



THE SPARE

WESTMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
Pittsburgh, PA

My friends,

Someone commented on contemporary American church life saying that we have fallen into a way of life that he called "The Mediocre Commission," that goes like this: *Then Jesus said unto them, "Go, invite people to come sit for an hour in worship once every six weeks or so, telling them that very little will be expected of them, that they will hear good music and that there will be coffee and snacks." But, Peter aggrieved and anxious said, "But, what if there is football?" And Jesus replied, "Well, that is a problem."*

It has often amazed, astounded, bewildered, baffled, confounded, confused, and concerned me that able, gifted, creative people are so timid when it comes to Christian service. I really don't know why some accept the mediocre commission.

What I do know is that Christ's work will be accomplished because, thank God, there are those who accept the responsibility of the Great Commission (Matthew 28:18-20) to go into the world and live the love of Jesus Christ.

We express our devotion to Christ when we serve. More than the fact that Jesus commands us to serve, it is, in reality, the key to real usefulness:

- *The key to greatness is found in bearing fruit in service.* Is it not true that the people we admire and look up to the most, whose lives challenge us to reach higher, are those who are busy serving, busy bearing the fruit of the Spirit as they help other people?

- *The key to personal happiness is found in service.* Service pulls you out of your preoccupation with self and focuses your time, interest, and talents on others who need you. It is in serving them that you really find your purpose, your place, and your happiness.
- *The key to community is found in service.* The fruit of a loving, warmhearted, happy church is found in serving other people. Churches that are busy serving others never have time to be petty.

People walk in darkness and despair, and we offer them the light of encouragement. People are lost in loneliness and we offer them friendship and a family of faith. People are drowning in deprivation and we extend a hand to help.

We're involved with SHIM and Produce to People and World Vision and City Mission and Homewood, and that's just in our community. We're involved worldwide in Haiti and Malawi and India. Personally, financially, prayerfully we support so many other people and places here and internationally.

There is no way we can meet every need or support every organization. But we must do everything we can because we are responsible to do our share of putting back together a very broken and bruised world.

We are responsible for providing first-class preschool and children's ministries, ministries for our youth and young families and for senior adults and single adults. It is our responsibility to learn of the needs of those in our congregation,

to carry them the comfort of a meal, the prayers for healing, to visit them when they're in the hospital.

We have a financial responsibility to support the ministries of the church, the ongoing mission.

We are responsible, and every member here really is in the ministry. Just look at the signpost to worship on your worship bulletin: *We seek to be a caring community of faith committed to bringing people to Christ and developing their faith through worshiping God together, teaching the faith, and serving in mission.*

In a church like this, with nearly 1,800 members, we are always in danger of losing people to the assumption that they are not needed, who want the joy of being in a working, growing, serving church, but feel they don't need to make a commitment to serve. I would rather have 1,800 members each doing one thing than 18 trying to do 100 things.

I remember an elder at a presbytery meeting saying that he had lived in his little town for a year before he even realized that there was a Presbyterian church in town. And then one day he happened to drive by a little church, with paint peeling and shutters lopsided, and he thought to himself, "Now there's a church that looks like it needs me."

That is a much better question to ask. Not "Does this church meet my needs?" but rather, "Does this church need me?" Or even better, "Where and in what way is God calling me to serve?"

Thanks and blessings,
Bruce Lancaster

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for the Bridge, Youth & Media*

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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.

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**Traditional
Worship**

📅	Sundays
🕒	8:30* & 11:00 a.m.
📍	Sanctuary

**The Bridge
Contemporary Worship**

📅	Sundays
🕒	9:45 a.m.
📍	WROC

* 8:30 a.m. worship moves back into the sanctuary beginning Sunday, September 8.

*The Lord's Supper is celebrated the first Sunday of each month.
Gluten-free wafers are available at all services.*

Sunday Funday

Sunday, September 8

Welcome back returning families and welcome new families to the start of Sunday school on September 8. Children will receive a back-to-school blessing during worship at the 9:45 service and in Room 107 during the 11:00 service, after parents drop off their child to their new Sunday school classrooms.

We invite all families to join us after both services to enjoy Kona Ice and fellowship outside on our new playground!

Upcoming Events

**08
SEP** Regular
schedule
resumes

**20
SEP** Chatham
Baroque
concert
in the sanctuary

**22
SEP** Blood Drive
*in Fellowship
Hall*

**28
SEP** Pittsburgh
Camerata
concert
in the sanctuary



Summer

Summertime was an active, engaging time at Westminster! Here's a look at some of the exciting ways we lived out the Westminster mission of being a community of faith, worshipping God together and serving in mission.

Looking for a way to get involved and develop your faith? Join us this fall for all that Westminster has to offer.



June 21 Spiritual Day Retreat at Spiritan Center in Bethel Park.



