



How does a weary world rejoice?

An Advent series in Luke's Gospel

Westminster Presbyterian Church



December 17, 2023 | 8:30 a.m. & 11:00 a.m.

THE Celebration OF Worship

*Please rise in body or in spirit.

WE GATHER TOGETHER

Prelude

All Glory in the Highest
On Christmas Day in the Morn
Westminster Ringers

arr. Sandra Eithun
arr. Fred Gramann

Welcome and Announcements

*Share the Peace of Christ

*Candle Lighting (8:30: Michelle, Kyle, Harrison, and Scarlett Burgess; 11:00: Pam and Bill Thomas)

- Leader: How does a weary world practice joy?
- People: **By dancing and throwing birthday parties.**
- Leader: By hanging Christmas lights and holding sleepy babies.
By singing loudly and looking for good news.
- People: **By telling the story of Jesus and showing up for our community.**
- Leader: There are a million ways to practice joy.
So today we light the candle of joy as a reminder and a charge.
- People: **With God's help, may we bring joy into a weary world. Amen.**

*Prayer of Confession

Holy God,

Somewhere in our childhood we face pressure to outgrow awe. We turn into adults who obsess over data and facts. We praise those who have answers, and assume that wonder is merely a game. Forgive us for closing that door to you. Remind us that your realm belongs to children. Teach us the ways of awe and wonder, so that when we find ourselves speechless, our first words will be words of praise. With hearts open wide, we pray.

(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

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel
verse 7

O come, Desire of nations, bind all peoples in one heart and mind;
bid envy, strife, and discord cease; fill the whole world with heaven's peace.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.

Reception of New Members

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.

Congregational Response

THREEFOLD AMEN

WE LISTEN FOR THE WORD

Prayer for Illumination

Scripture Lesson

Luke 1:57-66

New Testament, page 26

Leader: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

Sermon

Be Amazed

Jo Forrest

WE OFFER OUR GRATITUDE

Offertory Anthem

The Jesus Gift

Gilbert Martin

Shall I gather emeralds? Shall I bring him gold?
Shall I gather diamonds? White hard? Bright cold?
Shall I spangle jewels like stars above?
Give him laughter, simple warm laughter; offer him warm laughter and love.

Shall we gather emeralds? Shall we bring him gold?
Shall we gather diamonds? White hard? Bright cold?
Shall we spangle jewels like stars above?

Simplest of gifts, gentlest of hearts, kindness he'll use as he leads,
So, give Him these gifts; hand him your hearts;
Honor his birth and you'll need no:
Emerald nor rubies. Silver nor gold.
Neither bright diamonds, white hard, bright cold.
Spangle not rich jewels like stars above:
Give him laughter, sweet, peace-filled laughter.
Offer him warm laughter and love.

*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. 105

People, Look East
verses 1, 4, and 5

BESANÇON

*Benediction

*Benediction Response

The Jesus Gift, final phrase

Postlude

Postlude on *Venez, divin Messie*

César Franck

Leading in worship: Jo Forrest, Doug Florey, Jim Burns, Christine Hestwood, Jim Marshall, Westminster Ringers, the Quartet, Chancel Choir.

Welcome to Our New Members

Brian Behers
Prasha Behers
Sue Free

David Greiner
Jill Greiner
Brooke Kern

Jill Kern
Jared Massack
Britney Merola

Ann Mock
Jeff Mock
Luke Roode

Sarah Roode
Marie Sauret
Bonnie Schurr

Prayers of Concern and Thanksgiving

Recent surgery, hospitalization, or illness; Chuck Buterbaugh

The congregation extends condolences to the family and friends of Elaine Klein who died on December 13.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Worthy Notes and Upcoming Events

Westminster Seminars

A Brief History of Mary, the Mother of Jesus

TODAY | 9:45 a.m. | Galbreath Chapel



Coming Up in the New Year

Differences

January 7 & 14 | 9:45 a.m. | Galbreath Chapel

Disability, Inclusion, and Embrace - The Great Banquet: Who Is Missing from the Feast? Becky Boyer, Director of Youth Ministry, Westminster Presbyterian Church
In these two seminars, we begin to explore what we can do to include and embrace a more diverse community. What might it look like if we welcomed people who may be a little different than us and experience God in diverse ways? Read more and find the Zoom link on the church website.



