



THE SPIRE

WESTMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
Pittsburgh, PA

Thanks

Paul writes to the church in Philippi, "I thank my God every time I remember you" He's thankful for their sharing in the gospel with him, and thankful for the relationships they've enjoyed together. Anyone who has been in ministry with a vital congregation knows what Paul means. I certainly do, so my final column in the Spire is mostly to say thanks for sharing these twelve and a half years with me.

Westminster has been a vital congregation ever since John Galbreath started knocking on doors in the emerging post-war community of Upper St. Clair. The church grew in numbers for lots of reasons – some charismatic, others social and demographic, and still others spiritual. The spiritual reasons for growth are not altogether separate from the personal and social, because God always works in and through the concrete situations of our lives. As John's Gospel reminds us, "The Word became flesh and dwelt among us."

One thing that has made Westminster strong over the years is the two-dimensional focus on both the spiritual and the social. While some religious communities concentrate on "saving souls" in a highly individualistic way, and some others function like social organizations with a steeple, the most faithful churches hold the spiritual and social dimensions together like the vertical and horizontal beams of the cross of Christ.

It's no coincidence that the cross points both upward and outward. As the early Christian theologian Athanasius said, it's only on a cross that a man dies with his

arms outstretched. Westminster has been a vital congregation because it never succumbed to that false and unbiblical dichotomy between the spiritual and the social.

By "social," of course, I mean community and fellowship within the congregation and outreach and service to the wider world. Loving God and loving our neighbors are two parts of the same commandment, and Jesus' parable of the Good Samaritan reminds us that God's idea of the neighborhood is very broad indeed.

When ministers leave a congregation they've served, they need to make room for other ministers. That means, among other things, that we mustn't do weddings or funerals or other pastoral functions, or interfere in any way with the life of the church. That's not for lack of love and affection, but quite the contrary: precisely because we care about the people we've served, we need to let new relationships form with others who will care for them just as much.

Westminster is in good hands, not only with two fine ministers in Louise and Jason, but also with whoever else God has in mind to come, and with all the staff and elders and deacons and members who make up this strong congregation.

For all these reasons, I come back to the words of Paul: 'I am confident of this, that the one who began a good work among you will bring it to completion by the day of Jesus Christ.' And thanks again for letting me share in some of that good work.



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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

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The Bridge Contemporary Worship

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🕒	9:45 a.m.
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*The Lord's Supper is celebrated the first Sunday of each month.
Gluten-free wafers are available at all services.*

Upcoming Events

02 FEB Pittsburgh Camerata concert *in the sanctuary*

Inquirers' Gathering

15 FEB Chatham Baroque *in the sanctuary*

17 FEB Blood Drive *in Fellowship Hall*

23 FEB Serbian Choirs concert *in the sanctuary*

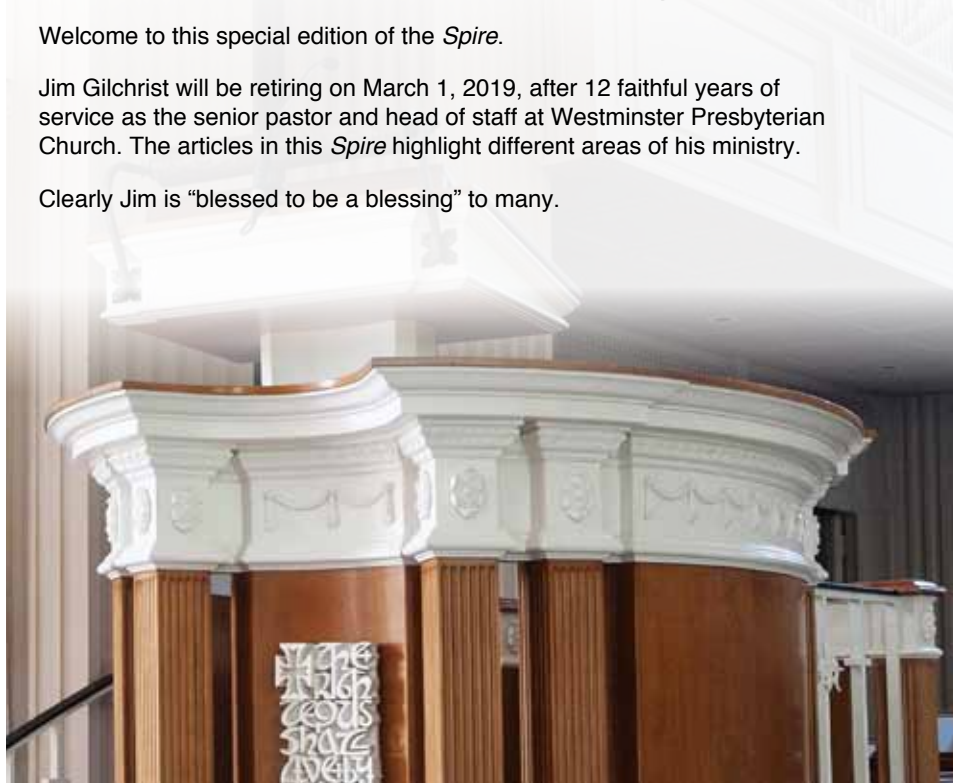
24 FEB Jim Gilchrist final Sunday, lunch celebration