Congregational Care Call volunteers placed **862 calls** on June 12.



200
children

Westminster's Barefoot School VBS welcomed over **200 children** and over 100 volunteers.



862
phone calls

AT WESTMINSTER

Organist Daniel Ficarri chats with concertgoers after his July 25 performance. Over **375 people** enjoyed Westminster's sanctuary and organ during this year's Organ Summer.



375
attendees

In Romney, West Virginia, **six middle school youth**, along with two adults, made home repairs throughout the community with The Jeremiah Project.



6
youth



Westminster celebrated 8:30 a.m. worship outside throughout the summer, including the Lord's Supper on the first Sunday of the month.

Over four days, our high school youth helped to feed **more than 5,000 homeless people** throughout Washington, D.C.



5,000
homeless fed



50
children

Westminster's summer Sunday school has shared Bible stories with nearly **50 children**.

Westminster Volunteers Summer Outreach

Most of us at Westminster go to the kitchen or one of several grocery stores when we are hungry. If my kids went to bed hungry it was because they were picky eaters and they weren't really that hungry or they would have found something in our kitchen to eat.

We have access to the best fruits and vegetables and we all know it costs a little more to eat healthy. On the brutally hot days of summer, we head inside where it is cool and if we choose an outdoor activity, we stay well hydrated with an assortment of drinks in fancy cooling drink cups and coolers.

There are people in our area, in our country, who don't have these options. There are children who rely on school to eat breakfast and lunch each day; and when school is out for the summer, they may go hungry. There are people who are choosing to pay rent or medical bills and skip a meal or two.

There are people who can't choose to eat healthy food because the food pantry where they "shop" – and rely on – can only stock shelf stable foods. And so they have no fruits and vegetables and their health suffers as a result.

There are people who can't get relief from the heat because they don't have a home to go home to.

As a church, we have been busy this summer trying to make a difference one person at a time.

We have collected food and packaged 320 take home bags for children in the city. When the children came to Warren United Methodist Church, Hilltop United Methodist Church, and Beechview United Presbyterian Church for a hot meal each week in July, they got a Food to Go bag provided by Westminster.

Westminster volunteers worked with the Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank for their Produce to People program and served 397 households by handing out 14,700 pounds of fresh produce in just three hours on a Saturday morning at the Martin Luther King Elementary School on the North Side.

We have a group of volunteers led by Sue Wyble who have been gardening each week during the growing season at Gilfillan Farm right across the street from our building. The harvest is driven each week to South Hills Interfaith Movement's food pantries for distribution to our neighbors here in the South Hills.

A group of Westminster's youth went to Washington, D.C., for four days to participate in ministry with The Pilgrimage, an outreach of a Presbyterian Church near Dupont Circle. I was fortunate to be one of the three adults who accompanied them. The teens helped prepare lunch at DC Central Kitchen (feeds 4,000 to 5,000 homeless people a day), sorted donations at A Wider Circle (serves those who have recently acquired a place to live), served breakfast to 45 homeless people at Charlie's Place, learned about what it is like to be homeless from a man who is part of the National Coalition for the Homeless and previously experienced homelessness himself, and helped to hand out



We have a group of volunteers ... who have been gardening each week during the growing season at Gilfillan Farm.... The harvest is driven each week to South Hills Interfaith Movement's food pantries for distribution to our neighbors here in the South Hills.

We have collected food and packaged 320 take home bags for children in the city.



much needed water and snacks to gatherings of the people experiencing homelessness. We learned that it is far more dangerous to live outside in the heat than in the bitterly cold temperatures of winter.

As I reflect on our summer, as a church and for myself personally, I have most enjoyed the people I have met. A quote comes to mind: "If it doesn't challenge you, it doesn't change you." I am not sure who to credit with this quote, but it is on my drink cup and it is a quote I have been trying to live by for the past several years in all aspects of my life. It certainly applies to those things I have been a part of this summer.

So, what are the challenges? Time is certainly a challenge for all of us. We have little of it to give, but when many volunteers made it a priority this summer, amazing things happened, rich connections were made.

Money is a challenge. We work hard for it and everyone needs/wants our money. But, the Barefoot School families and some church members and staff generously donated the food for our Food to Go bags.

Meeting people who are not like us is a challenge. This one was a big challenge for me this summer, but I found it to be the richest part of my summer. I have heard that from other volunteers this summer as well. I found that the people I met were much more like me than they were different. I will never forget the man experiencing homelessness who offered me water, or the man who gave me a bracelet and told me about God, or the woman who laughed hysterically with me as we carried the Food to Go bags from my car. When we step out of our comfort zone, we can see God's presence.

Hopefully, as a church we can live into my quote together. "If it doesn't challenge you, it doesn't change you." I can't wait to see what challenges God has in store for us as a church family. Let's look for the challenges and see how we are changed.

