



THE SPARE

WESTMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
Pittsburgh, PA

Glow People

My Friends,

Someone once noted that the glowworm is a most efficient creature, using 96% of its energy. Moving up the biological ladder, the observation was made that "it seems the people who glow are more useful and effective than people who glower."

It's easy these days to find people who glower, who frown and sulk, who complain and criticize all the time. But what about these "glow people," the useful, effective people who radiate energy?

This glow is the presence of power of God. And when we live by that power, we glow:

We are useful to God in working out the divine purpose. We know we are doing something that will make a positive difference. It can be a small thing, a big thing. The important thing is we are doing something useful.

We are effective disciples of the risen Jesus. It is not skill or luck or special knowledge that makes some people more effective than others. What they have is a clear and consistent purpose, a mission. For us, it is our passion to live the love of Jesus Christ each day.

We are energetic creatures of the Holy Spirit. Consider your mission for today. Is it just to make it through the day with the least effort? Or is it something so exciting, something that moves you through any challenge because you enjoy what you're doing?

I believe this "glow" shines most brightly when we live Jesus' command to look for ways to serve rather than be served. I remember a sermon from the wonderful preacher William Willimon: "What If the Church Is Not Here to Meet Your Needs?"

In other words, it's not about me; it's all about how useful and effective and energetic I can be serving others through the community of faith.



We "glow" when our starting point is somebody else, not ourselves. I like the way a businessperson would always answer the phone: "This is Susan. What can I do to help you?"

Each day, I pray that question powers you to glow and grow as a friend of Jesus Christ.

Thanks and blessings,

Bruce Lancaster

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Head of Staff*
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for Congregational Care*
REV. JASON FREYER, *Associate Pastor
for the Bridge, Youth & Media*

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**WESTMINSTER RECREATION & OUTREACH
CENTER (WROC)**

KATHY LONG, *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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**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 to the courtyard for the summer beginning Sunday, June 2.

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

This Joyful Eastertide

The month of May is a joyful time in nature, with flowers bursting in bloom and new growth all around. But the joy doesn't end with nature. In this year's church calendar, May continues the jubilation of Easter and finishes with the glorious ascension of Christ into heaven.

The season of Easter, also known as Eastertide, includes seven Sundays for us to celebrate the great mystery of our faith – that Jesus Christ is risen from the dead. The season spans the 50 days from the Sunday of the Resurrection to Pentecost Sunday (June 9 this year) and encompassing the Ascension of the Lord (May 30).

During Easter we rejoice in the presence of the risen Christ in the church. We also embrace Easter as a new way of life, in which we are "dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus" (Romans 6:11), called to "walk in newness of life" (Romans 6:4). For each of us, it is a welcome time of new life and new growth as followers of Christ. Rejoice and be glad!



Upcoming Events

**05
MAY** Celebrating
Volunteerism
at Westminster

**07
MAY** Chamber
Choir Festival

**12
MAY** Mother's Day
Musical

**19
MAY** Blood Drive
Mendelssohn
Choir Concert
*7:30 p.m. in the
sanctuary*

**30
MAY** Ascension of
the Lord

Sundays at 9:45 a.m.
Galbreath Chapel

May Series

May 5, 12, 19, 26

Women of Faith

Jack Aupperle

From the beginning of Christianity, women have been an integral part of the body of Christ. Their role has, of course, varied in time and place, and has sometimes changed dramatically. But it has endured. To help us gain perspective on women of faith, this series will look at women through the lens of the Christian community. It begins with the history of women in the church, their role and level of respect. The lives of three notable Christian women will then illustrate where and how the faith has played a part in challenging and reshaping the role and place of women in our communities.

May 5
The Women of Faith, Really?

May 12
Rosa Parks: A Rebellious Spirit

May 19 – Mother Teresa:
A Revolution of Humility

May 26 –
Rosemary Ruether:
Reform Again



Jack Aupperle, a Pittsburgh native and Methodist minister, is a graduate of Bethany College and Drew University. He served parishes in New York and Western Pennsylvania and for over 30 years has been on the faculty of St. Vincent College, where he teaches a variety of classes in the Theology Department. Dr. Aupperle has presented many seminar series at Westminster. It is always a joy to welcome him back.

