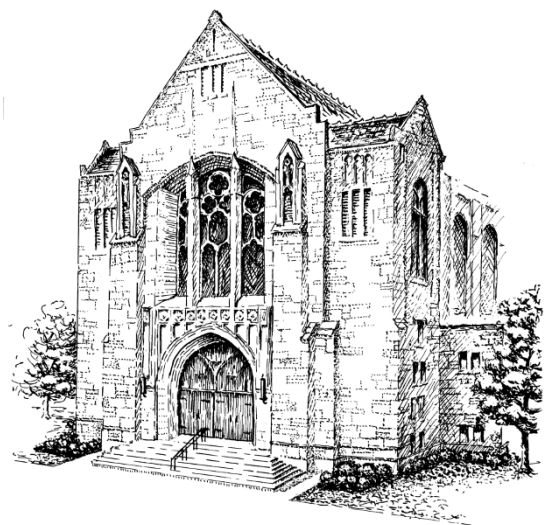


The Chimes

of Westminster Presbyterian Church

A monthly newsletter of events and opportunities for the members of Westminster

Enter his gates with thanksgiving...



Choral Vespers and Harvest Dinner

**Sunday,
November 8**

*...and his courts with praise. Give thanks to him, bless his name.
For the Lord is good and worthy to be praised.*

Choral Vespers at 4:00 p.m.

Mark your calendars now and plan to attend Choral Vespers on Sunday, November 8, at 4:00 p.m., with the Westminster Choir, percussion, organ, flute and harp.

Featured works include *Evening Hymn* by H. Balfour Gardiner, three spirituals: *My Soul's Been Anchored in the Lord*, arr. Moses Hogan; *Give Me Jesus*, arr. Larry L. Fleming; *I'm Goin' to Sing*, arr. Robert Shaw and Alice Parker, and *Chichester Psalms* by Leonard Bernstein.

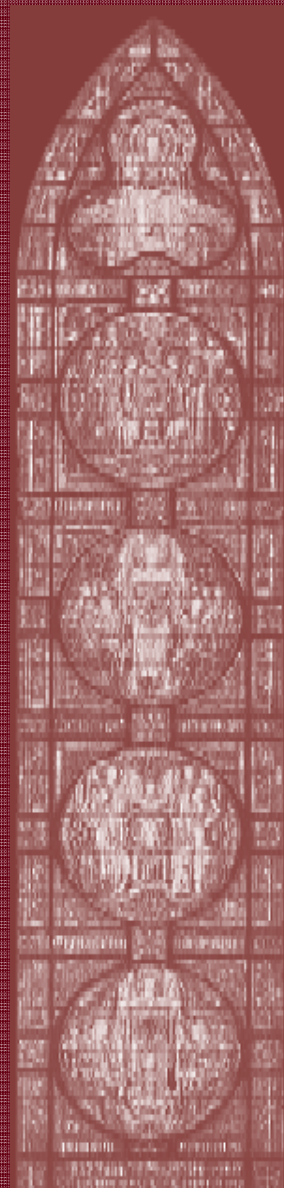
The prelude will be played by the Westminster Adult Handbell Choir. A freewill offering will be received.

Family Dinner at 5:15 p.m.

Following Choral Vespers, the annual All Church Harvest Dinner will be held at 5:15 p.m. in Fellowship Hall. Plan to join your church family for this full, holiday meal.

Please use the form on Page 11 to make your dinner reservation. Members who are 80 and older are guests; however, you must turn in a form or call the Church Office to reserve your dinner.

Mail the form to the Church Office or place it in the offering plate; and remember, *payment must accompany your reservation.* The cost is \$8.00 for adults (80 and older are free), \$4.00 for children 6-12, and free for children 5 and under. Firm deadline is **Sunday, November 1.**



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**Issue 1109
November 2009**

Where Loving God and Neighbor Is Transforming Lives

Among Our People...



