

2025 Pastor's Report *The River of Life!*

Westview is 127 years old! On Sunday November 23, 2025 we had a celebration worship service for our anniversary viewing slides from archives and reviewing our rich history.

Rachel Clark created 127-year anniversary banner and explained the symbolism depicted in this beautiful art piece:

“When I talked with several people in the congregation about what they wanted the banner to say I kept hearing ‘we don’t want to be defined by the concentration camps. We want a happy hopeful banner’. However, I reflected on how I grew up in Louisiana in a totally segregated community. I am proud of who I have become coming out of that community as a Black woman. For me it was difficult to ignore that there was a period of time in which our country put people into concentration camps who were actually citizens of this country, and while I don’t want to be defined by slavery and segregation, that is a part of me and I don’t want to ignore that that is a part of you, our church, as well. So, I had to find a way to put that in the banner and make a positive statement out of it, therefore the tree’s leaves have gold inserts inspired by kintsugi, a Japanese tradition in which broken pottery is repaired with lacquer and gold powder to make the cracks stronger. Gold-threaded seams in the design show how suffering can be turned into beauty. And part of that is that we stand on the shoulders of our ancestors, and I refuse to ignore those people who withstood the trials and tribulations. We are standing here because of them.

The tree symbolizes community, growth, stewardship, and renewal. The roots represent our ancestors, while the branches symbolize ongoing work for justice and care for the community. Westview does so much in serving the community through social commitment. The river stands for moving into the future and the church’s multicultural community. Each fabric piece floating on the river represents a different culture: denim for American heritage, woven fabric from Mexico, silk from China, Ankara from Africa, and shibori and yukata from Japan. Each fabric tells its own story, showing how many traditions come together as the congregation moves forward.

The border is inspired by the design of church’s windows.”-Rachel Clark

Wow, what a beautiful piece of art representing our past and our course into the future! I (Dan) especially love that the river not only represents moving into the future with a rich multicultural ministry, but in addition can represent the River of Life flowing from the temple of God (and the church) out into the desert (the community and the nations), growing from a trickle to a mighty river as it flows bringing healing, life, and abundance!

Ezekiel 47:7-12 paraphrased states of this river of life, “On its banks are abundant vegetation, trees, and fruit bearing trees, and it eventually flows to the Dead Sea, a saltwater sea that is so salty nothing can live in it, yet as this abundant fresh water flows into this dead sea, it makes the water fresh and an abundance of fish now flourish there--many different kinds of fish!”

I pray we can continue to be part of God's River of Life bringing healing and abundant flourishing life to all the many different kinds of fish in our community! And we especially get to be a part of bringing healing and abundant flourishing life to our unhoused neighbors as they find healing in our HOPE Village (tiny houses) which opened on February 2, 2026. And God bless our Community Action Board as they lead this very important healing ministry.

On January 31, 2026 we had our leadership retreat with our Elders and Deacons to plan, pray and give thanks for God's work among us.

Leadership retreat goals 2026 WPC:

1. How can you invite more of the congregation into our ministries?

- HOPE Village, SonRise kitchen, Bible studies (Wednesday Zoom and in Hope Village), sewing circle, packing lunches, clothes closet, food preparation for Sunday morning.
- better communication about what our ministries are, highlighting one at a time on Sunday morning during announcements.
- invite people personally to be involved with certain ministries that they might enjoy
- make a WPC ministry sheet –pass out, email, and put on bulletin Board
- acknowledge the importance of personal ministries that people have that are not related to the church programs--Like caring for a relative or a neighbor or other ways people volunteer and help in the community. Our ministries are not just the WPC programs! WE ARE THE CHURCH WHEREVER WE ARE and it is good that we are spread out all over the community!
- deacons follow up on this

2. Welcome and love the new HOPE residents:

Be a welcoming, loving community for our new neighbors.

-Invite HOPE residents to a meal: put up an invitation to a meal on a bulletin board in HOPE village and also personally invite. Also put up ministries and opportunities for them to serve on a bulletin board flyer. Dan and Margo know them and could go to breakfast/lunch and invite people. The meal is about sharing community with them, not to "help" them. Maybe a barbecue in which they get to help cook, late March or April weekday lunch maybe Wednesday, not Saturday so that we can bond with the staff, because on weekends it's a skeleton staff. Have game(s). Or bring coffee hour to them. It might take two or three invitations for them to come.

They participate in putting together the meal

- Sew with some of our AA people in order to form those relationships.
- Tell them of our Sunday Brunch on first Sunday each month.—We will need more food and food bringers on Sundays.
- Let us all be very intentional about greeting them and introducing names and try to remember names.
- Invite HOPE residents to help with our ministries, like bagging lunches and to sewing!

- Community Garden on side of church by old BBQ. We need a green-thumb volunteer to lead. Then invite HOPE village residents to participate and lead as well.
- Have a class to help them get their food server certificate.(Nancy.)
- Training of WPC members by CAB on how to care for residents in a healthy way.
- _Lead a Life Reflection/Bible Study in HOPE Village with food after they have settled in a while. WPC members attend/lead too in order to form relationships and care for them.

3. Welcome and love the staff and volunteers of HOPE village

4. Continue to foster WPC community life & mutual discipleship among our members.

Small groups or through more participating in serving the community together (with more intentional community, support and prayer). Games on Sunday after church?-get ideas on a Sunday -Jolly lead doing this

Thanks for 2025!—from our leadership retreat:

- Hope village is done & our unhoused neighbors are being cared for!
- Joanne, Evelyn and Jolly music!
- The Hayashi's, especially Art with putting out the Chimes Newsletter
- Leslie Nagata Garcia, and all she does!
- Social Hour resumed! -- thank you to Emily, Mary Lou, and Nancy!
- Our 127 year celebration Sunday and our new banner--thank you, Rachel Clark!
- Our other preachers: Rev Mick, Rev Rich and Rev Julie Thank you!
- That we have resumed “pass the peace,” and Communion served from upfront
- Sheri and Chrissy and all they do to help, and how welcoming they are!

In 2025 you continued to care well for our members who are grieving the loss of loved ones. Thank you for all you did to care for our grieving families! This year we celebrated the life of Chiyeko (Grace) Fujita, Craig George, Philip Fujita, and Emma Nestler, as they went on to be with loved ones and our Savior.

All-loving God, help us (the people, not the building) to BE your church--your hands and voice of love to those who are in need. Please, from this center of your hospitable love, give us creativity, wisdom, desire, courage, and compassion.

It is a joy and an honor to be your pastor.

May you know ever more fully your beloved-ness in God,
Pastor Dan