*Women
of Faith*

Coming in June

Ethics

Ethics

June 2

Ethics in Church

Sheldon Sorge, Executive and General Minister for Pittsburgh Presbytery

Ethical issues for pastors and churches seem clear enough – abuse of power, financial impropriety, and sexual misconduct. But there is more – classism, racism, ageism, plagiarism, theft of copyrighted materials, conflicts of interest, pastoral care that has no regard for someone’s contributions to the church, etc. This seminar will address the range of ethical issues facing pastors and congregations.

June 9

Ethical Mistakes in Public Health despite Good Intentions

Ted Kyle, health policy advisor

June 16 and 23

Real World Perspectives on Corporate, Personal, and Sexual Ethics

Regis Becker, attorney and board member of Pittsburgh Theological Seminary



All That Is Good

Our boys are three and a half now, and while I still struggle to believe that much time has passed for us, this is a remarkably fun age full of wonder and questions and discoveries. One of the boys' favorite questions of late has been "What's that sound?" When they come across something that is new to their experience, or at least something they can't remember, they tug at my arm and ask, "What's that sound?"

"Oh, those are the church bells."

"Oh, that's the music in Dada's office."

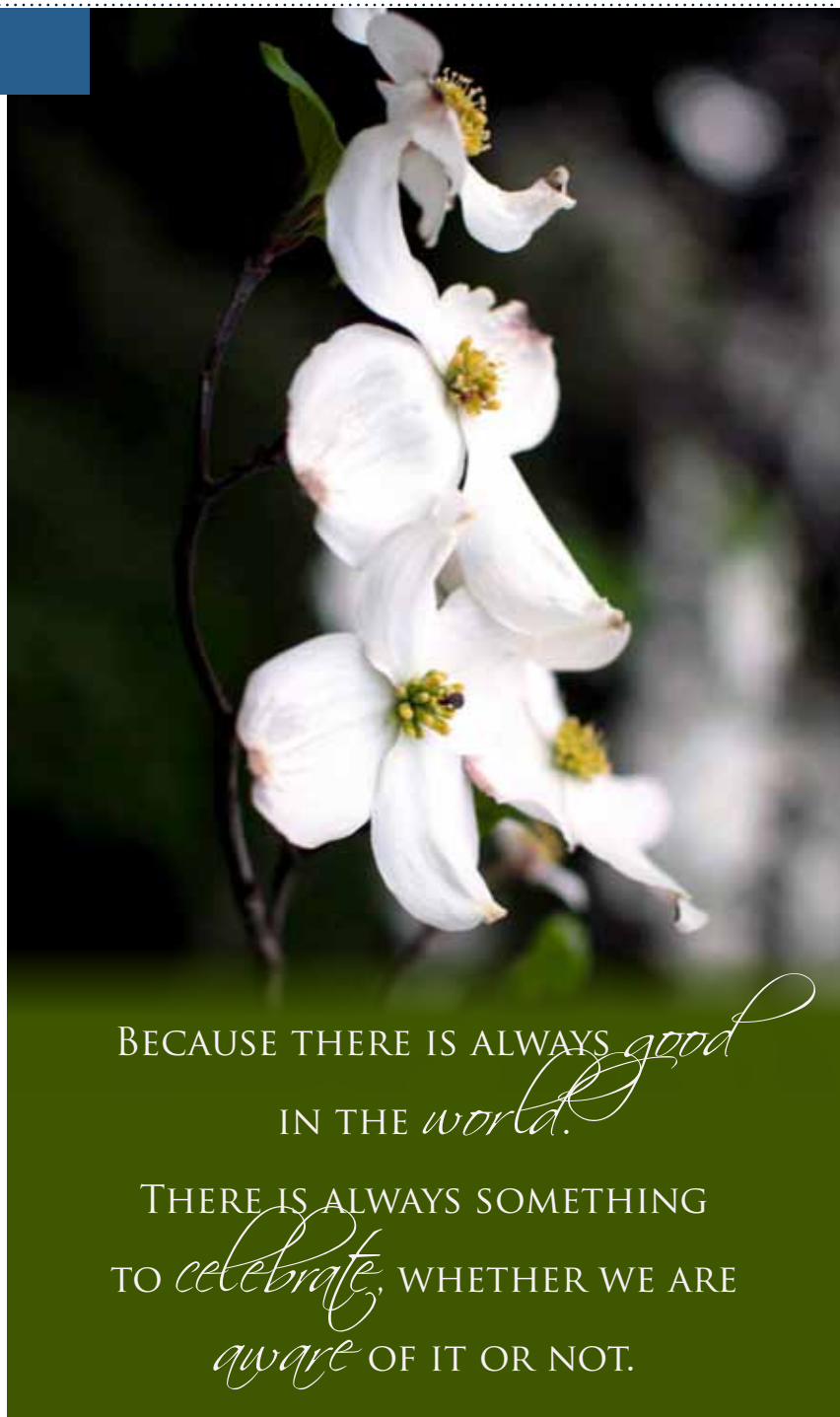
"Oh, those are birds."

