

THE SPARE



May 2022
Volume 63 No. 5

WESTMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
Pittsburgh, PA

Decades ago the foresight and generosity of members of Westminster Presbyterian Church created an endowment fund. Thanks be to God. Our Endowment enabled us to weather our financial distress and invest in new ministries.

In April, the Session approved the following \$177,000 disbursements from Endowment and Special Gifts:

Energize the Next Generation

- The past years have spotlighted the growing trends of anxiety, depression, and suicidality of young people. Westminster is uniquely positioned to enter into this conversation as a voice of care and connection guided by our faith in Jesus. We plan to host a series of seminars and conversations for our community beginning in the fall.
- Across all age groups new offerings are attracting more participants. We will equip teachers and staff with smart boards and refresh the rooms with new furniture.
- Endowment will fund the fulltime Associate Youth Director. We continue to recruit for this position to support education, mission, and service and allow us to expand. More energy for fun and faith!

These projects represent a \$91,000 investment in our future.

Seek Justice Without Exception

- We remain committed to serving outside of our community and will provide funding to Homewood Early Education Project to help construct classrooms.
- A new hands-on service opportunity will be funded to purchase supplies and pack bags for Street Mom's Homeless Ministry for homeless mothers in Wheeling, WV.

The above \$18,500 funding will fuel the passion within Westminster to serve in Christ's name.

Inspire Wonder and Meaning

- The Bridge service creates a palpable beat of music each Sunday, drawing congregants to their feet in song. Funding will support vocalists/musicians to enhance the talented volunteers.
- In addition, funds from the Music and Fine Arts Fund within Endowment will supply a new drum kit.

Let's praise God for this \$5,500 combined investment.

Support Our Property

- Fellowship Hall's renovation will be enhanced with new chairs, from the general Endowment and the Special Property Need Fund.
- To improve audio quality for online streaming and in person worship, the sanctuary sound system will continue to be upgraded.

This \$62,000 investment represents one of the strategic purposes of Endowment – to ensure this gorgeous building supports the breadth of ministry.

The Endowment loan with the church stands just over \$1 million. The covenant we made with ourselves to repay this loan represents over a \$100,000 annual expense from our operating budget. In the coming year, you will hear more about our desire to accelerate our payments to Endowment, reduce this burden, and strengthen our foundation.

We extend our thanks to members of the Endowment Committee – Brian Eccher, George Pitcairn, Jeff Rex, Ken Rapko, Bill Rogers, Linda Serene, Lois Singleton, Rob Wagner (chair), and John Wehn – for their prayerful work.

I remain ever grateful to serve you,
Jo Forrest



Our Mission: We seek to be a caring community of faith committed to bringing people to Christ and developing their faith through worshipping God together, teaching the faith, and serving in mission.

CHURCH STAFF

412-835-6630

PASTORS

DR. JO FORREST, *Senior Pastor, Head of Staff*
REV. LOUISE ROGERS, *Associate Pastor for Congregational Care*

ADMINISTRATIVE & BUSINESS SUPPORT

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RICHARD MILLS, *Church Financial Manager*

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DEBB EGLI, *Assistant Director of Children's & Family Ministry*
ED SUTTER, *Director of Youth Ministry & Family Counseling*
LAURA ECKLIN, *Associate Director of Youth Ministry*
CASSANDRA MILLIS, *Youth Ministry Advisor*

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JEANNIE SCHOTT, *Graphic Design & Print/Web Manager*

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LORRAINE MILOVAC, *Assistant Director*
JIM BURNS, *Organist*
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PROPERTY

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WALTER GERODA, *Head Custodian/Maintenance*

VOLUNTEER MINISTRY

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CARA DANIELE, *Kitchen Coordinator*

WESTMINSTER RECREATION & OUTREACH CENTER (WROC)

KATHY LONG, *Director*

WESTMINSTER EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION PROGRAMS (WECEP)

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NURSERY SCHOOL

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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.