Member Judy Stolle came home from the Montgomery County Fair this year with “ribbons of many colors.” Judy had 10 entries in the Arts and Crafts category and won 7 blue ribbons and 1 Honorable Mention. She also won Best of Show for her peach preserves entry. (Yum!) Judy didn’t end there...in the Flower Show she won 7 blue ribbons, 4 red ribbons, and 5 yellow ribbons, plus a Best of Show for her June hosta cutting and the Judges Award for a flower arrangement entry. Judy said, “The fair is a highlight of my year.”

Elders Les Ferguson, Sue Merz, and Scott Porter were elected by the Session at their September meeting to serve as Westminster’s three representatives to the Presbytery of the Miami Valley. The number of representatives a church may have is determined by the church’s membership. Our representatives last year were **Tom and Julie Preisser**, and we thank them for their dedication and service.

Deaths

October 5, 2009

Jane Crist

October 10, 2009

Richard Deeter



Janice Matthews “retires” as volunteer Parish Nurse

Janice Matthews has served as Westminster’s volunteer Parish Nurse since 2003. Other commitments (including the every-other-week care of grandchildren) have made it necessary for her to resign from this position to give more time in other areas. We will miss the care-giving gifts she brought to our members over the past six years.

Through Stephen Ministry training, Janice was able to offer excellent spiritual care and support to many of our members. She was of great help in the area of pastoral care, helping pastors to better understand various diagnoses and procedures. Janice was in charge of blood pressure screenings, and extremely instrumental in starting the Emergency Response Team, which is on duty every Sunday morning.

What Janice enjoyed most was taking folks to a doctor visit and then writing up the visit and going over it with the individual. Doing the write up and review allowed her to become a “translator” of medical jargon, thus helping the person have a better understanding of their medical situation. Though Janice has “retired” as our volunteer Parish Nurse, you will continue to see her some Sundays at blood pressure screenings and on the Emergency Response Team. Janice, thank you very much for your ministry, and for sharing your gifts of care and compassion with us.

Preparing Our Hearts for Generosity



"This most generous God who gives seed to the farmer that becomes bread for your meals is more than extravagant with you. He gives you something you can then give away, which grows into full-formed lives, robust in God, wealthy in every way, so that you can be generous in every way, producing with us great praise to God."
2 Corinthians 9:10-11(MB)

We receive so many wonderful gifts from God that we deceive ourselves when we think we have gotten where we are by our own hard work alone. Only through God's generosity have we become rich. God is generous to us so that we might in turn be generous. This is a life that is not anxious about scarcity. This is a life that is not afraid for tomorrow. This is a life that trusts in God. This is a life of faith.

Westminster depends on generosity. Sharing the blessings we have received from God, we share this life of trust and faith through our ministry and mission. We touch many lives through our worship, our various programs, and our witness. Working together as a community united, we shine a light against the shadows of fear and despair.

Stewardship Sunday is November 1. Together may we be generous to God and his work through our congregation.

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Thanks to Colin Nelson (See Mark 12:41-44)

10-05-2007

**DUE TO A MISUNDERSTANDING, WIDOW HARRIS
PUT TERMITES IN THE COLLECTION PLATE**

Parish

Church tour

Are you interested in finding your way around the church and learning more about the beautiful building? Stop by the Welcome Center at 11:20 a.m. on Sunday, November 1, after worship, for a brief tour that will conclude at 12:15 p.m.

Labyrinth open walk



Come walk the Labyrinth, noon-7:00 p.m., Tuesday, November 3, in Fellowship Hall. Please note the change in our ending time. Invite a friend to come along for the walk. All are welcome.

Be a part of one of our Interest Groups

We have two new groups, Bell Choir and Dominoes. All of these groups are open to everyone and provide a great place to bring a guest or two or three! Singles, beginners and all walk-ins are welcome.

- Bell Choir Interest Group on Thursday, November 5, at 5:15 p.m., in Room 300
- Bridge Interest Group #1 on Tuesday, November 10, at 6:30 p.m., in the West Parlor
- Bridge Interest Group #2 on Monday, November 23, at 6:30 p.m., in the West Parlor
- Dominoes Interest Group will not meet in November or December. Join us on January 28

New Orleans Mission Trip, December 14-19

Help rebuild New Orleans. We will be working with Presbyterian Disaster Assistance and Project Homecoming. The trip is open to anyone over the age of 18. We will be staying at Olive Tree, a PDA Camp located in the former Eastminster Presbyterian Church. The cost is \$150.00 and meals on the road. Additional information and registration forms are available on the Westminster Web site. Please contact Nancy Hodgkins (223-7285 or nancy@westminsterdayton.org) if you have questions.