A Special Acknowledgment

Welcome to this special edition of the *Spire*.

Jim Gilchrist will be retiring on March 1, 2019, after 12 faithful years of service as the senior pastor and head of staff at Westminster Presbyterian Church. The articles in this *Spire* highlight different areas of his ministry.

Clearly Jim is "blessed to be a blessing" to many.



An Invitation

Please join us for a luncheon in celebration of Jim Gilchrist's retirement. All are welcome and encouraged to attend!

Sunday, February 24
Following the 11:00 a.m. worship service
Fellowship Hall

Leadership Beyond Worship

When I first learned of Jim's retirement, my initial reaction was sadness – and that lasted for several weeks. Truth be told, I'm still feeling sad!

What I'm feeling now is gratitude for his excellent leadership, which includes not only worship but also administration. We've been blessed to have a senior pastor who delivers thoughtful, relevant sermons week after week. But that's expected from a senior pastor. What I've been amazed by is his excellent administrative leadership. I've worked as a church musician for nearly 30 years, under many senior pastors in several churches. I've never encountered a pastor who can lead from the pulpit and from behind a desk.

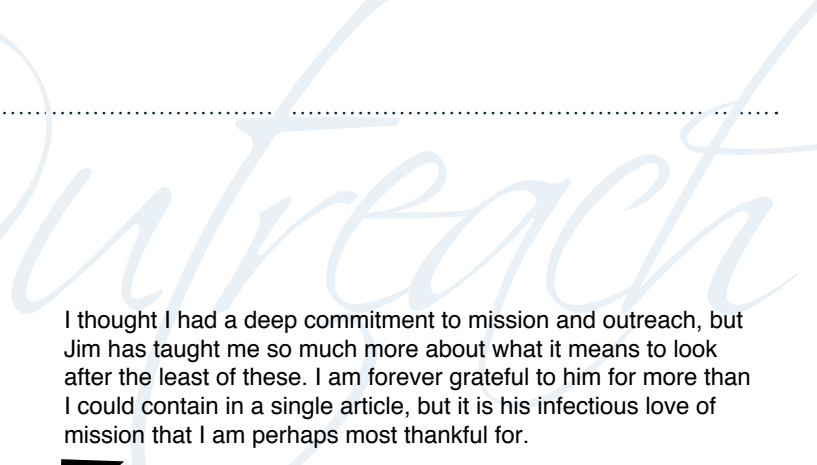
I'm also losing my personal translator. In conversation, I'm not very concise. I use way too many words. When Jim and I had the opportunity to sit down together to talk, I always enjoyed the clarity he brought to my thoughts. After I rambled on, he would say, "So, what I hear you saying is....." And he was always spot on!

– Chris Hestwood



Leadership

Much Will Be Required



I've never been threatened in quite the way I was threatened when I first interviewed with Jim Gilchrist.

It is, however, a story of legend. Jim and I met at the Panera that we have both come to know and love as our branch office. At that point, as someone who was tangentially connected to Westminster, I knew that the church had cycled through six youth workers in the last five years, and Jim didn't want me to be the next to leave. He said to me, "If you work with us for a year and leave for the Church of What's Happening Now, I will buy a gun and I will shoot you." Twelve years later and I'm still here. Jim assures me I'm in the clear, but who wants to chance these things?

For as memorable as that dialogue was, it was actually what followed that stuck with me even more. Jim and I were sitting down at that first meeting talking about the nature of church, how we believed things should be. We got to talking about mission, and Jim reminded me of a quotation from Luke: "To whom much is given, much will be required." Westminster is blessed with much, and so much will in fact be required of us. If I had any doubts about coming on board at Westminster, they left me in that moment. I was sold.

