



THE SPARE

WESTMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
Pittsburgh, PA

Redemption

The church is all about redemption.

In traditional Christian language, redemption usually means being saved from sin. Because our sin is ultimately against God, only God can redeem it, and this is what God does for us in Christ. As the letter to the Ephesians says, "In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace."

Redemption in that sense is roughly a synonym for salvation. We fall short of God's will for our lives. We miss the mark, which is the literal meaning of the Greek word we translate as "sin." So God in Christ picks us up and forgives us and makes us right, the way we were meant to be. And all of this is God's doing. It's a gift, pure and simple, not something we can earn or deserve. That was a central theme of the Reformation, taken again from Ephesians: "By grace you have been saved through faith...."

If you look up "redemption" in a dictionary, you may find this specifically Christian meaning. But there are other definitions, too, and the way they shade into one another is revealing.

A related meaning is the act of exchanging one thing for another, as when you redeem a ticket to claim a prize. This notion of exchange becomes another image of what God does for us in Christ: Jesus takes our place in suffering the



penalty for sin, all the way to death on a cross, so that we can be set free to live a new life in the risen Lord. To redeem in this sense is to "ransom," to pay the price to set someone free.

All of this is a classic, biblical way of thinking about what it means to be saved by Christ. But in some Christian circles the idea of salvation begins to sound entirely personal and private, as if the whole notion of redemption came down to a kind of spiritual "Get Out of Jail Free" card. That misses, I think, another, broader meaning of redemption which, according to my dictionary, is "the act of making something better," or "to free from what distresses or harms."

The church is about redemption in this wider sense as well. Often we encounter suffering, or conflicts between individuals, or clashes between whole groups of

people, and I find myself asking, "Where is the redemption in this situation? What does redemption look like here?"

Christ sets out to redeem, not just individuals, but the whole world – all of creation and everyone in it. That includes many kinds of pain, and strained or broken relationships between human beings, and the New Testament says that we who follow Jesus are to share in his "ministry of reconciliation."

In this fractious and wounded world, we Christians are to be on the lookout for what will make things better, and place ourselves in the service of Christ, who is always at work on the side of redemption.

PASTOR

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for Congregational Care
 REV. JASON FREYER, *Associate Pastor*
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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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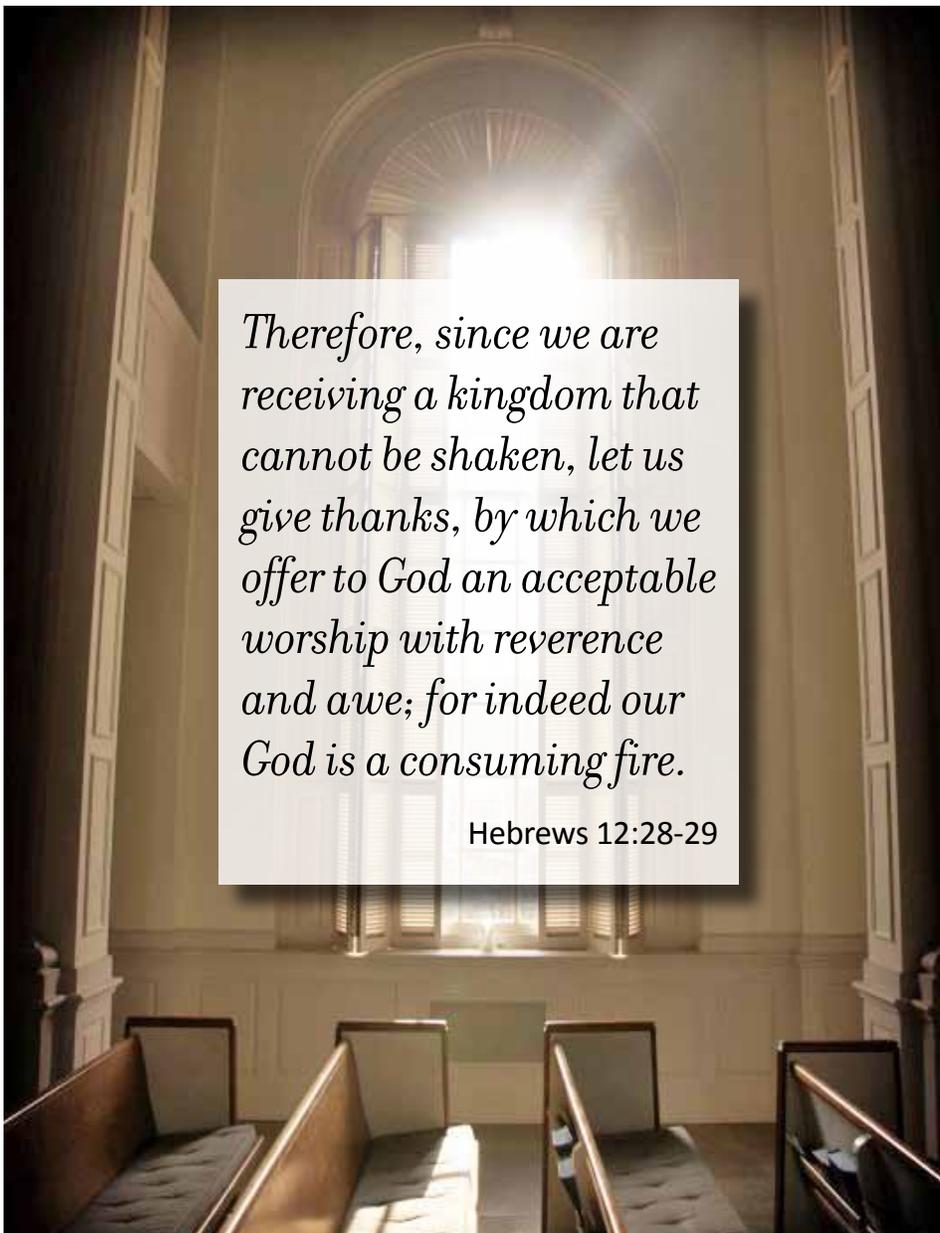
📅	Sundays
🕒	8:30* & 11:00 a.m.
📍	Sanctuary

