



THE SPIRE

WESTMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
Pittsburgh, PA

Christmas Gifts

The holidays can be stressful for lots of reasons. Just getting everything done – shopping, cleaning, decorating, cooking – adds a pile of chores on top of our already busy lives. Then all the gatherings with family and friends bring little stresses even when everyone is happy, and bigger stresses when not everyone gets along. And if we've had a bad year, or suffered some great loss, the compulsory cheerfulness of the season might only deepen, by contrast, the weariness we already feel.

It's no wonder the holidays are hard for many people. Here are a few ideas for Christmas gifts we might give to one another, and ourselves, to make the season more truly and deeply a time of joy.

First, simplify. The irony of making ourselves anxious in honor of the Prince of Peace is a sign that we'd do well to worry less about the trappings of Christmas and focus more on its meaning. The angel, after all, announces "good news of great joy," and the good news is that God is with us, no matter what else is going on. Doing less and reflecting more might make the Christmas season a time of real renewal.

Second, don't fret about feelings. It's Santa, not Jesus, who says, "Ho! Ho! Ho! Merry Christmas!" Little baby Jesus gives up the bliss of heaven to become one of us. He experiences cold and hunger and crying, and all the other things that make humans uncomfortable, along with the things that make us feel good. Where did we get the idea that the way we feel has anything to do with whether God is real and comes to be with us? Feelings are fickle, and an unreliable guide to the presence of God.

Third, focus on forgiveness. Why does Jesus come at all, but to show us the depth and breadth of God's love and grace? "God and sinners reconciled" is the whole point of Christmas. In Christ, God says, "I love you. All is forgiven. You can come home to me, where you belong." Part of what makes the holidays unhappy for many is the conflicts, the people we're still angry with. If God came to reconcile us at Christmas, who are we to hold on to grudges? They only rob us of joy and keep us from peace.



Forgive even one person this Christmas – including, not least, yourself – and see whether this holiday doesn't feel "holy" after all.

Finally, come to church. Not just on Christmas Eve, though that will be good, but on other Sunday mornings too. Those of us who come all the time look forward to familiar lessons and carols and candles at Christmas. But if that's all you see of church, it's like listening to the overture and not staying for the musical. Some of the best things in the world happen in church, things that make life rich and full and good. Christmas is only the beginning.

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The Spire is published monthly by the church staff from September through June. Contributions can be made by emailing a Word document to *Spire* editor Sara Kyle at sara@ruhlekyle.org. The deadline for submitting an article is the fifth day of every month for the following month's issue. Please include the author's name, telephone number, email address, and a title. All articles are subject to editing.

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Traditional Worship

 Sundays
 8:30 & 11:00 a.m.
 Sanctuary

The Bridge Contemporary Worship

 Sundays
 9:45 a.m.
 WROC

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

Christmas Eve Services

Morning Services*

9:45 a.m.
*Contemporary Service
in the WROC*

11:00 a.m.
*Traditional Service
in the Sanctuary*

**Nursery Care is available for children ages 3 and younger during both worship services, from 9:40 a.m. until noon in Room 237. There will be no Sunday school at either service. Children of all ages are welcome to attend worship with their families.*

Evening Services**

5:00 p.m.
Family Service in the Sanctuary

7:00 p.m.
*Contemporary Service
in the WROC*

9:00 & 11:00 p.m.
*Lessons and Carols
in the Sanctuary*

***Nursery care is available during the 5:00 service only for children ages 3 and younger in Room 237.*

New Year's Eve Services

Morning Services*

Regular Sunday morning worship services at 8:30, 9:45, and 11:00 a.m.

**Nursery Care is available for children ages 3 and younger during all three worship services, from 8:20 a.m. until noon in Room 237. There will be no Sunday school. Children of all ages are welcome to attend worship with their families.*

Evening Service**

6:30 – 7:30 p.m.
Communion and Prayers in Galbreath Chapel

***No childcare is available.*

Upcoming Events

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DEC Breakfast at the Manger

8
DEC Gingerbread House Factory

10
DEC Pet Remembrance Service
WROC
2:00 p.m.

10
DEC Westminster Christmas Concert
Sanctuary
7:00 p.m.

20
DEC Christmas Remembrance Service
Galbreath Chapel
7:30 p.m.

Sundays at 9:45 a.m.
Galbreath Chapel

DECEMBER 3 & 10

Westminster's Vision for Racial Reconciliation

Jim Gilchrist, John Wallace

Concerns about race have been part of the story of our country and our community here in Pittsburgh for many years. The recent congregational survey tells us that it is still very much on the minds of Westminster members. On December 3, Jim Gilchrist will discuss the survey results and ways that Westminster Church can broaden its efforts to address racism and related challenges as part of our strategic direction.

The following Sunday, Jim Gilchrist and John Wallace will discuss racism, the possibilities for racial reconciliation, and Westminster's role in the transformation of Homewood. At the University of Pittsburgh, John M. Wallace Jr., PhD, is a professor in the School of Social Work, Katz School of Business, and the Department of Sociology. He is the principal investigator on the university's Center on Race and Social Problems' Comm-Univ-City of Pittsburgh Project, an integrated program of research, teaching, and service designed to investigate and ameliorate social problems that disproportionately affect economically disadvantaged children, families, and communities. This program includes the Homewood Children's Village. Wallace is also a church pastor in Homewood and will preach at the 8:30 and 11:00 services.

