

A Sense of Permanence

By Nancy & Jim Carter, Westminster members

Permanence? Not in my vocabulary growing up as an “Army Brat,” moving at least every 3 years as long as I can remember. That pattern continued when Nancy and I married...many moves, homes, and churches across the country over our almost forty-four years of marriage. Continuing the move up the “corporate ladder,” we packed up yet again in 1982 when we came to Minnesota. We knew that something had to change. Our children were entering high school and middle school, and we felt that we needed to stay in one place until they had both graduated from high school.

Westminster quickly became the source for our family for worship, fellowship, and service. Guess what? In 1990—both kids out of high school—we moved again (Toronto, Allentown, Atlanta). Upon our return to Minnesota and Westminster in 2000, we still hadn’t given much thought to the notion of permanence until Nancy’s oldest brother died unexpectedly, having done little to no end-of-life preparation. This lack of preparation and communication with his family created stress at a very difficult time. We vowed not to put our children and extended family in the same predicament and immediately updated our wills. Interment ideas? Nothing satisfactory until the Westminster Memorial Garden Columbarium became available in 2008. We immediately purchased a niche, and are very secure with our decision. Our children are comfortable with and supportive of our plans to be interred at Westminster, where they grew up and where we’ve invested our energies.

We have no doubt that there is comfort in having plans that relieve the family of having to making permanent decisions in the throes of grieving. We don’t know your circumstance, but we urge you to consider end-of-life planning if you have not already done so. For further information about the Memorial Garden’s Columbarium or Memorial Wall, please feel free to contact us, Sam Cooke, or any of Westminster’s pastors. Brochures are also available on the church Information Tables and the online, www.ewestminster.org.