



THE SPIRE

WESTMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
Pittsburgh, PA

Usually, we think of Lent as a journey. It is preceded by Jesus' Transfiguration on a mountaintop and continues over the weeks as we move toward Jerusalem, join a parade, and stop by the quiet of a garden before we reach the hill of Golgotha. Such an approach could leave us breathlessly on the move and dizzy from the experiences. How do you ground yourself in that manner?

What if we pause and consider Lent not in the context of a journey, but through the places where we find ourselves in life? Think of a map.

Of all the liturgical seasons, Lent is the one that covers the breadth of places where we live a considerable portion of our lives. We might be banished in a wilderness of temptations, revel in mountaintops of shining brilliance, or exile ourselves far from home. Scripture speaks to all of these physical places and even the place we call home.

Lent also speaks to our willingness to reside near to God's heart or to wander away by serving our own desires. We might never leave home but when we swing between living devoted to God and one another or behaving like a petulant child, we create vastly different day-to-day experiences, for ourselves and others. What kind of a place do we construct? What about that place we find ourselves when we discover the god we serve is actually not the God revealed in Jesus?

Lastly, Lent includes that place where we encounter the depth of suffering at some time in life. Plunged into such a fragile existence, the physical place does not matter since it feels like a prison.

Lent reveals to us that no matter where we find ourselves, including death, God can find us and any place can be a

place of resurrection. No matter where we are, because of Jesus, we realize that God finds us and more importantly, we can find God.

Inspired by the framework created by Barn Geese Worship – a group of creative, young theologians – this Lent we will firmly plant ourselves to God through the cross of Christ.



The cross is a place where no one expected to find God at work and yet, it remains the place God's love is most deeply displayed. Whenever we see the cross, we feel accepted and loved by God. When we see the cross, we remember no matter where we go, we always belong to God.

In Christ,
Jo Forrest

CHURCH STAFF

412-835-6630

PASTORS

DR. JO FORREST, *Senior Pastor, Head of Staff*
REV. LOUISE ROGERS, *Associate Pastor for Congregational Care*

ADMINISTRATIVE & BUSINESS SUPPORT

RICHARD MILLS, *Church Financial Manager*
KIMBERLY DUNKOVICH, *Associate Accountant*

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

FAITH KEMMLER, *Director of Children's & Family Ministry*
DEBB EGLI, *Assistant Director of Children's & Family Ministry*
ED SUTTER, *Director of Youth Ministry & Family Counseling*
LAURA ECKLIN, *Associate Director of Youth Ministry*
CASSANDRA MILLIS, *Youth Ministry Advisor*

COMMUNICATIONS

ANNA HINER, *Communications & Database Manager*
JEANNIE SCHOTT, *Graphic Design & Print/Web Manager*

MUSIC & ARTS

CHRISTINE HESTWOOD, *Director*
LORRAINE MILOVAC, *Assistant Director*
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EILEEN MURRAY, *Administrative Assistant*

PROPERTY

CHARLEY RICHARDSON, *Property Manager*
WALTER GERODA, *Head Custodian/Maintenance*

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CARA DANIELE, *Kitchen Coordinator*

WESTMINSTER RECREATION & OUTREACH CENTER (WROC)

KATHY LONG, *Director*

WESTMINSTER EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION PROGRAMS (WECEP)

DENISE BURKE, *Executive Director*

NURSERY SCHOOL

412-835-2906

CHILD DEVELOPMENT CENTER

412-835-9450

Staff email addresses and phone extensions are available on our website, www.westminster-church.org.

Read the *Spire* online at: www.westminster-church.org

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Table of Contents

3 **Worship**
Worship at Westminster
Upcoming Events
Ash Wednesday

4 **Spiritual Growth**
How Are You?
Lent 2022
Westminster Seminars
Westminster Book Group
Adult Spiritual Development
Save the Date: Barefoot School is June 20–24

8 **Outreach**
Grove City College Touring Choir Concert
Westminster Recreation & Outreach Center
Mission on the Move: City Mission




11 **Other**
Session Update
Deaths
Easter Flowers

Worship at Westminster

All are welcome to join Westminster for worship! At the 8:30 and 11:00 a.m. traditional services, we invite those who are fully vaccinated to worship without a mask and strongly encourage those who are not vaccinated to wear a mask. At the 9:45 a.m. Bridge service, masks are required of all attendees regardless of vaccination status.

