



West End Presbyterian Church

West End | North Carolina



Mission Study Report for Coastal Carolina

Committee on Ministry

April 2016

Introduction

The West End Presbyterian Church, founded in 1912, is beginning the process of calling its 13th pastor. Along with this comes an opportunity for us to share together in assessing who we are and how God is calling us. This report is a record of our findings.

Our most recently installed pastor, Larry Lyon, served from 2006 until June, 2015. Jane Love became interim pastor in January, 2016.

Our survey, summarized later in the report, documented congregational stories and dreams. Among the 45 stories shared:

“WEPC has a wonderful history of ministry to our community through spiritual, economic, and mission service. Our congregation is a very caring and accepting group. I very much appreciate the kindness and love folks demonstrate in their daily lives. I see this in our young and our young at heart.”

“When we were new to NC we tried many Presbyterian churches and we came back and stayed at West End because we felt the love and spirit here. We knew this is where we wanted to be and we were right.”

“The story I would like to share is that this church has an appealing group of folks, an engaging minister, a place to raise our children, a place to make some dear friends, relationships I treasure. It fulfills a needed belonging.”

Reports and documents include:

1. Church History
2. Summary of survey findings
3. Missions
4. Membership demographics
5. Area demographics
6. Church report
7. Financial report
8. Survey results

Mission Study Team members:

Laura Pitts, Mac Clark, Lynne Graham, Dale Shepherd, Charla Thomson, Jeanne Williams

April 25, 2016

West End Presbyterian Church History

In 1912, the Titanic sunk, a Presbyterian, Woodrow Wilson, was elected president, Fenway Park in Boston opened, and the Girl Scouts were founded.

And West End Presbyterian Church began its ministry.

The Early Years

In 1908, a group of West End families gathered to form a church closer than Bensalem, Culdee, and Jackson Springs Presbyterian churches in the area. Rev. Robert S. Arrowood held monthly church services for them in the drugstore and later in the county schoolhouse. West End would become the fourth church founded by Rev. Arrowood, and a dream of M.C. McDonald and Arrowood became a reality.

On November 17, 1912, a commission appointed by Fayetteville Presbytery met to organize a Presbyterian church in West End. Rev. Arrowood moderated the meeting. Twenty-three names, representing 10 families, were presented with evidence of their good standing in their several churches. Charter families were Ritter, McDonald, Jackson, Cochran, Burns, Bruton, Thomasson, Lewis, Barnett and Barnes. M.C. McDonald was elected elder; J.E. Jackson and C.W. Ritter were elected deacons. The name chosen for the church was "West End."

For the first 40 years, the church shared pastors with other local churches. The first pastor, Rev. T.C. Delany, served for two years. Then in 1914, Rev. Arrowood became the pastor serving for five years until his death. By that time, membership had increased to 50. Rev. R.G. Matheson served as pastor for almost 20 years and headed efforts to build a sanctuary on land donated by M.C. McDonald. On March 25, 1922, the congregation held its first worship service in the new sanctuary built to serve a congregation of more than 100 members.

The early years of West End Presbyterian paralleled the growth of the West End village. The area's economic base of agriculture and timber products and its location on the Aberdeen-West End railroad positioned it to grow into a manufacturing center that would benefit the church in the years to come.

The Emerging Years

West End thrived in the WWII era with the expansion of furniture manufacturing, other industries, and peach orchards.

In 1940, Rev. R.R. Ramsey began his ministry which would span the decade ending in 1951. An addition, including classrooms, a parlor, and a fellowship hall for dinners and activities, was built to serve the growing congregation.

West End Presbyterian called Rev. Hogan Yancey as its first full-time pastor in 1952. The manse was built at this time. From 1956-1962, Rev. George Houck served the

church as pastor. His wife became organist and choir director, adding a junior choir. Both Yancey and Houck were active in social reforms. Over the next 20 years, the church was served by four different pastors while growth in the community and thus the church declined as manufacturing moved overseas.

In the late 1970s, a new community, Seven Lakes, was being developed. The calling of a new pastor, Rev. Dudley Crawford in 1983, began an era of expansion for the church as the membership grew to 500 by the year 2000. Moving to this area from all parts of the country, these new members along with their West End neighbors brought a rich heritage and diversity to the life of the church.

Rev. Crawford's enthusiasm and energy brought about an expansion of program, staff, and facilities. Sarah Reid enhanced the music program as a new organ and handbells were purchased. Norma Walter followed as director of music and education, building both of these areas, as well as an active mission program. An expansion of facilities followed in 1993 enlarging the sanctuary and adding an education and administrative wing. Seven years later, a new activity center was built and renamed the Crawford Center in 2005, in honor of Rev. Crawford's tenure and work here for 22 years.