Resource Center rich with faith-based materials

So, you've read every book in your house...your bookshelves are full and you just don't want to purchase any more books...and the public library just doesn't seem to have what you want. Well, maybe we have it! Over 1500 carefully selected faith-based books are available in the Faith-Based Resource Center at Westminster. And to make your browsing easy, many books are conveniently marked and color-coded in categories such as earth stewardship, coping, spirituality, literature and faith, prayers, and books especially for seniors. We also have other faith-based media for you to consider. Visit us every Sunday before and after worship.

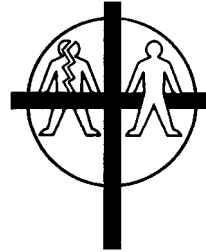
Senior Spotlight

Ruth Whiting is our member in the Senior Spotlight this month. Please see the Older Adult Ministry bulletin board outside the Chapel, and enjoy reading a short biography about one of Westminster's oldest members.

Notes

A new Stephen Leader says thank you

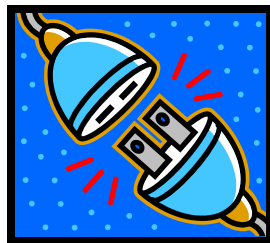
“In August I was fortunate to spend a week in Pittsburgh, attending a week-long Stephen Ministry Leader’s course. I was so pleased to represent Westminster Presbyterian Church. There were 300 women and men in attendance learning how to prepare others to be messengers of God’s love and healing. Some attendees were Stephen Ministers who wanted to become Stephen Leaders, while others were brand new to the ministry. It was a time of spiritual growth. We shared ideas, prayed, laughed, and attempted to stay awake at the end of some long days. We had prayer partners with whom we shared hopes and concerns. As I shared with others, both lay and ordained folks, I became more aware of the strength of our Stephen Ministry here at Westminster. I am thankful for the opportunity given to me by Westminster to lead others in this incredible ministry that has touched the lives of so many.” - Peggy Sisson



Let’s stay connected...

Recently we sent a congregational e-mail to our membership and 100 e-mail addresses came back as undeliverable. Was one of them yours?

When your contact information changes—address, phone number, e-mail, etc.—please let us know so we can stay in touch.



E-mail your changes to:
carol@westminsterdayton.org

(No phone calls please for e-mail address updates)

Update from Ben in the mission field



Ben Manuel is serving as a Young Adult Volunteer with the Presbyterian Church (USA). He is pictured here with the other volunteers and staff from Project Homecoming.

"I am working for Project Homecoming, which is the Presbytery of South Louisiana's disaster recovery effort in New Orleans. We are based out of the Gentilly neighborhood of New Orleans and we serve homeowners throughout New Orleans. With Project Homecoming, I am serving as their Warehouse Manager, with duties such as tool maintenance, supply management, and warehouse organization. Basically, I make sure the tools the work crews will need are present and in working order so that volunteers are always able to work. During October and November, Project Homecoming will welcome on average 80 volunteers each week.

"I live with six other Young Adult Volunteers in a two-story duplex next door to our office in Gentilly. We engage in weekly meetings and monthly service projects outside of our day-to-day service commitments.

"I am looking forward to seeing many of you here in December as part of your mission trip. December is a traditionally slow month for volunteers and your coming down is a blessing for everyone. If you are looking for a more in-depth look at my experience in New Orleans, feel free to check out my new blog at <http://benmanuelnola.blogspot.com/> or visit the Project Homecoming Web site at <http://projecthomecoming.net>."

Did you know???