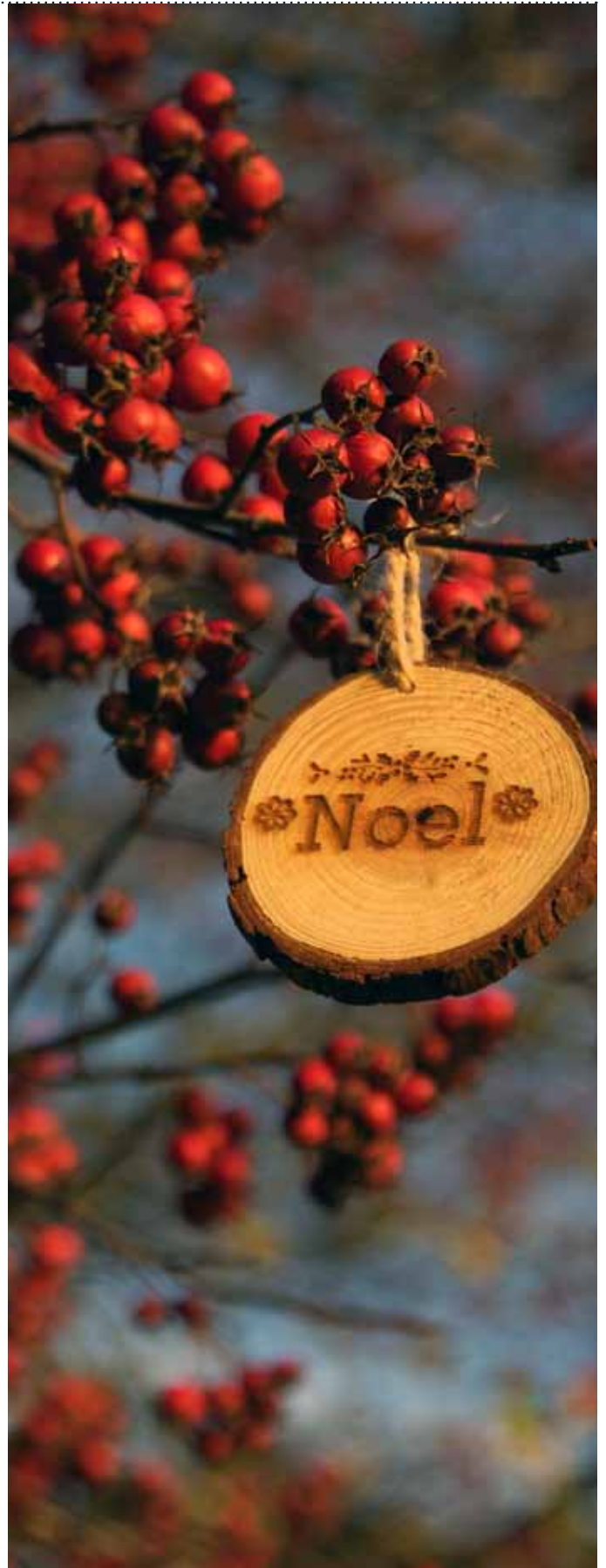
DECEMBER 17

No Reason, No Season: Why Early Presbyterians Ignored Christmas

Peter Gilmore

Although strong in their faith and devoted to the gospel, the earliest Presbyterians in Western Pennsylvania (like those in Ireland and Scotland) chose *not* to observe Christmas. Whatever were they thinking? This seminar will offer answers based on close examination of the record.

Dr. Peter Gilmore, an adjunct instructor in history at area universities, has written extensively about the Irish Presbyterian experience in Western Pennsylvania. His essay "Does Christ Belong in Christmas?" appeared in the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette on December 6, 2015.





With Us

The other day as I was driving around, I came across some old CDs in my car from when I was in high school. Remember, music to me is a very big deal, so I was really excited to open up this window into who I was as a 16 or 17 year old. The music that would come blasting out of my car speakers would have a lot to say about where I've been, and where I've come. What did that young man see in music? What kinds of things did he enjoy? How did it help me get to where I am today as a musician myself? This was exciting!

I put in the first CD. It was a heavy, punk rock band. I don't so much listen to that kind of music any more, but it filled me with a beautiful sense of nostalgia. Then the singer came in to the track. With an incredibly whiney voice he started singing about his girl who left him. "That's depressing," I thought to myself, and skipped ahead. Another whiney song. Another skip. Another whiney song. I ejected that CD and picked another band. More punk rock. More whiney singing. More skipping tracks.

When I got back to the house, I got on social media and immediately apologized to my high school classmates for being an emotional wreck.

But you have to admire the desire of a lot of these singers. One promised that he would do anything for his gal. Another promised his gal that if she would come back to him he would be a way better boyfriend than the guy his crush was currently seeing. One guy even promised to walk across the United States by himself to get to his crush, which by my math, bests The Proclaimers' song "500 Miles" by 2,180 Miles. That's dedication!

But the one thing these musicians had in common is that they simply wanted to be with their significant other. They all seemed to believe that just being in the presence of their significant other would cure all their problems.

I'll bet you didn't see any of that coming as an (admittedly long) intro to a Christmas *Spire* article, huh?

Be that as it may, I do think there's a special power in the simple act of presence. Richard Foster poses the thought that if you wanted to come up with a single theme for the entirety of the Bible, from Genesis to Revelation, it would be that the God of the universe wants to be with us. God's major complaint against the Israelites is that they are constantly forgetting God, and all that God has done for them. They get lost in their own desires and plans, which means they aren't with God. The whole point of the resurrection of Christ is that the power of sin and death is broken, and now you and I have the ability to be with God forever.

