



THE SPARE

WESTMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
Pittsburgh, PA

Discernment

St. Paul tells us, “Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God – what is good and acceptable and perfect.”

Discernment is a prominent theme in the Bible. It has to do with the perennial need for people of faith to listen and watch for God’s guidance. That’s quite a different thing from the ordinary, secular way of deciding what to do.

People who are not in the habit of relying on God tend to rely on their own judgment, perhaps with the added advice of a friend. They “weigh the pros and cons,” draw upon their experience, watch what other people do, and (implicitly if not explicitly) consider their own interests in the situation. All of that can contribute to better decision making, but it still leaves us with a ground-level view of what to consider, and misses the possibility that a broader and wiser perspective might come from asking what God would have us do.

Parker Palmer is a thoughtful Quaker who writes about the life of faith, including the practice of listening for God’s guidance. I’ve lent his little book called *Let Your Life Speak* to a number of people, and they invariably find it helpful – especially about discerning vocation, but also about hearing the still, small voice of God in general.

Palmer talks about the Quaker practice of consulting a “truth committee” when some



important decision needs to be made. A truth committee is a few individuals gathered because they are wise, not so much on account of their own insight but because they practice the presence of God and are accustomed to letting God guide their thoughts and decision-making. In short, they cultivate the gift of discernment.

At one point, Palmer says he had an opportunity to consider becoming a college president, so he brought together a truth committee to ask questions he might have missed on his own. One person asked whether he liked administration. “No, I hate administration” was the gist of his answer. Another asked whether he enjoyed fundraising, and he said he hated that too. “Well you know, Parker, those are two of the main things college presidents do. So why would you want to be a college president?” The honest answer,

he realized in light of their searching questions, was that he mostly liked the ring of it, the notion of being President Palmer.

Quakers specialize in listening, while Presbyterians lean more in the direction of talking. We would do well to learn, though, from those who call themselves the Society of Friends. I’m hoping we’ll enter a time of discernment together this fall at Westminster; and in the meantime, I’d encourage everyone to round up a little truth committee of spiritually discerning people whenever a big decision comes your way. God often speaks most clearly through those who care about us and have also learned to listen to God.

PASTOR

DR. JIM GILCHRIST, *Senior Pastor, Head of Staff*
 REV. LOUISE ROGERS, *Associate Pastor*
for Congregational Care
 REV. JASON FREYER, *Associate Pastor*
for the Bridge, Youth & Media

EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT TO THE PASTOR

PEG KINSEY

BUSINESS STAFF

DAVE REITER, *Church Business Administrator*

CARE ASSOCIATE

JOAN WATSON

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

ROBIN PYLES, *Director of Children's and*
Family Ministry

DEBB EGLI, *Assistant Director of Children's and*
Family Ministry

ED SUTTER, *Director of Middle School Ministry &*
Family Counseling

CASSANDRA MILLIS, *Assistant Director of Youth &*
Young Adult Ministry

COMMUNICATIONS

ANNA HINER, *Communications & Database Manager*

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

LAURA WHITCOMB, *Print Room Assistant*

MUSIC & ARTS

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JIM BURNS, *Organist*

AMY SANDERS, *Administrative Assistant*

OUTREACH MINISTRY

WILL HIGNETT, *Consultant*

PROPERTY

CHARLEY RICHARDSON, *Property Manager*

VOLUNTEER MINISTRY

JAN BAUMANN, *Volunteer Coordinator*

CARRIE KUSHNER, *Kitchen Manager*

WESTMINSTER RECREATION & OUTREACH CENTER (WROC)

KATHY LONG, *Director*

NURSERY SCHOOL

412-835-2906

CHILD DEVELOPMENT CENTER

412-835-9450

Staff email addresses and phone extensions are available on our website, www.westminster-church.org.

Read the *Spire* online at:
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3 Worship

Sunday Worship Services

Upcoming Events

Installation of Rev. Louise Rogers

World Communion Sunday

4 Education

Westminster Seminars

The Protestant Reformation at 500

Diary of a Lunatic: Generation to Generation

Between Here and There: Taxicab Faith

Glimpse of My World

7 Spiritual Growth

Library News

8 Mission

Deacons' 2017 Giving Gala

Rummage-Recycling Sales Benefit Mission

Westminster Does That?

Peace and Justice in Uncertain Times

11 Community Outreach

Blessing of the Pets

Chatham Baroque Returns to Galbreath Chapel

Music & Arts Series: Piano Four Hands Concert

The WROC

14 Caring Community

Caring Notes

Grief Recovery Group




15 Other

Financial Report




Session Update

Deaths

**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.*

Installation of Rev. Louise Rogers

Sunday, October 15
3:00 p.m.
Sanctuary

A special worship service will be held on Sunday, October 15, at 3:00 p.m. for the installation of Louise Rogers to the position of associate pastor of congregational care at Westminster Presbyterian Church. Members of Pittsburgh Presbytery will be present along with a commission of teaching and ruling elders. The Chancel Choir, pianist Betty Rieley, and organist Sara Kyle will provide exceptional music for the service. A reception of light refreshments will follow the worship service. The congregation is invited to attend!