It's a quite remarkable season of life, because these little guys are causing me to pause for a bit and reexamine my own world. Sometimes the sounds they come across are things that I hear all the time, every single day, and never actually stop to pay attention to. I work only two stories or so below the bells in our steeple, and yet I hardly ever notice when they're ringing. Birds chirp to signal the newness of spring, and yet I drown them out. Construction equipment can be hammering away and I might never ever notice. Having these little detectives at my side has caused me to stop and ponder all that is good in the world.

Two issues are at play here: the goodness in the world and the noise that covers it up. Because there is always good in the world. As we were reminded a few weeks ago when Ed was preaching, God is always providing, always blessing us, often in ways we get too used to. There is always something to celebrate, whether we are aware of it or not. The noise is everything that keeps us from noticing the goodness around us. The notification icon on my email is a steady culprit. I'm so busy doing the minutiae of work that I might forget what a blessing my job really is. I get so caught up in the details that I miss the beauty. I might miss the forest for the trees.

I am blessed beyond reason with these little voices asking "What's that sound?" It grounds me. It centers me. My hope and prayer is that I can keep their question at the front of my imagination long after they figure out the sounds around them. I hope that I am always asking myself to pay attention to all that is good in the world. God is a great gift giver, and he never wants to stop.

Since Bruce has been here at Westminster, and we have been showing him around the church and telling him about what we're up to, I'm noticing all that is good around here too. There is much to celebrate and be proud of. One *Spire* article can't possibly contain all the goodness here, but I'm sure if you look around you'll see it. You'll see the goodness in the smiles when we



BECAUSE THERE IS ALWAYS *good*
IN THE *world*.

THERE IS ALWAYS SOMETHING
TO *celebrate*, WHETHER WE ARE
aware OF IT OR NOT.

gather for worship, sort of a mini-family reunion every week. You'll see it in the mission work we do, when we go to World Vision or Produce to People, or big trips like Malawi or Haiti. You'll see it when one of our own is suffering, and the whole church works together to pitch in and help. To be sure, we have our own noise. We have distractions and issues, things that cause us to take our eyes off the ball. But God continues to provide.

So how have you seen God's goodness at play around us? Join the conversation this month at the Westminster Blog by visiting www.westminster-church.org/blog.

— Jason Freyer

BETWEEN HERE & THERE

I've taken a dive into the pool of journaling recently. Truth be told it's more of a jump than a dive, and I'm definitely in the shallow end. All that said, there's lots to learn in the shallow end, and lots of enjoyment there too. Here's my routine:

As best as I can, first thing each morning when I come into the office I sit down with a Bible, a small daily devotional, and a legal pad. I've found that it's important to truly make this a "first thing first" endeavor; it's too easy to get caught up in email, voicemail, administrative leftovers, and a growing to-do list. This has to take priority or it gets lost in the mix of the day. I start out with one, yep just one, chapter from whatever book of scripture I'm working through (right now I'm in Judges). The next shift is toward a daily devotional. Right now I'm reading through Eugene Peterson's *Every Step an Arrival*. It's a simple 90-day devotional with thoughts of encouragement, insight, and wisdom. It doesn't hurt that Eugene Peterson is fast becoming one of my very favorite Christian authors and theologians.