So here's where Christmas gets its power. It's not from the commercialism that our culture continues to allow to spin out of control. It's not from the lights and decorations and adornments of the season. Christmas doesn't even really get its power from our own traditions and rituals, though those are certainly great. Christmas gets its real power from the simple fact that in that barn some 2,000 years ago, God decided that it was best to be with us, as one of us, just like one of us. Jesus Christ is God putting on display God's own desire to be with us above all else.

It's a power that carries today. The resurrected Christ continues to be with us, to dwell in us, to abide with us. He meets us in our darkest moments and celebrates with us in our most joyous days. If we squint and stare, Jesus Christ is there through all the lights and glitter and cash registers that seem to cloud the season with noise, gently reminding us that all these centuries later, he's still with us.

And he doesn't even need a whiney punk rock song to prove it!

Merry Christmas, friends!

– Jason Freyer

BETWEEN HERE AND THERE

Scripture talks about both endurance and perseverance, which got me wondering: what's the difference between the two? It's a safe bet to say that we often use the two interchangeably, and I wondered if we were wrong to do so, so I looked up the definitions.

Perseverance: steadfastness in doing something despite difficulty or delay in achieving success.

Endurance: the fact or power of enduring an unpleasant or difficult process or situation without giving way.

Side note: "Enduring" is used in the definition of "endurance," so I looked up the definition of "endure" as well.

Endure: suffer (something painful or difficult) patiently.

So, you tell me. Should we use these words interchangeably, or are they different? It seems to me that while lots of times the two could be used in tandem, specific situations are more applicable to one than the other. When we look at the definitions of both *endurance* and *endure* we see the words "pain" and "unpleasant" show up. And while both perseverance and endurance speak about "difficulty," difficult and unpleasant are not analogous or equal. Perseverance is sticking it out; endurance is sticking it out even when it hurts.

To say that a life of faith requires both perseverance and endurance is wholly true. A faithful life is difficult, and at times unpleasant. We are asked to have hard conversations, to step into unknowns, to step out of comfort, to forgo our own lives for the sake of others', and to swim upstream from so much of what our culture tells us. Taken one moment at a time, this is hard. Taken over a lifetime, it requires both perseverance and endurance: perseverance to remain close to a dynamic and adventurous Savior, and endurance to withstand the consequences.

Consequences of following Jesus? Yep. When we truly devote ourselves to following in the footsteps of our Savior, we run headlong against the philosophies of this world. Jesus was up front about all of this: "If the world hates you, keep in mind that it hated me first. If you belonged to the world, it would love you as its own. As it is, you do not belong to the world, but I have chosen you out of the world. That is why the world hates you" (John 15: 18-19). It hurts to be hated, to be separated from friends, family members, or coworkers because our faith – in these times we need *endurance* to *persevere*.

One of the places that endurance and perseverance intersect in scripture is at the word "hope." According to Romans 5:4 and 15:4, each produces hope in our lives. It is at this point that we begin to see an upward cycle. Perseverance and endurance produce hope, and hope provides our spirit with the energy to carry on through difficulty, knowing full well that, as Ecclesiastes 3 tells us, there is a time and season for everything. This difficulty, this struggle, this pain lasts only for a season, and more seasons are to come. Perseverance produces hope, and hope encourages endurance.

So I wonder, what would happen if we all accepted challenges in our life and in our faith? Could it be true that just as an athlete trains their body through physical struggle, our faith is strengthened by intentional challenge? It seems to me impossible to calculate the results. Who can tell where the upward cycle may stop? Don't shy away from the struggles of this faith, "because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope. And hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us" (Romans 5:3-5).

– Ed Sutter



GLIMPSE OF MY WORLD



The volunteer was a granddad who helped out during Barefoot School (Westminster's VBS) in order to spend time with a grandson who joins us for the week even though he lives out-of-state. The student was the granddaughter of church members; she also lives out-of-state, but attends Barefoot School while visiting her grandparents during the summer.

There was no real reason that the two connected – they were assigned to small groups that sat near one another, and rotated through the day's activities together. The volunteer says "We just happened to catch each other's eye. It was just meant to be." I'm not sure that any of the rest of us even knew it had happened during that first week. In fact, I'm not sure we knew anything about this growing friendship for a whole year.

Imagine my surprise, on the first day of the following year's program, when a young girl I barely knew bounced on the balls of her feet in front of me as she asked if the volunteer she had met a year earlier was there. "I'm sorry, no, he isn't helping out this year," I said. Her face fell, and the bouncing stopped. "Oh no," she replied. "I really wanted to see him." She sounded so very sad. I suggested that I would see what I could do.

I made a phone call – and the next morning the volunteer stopped by, just to say hello to his young friend. She was thrilled! The connection continued – and the friendship continues to grow. This

past June, the volunteer was not helping during the program, but he stopped by one morning to surprise his friend. I got to deliver the message: I just said that there was someone to see her. She looked puzzled at first, and then, just like the sun coming out from behind a cloud, she broke into the biggest smile and jumped up, rushing off to greet her friend. This young girl looked like Christmas morning had just dawned. The two shared a hug, and then both starting talking nonstop, catching up on a year's news.

I have no idea why these two individuals connected in such a deep way. I have no idea how many other similar connections exist between young people and older church members within our congregation. I do know that this connection would not have happened if an adult had not made the time and opened his heart to a young person in our midst. I know that, although the two have never spent much time together, this relationship means an awful lot to both of them. And I know that adults making connections with young people is one of the strongest means of helping our youth grow in faith, in building the church as we grow followers for Christ.