If you are not comfortable attending in person worship or are traveling, visit our YouTube channel at www.youtube.com/user/WestminsterUSC or our website for links to the livestream services at 9:45 and 11:00 a.m., or watch anytime later on YouTube.

Bridge Contemporary Worship

 Sundays
 9:45 a.m.
 WROC & YouTube Livestream

Traditional Worship

 Sundays
 8:30 & 11:00 a.m.
 Sanctuary & YouTube Livestream (11:00 a.m. only)

The Lord's Supper is celebrated the first Sunday of each month.

Upcoming Events

02 Ash
MAR Wednesday
Service

04 Grove City
MAR College Touring
Choir Concert



Ash Wednesday

Quiet Prayer Time

Wednesday, March 2

1:00–1:30 p.m. in Galbreath Chapel

At 1:00 p.m., come to Galbreath Chapel for a quiet prayer time and imposition of ashes.

Ash Wednesday Worship Service

with imposition of ashes

Wednesday, March 2

6:30 p.m. in the Sanctuary

Come at 6:00 p.m. to walk through special Lenten prayer stations.



How Are You?

How many times have you been asked that question? This question easily rolls off our tongue when we meet someone, often we barely wait for a response. We are just being polite in the asking.

Generally, the response is “fine.” This works to satisfy the question. And when you think of all the terrible, awful things that could happen, we are generally “fine.” Usually, the person asking would be surprised to hear a response like: I’ve had a miserable day, my knee hurts, I forgot to call my mother – again, the national debt is three trillion dollars, and I can’t decide to mask or not to mask, COVID go away! I wish I was a cat who could curl up in a ball and sleep all day. Oh, and by the way, how are you?

Christian writer Kathleen Bostrom tells of her friend who is fluent in Spanish. He explained to a group that one of the responses given colloquially to the common greeting, “Como estas?” (How are you?) is “Aqui en la lucha,” which means “Here in the struggle.” I love that! What a perfect and honest answer. So much more expressive than “fine,” especially when you are just scraping by. A better answer than rattling off your personal litany of woes. Answering

“Here in the struggle” removes both the usual dishonest answers and the self-pitying ones.

In the Bible, many psalms, Psalm 86 included, find the writer struggling and pleading to be heard.

*Give ear, O Lord, to my prayer;
listen to my cry of supplication.
In the day of my trouble, I call on you,
for you will answer me.*

God, are you there? Are you listening? Answer me!

God replies, “Aqui en la lucha.”

Here in the struggle... No matter what we are facing, whether we choose to share with others or keep the details to ourselves, God is with us. We can always count on God being with us now, and forever more.

Thank you, God, for your abiding steadfast love.

Together on the journey,

Louise

Lent 2022

Reflections – A Lenten Devotion

Westminster's Lenten devotional for 2022 was written by people of Westminster. It is available during Lent online and in print. Daily readings can be found on the church website. Devotional books or daily readings are available at the church.

Here is an excerpt from this year's devotional:

Sometimes, life here on earth can be complicated, demanding, and busy. When the demands of life leave us rushing from place to place with scarcely a moment to spare, we may fail to pause and say a word of thanks for all the good things we received. But when we fail to count our blessings, we rob ourselves the happiness, the peace, and gratitude that should rightfully be ours.

Today, even if you're busily engaged in life, slow down long enough to start counting your blessings. Then, give thanks to our God, the Giver of all good things.

Heavenly Father, Your gifts are greater than what I can imagine. May I live each day with thanksgiving in my heart and praise on my lips. Let me share the joyous news of Your Son and let my life be a testimony to Your love and grace. Amen.