After these few readings comes the journaling. I already mentioned that I'm in the shallow end, so you won't be surprised that my daily goal is to write one-half of a page on a half-sized legal pad each day. It amounts to about a paragraph each day. I started with this end in mind because it gave me an achievable goal, something that wouldn't be discouraging but would still require me to invest in thought and prayer in a new way. Some days I find myself wanting more space; other times I feel like a sentence or two is all I have to say. In either case I stop myself at the half-page mark. Both scenarios keep me thinking. The former keeps my mind rolling after I've walked away from the writing, and the latter asks me to think more deeply even as I am still engaged.

In no particular order, here are the three main benefits I've experienced with this new practice:

1. Writing forces my mind to slow down. When I take the time to put pen on paper, my mind has to slow down to accommodate the words. This new pace has encouraged me to articulate thoughts and feelings in whole new ways. I often find myself switching gears in ways that I would never have predicted. The new pace and new insight feels more honest and far less "shoot from the hip."
2. My mind and my heart feel like they start the day in a much healthier place when my day starts with this short time of devotion. This focus can be lost, but it's a beautiful reminder at the beginning of each day to recall priority, to center on Christ, and even find some spiritual nourishment to chew on throughout the day.
3. I now have a written record of what my prayer life, spiritual life, and everyday life have been up to over the past few months. It's already pretty incredible to see how God has moved in answering prayer and providing direction from my first few days of journaling. This record serves as insight to God's work in my life, as well as a joyful reminder of progress on days that can be frustrating.

All told, this process takes no more than 15 minutes each morning. Talk about low cost, high reward! I'm not sure if you've ever considered journaling of any kind, but what I've learned is that this hurdle is far easier to jump than I had previously imagined. I'd encourage you to give a new habit of devotion, maybe journaling, a try in the coming days and weeks. You may be surprised to see the fruit of these simple habits in Christ.

I'd love to hear about your journey. Feel free to give me a buzz anytime.

– Ed Sutter



GLIMPSE OF MY WORLD

Here at Westminster, I am regularly involved in conversations in which we comment on the ways that God “shows up,” often unexpectedly. Sometimes, we recognize God at work right in the moment. But sometimes it is only as we reflect later that we see God’s presence and action. I recently experienced the latter.

It was Wednesday evening, and Fellowship Hall was busy with the usual mix of people enjoying dinner and conversation with family and friends. I was standing off to the side, just watching, when I noticed one of our two year olds. This little guy was exploring the room, while his mom trailed along behind. Every now and then he would check to make sure Mom was close by. Until he noticed the table full of cookies. Eyes alight, he took off, hands already reaching toward all those cookies. In only moments, he was lost in the sea of legs belonging to that room full of taller folks; he could no longer see his mom. Forgetting all about the cookies, he burst into tears. But of course, his mom was watching all along. She called his name, he turned, “found” her, and ran back into the safety of her arms.

To be honest, I really didn’t pay very much attention to this little not-especially-noteworthy scene. Just an ordinary, everyday interaction between a mom and a toddler, right?

A bit later that evening, the fifth and sixth graders and their JAM leaders were working our way through the story of Samson and Delilah. The intent of the lesson was to help these young middle school students explore ways in which our values determine our decisions. The goal was to begin to identify our own values, and then to consider how those values might affect our choices in an upcoming decision.

But as so often happens with this group, they had something else on their minds: “Wait a minute. This verse (Judges 16:20) says ‘But Samson did not know that the Lord had left him.’ I thought God never leaves us.”

