

WESTON CHRISTIAN CHURCH

(Disciples of Christ)



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Changing Culture Changes Everything

May's Journey Report
By Mary Bolan

Church is cultural, and it always has been. Thousands of years ago worship centered on sacrifice, because slaughtering an animal and cooking it was a big task that produced enough food for a community. People gathered at the outdoor oven and the designated priest (butcher) butchered the animal in a skillful way that included ritual to honor God of creation who provides. That was extended to offering sacrifices for other purposes, such as erasure of sin and restoration to righteousness.

In our world churches brought in guitars and long dresses and big sideburns in the seventies, big screens in the nineties, professionally produced videos in the two thousands, and now we are desperately trying to figure out what to bring in next. But culture has changed far too dramatically to be reached in those ways.

Our world is seeing problems unseen ever in the history of homo sapiens on earth, as far as we know. For the first time ever we have over population rather than under population. For the first time ever we have the ability to communicate instantly across nations, continents and languages. We have pollution of our water, land, and air. We have transportation and communication unimagined even thirty or forty years ago. Our world is changing faster than our bodies can keep up. Everything is speeding up, faster, faster, faster. Church as we "have always known it" will likely never be again.

I said that in a recent board meeting and got blank stares back at me. I asked what was happening and someone said they needed a minute to grieve. Yes, grieve! Then I realized that I had had a pretty big experience of that grief back in January. When it dawns on us that church is disappearing as certainly as the dinosaurs, it hurts. We love coming together to share our lives, to worship, learn, and serve. Surely people will continue to want to do those things, right?

Yes, but we are far less willing to put up with inconveniences now. Why should we sit here and listen to a sermon live when we can just download it later and listen to it during our drive to work? Why should we participate in a small group when one or two of the people who come rub us the wrong way? We can find people more like us online and connect with them. Why should we bring homemade food to a potluck when gourmet food is now available for delivery right from our phones?

It isn't that we no longer care about God or relationships, it is just that we do those relationships differently now. Here are some ideas to mull around.

1. Changing how we do stuff is not transformation.
2. The style of music, the theology preached, the day and time of the worship service, or having a catchy slogan or brilliant logo is not transformation.

3. Advertising/marketing might or might not bring more people to a particular event. Our biggest attendance each year has been Easter, with or without any particular effort of advertising. We had 109 people on Easter 2015 and 108 on Easter 2016, and 98 this year, because WCC is their church and that is where they want to be on Easter. Yes, we have had visitors on Easter, but the numbers primarily swell through people who already think of WCC as their church.
4. WCC is rooted in Weston. Weston and the congregation itself is the most compelling reason people participate in our congregation. We value our freedom to choose our beliefs for ourselves and still be part of the group. We are situated perfectly for this age of "spiritual, but not religious." People believe according to their own convictions, not according to what is taught by their minister. We have entered a new age of the church. Relationships among parishioners are far more important than any particular event, sermon, ministry, or minister. Your everyday relationships with everyone you know are WCC in action. That is our reputation in the community. That is our ministry. That is the Body of Christ.
5. We have a congregation of talented, caring, thoughtful, spiritually mature people. Folks are maxed out with busy schedules, but they deeply care about God and one another. I honestly think that nearly all participants in our congregation would take a midnight call from nearly any other. Long histories that are intertwined over generations in a small town create some tensions between individuals, families and various groups, but those long histories also teach folks how to forgive. We have a strong congregation, regardless of the attendance numbers on any given day.
6. Human beings need relationships with other people who affirm them, challenge them, help them, like them, and need them. We need to use our talents, skills, time, money, and efforts in worthwhile pursuits. We grow weary of giving of ourselves to fruitless, meaningless pursuits. If our church needs us, appreciates us, likes us, notices us, listens to us, and cares about what we care about, we will likely want to be involved and give ourselves to our church, as much as we are able, even sacrificially. (See I Corinthians 12)

If our church ignores us, argues with us, criticizes us, pressures us, has no use for our particular skills/talents/gifts/strengths, and pursues meaningless or harmful goals, we will likely look for excuses to pull away. Perhaps we'll even tell everyone we know what a terrible church it is.

No church performs consistently on either end of that scale. All churches are made of fallible people who miss opportunities to love one another in the ways we each need to be loved. But, obviously, if the church is reduced to the minister, the likelihood of harm is much higher than if we understand that the church is each and all of us. I will be great with some people and I will utterly fail with others. So will each of us. So, you pick up my slack and I pick up yours. We need each other. Notice, nothing in point 6 is about theology, feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, or housing the homeless. WCC is a network of relationships. Make the relationships better and the congregation gets stronger. It is as simple and difficult as that.

