



THE Celebration OF Worship

*Please rise in body or in spirit.

WE GATHER TOGETHER

Prelude

Offertoire sur Deux Noëls

Alexandre Guilmant

Welcome and Announcements

***Share the Peace of Christ**

***Candle Lighting (8:30 – Hedy and George Pitcairn; 11:00 – Sue and John Free)**

Leader: In a weary and worn world, how do we begin again?
Where do we start?

People: **We begin with tenderness. We begin with our hearts on our sleeve.
We begin from a place of vulnerability and hope.
And we begin with love.**

Leader: Yes, we start with love.
Today we light the candles of hope, peace, joy, and love.

People: **May the warmth of these lights be our cornerstone.
May the truth in these lights help us begin again.**

Leader: May it be so.

A Word for All Ages (11:00)

Children 4yrs through 4th grade are dismissed to Sunday School.

Sending Song Hymn No. 748 (11:00) Go with Us, Lord

Go with us Lord and guide the way, through this and every coming day,
that in your spirit strong and true our lives may be a gift to you.

***Prayer of Confession**

Gracious God,
You paint pictures of what could be, but we declare those visions impossible.
You speak of the lion lying down with the lamb, but we spout skepticism and uncertainty.
You call for justice, but we poke holes in the plan, unable to fathom it.
Forgive us for losing sight of hope.
Forgive us for assuming that what we see is all there is.
Open up our hearts to see the world as you see it.
Open up our hearts to risk hope, to dream dreams,
and to not be afraid of either.

(A time of silence for personal confession)

***Assurance of God's Love and Forgiveness**

Leader: Friends, believe the good news.

People: **In Jesus Christ we are forgiven.**

***Sung Response No. 92**

While We Are Waiting, Come

While we are waiting, come (repeat);
Jesus, our Lord, Emmanuel, while we are waiting, come.
With power and glory, come (repeat);
Jesus, our Lord, Emmanuel, while we are waiting, come.
Come, Savior, quickly come (repeat);
Jesus, our Lord, Emmanuel, while we are waiting, come.

Prayers of the People

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

Choral Response

SEVENFOLD AMEN

WE LISTEN FOR THE WORD

Prayer for Illumination

Scripture Lesson

Matthew 1:18-25

New Testament, page 1

Leader: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

Sermon

Words for the Beginning: Hope Is Worth the Risk

Jo Forrest

WE OFFER OUR GRATITUDE

Offertory Anthem

Carols Around (And a Round)

arr. Carl J. Nygard, Jr.

*Doxology

OLD HUNDREDTH

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; Praise him, all creatures here below;
Praise him above ye heavenly host; Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

Prayer of Dedication

WE GO OUT TO SERVE

*Closing Hymn No. 147

The First Nowell

THE FIRST NOWELL

Verses 1, 2, 4, and 6

*Benediction

*Benediction Response

People, Look East

People, look east. The time is near of the crowning of the year.
Make your house fair as you are able; trim the hearth and set the table.
People, look east and sing today: Love, the Guest, is on the way.

Postlude

Gabriel's Message

arr. Michael Bedford

Leading in worship: Jo Forrest, Laura Bentley, Jim Burns, Christine Hestwood, the Quartet, and Chancel Choir.

Prayers of Concern and Thanksgiving

Baptism (9:45) - We rejoice with Emily and Eric Falconer as they present Levi Robert for the Sacrament of Baptism.

We celebrate with joy the marriages of Kira Brown and Rich Secrest, and Mia Scott and Matthew Lemarie!

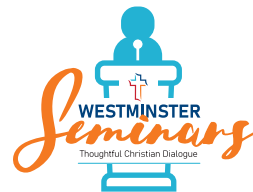
ANNOUNCEMENTS

Westminster Seminars

God in Unexpected Places: Preparing Ourselves to Celebrate Christmas

Advent Series – TODAY | 9:45 a.m. Galbreath Chapel

John Burgess, *Professor of Theology, Pittsburgh Theological Seminary*



For more info and the Zoom link, go to <https://www.westminster-church.org/events/event-list/westminster-seminars>.