– Missy DalBon



Westminster Seminars

In Person and Online

Sundays, 9:45 – 10:30 a.m.
Galbreath Chapel & Zoom

The Westminster Seminars address, in various ways, how our beliefs and practices as Christians enrich our lives in today's culture. Everyone is welcome – come every week or whenever the topic appeals and your schedule allows. If you can't join in person or on Zoom, plan to watch or listen later on the Westminster website – under News & Media – here: <https://www.westminster-church.org/news-&-media/westminster-seminars>.

The Zoom meeting opens at 9:30 for greetings and conversation. Find the link on the church website under Featured Events or in the Friday church email.

Lenten Series

Interpreting the Bible is always something that can stir people up. What can we learn from past efforts to understand what it meant to people in different times? What can this history reveal about what the Bible speaks to us today?

March 6, 13, 20, 27

History of Biblical Interpretation

*Kenneth J. Woo, Associate Professor of Church History
Pittsburgh Theological Seminary*

As Protestants we take as self-evident the importance of the Bible to Christian belief and practice. Yet we also affirm the rich variety of experience and contexts that comprise the history of Christianity as a global faith. How did the church in different times and places relate to Scripture and understand its meaning? In what ways did significant cultural shifts impact methods of interpreting Scripture in the church? What can the history of biblical exegesis teach us about the diverse questions God's people brought to God's word in various situations, the answers they found, and the implications of these lessons for our reading of Scripture today? Join us as we explore these and other questions together in March.

The Rev. Dr. Kenneth J. Woo teaches church history at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary, where he also directs the seminary's Master of Theological Studies program. A specialist in Reformation history and theology, Ken is the author of Nicodemism and the English Calvin (Brill, 2019). His next book – Calvin, Refugee Theologian – is forthcoming with Baker Academic. For six years Ken served as a pastor in the Washington, D.C., suburbs. He lives with his family in Pittsburgh.



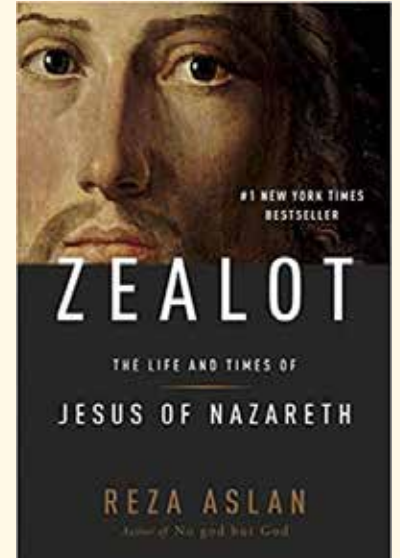
Westminster Book Group

Wednesday, March 30
Noon – 1:15 p.m.
Room 238

At the next meeting of the Westminster Book Group, we will discuss *Zealot: The Life and Times of Jesus of Nazareth* by Reza Aslan. Bring a brown bag lunch and join us.

“From the internationally best-selling author of *No god but God* comes a fascinating, provocative, and meticulously researched biography that challenges long-held assumptions about the man we know as Jesus of Nazareth.”

– Amazon



Silence for our lives

ADULT SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT

P
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T

“In order for music to be made, you must have elements of both sound and silence. This is a perfect metaphor for our relationship with God. God lures us into God's holy silence by what is resonating most in our lives. It is there that God is waiting to meet us.”

– Br. Jim Woodrum, SSJE

Save the Date

Barefoot School is June 20-24, 2022



Ready to cook up some fun? This year, Westminster's vacation Bible school invites children of all ages to get on a roll with God as a parade of Food Trucks rolls into their neighborhood for the summer's biggest party!

This VBS invites children to pray as Jesus teaches us in Matthew 6:11; "Give us this day our daily bread." These words serve as a reminder that everything we have comes from God — and that it's by turning to God in prayer that all of our daily needs are met.

At the center of the Food Truck Party is a special food truck called "On a Roll." Here, kids (or "Chefs") will learn from the food truck's Top Chef, along with DJ Cupcake (an adorable cupcake puppet), about the Daily Specials (Daily Learnings), which are lines from the well-loved prayer that teaches us to turn to God to meet our needs.