The Bridge Contemporary Worship

📅	Sundays
🕒	9:45 a.m.
📍	WROC

* 8:30 a.m. worship moves back into the sanctuary beginning Sunday, September 10.

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



Upcoming Events

10
SEP Education
Classes
resume

13
SEP Wednesday
activities
resume

17
SEP Blood Drive

23
SEP Spiritual Gifts
Workshop

24
SEP Seraphic
Singers
Concert
in the sanctuary

WESTMINSTER SEMINARS

Sundays at 9:45 a.m.
Galbreath Chapel

Everyone is welcome at the Westminster Seminars, a convenient way to learn and grow in faith before or after worship on Sunday mornings. Seminar topics, which vary from month to month, cover Christian living and mission, theology and history, culture and the arts, and of course the Bible. Please join the discussion as your schedule permits. No preparation is necessary. Simply come with a curious mind.

September 10, 17, 24; October 1

What the New Russia Wants: Politics and Religion in the Era of Vladimir Putin

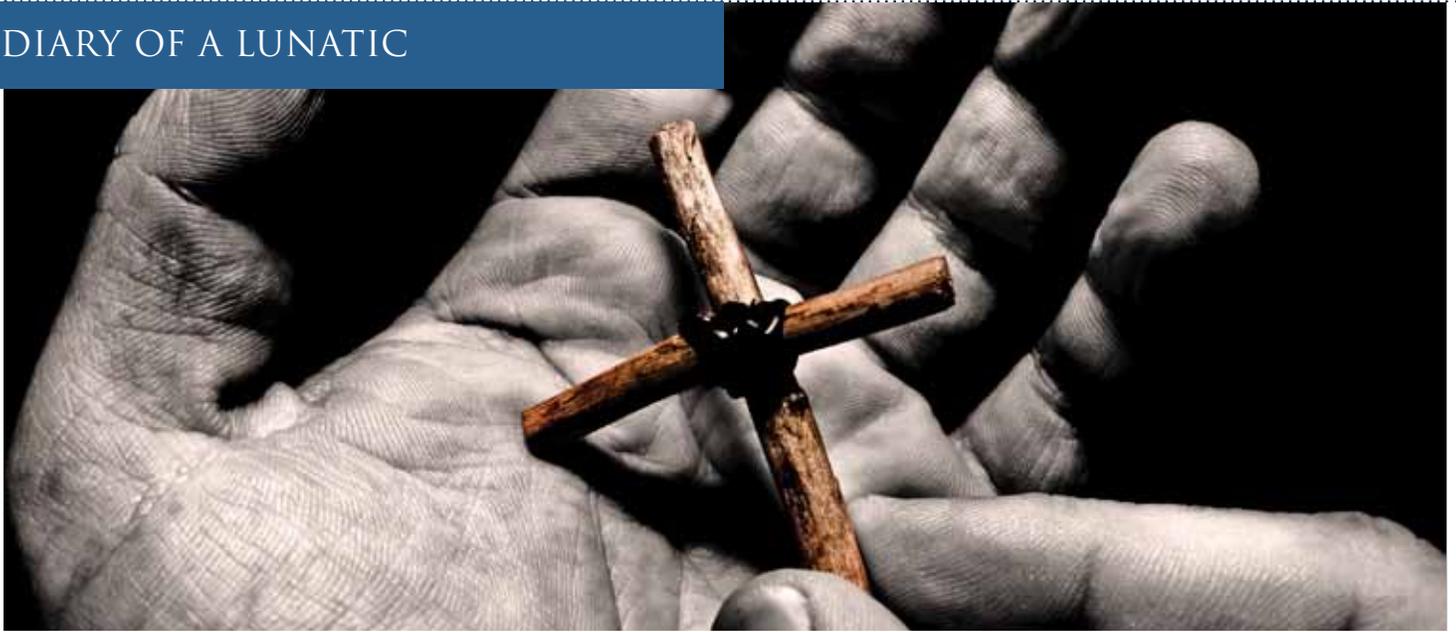
John P. Burgess
Pittsburgh Theological Seminary

