



THE SPARE

WESTMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
Pittsburgh, PA

Several years ago, I had the privilege of walking St. Cuthbert's Way, a pilgrim trail that begins just below Edinburgh and traverses the border lands between Scotland and England, ending at the North Sea. St. Cuthbert roamed that region in the early seventh century, introducing Christianity with only the Gospel of John and the psalms he sang by heart.

Most days we enjoyed cool breezes and blue sky with the exception of one day when we slogged across the hilltops of open fields, in rain and fog, with thunder rumbling in the distance. The wet air hid the normally bright trail markers, forcing us to rely upon the footpath worn by pilgrims.... and the cows. Those darn cows had worn so many paths in varying directions, we doubled back several times, only adding to the tensions caused by the thunder and already long day.

We learned to cope with uncertainty and a bit of lostness.

Plodding our way out of this pandemic reminds me of this hike. We take a few steps forward with many people celebrating their vaccine doses, and

yet you know there is a step back in this cliché. Is it two or three steps back as so many members of our community continue to fall ill? Is it kids returning to schools only to be sent home, with parents again scrambling to balance their care and work? You can fill in the blank with the range of life's joys and routines still disrupted.

We cope with uncertainty because of our faith.



Our faith history teaches us to persist across the wide range of emotions. Write poetry of God's goodness. Lament, loudly. Hold vigil with the sick. Rail against injustice. Our forebears in faith teach us to grieve our losses. Keep on keeping on.

From their experiences we cannot be surprised when God startles us with an empty tomb.

The mystery of Christ's resurrection beckons us to know that the bleakness will give way to new growth.

On St. Cuthbert's Way, our rain drenched hike ended at a cozy inn with hot tea. We made our way to the English coast and at low tide walked the sandy floor of the North Sea to

the Holy Island. It was quiet. Simple. And it is hauntingly clear that St. Cuthbert prevailed to bring the good news to this part of God's world.

Our sermon series during Eastertide will explore how the earliest followers of Jesus found a way to share the good news despite opposition, and how they experienced their own unexpected joy.

In this year of such uncertainty, we

have one sure thing – the tomb was and is empty. God brings the dawn of good news. We can choose how we carry this forward.

In faith,
Jo

PASTORS

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

ADMINISTRATIVE & BUSINESS SUPPORT

PEG KINSEY, *Executive Assistant to the Pastors*
 RICHARD MILLS, *Church Financial Manager*
 KIMBERLY DUNKOVICH, *Associate Accountant*

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

NATALIE BROWN, *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*

COMMUNICATIONS

ANNA HINER, *Communications & Database Manager*
 JEANNIE SCHOTT, *Graphic Design & Print/Web Manager*
 LAURA WHITCOMB, *Print Room Assistant*

MUSIC & ARTS

CHRISTINE HESTWOOD, *Director*
 LORRAINE MILOVAC, *Assistant Director*
 JIM BURNS, *Organist*
 EILEEN MURRAY, *Administrative Assistant*

PROPERTY

CHARLEY RICHARDSON, *Property Manager*

VOLUNTEER MINISTRY

JAN BAUMANN, *Volunteer Coordinator*
 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

The Spire is published monthly by the church staff from September through June. Contributions can be made by emailing a Word document to *Spire* editor Sara Kyle at sara@ruhlekyle.org. The deadline for submitting an article is the fifth day of every month for the following month's issue. Please include the author's name, telephone number, email address, and a title. All articles are subject to editing.

Table of Contents

3 **Worship**
 Worship at Westminster
 Upcoming Events

4 **Spiritual Growth**
 Easter Questions
 Between Here and There
 Westminster Seminars Online
 Westminster Book Group
 Walk in Spirit
 Adult Spiritual Development
 Children & Families: Save the Date!
 All Aboard the Rocky Railway

9 **Outreach**
 Deacon Happenings
 Westminster Recreation & Outreach Center




10 **Other**
 2021 Easter Giving
 Financial Update
 Session Update
 Deaths

Worship at Westminster




Beginning Sunday, April 4, the 8:30 a.m. traditional worship service returns in person. Please make a reservation in advance to attend in person worship services on Sunday mornings by visiting our website at www.westminster-church.org and clicking on the "Worship Reservations" button.

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. Sunday mornings (no livestream at 8:30 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

04 Easter Sunday
APR

25 Veritas Cornhole Tournament
APR

28 Westminster Book Group
APR

Holy Week Worship

Palm Sunday, March 28

9:45 a.m. – Bridge Worship
WROC & livestream

11:00 a.m. – Traditional Worship

Sanctuary & livestream

Cherub Choir sings "Little Grey Donkey," Easter Egg Hunt for children; children will be dismissed from worship.

