

# Ministry Minute

## What is the Ministry Minute?

### “Getting the Inside Scoop on the Storyteller”



#### **Westwood Ministry Minute (noun) definition:**

*An article that spotlights people, staff, lay groups, ministries, the generosity of people’s time, talents, and financial gifts, or events happening at Westwood to inspire and motivate the congregation with impactful stories.*

Earlier this year, Pastor Jason Van Hunnik and the new Director of Communications, Tricia Goede, discussed more ways to communicate with the congregation about various ministries at Westwood. His initial goals were to: 1) Inform people of happenings at Westwood they may not be aware of. 2) Share the impact the people, events, or ministries have on others at Westwood or the greater community.

“It’s amazing how many things are happening ‘behind the scenes’ among Westwood members. Prior to working at Westwood, our family came 1-2 times a week and thought we were ‘in the know.’ However, I never truly knew the abundance of volunteers, lay teams, and ministries offered at Westwood and where people can be involved,” said Tricia.

Some call it a coincidence; others may say it is a “God-incidence” when the right thing happens at the right moment.

God blessed Westwood with a new member, Rene Kaluza. She spent 40-plus years as a newspaper reporter and editor in St. Cloud and wanted to be involved at Westwood. She began offering her time as a rotating volunteer in the church office. Pastor Jason and Rene talked further, and the use of her gifts and talents blossomed into being the primary interviewer and writer for the “E-News Ministry Minute.” A natural connection was made, allowing Rene to learn about her new faith community while providing short, impactful stories for the congregation.



**Rene Kaluza & daughter Kate**

Rene has a passion for stories. Recalling past experiences, she said, “I loved helping tell the stories of people, events, and ideas that drove our [St. Cloud] community. It was rewarding to watch the writers I worked with [and trained] grow into accomplished storytellers. When Pastor Jason asked me about working on the Ministry Minute, I saw it as a way to share Westwood’s stories and showcase the opportunities Westwood gives its members to share the work we need to do at home and in the world.”

Since March, Rene has shared a variety of narratives from different ministries: affinity groups, Westwood gardeners, men’s Bible study, youth trips, prayer shawl and quilting ministries, to name a few. Her gift of writing captures the generosity and impact of others here at Westwood.

She further commented, “My favorite part of this is when I can hear in someone’s voice the joy and excitement they have for the work they are doing. No one puts himself or herself first. They might admit to being the conductor, but they always say it’s their band that carries the tune. While they take pride in the work they and their team accomplish, they are never prideful.”

Members should be proud and joyful to share the many actions and activities that make Westwood the vibrant and engaging faith community it is today.

Pastor Jason said, “I’m so grateful to Rene for stepping forward to make the Ministry Minutes a reality. This is an active place, and folks are often not aware of several interesting ministries that are happening in and through Westwood and its people. Rene’s willingness to use her writing and editorial skills to help make this reality has been a huge asset in spreading the stories of impact.”

Tricia’s sentiment included, “I cannot express my gratitude enough for Rene’s efforts, thoughtful creativity, and ability to capture the true impact and spirit of others. I am always excited to collaborate with her on topics, especially to get the first read when I weave in the images, colors, and format, which becomes our final product.”

May the Ministry Minutes inspire you to lead a faith-filled life and consider how you can contribute your time, talents, or support to Westwood’s ministries.