Coming Up Next

Jonathan Edwards: What You Don't Know About This Puritan Will Surprise You

January 5, 12, 19, 26 – Note time change to 8:45 a.m. on the 26th | 9:45 a.m. | Galbreath Chapel

Presented by Lou Mitchell

You might know the name Jonathan Edwards as one those “terrible” Puritans, who preached the infamous sermon “Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God.” This series will dispel the misleading stereotype of Edwards as we learn how he saw God through the idea of beauty and why he is considered the most important philosopher/theologian that American has ever produced.

CHRISTMAS WORSHIP SERVICE SCHEDULE

Tuesday, December 24, Christmas Eve

Lessons & Carols 3:00 p.m. | Sanctuary
Contemporary..... 5:00 p.m. | WROC
Lessons & Carols 8:00 p.m. | Sanctuary

One Service Sunday

Sunday, December 29
One worship service
10:00 a.m. | Sanctuary

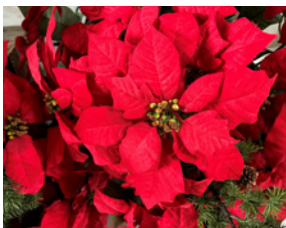


Christmas Joy Offering

TODAY | All Services | Sanctuary & WROC

There are special purple offering envelopes in the pews this morning to support the PC(USA) Christmas Joy Offering. This offering supports leadership development for communities of color, and provides for Presbyterian church workers in their time of need. Your gifts to the Christmas Joy Offering combine with gifts from thousands of congregations throughout our denomination to do our part to repair the world.

Read more at: pcusa.org/christmasjoy.



Christmas Flower Delivery

Flowers for delivery can be picked up at the church on
December 24 following the 5:00 p.m. & 8:00 p.m. services;
December 26, 10:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m. and December 27, 9:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.

The Chancel Guild wishes to thank all who contributed Christmas poinsettias. They add greatly to the beauty of our church.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Year-End Giving Reminder

For your contribution to be tax deductible in 2024, it should be received in the church by Friday, December 27, 2024, to allow for sufficient processing time. Earlier mailing is encouraged to ensure timely posting to giving statements.

To ensure the deductibility of your church contributions, please do not file your 2024 tax return until you have received a written acknowledgement of your contributions from the church. Some of your contributions may not be 100% tax deductible.

The 2024 contribution statements are anticipated to be mailed to you around the third week of January 2025.

If you have any questions regarding year-end contributions, please contact Jane Zacchero, Accounting Assistant, at 412-835-6630x202, or Jack Kelly, Director of Finance/Operations, at x201.



PLEDGE & GIVE 2025

The Heart of Generosity Pledge & Give campaign has received 270 pledges totaling \$1,215,784. Thank you for your pledges! Please return completed pledge cards to Anna Hiner in the church office or place them in the offering plates at any Sunday service. You may also [submit your pledge online](#).



① ONE SERVICE SUNDAY

Sunday, Decemeber 29 | 10:00 a.m. | Sanctuary

The service will blend both traditional and contemporary styles. It will also be livestreamed.



Register Now for Winter Fitness Classes at the WROC!

Classes begin the week of January 5.

Visit our website at wroc.westminster-church.org for a list of all fitness classes or call Kathy Long at 412-835-6630x200.

- Barre Sculpt
- Cardio Drumming
- Cardio Strength Fusion
- Gentle and Flow Yoga
- Pilates
- Stronger Bones/Better Balance
- T'ai Chi
- Zumba

ANNOUNCEMENTS



LIFT Sip & Paint @ Art by Becca Ward

Thursday, January 16 | 7:00-9:00 p.m. | 724 Donati Road

Join Ladies in Fellowship Together (LIFT) at ART by Becca Ward for a fun and creative night of painting! Becca will guide us through a step-by-step painting meant to inspire you. Whether you're a beginner or an experienced artist, it's sure to be a great time of female fellowship!

Register by scanning the QR code by January 9.



Offering Envelopes

If you indicated on your pledge card that you would like to receive offering envelopes for 2025, they are now available for you to pick up in the narthex.