The King will reply, "I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me."

– Matthew 25:40

– Jan Baumann



The teens helped prepare lunch at DC Central Kitchen (feeds 4,000 to 5,000 homeless people a day), sorted donations at A Wider Circle (serves those who have recently acquired a place to live), served breakfast to 45 homeless people at Charlie's Place ... and helped to hand out much needed water and snacks to gatherings of the people experiencing homelessness.

Sundays at 9:45 a.m.
Galbreath Chapel

All are welcome!

*Come to listen, learn, and ask questions
—no preparation needed.*

September 8, 15, 22, 29

Russia Update: Holy Elders and Power Politics

John Burgess

This four-week series will examine the tradition of “holy elders” in the Russian Orthodox Church, whether holy elders exist today, and how spiritual authority plays a role in contemporary Russian politics. John Burgess will report on his research over the past 12 months in Russia.

John Burgess is professor of systematic theology at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary and a longtime observer of church and state in Russia. His most recent book is Holy Rus': The Rebirth of Orthodoxy in the New Russia.



Shake the Dust

A few nights ago, some friends invited me over to their studio to sit in with them on the drums. When I was in high school and college, playing the drums was my life. I had eight periods of school in a day, and during my senior year five of those periods were spent in the band room. I played the drums when I was at school. I played the drums when I was at home. I played the drums in my own rock and roll bands. I played the drums by myself. If there was a chance to hit something and make noise with it, I was there.

Over time as life got busier with classic adult type stuff, the drums slipped in to the background. I might play at church every once in a while, but nowhere near the level of consistency I had when I was a kid. Still, I love playing, so when these friends invited me to join them, I was 100% interested. I got to the studio, pulled out a pair of sticks, and started to play.

A funny thing happened with a whole bunch of years off. My brain remembered what to do. I knew how I wanted to play, the riffs I wanted to make happen. But my hands and feet simply would not cooperate. I was clumsy. I was off tempo. I was rusty. It actually took a few sessions with my friends to get to a place where I was able to do some of the stuff I wanted to on the drums. I'm still nowhere near as good as I was when I was a kid. That's going to take a lot of time.

All of this has me thinking about routine, habits, and disciplines. Many of us are just coming back to the Westminster scene after a busy summer. Family vacations. Mission trips. Home improvement projects. Band camps. Football camps. Soccer camps. Dance camps. Camping camps. We've been all over and everywhere in between, and as September arrives we might start to find ourselves getting back into a normal schedule (whatever that means these days). And for many of us, that includes getting back into church.

Now we need a moment's pause here. Some religious types make going to church some kind of marker of your spiritual health, and make people feel all kinds of guilt when they don't show up. This column isn't that. I know we're all busy. I know we have a lot of stuff going on. I know that life gets in the way. And I surely won't fault anyone for that being true, especially now as my children are getting older and I'm starting to see those pulls on our schedule take shape. So if you read this article and you start to feel like I'm trying to make you feel guilty, I've misrepresented my tone.

However, I do want to make the argument that church is important.

In much the same way that when I stop practicing drumming I become far less capable on the drums, I know for me that when

I stop practicing my faith I become far less capable on a spiritual level. When I fall out of my daily Bible reading habit, I have a harder time remembering the word of God in my life. When I fall out of my praise habit, I forget how awesome God is in the face of my failures and shortcomings. When I fall out of the church habit, I lose the ability to be both encouraged and challenged by my brothers and sisters in Christ.

In fact, there is some rather compelling brain science that suggests that the more you practice your faith, the more your brain can change and adapt to help you see God in the world. The more you practice your faith, the more easily you can live into your faith on an actual physical level. The more you think about God on a regular and disciplined basis, the better you form the neural pathways in your brain. Quite literally, the word becomes flesh.

Maybe you've been here with us all summer, and you know the value of this habit and routine. To that crew I suggest we make space for those who need to shake off the dust and get back in the routine. Maybe you've been away for a summer and you need to shake the dust off. Totally understandable! We welcome you back with open arms! Maybe you've been away for far longer than that, and you're afraid that you won't fit in with this church thing anymore. You will. One thing I know about Westminster is that we welcome and celebrate everyone, no matter where you've been or where you're coming from.

*The more you practice your faith,
the more easily you can live into
your faith on an actual physical level.*

Again, this isn't about guilt. Ultimately it's about joy! No one had to guilt me into getting back in the habit of practicing the drums. I was propelled by the incredible joy I felt when I was able to get back into something like my original form. And I am sure that as we gather back in the spiritual habits and disciplines of a shared life together, the joy of living the life of Christ will propel us forward.

Welcome back, friends! It's great to see you!

Note: Don't forget that you can check in on the newly designed website for follow-up thoughts to this column on the blog!