World Communion Sunday

"This is Christ's Body, broken for you..."

Sharing communion is one of the most sacred parts of our liturgical life together, so it might seem a little odd that on the first Sunday in October we replace the customary bread of each service with a colorful collection of breads from different countries. This departure from the usual is Westminster's way of celebrating World Communion Sunday during the Lord's Supper.

Our tradition of "world breads" has its roots in the knowledge that the church is a global body, and that our brothers and sisters in Christ are from many countries and in fact are of many colors. October 1 is both World Communion Sunday and Peacemaking Sunday. On that day, we remind ourselves that, as part of Christ's Body, we are broken for one another. This is lived out in our service to one another, across lines of color and culture. So when we receive communion on October 1, let us reflect on ways we can serve those whose lives are different from ours.

Upcoming Events

1
OCT World Communion Sunday/
Peacemaking Sunday
Blessing of the Pets

13
OCT Chatham Baroque at Westminster

15
OCT Service of Installation for Rev. Louise Rogers

21
OCT Giving Gala

22
OCT Piano Four Hands Concert

29
OCT Reformation Sunday

Sundays at 9:45 a.m.
Galbreath Chapel

October 8, 15, 22, 29

Living in God's Coming Kingdom: Main Themes in Matthew

Jim Davison

The author of Matthew composed his Gospel a generation or so after Jesus lived. Matthew's aim was to present the meaning of Jesus' life, death, and resurrection for a mixed congregation of Jews and Gentiles. The similarities between their situation and ours today are easy to see. These disciples were striving not only to live together in spite of strife and factions among themselves, but also to maintain their faith in the midst of a world that mostly considered them irrelevant, if not laughable. No wonder Matthew's message to his church can speak so practically and powerfully to our own time!

October 8 – Embracing Jesus as Messiah

October 15 – Seeking the Kingdom of Heaven

October 22 – Following Jesus

October 29 – Welcoming All

We welcome Dr. James E. Davison, a former pastor at Westminster. During his years here, Jim developed and nurtured a strong program of adult seminars on Sunday mornings. This tradition continues and now Jim graciously returns every year or two to teach a series of seminars on a biblical topic. After serving Westminster, Jim directed the continuing education programs at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary and taught classes in Greek. In retirement, Jim continues scholarly research and writing, teaching, and serving in mission. Jim's guide to the Year of the Bible and book on baptism for Presbyterians are well known to Westminster members.

The Protestant Reformation at 500

Five hundred years ago on October 31, 1517, Martin Luther posted his 95 theses on the church door in Wittenberg, Germany. While efforts to reform the Catholic Church had already begun, this date marks the official beginning of the Protestant Reformation. On Reformation Sunday, October 29, we commemorate this milestone of 500 years.

As Westminster concludes a year of remembering the work and influence of Luther, one highly acclaimed book stands out as an excellent introduction to Luther. *Martin Luther: Visionary Reformer* by Scott H. Hendrix (Yale University Press, 2015) is both scholarly and easy to read. And it is concise at just over 300 pages. Hendrix, Emeritus Professor of Reformation History at Princeton Theological Seminary, presents an insightful, vivid portrait of Luther, placing his thought in the context of his entire life, his political motivations, and his personal relationships so that "Luther's very real humanity emerges" (*Methodist Recorder*).

Hendrix includes plenty of excerpts from Luther's letters and other writings to give the reader a strong sense of the reformer's voice. Here are four for reflection:

Our life consists of beginning and progressing, not of reaching perfection. The person who has come nearest the Spirit is the better interpreter. If I attain the moon, I will not then assume I am the only one to grasp it nor will I look down on lesser stars. There are degrees of living and doing, why not also degrees of understanding? The apostle [Paul] says that we are transformed from clarity into clarity (2 Corinthians 3:18).

*Page 106: Operationes in Psalmos, 1519-1521:
Dedication to Elector Frederick*

My sole purpose from beginning to end has been and still is to write, teach, preach, perform, and endorse nothing but that which serves and strengthens the word and honor of God and, in addition, promotes the true and holy faith and love of neighbor – all of this for the well-being of Christendom.

Page 152: Letter to Elector Frederick, 1523

Nothing is so small but God is still smaller, nothing so large but God is still larger, nothing is so short but God is still shorter, nothing so long but God is still longer, nothing is so broad but God is still broader, nothing so narrow but God is still narrower. God is an inexpressible being above and beyond all that can be described or imagined.

Page 207: Confession concerning Christ's Supper, 1528

In every life, it happens that many things we plan, say, and do have harmful consequences. But God uses these failings to humble his saints and turns our misdeeds to better account. Perhaps God would not bother if we did not have this defect.

Page 241: Lectures on Genesis



Generation to Generation

January 8, 2017, was a great day for me. It was a day that had taken nearly ten years of hard work, study, and effort. It was a day that I had dreamed about since I was in college. It was the day of my ordination service.