Table of Contents

3 Worship

Worship at Westminster
Upcoming Events
Ascension of the Lord

4 Spiritual Growth

Living with Integrity
Silence for Our Lives
Beloved Community
Westminster Seminars
Westminster Book Group

7 Youth, Children & Families

Stay Connected with Veritalk
The Easter Egg Hunt
Connecting with Holy Week Through Art
Barefoot School 2022

9 Outreach

Mission on the Move: Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank
An Evening with Town Hall South

10 Caring Community

Thank You from Peg Kinsey

11 Other




Financial Report
Easter Joy @ Westminster
Baptisms, Deaths

WORSHIP AT WESTMINSTER



All are welcome to join Westminster for worship! At the 8:30 and 11:00 a.m. traditional services, we invite those who are fully vaccinated to worship without a mask and strongly encourage those who are not vaccinated to wear a mask. At the 9:45 a.m. Bridge service, masks are required of all attendees regardless of vaccination status.

If you are not comfortable attending in person worship or are traveling, visit our YouTube channel at www.youtube.com/user/WestminsterUSC or our website for links to the livestream services at 9:45 and 11:00 a.m., or watch anytime later on YouTube.

Bridge Contemporary Worship

	Sundays
	9:45 a.m.
	WROC & YouTube Livestream

Traditional Worship

	Sundays
	8:30 & 11:00 a.m.
	Sanctuary & YouTube Livestream (11:00 a.m. only)

The Lord's Supper is celebrated the first Sunday of each month.

ASCENSION OF THE LORD *May 26*

Jesus' Message at His Ascension

To heaven, to my father I depart from this life. There I shall be your master, and give you the Spirit that shall console you in tribulation and teach you to recognize me and lead you to truth.

What I have taught and done you shall do and teach, so that God's kingdom will grow to his praise and glory, and beware of the law of man, for the precious treasure is corrupted by it.

This I leave you as a token of farewell.
Alleluia.



Verses from one of Martin Luther's earliest hymns, "Dear Christians, One and All, Rejoice," 1523

Upcoming Events

01 MAY Masterpieces for Piano Four Hands Concert
Sanctuary @ 3:00 p.m.

10 MAY Town Hall South Evening Lecture
USC High School Theater @ 7:00 p.m.

15 MAY Deacons Blood Drive
Fellowship Hall

26 MAY Ascension of the Lord

LIVING WITH INTEGRITY

Harper Lee's masterpiece, *To Kill a Mockingbird*, returned to Pittsburgh's Benedum Center in April. This time Richard Thomas, rather than Gregory Peck, performed the role of Atticus Finch.

To Kill a Mockingbird takes place in Maycomb, Alabama, in the 1930s, a place and time where prejudice against African Americans was still acceptable, at least to some folks. Not to Atticus Finch, the local lawyer who is called upon to defend Tom Robinson who has been falsely accused of raping a white woman.

Atticus willingly defends Tom Robinson, even though it puts his family and his own life at risk. His two young children, Scout and Jem, are ridiculed for what their father is doing and, though it breaks Atticus' heart, he knows he has to do what his conscience tells him is right.

One Saturday morning, Scout and her older brother Jem are walking into town when their neighbor Mrs. Dubose yells out some nasty comments about their father, Atticus. Later that day Jem, in a rage, vandalizes the old woman's flower garden. That evening Scout climbs into her father's lap as is her evening ritual, especially when she needs a little extra comfort. She questions why she and Jem need to keep their heads held high and ignore the hostility that is continually directed at them. Atticus tucks Scout's head under his chin and rocks her.

"Scout" said Atticus, "when summer comes, you'll have to keep your head about far worse things....It's not fair

for you and Jem, I know that, but sometimes we have to make the best of things, and the way we conduct ourselves when the chips are down – well, all I can say is when you and Jem are grown, maybe you'll look back with some compassion and some feeling that I didn't let you down. This case is something that goes to the essence of a man's conscience. Scout, I couldn't go to church and worship God if I didn't try to help that man....Before I live with other folks, I've got to live with myself. The one thing that does not abide by majority role is a person's conscience" (quote from the novel).