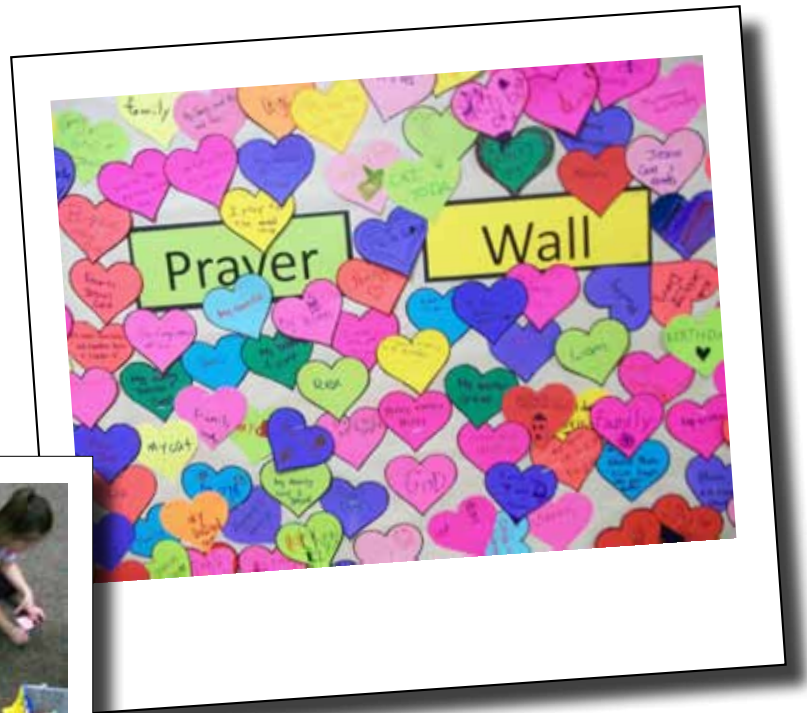
So, I would invite you, as we prepare our hearts and minds during this Advent season to celebrate the coming of our Savior, to consider one small way in which you might reach out in friendship to a young person, sharing God's love.

– Robin Pyles

Prayer Wall

Coming in through the playground entrance, chances are you might have seen the Sunday school Prayer Wall overflowing with hearts! The children are asked each week to write a prayer request on their hearts and place them on the wall. As they go to the Prayer Wall each week, they see how the Prayer Wall has grown since September and will continue to grow throughout the year. It is amazing to watch the children as they carefully choose just the right spot to place their heart with their special request!

Stop by to see the Prayer Wall and if you would like to add your own heart, there is a basket with hearts, pens, and staplers on the table near the Prayer Wall.



MISSION

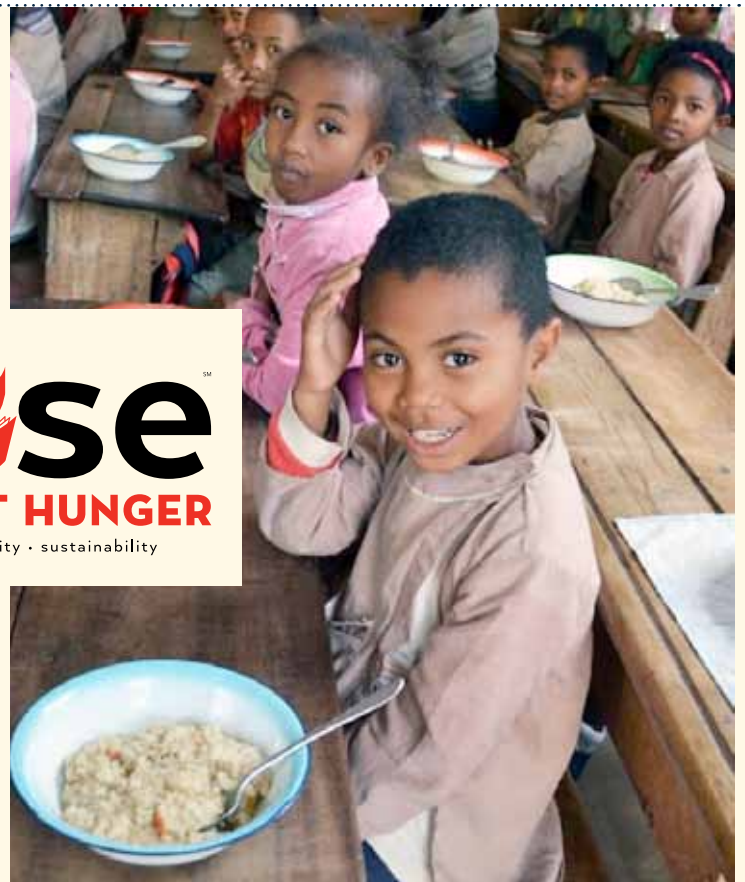
Save the Date

Rise Against Hunger

**Saturday Morning
February 10, 2018**

We are once again hosting a packaging event for Rise Against Hunger, formerly Stop Hunger Now. It is an international hunger relief nonprofit organization that coordinates the packaging and distribution of food and other life-changing aid to people in developing nations.

We will need 325 volunteers to staff the assembly-line shifts for this one day. Please invite friends, neighbors, and co-workers. In addition to providing a much needed meal to 100,000 children, it will be an opportunity for fun and fellowship for everyone.



Merry Christmas!



WROC Gift Certificates Make Great Stocking Stuffers!