Maundy Thursday, April 1

7:30 p.m. – Service of Tenebrae
Sanctuary & livestream

Evening to recall the passion of our Lord, with music and candle lighting.

Good Friday, April 2

noon – 3:00 p.m.
Galbreath Chapel open for quiet, personal prayer.

Easter Worship

Easter Sunday, April 4

Communion will be served at all services. Reservations required for all indoor services. Masks required.

6:30 a.m. – Sunrise Service
North courtyard (Fellowship Hall, if inclement weather)
with Ed Sutter and Louise Rogers

8:30 a.m. – Traditional Worship
Sanctuary
with brass quartet and virtual choir performance of the Hallelujah Chorus from Handel's Messiah, Jo Forrest preaching

9:45 a.m. – Bridge Worship
WROC & livestream
with praise band, Jo Forrest preaching

11:00 a.m. – Traditional Worship
Sanctuary & livestream
with brass quartet and virtual choir performance of the Hallelujah Chorus from Handel's Messiah, Jo Forrest preaching



Easter Questions

When my daughters were young, we came to Easter worship at Westminster Church with my extended family. We all got dressed up in our Sunday best and a few of us arrived early to “hold our pew.” We got the one we wanted, five rows back on the right-hand side. A bit later, the rest of the family arrived along with hundreds of other church goers in their Sunday best. The sanctuary was adorned with pretty bright tulips, Easter lilies, and hydrangeas. The brass musicians were already sitting up front ready to lead the congregation in “Christ the Lord Is Risen today!” Yes, everything was falling into place for Sunday worship.

Just before the service was to begin, a grandmother and her young grandson, Tim, came down the center aisle and squeezed in the pew behind us. The boy had never been to church before. He asked questions about everything he saw. “Why are there flowers on the widows?” “What are all these people doing here?” “Why is the ceiling so high?” Questions went on during the service, too.

Tim loved passing the peace, but other parts of the service were boring to him. “Who is that man in the funny robe?” the boy asked during the sermon. Then he blurted out, “Jesus, who is Jesus? Why are we talking about Jesus so much?” Quickly his grandmother bent over and whispered to him, “He is why we are here. Jesus rose from the dead and we came to worship him.” But that innocent, direct question stayed with me.

The beautiful Easter flowers, the grand music, the word proclaimed, the gathering for worship all proclaimed the risen Christ. Yet, Tim’s question got to the heart of the matter. Who is this Jesus? Why are we talking about him so much? I can begin with a few formal answers:

In Jesus, God came into the world to live among us – incarnation.

Jesus was God’s Son, truly divine and truly human – hypostatic union.

Jesus died for us, took our sins and by his death brought a new possibility for living – atonement.

Jesus died but was raised from the dead by the power of God – resurrection.

Matthew 29:1-15, Mark 16:1-8, Luke 24:1-12, John 20:1-10

Jesus conquered sin and death in the resurrection, so we receive a life lived forever in the presence of God in heaven – eternal life.