One reason I love working with this age group is their tendency to see things I’ve never noticed, and their willingness to ask hard questions. But sometimes answering those questions can be one of the greatest challenges.

“What do you all think?” I asked, partly stalling and partly hoping one of them would have a great answer to their classmate’s question. But for once, they were absolutely silent. Not one word. Just a roomful of worried faces staring at me, probably hoping I had a great answer. And I didn’t have one. Quick silent prayer: “Okay, God... help!”

And then I remembered the little boy and his mom at dinner. In his quest for a cookie, that toddler lost sight of his mom. For those few moments he felt all alone, frightened, abandoned, unprotected, lost. He certainly felt as if his mom had left him. Perhaps Samson felt much the same way, as he realized that his willingness to put his attraction to Delilah before his commitment to God had resulted in the loss of his strength and his subsequent defeat by the Philistines? Maybe we feel that way sometimes too?



But when the little boy remembered his mom, and called out for her help, she was right there. Only a few verses later (vs. 28), the author of Judges says, “Then Samson called to the Lord and said, ‘Lord God, remember me and strengthen me only this once, O God...’” And God does.

“Oh, I get it,” said one of the kids. “When Samson’s hair grew back, so did his faith. Then he could see God again.”

Well, something like that.

The kids suggest that we ask God for the strength to keep our focus on him, even in the midst of all the distractions we might see in the world around us. We’ll also be asking for the strength to hold on to our faith in God with both hands, because it’s hard to reach for other stuff – like cookies – if your hands are already full.

Will you join us as we pray for eyes and hands and hearts and minds full of God?

– Robin Pyles

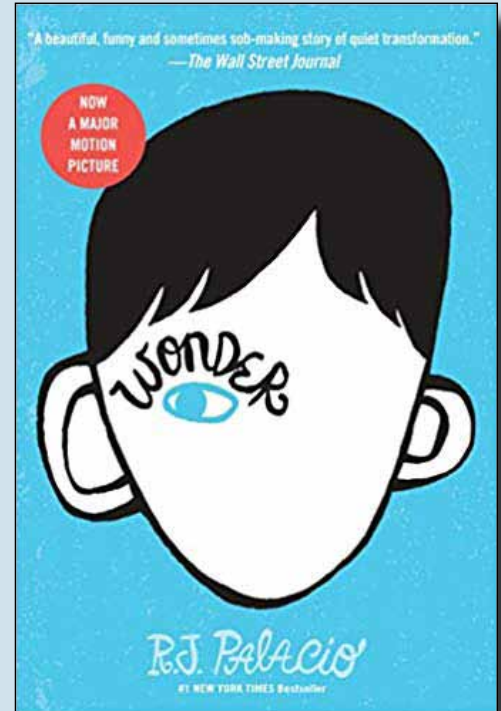
Westminster Book Group

Wednesday, May 29
Noon – 1:15 p.m.

The Westminster Book Group will meet on Wednesday, May 29, at noon in the Yahweh Café to discuss *Wonder* by R. J. Palacio. We invite you to bring a brown bag lunch and join us.

August Pullman was born with a facial difference that, up until now, has prevented him from going to a mainstream school. Starting 5th grade at Beecher Prep, he wants nothing more than to be treated as an ordinary kid – but his new classmates can't get past Auggie's extraordinary face. *Wonder* begins from Auggie's point of view, but soon switches to include his classmates, his sister, her boyfriend, and others. These perspectives converge in a portrait of one community's struggle with empathy, compassion, and acceptance.