❖ The people of Westminster have given over **\$8,000 through our special offering for E. J. Brown Elementary School**. Your generosity will allow us to restore some of the budget cuts we made earlier in the year, such as changing our "Student-of-the Quarter" pizza party to a "Student-of-the-Month" party and to add needed purchases such as new educational software for tutoring in Memory Lane. Thank you for helping us to help some of the neediest students in the Dayton school system. If you have any questions, contact Jim Henry, our Mission Associate, who oversees the partnership with E. J. Brown. You can call him at the church at 223-7285 or e-mail him at jim@westminsterdayton.org.

❖ One part of the Deacons' Ministry is to provide a meal to a member recently home from the hospital or from rehab. This ministry keeps us face to face with our members and shows how we care for each other. If you would like to help by occasionally providing a meal, please contact Marsh Stevens, our Deacon Meal Coordinator (294-8082). We thank you in advance.

Adult Education Opportunities

Let's Learn and Grow Together

Every Sunday, 9:00 – 9:45 a.m., Room 206

Lectio Divina: Sunday Morning Meditation and Prayer

This class experiences the ancient practice of “sacred reading” of the day’s scriptures, seeking a personal word from God through the biblical text. Class members lead the group.

Sundays, November 1 through November 22

11:20 a.m. – 12:15 p.m.

Ephesians—A Bible Story

Leader: Sandy McConnel

This letter is an essential part of the biblical story. It is clear that God takes the church far more seriously than some of his people in later times have done, precisely because it is the place where God has brought about reconciliation between diverse people who were often bitter enemies, and made them his people who bear his likeness in their life together. All of this points to evidence that God has defeated “the powers.”

Health Care Today

Facilitator: Kay Davis-Dudding

This class will address several issues regarding health care, including the current health care debate. Topics will be presented by various speakers.

Visions of Grace in Modern Literature

Leader: Bob Davis

This course will consider scenes of spiritual insight in four modern writers: Walt Whitman, Gerard Manley Hopkins, Anne Sexton, and Flannery O’Connor. Our writers come from a range of backgrounds—an inner-light Quaker (Whitman), a Jesuit priest (Hopkins), a Protestant mystic (Sexton), and a devout Catholic (O’Connor)—but they share an interest in what might be called *the immediacy of grace*, the sense that God’s presence is as direct and vivid as a blade of grass or a child’s cry or the tattoos on a working-man’s back. No previous experience with literature is necessary, of course, but it helps if you enjoy poetry. Prepare to be surprised, fascinated, and possessed.

Education during Advent

Sundays, November 29 – December 20

11:20 a.m. – 12:15 p.m.

The Music of Christmastime: Westminster 2009

Leaders – Gloria and Larry Pugh

The first 2 sessions of this class on November 29 and December 6, will include Dayton Philharmonic Orchestra Music Director, Neal Gittleman, who will share with us his thoughts on *Messiah* (being performed at WPC on December 13) from the conductor’s point of view. In sessions 3 and 4 of the class, Larry and Gloria Pugh will explore the music being sung at the *Lessons and Carols* service and the carols scheduled for the Christmas Eve services. Join us for some singing, some listening, and some historical perspective on your favorite music from Christmas at Westminster!

Crafting Christmas

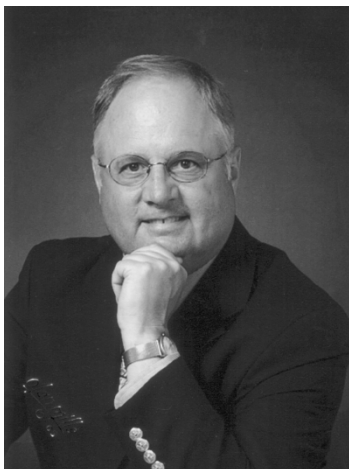
Leader – Linda Lane

It’s time for hands-on Crafting Christmas. This year we will be making a Christmas tree with yo-yos, a gift box with a surprise in it, a beautiful holiday ornament and much more. Come and join the party. It’s a lot of fun!

Where Do We Begin?

by The Reverend Dr. George H. McConnel

As preached on October 11, 2009



Sandy McConnel

2 Samuel 7:18-21

Today officially begins the season of the stewardship of money for our congregation. Yes, already. I can't believe it either. It's *that* time of year again. Well, just where and how do we begin?