The service itself was pretty straightforward. There were no special gimmicks or tricks. I just wanted to have the people (as many as possible) who had been part of getting me to this special day take part in this special day. Jim Gilchrist was there to give the introduction and serve communion. Amy Winegarden was there to present me. The praise band from the Bridge was all there, leading worship with their usual skill and grace.

And of course, there were so many more there from my pre-Westminster days. My friends from ministry around town led in prayers. My third grade Sunday school teacher asked questions of the congregation. And my youth leader, the guy who (for better or for worse) is responsible for much of who I am as a Christian, gave a sermon.

As had been the case when I was a youth, I found myself kind of drifting in and out of Taylor's message. Not because I was bored, I wasn't. And not because it wasn't a good sermon, it really was. But I kept flashing back to these moments in my past that had led to this moment. I remembered Taylor taking me deep into a cave on the opening retreat of my confirmation class, using the darkness as an illustration about sin and darkness. I remembered frequently finding my way into Taylor and Bob's office after school, and thinking that anyone who could play that many games in the middle of the day surely had a good job. I remembered the countless cups of coffee that Taylor shared with me as we would talk through the normal issues and troubles a young teenager finds in high school days. Most of all, I remembered that Taylor helped me, however patiently, to fall in love with Jesus.

And now here I was, sitting in the front row, wearing a robe, thinking about how all of Taylor's work had led me to help other teenagers, however patiently, to fall in love with Jesus themselves.

But then again, it wasn't only Taylor who got me here. There were countless volunteers, parents, and invested adults along the way who showed me how much they loved Jesus, and taught me a good bit about life. My favorite example of how small the world can really be is that Jack and Helen Watson, who now call Westminster their home, were my own mentors during my confirmation days. When I came to Westminster and needed to start my own confirmation class, guess who were the first people I called?

The psalmist writes that "One generation shall laud your works to another, and shall declare your mighty acts." After we talked last month about experiencing Jesus, one of the most meaningful, profound, and beautiful things you can do with that experience is to share it with another generation. This is much, much bigger than just a youth leader asking for volunteers to help with the lock in (though, you know, if you're free...). This is about sharing the experience of Christ with the younger generation, and (this is critical) allowing the younger generation to share their experience with you.

So once again on the blog this month, every Tuesday we will look together at what it means to share our experience of Christ, one generation to the next. What exactly is it that we are proclaiming? How can we point young people to Christ? What's in it for us? All of these questions and more we'll explore together.

And who knows? Maybe the student you share your experience of Christ with will have their own ordination service! Hopefully they get through seminary a little faster than I did.

– Jason Freyer

Taxicab Faith

I have been given the surest sign that my life is on the verge of major change: I will soon be a parent who drops his kid off at school. This is just the beginning as far as I can tell. It starts with dropping off at school, then friends' houses, then dance, then art club, then parties... we have lots of "dropping off" in our future.

I remember when I was on the receiving end of being dropped off; there was a strong sense that parents were just a necessary inconvenience, merely a delivery service. Any time a friend lived on the other side of town or an activity took me beyond the reach of my bike, a ride from mom or dad was the solution. Maybe you remember the feeling, too, the desire to jump out of the car as soon as it came to a stop, "Thanks, Mom. See you later!"

I wonder if sometimes we approach our relationship with Jesus in the same way. "Well," we think to ourselves, "I'll never make it through this on my own, so I guess I'll ask Jesus to help me out." And as soon as we arrive safely on the other side, "Thanks, Jesus. See you later!" I think each one of us does this with varying levels of consciousness. We have a tendency to seek support when we need it, and control when we don't. In other words, we want a driver, not a chaperone. "Just drop me off here, Jesus. I can walk the rest of the way." The very moment we find firm footing we grab control back from Jesus and rarely give second thought to what it may look like to invite Jesus alongside us into the next steps, or better yet, follow him as he continues to lead. When we do this, we're placing a cap on how we allow Jesus to affect our lives.

I suppose there are lots of reasons we may choose control over trust. Fear of what Jesus may ask of us, selfishness in the choices we'd like to make, uncertainty of what the future will hold, laziness in place of motivation, even habit can play a hand in how we grasp at control, and certainly the list could go on. Who knows what might happen if you approached your relationship with Jesus on a daily basis and not simply "as needed."

There's a lot to unpack here: Are you treating your relationship with Jesus like some sort of Uber service through life's hard times. What's holding you back from allowing Jesus to take the lead in your life? What direction might your life take if you invited Jesus into your every day? I hope you'll accept this challenge, to buckle up in the passenger seat, today. No matter if life is exactly as you've always wanted or as far from your dream world as you can imagine, allow for Jesus to walk along your side at each part of your day. You may even end up saying, "Thanks for the ride, Jesus. Where to next?"

— Ed Sutter



GLIMPSE OF MY WORLD

Sometimes I think we grown-ups forget some of the excitement that comes with starting something new. We get bogged down in all the details that have to be taken care of and all the arrangements that have to be made. We worry about what it will be like and if we'll have the right stuff or the right clothes or the right skills.