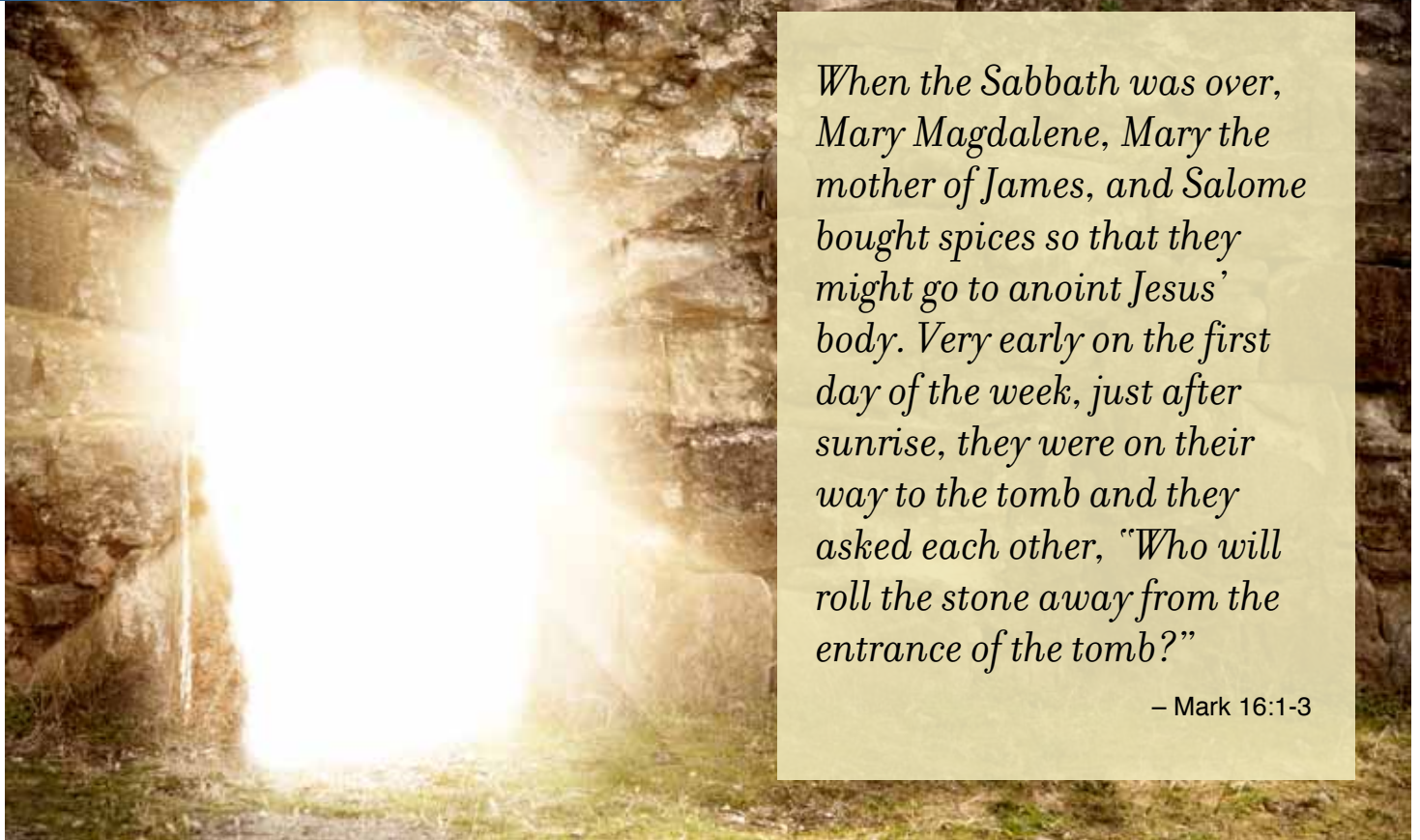


The question “Who is Jesus?” begs a personal response from us, too. Who is Jesus for you and me? For me, Jesus is the one who knows me completely, claims me as his own, forgives my sins, loves me totally, and transforms my heart and life daily to be more and more like him. I believe in him and live humbly having received his grace. To quote a popular song, “He is my all and all.”

This Easter season, I pray for all of us to experience the gift of wonder that Tim found in worship. May we experience again the power of the miracle, Christ is alive. The same power of love that raised Christ from the dead is able to raise us to new life so we can live the kind of loving, trusting, and obedient lives God intended. Yes, this is good news for us to celebrate!

Together on the journey,

Louise



When the Sabbath was over, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought spices so that they might go to anoint Jesus' body. Very early on the first day of the week, just after sunrise, they were on their way to the tomb and they asked each other, "Who will roll the stone away from the entrance of the tomb?"

– Mark 16:1-3

Though the details of the story are undoubtedly different, my hunch is that this story of "the first Easter" is strikingly similar to the Easters with which you're familiar. These three verses give us the image of a small group of people gathering in the name of an important tradition – and there's no shortage of details with which to concern oneself! I love this question: "Who will roll away the stone?" It sure is easy to get bogged down in the details of a busy day.

Here's why I think that these are important verses: even in the midst of our busyness, our daily tasks, and our focus on the practical matters of any given day ("Who will move that rock?"), Jesus is still working. When I read that question, there's something deeply relatable. "Who will roll the stone away..." could easily be "Who's going to get the kids from the bus stop?" or "Do I need to go to the grocery store?" or "Where am I going to fit that meeting into my schedule?" These tend to be the questions on the forefront of our mind. Much less often do we wonder things like "How will Jesus show me life and resurrection today?" There's absolutely no sense in this story that these women have any clue that they're about to walk into one of the most influential moments in creation's history. They're just going about their business.