– Amazon

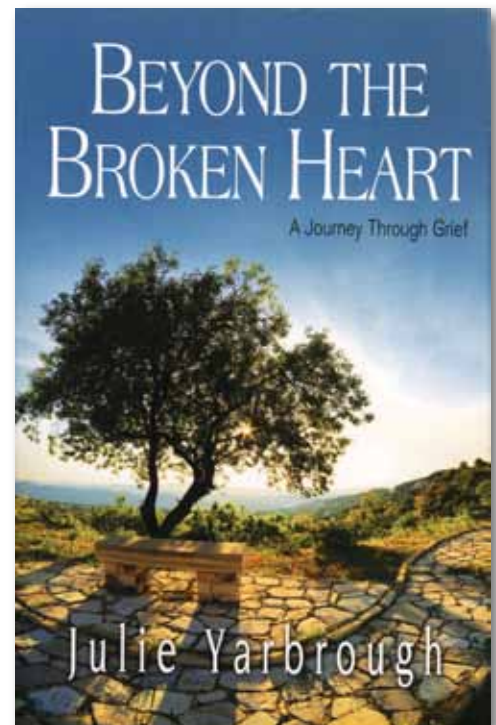


Grief Care Group

Wednesdays, April 24 – May 22
6:45 – 8:00 p.m.
Memorial Parlor

If you have lost a spouse, child, family member, or friend, it may be hard to feel optimistic about the future right now. You may have found that people don't always understand the deep hurt you feel. This can be a confusing time when you feel isolated and have many questions about things you've never before faced. Grief Care is a faith-based grief support group that can help you face the challenges of loss and move toward rebuilding your life. Please contact Louise Rogers if you have any questions.

The group uses the book *Beyond the Broken Heart: A Journey Through Grief* by Julie Yarbrough. **To register and for more information**, complete the online registration form on the church website or call Peg Kinsey at 412-835-6630. To help defray the costs of materials, a donation of \$10.00 is suggested.



Good News in Homewood

From 1994 to 2013 more than 140 Westminster members have gone to Homewood to: (1) build a credit union, (2) attend and strengthen House of Manna, and (3) launch Homewood Renaissance. All of these started well but then struggled because of the many issues in Homewood. Over the last five years, Westminster's investment of time and talent has worked to address these issues with Homewood partners – with dramatic results. We've partnered with the Homewood Community Development Collaborative to help them become a more effective leadership team by investing in a community development consultant to assist them in building an effective decision making and team management process. As a result, the Collaborative has aligned Homewood's many stakeholders (i.e., city agencies, mayor's office, City Council, black politicians, foundations, Homewood's residents, etc.) through implementing the six key initiatives described below:

1. Homewood's Comprehensive Community Plan, which will be approved by City Council.
2. The Strategic Plan for implementing the Community Plan.
3. The Collaborative qualifying to be Homewood's Registered Community Organization (RCO) selected by the city to lead the implementation of the Community Plan.
4. Selecting, staffing, and planning the management of key projects to implement the Strategic Plan.
5. Forbes Fund Capability Assessment of Homewood's nonprofits as the basis for both staffing the Collaborative's projects and investing in building their capacity.
6. Developing the media for launching the Community Plan and RCO, including a series of videos, websites, and social media.

The Community Plan and Strategic Plan for implementing it was announced at an April 23 Homewood Community Meeting.

All of this is happening in the midst of accelerating investments in Homewood by the city, developers, and the Collaborative. These include:

1. Homewood Business District's development of 100,000 square feet of commercial property and 150 residential properties along Homewood Ave.
2. Lexington Partners of Pittsburgh's residential and commercial development of 400,000 square feet of commercial property plus 125 apartments and 25 townhouses in Point Breeze, just on the other side of the busway from Homewood.
3. Development of 58 new townhouses along Kelly Street and Hamilton Avenue.
4. Development of a plan and funding to construct 400 new and rehabilitated homes throughout the community.
5. University of Pittsburgh's Homewood investments, which include:



The Homewood Collaborative

- a. Manufacturing Assistance Center teaches machining and computer-aided manufacturing to Homewood students.
 - b. Community Engagement Center pulls from all 14 Schools at Pitt to come alongside community leaders to address the challenges found in Homewood.
 - c. Wellness Pavilion will provide services in physical therapy, occupational therapy, counseling, health screenings, etc.
6. Innovation Lab & Makerspace features Small Business Development courses for Homewood's residents; it is equipped with 3D laser printers, CAD woodworking, and CAD soft textile equipment.
 7. Own Our Own is John Wallace's project for the development and support of black entrepreneurs.
 8. Development of light manufacturing facilities along an entire block of Susquehanna Street by Bridgeway Capital.
 9. Stargell Field's redevelopment into a world-class sports entertainment complex.