I recently had a conversation with a young lady who is a brand new kindergarten student. She had been to school a grand total of three days – and couldn't wait to tell me all about it. She told me about how much fun the bus is, all about lunch at school, and her new friends. She has a seat and a name tag and pencils and a folder and new shoes. She talked about the playground and all the fun things she will learn this year. Her enthusiasm flooded out in every word. Her excitement showed in every bounce and wiggle and dance step that accompanied our chat.

"And, I have the best teacher ever!" she announced. "You do?" I responded, "What makes him the best?" "He listens to everything I say." Now, I happen to know that listening to everything this particular child has to say can be a tall order. And remember, another 15 or 20 students are in this class.

So I asked, "How do you know he listens to everything you say?" "Because he looks me right in the eye, and he nods and says 'uh huh.' And my heart feels it."

Take just a minute before we go on. Think about the very best listener you know, that person who listens to you, deeply and carefully. Think about how that feels.

The conversation went on: "And you know who else listens to everything I say?" she asked. I guessed mommy and daddy? Grandparents? Pet dogs? Me? (I figured by now in this conversation I might get some credit.) "Nope – God. God really listens to me all the time."

As my kids will tell you, I simply can't stop myself. So, "How do you know?" I asked.

"Because my heart feels it," she said.

"Do you ever listen to God?" I asked. "Of course," my young friend replied. "And when I am quiet, he talks to me right here (with her hand over her heart)."

Sometimes we grown-ups forget that God hears us – every word. Sometimes we get so bogged down in all the details and the busyness of our lives that we forget to set aside time to be quiet, to be still and wait for God, to listen for God's voice. Sometimes it takes an overly excited child to remind us.

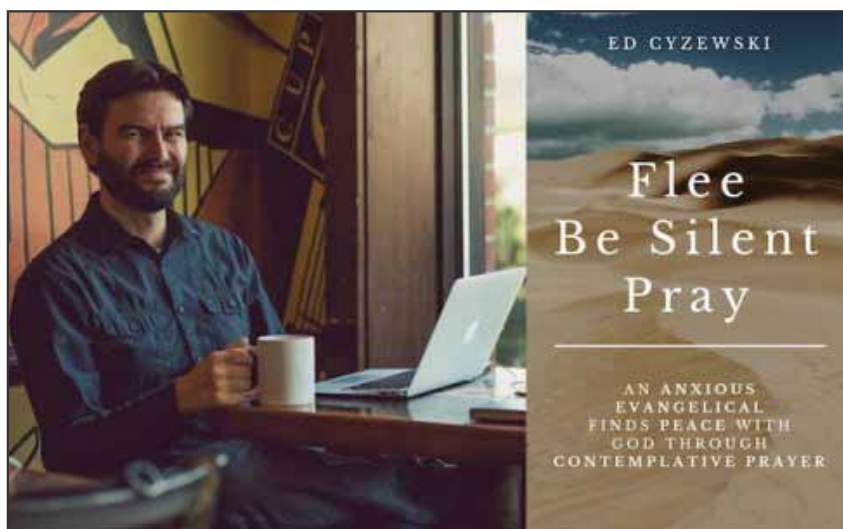
– Robin Pyles



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Library News

Flee, Be Silent, Pray



Some of you may remember my friend Ed Cyzewski who conducted a seminar at Westminster several years ago. He is an author and unfortunately for all of us a fan of the Philadelphia Flyers and Columbus Blue Jackets. We pray for his healing and restoration. Anyway, earlier this year Ed released a new book called *Flee, Be Silent, Pray: An Anxious Evangelical Finds Peace with God through Contemplative Prayer*, and it is the newest addition to the church library. When I picked it up I was in a mediocre place. I wasn't exactly in a "dark night of the soul," but I wasn't really thriving spiritually either. I would occasionally pick up this prayer practice, that devotional reading, another blog to consume. But everything fell well short of kick-starting the spiritual engine. But then, and I promise that I am not overselling this, Ed helped me to have a spiritual awakening.

"God's love is already ours, and until we learn how to simply receive it, we'll get stuck in an anxious rut of performance, failure, and struggle." That sentence hit me like a ton of bricks and wouldn't let me go. God's love is already ours. I had actually proclaimed this with tremendous frequency, sometimes from behind the pulpit. But I didn't realize until I had put it in terms of prayer, of silence, of contemplation, just how meaningful it was to me. The phrase that has stuck with me for the months after I read the book is "I want to dwell in the joy of God's love," a task made much easier when I was reminded that I already have God's love.

I feel like Ed has opened us up to a pathway forward in faith, one that the church has known about for over two thousand years. In a busy, cell phone dominated world, Ed has shown us the value of unplugging. In an over-broadcasting Twitter society, Ed has taught us the deep value of shutting down and listening for a while. I hope the church is ready to listen.

– Jason Freyer

Giving Gala 2017: Last Call for Tickets



Saturday, October 21
St. Clair Country Club

On Saturday, October 21, the Deacons will sponsor their second annual Giving Gala at St. Clair Country Club to benefit City Mission.