Rev. Dr. Larry Lyon was called as pastor in 2006 and was joined by Rev. Chip Pope, associate pastor, two years later. Their outreach statement describes our church as *a place to love, a place to be loved, and a place of grace for all ages*. As a caring community of faith we strive to care for, comfort, encourage, and inspire one another through our ministries of mission, education, youth, worship, and fellowship.

On Tuesdays during the school year, the Crawford Center is filled with tutors working with local Hispanic children. In the Prayer Shawl ministry, women of the church knit and bless beautiful shawls to share with those in need of comfort. As a partner in Family Promise, homeless families are housed, fed, and cared for at the church for a week each quarter. Rice collected weekly for the Coalition for Human Care helps feed the hungry in our area.

Christian Education is a lifelong journey. Milestone Ministry celebrates each child's faith journey from birth through high school graduation. Children participate in a mid-week after school program and in the summer, Vacation Bible School and Music Camp. Youth are active in urban missions and building projects in poverty areas here and in Mexico. Weekly meetings, retreats and conferences strengthen their faith and leadership skills. A variety of adult classes are offered on Sundays.

Music has brought a special joy to worship for many years with choirs of adults, children, and handbell ringers. Loving, caring, and nurturing one another is reflected in the many opportunities for fellowship time together.

Celebrating the Centennial Year – 2012

The year of activities began with the publishing of a cookbook, Centennial Cuisine, which helped fund part of other activities.

A major project was a permanent display of three large historical panels with picture and text depicting the history of the church over the past 100 years. A Centennial Church Directory also was published in the months leading up to the anniversary date.

Throughout the year, Centennial stories were told. Sunday, March 25, marked the 90th anniversary of the first service held in the new sanctuary. Worship was celebrated with a bagpiper to recognize the Scottish roots of the founders, followed by a luncheon and program with stories from the first 60 years.

In April, we “*Traced our Roots*” learning how the Highland Scots came to settle in this area. After viewing pictures of early days in West End, a short walking tour nearby was followed by a field trip to visit Jackson Springs and Bensalem Presbyterian Churches and the old Scottish Cemetery.

In the fall, the Centennial Team, Mission Team, and Deacons partnered in an intergenerational mission program sponsored by *Stop Hunger Now*. Volunteers of all ages assembled rice based food packets for distribution worldwide to support school feeding programs and crisis relief.

At the final event on November 17, church members and friends celebrated the 100th birthday of West End Presbyterian Church. The program, *We Sing, We Care, We Give*, reflected stories from the past 40 years recognizing music, education, and mission work with a look to the future, and was followed by a dinner.

Following this celebration, the church embarked on a study of how to best serve our growing number of young children and families. Ministry consultants were selected to work with a team of members. From this study it was determined that renovation and updates to the existing church plant were necessary to continue the high quality of programs offered. A campaign for capital improvements was begun in 2014 with the goal of retiring the church debt, renovating the late 1940’s and 1993 additions, purchasing a new church van, and renewing the Crawford Center. As of early spring 2016 members and friends have contributed almost \$725,000 towards the original goal of \$800,000. The debt is retired, the 1993 addition renovation is completed, and a new van has been purchased. The 1940’s addition is slated to begin in June 2016.

After the call of Associate Pastor Chip Pope to Raleigh’s White Memorial Presbyterian Church, Kris Adler-Brammer came in May 2014 to serve as Director of Christian Education specifically to meet the growing needs of our congregation with young families. With Dr. Larry Lyons’s retirement June 2015, we embark on the journey for a new pastor. Our missions continue; we are led by a gifted interim pastoral leader and preacher, the Rev. Jane Love, who joined us in January, 2016. West End Presbyterian Church continues to grow in its many ministries, embracing God’s amazing grace, and the love of Christ.

This is a special place: a place to love, and a place to be loved. We give thanks to God for these 104 years of blessings!

Mission Study Survey Summary

West End Presbyterian Church conducted a Mission Study Survey developed by the Hartford Institute for Religion Research with our congregation in February and March of 2016. Our findings are summarized below and a complete survey analysis is included in this document.

Who are we?

In our congregation's response to the "tasks of the church:"

- an overwhelming percentage express satisfaction with worship and that it provides a meaningful experience of God and the Christian tradition. Providing worship that is intellectually challenging and emotionally moving is very important to our congregation; including children in worship is of paramount importance for our congregation;
- an overwhelming percentage express satisfaction with Christian education provided for children and youth, in fact our congregation feels that this task of providing Christian education is our strongest attribute;
- while a large percentage express satisfaction that worship expresses the Gospel in contemporary language and forms, our congregation feels that sermons should be spiritually moving and inspirational as well as set forth a "clear faith position as a guide for making decisions and living a faithful life."