Jim has carried a deep sense of mission that is infectious, and will certainly stick with me as long as I live. Westminster has always had a steady and increasing commitment to outreach. We've worked with local partners like SHIM and the Pittsburgh Food Bank. We've been committed to national projects, particularly when a natural disaster hits our shores. I have personally traveled with Jim on two occasions to Malawi, once to re-establish our partnership relations and the second on a youth group mission trip. Friends, I've been around the block a little bit. I don't know many other senior pastors who would support, much less travel on, a youth group mission trip to Africa. I appreciated it so much that I almost didn't include this embarrassing photo we got of Jim in Malawi. Almost.

Trust me when I tell you, Jim has been at the helm directing our mission and outreach the whole time I've been here. When I came here in 2007,



I thought I had a deep commitment to mission and outreach, but Jim has taught me so much more about what it means to look after the least of these. I am forever grateful to him for more than I could contain in a single article, but it is his infectious love of mission that I am perhaps most thankful for.



I was worried that this was starting to read like a eulogy, and as Jim has reminded us with the words of Monty Python, he's not dead yet. In fact, that's maybe the most beautiful part of all. Whatever comes next for Jim, I'm quite certain that the Kingdom of God will be better for it because of Jim's commitment to mission and outreach. That's not so much a job as it is a calling, one that will follow him for the rest of his days. And I also know that Jim's impact on Westminster will live on for years to come. Jim has sparked something in us that I can't imagine we can return from. We've seen something in ourselves that we can't unsee. It's a vision for a better world. It's a reminder that the prayer we lift up each week is one in which we can participate: Thy kingdom come, thy will be done.

Of course, one of Jim's other great qualities is one of appropriate humility, and so I am slightly concerned that upon his reading this article the gun will come back out. But truly, I would not be the pastor I am today without Jim's guidance and mentorship. I would not have survived the gauntlet of seminary without his encouragement. I would not have made it through the process of ordination without his assistance. I would not have understood youth ministry the way I do today without his leadership. And I wouldn't have known what is possible for a single church to do without Jim's dedication to mission and outreach.

Godspeed, boss. May retirement bring you endless joy, rest, peace, and blessing!

Jason

Permission to Grow

Over the past several years Westminster's youth ministry staff has participated in the National Youth Workers' Convention. It's a weekend-long conference of thousands of youth ministry staff and volunteers from all over the country who gather to learn, share, grow, take a deep breath, and worship together. We've long understood that one of the greatest benefits of this weekend is to be surrounded by a community of people who "get it." They've worked with difficult students, frustrating events, family crises, and the myriad other situations that make up a youth pastor's unwritten responsibilities. Early on in our tenure at Westminster we realized that our experience was different from many of those being shared.

We had a supportive pastor. Our boss appreciated us. We were trusted. These details separated us from thousands of other stories from across the country.

Jim Gilchrist looked at a duo of rag-tag twenty-somethings and decided to trust us. When we've been surrounded by churches with stories of divisive leaders, suffocating boundaries, outdated guidance, and strong-armed control, Jim provided us with care, wisdom, and endless opportunities for growth. I know that this experience is shared by each and every member of this staff. While I can't speak to each of their stories, I can to my own.

In the years that I've been blessed to work with Jim, one continuous thread of conversation has woven itself across the years – and three continents! Of course, Jim has cared about the state of Westminster's ministry to young people and their families. But he also prioritized my personal development and well-being. He's encouraged me to jump at professional opportunities, guided me to explore my motivations and priorities, challenged me to expand my understanding of grace and compassion, and taught

me to dream of a life and ministry that is sustaining, adventurous, and exciting. No matter whether we were on a porch in India, a gazebo in Malawi, or an office in Upper St. Clair, I have always left the conversation feeling energized, trusted, and loved. This conversation has carried on for 12 years.

I sometimes joke that the longer you've known me the harder it is to imagine that I work in ministry and mental health. I'm convinced that both of these are true, in part, due to Jim's care and encouragement. I've always needed my life and work to be dynamic, and I've learned that Jim bears this same trait. Perhaps it's because of this value that Jim has allowed the staff to stretch our wings, try out something new, take on uncharted territory. The more I partner with and work alongside ministries from around the country, the more I realize how unique our staff is. The longevity we've experienced over this past decade is all but unheard of, and I'm convinced that strength is one of the many results of longevity. I know that I said I could only speak to my own experience, but I'm convinced that the entirety of Westminster's staff would agree with me: Jim's ministry stretches far beyond any pulpit or Bible study. He has been a leader, guide, and mentor to my family life, professional life, and to the life which God has called me.