("Journey" continued on Page 2)

Our identity statement:

We are Disciples of Christ, a movement for **wholeness** in a fragmented world. As part of the one body of Christ we welcome all to the Lord's Table as God has welcomed us.

("Journey" continued from Page 1)

7. Transformation happens over time whether we want it or not. It is a natural process. Are we engaged in conversations and efforts that actually matter in the lives of the people involved? Or are we distracted by people who are not here, worried about numbers and bills and property to the exclusion of caring about the person right in front of us? What matters in life? Are we actively engaged in what matters or not?

Frankly, programs that worked in the 70s don't matter. They don't. Human beings connecting with each other and with God is what matters. People have needed relationships with each other and with God since the beginning of time. If church can be a place where those relationships thrive, let's do it. The church does not exist for buildings, budgets, theologies, acts of service, and worship styles. All those things exist to support relationships among people with God.

What we do matters very little. How we do it matters a great deal. (See 1 Corinthians 13.)



2017 Platte County Clean Up Friday, May 12th Saturday, May 13th 7:30 am-4:30 pm

Standard Load Entry Fee:
Car, Truck, SUV, Van \$5.00
Vehicle & Trailer \$15.00
Loads over 12' \$20.00
All loads are subject to inspection & any item or load may be denied.

NON-BULKY ITEMS MUST BE BAGGED OR BUNDLED.
Subject to additional charges if pertinent.

Additional Fees:
Passenger Tires \$1.00/each
Truck/Tractor Tires \$5.00/each
Appliances/Electronics* \$20.00/each

*Appliances are items with motors or compressors.
All appliances must be empty.
Acceptable Electronics: TVs, Computers & Printers

PROHIBITED ITEMS: HAZARDOUS WASTE, LIQUID PAINT, CHEMICALS AND NO WASTE FROM BUSINESSES.

Located at PLATTE COUNTY PUBLIC WORKS
Exit 20 off I-29
15955 Hwy. 273
Platte City, MO 64079
Contact the Department of Public Works
(816) 858-2223
publicworks@co.platte.mo.us



Graduation is here...

If you have a Graduate you would like us to recognize, please send their name and school/university/technical program to Mary or the church office as soon as possible.



May & June Sermons

May 7th - "Caught Up With Him"
1 Thessalonians 4:14-5:11

May 14th - "He Appeared"
1 Corinthians 15:1-11
(Graduation Sunday & Mother's Day)

May 21st - "Resurrection of the Dead"
1 Corinthians 15:12-22

June 4 - "Transformed by the Word"
Acts 2:1-21
Guest Ron Henderson, Gideons International
(Pentecost)



June 11th - Guest Minister
(Mary will be gone to her niece's graduation/ordination)

June 18th - "All Enemies Under His Feet"
1 Corinthians 15:20-34
(Father's Day)

June 25th - "We Shall All Be Changed"
1 Corinthians 15:35-58

Notes of Thanks...

(Notes of thanks were received from family members of one of our recently deceased members.)



Thanks so much for the love and support during this difficult time. The lunch was outstanding and a wonderful tribute to Mom! We truly appreciate everyone's kindness.

We want to thank every one of you for the wonderful lunch you provided for our family and friends in honor of our mother.



Our mother loved the church and each and every one of you. We can't thank you enough for being part of her life and everything you have done for her.

What's happening in...



9:30 am—Adult Sunday School
10:10 am—Greeters
10:30 am—Worship Service
Tuesdays, 6:30 am—Men's Bible Study
Wednesdays, 7:30 pm—Choir Rehearsal

- 5/1 4:30 pm - Micah Ministry at IBCC—carpool from Parsonage
- 5/2 9:30 am - Yoga in Fellowship Hall
- 5/10 7:00 pm - Baccalaureate at West Platte Performing Arts Ctr.
- 5/13 3:00 pm - West Platte H.S. Graduation - High School Gym
- 5/13 8:00 am - Community Prayer Breakfast at First Baptist
- 5/14 Mother's Day
- 5/16 9:30 am - Yoga in Fellowship Hall
- 5/21 11:30 am - Church Board Meeting
- 5/29 Memorial Day