While these three stood out to our team as a reflection of our church's core values, other tasks held high were providing fellowship opportunities for members, expressing our denominational heritage and tradition, supporting the global mission of the church and denomination, and engaging in acts of charity and service to persons in need.

What is our community?

In our congregation's response to the questions concerning WEPC's community both external and internal:

- members feel comfortable with a strong sense of belonging and feel that their spiritual lives have been enhanced by joining;
- members are drawn by the qualities of the minister and fellow members. Worship style and children/youth programs weigh heavily on the parishioners' desire to join. The survey supports that it is also these characteristics that keep members at WEPC. Our congregation feels that WEPC has excellent spaces in worship, office, and fellowship;
- members feel that we help others in times of trouble, have equal opportunities in key leadership positions, and express a sense of excitement about our church's future.

Where is God leading us?

In our congregation's response:

- the congregation feels that the next pastor must be a strong leader who challenges with thought-provoking sermons, who supports and guides with pastoral care, and who encourages and strengthens a vigorous youth program. In addition, the congregation prefers a Biblical emphasis in sermons but at the same time recognize the importance of the inclusion of contemporary issues along with new approaches to worship;
- the congregation seeks a theologian who is "down to earth, authentic and genuine, a fellow so-journer, not afraid to reveal personal pain and struggles, and a role model in his/her personal life;"
- congregants would like to see more emphasis in helping members discover their own gifts for ministry and service, encouraging members to act on the relationship of the Christian faith to social, political and economic issues, and providing continuing education programs for adults;
- this church possesses a strong desire to become more diverse in the future. As a people of faith in these fast changing times it is important that we join with congregations in the community to reach out to the unchurched, to be aware of social welfare needs, and to be a voice for the marginalized;
- members look to Jesus as a way to salvation and to the Bible for life's guidance; we respect those who follow different paths from our own in their quest for salvation and truth.

WEPC's Outreach/Missions

In the survey members expressed a desire to expand our mission involvement. The following is a partial list of our outreach into the community and beyond.

Men's Breakfast Group

1. Clean-up around the church ground.
2. Contribute to the congregational rice project.
3. Contribute to and assist in assembling the 5-gallon clean-up buckets and supplies sent for disaster relief.
4. Clean yard for a family that was not able to maintain the area.
5. Build handicap ramps when needed and removed when no longer needed.
6. Support the "Stop Hunger Now" project.
7. Assemble new furniture and move existing furniture and materials during renovation.
8. Paint and refinish furniture and fixtures in the children's class rooms
9. Fund replacement of lights over the choir.
10. Provide meals for the youth.

God's Garden

God's Garden was organized in 2008 by a Methodist pastor, Rev. Dena White, with the help of area farmers and volunteers. WEPC is recognized as a sponsoring church. Produce is grown using donated land and volunteer labor that is shared with those who are "food insecure," usually through the Sandhills Food Bank. Thousands of pounds of squash, green beans, corn, sweet potatoes, and collards are grown and harvested for friends and neighbors. Church members, Harold and Joanie Jones, have been active in this hands on and well-organized mission.

Presbyterian Women

- Morning Circle meets 1st Mondays
- Evening Circle meets 3rd Mondays

Organizations supported through offerings:

1. Friend to Friend
2. McDuffee Mission in Spain (SEND International)
3. Children's Hope Alliance (formerly Barium Springs)
4. Mira Foundation
5. Least Coin Offering

The Down Under Sunday School Class

Below is a summary of one class' outreach into the community that is outside of annual pledges and tithes.

“Supporting Backpack Pals is a yearly tradition; each class member gives approximately \$20 for the year to cover the cost of supplying raisins (whatever we're asked to provide) for the Food Bank/Backpack Pals. We adopt at least one family through Empty Stocking. This year we shopped for a family of 7, who had lost everything in a fire. Adopting a family at Christmas is another long standing tradition. Items are also donated for needy children at West End Elementary.

Recently Lynne Graham spearheaded a drive to help a family that lost their house, also in a fire. We donated household items, some new or gently used clothing and collected cash. The family benefitted from a mattress, bedding, towels, kitchen appliances and utensils etc.

This class is a great model for WEPC. We are a tight-knit group that serves on many committees; we do not hesitate to volunteer for Family Promise and support each other in good or bad. We have taken meals to members that may be suffering, emotionally or physically.” *Submitted by Carol McDonald*

Hispanic Ministry Outreach - Global

WEPC's Hispanic Global Outreach began in the “last century” when Jim and Judy Kullberg became members of WEPC and connected WEPC with the Presbytery of Chetumal in Mexico. The Kullberg's former church in Corning, NY had provided mission support and trips in Chetumal. Norma Walter WEPC's former director of music and Christian Education was looking for a youth mission trip for the coming year. In June of 2000 youth and adult members travelled to Chetumal to help build a church building in Chetumal, Mexico. Both youth and adults worked side by side of our Mexican brothers and sisters in Christ and in 2002, both churches signed a covenant agreement for our churches to be Sister Congregations. Nine mission trips have been made by WEPC to Chetumal; and in 2003 and 2009, IXOYE Presbyterian Church's pastor, Rev. Adiel Espinosa Chi, visited WEPC. The most recent trip to Chetumal was in 2014, where the church's membership is now 80 with 30 other regular attendees.