Jim often uses the analogy of a ship sailing in a channel; the captain must guide the ship between the banks with care and intention, never sailing too close to the rocks. So, as Jim's ship comes about and tacks toward a season of well-earned sabbath and rejuvenation, I can say with my entire heart that I am unendingly grateful to have shared his ship, and am proud to sail on in his wake.

– Ed Sutter



Welcoming and Teaching All

A number of years ago, I took on a part-time position as “Bible Time Teacher” for Westminster’s Nursery School. I shared Bible stories with the preschoolers, working two days each month. It was a good way to use my training and experience in education, “giving back” a little to the church community that had welcomed us as new Pittsburghers, while still caring for our young family.

One year, I shared the story of the encounter two disciples have with the risen Jesus, on the road to Emmaus. This story is a great one for young children. It tells the central story of the gospel – Jesus’ death and resurrection – in a way that focuses on joy and friendship, Jesus as risen savior, friend, and companion. Plus, there’s the fun of mistaken identity – as the disciples don’t immediately recognize Jesus – and a shared meal. Sounds perfect, right?

Except for that one kid, the one who kept asking, “But, what were their names?”

I have to admit, I was stumped. In preparing for the story, I had focused on the storyline, and on Jesus’ role in the narrative. Those two guys were just two guys. I had not paid any attention at all to their names. Who cared, anyway? Well, that one little boy, for one.

Several months earlier, Westminster had installed its fourth senior pastor. On a whim, I do what many of us do when faced with a tough problem: I passed the buck. “Let’s go see the pastor,” I suggested. And so we did. Off I headed to the office of that new senior pastor, with 15 four year olds and their two teachers in tow, despite the fact that I barely knew him.

If the Reverend Dr. Jim Gilchrist was surprised to find this entourage at his door, he didn’t let on. Instead, he invited us all into his office, chatted for a few minutes, and then, removing a Bible from a shelf, found the passage and answered the question: “Cleopas...and Fred.”

I learned some important lessons that day:

I learned that Luke actually only names one of those disciples (24:13-35, if you want to read it for yourself). But that God, and often the story, is in the details – and our human minds and hearts need the details to really hear the story.

I learned that our new senior pastor was kind and gracious. In the middle of his work day, he welcomed a bunch of little kids and their teachers, answering their question in a way that didn’t embarrass their ill-prepared teacher.

But, perhaps most of all, I began to learn how important it is to Jim to ensure that the church welcomes and teaches all those who come to seek Jesus, including the smallest of us.

I have seen this value of Jim’s in many situations, but one place I regularly experience it, and the one where I am willing to bet that you have seen it too, is when Jim presides at the sacrament of baptism. Without fail, he reminds the parents and the congregation of our responsibility, our obligation to welcome and teach each person baptized, to “take responsibility for their nurture in the faith.”



But even more – have you watched his face? Look carefully and you will see that he is totally focused on the child or baby in his arms, an expression of pure joy lighting his face, as he welcomes this newest member of the family of God, this newest “precious child of the covenant.” He models for us all the seriousness, but also the joy, that comes with living into this responsibility, this call to welcome “even the least of these.”

– Robin Pyles



WELCOME

Grace Given to Us: The Teacher in Teaching...

When a colleague of mine heard I was going to work at Westminster Presbyterian Church with Jim Gilchrist, he smiled and said, "You will like serving with Jim – he is truly brilliant." I had read about Jim's impressive academic credentials – undergraduate and divinity degrees from Yale, a master's degree in international affairs from the University of Pittsburgh, and a PhD in history and policy from Carnegie Mellon University. But these credentials just scratched the surface of his true abilities as a pastor. Jim ponders life's deep questions and takes us along on the quest for greater truth.

Each week Jim gathers the staff for a Bible study to discuss the biblical text for the upcoming Sunday worship services. He poses a few thoughts and then prompts us to move beyond light Sunday school answers with questions like: "What is God really saying here? What do we see in this text? What does this mean for our time?" These discussions challenge us to take inventory of our own beliefs as we examine how we live our lives as Christians.

Jim works hard as a teacher as evidenced by the many classes he has taught at Westminster, including the 4:00 Wednesday afternoon Bible study, Perspectives Class on Sunday morning, Sunday seminars, Jewish-Christian Dialogue, Faith in Life, and the summer series on justice. The classes have had a remarkable impact on those who attended as you can read from the following participants:

For many of us, Jim's Wednesday night Faith in Life gathering has been the heart of our growth and learning. As we considered where our faith might be calling us on controversial social issues, Jim pressed us into careful reasoning. Under his leadership we avoided "food fights" and grew together as a real community. I will probably miss these sessions most of all.