– Jason Freyer

From a Daughter's Heart

"For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not harm you, plans to give you hope and a future."
 —Jeremiah 29:11

I'm honored and delighted to begin this new journey at Westminster Presbyterian Church as the Director of Children's and Family Ministry. Some of you may or may not know that I am a special education teacher. For many years, I taught elementary children for the Bethel Park School District. This past year, I had the opportunity to teach high schoolers at a private school for children with varying exceptionalities. I also had a wonderful experience working as a disability awareness facilitator for Easterseals. I bring an understanding and appreciation for children who have disabilities. My professional teaching experiences have given me sensitivity, compassion, and love for all children. I am the mother of three children. Watching children grow is something near and dear to my heart. I am extremely thankful for my years as a special education teacher as I begin this new chapter at Westminster.



For so many years my job was setting up a classroom and preparing for my new students. Those of you who are in education know all the planning and preparation involved in getting ready for a new school year. Now, I am preparing to support families as they develop and nurture their children's faith in Jesus Christ. I am looking forward to working alongside the extraordinary staff, families, and children of Westminster. Being the director is such a blessing to me! As the Director of Children's & Family Ministry I will continue to grow and learn spiritually with all of you. This is an answer to my prayers for our Lord Jesus to guide me and direct my path in serving the families of Westminster.

This past January I was installed as a Westminster Deacon. This was a significant moment for me in the church. It is an honor to share my gifts and talents with this body of believers. I am in awe that our Lord has brought me into this position and I will eagerly watch as his plans for me as the Director of Children's & Family Ministry unfold.

Just as I am beginning this new season in my life, our children are beginning a new school year with excitement and anticipation. There will be new teachers and classmates, new expectations

and routines, fall sports and activities. As a parent, I know it can become a bit hectic at times with all the changes and obligations. It is important to embrace the changes and encourage and enjoy these precious moments as our children begin this new season of their lives too. I will be praying for God's continuous guidance and protection for all our children as I believe his love and grace will be with us always. "I am always with you" (Psalm 73:23).

I am confident Jesus will bless the parents and children, for his promise is "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are children of God" (Romans 8:16) and he loves us!

Please feel free to reach out to me. I am here to serve, and I am eager to get to know you!

My contact information is brown@westminster-church.org or 412-835-6630x226.

With Christ's love,

Natalie

Welcome to Sunday School at Westminster

Welcome to another exciting year to all of the children and their families! We look forward to partnering with you as we witness God's work in and with these children as they grow closer to Jesus in their daily walk.

We invite you to join us for Westminster's 2019-2020 Sunday school year, beginning on September 8, during either the 9:45 or 11:00 a.m. worship services.

This year, we will once again be implementing the Tru curriculum throughout the entire children's Sunday school program. Tru offers two different formats, so although the Bible passage is the same at both hours, the supporting activities are different.

Tru is a dynamic curriculum that tells God's Big Story in chronological order, offering relationship building activities that reinforce the story for each age group. Tru is written with the goal of engaging children so that they recognize their own part of God's Big Story.

Each week, your child will bring home a short newsletter, *At Home*. The newsletter will provide insight into that day's lesson, including a Bible verse for you and your child to discuss. It also provides a preview of the following week's lesson, along with activities that you can do at home. You can choose what sections you would like to do with your child(ren). We hope you will use *At Home* to partner with and support your child's Sunday school classes.

Registration

Sunday school registration is online or by completing a hard copy you can pick up in your child's classroom. Teachers will have copies available to complete.

Sign In/Sign Out Procedures (both hours)

When dropping off your child, sign in on the attendance clip board. If someone

other than a parent will be picking up your child at dismissal, please inform the teacher at drop-off.

9:45 Sunday School

Children will begin worship in the Bridge and will join 9:45 Sunday school after the children's prayer. They will enjoy lessons from God's Big Story by exploring the stories through activities, music, worship, and skits/storytelling.

Children will be accompanied by a Westminster staff member to Room 194.

11:00 Sunday School

Children will begin in their rooms with their teacher for small group activities that will introduce them to God's Big Story. They will then go to Room 107 to participate in worship, skits, singing, and dancing. Teachers will gather the children and return to their rooms for activities that reinforce the Big God Story they heard in large group.

On the first Sunday of the month, children PreK through sixth grade will go directly to the sanctuary for worship at 11:00. After the children's moment, PreK through first grade may join their small group for Sunday school. Children second through sixth grades will continue in worship with their families.

Second through fourth Sundays, and when there is a fifth, all children will go directly to their classrooms.

Children's & Family Ministry volunteers and staff are so looking forward to seeing the children and families as we start the new Sunday school year. We hope you will become part of Sunday school and be with us as we join the children on their journey of faith. We'll see everyone on Sunday, September 8!