Give the gift of fitness to a child or adult in your life. Visit our website for a complete listing of our Winter 2018 Programs.

Pet Remembrance

**Sunday, December 10
2:00 p.m. in the WROC**

It's common to have a memorial service to celebrate the life of a loved one who has died. In fact, we do it all the time because these gatherings allow us to grieve the death of our beloved and also provide an opportunity to start coping with the loss and start moving toward healing. So why wouldn't we do the same for our beloved pets? After all, our animal companions have given us years of joy and are often regarded as members of the family. And when we lose them, the grief we experience can be as powerful as it is with the loss of any family member.

These are some of the reasons we're having a Pet Remembrance Service. We'll share memories, we'll laugh, we'll cry; but most important, we'll acknowledge the loss and pay tribute to these cherished members of our families. So if you – or someone you know – has recently lost a pet, please join us on Sunday, December 10. All family members, including pets that are still with you, are invited and encouraged to come.





Annual Christmas Concert

Sunday, December 10
7:00 p.m.
Sanctuary

The annual Christmas concert presents sounds of the season, with performances by the Upper St. Clair High School Chanteclairs, the Westminster Ringers, the Cherub and Junior Choirs, and the Westminster Chancel Choir and Academy Chamber Orchestra performing Bach's Magnificat.

The concert is free and will appeal to all ages. A freewill offering will be gratefully accepted to support future programming.



Magnificat: Mary's Song for a Broken World

On December 10, the Chancel Choir and Academy Chamber Orchestra will present Bach's glorious Magnificat as part of Westminster's annual Christmas Concert. The work is one of Bach's most popular. Its memorable opening and closing choruses, with trumpets and timpani, frame a beautiful variety of movements for soloists and for chorus. This exhilarating work of sacred music will surely stir the souls of everyone in the congregation, even if we don't pay attention to the Latin text. But it is the words that inspired Bach's creativity and can inspire us today.

The Magnificat is the canticle, or song, of Mary from the Gospel of Luke. It is Mary's spontaneous reaction when she realizes her important, yet daunting place in God's story. The song, which is the longest statement by a woman in the New Testament, seems to flow from Mary's heart. And the content may surprise us. These words are not a gentle praise song from a sweet young woman, but a fierce statement of Mary's faithfulness to God as well as her expectations for the coming Messiah to bring hope and change to a fallen world, a world troubled by a harsh political and social culture, rife with injustice. Mary had much to fear – as an unwed young woman even her life – yet she trusted God and sang a song of praise and confidence to him.

The Magnificat has been a regular part of Christian liturgy for centuries, and thus its message has become vital to Christian worship and identity. Featured throughout the year at services of Vespers, Evensong, and more, the text is either spoken or set to music. Over time, the Latin words have been paraphrased as a rhymed hymn in vernacular languages, including English and German. Without a doubt Mary's song is essential to our faith, as it was to Bach's.

In Bach's Leipzig, Martin Luther's German version of the Magnificat was used for ordinary occasions. But on special feast days such as Christmas, Easter, and Pentecost, a festive setting of the Latin text was expected. Bach composed his elaborate Magnificat in D on a grand scale for voices and instruments, and this work has come to define the word Magnificat for many people. It is without doubt one of the monuments of sacred music in Western culture.

Bach took Mary's words and created music that vividly conveys the meaning of each verse. When we follow the text while hearing the music, Mary's message comes to life. And just as Mary's world was broken, beset by problems and conflicts, our world faces enormous challenges of strife, poverty, war, and uncertainty. In our broken world, Mary's Magnificat speaks to us in a bold way and gives us hope for a better future in Christ.

In many times and places, the Magnificat has been used to console and encourage suffering people. During the rise of Nazism in Germany, the German theologian Dietrich Bonhoeffer recognized the power of Mary's song. His words, from an Advent sermon in 1933, point us to the profound meaning of the Magnificat:

The Song of Mary is the oldest Advent hymn. It is at once the most passionate, the wildest, one might even say the most revolutionary Advent hymn ever sung. This is not the gentle, tender, dreamy Mary whom we sometimes see in paintings.... This song has none of the sweet, nostalgic, or even playful tones of some of our Christmas carols. It is instead a hard, strong, inexorable song about the power of God and the powerlessness of humankind.

Reflect on Mary's song and come to the Christmas Concert to experience how exquisitely the ancient words of Mary come together with Bach's music to give us a welcome message of hope in this Advent season.

– Sara Ruhle Kyle



Magnificat Canticle of Mary

Luke 1:46-55

*My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord,
my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,
for you, Lord, have looked with favor on your
lowly servant.*

*From this day all generations will call me blessed:
you, the Almighty, have done great things for me
and holy is your name.*

*You have mercy on those who fear you,
from generation to generation.*

*You have shown strength with your arm,
and scattered the proud in their conceit,
casting down the mighty from their thrones,
and lifting up the lowly.*

*You have filled the hungry with good things,
and sent the rich away empty.*

*You have come to the aid of your servant Israel,
to remember the promise of mercy,
the promise made to our forebears,
to Abraham and his children for ever.*

– The Book of Common Worship

Caring Notes

We love the lights of the Christmas season. The soft candles glowing on the mantle, twinkling lights on the Christmas tree, outdoor lights flickering. The lights lift our spirits as they shine brightly through the darkness of winter evenings. Although Jesus came into this world without any fanfare, I imagine that when the angel and heavenly host arrived they brought with them an amazing light show!