One hundred years ago, the Bolshevik Revolution took place, an event that changed the world forever. In 1991, communism finally collapsed, but under Vladimir Putin Russians again think of themselves as a great world power. This series will help us understand the aspirations of the new Russia, the growing tensions between Russia and the United States, and the role of religion in shaping a new Russian national identity.



JOHN BURGESS

John P. Burgess is professor of systematic theology at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary. For more than a decade, he has studied religion and politics in the new Russia. His most recent book is Holy Rus': The Rebirth of Orthodoxy in the New Russia (Yale Univ. Press, 2017). He and his wife Deb recently led a group of eight seminary students to Russia.



Experiencing Jesus

If you are anything like me, we need to begin this *Spire* article with a collective “Where did our summer go?” Seriously, it feels like we were just getting ready to head out on the typical youth ministry summer trips like our mission trip to Wintersville, Ohio, our Mini Golf Pro Tour, our Mystery Trip (to Cedar Point, for the curious among us), and the New Wilmington Mission Conference. It feels like I was just starting to pack up and get us ready. Now we’re home, and the back-to-school sales are relentless.

It’s game time, I suppose.

Something in me always wants to reflect on summer. I was that one kid who really enjoyed the “How I spent my summer vacation” assignment. I guess I just always want to make sure that I managed to squeeze every last ounce of goodness from the summer. I want to know that I spent it well. I want to know that I did everything I wanted to do, and of course spent some time at a beach somewhere.

But at this point in my ministry career, I find myself asking a different question altogether. Instead of “how did I spend my summer vacation,” I find myself quietly wondering where I experienced Jesus throughout the summer. Where were the unexpected moments of grace? Where were the places where the Lord took me by surprise? What was it that I heard in his voice? With the hustle and bustle of the school year on pause, did I take advantage of the stillness to hear from Christ?

I think this summer I did a pretty decent job of experiencing Jesus. I saw him in Wintersville, Ohio, as some of our youth worked to prepare a home that would be used to house women set free from the sex trade. I saw him there as we prayed over every room, asking Christ to make this place feel like home to these women who have known none. I saw Christ at the New Wilmington Mission Conference, through passionate speakers and dedicated missionaries who wanted to share with us the stories of what God is doing in their midst. I even saw Jesus on the mini golf course,

if you can believe it. This year we had one week on the tour where students played with their parents as a team. My dad even made the trek in from Murrsville to play! I watched as a group of students and parents spent the night relaxing and enjoying each other’s company, and I am pretty sure I saw Christ present in those exchanges as well.

The trick with experiencing Jesus is to be mindful enough in the moment to see him at work in real time. Too often, at least for me, I get distracted. I see my own agenda and priorities way louder than I ever see Jesus. It actually takes a healthy amount of discipline to see Jesus at work in our worlds. It takes discipline to set aside everything that I think is important, and to quietly ask where Jesus places his value and priorities in my life. It’s a daily struggle.

This year for the *Spire*, I decided to try something a little bit different. I think one of the best kept secrets in the church is the fact that we have a blog (www.westminster-church.org/blog) where we are routinely posting fresh content and discussions. I thought it would be interesting if my articles here in the *Spire* were actually the first word in a conversation, rather than the last. So every Tuesday this month, I invite you to head over to the blog for some follow-up ideas on what it means to experience Jesus in our everyday lives. What does it mean to experience Jesus when we read the Bible? What does it mean to pray in a way that helps us experience the Lord? Can we see Christ in each other? And we’ll even take a look at experiencing Jesus in the grocery store. I invite you to head on over to the blog, read along with me, and then join the conversation in the comments section.

Because in truth, we do experience Christ better together. Your stories are powerful on their own, but they also enhance and color in my experiences of Christ. Watching Jesus work in your life makes it a little bit easier to see him at work in mine. So join me, won’t you, and together we’ll see what Jesus is up to in our midst.

I hope you all had a happy summer! It’s great to be back!

– Jason Freyer

Sunday School at Westminster

Welcome back returning families and welcome new families to the start of Westminster's 2017-2018 Sunday school beginning September 10, during both 9:45 and 11:00 a.m. worship services.

This year, we will be implementing the Tru curriculum throughout the entire Sunday school program. We have been using this curriculum on a small scale during the past year or two, and have been pleased with its context, especially Tru's strong biblical base and activities that reinforce the Bible lesson. We are looking forward to using this curriculum with all the children in both hours. Tru offers two different formats, so that although the Bible passage will be the same, the supporting activities will be different during each hour.