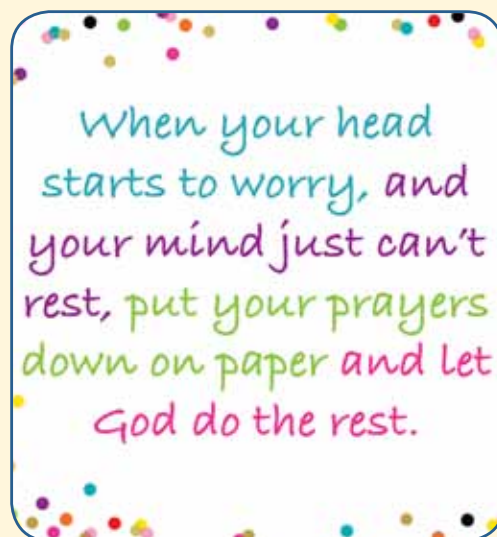
— Debb Egli & Natalie Brown

9:45 Pick up

PreK – 4th Grade	Rm. 194
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11:00 Drop off/Pick up

2 and 3 year olds	Rm. 237
PreK	Rm. 136
Kindergarten	Rm. 138
1st & 2nd Grade	Rm. 127
3rd & 4th Grade	Rm. 121
5th & 6th Grade	Rm. 257



Westminster Book Group

Wednesday, September 25

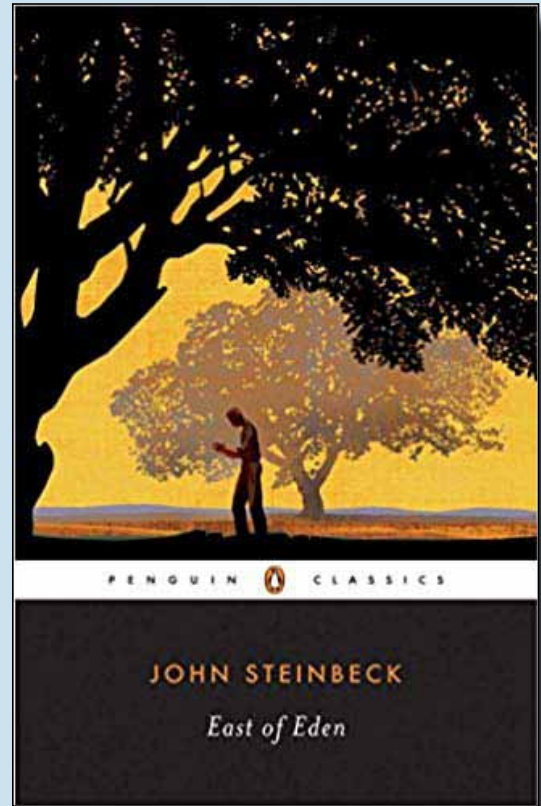
Noon – 1:15 p.m.

Yahweh Café

The Westminster Book Group will next meet to discuss *East of Eden* by John Steinbeck. We invite you to bring a brown bag lunch and join us.

The masterpiece of Steinbeck's later years, East of Eden is a work in which Steinbeck created his most mesmerizing characters and explored his most enduring themes: the mystery of identity, the inexplicability of love, and the murderous consequences of love's absence. Adapted for the 1955 film directed by Elia Kazan introducing James Dean, and read by thousands as the book that brought Oprah's Book Club back, East of Eden has remained vitally present in American culture for over half a century."