The lights guiding us toward Christmas can bring joy and happiness along with anticipation of special gatherings with family and friends. For some of us, however, the days leading up to Christmas can be difficult as we carry a burden of grief for a loved one who died. When you have lost a loved one, the Advent season can be a painful reminder of the loss you are feeling – instead of bringing warmth, love, and excitement.

In order to support on another, here are some practical steps we can take to come alongside someone who is grieving during the holidays.

- **Be supportive of the way the person chooses to handle the holidays.** Some may wish to follow traditions; others may choose to avoid customs of the past and do something new. It's okay to do things differently.
- **Offer to help the person with decorating or holiday baking.** Both tasks can be overwhelming for someone who is grieving.
- **Invite the person to join you or your family during the holidays.** You might invite them to join you for a church service or a holiday meal where they are a guest.
- **Ask the person if he or she is interested in volunteering with you during the holidays.** Doing something for someone else, such as helping at church or working with children, may help your loved one feel better about the holidays.
- **Never tell someone that he or she should be “over it.”** Instead, give the person hope that, eventually, he or she will enjoy the holidays again.
- **Be willing to listen.** Active listening from friends and family can be an important step to helping cope with grief and healing.
- **Remind the person you are thinking of him or her and the loved one who died.** Cards, phone calls, and visits are great ways to stay in touch.

Jesus encouraged us to let our light shine for others. This Advent season, enjoy the anticipation, but let us also keep in mind those who have a heavy heart who could use a supportive friend. During challenging days, a friend who is sensitive, supportive, and caring can help. A helpful friend is one who comes alongside on a journey of dealing with loss and helps another to find hope.

With joy for the journey.

– Louise Rogers



Christmas Remembrance

A Service of Comfort and Hope

Wednesday, December 20

7:30 p.m.

Galbreath Chapel

The Advent-Christmas time is a beautiful time of celebration. It can also be a time when feelings of loss and grief are profound. You are invited to join with others who have lost loved ones at a special service of Christmas Remembrance. The service will be a time to remember your loved ones, to acknowledge your grief, and to be reminded again of the comfort and hope that the newborn Christ brings to us all, especially those who are hurting. Join us for this special time of remembrance, of comfort, and of hope. For more information, contact Louise Rogers at rogers@westminster-church.org or 412-835-6630.

Welcome New Members

On October 22, Westminster welcomed the following new members:

Betsy & Eric Boughner



Carol & George Couch



Andrea & Jon Killmeyer



Jodi & Jake Frederick



Doris & Howard Bower



Brittany & Wes Harshbarger



Ellen & Jon Hart



continued on Page 14

Welcome New Members (continued)