Tru is a dynamic curriculum that meets the needs of today's children. Tru tells God's Big Story in chronological order, and offers relationship building and activities that reinforce God's Big Story for each age group. Tru is written with the goal of engaging children so that they are able to remember and understand that they are part of God's Big Story and they play a part in this incredible story. The curriculum puts God on display as the "main character" of every lesson.

Each week, your child will bring home an *At Home* that will tell you what that Sunday's lesson was about, including a Bible verse for you and the children to discuss. It also provides a preview of the following week's lesson, along with activities that you can do at home. It brings Sunday school home to you. You can choose what sections you would like to do with your child(ren) and get away from the blank look when you ask, "What did you learn in Sunday school today?" We hope you will use *At Home* to partner with and support your child's Sunday school classes.

Registration for Sunday school (both hours)

Registration is required for all children participating in Sunday school and other children's programs at Westminster. You can go to the church website at westminster-church.org and follow the "connect" menu bar link to "children & family ministry" to register your child(ren) online, or complete a registration form when you first drop off your child to attend Sunday school. This form not only registers your child but gives us important information regarding allergies and/or special needs.

Sign In/Sign Out Procedures (both hours)

These procedures remain the same as last year. When you drop off your child, sign him/her in on the attendance clip board. If someone other than you will be picking up your child at dismissal, please inform the small group leader at drop-off. Please be sure to sign your child out the same way at dismissal.



Sunday school begins September 10.

9:45 Sunday school

At 9:45, children may be dropped off in their classrooms for a lesson from God's Big Story, created especially for their age group. They will explore the story through activities, music, worship, and skits/storytelling.

Children may be dropped off/picked up in these rooms:

PreK – 1st	Rm. 107
2nd – 4th	Rm. 125

11:00 Sunday school

Children will begin in their rooms for small group with their leaders, doing 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. The small group leaders will gather the children and return to their rooms for activities that reinforce the Big God Story that they heard in large group.

Children may be dropped off/picked up in these rooms:

2 and 3 year olds	Rm. 237
PreK	Rm. 136
Kindergarten	Rm. 138
1st Grade	Rm. 127
2nd Grade	Rm. 128
3rd & 4th Grade	Rm. 121
5th & 6th Grade	Rm. 257

On the first Sunday of the month, the children (PreK through 6th) will go directly to the sanctuary for worship at 11:00. After the Children's Moment, PreK through 1st grade may join their small group for Sunday school. Children 2nd through 6th grades may 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.

See everyone on Sunday, September 10!

– Debb Egli

Library News

Anything but Simple

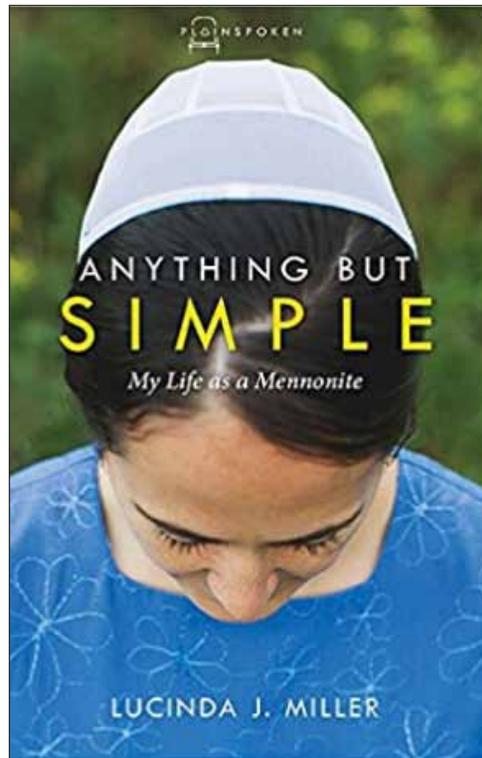
The newest addition to the church library is the memoir *Anything but Simple: My Life as a Mennonite* by Lucinda J. Miller. It also happens to be written by my newest friend. As a librarian, I sometimes receive digital copies of books before they are published in exchange for a short review (and of course the publishers hope I will purchase copies for the libraries where I work and volunteer). This is how I got to read *Anything but Simple* several months before it was released.

I love memoirs. They give a glimpse into the life and culture of another person and often leave me feeling as if I know the author. After I finish a good book, I often look up the author's website. When I scrolled down to the bottom of Lucinda's site, I noticed a section that says "Get in touch." So I did. I sent a brief email where I introduced myself and thanked her for sharing about her life through her book. I never expected a reply. But Lucinda did reply and we've been emailing back and forth for a few months. She mentioned that she would be in Pittsburgh in July and asked if I knew of a place where she could talk about her book. Since her book, like her life, centers on her faith, I knew Westminster was the perfect place. Kathy Long, the WROC director, took care of logistics, and Lucinda explored the question "What Is Simplicity?" and then answered questions from the audience.