The Bible says, "Show yourselves in all respects a model of good works, and in your teaching show integrity" (Titus 2:7). As people, living with the good news of Easter, imagine if we all took this teaching to heart. Imagine if we all stood for what was right, not popular. Jesus impressed others as he lived and taught in truth. "Teacher," they said, "we know that you are a man of integrity and that you teach the way of God in accordance with the truth." The word used in the Bible, "alethes," translates into English as integrity. It has five attributes: true, genuine, reliable, trustworthy, and valid. Imagine what the world could be like if we sought to embrace Jesus' integrity and walked in his footsteps. Trust that God goes with us always.

Together on the journey,

Louise

SILENCE FOR OUR LIVES

P
I
R
I
T

ADULT SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT

"In a world of noise, confusion, and conflict it is necessary that there be places of silence, inner discipline, and peace. In such places, love can blossom."

Thomas Merton

BELOVED COMMUNITY

In a recent Westminster discussion, the term *Beloved Community* emerged. As one who was introduced to the concept in my early college days, I was intrigued. What did folks understand today about the Beloved Community? Indeed, what is a Beloved Community and how would we recognize one? Perhaps even more important, how would one go about forming a community of beloved?

All these were spinning in my head as I decided to take a deeper look.¹

As a theologian and oftentimes philosopher, Josiah Royce initiated the concept of Beloved Community in the early 20th century. Royce is also known for founding the Fellowship of Reconciliation. For Royce a Beloved Community was religious in nature, including eternal dimensions allowing persons a place of peace and rest. It allowed one to carry on in the face of loss, buffeted by other members of the community. Indeed, loyalty was essential and became the glue holding the community together. It was foundational to the collectivity among those who participated – the beloved – and was a form of Christian *agape*. Such love among the beloved became a universal understanding of the community, one that took on ecumenical meaning for all.

However, it was Martin Luther King Jr. who used the term in a 1957 national speech, “Birth of a Nation,” thereby giving it mainstream use. King was a member of the Fellowship of Reconciliation. At that time, Beloved Community referred to everyone who participated, regardless of poverty, hunger, or hate. All were welcome into the Beloved Community. As a form of resistance

to hate, violence, and surely many of the “isms” of the time, including of course, racism, the beloved in a community were inclusive as a group. Idealistic? Perhaps, but it also formed a safe spiritual haven. It became a group from which members of the beloved could address and struggle with the critical social issues of the time, regardless of divisions.

“Everybody
can be great...
because anybody
can serve....
You only need
a heart full of
grace. A soul
generated
by love.”

– Martin Luther King Jr.

Beginning in the mid-1960s, the term took hold as a symbol of the mission of the nonviolent movement: seeking change regarding racial and human rights oppression within some aspects of American society. One of King’s tenets based on the community was that “...all can be great because all can serve (in whatever way he/she can best serve).” Thus, fundamentally the Beloved Community is a small group or collectivity – or truly idealistically, a society – which is based on an understanding of justice for all.

In that regard it is the aftermath of the nonviolent movement(s).

King preached and encouraged persons to participate in a Beloved Community, allowing members to address societal issues through principles. Principle one, for instance, noted that being nonviolent is a way of addressing evil in our society. It also pursued the ideal that all persons can be redeemed, a fundamental in Christian faith. However, while it is nonviolent it is robust in spiritual, mental, and emotional dimensions. Likewise, Principle two noted one seeks to win friendships, trust, and understanding. It is a basis of redemption and reconciliation, these latter two for all involved.

Fundamentally, therefore, the Beloved Community, founded on the concepts and teachings of Christ, claimed a peaceful approach to enhancing human rights for all. The aim was for all persons to be treated with respect and love. Easy to do? Being a member of a truly Beloved Community relies on faith, commitment, and courage in the face of daily challenges. It also supports taking a stand, and resisting oppression, albeit nonviolently, to acquire universal justice. However, for Royce, King, or John Lewis, among others, the concept of a Beloved Community was the fulcrum point – the support base – from which they moved in order to create a more just society for all.

