

## A Blessing on This House and Yours

We're excited to get this newsletter into your hands early this year so that its contents can be part of your New Year planning. We've brought to the front page an ancient tradition and blessing that we have shared before, and that you may employ in your own home.

In the New Year, we pray this blessing over our church home as well, for *Epiphany* means "encounter with God," and we pray that those who enter Westminster's doors in the year to come will encounter God here.

### Chalking the Doors

*From the PCUSA Book of Common Worship*

An old Epiphany tradition involves using chalk to write the letters *CMB* and the numbers of the current year, separated by crosses (+), over the doors of congregations and Christian homes: 20 + C + M + B + 26 or CMB + 2026.

The letters *CMB* are said to stand for the names of the magi (Caspar, Melchior, and Balthazar) or the Latin phrase *Christus mansionem benedicat* (Christ bless this house).

***Before or after chalking the doors, the following or a similar prayer may be said:***



God of doors and homes,  
bless this home this year and every year.

Bless all who come and go through this door,  
both those who live here and those who visit.

May all who enter through this door  
come in peace and bring joy.

May all who come to this door  
find welcome and love.

May the love and joy in this home overflow  
and spread into the community and the world. And may Jesus the Christ watch over us all.  
**Amen.**

Your pastor and friend,

 **Caroline**

On entering the house, [the Magi] saw the child  
with Mary His mother, and they knelt down and  
paid Him homage.

Matthew 2:11a

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## January Sermon Series: Christmas, Epiphany, & Beyond

December 21, the publication date of this newsletter, is the longest night and the shortest day of the year. From that day on, until the summer solstice, the length of daylight in the northern hemisphere grows. This turning of our part of the world towards the light is a good metaphor for the growing light of Christ within us and radiating from us. Let us begin this new year following and becoming the light that God has chosen to bring all peoples home to God's righteousness and love.

### **December 24: Christ is Here!**

*We light the **Christ** Candle*

- † Isaiah 35:1-10
- † Luke 2:1-20

### **December 28: Christ After Christmas**

*First Sunday in Christmastide*

*Guest Preacher: The Rev. Anna Burch*

- † Matthew 28:16-20

### **January 4: Christ, the Light Within Us**

*Epiphany Sunday*

*Communion/Food Bank Collection*

- † Matthew 5:14-20

### **January 11: A Parent's Pride Shines**

*Baptismal Remembrance*

- † Isaiah 42:1-9
- † Matthew 3:13-17

### **January 18: Radiant Light**

*Annual Meeting/Installation of Elders*

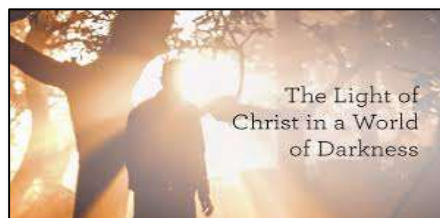
*A Service of Lessons and Hymns*

- † Isaiah 49:1-7
- † Psalm 40:1-11
- † 1 Corinthians 1:1-9
- † John 1:29-42

### **January 25: Can't We All Just Get Along?**

*Guest Preacher: Brian Purcell*

- † 1 Corinthians 1:10-18



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## Children Hear Ancient Stories with Fresh Ears

*Submitted by Kathy Gillespie*



### **This is the Year of Matthew!**

Between Epiphany and Lent, the children's Sunday School will focus on the Book of Matthew, with emphasis on Jesus' parables—stories he used to help the Disciples and others understand important ideas about God and the Kingdom of Heaven. We have a new book on the

Parables and an old book about the Gospel of Matthew to help us with our studies.

### **What makes this “The Year of Matthew”?**

Through the centuries, Christians have developed lectionaries—a list of portions of the Bible appointed to be read each day at home or during worship. The purpose of a lectionary is to provide a disciplined approach to reading all the way through the Bible, usually across several years.

Like millions of other churches, Westminster uses the Revised Common Lectionary to guide our readings across three years, labeled Year A, Year B, and Year C. Following this plan, the Church cycles through the Gospels of Matthew (in Year A), Mark (Year B), and Luke (Year C), with John used in all years. In 2026, we are using the Year A readings...and that makes this the Year of Matthew!