If you missed the talk, you can still learn what it is like to be a Mennonite woman today by stopping by the church library to check out Lucinda's memoir. She wrote about her church and her family, the homemade dresses and head covering she wears, and her cellphone and Facebook page. She wrote about her day-to-day life, thoughts, feelings, and emotions. "With a roving curiosity and a sometimes saucy tongue," as the back of the book says, Lucinda's writing is lyrical and lovely.

I'm happy that I read her book, but I'm even happier that I was blessed with a new friend.

— Sarah Fetterman-Freyer
Westminster Church Librarian



Westminster Book Group

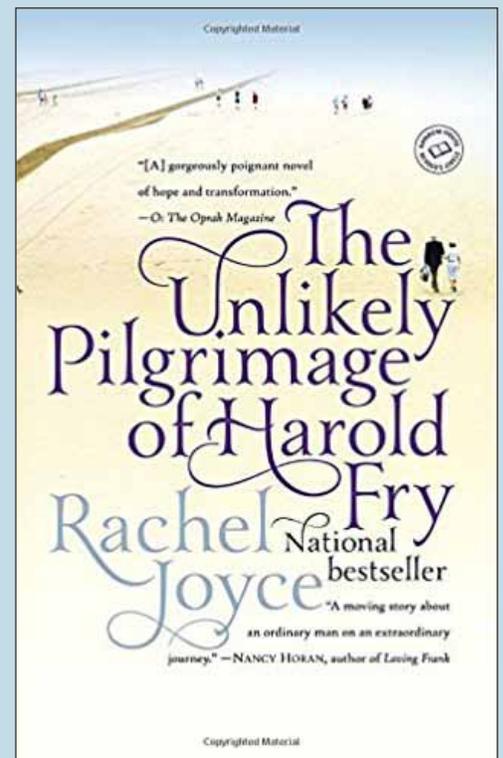
Wednesday, September 27
Noon – 1:00 p.m.
Yahweh Café

The Westminster Book Group will meet next on Wednesday, September 27, at noon in the Yahweh Café. We will be discussing *The Unlikely Pilgrimage of Harold Fry* by Rachel Joyce.

You have to love Harold Fry, a man who set out one morning to mail a letter and then just kept going.... Like Christian in John Bunyan's *The Pilgrim's Progress*, Harold becomes Everyman in the eyes of those who encounter him.... Harold's journey, which parallels Christian's nicely but not overly neatly, takes him to the edge of death and back again. It will stick with you, this story of faith, fidelity and redemption.

— *Minneapolis Star Tribune*

We invite you to bring a brown bag lunch and join us.



What Is the Grace Memorial Book Club?

On alternate Mondays a small group of Westminster members travels together to Grace Memorial Presbyterian Church, a mostly black church in the city's Hill District, to meet with a group of their members. Growing out of our Peace and Justice Group's February 2016 *Faith, Race, Justice, and Mass Incarceration* workshop at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary, this little community of black and white Christians has been meeting since May 2016 to share concerns and discuss issues of racial and economic justice. Because all of us care deeply about these issues but none of us are experts, we have been reading and learning together from a range of authors. Here are the books we have read so far:

- *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness*, Michelle Alexander
- *Just Mercy: A Story of Justice and Redemption*, Bryan Stevenson
- *America's Original Sin: Racism, White Privilege, and the Bridge to a New America*, Jim Wallis
- *Locked Down, Locked Out: Why Prison Doesn't Work and How We Can Do Better*, Maya Schenwar
- *Letters to a Young Brother*, Hill Harper
- *Urban Ministry: An Introduction*, Dr. Ronald Peters
- *Executing Grace: How the Death Penalty Killed Jesus and Why It's Killing Us*, Shane Claiborne
- *The Other Wes Moore: One Name, Two Fates*, Wes Moore
- *Ferguson and Faith: Sparking Leadership and Awakening Community*, Leah Gunning Francis
- *Tears We Cannot Stop: A Sermon to White America*, Michael Eric Dyson

At least as important as what we are learning is what we are becoming – a community of people who care for one another. We are learning about each other's life experiences, fears, challenges, and hopes for the future. We are not colorblind; we are exploring all the ways in which race affects our lives. We feel blessed to be part of conversations that rarely happen in today's America, and yet need to – especially among Christians.

We are just beginning a new book, *Ministry for Prisoners and Families: The Way Forward* by W. Wilson Goode. This book explores the impact of incarceration on the African American community and the biblical mandate for an intentional response from the church. If you have a concern for these issues, please consider joining us. Our next meeting will be September 11, from 6:30 to 8:00 p.m. For carpooling and other information, contact Bobbie Hartman or Will Hignett.