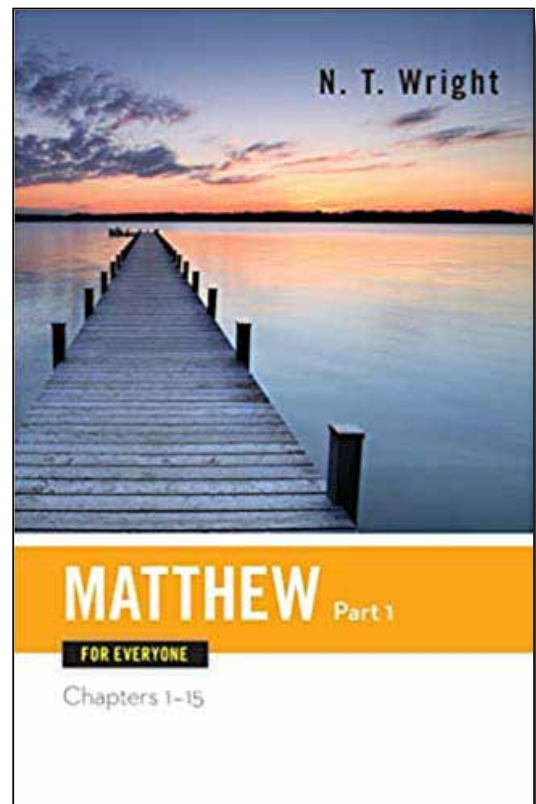
– Amazon



Genesis 2.0

A New Adult Educational Opportunity

It isn't a Bible study, or a Sunday school class, or a prayer, mission, or Christian fellowship group. It is all of these things. Genesis 2.0 is engaging scripture discussion, a safe place to voice questions and doubts, deeply felt intercessory prayer, and awareness of and responses to where people are hurting in our community. If you are looking for more personal connections in the church with people who seek to live with Christ in the 21st century, come to Genesis 2.0 on Sunday mornings at 9:45 beginning September 8. We will meet in Room 231 which is at end of the hall from the church office and past the library. Our main resource for learning for fall 2019 is the Gospel of Matthew per N.T. Wright in his book *Matthew for Everyone: Part 1*.



Summer at the WROC

Here's a snapshot of what's been happening at the WROC this summer! Don't miss out on the fun. Join us for our fall WROC programs. Register today at wroc.westminster-church.org.

Westminster Single Women's Group

For Single, Widowed, and Divorced Women

The Westminster Single Women's Group kicked off in May with a room full of women looking to create new friendships and add an assortment of fun activities to their social calendars. Many ideas were shared that morning and the common thread among the women was the desire to have a friend to share common interests and activities. The monthly events allow women to get to know each other and connect with others who share their particular interests. Members may have two tickets for an event or want to see a particular movie, grab dinner, or ride bikes. The possibilities for connecting are many.



The group currently has 44 members and held three events this summer. The group is open to both members and non-members of Westminster Presbyterian Church. This lighthearted, easy-going group is without a long-term commitment. The intention is to come when you can and participate in the activities you enjoy.

For more information, please visit our website, wroc.westminster-church.org, or contact Catherine "Cathy" Kramer at 214-908-9845.



Pickleball

A racket game for all ages and abilities

This was our first summer for Pickleball. With 65 registered players, we played on Thursday and Friday evenings throughout the summer. The group also added outdoor Pickleball events that included food and music.

Cycling

This is the third summer for the Cycling Group Ride on the Montour Trail. There were 16 registered riders with Rev. Jason Fryer leading the way.



Added to the WROC line-up of fitness classes this year!

Deep Stretch (YIN) Yoga
Monday at 8:00 p.m.

Flow (Vinyasa) Yoga
Saturday at 9:00 a.m.

Delay the Disease
a fitness class for those managing Parkinson's
Now offered 1:00 – 2:00 p.m. AND
2:00 – 3:00 p.m.
on Tuesdays and Thursdays

Arthritis Exercise
Now offered
9:30 – 10:20 a.m. on Mondays and
10:00 – 10:50 a.m. on Wednesdays

Chatham Baroque at Westminster

Foreign Accents: Cantatas by Bach, Handel, and Scarlatti

With the Four Nations Ensemble

Friday, September 20

7:30 p.m., Sanctuary

Chatham Baroque's season begins with a special joint presentation on both the Renaissance & Baroque and Chatham Baroque series. The Four Nations Ensemble and Chatham Baroque unite to explore works written by some of the Baroque's most famous vocal composers in languages and styles beyond their homelands. The program features the luminous and beloved voice of soprano Pascale Beaudin and includes an Italianate cantata by J.S. Bach, a Spanish cantata by Handel, and much more.

Expect to hear a brilliant variety of instruments to support the soloist: violins, viola, flute, cello, viola da gamba, theorbo, and harpsichord.



For four decades, the Four Nations Ensemble has developed a leading presence on the early music scene in New York and across the country. Four Nations has performed at major houses and on prestigious series throughout the United States including the Kennedy Center and Lincoln Center. Harpsichordist Andrew Appel is artistic director.

Tickets, with discounts for seniors and students, are available online and at the door. For more information and ticket prices, visit www.chathambaroque.org or call 412-687-1788. Ticket prices are \$5 more at the door.

The Pittsburgh Camerata at Westminster

A Whitman Sampler: The Poetry of Walt Whitman in Song

Saturday, September 28

7:30 p.m., Sanctuary

It has been suggested that Walt Whitman's poetry has been set to music more than that of any other American poet except for Emily Dickinson and Henry Wadsworth Longfellow. Some call Whitman a latter-day successor to Homer, Virgil, Dante, and Shakespeare. Whitman's poetry celebrates democracy, nature, love, and friendship.

The Pittsburgh Camerata is a professional vocal ensemble which has been presenting choral concerts in Pittsburgh since 1974. They sing music you won't hear performed anywhere else in Pittsburgh. Some of it is from the Renaissance and Baroque periods. Some is 20th or 21st century music. The remainder might be from any era. All of this is intended to be sung by a small choral ensemble. The Pittsburgh Camerata's concerts are acclaimed for imaginative and inspiring programs sung with excellence. Mark A. Anderson is artistic director.