Vonnie Marshall



John Riccio



Merdie Shoemaker



Kelly Ralston



Barb & Richard Shields



Jen & Dave Wolf



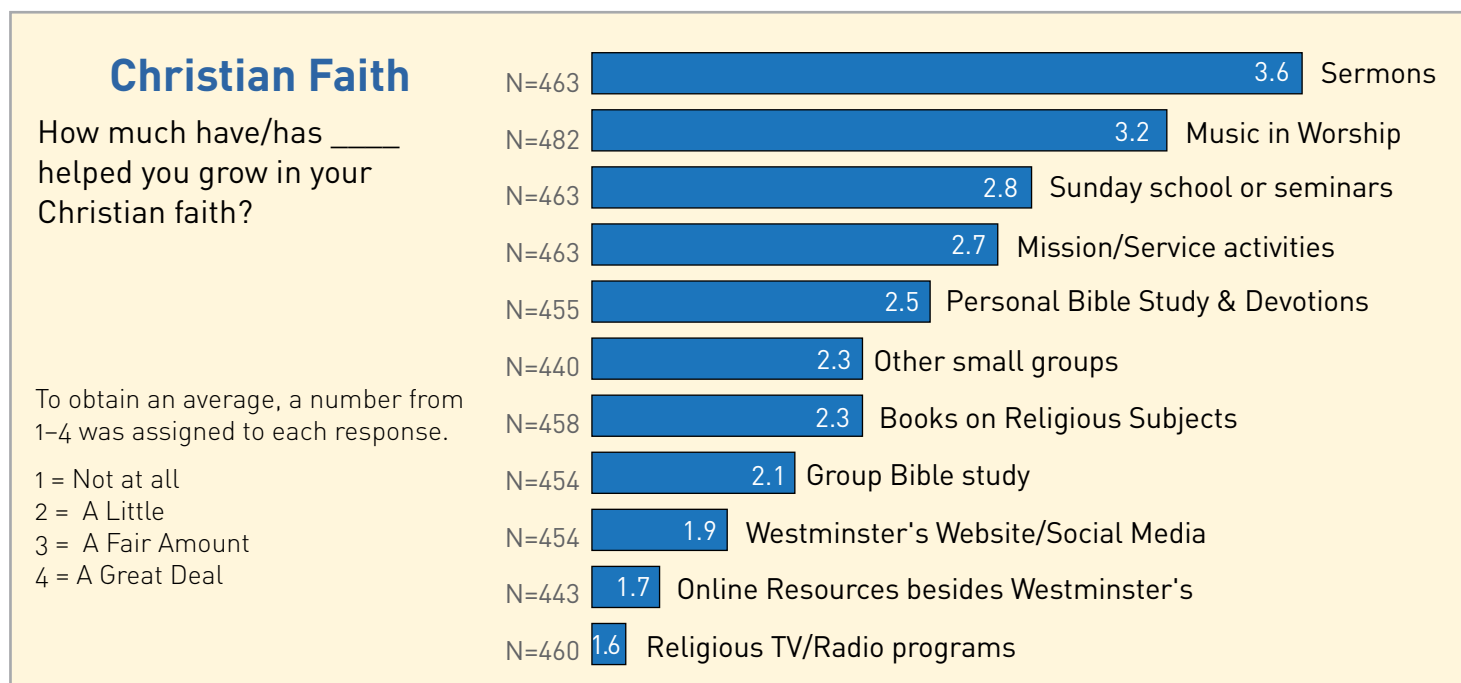
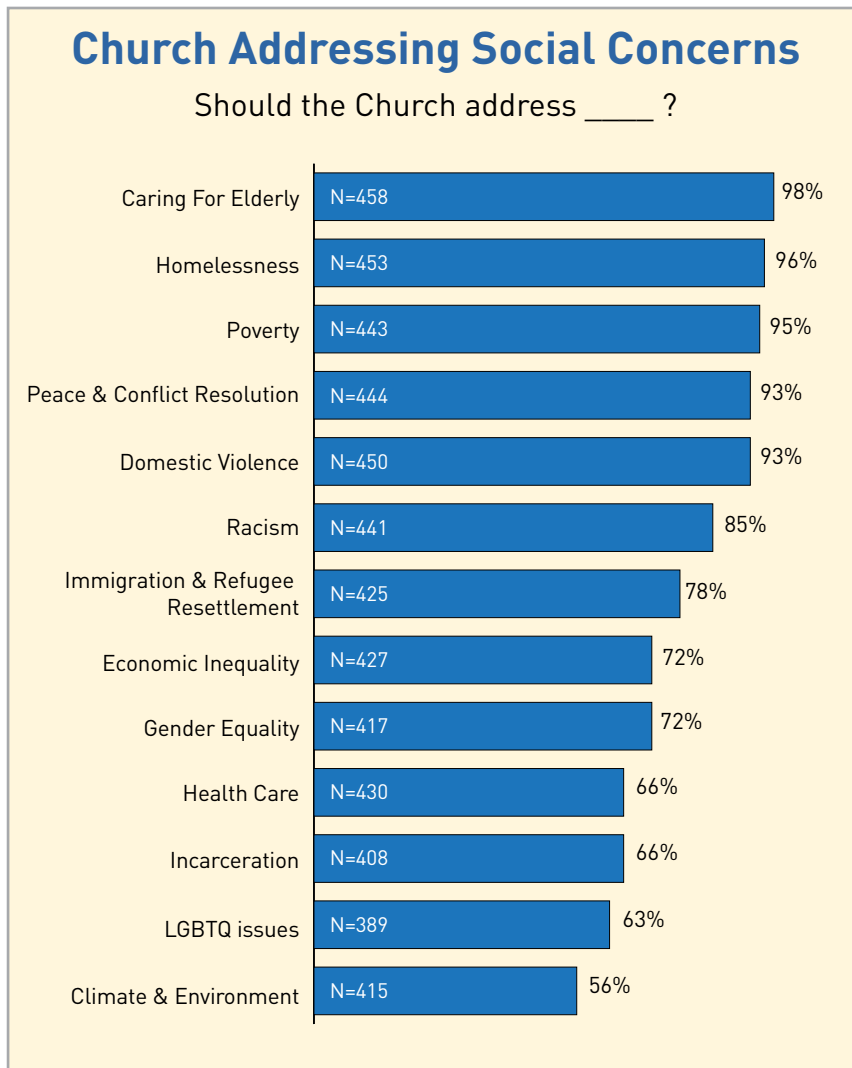
Welcome

2017 Church Survey

We're grateful to Craig Marshall and Marshall Marketing for conducting our most recent Westminster survey on Sunday, October 1, 2017. Their initial report offers a great many insights concerning things that help our members grow in their Christian faith, how the faith relates to other aspects of their lives, and their perspectives on a number of social concerns in the world around us.

Here are just two charts that reflect results from the survey. One indicates the extent to which various resources help Westminster people grow in faith, on a scale from 1 to 4. The other shows the percentage of respondents who say the church should address each of 13 social concerns. (The "N" on each chart shows the number of individuals who answered that particular question, out of all 505 who took the survey; e.g., "N=458" means 458 people responded to "Caring for Elderly," and 98% of them said the church should address this.)

We'll be providing shorter summaries on various topics in weeks to come, but we wanted to make this first report available to Westminster members, with our thanks again to Marshall Marketing. To view the report and the original survey, click on the Members tab in the upper right corner of the church's homepage. Then, sign in to the Members page and click the "2017 Church Survey" drop down bar. Also, feel free to contact Jim Gilchrist if you have any questions.



Year-End Contributions Recording and Reporting

In order for your charitable contributions to be tax-deductible in 2017, they must be received in the church or postmarked by December 31, 2017. Any contributions received in the church during January 2018 (other than those that are mailed, dated, and postmarked by December 31, 2017) will be deductible only on your 2018 tax return.

Also, to ensure the deductibility of your church contributions, please do not file your 2017 income tax return until you have received a written acknowledgment of your contributions from the church. Some of your contributions may not be tax-deductible if you file your tax return before receiving a written acknowledgment of your contributions from the church. The 2017 contribution statements will be mailed to you on or around January 13, 2018.

If you have any questions regarding year-end contributions, please contact David Reiter, church business administrator, at 412-835-6630x201.