Most disadvantaged communities across Pittsburgh have struggled to accomplish this kind of progress, just as Homewood has struggled for decades. But now because of the progress it has made, Homewood is positioned to be a "role model community" for other communities as described by Mayor Peduto and Councilman Ricky Burgess.

All of this will provide many opportunities for Westminster members to invest their time and talent in Homewood's future as scripture tells us in three well known Bible verses:

"Whatever you did for the least of these you did for me."

– Matthew 25:40

"To whom much is given much is expected."

– Luke 12:48

"Where your treasure is, there will be your heart."

– Matthew 6:21

– Dan Paul



Mendelssohn Choir at Westminster

Victoria's Secret: A Life in Music

Sunday, May 19

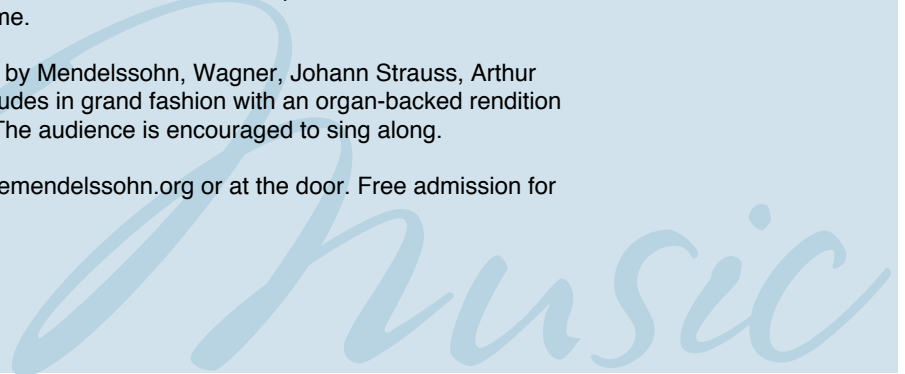
3:00 p.m.

Sanctuary

Celebrate Queen Victoria during the 200th anniversary of her birth. Created by Matthew Mehaffey, the Robert Page Music Director of the Mendelssohn Choir of Pittsburgh, the concert will feature an actor playing several historical figures in Victoria's life, and an actress playing the Queen herself. They will lead the audience through episodes of the Queen's life in between short performances of music significant to her and her time.

The concert features works by Mendelssohn, Wagner, Johann Strauss, Arthur Sullivan, and more. It concludes in grand fashion with an organ-backed rendition of "God Save the Queen." The audience is encouraged to sing along.

Purchase tickets at www.themendelssohn.org or at the door. Free admission for children under 12.



Westminster Single Women's Group

Are you single, widowed, or divorced and looking to create new friendships and add an assortment of fun and exciting activities to your social calendar?

Join church member and facilitator Cathy Kramer on **Tuesday morning, May 21**, from 9:30 until 11:00 in Room 231 for our kick-off meeting. Help us get established by bringing your ideas and single friends. The group is open to both members and non-members of Westminster Presbyterian Church. This lighthearted, easygoing group has no long-term commitment. The intention is to come when you can and participate in the activities you enjoy.

Kick-off Meeting
Tuesday, May 21
9:30 – 11:00 a.m.
Room 231

Coffee and light refreshments will be served.

RSVP by visiting the WROC website at wroc.westminster-church.org.



Strong Bodies – Strong Bones

An exercise program to build and maintain bone strength

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. Anne's goal is to give you the knowledge to safely continue the exercise program at home. Get started with this five-week summer class; learn what you need to do to beat osteoporosis. Participants may choose to stand or sit and should bring a pair of light hand weights to class.