OUTREACH

Grove City College Touring Choir Concert

Friday, March 4
7:00 p.m. in the Sanctuary
freewill offering

Join us for an evening of choral music including works by Palestrina, Mozart, Vaughan Williams, Meador, Rutter, and Moses Hogan, with the Grove City College Touring Choir. The Grove City College Touring Choir, under the direction of Professor of Music Dr. Katherine Mueller, is a select group of 46 singers. The choir consists of students from a variety of academic majors and tours annually during the spring semester throughout various regions of the United States.



The GCC Touring Choir members desire to make beautiful music using the gifts and talents given them by God. In addition to the spring tour, the choir performs for churches, colleges, and community events in the western Pennsylvania area.

Put a little spring in your step with WROC Fitness Classes.

A body in motion tends to stay in motion. Moving is the key to keeping your bones strong. Check out these classes that help to build and maintain bone strength, maintain flexibility, and increase balance.

**Strong Bodies,
Strong Bones**

Exercise plays a critical role in building and maintaining bone strength. Exercise physiologist Anne Brucker presents a gentle, joint friendly OsteoDynamic program that strengthens the spine, rebuilds bone, teaches balance, and reduces fractures. Participants may choose to stand or sit and should bring a pair of light hand weights to class.

**Tuesdays & Thursdays
March 22 – May 5
10:15 – 11:05 a.m.
Cost: \$49**



Gentle Yoga

You don't have to be a contortionist or even be able to touch your toes to perform the yoga exercises and poses! This gentler, slower-paced yoga program will improve your flexibility, will increase your strength and vitality, reduce tension, and enhance inner calmness to bring health, enjoyment, and well-being into your life.

**Wednesdays, March 23 – May 4
10:00 – 11:00 a.m.**

Cost: \$63

Instructor: Larkey Miller – Board certified by the Himalayan Institute

Pole Walking

Pole Walking is one of the easiest forms of exercise most of us can do, from the casual, average walker to the serious, athletic walker. Using poles while walking increases calorie burn and cardio health, while lessening the impact on joints. The classes are taught in three one-hour sessions that include conditioning exercises, walking drills, pole technique, and outdoor adventure and cool down stretch. Instruction is easy and fun, and filled with music and laughter, as we all learn to embrace the Nordic exercise phenomenon of pole walking.



**Mondays, March 28 – April 11
1:00 – 2:00 p.m.**

Cost: \$30

Location: WROC (gym), outside the church, and Gilfillan Trail

Instructor: Anne Brucker, M.Ed., Exercise Design

Tai Chi



Fall prevention is a function of balance. Balance is a skill that can be learned at any age and strengthened with daily practice. Muscle and bone become stronger when they are challenged to keep the body upright. Tai Chi is considered one of the best tools for achieving balance, control, and strength. This ancient Chinese art is taught in a standing posture, but excellent results can also be achieved by those who need to be seated.

**Tuesdays & Thursdays, March 22 – May 5
11:15 a.m. – 12:05 p.m.**

Cost: \$49

Instructor: Anne Brucker, M.Ed., Exercise Design

Check out our website at wroc.westminster-church.org for a complete list of fitness classes.

MISSION ON THE MOVE

City Mission



City Mission exists to share Christ, to shelter, to heal, and to restore the homeless to independent living – without discrimination. A person’s descent into homelessness can be transformed into an ascent into recovery that eliminates the barriers to independent living. City Mission, a Christ-centered rehabilitative homeless shelter located in Washington, PA, facilitates this transformation by providing food, shelter, case management, biblical based counseling, and life-changing programming. City Mission is dedicated to restoring the whole person through a Christ-centered approach that expresses God’s love for them. Their goal is to help each person who comes to City Mission to move from a life in crisis to a thriving life that is achieved through a broad spectrum of services and connections to community resources to ensure sustained recovery leading to independent living.

