination to align its actions with its rhetoric regarding care for creation. Through the Changing Course overture, the Assembly has called on its two fiduciaries, the Presbyterian Foundation and the Board of Pensions, to remove their funds from the great majority of its fossil fuel industry investments in the over 50 companies which are currently held in their respective portfolios “by 2030 or as soon thereafter as prudent management allows” and to “cease from initiating new investments in such companies.”

The overture was drafted by a joint writing team composed of members from PEC and Creation Action Network of Presbyterian Young Adults, and sponsored by the Presbytery of Susquehanna Valley, with several other presbyteries concurring, including our own National Capital Presbytery.

While selling our stocks does not directly contribute to making significant reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, it does remove our church’s contribution to their destructive impacts and the industry’s social license as a form of witness to our values and solidarity with all those most vulnerable to the ravages of climate chaos while also freeing up funds which may be re-directed, as the approved overture suggests, to the support of ethically produced renewable sources of energy.

The PCUSA divestment effort began in 2013 after several Presbyterians were inspired and challenged by Bill McKibben's fossil fuel divestment campaign. Connected with each other through the PC(USA) Earth care staff, they soon began developing overtures which were sponsored by different Presbyteries from around the country. The Fossil Free PCUSA effort achieved limited success until a hiatus during the COVID pandemic. Then in 2021, PEC picked up the challenge with new committees and continued overtures until this latest overture, which came to be called "Changing Course for a Green Future," passed through the Climate and Environmental Justice Committee at this summer's 227th GA on a 50-13 vote. Warner Memorial and the National Capital Presbytery divested from fossil fuel stocks at least 10 years ago. Dr. Mark Eakin and Cory Atwood were just two of the thousands who contributed to this campaign for divestment from fossil fuels.

For more information about fossil fuel divestment, the history of PCUSA overtures on divestment and the text of the 227th GA overture, you may visit: <https://presbyearthcare.org/general-assembly-2026/>



Garden Harvest Feeds Hungry Folk

Susan Bresee and June Eakin, among others, have "shepherded" our vegetable garden this season with resulting bountiful harvests. On Sundays, you can take home fresh vegetables including: green beans, peppers, tomatoes, cucumbers and herbs for a donation to Shepherd's Table. Please stop by the Common Room to get delicious and nutritious food and support the Silver Spring community. One recent Sunday in August, we delivered beans, tomatoes, basil and \$77 to Shepherd's Table.

~ June Eakin and Sharon Allen

LIFE of the CHURCH

Happy New “Year”?

The LOTC Commission had a "working" summer vacation, meeting in June and August to keep things moving without interruption. Thanks to everyone who helped keep the lights on each Sunday, and throughout the week, by volunteering to open and close the church, serve as liturgists, provide special music, host Fellowship Hours, and support worship in so many other ways.

Special thanks to those who shared their favorite hymns during worship on Sundays in July and August. The summer certainly flew by!

We may not be rushing out to purchase new notebooks and backpacks, but the days are growing shorter. Finding a beautiful scarlet leaf on the grass earlier this week was an unmistakable sign that summer is waning and a new season is on its way.

We have much to look forward to as we begin a new season at Warner:

- Welcoming our new Commissioned Ruling Elder, **Dorothe Ngo Ikula**
- Hearing from the WMPC Mission Team during worship on **Sunday, September 13**, about its work in North Carolina this August
- Gathering in the Common Room after worship on September 13 for the Warner "Pitch-In" Fellowship Hour and enjoying some tasty nibbles
- Participating in a **Congregational Conversation** following Fellowship Hour on September 13, during which we will hear about the progress of the Missional Incubator project

Planning for Advent at WMPC

The Life of the Church (LOTC) Commission is planning to form an ad hoc committee this fall to help decorate the church and support the Advent theme proposed by JC, **"Making Room for Christ."**

We would love for you to consider participating in this team. Our first meeting is planned for the **week of October 26, 2026**, via Zoom, in the evening. The specific date is still to be determined.