Tickets may be purchased at the door or online at www.pittsburghcamerata.org. Discounts for groups of ten or more are available with advance payment. Find details on the website or call 412-421-5884.

A Harpsichord for Westminster

In June the chancel of Galbreath Chapel became home to a beautiful harpsichord, thanks to a generous gift to the Music & Arts endowment fund by Jack Fisch in loving memory of his wife, Sandy S. Fisch. Music was important in Sandy's life. She played the piano and loved listening to music. The memorial gift ensures that Sandy's enthusiasm for music will be passed on to generations of the Westminster family and the wider community.

This harpsichord has a history in the South Hills of Pittsburgh. The first owner left it to her daughter, who lives in Mt. Lebanon. When the daughter was ready to downsize, she sold it to Edgar Highberger of Greensburg in Westmoreland County. Highberger, professor of music at Seton Hill University and organist at First Presbyterian Church of Greensburg, placed the harpsichord safely in his university office. For performances it was moved to the concert hall.

After his retirement, Highberger kept the harpsichord in his home. Recently he began to seek a new owner who would care for this fine instrument. He consulted with Pittsburgh harpsichordist Justin Wallace, who suggested Westminster as an ideal home for the Eckstein harpsichord. Highberger had heard the Taylor and Boody organ in Galbreath Chapel in 2015, and he felt strongly that the chapel would be perfect for his harpsichord. So now, this lovely harpsichord is back in the South Hills, where it will bring great joy to players and listeners alike.

The harpsichord was built in 1995 by L.G. Eckstein in West Lafayette, Indiana. It has two keyboards, an ebony and gold case, and a soundboard painted by the builder's sister. This style of instrument would have been common in 18th-century France, and is still favored today for its musical versatility. As a solo instrument, it plays the full range of music written for the harpsichord. With other instruments and voices, it can play either a supporting role or a prominent role. It's also physically versatile. While Westminster's harpsichord will stay in its chapel home, it can be moved to the sanctuary when desired.

Watch for it at this year's annual Christmas concert, featuring the Christmas portion of Handel's *Messiah*.



Harpsichord and Piano

The harpsichord is a stringed keyboard instrument with 600 years of history. Today it is most often used to perform music from the Baroque era as well as new music written for it. The harpsichord is similar in shape to the grand piano. However, the strings are plucked, not struck by hammers as in a piano. The resulting sound is distinctive – bright, clear, and sparkling.

The piano developed gradually in the 1700s while the harpsichord was still widely used. Called a pianoforte because the player could vary the volume of sound, it first appeared in public concerts in the 1760s and soon became the preferred keyboard instrument of the Classical era. This early piano had a generally softer, more delicate sound than the grand piano we know today, which became standard in the Romantic era of the later 1800s.

In 21st-century music making, the harpsichord and piano each have an important role to play.

Day By Day

This summer we traveled to Alaska with friends for a trip of a lifetime. The scenery was gorgeous, breathtaking, vast, and magnificent as we took in creviced glaciers, snowcapped mountains, braided rivers, and soaring eagles. In Denali National Park as I stood by the Teklanika River, I saw 12 different mountains. Alaska did not disappoint!

A highlight of the trip was an afternoon spent with sled dogs in training. In the winter the dogs still patrol the national park, taking supplies and delivering passengers to remote locations. As the park ranger explained, the dogs are perfect for their work: they are excited to start every day. They never complain and are delighted with hard work such as running – well, that is not a problem with these dogs. The dogs howl with delight when they think it is their turn to go out. The trainers allowed the dogs to put on a show for us. Their tails wagged the entire time they were charging up the path before them.

On our way back to base camp we decided to walk. The dogs had inspired us to take the long way home. As we walked along the path, the terrain changed from packed soil to rocky places; strange weeds and trees were all around. Yet the path was sure and clear. Our future life is unknown, bringing joy and celebrations but also pain, illness, loss, loneliness, defeat, worry, and hardships of one kind or another. Yet for people of faith, there is knowledge, a feeling, an assurance that we are loved by the almighty God who is with us in all circumstances: "You search out my path and my lying down, and are acquainted with all my ways" (Psalm 139:3).

We don't have to go to Alaska to witness the spectacular. Right here, right now God is in our midst. We are gifted with people who are made in God's image who are beside us. While we may not know where the path will end up, we can be assured the Lord will accompany us near or far, whatever lies ahead on life's journey.

With joy,

Louise



ADULT SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT

Silence for our lives

P
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T

"There are times not to answer the door, not to answer the phone, not to do undone things, but to rest in silence from everything. The world can wait for five minutes. In fact, no matter how busy we are, no matter how well organized, no matter how little rest we allow ourselves, we will never do all that needs to be done. But to do well what we are called to do, it is essential to nurture a capacity for inner stillness; such quiet, deep-down listening is itself prayer."