To find the Revised Common Lectionary to use in family devotional time, check out the PC(USA) website: <https://pcusa.org/devotion/revised-common-lectionary> (*see also page 10*).

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# Westminster Happenings

**Thursday  
January 1**

**Notes:**

- **Caroline is on vacation December 29 – January 3**
- **Church Office is closed for the holiday January 1**

**Sunday  
January 4**

**Sunday School**

Adults: Gather at 9:00 A.M. in the Joe Gettys Room.

Children and Youth: Meet at 9:00 A.M. in lower-level education wing.

**Christ, the Light Within Us**

Worship at 10:00 A.M. in person or via live streaming.

Come, like shepherds and Magi, to worship the miracle of Emmanuel.

**Undecorate the Church**

Remain in the Sanctuary to help return our special ornaments to storage.

**Monday  
January 5**

**Prayer Time in the Upper Zoom**

Look for the Monday prayer list email and join via Zoom at noon.

**BEMA Bible Discussion Group**

Meet in the Joe Gettys Room at 6:00 P.M.

**Tuesday  
January 6**

**Epiphany** (*see page 7*)

**Presbyterian Women's Circle** (*see page 5*)

Bring a lunch and join the Circle in the Joe Gettys Room at 11:30 A.M.

Learn about "The Gift of the Woman Who Was Poor" from our study.

**Wednesday  
January 7**

**New! Better Together Wellness Group** (*see page 6*)

Gather in the Fellowship Hall at 5:15 p.m.

Learn about this interactive approach to optimizing your lifestyle choices.

**Books & Brown Bags Study Group**

Come to the Joe Gettys Room at 6:00 P.M. (*see page 6*).

Resume our literary adventures, learning *How to Know a Person*.

**Sunday  
January 11**

**Sunday School**

Adults: Gather at 9:00 A.M. in the Joe Gettys Room.

Children and Youth: Meet at 9:00 A.M. in lower-level education wing.

**A Parent's Pride Shines**

Worship at 10:00 A.M. in person or via live streaming.

Cherish your baptism as we remember Christ's.

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## Westminster Happenings, *continued*

<b>Sunday</b> <b>January 11,</b> <b><i>continued</i></b>	<b>Stated Session Meeting</b> Meet at 11:15 A.M. in the Joe Gettys Room. Conduct the business of the church with guidance from the Holy Spirit.
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<b>Monday</b> <b>January 12</b>	<b>Prayer Time in the Upper Zoom</b> Look for the Monday prayer list email and join via Zoom at noon. <b>BEMA Bible Discussion Group</b> Come to the Joe Gettys Room at 6:00 P.M.
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<b>Wednesday</b> <b>January 13</b>	<b>Better Together Wellness Group</b> Gather in the Fellowship Hall at 5:15 p.m. Focus on key areas that affect your health and wellness. <b>Books &amp; Brown Bags Study Group</b> Come to the Joe Gettys Room at 6:00 P.M. Discuss the significance of seeing and hearing those around you.
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<b>Saturday</b> <b>January 17</b>	<b>Session Retreat</b> Meet bright and early at 9:00 A.M. in the Joe Gettys Room. Lay the foundation for a powerful and profound 2026.
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“...the people who are loyal to their God shall stand firm and take action.”

Daniel 11:32b

<b>Sunday</b> <b>January 18</b>	<b>Sunday School</b> Adults: Gather at 9:00 A.M. in the Joe Gettys Classroom Children and Youth: Meet at 9:00 A.M. in lower-level education wing. <b>Radiant Light</b> Worship at 10:00 A.M. in person or via live streaming. Celebrate Elder installation and participate in the annual meeting ( <i>see page 8</i> ). <b>Sunday Sustenance</b> Savor a tasty lunch provided by Chef Rob and his sous chefs. Bring some extra cash to contribute to a good cause.
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<b>Monday</b> <b>January 19</b>	<b><i>Note: Church office closed for M.L. King Day</i></b> <b><i>Caroline away on study leave through January 24</i></b> <b>BEMA Bible Discussion Group</b> Meet in the Joe Gettys Room at 6:00 P.M.
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## Westminster Happenings, *continued*

**Wednesday  
January 21**

**Better Together Wellness Group**

Gather in the Fellowship Hall at 5:15 p.m.