The gala will begin at 5:30 p.m. with a cash bar and hors d'oeuvres, followed by a gourmet dinner, basket raffles, and a live auction. Please join us for an evening of fun and fellowship while supporting a worthy cause. The tickets, which are \$75 each, are on sale through Sunday, October 15. Don't delay – get your ticket today to support this worthy cause!

For 75 years, City Mission has served the homeless and needy in the Southwestern Pennsylvania region. Last year the mission provided over 113,000 meals, 33,000 nights of shelter, medical care, residential programming, job training, and education services to men, women, and children. The mission is growing, with a new veterans' residence and a renovated women and children's facility planned for completion in 2018. With your support, the mission works each day to transform lives.

Rummage-Recycling Sales Benefit Mission

It is always a happy day when, in June, several of us gather in the church library to distribute the proceeds from the previous November and April Rummage-Recycling Sales. We welcome having Will Hignett, WPC consultant for outreach ministry, join us since he is most up-to-date on the needs of our region. Although the dollar amount of what we take in at our sales has plateaued in recent years, as would be expected, we are always pleasantly surprised at the funds we can give to help others. We are blessed! Thanks to the hundreds of individuals who participated in one way or another in these last two sales, we were able to distribute a total of \$18,580 to 23 mission projects, mostly local, but also international groups and organizations.

We want to again thank the 160-plus church members who volunteered their time to help during each of the two days, as well as those who volunteered food for the volunteers' delicious lunches. We also thank the many folks from Westminster and surrounding communities who donated items they no longer wanted or needed. And thank you, also, to the hundreds of people, some traveling considerable distances, who came to shop for treasures at our Saturday sales.

The distribution was as follows:

Angel's Place	\$500
Barefoot School	\$500
Pittsburgh Diaper Bank	\$250
Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank	\$1,000
Jubilee Soup Kitchen	\$500
Meals on Wheels, Bethel-St. Clair	\$1,000
Meals on Wheels, Peters	\$1,000
Open Door Youth Ministries (Crafton)	\$500
The Open Door – Garfield Community Farm	\$1,000
Open Hand Ministries	\$500
PRISM	\$250
Rebuilding Together Pittsburgh	\$1,000
South Hills Interfaith Movement (SHIM)	\$1,000
Sponsorship of two Haitian children	\$480
Rise Against Hunger (Stop Hunger Now)	\$3,000
Valley View Presbyterian Church	\$1,000
City Mission (Washington, PA)	\$1,000
City Mission Avis Arbor Women's Shelter	\$500
Washington Presbyterian SeniorCare	\$500
Westminster Child Development Center	\$500
Westminster Nursery School (scholarships)	\$500
WEST Fund (scholarships)	\$500
Presbyterian World Mission Fund	\$1,600



Fall 2017 Rummage-Recycling Sale

Saturday, November 11
8:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

Our ability to provide such substantial help to so many people and organizations is a tribute to the willingness and dedication of members of the WPC congregation. If you have volunteered, you know how much satisfaction and enjoyment you get from your efforts. If you have not shared in this amazing opportunity, please consider joining us in the fun and fellowship this coming November 10 and 11.

Volunteering to help in the Rummage-Recycling Sales is the single regularly scheduled opportunity at Westminster where people of all ages, from children to folks in their nineties, join together to support such a worthy cause.

The next sale is coming soon. Mark your calendar for November 10 and 11. Friday, November 10, is collection day from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. Sale day is Saturday, November 11, from 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. You can volunteer for several hours on either or both days. To sign up, please call Marilyn Hayes (412-831-5704) or Jan Baumann, the church's volunteer coordinator (412-835-6630).

Westminster Does That?

If you are new to the church, you may not be aware of all that Westminster does to show the love of God by serving people in need. If you are a longtime member, you may appreciate a reminder of the influence Westminster is having in our community and in the world. Actions large and small honor Christ's request that we love our neighbors. Westminster contributes to positive results by providing basic relief, community building, and aid for the education of children both in the U.S. and internationally.

Perhaps the work that Westminster supports might not surprise you in its focus, but you may not know the depth of our financial support or the volunteer work that we provide. Here are some examples:

Education of children

- Westminster has excellent childcare programs.
- We provide funding and volunteers to SHIM's afterschool, mentor, and homework help programs. We also help fund their preschool, parent training, and Parent Child Interactive therapy programs. All of these programs are positively shaping young lives. In addition, we support SHIM's Back-To-School event by collecting school supplies that this year contributed to well over 1,000 South Hills children receiving backpacks and valuable supplies.
- Our church members designed – and the congregation primarily funded – the bright, solar-powered school in La Croix, Haiti, which expanded the number of students taught to 1,000. We also supported the building of the school in Paul, Haiti, and through the child sponsorship program, we help children with uniforms and other things that enable their school attendance.
- Westminster gives financial support to the Open Door youth program in Crafton Heights, a program that demonstrates the love of Jesus Christ to neighborhood young people and families through intentional relationships with caring adults.
- We support the youth program at Friendship Community Church as well as their community outreach program, The Corner.