– Charlotte McDaniel

¹The author is indebted to *Walking with the Wind: A Memoir of the Movement*, by John Lewis with Michael D’Orso, Harvest Book, NY, 1998, for fuller exploration of the concept, *Beloved Community*.

Westminster Seminars

In Person and Online

Sundays, 9:45 – 10:30 a.m.
Galbreath Chapel & Zoom

The Westminster Seminars address, in various ways, how our beliefs and practices as Christians enrich our lives in today's culture. Everyone is welcome – come every week or whenever the topic appeals and your schedule allows. If you can't join in person or on Zoom, plan to watch or listen later on the Westminster website – under News & Media – here: <https://www.westminster-church.org/news-&-media/westminster-seminars>.

The Zoom meeting opens at 9:30 for greetings and conversation. Find the link on the church website under Featured Events or in the Friday church email.

Five-Week May Series

CHRISTIANS, THE NATIONS, AND WAR

John P. Burgess
Professor of Systematic Theology
Pittsburgh Theological Seminary

The Russian invasion of Ukraine has shocked the world. This series will draw on Christian perspectives on war to help us understand how God may be at work in these events and what God is calling us to do as American Christians.

May 1 – What Is Happening in Ukraine?

May 8 – Is God at Work in War? How?

May 15 – Should a Nation Defend Itself from External Aggression?

May 22 – What Kind of Justice Must We Work For?

May 29 – How Can We Live Out Our Prayers for Peace?

John Burgess has lived in Russia and traveled to Ukraine. He is closely following current events, as he tries to think about the role of religion in war and about Christian responsibility to the nations.



WESTMINSTER BOOK GROUP

Wednesday, May 25
Noon – 1:15 p.m.
Library

At the next meeting of the Westminster Book Group, we will discuss *A Thousand Splendid Suns* by Khalid Hosseini. Bring a brown bag lunch and join us.

"Propelled by the same superb instinct for storytelling that made *The Kite Runner* a beloved classic, the #1 *New York Times* bestseller *A Thousand Splendid Suns* is at once an incredible chronicle of thirty years of Afghan history and a deeply moving story of family, friendship, faith, and the salvation to be found in love." – Amazon

STAY CONNECTED WITH VERITALK

Have you ever wondered what we talk about at youth group on Wednesday nights? The youth department has started a podcast, called Veritalk. Listen in for some fun, laughter, and a review of the scripture lesson from the previous week. The youth of Westminster are dedicated to deepening their faith in a community of friends, and their insights blow us away every time. Let us share with you some of the thoughts of the next generation.



Our goal with this podcast is multifaceted. We work hard on what we teach, so adding use to what we create is wonderful. Teens these days have busy schedules and miss Veritas sometimes. Veritalk allows them to stay connected when they're physically unable to attend – and loops in college students who have left us. It gives parents a chance to hear what exactly it is we are teaching their kids and creates an opportunity for families to have meaningful faith conversations at home.

Finally, we want to share our works with the whole church. Maybe as you read this you've seen some information about Veritas in the bulletin, but never paid much attention. Maybe you know someone who would be interested in the program. Or maybe you just want to know exactly what it is we do on Wednesday nights. This podcast is for everyone. No age limit. We often include discussion questions – listen with your family or a friend to spark conversation at dinner. So please – put it on in the car, listen on the bus on the way to school, or set up a friend to talk about it with. We would love to have you listen and get a taste of what it is we do here at Westminster for our youth and how their contributions to the discussion inspire our faith as well. We promise we won't force you to play dodgeball with us, but the invitation is open.

– Laura Ecklin



THE EASTER EGG HUNT

On Palm Sunday morning, the children gathered at both hours for their Easter Egg Hunt in the courtyard. They looked for eggs that contained scripture and symbols of Jesus' life, death, and resurrection. There were also a few surprises hidden in the eggs. It was a busy morning with the children searching for the eggs and helping each other to fill their egg cartons. When they opened their eggs, they learned about the special events of Holy Week. Thank you to all who helped make the children's Easter Egg Hunt such a special one.