May 22 – June 19
Wednesdays, 9:00 – 9:50 a.m.
Cost: \$25

Anne Brucker has worked for 40 years as a teacher, lecturer, and researcher in the health industry. She served as the lead exercise physiologist for the six-year Highmark Osteoporosis HOPE Study. Brucker acted as the exercise design coordinator and conducted the pilot program for the University of Pittsburgh's 10 Keys to Healthy Living Study and currently serves on the advisory board for the MOVE UP Study at the University of Pittsburgh's Prevention Research Center.

WROC Summer Fitness Classes – Enroll Now

The WROC continues to offer a variety of fitness classes for all ages and fitness levels. Visit our website for a complete listing of classes being offered at the WROC this summer.



Treasures for Troops

Throughout the month of March, the Deacons sponsored their annual Treasures for Troops drive. This program provided necessary items for our troops who are stationed in the Middle East. Your response was again overwhelming! Each Sunday, you filled our boxes to the brim and received a salute of thanks from our own resident soldier, Dick Hestwood.

We gratefully packaged and sent 23 boxes of treasures in early April along with thank you notes from our Sunday school children. Your generous monetary contributions covered our postage costs.

We thank you all for making Treasures for Troops another Westminster success.



Thank You!



Blood Drive

Sunday, May 19
8:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.
Fellowship Hall

The Deacons thank you for your continuing support in the worthy mission of donating blood. In order to donate, you must:

- Be 17 years or older (16 with parental consent)
- Weight 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 medical questions, please call the Central Blood Bank's Medical Help Line at 412-209-7160.

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

- Online at www.centralbloodbank.org, using sponsor code G0010171
- Signup tables before or after worship services on May 5 and 12
- Contact the church office at 412-835-6630
- Walk-ins are always welcome

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

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

A Reminder About Check Donations

PNC Bank has recently changed their policy on how checks are written out to payees. Any checks for donations to the church or any specific church activities must be made out to "Westminster Presbyterian Church" and not "WPC" or any other acronym or activity name, such as "WROC" or "Chancel Guild." Designation of funds should be noted in the memo line only, so that your check can be properly processed and credited.

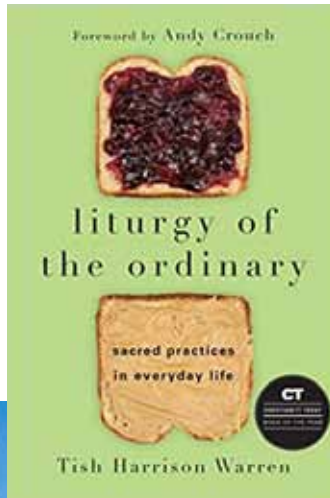
We appreciate and value your donations to the church and its causes, and thank you in advance for your attention to this detail going forward when making out your donation checks.

Save the Date

Day Retreat Friday, June 21

Louise Rogers will lead a one-day retreat at the Spiritan Center in Bethel Park on Friday, June 21, from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Plan to join us for a day of relaxation and spiritual renewal.

During our time together we will look at excerpts from the book *Liturgy of the Ordinary: Sacred Practices in Everyday Life* by Tish Harrison Warren (InterVarsity Press, 2016). *Liturgy of the Ordinary* releases the ancient word from its traditional roots and refurbishes the idea of liturgy into a heartfelt pursuit of integrating Christ into daily activities.



Session Notes

At its meeting on April 15, the Session discussed where we have seen “the church being the church.”

A discussion led by the Finance Commission reviewed the February financial numbers, as the quarter end numbers are being finalized. The commission provided information on the positive steps being taken as we move forward. Communication to the congregation will go out directly.

Barefoot School, Westminster’s vacation Bible school, will be held June 24 – 28. Many volunteers are needed.

Deaths

John Miller
February 5

Jeffrey Scott
March 26

Fred Langenberg
March 31





**WESTMINSTER
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**

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

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GOD HAS GONE UP WITH A SHOUT,
THE LORD WITH THE SOUND OF A TRUMPET.

SING PRAISES TO GOD, SING PRAISES;

SING PRAISES TO OUR KING, SING PRAISES.

FOR GOD IS THE KING OF ALL THE EARTH;

SING PRAISES WITH A PSALM.

— PSALM 47:5-7