Continue learning about the effect of your lifestyle choices.

**Books & Brown Bags Study Group**

Come to the Joe Gettys Room at 6:00 P.M.

Probe more deeply *How to Know a Person*.

**Thursday  
January 22**

**PFLAG Meeting**

Connect in the Joe Gettys Room at 6:00 P.M.

Find support with Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays.

**Sunday  
January 25**

**Sunday School**

Adults: Gather at 9:00 A.M. in the Joe Gettys Classroom.

Children and Youth: Meet at 9:00 A.M. in lower-level education wing.

**Can't We All Get Along?**

Worship at 10:00 A.M. in person or via live streaming.

Consider Paul's words on finding agreement and living in unity.

**Monday  
January 26**

**Prayer Time in the Upper Zoom**

Look for the Monday prayer list email and join via Zoom at noon.

**BEMA Bible Discussion Group**

Meet in the Joe Gettys Room at 6:00 P.M.

**Wednesday  
January 28**

**Better Together Wellness Group**

Gather in the Fellowship Hall at 5:15 p.m.

Share your thoughts on pursuing health and wellness.

**Books & Brown Bags Study Group**

Come to the Joe Gettys Room at 6:00 P.M.

Practice seeing others and experience the joy of being seen.

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## Circle Up, Ladies!

*Submitted by Beth Hammond*

Presbyterian Women will meet on Tuesday, January 6, at 11:30 A.M. in the Joe Getty's Room. Bring your lunch and beverage, and join us for a brief time of fellowship followed by Lesson 5 in our Bible Study from "Finding Resilience, Joy, and Our Identity in Jesus Christ." Gloria Christie will lead the lesson, "The Gift of the Woman Who Was Poor." All women are welcome—January is a great time to enter this caring circle of faithful fellowship!





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## Adult Sunday Study: Understanding *Mere Christianity*



Beginning January 4<sup>th</sup>, the adult Sunday study group launches a study of *Mere Christianity*, by C.S. Lewis, one of the most important writers of the 20th century. The book explores the common ground upon which all of those of Christian faith stand together. Bringing together Lewis' legendary broadcast talks made during World War Two, *Mere Christianity* provides an unequalled opportunity for believers and nonbelievers alike to hear this powerful apologetic for the Christian faith.

Kick off your new year of spiritual and discipleship growth by joining us every Sunday morning at 9:00 A.M. We always welcome new students *and* new facilitators!

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## Westminster Hosts New Community Wellness Group

When it comes to managing your health and lifestyle, it can be tough to find both the reliable information and the self-discipline that you need. That's why it's **Better Together!**

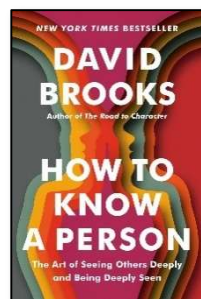


Beginning Wednesday, January 7, come join this new collaboration geared toward making lifestyle choices that have a positive impact on optimizing the working of this miraculous body God has given us. Each of the 12 interactive sessions focuses on one area of wellness. After an introductory session to set goals, topics are chosen according to the interests and needs of the group. Previous sessions have included the following topics: What is Health? Sleep, Meal Planning, Exercise, Movement, Meditation, Epigenetics.

Class meets Wednesdays at 5:15 p.m. from January 7<sup>th</sup> to March 25<sup>th</sup>. You won't want to miss this—we are truly *Better Together!*

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## B&BB: How to Know a Person



Our merry band of Books & Brown Baggers reconvenes on January 7 to dive into David Brooks's new book, *How to Know a Person: The Art of Seeing Others Deeply and Being Deeply Seen*. This book has been characterized as "a practical, heartfelt guide to the art of truly knowing another person and fostering deeper connections at home, at work, and throughout our lives"

Brooks draws from the fields of psychology and neuroscience, and the worlds of theater, philosophy, history, and education to present a welcoming, hopeful, integrated approach to human connection. *How to Know a Person* helps readers become more understanding and considerate toward others, and to find the joy that comes from being seen. It offers a possible remedy for a society that is riven by fragmentation, hostility, and misperception.