Donations of Appreciated Assets

Contributors to Westminster Presbyterian Church may give appreciated assets to the church (such as stocks or mutual funds) without being required to pay tax on the capital gains. This can be accomplished either by delivering certificates to the church or by electronic transfer of these assets to Westminster Presbyterian Church as payment on your pledge. Please note that these gifts must be long-term investments. Short-term capital gains do not qualify for the tax benefits.

The procedure for each of these types of donations is quite simple.

CERTIFICATE DONATION

- Present the certificates to Dave Reiter, church business administrator, at the church office.
- The owner(s) must sign and date the certificates. If all of the shares of the certificate are being donated to Westminster Presbyterian Church, the owner(s) must sign a form letter to confirm the donation to Westminster Presbyterian Church.
- If a fraction of the total shares of the certificate is being donated to Westminster Presbyterian Church, the owner(s) must sign a form letter to confirm the donation to Westminster Presbyterian Church and a request for reissue of the remaining fraction of certificate shares.
- An acknowledgement of the receipt of the stock shares will be given or sent to the donor(s), followed by a confirmation letter of the sale, per share average price for the date of the gift, and total value of the donation.

ELECTRONIC TRANSFER

- Notify your broker that you wish to donate shares to Westminster Presbyterian Church through ***Morgan Stanley Smith Barney***.
- The transfer should go to:
DTC 0015
Account no. 827-105717-515
- It is important that you or your broker contact Dave Reiter at the church office, 412-835-6630x201, informing us that a transfer is being made. This will ensure that proper credit is given to you on your church giving statement.
- A letter of confirmation of the sale will be sent to the donor(s). This letter will state the date of sale, per share average price for the date of the gift, and total value of the donation.

If you have further questions, please call Dave Reiter at 412-835-6630x201.

Financial Report *As of October 31, 2017*

General Fund Contributions

Year-to-Date Actual 2017	\$1,553,182.32
Annual Budget	\$1,995,623.00
Amount needed to fulfill budget	\$442,440.68

Year-to-Date Income Statement

Income	\$1,834,431.93
Expenses	\$1,823,948.52
Net Position	\$10,483.41

We thank you for your wonderful support through the first ten months, and we are pleased to report that we have not had to rely on any outside lending sources to fulfill our internal and external commitments. However, as you can see above, we still have approximately 22.2% of our 2017 budgeted contributions yet to be fulfilled.

If you are current or ahead on your 2017 pledge, thank you for your continuing support. If you are behind on your 2017 pledge, we ask that you would consider catching up and fulfilling your pledge, so that we can continue to meet our commitments. Thank you.

2018 Stewardship Campaign Update *As of November 20, 2017*

	2018	2017
Number of pledges received	281	471
Amount pledged	\$1,034,005	\$1,695,120

The 2018 Stewardship campaign is underway, and we thank you for your pledge for 2018. We have received pledges for 2018 from about 55% of those who pledged for 2017. If you have yet to make your 2018 pledge, you may do so by placing it in the offering plate today, or by mailing it to the Finance Office at the church, or by going online at www.westminster-church.org/give. The 2018 Stewardship campaign pledge cards are available in the pew racks and in the brochure racks around the church. Thank you.



Christmas Joy Offering

Presbyterians have long celebrated the birth of Jesus Christ by giving generously to a Christmas season offering. The 2017 Christmas Joy Offering at Westminster supports two programs. Your gift to the Christmas Joy Offering helps provide financial assistance to current and former church workers and their families and also enables deserving students to attend Presbyterian-related racial ethnic colleges and schools.

Envelopes for the 2017 Christmas Joy Offering will be in the pews beginning December 17, and are also contained within your 2017 Offering Envelope boxes.



Church Closing Policy

Bernice “Nickie” Doane

November 7

Elizabeth Davis

November 13

When the Upper St. Clair School District is closed due to weather conditions, the church offices will be closed and all activities and meetings scheduled for that day are canceled. When the school district is on a two-hour delay, the church offices will be open during normal business hours and all activities and meetings scheduled for the day will take place at their scheduled times. Church closing information is broadcast on television (KDKA, WTAE, and WPXI), radio (KDKA-AM 1020), and the church’s website.





Christmas Poinsettias



The Chancel Guild is accepting memorial or honoree contributions for poinsettias. The beautiful poinsettias throughout Westminster during the Christmas season are the result of generous contributions by our members and friends. Use the form below and make your check payable to the Chancel Guild. Mail the form and your check to Peg Kinsey at the church office or place it in the collection plate. Contributions must be received no later than **Monday, December 18**, so your gift can be listed in the Christmas Eve bulletin.

Please indicate below if you plan to pick up your flower or whether you would like it delivered to a shut-in.



Christmas Memorial and Honoree Poinsettia Order Form

Memorial Honoree

Name of Memorial/Honoree (PLEASE PRINT)

Deliver poinsettia to shut-in Will pick up poinsettia on Sunday, December 24, following the final Christmas Eve service (11:00 p.m.)
OR Tuesday, December 26, or Wednesday, December 27 (9:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.)
NOTE: The church is closed on Monday, December 25.

My Name _____

Please return this form to Peg Kinsey in the church office by **Monday, December 18**.



**WESTMINSTER
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**

2040 Washington Road
Pittsburgh, PA 15241
www.westminster-church.org
A PC(USA) Congregation

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www.youtube.com/user/WestminsterUSC



“*Glory* TO God
IN THE HIGHEST HEAVEN,
AND ON EARTH *peace*
AMONG THOSE WHOM
HE FAVORS.”

LUKE 2:14