Our community seniors

- We give funds for Peter's Township Meals on Wheels, which provides meals for seniors living in Eighty Four, Finleyville, Houston, Canonsburg, Cecil Township, Bridgeville, South Fayette, and parts of Upper St. Clair and Bethel Park.

- Volunteers serve at SHIM's food pantries and at two Greater Pittsburgh Area Food Bank food distribution programs: Grocery Plus Senior and Produce 2 People. The Grocery Plus Senior program is new and is specifically for adults who are 60 years or older; Produce 2 People serves many seniors among those who receive food.
- Westminster financially supports Ursuline Support Services and Rebuilding Together Pittsburgh, both nonprofits that focus on assisting seniors. We provide volunteers for a day of house repairs through Rebuilding Together Pittsburgh.



Community building

- Westminster's Outreach Commission gives financial support to an orphanage in Malawi, which saves the current generation, educating and strengthening them for the future.
- As mentioned above, we have significantly invested in children's education in Haiti through building and even providing education at schools. We also helped create and provided hundreds of books for their school library.
- In India, we provide funding for a school that provides therapy and humane care for children with special needs and vocational training for adults with intellectual disabilities. We also provide funds for a medical center and for Prabhat Tara Sanstha, an organization that provides a home and food for children, a preschool and youth education, and adult literacy/skills training.
- Right here in Pittsburgh, a small group of Westminster volunteers is working on a number of large efforts in Homewood as well as supporting our friends at Grace Memorial Presbyterian Church by assisting with strategic planning and support of their nonprofit, Schenley Heights Community Development Program.



While these are not all of our outreach and mission efforts, they may be some of the less well known activities. Westminster is grateful and honored to take part in these and other efforts. As a member of the Westminster family, please join our church's work to help others, serving God and showing your gratitude for all God has done and continues to do each day.

– Will Hignett

Peace and Justice in Uncertain Times

We see it everywhere: signs of division and strife for personal and political gain. Such division separates brothers and sisters of different colors, faiths, and nationalities. Even in this country, where equality has a place of honor in our national heart, the population is sharply divided. Economic disparities are widening. Divisions along color lines persist, evident today in underfunded schools, inadequate housing, and disproportionate incarceration rates for people of color. People of faiths different from ours are often judged unfairly. Many forms of prejudice remain in society.

Jesus said, “Blessed are the peacemakers,” so where does that lead us in times like these? Paul talks about breaking down the dividing walls of hostility, and while those being walled in or out may be different these days, the hardness of hearts hasn’t changed. But we know that in Christ we are all made new, and part of this newness is a longing for true peace, and not just the kind that makes the noise go away. We long for the peace that comes from knowing that all our brothers and sisters, particularly those whom Jesus calls “the least of these,” have basic needs met and are treated fairly. This peace comes from breaking down walls of separation, reaching out to people not like us, and recognizing that we are one human family.

How do we reflect this newness of heart? In small ways, members of Westminster’s Peace and Justice Group have worked to build bridges.

This summer, following Jim Gilchrist’s June seminar series on the tenets of other faiths, we invited speakers from three different faith traditions – Roman Catholicism, Judaism, and Islam – to be part of our series Many Faiths Doing Justice. We learned of the speakers’

peace and justice work locally and globally and that, in spite of differences in our belief systems, we are united in caring for others.

A group of us meets regularly with a small group from Grace Memorial Presbyterian Church in a largely black community where people’s life experiences are very different from ours. In reading together we have learned how certain laws, regardless of intent, have the effect of disproportionately hurting people of color. But we have also learned that we are one in Christ and we care deeply for one another. This caring led to Westminster’s support for our former seminary intern Gavin Walton to become the new pastor for Grace Church.

In Pittsburgh, people of faith, including our senior pastor, gathered on the anniversary of Martin Luther King’s March on Washington to call for repentance following the dark events of Charlottesville. Members of many faith traditions listened to sermons from Christian, Jewish, and Islamic leaders and then pledged to work for racial reconciliation.

So in many small ways, the light shines in the darkness. On October 1, World Communion Sunday and Peacemaking Sunday, we highlight the Peace & Global Witness Offering. Half of the offering goes to our national peacemaking program, 25% goes to Pittsburgh Presbytery’s peacemaking efforts with its continuing focus on racism, and 25% will remain at Westminster. This year we used our 2016 funds for the series on doing justice described above. Next year we will see what compelling issues will call us to build bridges instead of walls. Thank you to all who have supported our Peace and Justice efforts over the years.

– Bobbie Hartman

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Blessing of the Pets

Sunday, October 1

2:00 p.m.

North Parking Lot*

All people-friendly pets and their owners are invited to a designated celebration that both acknowledges and pays tribute to the loyal animal companions that love us unconditionally. Join pastors Louise Rogers and Jason Freyer as they give thanks for these special family members, and as they bless the people who love and care for them deeply.

Please be sure your pets are on non-retractable leashes or in carriers, and have proof of up-to-date vaccinations.