– Bobbie Hartman

As the name suggests, we are given a unique privilege of holding group discussions with Jim on his sermons, to be able to provide our perspectives without judgment. He has led inspired discussions that examine our world through God's lens, teaching us about grace, humility, forgiveness, and hope. It is no coincidence that some of us have taken leadership roles in church. We will miss him dearly.

– Mike Lee

My desire to attend the Jewish-Christian Dialogue was heightened by the participation of Rabbi Mark Mahler from Temple Emanuel. He said "I want to be your rabbi. I want you to be the best Christians you can be." That has always stuck with me. He, and everyone, should want us to be the best Christians we can be. And we should want our Jewish friends to be the best Jews they can be. After all, that means we are all being faithful to what God has commanded us to do. I think the Jewish-Christian Dialogue series is a wonderful way to encourage each other



to be at that spiritual best. May it continue to shine in the South Hills and radiate outward.

– Carolyn Kerr

In Jim's longstanding Wednesday afternoon Bible study, he skillfully guides our scripture readings and discussions, which are often related to his upcoming Sunday morning sermons. I am amazed at how he is able to subtly intertwine some of our random thoughts into his message in an organized, thoughtful way while teaching us and helping us to strengthen and deepen our faith. We are all so thankful for his guidance. By the way, those of us in this group will always remember Jim's line: "There was no apple." Right?

– Sandy Conaway

Faithful pastors give more than intellectual knowledge to their congregations. Jim warmly shared in celebrations of marriages, baptisms, and communion, and came alongside families at the most heartbreaking times in their lives. He held the hands of the dying, spoke the word of encouragement at the moment of despair, and cast the vision of God's redemptive power in all things. To possess remarkable intellect is impressive, but to share the love of Christ is truly what makes brilliance transformative. The formidable theologian Thomas Aquinas said, "It is better to illuminate than to shine."

Thank you, Jim, for teaching us to discover God's light on our path and in our hearts.

Indeed it has been my privilege to have served with you.

Godspeed,

Louise

Sundays at 9:45 a.m.
Galbreath Chapel

February Series

Reformer and Refugee: (Re)Considering John Calvin

Kenneth J. Woo, Assistant Professor of Church History, Pittsburgh Theological Seminary

The 500th anniversary of Martin Luther's Ninety-Five Theses might have passed with 2017, but the Protestant Reformation's significance endures. One example of this, especially relevant for Presbyterians, is the life and thought of John Calvin (1509-1564). Who was this reformer who has provoked intense reactions — positive and negative — from his own day to the present? How has Calvin's theology (including his teaching on divine predestination) managed to keep a firm grip on the imaginations of friends and foes alike? What can we learn from Calvin's situation as a religious refugee who ministered to others facing persecution and exile? Join us for this four-part series that will consider Calvin's ideas as they emerged in his 16th-century context and continue to influence the Reformed tradition today.

The Rev. Dr. Kenneth J. Woo began teaching at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary in 2016. He has taught at Duke Divinity School, Redeemer Seminary, and the College of New Jersey. Woo received his ThD in the history of Christianity (Reformation Studies) from Duke University. At PTS, Dr. Woo teaches courses in church history and historical theology, while also directing the seminary's Master of Arts in Theological Studies program. Dr. Woo's forthcoming book, Nicodemism and the English Calvin: Reception of a Reformer Against Religious Dissimulation, 1544-1584 (Brill, 2019), examines complex ways in which John Calvin and his followers established and enforced social and ecclesial boundaries in a variety of 16th-century contexts. His work has appeared in Church History and Religious Culture, Concordia Theological Quarterly, and Sixteenth Century Journal. A minister of the Reformed Church in America, Woo served for six years as a pastor near Washington, D.C.

John Calvin



Unknown author [Public domain or Public domain]
via Wikimedia Commons



Library in Haiti: Helpers Make It Happen

The children rush to school with great enthusiasm. Some have run or walked many miles to get there in time for the bell to ring. They do this while keeping their uniforms neat and tidy. It is exciting that they are proud to be going to school and want to learn! The library at the New Testament Mission in La Croix, Haiti, supports this desire to be educated. The Westminster trip to the mission this February will continue the work of creating a school library that was first dreamed of in 2011. The book collection of 3,000 will expand this year with books written in French to bolster the proficiency the students need to pass their Haitian school exams. Books will be purchased in Port-au-Prince whenever possible. This saves luggage space for other essential items and helps support the Haitian economy.