Perhaps that feels particularly relatable in this season of COVID-19. Someone said to me a few months ago, "Every

decision feels consequential." I think that continues to be true as we look more and more closely at what it means to reopen. With whom do we gather? Are they comfortable and safe? Am I comfortable and safe? We've always had lots on our minds – especially around the holidays – and for many of us, that might be particularly true this year. So, here's the lesson in all of this: in the midst of your decisions, in the midst of your tasks, concerns, and chores, don't forget that Jesus can do some wild stuff – even when you're not looking for it.

We're all susceptible to this. Some of us are ready to dive right back in ("Move that stone!") and others of us aren't quite there yet, but we've all got something on our mind. As we walk through this Easter season, what are the "stones" that are holding your attention? What tasks have become forefront in your mind, and what might it look like if they were rolled away to reveal what Jesus was doing behind the scenes?

Has something drawn your attention away from our Risen Savior? What would it take to roll that distraction away? I'd love to hear your story.

Be well, friends.

– Ed Sutter

Westminster Seminars Online

Welcome All!

Live on Sundays – NEW Time!
9:45 – 10:30 a.m.
Zoom

The Zoom meeting will open at 9:30 a.m. for greetings and conversation. Find the link on the church website or in the Friday church email.

Want to catch the seminar online and attend in person worship? Bring your smart phone or tablet to Galbreath Chapel and join the seminar on Zoom. Seating will be limited to ensure your safety.

We extend a warm invitation to folks near and far to join us on Zoom or watch later on the Westminster website here:
<https://www.westminster-church.org/news-&-media/westminster-seminars>.

APRIL SERIES (no seminar on Easter Sunday, April 4)

April 11, 18, 25

Reinhold Niebuhr and Paul Tillich

John E. Wilson

Niebuhr and Tillich were the most influential American theologians of the 20th century, and their influence and importance have continued into this century. They were at one time colleagues at Union Theological Seminary in New York; Tillich was later professor of theology at Harvard and the University of Chicago. More than any other theologian, Niebuhr has informed the way the traditional "mainline" churches approach social ethics, while Tillich remains the most prominent representative of "liberal" theology. This series will provide an introduction and review, especially by way of a consideration of texts selected from their publications.

Please join us as we learn about how these two theologians, each great in his own way, continue to influence how we practice Christianity in today's world.

John E. Wilson is a former professor of church history at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary. His several books are in the area of modern theology, but at PTS he taught all areas of church history. He is married to Nana, who facilitates the Centering Prayer group at Westminster. They have three grown children and three grandchildren.

Westminster Book Group

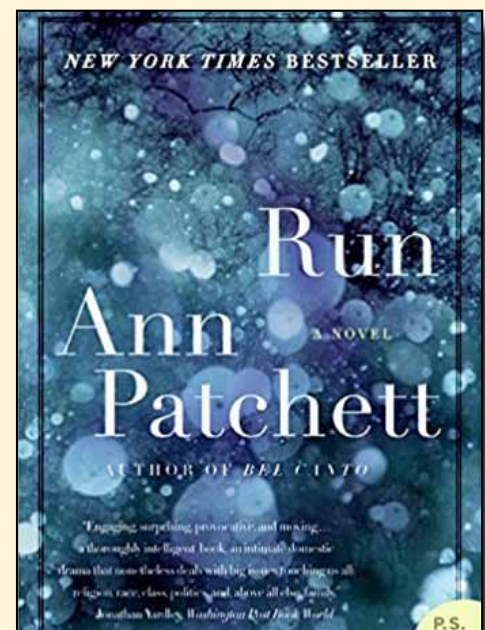
Wednesday, April 28
Noon – 1:15 p.m.

The next meeting of the Westminster Book Group will be on Zoom and in Room 238. The zoom link can be found in the meeting announcement on the church website. We will be reading *Run* by Ann Patchett.

"Engaging, surprising, provocative and moving...a thoroughly intelligent book, an intimate domestic drama that nonetheless deals with big issues touching us all: religion, race, class, politics and, above all else, family."

– *The Washington Post*

We invite you to join us either by Zoom or in person in Room 238.



Walk in Spirit

You are invited to “see God in the everyday” and join us to Walk in the Spirit on Gilfillan Trail. While it is still difficult to offer group labyrinth walks and remain socially distant, the trail provides a familiar space for group walks. This is an occasion to walk with the intention of inviting the Spirit to be present as we commune with nature and enjoy casual conversation.

Spiritual walking is a common practice in religions and faith groups worldwide. Walks may be pilgrimages to sacred sites, prayer walking in cloisters, walking the labyrinth, or prayers and mantra practice while walking. Walks welcome all who desire to deepen their spiritual connection.