**If weather is inclement, please meet in the WROC (gymnasium).*



Chatham Baroque Returns to Galbreath Chapel

Westminster is pleased to host the early music ensemble Chatham Baroque for four concerts of their Pittsburgh series. The concerts begin at 7:30 p.m. on Fridays, October 13 and November 10, 2017, and February 9 and April 13, 2018. 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.

Friday, October 13

7:30 p.m.

Galbreath Chapel

The season opens with "The Italian Trio Sonata," featuring the many permutations of the trio sonata, with engaging works by Vivaldi and fellow Italian masters Corelli, Bertali, and Castello.

Piano Four Hands

CONCERT

**Sunday
October 22**
3:00 p.m.
Sanctuary

JAMES BURNS & ANOUSH TCHAKARIAN

Since the invention of the piano, composers from Mozart to Stravinsky have created a wide variety of music for two performers at one piano. Often considered more suitable for the home than for the concert hall, much of this music is rarely heard in concert. Join us on October 22 as pianists Jim Burns and Anoush Tchakarian offer a sampling of this unique repertoire. The program will feature Schubert's magnificent F Minor Fantasia, widely considered to be the pinnacle of the four-hand repertoire, as well as works by Debussy, Poulenc, and Rachmaninoff. The program concludes with Ravel's sensual and virtuosic "La Valse."

Plan to enjoy this exceptional musical treat – and bring your friends. A reception will follow the performance.

The concert is free. A freewill offering will be gratefully accepted to support future offerings in the performing arts.

WESTMINSTER
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Music
& Arts Series

WROC Talk – A Free Speaker Series

Abraham Lincoln Impersonator Rick Miller

Tuesday, October 17

7:00 – 8:00 p.m.

Cost: Free, registration necessary

Impressionist Richard Miller will share stories and anecdotes from Lincoln's presidency and early years. Questions are encouraged to enhance the interaction with the audience.

What would you ask President Abraham Lincoln if you were standing in a room with him today? Rick Miller, who has been portraying Lincoln for more than 20 years, is excited to answer your questions! The 6-foot 2-inch impersonator is a member of the Association of Lincoln Presenters and portrays our 16th president at 30 to 40 events each year. He has done extensive research on Lincoln and has an impressive collection of books and memorabilia about him.

When he's not portraying Abe, Miller is a yoga instructor. When asked if he thought Lincoln would do yoga, he responded quickly. "Yes, I think he would. He was known to put a glass of water behind him on the floor and then bend over backward to pick it up and drink it... that's a yoga move and a hard one" (*Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*).

Gather your friends, bring your questions, and join us for an educational and entertaining evening!



Photo credit: Dan Gomola, www.dangomola.com

Li'l WROCers

Basketball Skills and Drills Basic Course

(for boys and girls ages 7 - 11)

The course will cover the following skills with your child:

- Ball-handling skills without dribbling
- Dribbling skills
- Shooting skills from different areas of the court
- Foul shooting
- Layups from left side and right side
- Passes: chest, bounce, and outlet
- Offense and defense principles and fast-break fundamentals
- Scrimmage games

October 12 – November 16

Thursdays: 5:30 – 7:00 p.m.

Cost: \$65

Instructor: Albert Mallah is a Westminster church member, with a long career in basketball. In addition to playing basketball for 13 years in Europe, he has also coached college and professional level teams.



Pole Walking

Imagine transforming a casual walk into a gentle, fabulous, fun filled, whole body workout that engages 90% of your major muscle groups!

Join instructor Anne Brucker, M.Ed., as she shares her 40 years of fitness skills to bring you a delightful new experience in a walking workout.

Wednesdays

October 4 – November 1

12:15 – 1:15 p.m.

Cost: \$25



Caring Notes



Capernaum is a small fishing village located on the western side of the Sea of Galilee. Jesus and his friends Peter and Andrew knew this place well as it was home for Peter's relatives. On one particular Saturday evening they went to the synagogue together. (Mark 1:29-31) Then the young men returned to Peter's home where his mother-in-law was lying ill with a fever. Jesus went into the room where the woman was lying. He reached out to her, raised her up, and she was healed. Soon she began to wait on them!

In this simple miracle by Jesus (if there can be a simple miracle) we glimpse a model for bringing care to one another. Jesus made care personal, in the ordinary places of our lives. The Lord engaged people as he addressed their particular needs. Jesus' genuine care toward others and desire to bring comfort is seen in this woman's experience. To care for another is to affect the entire person: body, mind, and soul. Extending loving care to another is a ministry of hope.

When the group from Westminster Church traveled to Israel in the spring of 2016, we went to Capernaum where we saw the remnants of a synagogue and a church constructed over the traditional site of Peter's home. While it was amazing to see the place where Jesus walked with his friends, we knew our mission was not just to see. Our calling is to go and do likewise. What a joy to be a part of this warm congregation with a commitment to follow in the ways of Jesus in caring for one another. Westminster's mission statement begins: "We seek to be a caring community of faith...." Not only do we say it, we practice congregational care through our worship services, prayers, deacons, caring ministries, and visits intended to share Jesus' love and hope with one another. Thanks be to God for all of the dedicated people who are reaching out to others in caring ways to continue Jesus' ministry in this church and in this community.