– from *Praying With Icons* by Jim Forest

Giving Gala 2019

**Saturday,
November 2**


On Saturday, November 2, the Deacons will sponsor their annual Giving Gala. This year the proceeds will benefit SHIM (South Hills Interfaith Movement), an organization that helps neighbors build a better life for their families. Serving a culturally diverse community, it offers programs that focus on parenting, education, youth development, employment counseling, and more. Our focus will be on SHIM's work to empower women and girls with development of strong interpersonal skills. The goal is to strengthen self-esteem so that the women and girls can rise above their challenges and fulfill their potential.

Our proceeds will target "Ruling Our eXperience," better known as ROX, a program for girls in grades 6-8. ROX helps girls develop skills to deal with social, personal, and academic issues. Learn more about this national, evidence-based empowerment program for girls at www.rulingourexperiences.com.

This year's Giving Gala proceeds will benefit SHIM's work to empower women and girls with development of strong interpersonal skills.

The Gala will begin with dinner at St. Clair Country Club, followed by a live auction and spectacular basket raffle. Tickets for both the event and basket raffle will be sold throughout the month of October in the north entry and the Bridge. For those who can't attend, other giving opportunities include corporate sponsorships and individual donations.

We've found this to be a special evening of fun and fellowship, while addressing the needs of our neighbors. So please mark your calendars and plan to join us. For questions, please contact Andree Jeffrey at 412-831-7839 or andreejeffrey@aol.com or Hedy Pitcairn at 412-831-7126 or hp@gwpitcairn.com.



*Since there will
never cease to
be some in need
on the earth,
I therefore
command you,
"Open your
hand, to the
poor and the
needy neighbors
in your land."*

– Deuteronomy 15:11



Blood Drive

September 22
8:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.
Fellowship Hall

Westminster is hosting its third blood drive of 2019 on Sunday, September 22.

Blood donations are at a critical low in our area and Western Pennsylvania. Vitalant is asking the public to help. Life-saving needs are always a priority, but without enough blood, many surgeries and treatments risk cancellation.

For your convenience and to help Vitalant to plan for this drive, we ask all prospective donors to pre-register in one of the following ways:

- Register online at www.vitalant.org, using sponsor code G0010171.
- Signup tables will be available before or after worship services on September 8 and 15.



Sponsored by the Deacons, Westminster's blood drive is a significant event that benefits donors and recipients alike. Many of the deacons will also be assisting with this event, either as donors, greeters, or helping behind the scenes.

In order to donate, you must:

- Be 17 years or older (16 with parental consent)
- Weigh at least 110 lbs.
- Not have donated within the last 56 days
- Be in good health

Medications such as insulin, aspirin, and high blood pressure treatments do not prevent you from donating. If you have any medical questions, please call Vitalant at 877-258-4825.

- Contact the church office at 412-835-6630.
- Walk-ins are always welcome; donors already registered will be taken first.

For those planning to donate, please remember to eat a good breakfast and drink plenty of non-caffeinated beverages. There will be snacks and goodies available for all donors!

The Westminster Deacons thank you in advance for your support of this worthy mission.

1 in 7

people entering the hospital need blood

780k

generous blood donors transforming lives with Vitalant

36,000

units of red blood cells used every day in the United States

Westminster Columbarium

The Westminster columbarium is beautifully landscaped and has a labyrinth as its architectural centerpiece. A labyrinth is a walking meditation, a path to quiet the mind and become closely in tune with God. People who have loved ones in the columbarium find it comforting to walk the labyrinth. God has richly blessed us with this gift of a courtyard of saints and a labyrinth to offer our gratitude and praise.

You may wish to consider purchasing a niche in the columbarium now to lessen the burden of a family member. The cost is \$1,750 per niche. Anyone interested in the purchase of a niche may contact Peg Kinsey at 412-835-6630x211.



Deaths

Martha Miller
March 15

William Getty
April 1

Isabelle Coltman
May 28

Melvin Eisel
May 31

George Geiser
June 3

Robert Black
June 4

Gail Coulter
June 26

Marjorie Rogers
July 6

Edith Dyck
July 11

Raymond Sauer
August 10

Session Highlights

At its meeting on August 19, Session saw a presentation and received an overture from Presbyterian Men for a first reading that deals with evangelism for the church. The charter for the Safety and Security Committee was reviewed and accepted. The Finance Commission reviewed steps in preparation of the budget planning meeting on August 29. The meeting began and ended joyfully with prayer.



WESTMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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A PC(USA) Congregation

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www.youtube.com/user/WestminsterUSC



“Welcome one another, therefore, just as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God.”

– Romans 15:7