The act of seeing another person, Brooks argues, is profoundly creative: How can we look somebody in the eye and see something large in them and, in turn, see something larger in ourselves? *How to Know a Person* is for anyone searching for connection, and yearning to be understood.

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## Epiphany

*Excerpted from pcusa.com*



January 6<sup>th</sup> is the twelfth and final day of Christmas, according to the Christian liturgical calendar. It is known as Three King's Day, or the Feast of Epiphany.

Epiphany is the celebration of God's manifestation or self-revelation to the world in Jesus Christ. In particular, we celebrate the revelation of God's promise and purpose to the nations of the world, as the magi came from the East to worship to the Christ child, and God's covenant of grace is extended to all who believe the good news of Christ Jesus.

The symbolism of light is important: not only because of the star that guided the magi, but as it relates to the bright dawning of God's self-revelation in Christ.

For Christians, Christmas marks the coming of God to us; Epiphany celebrates the appearance of the Lord in the midst of humanity. The Christmas stories of the birth of Immanuel declare the divine entry; Epiphany extols the revelation of God to the world in the person of Jesus of Nazareth.

In our celebrations of Christmas and Epiphany we rejoice in the dawning and the arising of Light in darkness. ... Epiphany not only discloses the Savior to the world but also calls the world to show forth Christ, to be witnesses to God's true Light.

The timeless mystery of the incarnation, God in flesh, leads us forth to show and tell of Christ as God's gift of grace and salvation for all persons. Some call this ongoing epiphany the work of Christmas.

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## More Reasons to Celebrate!

Best wishes and sincere prayers for these members and friends with birthdays in January:

- ❖ 3<sup>rd</sup> – Emily Hughes
- ❖ 4<sup>th</sup> – Mia Irons
- ❖ 7<sup>th</sup> – Kaye Schwarzmann
- ❖ 14<sup>th</sup> – Kathy Felder
- ❖ 16<sup>th</sup> – Laine Horowitz
- ❖ 22<sup>nd</sup> – Kathleen Watkins
- ❖ 29<sup>th</sup> – Cecilia Bornemann

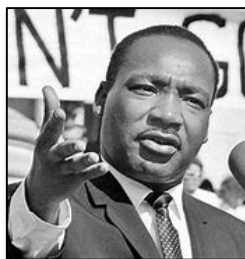


*Don't forget to enter your family information and celebrations in Instant Church Directory!*

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## Thoughts for MLK Day

*Excerpted from pcusa.com*



Any reflection on the work of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. calls into view particular gifts of his ministry: the application of the gospel to political and social reform; the coupling of cries for justice with public action; and the merger of passion and intellect.

Dr. King, like preachers before him, focused on agape. However, he was radical enough to merge the themes of grace and justice. He brought to the pulpit a social gospel that defined racism as a theological issue and promoted active agape love as a power that could bring political transformation to a nation steeped in discriminatory practice and ideology.

*From "Remembering Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr." by The Rev. Dr. Gloria J. Tate, pastor of The Presbyterian Church of Teaneck in Teaneck, New Jersey.*

## Annual Meeting: January 18<sup>th</sup>

As part of worship on January 18<sup>th</sup>, you are invited to participate in our Annual Meeting, as required by the *PC(USA) Book of Order*:

### **G-1.0502 Annual and Special Meetings**

The congregation shall hold an annual meeting and may hold special meetings as necessary, for any or all of the purposes appropriate for congregational consideration.

The business to be transacted at special meetings shall be limited to items specifically listed in the call for the meeting. All active members of the congregation present at either annual or special meetings are entitled to vote.

On the agenda: a report from Session regarding the approved 2026 Operating Budget, and a motion to approve 2026 Terms of Call for retaining our current Pastor. A printed Annual Report will be provided, celebrating 2025 and looking ahead to 2026.

## Purcell to Preach January 25<sup>th</sup>

Westminster welcomes a familiar face and voice to our pulpit on January 25<sup>th</sup>: Brian Purcell.

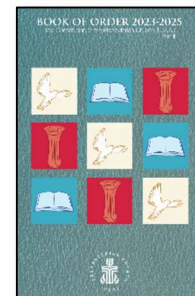


Brian and his delightful wife, Kim, are regulars in our worship and work. He is pivoting from an amazing, decades-long career as head coach of the Presbyterian College women's soccer team to a new calling in the ministry. He is currently juggling the demands of serving as Chaplain for Hospice & Palliative Care of the Piedmont while striving toward ordination, under the care of Trinity Presbytery's Commission on Preparation for Ministry.