Severe Winter Weather Policy

In the event of severe weather, Westminster Presbyterian Church and Westminster Recreation & Outreach Center (WROC) will follow the schedule of the [Upper St. Clair School District](#).

Please read more on our church website at westminster-church.org.

PEACE

A Guiding Star (Word)

This is the time of year when the world begins dreaming up New Year's Resolutions. How can we lean further into trusting the guidance of the Holy Spirit in 2025? Inspired by the magi who followed the star, a new tradition for the new year has begun in church communities: Star Words. Star Words are guiding words, gifted to us to inspire our spiritual journey into the new year.

In early January, we'll be sharing more information on how to receive and use your star word in the year ahead.

WONDER

THIS WEEK @ WESTMINSTER

DEC 22-28, 2024



Scan here for complete church calendar



Scan here for a full WROC schedule & information

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 22

8:30	Traditional Worship Wiggle Room**	Sanctuary Rm. 239
9:00	Welcome Center	North Main Entry
9:45	Bridge Contemporary Worship Bridge Sunday School (4yrs-4th Grd) Wiggle Room - The Bridge** Westminster Seminars	WROC/Lvstrm. Rm. 176 WROC Fitness Galbreath Chapel
11:00	Traditional Worship Wiggle Room** Sunday School (4 yrs-4th Grade)	Sanctuary/Lvstrm. Rm. 239 Rm. 233

*Sunday School - Dismissed from worship after the children's message. Pickup after worship 9:45 in Room 176; 11:00 in Room 233. A time for children 4 years through 4th grade to explore the Bible, enjoy fellowship together, and grow in their faith.

**Wiggle Room - 9:45 - Upstairs WROC Fitness Room; 8:30/11:00 - Room 239. Available to families with children who would prefer a separate space to step away while listening to the worship service. Please see an usher if you need help finding the Wiggle Room.

MONDAY, DECEMBER 23

12:00	AA	Fellowship Hall
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TUESDAY, DECEMBER 24

All Day	Church/Office/ WECEP Closed - Merry Christmas!	
3:00	Christmas Eve Lessons and Carols Wiggle Room	Sanctuary Rm. 239
5:00	Christmas Eve Contemporary Worship Wiggle Room	WROC Rm. 239
8:00	Christmas Eve Lessons and Carols Wiggle Room	Sanctuary Rm. 239

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 25

All Day Church/Office/ WECEP Closed - Merry Christmas!

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 26

7:30	NA	Rm. 107
	Nar Anon	Rm. 131

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 27

6:30	Fishers of Men	Rm. 231
7:00	AA Al Anon	Rm. 107 Rm. 231

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 28

Date Notes

The church office is closed on December 24, 25, and January 1.

Sunday School and the Westminster Seminars will not meet on December 29. Please join us on January 5.



Children's & Family Ministry



Food & Fellowship Menu



Music & Choirs

STAFF PROGRAM/MINISTRY CONTACTS

Jo Forrest, Senior Pastor, Head of Staff, forrest@westminster-church.org

Laura Bentley, Associate Pastor, bentley@westminster-church.org

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Giving to Westminster

ONLINE: <https://www.westminster-church.org/give>

TEXT-TO-GIVE: Text WPCUSC to 73256. Standard text messaging rates may apply.



Westminster Staff Contact Information

We would love to hear from you. Give us a call, drop us an email, or stop by the church office.

GET CONNECTED!



[Westminster.Pittsburgh](https://www.facebook.com/Westminster.Pittsburgh)



[wpc_pgh](https://www.instagram.com/wpc_pgh)



[WestminsterUSC](https://www.youtube.com/WestminsterUSC)

Westminster on Social Media

Watch worship videos, share Westminster events, find prayers, scripture, and more to like and share!

Photos/Videos at Westminster: We would like to make you aware that by participating in Westminster Presbyterian Church worship and activities, you may be photographed and/or videotaped and therefore assign and authorize the producer, Westminster Presbyterian Church, all rights to reproduce, copy, exhibit/publish, and distribute any such videotape and photography. If you have any concerns, please contact Anna Hiner, Membership & Communications Coordinator, at hiner@westminster-church.org or 412-835-6630x207.

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A PC(USA) Congregation