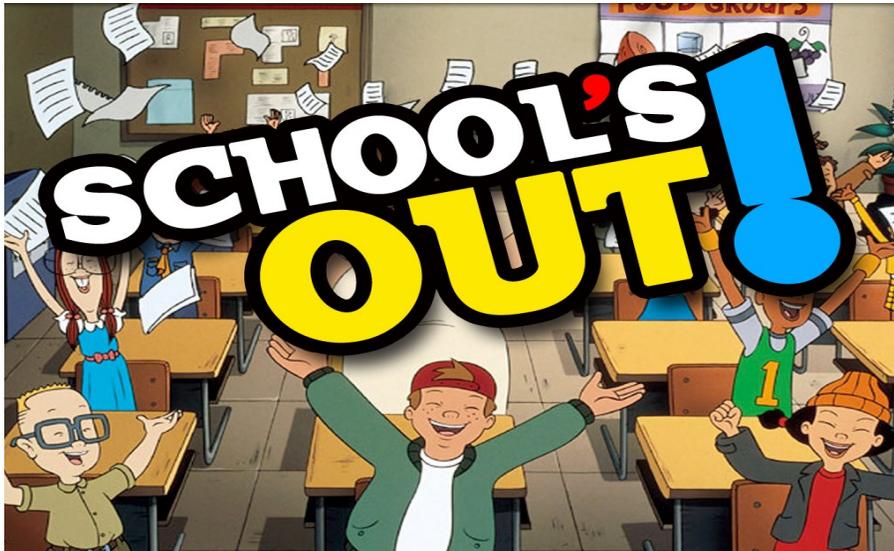


Weston Christian Church...

Thank you for your support of the West Platte Booster Club's After Prom event! Your generous donation of \$50 will assure that our students have a safe evening of fun. Providing our students with a venue to celebrate that is alcohol and drug free, as well as peace of mind to their families on Prom night, is our number one priority.

We couldn't do it without you!

The West Platte Booster Club After Prom Committee



May 9 Church Calendar

Search Calendar

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<p>30</p> <p>8:30 Choir Rehearsal</p> <p>9:30 Adult Sunday School</p> <p>10:15 WCC Church Zoom Meeting</p> <p>10:30 WCC Worship Service</p> <p>3p Greater KC Regional Assembly</p>	<p>May 1</p> <p>4:30p Micah Ministry-Indep. Blvd. Christian</p>	<p>2</p> <p>6:30 Mens Bible Study</p> <p>9:30 Yoga - Fellowship Hall</p>	<p>3</p> <p>7:30p Choir Rehearsal</p>	<p>4</p>	<p>5</p>	<p>6</p>
<p>7</p> <p>8:30 Choir Rehearsal</p> <p>9:30 Adult Sunday School</p> <p>10:15 WCC Church Zoom Meeting</p> <p>10:30 WCC Worship Service</p>	<p>8</p>	<p>9</p> <p>6:30 Mens Bible Study</p>	<p>10</p> <p>7:30p Choir Rehearsal</p>	<p>11</p>	<p>12</p>	<p>13</p> <p>8 Community Prayer Breakfast-1st Baptist</p>
<p>14</p> <p>Mother's Day</p> <p>8:30 Choir Rehearsal</p> <p>9:30 Adult Sunday School</p> <p>10:15 WCC Church Zoom Meeting</p> <p>10:30 WCC Worship Service</p>	<p>15</p>	<p>16</p> <p>6:30 Mens Bible Study</p> <p>9:30 Yoga - Fellowship Hall</p>	<p>17</p> <p>10 "In His Service" Soup Ministry (workers a</p> <p>7:30p Choir Rehearsal</p>	<p>18</p>	<p>19</p>	<p>20</p>
<p>21</p> <p>8:30 Choir Rehearsal</p> <p>9:30 Adult Sunday School</p> <p>10:15 WCC Church Zoom Meeting</p> <p>10:30 WCC Worship Service</p> <p>11:30 Church Board Meeting</p>	<p>22</p>	<p>23</p> <p>6:30 Mens Bible Study</p>	<p>24</p> <p>7:30p Choir Rehearsal</p>	<p>25</p>	<p>26</p>	<p>27</p>
<p>28</p> <p>8:30 Choir Rehearsal</p> <p>9:30 Adult Sunday School</p> <p>10:15 WCC Church Zoom Meeting</p> <p>10:30 WCC Worship Service</p>	<p>29</p> <p>Memorial Day</p>	<p>30</p> <p>6:30 Mens Bible Study</p>	<p>31</p> <p>10 American Legion Memorial Day Service (</p>	<p>Jun 1</p>	<p>2</p>	<p>3</p>