Brian welcomes your prayers as he prepares to preach, moves toward ordination, and savors life with Kim and their two sons, Jay and Will.

## Elder Installation: January 18<sup>th</sup>

Westminster is blessed to have numerous faithful workers and leaders in our midst. Each year, we call six of them to serve as Ruling Elders—that is, to be part of our Session (basically, our Board of Directors).



Here's what the PC(USA) Book of Order says about being *called*:

### **W-4.0401 Called to Ministry**

In Baptism, each Christian is called to ministry in Christ's name. God calls some persons from the midst of congregations to fulfill particular functions, so that the ministry of the whole people of God may flourish.

In **ordination**, the church sets apart with prayer and the laying on of hands those who have been called by God through the voice of the church to serve as deacons, ruling elders, and ministers of the Word and Sacrament.

In **installation**, the church sets in place with prayer those who have been (previously) ordained as deacons, ruling elders, and ministers of the Word and Sacrament, and are now called anew to service in that ministry.

Ginny Cartee was elected in a congregational meeting on September 28 to serve as a new Ruling Elder. And Rob Graves agreed to serve a second term. Because both of these servant-leaders have already been *ordained*,

they simply need now to be *installed* for this new term of service.



We are deeply grateful for the loving and faithful service that Tina Corley has provided during her tenure on the Session.



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## Taste and See that The Lord is Good Part I: Setting the Table for the New Year

As we move into the New Year, it is tempting to begin loading our “plate,” like a Chinest at a church covered dish, with lots of new things, like: “I will start exercising! Take up quilting or golf! Read through the Bible this year!”



Before long, our plate is overloaded and we haven’t even gotten to the dessert table. This year, before you add more to your plate, try this New Year’s Day reflection:

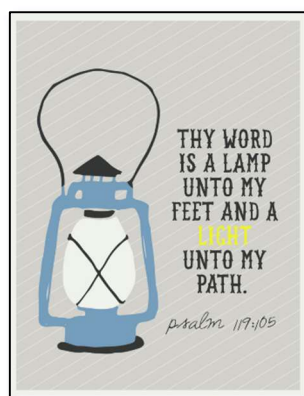
- 1) **What is already on your plate?** What are the must-haves? The meat and potatoes? Work, time with family and friends, housekeeping, self-care, time with God.... How are these things working for you? Are they good? Do they need some seasoning? Some reworking? How’s the balance? Too much work? Not enough rest?
- 2) **What needs to come off the plate?** What’s on the plate that is not good for you? More than you can stomach?
- 3) **What can you add?** Is there space now to add something new or give more time to something old?
- 4) **Say Grace.** Give thanks to God for what is on your plate and ask God’s blessing on it.

*God of the feast, you are great and good.*

*I thank you for all that is on my plate: for good work to do, for friends, and family, for time with your word, meaningful contributions to my community, restorative recreation, opportunities for learning and growth, even for challenges that help me lean into strength and peace, your wisdom and your word.*

*Bless, O Lord, this food to my use and me to your service.*

*Amen.*



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## Taste and See that The Lord is Good Part II: Making Good Choices

Faced with a full smorgasbord of tasty temptations, then, how can we choose wisely which ones are *worthy* of a place on the plate? Psalm 119:105 holds the answer: “Thy Word is lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path.”

As we enter into the New Year, we are invited to be like the Magi who followed a star to God’s greatest gift, a child born for us—for *all* of us! We understand that star to be the Word of God written in our scriptures and incarnated in Christ, which God has given us to be a lamp to our feet and a light to our path.

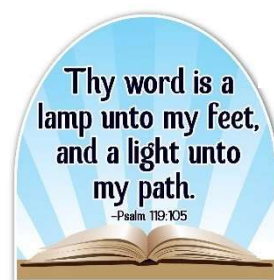
In years past, we at Westminster have celebrated Epiphany by receiving a word for the year, a Star Word, that was to be for us a guiding light in the year ahead. Some years, star words

*Continued on page 10*

were given to us. Some years, we selected words of our own; words like: faith, joy, peace, curiosity, hope, kindness, gentleness, hunger, thirst, prayer, praise, rooted...