CONNECTING WITH HOLY WEEK THROUGH ART

Throughout Lent, children from PreK through 4th grade gathered each week at Kids' Connection to connect with God and each other as they learned about Holy Week. After reading about the Last Supper and connecting it to communion, we explored various artists' interpretations of the Last Supper before creating our own. It was so fun to see each child's creative process as they decided what parts of the story they wanted to feature in their art!



BAREFOOT SCHOOL 2022

Barefoot School registration opens May 1! Join us June 20-24 as we cook up some fun and get on a roll with God at our Food Truck Party!

Barefoot School is open to students entering grades K through 6 for the 2022-23 school year. The cost for BFS is \$25 per child with a maximum of \$45 per family.

Registration will be available online beginning May 1. Youth and adults interested in volunteering can contact Faith Kemmler.



GREATER PITTSBURGH COMMUNITY FOOD BANK

Their mission is to feed people in need and mobilize our community to eliminate hunger.

In June 1980, Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank opened its doors in Pittsburgh's Hill District. This came at a time of great change in Southwestern Pennsylvania. The once-thriving steel industry, which had been in a slow, steady decline for nearly 30 years, began to rapidly deteriorate during the early 1980s.

In January 1983, the region's unemployment rate hit 18.2 percent, leaving 212,000 people unemployed. The food bank was there to not only provide food assistance, but to help people get back on their feet.

Today, GPCFB works with a network of more than 850 partners across the 11 counties we serve. In addition to sourcing, warehousing, and distributing food, the food bank is actively engaged in stabilizing lives and confronting issues of chronic hunger, poor nutrition, and health. And, through their advocacy efforts, they have become a primary driver in comprehensive anti-hunger endeavors regionally, statewide, and at the national level.

In 2021, their network delivered about 12 million pounds of fresh fruit and vegetables to our neighbors in need. That's almost double the amount distributed in 2015, and about six times as much produce as they distributed annually in 2000.

There are over 340,000 food insecure community members in the 11 counties of Southwestern Pennsylvania – over 10% of our community.

GPFB is committed to providing more fresh food options to people who are food insecure, with a goal of closing the meal gap in our region and also helping people to stabilize their lives. Ensuring people have fresh, healthy food to eat allows them to achieve this goal.

The food bank's focus spans beyond the distribution of food, seeking to address root causes of food insecurity



in racial inequality. Their position as a nonprofit leader in the community enables them to take meaningful action.

The Food Bank has many ways for individuals and groups to get involved and contribute financially and through volunteering.

VOLUNTEER WITH THE FOOD BANK



For many years, Westminster has participated in Produce to People directly distributing produce and other food to GPCFB clients on Saturday mornings.

Due to COVID-19, Family Volunteer Day and Produce to People were transformed into the Drive-up Distribution. Produce to People will likely be restarted at some point.

Westminster has also provided regular financial contributions via Outreach Commission allocations. Looking forward, we will seek to explore further opportunities for hands-on mission work with the food bank.

Food is a basic human need, yet every day thousands of our neighbors struggle to have enough food on their plates.

Westminster is working on plans for a Drive-up Distribution opportunity at our church later this year. More details to come.

– Allison McGhee

AN EVENING WITH TOWN HALL SOUTH

Tuesday, May 10, 7:00 p.m.
Upper St. Clair High School Theater

Town Hall South Speaker Series presents An Evening with Town Hall South featuring a live lecture by Admiral James Stavridis, USN (Ret.) on Tuesday, May 10, at 7:00 p.m. at Upper St. Clair High School. Admiral Stavridis will address "The Ukraine War and Global Geopolitics."

Tickets are priced at \$40 each for reserved seating and are available at www.townhallsouth.org. Tickets for Upper St. Clair faculty and staff are \$30; Upper St. Clair student tickets are \$20.