With joy,

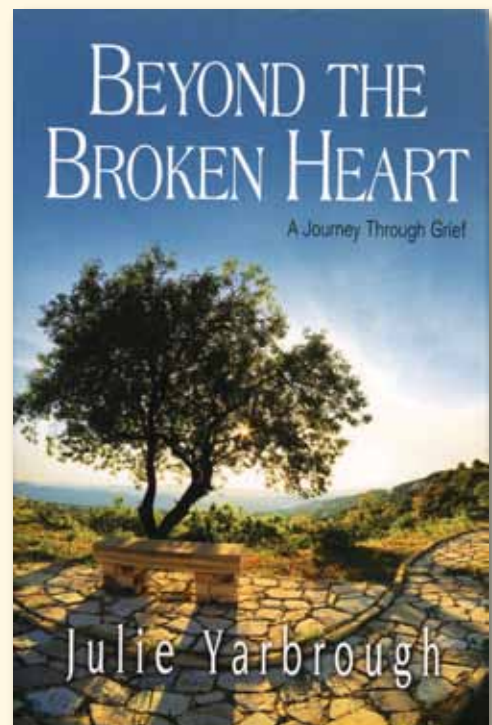
Louise

Grief Recovery Group

Wednesdays, October 18 – November 15
6:45 – 8:00 p.m.
Memorial Parlor

If you have lost a spouse, child, family member, or friend, it may be hard to feel optimistic about the future right now. You may have found that people don't always understand the deep hurt you feel. This can be a confusing time when you feel isolated and have many questions about things you've never before faced. Grief Recovery is a faith-based grief support group that can help you face the challenges of loss and move toward rebuilding your life. Please contact Louise Rogers if you have any questions.

The group uses the book *Beyond the Broken Heart: A Journey Through Grief* by Julie Yarbrough. **To register and for more information**, complete the online registration form on the church website or call Peg Kinsey at 412-835-6630. To help defray the costs of materials, a donation of \$10.00 is suggested.



Financial Report

As of August 31, 2017

General Fund Contributions

Year-to-Date Actual 2017	\$1,237,411.89
Annual Budget	\$1,995,623.00
Amount needed to fulfill budget	\$758,211.11

Year-to-Date Income Statement

Income	\$1,458,599.84
Expenses	\$1,450,107.05
Net Position	\$8,492.79

We thank you for your wonderful support through the first eight 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 38% 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.

Session Update

On September 18, Session received a recommendation from the Property Commission to raise the price of niches in Westminster's columbarium to help recover the original investment in creating it, and to assist in its upkeep. After considerable discussion, Session voted to increase the price from \$1,500 currently to \$1,750, effective May 1, 2018, which is still less expensive than individual niches in some nearby columbaria. Approximately 290 niches remain out of 1,040, and members of the church are invited to consider the columbarium in their personal planning.

Session also received an updated table of organization for the church's staff in light of recent changes, and a preview of a survey to be conducted with the congregation on October 1, as part of a plan for discerning some of the church's future direction in ministry and witness.

Presbyterian Disaster Assistance: Out of Chaos, Hope

You shall be . . . the restorer of streets to live in.
— Isaiah 58:12

Presbyterian Disaster Assistance enables congregations and mission partners of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A) to witness to the healing love of Christ through caring for communities adversely affected by crisis and catastrophic event.

Presbyterian Disaster Assistance (PDA) is the emergency and refugee program of the Presbyterian Church U.S.A. The core budget, including staff and administrative costs, is funded through the One Great Hour of Sharing, and its program work is additionally funded through designated gifts.

Hurricane Irma

PDA has been in touch with the leadership of the Synod of Boriquen (Puerto Rico) and the Presbyteries of San Juan, Noroeste (Northwest) and Suroeste (Southwest) to share contact information and grant information.

PDA is also in touch with the Florida Presbyterian Disaster Assistance Network (FLAPDAN), which is a mutually agreed upon partnership between six presbyteries in Florida. This is a unique platform in which PDA can relate to all six presbyteries at once for disaster situational awareness.

Hurricane Harvey

PDA continues to be in touch with presbytery leadership in New Covenant, Mission, and South Louisiana Presbyteries. National Response Teams are being deployed into the affected regions when it is safe to do so.

How You Can Help

For those who wish to contribute to the relief efforts, you can make your check payable to Westminster Presbyterian Church, and in the memo line, put Hurricane Relief. Or, go to the church's website to donate online. We will then send a check to Presbyterian Disaster Assistance from the church.



WESTMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

2040 Washington Road
Pittsburgh, PA 15241
www.westminster-church.org
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PEACE & GLOBAL WITNESS
SPECIAL OFFERINGS
PEACEMAKING AND RECONCILIATION



Proclaim Christ's Peace

"So he came and proclaimed peace to you who were far off and peace to those who were near. . ."

—Ephesians 2:14-17