Some say we need to begin with budgets. That makes good business sense. What are the needs of the church? Let's put a budget together. Then we can raise the dollars necessary to meet the budget. If we were the United Way or the YWCA, that certainly would be the way to go. We could make a poster of a thermometer and fill in our progress each week. Or, we could make a budget and then divide the budget

1100 ways and tell everyone what their share is. Budgets are a quick "go to" but, that's not how a church begins a stewardship campaign.

Stewardship - where do we begin?

Some folks always begin with a question. It's a good question, a practical question, a reasonable question. Here is the question: "What did I give last year?" I know that's my first question when I decide how much I'll give to Princeton Seminary each year or to the Human Race Theater Company or to Lehigh University where I went to college. It's a natural question. How much did I give last year? Then I can give \$25.00 more than I did last year and everyone will be happy. Or if they did something that upset me I can give \$25.00 less. That'll show 'em! Of course, that's not the appropriate way to begin thinking about stewardship to God and the Church either.

Stewardship - where do we begin?

One place some of us will be tempted to begin is out of our sense of scarcity. I imagine that will be a big temptation this year especially with all the economic struggles we've all been having. With all the economic uncertainty for the future, it will be really tempting to say, "I can't afford it this year. Don't talk to me about stewardship. I don't want to hear it. I can't make ends meet as it is."

Stewardship - where do we begin?

The Bible has a clear answer, a very clear answer. It's not an economically motivated answer. It doesn't have much to do with budgets or past giving habits or the fear of scarcity. It's not an immediate go to answer. It's not a practical answer or a very reasonable answer at least by today's standards. It doesn't make much business sense. Still, it's right there in the text—over and over again.

Stewardship - where do we begin? What do you think the *biblical* response is? The Bible says we begin with a sense of gratitude.

Do you remember how the 10 Commandments begin? They don't begin with a commandment, but with a statement of fact. "I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage" (Exodus 20:2). It is only after God has said these words of reminder that he asks obedience from the children of Israel. God's requests are always based on his having the right to ask, because he is the Great Giver.

Christian stewardship is a response. The motivation for our giving is that we have received. This doesn't mean we try to pay God back, for that is an impossibility. It does mean that our giving begins in gratitude, so we give in thankfulness. It is a *thanks* giving. We give out of what God has given us individually and corporately as a church.

A certain man was known for his generosity. He was asked whether he was not in danger of begging himself through his gifts. He replied, "Not at all. I shovel out and God shovels in, and he uses a bigger shovel than I do. And, God started the shoveling first."

Friends, thanksgiving is not the result *of* perception; thanksgiving is the access *to* perception.

In the classic Western Shenandoah, James Stewart stars as Charlie Anderson, a Virginian farmer trying to keep his family out of the Civil War.

With a place setting laid out for his dead wife, and with his children gathered around the supper table, Charlie begins a litany they obviously have heard before: "Now your mother wanted all of you raised as good Christians, and I might not be able to do that thorny job as well as she could, but I can do a little something about your manners."

He gestures that they all should bow their heads and continues, "Lord, we cleared this land; we plowed it, sowed it, and harvested it. We cooked the harvest. We wouldn't be here, we wouldn't be eatin', if we hadn't done it all ourselves. We worked dog-boned hard for every crumb and morsel, but we thank you just the same anyway, Lord, for the food we're about to eat. Amen."

Through the course of the movie, we see one tragedy after another strike the Anderson clan: the youngest son is mistaken for a soldier and captured, another son and his wife are murdered by marauders, and a third son is shot by an overzealous sentry. When we next see Mr. Anderson at the supper table, there are four more empty places as he begins his ritual prayer. But this time we hear his voice quiver and break as the awful realization comes on him that he is not in control, that he is not the master of his own destiny. His voice trails off as he finishes the words, "if we hadn't done it all ourselves."

He stops, gets up, and walks away, a proud man broken and stripped of his pride.

Thanksgiving is not the result of perception; thanksgiving is the access to perception.