To expand the variety of books, my husband and I took advantage of a recent trip to Toronto, Canada, to purchase a variety of books in French. The joy of the trip, beyond the purchase of 105 books, was meeting helpers along the way. One book store clerk asked how he could donate. The Afrocentric bookstore cashier asked if we'd like a 10% discount to help support our cause. And two more stores invited the mission school to participate in their award programs and teacher discounts. A stop in the public library led us to a librarian who spent time helping us find additional stores to visit. As each little surprise of help was revealed, our excitement grew for the delight and learning that will occur when the students use these books.

You too can be a "helper"! Options include praying for the library project or helping to grow the book collection



by shopping the Amazon wish list. Visit [amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com) and use "Jenny Gallo" to search wish lists for the New Testament Mission Library wish list. We'll deliver the books in February. Alternatively, financial contributions to the Haiti library afterschool programs, computers for educational research, and library supplies can be made through the church finance office. Last but not least, tell your friends and family about this ministry. You might ignite another book lover to become a helper!

As we have learned in Romans 12:4-5, we come together individually to make it all work. Thank you for being part of the team!

If you have questions or want to be added to the library newsletter, please contact me, Jenny Gallo, jlg@pobox.com or 412-480-4193.

For as in one body we have many members, and not all the members have the same function, so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually we are members of one another.

– Romans 12:4-5

The following reflection was written by Ellie Pigman, a member of Westminster and of the Writers of Westminster under the direction of Jim O'Brien. Thank you to Ellie and Jim for permission to reprint Ellie's work in the Spire.

Why Am I Sitting Here?

Sunday mornings for 85 years found me sitting in church, singing in church, and praying in church. WHY?

JANUARY 2018

Two grandsons were home sleeping in bed. A granddaughter and her parents were out of town for a dance competition. Is this the ending of church going for the next generation? Why am I sitting here in the sanctuary?



I grew up with Kilburn Memorial Presbyterian Church at the end of my street. This was the church of my family generations before me. I was baptized there. With the decision made for me, I was enrolled in Kilburn's Cradle Roll. I heard about Jesus who said, "Let the little children come unto me." I liked that; after all I was a child. Year after year attending Sunday School, singing in the choir, enjoying summer Bible School, and later as a teenager spending Sunday evening as a member of Christian Endeavor took up a lot of my time. I memorized poems for Children's Day and played on a girl's basketball team and eventually taught Sunday School. When I joined the church as a teenager I talked about my doubts with the minister.



I received a pin for each year of perfect attendance in Sunday School which eventually held ten pendants. Ten years of perfect attendance in Sunday School? Who does that? Was I brainwashed? I don't think so. I had my doubts about some of the mystical parts of the Bible. I found Thomas Jefferson's Bible in the church library. He also had his doubts. Both Jefferson and I found Jesus profound and the example to follow. The Bible is packed with answers to just about anything. I memorized Bible verses and hiked over the fields by my home when adversity entered my life and everything seemed to be falling apart. I constructed crosses out of sticks I picked up as I hiked and prayed. Surprising huge perseverance and empathy was given to me. I felt Jesus' presence and heard the words

that "all will be well" as I sat on the porch quietly listening to the creek, resting after a long hike over the fields. He was sitting there!

If I am traveling, snowed in, not feel well, or attending a grandchild's event, I miss going to church. When I miss a few Sundays in a row I find I am hungry and weaker and need to be fed by the words, music, and the people. I need to be in church to regain my strength, to charge myself to help others, and to love and think on larger scale. To reflect upon my shortcomings and confess and hope to become better opens my heart to forgiveness. This Holy Spirit they talk about seems to be tuned in.

I need the word of God to humble me. To stop for a moment to feed upon the hope that goodness is growing in the world.

I need the word of God to humble me. To stop for a moment to feed upon the hope that goodness is growing in the world. Without this awareness, I am diminished. The quality of my life goes down and I become more self-centered. My hopes for peace in the world become weaker. I know why I am sitting here in church and turning the pages of the hymnal. I am nourished by standing up and singing the words of hope and joy of the old hymns that have been written and sung for hundreds of years. I sing with gusto, sometimes out of tune.

So, my dear Naomi, Rylen, Sophie, Bennett, Harold, Emma, Everett, and last but not least, by any means, Lucy Eleanor – my grandchildren and family – I am writing this to let you know that to be with others who are being fed by the words of Jesus and helping others is sweet. We go out together to volunteer all over the city and the world, helping others in need. As I said, I find myself starving when I have not been in church. I need the nourishment of the music, and hunger for the scriptures and sermon and the good people. It will give you hope when life gets difficult. To be sitting here is to be fed in so many ways. I am writing this for you, the next generation who may be asking, "Why is Gammy sitting in church on Sunday mornings?"