A Florida native, Admiral James Stavridis attended the U.S. Naval Academy at Annapolis, and spent 37 years in the Navy, rising to the rank of four-star admiral. Among his many commands were four years as the 16th Supreme Allied Commander at NATO, where he oversaw operations in Afghanistan, Libya, Syria, the Balkans, and counter piracy off the coast of Africa. He also commanded U.S. Southern Command in Miami, charged with military operations through Latin America for nearly three years. Admiral Stavridis was the longest serving Combatant Commander in recent U.S. history.

Following his military career, he served for five years as the 12th Dean of the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy at Tufts University.

Admiral Stavridis has published ten books on leadership, the oceans, maritime affairs, and Latin America, as well as hundreds of articles in leading journals. His novel, *2034: A Novel of the Next World War*, was a *New York Times* bestseller in 2021. His newest book, *To Risk It All: Nine Conflicts and the Crucible of Decision*, will be published in May 2022. Admiral Stavridis is a contributing editor for TIME magazine and Chief International Security and Diplomacy Analyst for NBC News.

New subscriber season tickets are also on sale now for Town Hall South's daytime Speaker Series which begins on October 11 with the first speaker of the season, Dan Rather. Series subscriptions are available at the website: www.townhallsouth.org.



CARING COMMUNITY

THANK YOU

Let me begin by thanking God for the innumerable blessings he has bestowed on me these many years at Westminster Presbyterian Church. I wish to express my humble gratitude to the family of Westminster for their support, friendship, and encouragement during my tenure. I would be remiss if I failed to mention my good fortune to work alongside some of the most caring and professional individuals I have ever known. My time at Westminster has been one of great joy.

Due to an unfortunate accident last May, it has become evident that I can no longer perform my duties as executive assistant in an efficient and productive manner. After prayerful consideration, I have decided to retire. Please know I carry only fond and loving memories in my heart of my time with you.

My beloved husband, David, ended every worship service with the quote "God loves you and so do I." I cannot think of a more appropriate way to conclude my professional journey with you.

May God bestow his blessings upon each of you.

Love and prayers,
Peg Kinsey



FINANCIAL REPORT

As of March 31, 2022

MARCH 2022	Actual	Budget	Variance	Mar. 2021
Income	\$183,775	\$160,902	\$22,873	\$186,678
Expense	\$221,370	\$167,267	\$(54,103)	\$170,517
Net Total	\$(37,595)	\$(6,365)	\$31,230	\$16,161

YTD 2022	Actual	Budget	Variance	YTD 2021
Income	\$536,281	\$543,892	\$(7,611)	\$556,080
Expense	\$489,426	\$499,560	\$10,134	\$482,051
Net Total	\$46,855	\$44,332	\$(2,523)	\$74,029

ENDOWMENT LOAN BALANCE \$1,003,733

BAPTISM

April 24

Riley Mae Bono
parents: Jennifer and
Richard Bono

DEATHS

Stephen Zanardelli
April 18

Jean Lee Pauley
April 24

EASTER JOY @ WESTMINSTER

The Lenten season was a joyous celebration of faith, fellowship, and worship at Westminster. Palm Sunday, April 10, saw an incredibly successful Pocket Change collection of more than \$1,600, led by Westminster's children. And more than 875 eggs were hidden and found at the Children's & Family Ministry Egg Hunt.

Maundy Thursday's power tenebrae service had robust attendance, and was a moving spiritual experience for many.

On Easter Sunday, April 17, we opened our doors to more than 850 in person worshipers and more than 300 livestream participants.

Westminster is truly extending the pulpit within and beyond our walls. He Is Risen. He Lives. Praise God.

Lenten Word Cloud

The Membership Commission would like to thank everyone who provided input for our Lenten Word Cloud. Here's a picture of "Where do you feel close to God?" from our Westminster community of faith.





WESTMINSTER
PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH

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A PC(USA) Congregation

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“To clasp the hands in prayer
is the beginning of an uprising
against the disorder of the world.”

“Prayer without study
would be empty.
Study without prayer
would be blind.”

Karl Barth, Swiss Protestant theologian
(May 10, 1886 – December 10, 1968)