– Bobbie Hartman

Spiritual Gifts Workshop

Saturday, September 23

9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Fellowship Hall

L. Roger Owens, Pittsburgh Theological Seminary

Sponsored by the Adult Spiritual Development Commission

1 Corinthians: 12 has a lengthy list of spiritual gifts (as well as Romans 12 and Ephesians 4). Have you considered what your gifts might be? How do you act on them, and how do they inform your walk and your spiritual practices? On September 23, Roger Owens will lead us in a workshop on the topic. We'll work toward discerning (a gift itself) what our gifts might be. Your gifts might be so close and natural to you that you easily overlook them!

You may know Roger from our Westminster Seminars. Since 2013 L. Roger Owens (PhD, Duke University) has been associate professor of leadership and ministry at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary. An ordained elder in the United Methodist Church, Roger spent eight years as a pastor in North Carolina serving churches with his wife, Rev. Ginger Thomas, before moving to Pittsburgh. Now as a professor, writer, and retreat leader, he offers students and other audiences a new, refreshing way to think about ministry.

Roger is the author of three books, the editor of two others, and he has written numerous articles. He is a frequent faculty presenter in the Upper Room's Academy for Spiritual Formation, teaching broadly in Christian spirituality. He also leads workshops on spiritual leadership.

Please watch for further details as they become available.



L. Roger Owens

Deacons' 2017 Giving Gala Benefits City Mission



Saturday, October 21
St. Clair Country Club

On Saturday, October 21, the Deacons will sponsor their second annual Giving Gala at St. Clair Country Club to benefit City Mission.

For 75 years, City Mission has served the homeless and needy in the Southwestern Pennsylvania region. Last year the mission provided over 113,000 meals, 33,000 nights of shelter, medical care, residential programming, job training, and education services to men, women, and children. The mission is growing, with a new veterans' residence and a renovated women and children's facility planned for completion in 2018. With your support, the mission works each day to transform lives.

The gala will begin at 5:30 p.m. with a cash bar and hors d'oeuvres, followed by a gourmet dinner, basket raffles, and a live auction. Please join us for an evening of fun and fellowship while supporting a worthy cause. The tickets, which are \$75 each, will be on sale in September after all three services and online. Seating is limited, so please secure your place as soon as possible.

Haiti This Winter!

January 30 – February 6, 2018

In January when the snow is flying in Pittsburgh, some of us will be in La Croix, Haiti, where we will be warmed by the 90-degree weather. But more important, our hearts will be warmed by working with the Haitian people at the New Testament Mission in La Croix. If you have been thinking about joining in this effort, this is a good time to get involved: our Westminster team is currently forming for 2018.

The work we do will be determined by the needs in La Croix and the skills of our travel team. In the past, work has included construction, teaching, office work, computer technology, electrical work, health-related projects, child sponsorship, art, and handcrafts. If you have an interest in serving the people of La Croix, never fear, there will be work for you to do. (For a review of our 2017 mission efforts, see the April *Spire* article "Haiti: Why We Go.")

This year we are planning for one week only to make room for the increased number of groups wanting to participate in this mission. Also, note that our travel days are Tuesdays. We are experimenting with flying on Tuesdays for reasons of reduced cost and less crowded traveling.

The cost of the trip is air fare from Pittsburgh to Port-au-Prince, and \$200 for food, accommodations, and in-country transportation for the week. Accommodations are basic but clean, comfortable, and safe, and the food that the mission's "kitchen ladies" prepare is delicious.

Space is limited to 20. We will hold spaces for Westminster folk through the end of September. After that we will invite others to join us. At this writing we are not quite half full. If you are interested in going or just want to learn more, contact Paul and Sandy Conley at conley1973@verizon.net or Tom and Bobbie Hartman at hartman1976@verizon.net.





Seraphic Singers

Sunday, September 24
4:00 p.m.
Sanctuary

On Sunday, September 24, the Westminster sanctuary will ring with the soaring voices of the 12 women who make up Seraphic Singers, Pittsburgh's professional women's chorus. Led by founder and director Gretchen Franz, the chorus will make its second appearance at Westminster in a concert celebrating some of the finest music composed and arranged for women's voices.

The program includes a diverse array of music spanning decades and genres with a focus on the works of iconic composers from the 21st century, including two compositions by the winner of the American Choral Directors Association's Brock Commission, Gwyneth Walker. Also on the program are musical theater favorites from George and Ira Gershwin and Stephen Sondheim.

WESTMINSTER
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
Music
& Arts Series

Founded in 2014, Seraphic Singers promotes a wide array of secular and sacred music composed for women's voices. The group is comprised of professional singers, vocal coaches, choral directors, music teachers, pianists, a financial planner, and a psychologist – all with a passion for singing great music. Pianist Joy Crummie will accompany the ensemble.

This is a concert not to be missed. Admission is free; a freewill offering will support future programming.

"It's the *sound* of 12 wonderful *voices* that *moves* people."

– Gretchen Franz

Fall Happenings at the WROC

Dave Ramsey's Financial Peace University

September 14 – November 9

Thursdays: 7:00 – 8:30 p.m.