Wishing you to have this strength and nourishment,

Loving you always,

Gammy



Westminster Book Group

**Wednesday, February 27
Noon – 1:15 p.m.**

The Westminster Book Group will meet on Wednesday, February 27, at noon in the Yahweh Café to discuss *A Story of Arthur Truluv* by Elizabeth Berg. We invite you to bring a brown bag lunch and join us.

Wonderfully written and full of profound observations about life, The Story of Arthur Truluv is a beautiful and moving novel of compassion in the face of loss, of the small acts that turn friends into family, and of the possibilities to achieve happiness at any age.

– Amazon

Save the Date

Monday Morning Lenten Study

**March 4 – April 8
10:00 – 11:30 a.m.**

Room 231

Led by Louise Rogers

Come be a part of this Lenten study as we seek to deepen our spiritual understandings. Beginners welcome!

Blood Drive

**Sunday, February 17
8:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.
Fellowship Hall**

Westminster Church continues to hold three blood drives a year. Anyone in good health can donate; you are helping to save someone's life!

Sponsored by the deacons, Westminster's blood drive is a significant event that benefits donors and recipients alike. Many of the deacons will also be assisting with this event, either as donors, greeters, or helping behind the scenes.

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 Vitalant at 877-258-4825.

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

- Register online at vitalant.org, using sponsor code G0010171.
- Signup tables will be available before or after worship services on February 3 and 10.
- Contact the church office at 412-835-6630.
- Walk-ins are always welcome; donors already registered will be taken first.

For those planning to donate, please remember to eat a good breakfast and



drink plenty of non-caffeinated beverages. There will be snacks and goodies available for all donors!

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

Thank You

WROC Talk Presents

Understanding the Opioid Epidemic

Join Dr. John D'Angelo from Tri-Community South EMS as he relays his experience in our local community with the opioid crisis.

You will learn:

- What led to the opioid crisis
- What impact the opioid crisis has had on our local community
- Why the Medicare population has one of the highest and fastest-growing rates of diagnosed opioid use disorder
- Whether opioid addiction is a disease or a moral issue
- Who is most susceptible to becoming addicted to opioids
- How to recognize signs and symptoms of addiction
- How to administer NARCAN, the drug that can reverse the effects of an opioid overdose

CPR instructor Dr. John D'Angelo became an employee of Tri-Community South in 2003 after a 35 year career as a high school and college English teacher. He has worked as both an EMT and a CPR instructor. Currently, Dr. D'Angelo is the system's most active instructor, averaging three to four classes each week. In addition, Dr. D'Angelo's articles have been widely published both locally and nationally. Included in the awards presented to Dr. D'Angelo are the 2013 District 39 First Responder Award and the 2015 EMSI state award for contributions to emergency medicine.

Monday, February 25
7:00 – 8:00 p.m.
Fellowship Hall
Cost: Free; registration required

Chair Aerobics to Broadway Tunes

(55+ Friendly)

Low impact chair exercise class

Not your typical chair class, you'll dance, laugh, and sing along to popular Broadway tunes and also answer trivia questions to buff up the brain! You won't even realize you're exercising. Class includes gentle, joint friendly exercises with light weights, balls, and bands. Join the fun!

Wednesdays, March 6 – April 24
10:00 – 10:50 a.m.

Cost: \$35

Instructor: Anne Brucker – Master of Education, Exercise Design



Three Concerts in February

The beauty of music will brighten three evenings at Westminster this month. Two concerts feature outstanding professional ensembles reaching out into our suburban neighborhood – the Pittsburgh Camerata on February 2 and Chatham Baroque on February 15. Then on February 23, the Westminster Music & Arts Series presents the Tsar Lazar Servian Men's Choir and Carica Milica Serbian Women's Choir. Plan to enjoy great music in February without driving into the city on cold winter nights!

The Pittsburgh Camerata at Westminster *Music of the Spheres*

Saturday, February 2
7:30 p.m., Sanctuary



The universe beckons with images of spheres: our earthly globe, heavenly celestial bodies, the very sky that greets us each morning. Journey with the Camerata beyond our earthly existence, as we pique our imaginations to the sights and sounds of the universe.

Westminster welcomes the Pittsburgh Camerata to our sanctuary. Tickets may be purchased at the door or online at www.pittsburghcamerata.org.

The Pittsburgh Camerata is a professional vocal ensemble which has been presenting choral concerts in Pittsburgh since 1974. They sing music you won't hear performed anywhere else in Pittsburgh. Some of it is from the Renaissance and Baroque periods. Some is 20th or 21st century music. The remainder might be from any era. All of this is intended to be sung by a small choral ensemble. The Pittsburgh Camerata's concerts are acclaimed for imaginative and inspiring programs sung with excellence. Mark A. Anderson is artistic director.