This idea grew out of discussions following the 2025 holiday season. Recognizing that our time and volunteer resources are limited, we hope that early planning will help reduce stress and allow us to prepare thoughtfully for Advent.

Personally, I am intrigued by this year's theme and look forward to exploring its possibilities together. If you are interested in helping, please contact me or any member of the LOTC Commission.

We are tentatively scheduled to meet on the evening of Wednesday, October 28th. We look forward to the conversation, planning, and fellowship as we prepare to celebrate the Advent season together.

~ Sue Burns



Picture by [PhotoEnduro](#) via Pixabay

LCYC

School is back! LCYC students return on 8/31/26. Our excellent teachers and staff were in the building this week preparing for their return. Just a reminder, please refrain from entering the ground floor during school hours to keep our school secure!



SESSION UPDATE

The Session met on Zoom for our summer meeting. We observed the passing of Isabelle Merl on 7/20 and Ed Burr on 7/30/26.

We continue to explore the next steps for The Upper Room, the next life for our 3rd floor space. Come share in a congregational conversation about this project (NOT a meeting!) on Sunday, September 13th, following worship. In-person (in the Common Room) and Zoom participation options will be available.

~ Chelsea Cook, Clerk of Session

FINANCIAL UPDATE

The final numbers are in, and the Surplus Sale netted \$1,221.95. Thanks to all who helped and shopped.

Below is a high-level view of the church’s operating income and expenses compared to the budget, as of July 31, 2026.

	July 2026	YTD 2026	YTD 2026 Budget	% of YTD Budget
Pledge Income	\$6,782	\$162,516	\$132,184	123%
Total Income	\$20,392	\$229,998	\$195,683	118%
Total Expenses	\$43,395	\$248,183	\$248,415	99.9%
Difference	\$23,002	\$18,186	\$52,732	

Total Assets: \$719,312; Total Liabilities: \$65,030 (AC loan), \$49,602 (borrowed from LCYC).

We are very thankful to the Financial Review Committee who completed their report and submitted it to Session in June. The Committee reviewed Warner’s financial statements, bank statements, personnel records, donation database and other financial records, and conducted random sampling. They found that Warner’s accounts were materially accurate in 2025 and did not include material misstatements or errors. The Committee identified some issues during the review process. These issues were identified in the report to Session, and A&F prepared a response and submitted it to Session for the July meeting.

We look forward to improving our practices to address the issues during the coming months.

In preparation for funding the Missional Incubator project, A&F has begun work on updating the Endowment and Special Funds and will present a simplified structure for them at the September Session meeting.

~ Mark Eakin, Elder and Chair of Administration and Finance Commission



August	September	October
Pat Brosnan Sue Burns J.C. Cadwallader Jon DeCarlo Owen DeCarlo Carolyn Hollis Ann Kirchhoff Bob Koch Louise Koch JoEllen LaPrade Marlene Montgomery Charity Singletary	Catharine Burke Susan Bresee Julia Cope Graham Dunn Kaitlin Dunn Max Dunn Steve Dunn Susan Kline Elizabeth Lohr Bennet McGlade Peter Smeallie Janet Trautvetter Anne Fleur Winter	Mark Bocchetti Ben Bresee Phil Och Lisa Smeallie Natalie Thompson

WARNER WELCOMING STATEMENT

All people are of sacred worth and God loves everyone without exception. We welcome all people into our worship, fellowship, membership, and leadership. Believers, seekers, and doubters are all welcome at Warner. We are an affirming and supportive spiritual community that celebrates God's infinite love, wisdom, and grace through worship, music, education, mission, and fellowship. Though we are all unique, we are united in loving and praising God and in loving each other. We are committed to communing together in such a way that we give witness to Christ's sacrificial life, redeeming death, and glorious resurrection. Loved and accepted by God, our congregation offers love and acceptance to all.

Warner Memorial Presbyterian Church

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