It is interesting to contrast Charlie Anderson's weak thanksgiving prayer in the movie *Shenandoah* with the prayer of David from this morning's scripture lesson:

King David went in, took his place before God, and prayed: "Who am I, my Master God, and what is my family, that you have brought me to this place in life? But that's nothing compared to what's coming, for you've also spoken of my family far into the future, given me a glimpse into tomorrow, my Master God! What can I possibly say in the face of all this? You know me, Master God, just as I am. You've done all this not because of who I am but because of who you are—out of your very heart!—but you've let me in on it.

David is properly deferential, contrasting his own insignificance with God's greatness. Four times in this short prayer David speaks the awesome name Yahweh God. David acknowledges all that he is, all that he has, all that he will be, is a gift from God.

While hurrying through Chicago's commuter train station, Judy Keene had an "Aha!" moment that stopped her in her tracks. She says, "I had just left the candy counter where I'd bought Valentine treats for a party a few of us were planning for our church's single moms. Doing so took my thoughts back to a cookout the previous summer, for which I had covered the cost. The single moms, their children, and I enjoyed a glorious day at a local sunshine-drenched beach, conversing and stuffing ourselves with burgers, chips, and the trimmings.

"As the afternoon ended, I sat among the moms at the picnic table as they enthusiastically divided up the leftover hot dogs, sodas, and desserts. No one thought to offer me a thing. My feelings were a little bruised. No, I didn't need the food. And, most of the moms had given little thought to where the picnic spread had come from. But, the slight was significant enough that I recalled it in the train station six months later.

"Then it hit me! How much more slighted God must feel when, as recipients of his **enormous generosity**, we are reluctant to share a significant portion of our resources with him. Just as I didn't need the potato

salad, he doesn't need our money. But, he does crave our acknowledgment that all we have is from him.

Stewardship begins with gratitude. We give because we have received. We give because we belong to God. We increase our giving as we grow in appreciation of God's love and in knowledge of his goodness.

Albert Einstein was right when he said, "There are only two ways to live your life. One is as if nothing is a miracle. The other is as if everything is." When you live that second way it is hard not to be grateful.

In his book *The Sacred Journey*, Frederick Buechner, writes:

One winter I sat in army fatigues somewhere near Anniston, Alabama, eating my supper out of a mess kit. The infantry training battalion that I had been assigned to was on bivouac. There was a cold drizzle of rain, and everything was mud. The sun had gone down.

I was still hungry when I finished and noticed that a man nearby had left something that he was not going to eat. It was a turnip. When I asked him if I could have it, he tossed it over to me. I missed the catch, and the turnip fell to the ground, but I wanted it so badly that I picked it up and started eating it, mud and all.

Time deepened and slowed down. With a lurch of the heart, I saw suddenly that not only was the turnip good, but the mud was good too, even the drizzle and cold were good, even the Army that I had dreaded for months was good. Sitting there in the Alabama winter with my mouth full of cold turnip and mud, I could see at least for a moment how if you ever took truly to heart the ultimate goodness and joy of things, even at their bleakest, the need to praise someone or something for it would be so great that you might even have to go out and speak of it to the birds of the air.

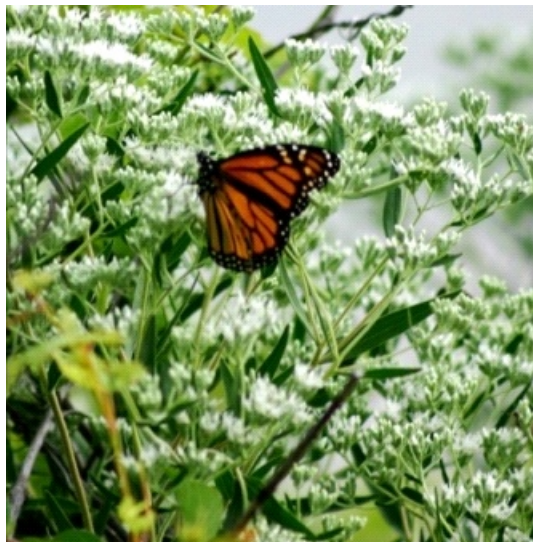
A certain man was known for his generosity. He was asked whether he was not in danger of beggaring himself through his gifts. He replied, "Not at all. I shovel out and God shovels in, and he uses a bigger shovel than I do. And, God started the shoveling first."