Why is the Pittsburgh Camerata coming to Westminster? Many of the finest musical programs take place in the city of Pittsburgh, and many residents of suburbs find it challenging to attend as many concerts as they would like. It's a matter of time and traffic as well as busy schedules. The Pittsburgh Camerata's solution is to come to the suburbs with a Saturday evening performance. (The ensemble performs the same concert the following afternoon at Shadyside Presbyterian Church.) This season, the fortunate suburban venues are Fox Chapel Presbyterian, Mt. Lebanon United Lutheran Church, and our own Westminster Presbyterian Church. Hearing the best in choral music without a hassle is truly a wonderful opportunity for lovers of music, especially anyone who has enjoyed singing in church choirs or in school and community choruses. The music will lift your spirits!

Chatham Baroque at Westminster *Cupid's Harp*

Friday, February 15
7:30 p.m., Sanctuary

Celebrate Valentine's Day with a love-filled program of music from Italy and England. Songs by Dowland, Purcell, and Monteverdi are sure to make you swoon. With guest tenor Aaron Sheehan and Baroque harpist Christa Patton.

Tickets, with discounts for seniors and students, are available online and at the door. For more information and ticket prices, visit www.chathambaroque.org or call 412-687-1788.

This is the fourth season of Chatham Baroque's outreach to the South Hills at Westminster Church. The concerts include music that is always engaging. Sometimes you recognize the pieces. Other times you hear sublime music that you have never heard before – glorious surprises! A Chatham Baroque concert is an opportunity to open your heart to the best in music of the 17th and 18th centuries. If the Westminster date doesn't fit your schedule, you can choose to hear the same concert on Saturday night or Sunday afternoon in the city.



MUSIC & ARTS SERIES

Music & Arts Series

Tsar Lazar Serbian Men’s Choir and Carica Milica Serbian Women’s Choir

Conductors Snezana Lazich and George Milosh

**Saturday, February 23
7:30 p.m., Sanctuary
Freewill offering**

Enjoy the ethereal music of the Serbian tradition as it swirls around our sanctuary. George Milosh, one of the conductors and Westminster’s tenor section leader, learned music of the Serbian Orthodox Church from his early years. George is currently working on his Master of Music degree in voice performance at West Virginia University. George also sings with the Pittsburgh Camerata and is sought after as a soloist in the Pittsburgh area.

Carica Milica was created in February 2014 to represent the Serbian female population at a Serbian Singing Federation Festival held in Pittsburgh. The name of the choir was chosen as a commemoration of the Empress (Carica) Milica, ruler of Serbia after her husband, Czar Lazar, was killed at the Battle of Kosovo. The women of Carica Milica represent the four Serbian Orthodox churches in the Pittsburgh area. Their repertoire is sacred and secular, tending more toward modern and folk traditions of Serbian music and culture.



photo credit: Alisa Innocenti

The Tsar Lazar Male Choir is comprised of singers from Serbian Orthodox and Carpatho-Russian Orthodox parishes throughout greater Pittsburgh, Weirton, WV, and eastern Ohio. Originally directed by the late Very Rev. Stevan Stepanov of the St. Elijah Serbian Orthodox Church in Aliquippa, PA, the choir is now in its 26th year and has performed throughout the United States and in Ontario, Canada. Currently under the direction of George Milosh, Tsar Lazar specializes in Serbian, Russian, and Ukrainian liturgical hymns and folk rhapsodies, and has recorded two CDs, *Spirit of Tsar Lazar* and *Undying Spirit*.

Session Update

On Saturday morning, January 12, Session met with the Board of Deacons for the annual organizational meeting of all the church officers.

A plenary meeting reviewed the state of the church and the responsibilities of elders and deacons. The two groups then met separately to welcome new members, arrange committee assignments, and tend to their first orders of business for the year. As the morning ended, officers reviewed plans for ordination and installation during worship the next day.

Session will meet again the third Monday in February. Louise Rogers was appointed to serve as acting head of staff upon Jim Gilchrist’s retirement, until an interim senior pastor arrives.

Deaths

Amy Sanders
December 20

Richard Frost
December 24

Gladys Camaioni
January 3





**WESTMINSTER
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**

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“He has told you,
O mortal, what is good;
and what does the
Lord require of you
but to do justice,
and to love kindness,
and to walk humbly
with your God?”

– Micah 6:8