This year, when you come to worship on January 4, you will be given a star, and on the star will be a scripture reference. Each person will get a different scripture reference. Consider letting that scripture be a guiding light for you in the coming year. On January 11, Baptism of the Lord Sunday, we will spend some time in worship talking about the scripture we received, where it finds us at the beginning of the year and the way it may be for us a light for the path ahead.

At Westminster, our Mission Statement affirms that we are committed to growing disciples. Part of that means nurturing *ourselves* as disciples by reading, studying, and following God's word. Allowing this one "star scripture" to be a guiding light is one way to do that. And we challenge and encourage you to do more! Here are some ideas for items that *are* worthy choices for your 2026 plate:



### **The Bible in a Year**

Is this the year you will read through the entire Bible? There are many good reading plans that can be found online. We recommend gathering a small group of committed folks to commit to a year with the Bible using, James E. Davison's book, *The Year of the Bible*.

### **Connecting With Christians Around the World**

Perhaps you feel called to spend time with the scriptures for the week (or day) from the Revised Common Lectionary. Christians around the world focus on these prescribed scriptures in their personal devotion and corporate worship. You can find the scriptures for the week or day at the PCUSA Website <https://pcusa.org/devotion/revised-common-lectionary> or through Vanderbilt University at <https://lectionary.library.vanderbilt.edu/>. Our Session stays connected with the lectionary using the *Disciplines Devotion Book* from the Upper Room press.

### **Connecting with or Forming a Small Group**

Christian disciples grow better in groups. Our Monday night *BEMA Bible Study* participants will testify that their multi-year journey together through God's word has reignited their faith, making them not only more knowledgeable about the Bible, but also more curious. While this BEMA group is two years into their journey, many have expressed an interest in starting a new group. Is that you? Our Monday night BEMA group facilitators, Luke and Gloria Christie would love to talk with you about how to begin.

Information about other existing small groups can be found in Westminster Happenings and on pages 5-6. Perhaps you'd like to start a *new* circle of women (or men, or young folks, or college students, or jazz junkies, or movie enthusiasts...) to study God's word together weekly or monthly. Our pastor and our Nurture and Education Ministry Team will be glad to help you find resources for your study.

Whether it is holding onto your Star Scripture for the year, reading through the Bible in a year, daily devotions in the Revised Common Lectionary, or joining or forming a small group, we pray that you will find yourself growing as a student and follower of Christ as you journey in the light of His word.



## WPC Ministry Teams—Help Wanted!

Volunteers serving on Westminster's ministry teams are the driving force behind our work and worship as a Christ-centered community. Whatever your spiritual gifts and faith-related interests may be, there is always room for you in our ministry teams. Westminster is blessed with an abundance of seasoned leaders who are eager to mentor newcomers. Contact Pastor Dennis or any Session member for more information.

## Business Affairs Report

*Submitted by Bill Kimler, Ministry Team Chair*

Pastor Caroline recently shared with us the importance of joy in our lives. This past month, as we've gone through our annual stewardship and budgeting processes, we have much to be joyful about.

The commitments you have made in time, talents, and financials have put us in a strong position to be able to continue and grow our mission in 2026! We received **15% more** stewardship covenant forms than we did at this time last year, and the number of volunteers for the dozens of activities we laid out has broken WPC records!

We're grateful to all who are ready "to church" with us in 2026. As we often say: It's the people, not the building, that make up the Church.

## Stewardship Snapshot

*Please note that because of the newsletter publication schedule vs. timing of month-end close, these reports will typically be about six weeks behind.*



### November 2025

	November Actual	Monthly Budget	Year-to-Date Actual	Year-to-Date Budget
<b>Total Income</b>	\$30,713	\$20, 295	\$264,132	\$243,536
<b>Total Expenses</b>	\$15,643	\$19,797	\$218,589	\$217,767
<b>Net Gain/Loss</b>	\$15,070		\$1,474	

Unrestricted contributions were significantly above the stated budget due to the receipt of a full annual pledge during the month. Other notable contributions were \$4,427 in memorials and \$525 in special offerings. Program area expenses were well managed, resulting in a surplus of contributions in excess of expenses of \$15,070. The surplus available for normal operations is \$10,118, which excludes memorials and special offerings..