The Men’s Shelter had a successful year in 2021 despite the effects of the global pandemic. Policies were created to encourage social distancing and mask-wearing, and residents rose to the occasion, working to help keep everyone safe. There has not been a single case of COVID-19 across all the programs. During this time, services were stepped up, providing increased classes and recreational activities on campus at the height of the governor’s stay-at-home order. Recovery meetings remained on site. Residents received hybrid treatment through both on site and teleservices with outside providers. As state restrictions for COVID-19 relaxed, outside visits

to providers increased, and residents slowly returned to outside meetings following the CDC’s COVID-19 guidelines.

City Mission’s single Women’s Program offers a holistic approach to life transformation, from intake to recovery and re-entry. Many of the women in the program work while balancing their recovery and their spiritual walk. They attend devotions, Bible studies, chapel services, groups, work readiness, drug and alcohol counseling, outpatient therapy, mental health counseling, and one-on-one case management with their House Coordinator.

City Mission tracks monthly 15 metrics of recovery for each client. These include Mental Health, Addiction Recovery, Medical Health, and Legal Issues.

City Mission’s 2021 outcomes include 136,000 meals served, 56,000 nights of shelter, 9,700 medical services, 1,156 individuals served, 139 jobs obtained, and 70% success rate.

Dozens of Westminster members have volunteered at City Mission serving meals, working in the distribution center, working in stores, in worship, and as mentors. Dan Paul has been a member of City Mission’s board for seven years.

– Dan Paul



“This time last year, I was depressed, but today I have hope. The Mission is a place of restoration. A place of giving life to the lifeless.”

– Carmella, City Mission Resident



“When I had nowhere else to go, their doors were open. They took me in graciously. They’ve given me hope. I’ve gotten my confidence and dignity back.”

– Matt, City Mission Resident



“The gratitude I have in my heart for this place is indescribable. It is always going to be a part of my life. City Mission is forever engraved on my heart.”

– Renee, City Mission Resident

Session Update

On February 11 and 12, the newly ordained and installed officers of Westminster gathered in the sanctuary for a retreat. Since the pandemic quarantines of early 2021 did not permit a retreat, this gathering felt particularly joyful. On Friday evening, we reflected on the challenges and accomplishments of 2021. In a trying year, this congregation created stability and spiritual growth that will enable it to make investments in 2022 and beyond. The evening concluded with a worship service led by elders and deacons in which everyone offered a prayer and lit a candle for our future.

On Saturday, our conversation in the WROC explored the ways Westminster may embody the priorities to accept



everyone, inspire wonder and meaning, pursue justice, and energize the next generation. The variety of ideas will shape the ways this church will love God and neighbor.

Later that morning, a Session meeting was held in which the 2022 operating budget was approved. This budget will be presented at the congregation's Annual Meeting on February 27, 2022.

Deaths

Carolyn Berdanier
February 3

Heather McCleary
February 10



Easter Flowers

Spring is just around the corner. The Chancel Guild is accepting memorial/honoree contributions for Easter flowers. If you would like to participate in this Westminster tradition, please make checks payable to "Westminster Presbyterian Church," and write "Easter flowers" on the memo line.

Checks and forms can be mailed, dropped off at the church office, or placed in the Sunday collection plate.

Your contribution and completed form must be received **by Monday, April 11**, so that your gift can be listed in the Easter Sunday bulletin. Please indicate on the form if you will pick up your Easter flower following the Bridge or 11:00 service on Easter Sunday, or if you would like the deacons to deliver your flower to a shut-in.

EASTER FLOWERS ORDER FORM

In memory In honor

Name of memorial/honoree (PLEASE PRINT)

Please deliver flower to a shut-in I will pick up the flower

My name _____

Please return this form to the church office by **Monday, April 11**.





WESTMINSTER
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

2040 Washington Road
Pittsburgh, PA 15241
www.westminster-church.org
A PC(USA) Congregation

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www.youtube.com/user/WestminsterUSC

The scripture says, "No one who believes in him will be put to shame." For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; the same Lord is Lord of all and is generous to all who call on him. For, "Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved."

Romans 10:11-13