Praise from All Creatures

from *Guerrillas of Grace* by Ted Loder

Praise be to you, O Lord,
who spins shining stars across the wondrous heavens
and stretches out the seas,
who lifts the dawn into place
and sets boundaries for night,
who awes the earth with storms
and gentles it with green,
who gives everything a season
and breathes life and love into the dust of me.
Praise be to you.



Praise in all things,
for all things:
the soft slant of sunlight,
the sweat of battle,
a song in the wilderness,
the evening breeze,
the deep breath,
the tended wound,
mercy, quietness, a friend;
for the miracles of the daily,
the mysteries of the eternal.
Praise be to you.

Praise from all creatures,
laughers and list-makers,
wonders and worriers,
poets and plodders and prophets,
the wrinkled, the newborn,
the whale, and the worm,
from all, and from me.


Praise, praise be to you
for amazing grace.

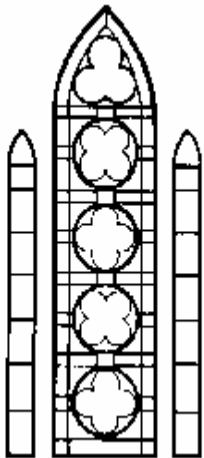
Alternative Gift Market

Come and experience a new way to select meaningful gifts for family and friends. Join with Westminster Presbyterian Women members and other folks from local churches at Southminster Presbyterian Church, 7001 Far Hills Ave., on Saturday, November 7, during the hours from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. for some “alternative shopping.”



The “Gift Market” will have many booths from different charities—local, national and global—and each booth will have folks available to tell you what that particular charity does and needs. As you walk around with a Gift Market contribution sheet in hand, you will probably find just the right charity to contribute to in the name of your loved one. For each contribution, you will receive a gift card and small ornament to send your loved one that tells of your gift to them. This is a fun and festive way to spend an hour or two, and you may walk away with part of your Christmas gift list already checked off. Come, bring a friend and experience this new idea of giving meaningful gifts from the heart. We think you'll like it!





Harvest Dinner Reservation Form
Sunday, November 8, 5:15 P.M.
Reservation deadline is November 1.

Name _____

Phone Number _____

Number of reservations:

- _____ Westminster Members 80 and over - free
- _____ Adults at \$8.00
- _____ Children, 6 to 12 years old, at \$4.00
- _____ Children age 5 and under - free

Amount Enclosed \$_____ (payment must accompany reservation)

Please make checks payable to Westminster Presbyterian Church.

Looking Ahead to Advent

Communion

Sunday, November 29, 10:00 a.m.

Join us for this first Sunday in Advent as we begin our preparation for the coming of Jesus Christ into the world.

All Church Advent/Christmas Dinner and Program

Sunday, December 6, 5:00 p.m., Fellowship Hall

Potluck dinner and fellowship for all ages!

5:45 p.m., Children's Christmas drama. Music by the Genesis Choir and Knox Choir. Carol singing by all.

Lessons and Carols

Sunday, December 13, 10:00 a.m.

A traditional service of Advent and Christmas Scripture, music and prayers

Noonday Carol Sing

Wednesday, December 16, 12:10 – 12:40 p.m., Sanctuary

Join us as we sing favorite hymns and carols of the season. Lunch follows

New This Year!!!

Christmas Cookie Walk

Sunday, December 20

Immediately following worship, Fellowship Hall

Blue Christmas Service

Sunday, December 20, 12:30 p.m., Chapel

A brief worship service with prayers, scripture and music that acknowledges God's presence for those who mourn and struggle at Christmastime

Christmas Eve Services

Thursday, December 24

Family Centered *Christmas in the Stable*, 4:00 p.m.

Christmas in the Cathedral, 10:00 p.m.

Prelude at 9:20 p.m.

Join us for candlelight worship on the eve of our Savior's birth.



Printed on
recycled paper

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Distribution Date:
Friday, October 23
Information Deadline
for Next Issue:
Thursday, November 5
4:00 p.m.