Writers of Westminster

TODAY | Cost: \$10; \$13 if mailed.

Before and after all services in the Welcome Center

The Writers of Westminster are selling copies of their most recent publication. Stop by their table in the Welcome Center to meet some of the writers and get a "must have" autographed copy for yourself and to give as gifts. **Checks should be made out to Westminster Presbyterian Church.**



Pet Remembrance Service

TODAY | 2:00 p.m. | Galbreath Chapel

It's common to have a memorial service to celebrate the life of a loved one who has died. So why wouldn't we do the same for our beloved pets? If you or a friend have recently lost a pet, please join us to share memories and pay tribute to these cherished members of our families. All are invited and welcome.



Christmas Flower Delivery

Flowers are to be delivered December 26-28, 9:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

Put a smile on someone's face with a poinsettia. Deliver a plant to someone who can't come to church at Christmas. Deliver one or two poinsettias to folks who were recently hospitalized, are elderly and at home, or live in a senior community. Deadline to volunteer is Monday, December 18. Please contact Jan Baumann.



Merry Christmas from the WROC!



Church members are welcome to drop in on fitness classes for **FREE** in December! Take a deep breath with yoga, dance away the stress with Zumba, or release some tension with Burn & Sculpt. Eligible classes include Yoga, Zumba, Burn & Sculpt, Barre Balance, Cardio AM and PM, Stronger Bones/Better Balance. No registration required; classes in the Fitness Room have limited availability.

Christmas Eve Loose Offering

Sunday, December 24 | All services | Sanctuary

In this season of joy and giving, there are those in our communities who experience hardships and lack basic necessities. We think of and pray for these homeless men, women, and children. We recognize all that we have in our lives and seek to bring some light to theirs. The Christmas Eve offering will be given to Street Moms, a community outreach initiative that hand delivers needed items and personal connection to the homeless population in Wheeling, WV. WPC engages in hands on mission with Street Moms, making meals, supplying tents and other necessities. The offering also will be shared with Proud Haven, a local shelter for homeless LGBTQIA+ youth, an organization selected by the youth of Westminster as a meaningful cause.

Town Hall South Speaker Series

Town Hall South, currently celebrating its 53rd season, announces the close of the series at the end of our 2023-2024 season. Our volunteer board extends our deepest thanks to Westminster Church, the Upper St. Clair School District, St. Clair Country Club, and the Community Foundation of Upper St. Clair, as well as our generous individual and business sponsors, for the many years of partnership and patronage. Please visit our website at townhallsouth.org for the full announcement and to purchase tickets to join us for the series' remaining exceptional speakers.





Dismantling Antisemitism Workshop

Wednesday, January 31 | 6:30 p.m. | Fellowship Hall

The startling and deadly rise of antisemitism impacts everyone in our community. This interactive workshop, taught by Noah Schoen of the Holocaust Center of Pittsburgh, invites participants into greater understanding of antisemitism. Participants begin to develop their own stake in dismantling antisemitism and leave with actionable knowledge. This event is open to the community, and is designed for

high school students and adults. For more info, go to <https://www.westminster-church.org/events/event-list/dismantling-antisemitism-workshop>.



We Need Your Help!

Our Stewardship Campaign, The Heart of Generosity, has received pledges totalling \$1,173,000 to date that represents 84% of our needs for 2024. We have received pledges from 35% of our families. Thank you for your pledges! For those who have not yet had an opportunity to do so, please return your pledge cards to Anna Hiner in the church offices or place them in the offering plates at any Sunday service. You may also submit your pledge online at www.westminster-church.org/give.

Year-End Giving Reminder

For your contribution to be tax deductible in 2023, it must be received in the church or **postmarked by December 31, 2023**.