Gilfillan Trail offers easy access and, like the labyrinth, it is a circular path. The trail is ordinary but full of surprises along the way. It is in the midst of daily life but invites us to step out of the routine for a while. Walking in the Spirit is living a life in the Spirit. It's living life in the presence of the Spirit of God.

Join others from the Westminster community as we step out for three informal spiritual walks, weather permitting:

Sunday, April 18, 3:00 p.m.

Thursday, April 22, 3:00 p.m.

Monday, April 26, 10:30 a.m.

Watch for details in the Westminster weekly emails.

Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit. Let us not become conceited, provoking and envying each other.

– Galatians 5:25-26

– Barbara Myers
Adult Spiritual Development Commission



Silence for our lives

P
R
I
E
T

Lord Jesus, create in us silence so that we may listen to your voice in Creation and in the Scriptures, in events and in people, above all in the poor and suffering. May your word guide us so that we may experience the power of your resurrection and witness to others that you are alive in our midst as source of fraternity, justice, and peace. Amen.

— Carmelite prayer

Save the Date! All Aboard the Rocky Railway

Barefoot School, Westminster's Vacation Bible School, will be chugging along the railway June 21-25, 9:00 a.m. – noon. Children going into kindergarten through sixth grade are welcome to join and participate in the fun and learn about Jesus. This year, Barefoot School will take place at the church. COVID-19 precautions will be in place. Registration will begin May 1, 2021.

Come and Meet:
Ramsey the Ram
Ava the Hawk
Sierra the Lion
Finn the Fish
Lawrence the Elk

Teen and adult volunteers are needed. Please contact directors Kelly Ralston and Beth Ketterman for information at barefootschool@westminster-church.org. We hope to see you June 21-25.



Deacon Happenings

The Deacons work to serve Christ through caring ministries. At Westminster Church last year, many of the traditional caring programs were stalled due to COVID-19 restrictions. Our Deacons got busy and created new ways to care for the congregation and community while keeping safe.

Here is a collection of the ways they are reaching out to our members and the wider community at this time and for the future.

- Service to Westminster community: Deacons will be connecting by **making care calls** to check in, **providing meals to families** when necessary, **sending uplifting cards** through the Snappy Spiritual Team, and occasionally **taking items to members** who are limited in getting to church through the Surprise and Delight Team. This year we are also adding **Game Nights on Zoom** so members can get to know each other and have fun while we are apart!
- The Deacons extend care to the wider community, too. **Blood Drives** are held at Westminster four times a year. **Treasures for Troops** provides unique items to show appreciation to our troops for their service. **The Giving Gala** supports organizations that care for those in need in our area by raising needed funds. This year the Deacons will be **assembling buckets** for Presbyterian Disaster Assistance to go to families in crises.
- Look for the Deacon offerings this year as they reach out to care and share God's love to others. Thank you, Deacons, for your committed, caring work for others. If you have a caring need or a comment for the Deacons, please contact Matt Baculik at 412-298-0587 or Louise Rogers at 412-835-6630.

*Jesus said,
"Just as I have loved you,
you must also
love one another."*

– John 13:34

Westminster Recreation and Outreach Center

With perseverance, creativity, and the commitment of dedicated WROC fitness instructors, we continue to offer fitness programs safely and to maintain focus on the WROC mission:

"To reach out to people for Jesus Christ and develop their faith through recreational activities and Christian fellowship."

WROC fitness classes resumed in July with COVID-19 safety protocols and guidelines. Things look different at the WROC – temperature checks, health screenings, signs posted to ensure mask wearing and social distancing. Registration is now online only, and class sizes and offerings are limited.

Despite the changes, classes are full or close to full and you still hear the distinctive music, laughter, prayer, and conversation from each class and activity. Coming together, even six feet apart, allows us to have fellowship and share the love of Christ with each other. Please join us.

Gentle (Hatha) Yoga

This class emphasizes a gentle form of the classical hatha yoga poses and slow-moving yoga postures. It is a less intense, less strenuous yoga practice than a flow yoga class. It is appropriate for those who want a softer, nurturing, slow-paced relaxing practice. It is ideal for people with movement limitations, stiffness due to lack of activity, and relief from conditions such as arthritis, back pain, fibromyalgia, and other musculoskeletal issues. For seniors, new practitioners, and those seeking stress-reduction.

Class is appropriate for people of all sizes, fitness levels, and ages.