Room 238

Cost: \$93 (includes Financial Peace Membership Kit)

What if you were following a plan for your money that you *knew* worked? With Dave Ramsey's class Financial Peace University, you *can* take control of your money, get out of debt, and create a plan for your future.

Financial Peace University is designed to teach you and your family how to get out of debt, stay out of debt, and build wealth. You'll meet with your class each week to watch the video lesson and participate in discussion and accountability groups that will change your whole attitude about money.

During this class you will learn to:

Get Control of Your Money

- Follow the step-by-step process for getting out of debt and staying out of debt
- Put together a monthly spending plan that really works
- Set financial goals and communicate about money

Stop Struggling to Make Ends Meet

- Protect your family from life's emergencies
- Eliminate the stress that comes from financial problems
- Save and invest for your future

Tell Your Money What to Do

- Know what insurance to buy – and what to avoid
- Get great deals on the things you buy
- Buy or sell a home the right way
- Plan for your retirement and make the right investment choices

Change your Family's Future

- Utilize a good money plan to strengthen your marriage
- Unlock the power of giving to change your community

This nine-week video curriculum is taught by financial expert Dave Ramsey. Small group discussion will be led by church members David and Daryl Kerr.

Register at wroc.westminster-church.org.



4^{first place} health

discover a new way to healthy living

A Weight-Loss Program and So Much More!

First Place 4 Health invites you to discover the most complete Christ-centered weight-loss and healthy living program available, based on proven techniques and 25 years of experience.

See how putting God first can lead to successful weight loss. Learn about how God calls Christians to be physically fit. Understand the positive effects that good nutrition and exercise have on your emotions and spirit.

Free Orientation Meeting (required for new members)

Monday, September 18

10:30 a.m.

Room 231

First Place 4 Health Orientation will give you an opportunity to hear about this Christ-centered weight-loss program that addresses all areas of life: physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual. You will have the chance to view materials, ask questions, and have a good understanding of what to expect during the journey to a new you.

Twelve-Week Session

September 25 – December 11

Mondays, 10:30 - 11:30 a.m.

Room 231

Instructor: Marianne Trachok

Cost: \$20 includes *Growing in the Fruit of the Spirit* Bible study book

Additional Resources:

- Member's Guide – Required, but not provided; please search online for a new or used book.
- Member's Kit – Optional; includes above Member's Guide

Enroll now for WROC Fall Fitness Classes!

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

Caring Notes from Pastor Louise

First, I give thanks...

Thank you, Lord, for bringing me to serve at Westminster Presbyterian Church with a sense of humility as the Associate Pastor for Congregational Care. Thank you for the dedicated members of the Associate Pastor Nominating Committee who spent hours away from home processing resumes, listening to sermons, conducting interviews, discussing candidates, and praying. Thank you for the warm reception and support on June 11 when I preached (with a bit of trembling) to the congregation. Yes, thank you, Lord!



Pastor Louise at John McMillan Presbyterian Church

Who is this person called to be your new pastor?

As you may have heard, I grew up at Westminster Church. Please don't believe any stories you hear from past Sunday school teachers! Following my graduation from Grove City College, where I majored in religion and business, Bill and I were married four years later by Revs. Rich and Jill Minnich at Westminster Church before we moved to Washington, DC. In those days, I was employed by ADP in sales, and eventually we moved west to the San Francisco Bay area where I worked as the regional VP of sales. To our delight, our daughters Carolyn and Kelsey were born in San Ramon, California. Our shifting priorities drew us back to Pittsburgh, closer to family.

Although our lives were moving fast, one constant was God's presence in our lives. No matter where we lived, we were active in a local church community that supported us and encouraged us in our faith. We hold fond memories of friends from the First Presbyterian Church of Annandale, Virginia, and John Knox Presbyterian Church in Dublin, California. Once back in Pittsburgh, I answered the call to ministry and began studying for my Master of Divinity degree at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary and interning as a chaplain at the Baptist Home. I happily returned to attending Westminster Church.

Following seminary, I served at John McMillan Presbyterian Church for 12 years. Who would have dreamed 50 years ago, when Westminster Church helped plant John McMillan, that God would call me to serve at both of these congregations?

Today at Westminster Church, we can be assured of God's continued leading. Know that as your pastor, I will seek to bring Christ's spirit to places of need and bring joy as we discover our gifts to use in the service of one another. As the psalmist said, "Commit your way to the Lord; trust in him, and he will act." In the years ahead I look forward to getting to know you and to discovering how our extraordinary God is moving in our lives to bring hope and love.

– Louise Rogers

Blood Drive

September 17
8 a.m. – 2 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)
- 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 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
- Sign-up tables before or after worship services on September 3 and September 10
- 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.