To ensure the deductibility of your church contributions, please do not file your 2023 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 2023 contribution statements are anticipated to be mailed to you around the third week of January 2024.

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

CHRISTMAS WORSHIP SERVICE SCHEDULE

Sunday, December 24

Advent Morning Worship Service | 10:00 a.m.

Christmas Eve Worship Services

Family Service | 5:00 p.m.
Contemporary Service | 7:00 p.m.
Traditional Candlelight Service | 9:00 p.m.

New Year's Eve Day

Sunday, December 31
One worship service
10:00 a.m.

THIS WEEK @ WESTMINSTER

DEC 17-DEC 23, 2023



Scan here for complete church calendar



Scan here for a full WROC schedule & information

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 17

8:30	Traditional Worship Wiggle Room**	Sanctuary Rm. 239
9:00	Welcome Center Writers of Westminster Book Signing	North Main Entry
9:45	Bridge Contemporary Worship Bridge Sunday School (PreK-4th Grd.) Wiggle Room - The Bridge** Westminster Seminars	WROC/Lvstrm. Rm. 176 WROC Fitness Galbreath Chapel
11:00	Traditional Worship Wiggle Room** Sunday School (PreK-4th Grade) Confirmation Class 2023-2024	Sanctuary/Lvstrm. Rm. 239 Rm. 233 Rm. 283
2:00	Pet Remembrance Service	Galbreath Chapel
7:00	Youth Choir	Rm. 268

***Sunday School** – 9:45 a.m., dismissed from worship after children’s message; 11:00 a.m., report directly to Room 233. A time for children in PreK 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 from birth through age 3** 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 18

12:00	AA	Fellowship Hall
6:00	Cub Scout Den Meeting	Rm. 107

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 19

7:00	Tuesday Morning Men’s Group	Rm. 238
10:00	Staff Meeting	Rm. 238
7:00	USC Choir Concert	Sanctuary

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 20

1:30	The Writers of Westminster	Rm. 238
4:30	Advent Devotions	Rm. 238
4:45	Little Ones & Loved Ones Cherub Choir (Grades K-2) Junior Choir (Grades 3 - 6)	Rm. 194 Rm. 176 Rm. 268
5:30	Wednesday Food & Fellowship	Fellowship Hall
6:00	Kids' Connection (PreK-2nd Grd) Kids' Connection (3rd/4th Grds) JAM - Youth Group (Grds 5-6) Veritas Youth Group (Grds 7-12)	Rm. 233 Rm. 176 North Main Entry Youth Dept.
7:30	Westminster Ringers	Rm. 268

Wednesdays @ Westminster have something for everyone! From children’s choirs to Children’s & Family Ministry programs, Food & Fellowship, Veritas Youth Group, Bible studies, and more, make plans to be here. Visit our website or scan the QR codes below for details.

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 21

All Day	WNSK Closed - Christmas Break	
12:00	Dementia Caregiver Support Group	Rm. 290
7:00	Chancel Choir	Rm. 268
7:30	NA Nar Anon	Rm. 107 Rm. 131

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 22

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 23



Children's & Family Ministry



Food & Fellowship Menu



Music & Choirs

STAFF PROGRAM/MINISTRY CONTACTS

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

Ann Morris, Parish Associate, morris@westminster-church.org

Jack Kelly, Director of Finance and Operations, kelly@westminster-church.org

Jan Baumann, Volunteer Coordinator, baumann@westminster-church.org

Becky Boyer, Director of Youth Ministry, boyer@westminster-church.org

Christine Hestwood, Director of Music, Interim Director of Communications, hestwood@westminster-church.org

Faith Kemmler, Director of Children's & Family Ministry, kemmler@westminster-church.org

Kathy Long, Director, Westminster Recreation & Outreach Center, long@westminster-church.org



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, listen to the Veritas podcast, 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, Communications & Database Manager, at hiner@westminster-church.org or 412-835-6630x207.



WESTMINSTER
PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH

A PC(USA) Congregation

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