Tuesday Tutoring - Hispanic Ministry Outreach - Local

Since 2002, WEPC has sponsored and supported a local Hispanic outreach, Tuesday Tutoring, which was inspired by our Chetumal Sister Congregation and WEPC member Anna Stevens who is Moore County Schools ESL Coordinator. Anna's parents were missionaries in South America and she speaks fluent Spanish. The tutoring program began in the fall of 2002 and is one-on-one tutoring for students in grades K-8. Today the program serves 37 students with total volunteers including tutors, snack crew,

drivers, and substitutes numbering more than 50. Volunteers come from WEPC and the community. Anna's vision to help Hispanic children in our area whose parents are not fluent (reading, writing, and/or speaking) in English has been life-changing, enriching, and far reaching for the children, their families and especially, the volunteers.

Rice Ministry

WEPC members contribute rice weekly to the area food bank. In 2015 almost a ton of rice (2353 pounds) was contributed!

Stop Hunger Now

Stop Hunger Now gives food and life-saving aid to the world's most vulnerable people, and works to end global hunger in our lifetime. Established in 1998, SHN has provided over 225 million meals in 73 countries. WEPC began this program to celebrate the church's Centennial in 2012. After four years and increasing involvement from the community over 100,000 meals (in 2015, the number was 63,000) have been packed for use around the world.

Christmas for Moore (formerly Empty Stocking Fund)

WEPC has supported the newly renamed Christmas for Moore for many years. Last year the church helped 43 families, all with children, and provided a food voucher, Christmas gifts for children, and household items for these needy families.

Family Promise

Family Promise has been a mission of WEPC since the 1990s. Our church along with other Moore County churches support homeless families (women and children) by providing dinner, overnight housing, breakfast, and transportation for a week. The churches rotate weeks and WEPC provides this ministry every nine weeks or five to six times per year. In April of 2016, 70 volunteers were needed. The church provides \$2,000 annually to support this mission.

Who are the members of West End Presbyterian Church?

- 60% are females; 40% are males.
- 80% are 55 and older with the 50-60 age group representing the largest number.
- Young families and plenty of children are present.
- While interested in diversity, there is no racial or ethnic diversity.
- Vast majority married and couples without children living in the home.
- Vast majority have education beyond high school with one third having post graduate work or degree.
- Half the congregation is retired, with most of the remaining working full-time.
- Occupations are professional and technical- many employed in education and health care.
- 15 percent self-employed, independent business.
- While household income exceeds \$150,000 for some, average income seems to be about \$80,000.
- Annual pledges total between \$1,000 to \$8,000 with most frequent gifts between \$1,500 to \$5,000. This does not reflect giving to the current capital campaign.
- 85% of the congregation have lived in this area for 10 or more years and half of these for 20 or more years.
- Forty percent of the congregation was reared in the Presbyterian denomination with a lesser number of Methodists and Baptists.

Seven Lakes, NC Data & Demographics (As of July 1, 2015)

POPULATION		HOUSING	
Total Population	5,167	Total Housing Units	2,454 (100%)
Population in Households	5,162	Owner Occupied HU	2,027 (82.6%)
Population in Families	4,584	Renter Occupied HU	200 (8.1%)
Population in Group Qtrs	5	Vacant Housing Units	227 (9.3%)
Population Density ¹	616	Median Home Value	\$244,103
Diversity Index ²	20	Average Home Value	\$308,588

HOUSEHOLDS		INCOME	
Total Households	2,227	Median Household Income	\$53,765
Average Household Size	2.32	Average Household Income	\$69,852
Family Households	1,742	Per Capita Income	\$29,891
Average Family Size	3		

(Compound Annual Growth Rates)

GROWTH RATES	2010-2015	2015-2020
Population	1.06%	1.19%
Households	1.23%	1.21%
Families	0.84%	1.14%
Median Household Income		1.24%
Per Capita Income		2.24%

1) Population Density = Total Population per square mile.

2) The Diversity Index is a scale of 0 to 100 that represents the likelihood that two persons, chosen at random from the same area, belong to different race or ethnic groups. If an area's entire population belongs to one race AND one ethnic group, then the area has zero diversity. An area's diversity index increases to 100 when the population is evenly divided into two or more race/ethnic groups.

Based on Census 2010 counts, the Diversity Index for the United States was 60.6 and it is expected to increase to 64.8 by July 1, 2018.