Our Communion Bread

Visitors to the eleven o'clock service on a Communion Sunday may be surprised at the sweet taste of Westminster's communion bread, Scottish shortbread. To most Americans, these small pieces of shortbread look and taste like mini cookies. Why do we eat cookies at the Lord's Supper? The answer is part tradition at Westminster and part remembrance of our Scottish heritage.

In the first centuries of Christianity, most churches used leavened bread in the Lord's Supper. Justin Martyr, writing in the second century, refers to "common bread" – the bread of the people. In fact, the people brought both bread and wine for the sacrament from their pantries; it was truly ordinary wine and bread. In the Middle Ages the Western church began to use unleavened wafers while the Eastern church continued to use leavened bread. During the Protestant Reformation, leavened bread gained the upper hand and was the bread of choice in John Calvin's Geneva and in the Presbyterian Church of Scotland. Nevertheless, unleavened bread was also accepted and preferred in some places. The unleavened bread we know as Scottish shortbread was probably used more in rural churches, where it was considered the best available bread. By the 20th century, when baker's breads had become common even in the countryside, shortbread had no doubt become a tradition in various churches in both the British Isles and America.

Westminster Church's heritage goes back to the Scots-Irish settlers of Western Pennsylvania, who brought Presbyterianism to the frontier. While Westminster is a mere 70 years old, its use of shortbread for communion helps to connect our 21st-century community of faith to our Presbyterian ancestors who worked so hard to establish the Presbyterian faith in the Pittsburgh area. So, next time you celebrate the Lord's Supper with that sweet nugget of butter, flour, and sugar, think of it as "the choicest bread available for the sacred service" (R.T. Tarbert, *Buittle Parish: Past and Present* [Scotland], 1905).



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Baptisms

May 21

Brian Christopher

Parents: Kelly & Alexis Shedleski

Samantha Hadley

Parents: Elizabeth & Jeffrey Hogan

June 4

Carter Ann

Parents: Erica & Michael Anderson

Katherine & Brooke

Parents: Anne & Thomas Meikle

Aubrey Belle

Parents: Megan & Donald Mohring

Emery Sybil

Parents: Erin & Ryan Rupert

Brooklyn Rae

Parents: Lindsay & Joseph Senge

Liam Baker

Parents: Jessica & Andrew Stutzman

Tyler Edward

Parents: Jill & Adam Zibar

June 11

Matteo Joseph

Parents: Rosanna & Daniel Madden

Maddox David

Parents: Breanna & Cody Porter

Sawyer Grace

Parents: Taylor Cavanagh & Jacob Machel

July 16

Jackson Thomas

Parents: Nicole & Robert Beck

Charlotte Anna

Parents: Brandy & Phillip Croco

Property Projects

In 2017, the following property projects have either been completed or are currently in progress:

- The shingles over the north wing from the choir room to Memorial Parlor were replaced. With the completion of this project, the shingled roof areas of the entire facility have been replaced within the past nine years.
- Restoration of the sanctuary windows on the south side of the sanctuary, which brings the original windows installed in 1959 back to near original condition.
- Purchase of a new church van to replace the bus which was deteriorating and becoming more costly to maintain.
- Stage one of the restoration of the original columbarium plaques. We are striving to begin stage two in the fall of 2017.
- Construction of a new storage closet area in Room 107 for both the Sunday school and Westminster early childhood education programs.
- Renovation of Room 212, known as the bride's room, to facilitate utilization of the room for additional purposes, such as small group meetings.
- Repurposing three parking spaces in the north entrance parking lot area to be handicapped only parking spaces.

– Dave Reiter

Financial Report *As of July 31, 2017*

General Fund Contributions

Year-to-Date Actual 2017	\$1,088,625.87
Annual Budget	\$1,995,623.00
Amount needed to fulfill budget	\$906,997.13

Year-to-Date Income Statement

Income	\$1,294,930.15
Expenses	\$1,273,905.06
Net Position	\$21,025.09

We thank you for your wonderful support through the first seven months, and we are pleased to report that we have not had to rely on any outside lending sources to fulfill our internal and external commitments. However, as you can see above, we still have approximately 45.4% of our 2017 budget yet to be fulfilled.

As vacations and time away from home have been more prevalent in the summer, we ask that you remember that Westminster has internal commitments to staff, programs, and building costs, as well as local and global mission commitments. If you are current or ahead on your 2017 pledge, thank you for your continuing support. If you are behind on your 2017 pledge, please consider catching up and fulfilling your pledge, so that we can continue to meet our commitments. Thank you.



Deaths

William Singleton

May 19

Dominic Palombo Jr.

July 21

Florence Davis

July 23

Helen Moore

July 28





**WESTMINSTER
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**

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www.facebook.com/Westminster.Pittsburgh



www.youtube.com/user/WestminsterUSC

May the God of *steadfastness* and *encouragement* grant you to live in harmony with one another, in accordance with Christ Jesus, so that together you may with one voice *glorify* the God and Father of our *Lord* Jesus Christ.

– Romans 15:5-6