April 14 – May 26
Wednesdays: 10:00 – 11:00 a.m.
Cost: \$63

2021 Easter Giving

Given By:

Nancy & Ray Balach
Fritz & Linda Balsinger
Pat Boyd & Courtney Grant
Elizabeth Camody
Elizabeth Carmelite
Donna Carroll
Carol & George Couch
Blair, Missy & Callee DalBon

Janis Davis
Jay Descalzi
Susan Fitzsimmons
Bev & Dave Hilty
Hester Joseph & Family
Kathy Knopp
Candy Kottyan
Ted & Sara Kyle
Jack Laffin Family
Marilyn Lindstrom
Bill & Maureen Ludwig
Ruth & Joni McMillen
John & Joyce Michael
Margie Mueller
Andie & Bob Noah
Ruth O'Brien
Nancy Page
Kelly & Richard Ralston
Robert Ralston
Bill & Denise Rost

Kathy Roth
Nancy Schneider, Rick & Bill
Rick & Alicia Scott
Simon Family
Roy & Carole Strobe
Bonnie Thompson
Susan & John Van Cleve
Joan E. Watson
Barb & John Wehn
Karen Williams

Marge Zeller

Given By:

Schofield & Fitzsimmons Family

In Loving Memory of:

Parents
Loved Ones
Mary Jane Pietrzak
parents, Clinton & Katharine Denny
Virginia Moir
John Carroll; family members
Rhonda Cattrill Leary
brother & uncle, Mike Shields;
grandparents, Dave & Sis Shields
Robert Davis
Joan Descalzi
Gilbert Fitzsimmons
Parents
Joe A. Joseph
Walter Knopp
Mimi & Frank Esherick
Edward R. Cathcart
Rachel Laffin
Carl G. Lindstrom; parents
Jack O'Brien
Francis & Lillian McMillen
Christine Michael Torie; Carol Fuller
John F. Rackley Sr.
Parents
Jack O'Brien
Paul H. & Russell L. Page
Abbey Victoria; Karen Ralston
Karen Ralston; Abbey Ralston
Kate, Lily, Bill Sr. & Kay Rost;
Tom, Barbara, Doug & Terry Fry
Bowlas & Roth families
Chris Norton
Carlotta & Carmello Massinople
Loved Ones
Parents
Al Thompson
Parents
Thomas, Dorothy & John Watson
Those lost to COVID-19
parents, Paul & Marthe Haupt;
Gregg Yeager
parents, Betty & Warren Rauh;
sister, Pat Schroeder

In Honor of:

Jane Wallace; Lucille Fitzsimmons



Financial Report

As of February 28, 2021

Income	
February Income	\$189,474.17
February Budget Income	\$146,860.33
YTD 2021 Income	\$365,027.74

Expenses	
February Expenses	\$166,429.57
February Budget Expenses	\$206,216.08
YTD 2021 Expenses	\$311,533.90

Session Update

On March 15, the session met, with almost everyone present. The commitment to serve and to do so faithfully each month is such an asset to this church and our future.

Dave Heilman was elected to serve as Treasurer, completing John Null's term. He will stand for re-election in the fall at the next election of officers. John Null has been clear in his commitment to remain engaged in several outstanding issues in which he has unique history and expertise.

Louise Rogers reported on the progress of in person worship and plans for Easter. The 8:30 service will return on Easter Sunday and remain going forward.

Commissions shared their response to "what is God calling them in 2021+." In addition to the reports, these responses served to connect the work of the commissions and remind us our work is to God's glory.

In our congregation, COVID continues to raise its very ugly head. Many members continue to become infected, many are suffering, and we felt a palpable sense of fear among several elders for family members. Even though we are opening for in person events, we must remain diligent in safety protocols. How easily it has become not newsworthy that 1,500+ people die each day in our country.

– Jo Forrest

Deaths

Frank Knoerdel

March 10





**WESTMINSTER
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**

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

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED
DATED MATERIAL — PLEASE DELIVER PROMPTLY

This *Spire* was printed on paper that contains 30% recycled post-consumer fiber, is EcoLogo certified, and was manufactured in Canada using biogas.

Thank you for helping to care for God's creation by recycling this *Spire*.



www.facebook.com/Westminster.Pittsburgh



www.youtube.com/user/WestminsterUSC

*Christ our Passover has been sacrificed for us;
therefore let us keep the feast,*

*Not with the old leaven, the leaven of malice and evil,
but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.*

Alleluia.

— Book of Common Prayer, 1979