*Please direct any questions about church financial matters to Treasurer David Hammond or to the Business Affairs Ministry Team.*

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## Our Own Dr. Nancy Hart Wicker

*From the December 12, 2025 issue of The Index-Journal*



Hospice & Palliative Care of the Piedmont is proud to announce that Nancy Hart Wicker, MD, Medical Director, has been accepted as a Fellow of the American Academy of Hospice and Palliative Medicine (FAAHPM) — one of the highest professional honors awarded by the American Academy of Hospice and Palliative Medicine.

It recognizes physicians who have demonstrated excellence in clinical practice, leadership, and dedication to advancing the field of hospice and palliative medicine. Fellows are selected for their commitment to improving the quality of life for patients facing serious illness and their families.

Wicker has led initiatives to enhance patient-centered care, expand interdisciplinary collaboration, and advance the organization's mission of compassionate, high-quality support for individuals and families throughout the Piedmont region. Her leadership has helped integrate innovative practices in communication, symptom management, and holistic care delivery.

"Dr. Wicker's fellowship is a testament not only to her personal accomplishments but also to the culture of excellence we strive for each day," said Charlene Kish, CEO of Hospice & Palliative Care of the Piedmont. "Her passion and expertise uplift our entire team and reinforce our commitment to compassionate, whole-person care."

*Professional. Compassionate. At the Heart of All We Do.* Hospice & Palliative Care of the Piedmont is a non-profit organization committed to providing high-quality, professional, innovative inpatient and in-home, hospice and palliative medicine and supportive care services to patients living in Abbeville, Edgefield, Greenwood, Laurens, McCormick, Newberry and Saluda counties. Dr. Wicker's recognition by FAAHPM further positions Hospice & Palliative Care of the Piedmont as a leader in the field and a trusted source of care in the region.

For more information about Hospice & Palliative Care of the Piedmont and its services, visit [www.careofthepiedmont.org](http://www.careofthepiedmont.org) or call 864-227-9393.

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## Please Help Update Our WPC Online Directory!

You can now access the Westminster church directory online—and you are invited to enrich and update your listing any time. Here's the link:

<https://members.instantchurchdirectory.com/>

You can also download the app from the Apple Store and Google Play Store.

Note that this online directory is available to Westminster's congregation *only*. We are serious about protecting your privacy







## We're Workin' on the Kirkin' for 2026!

*Submitted by Gloria Christie*

WPC's inaugural Kirkin' O' the Tartans service was so well received, we plan to make it an annual tradition! As you may know, the celebratory supplies for our 2025 Kirkin' were borrowed from First Presbyterian. But now you have an opportunity to help make Westminster's Kirkin' reflect our own church family.

This year's service will be on Sunday, September 20th, and while that may seem far away right now, it is not too early to start thinking about ways in which you might be a part of this year's celebration. Please prayerfully consider how you might be part of the fun through volunteering your time or purchasing some or all of the items needed to fully represent your (or another) family's tartan.

### **Supplies and support needed:** *(costs are close estimates)*

- 1 flagpole kit (includes pole, topper, and stand): \$120
- Tartan fabric for 1 flag: \$75-100
- 1 flag tassel: \$15
- Complete tartan flag kit: \$210
- Boutonniere supplies: \$15
- Volunteers to sew flags (simple seams)

More details to follow. Reach out to Gloria Christie with questions: [ggchristie716@gmail.com](mailto:ggchristie716@gmail.com) or 864-379-5034.

## Thank You and Good Luck, Ellery!

On December 14<sup>th</sup>, Westminster sent forth our friend, Ellery DeRosa, into her new career as an educator, equipped with valuable classroom supplies and our prayers for her success.





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# The Most Expensive Habit: Anxiety

By Ryan Holiday, author of *The Daily Stoic*

I don't gamble. I don't spend recklessly. But I *do* have an expensive habit: anxiety. It's cost me hours of sleep, moments with my family, and opportunities I let pass because I was too caught up in my fears. It's the vacation I didn't enjoy, the dinner I spoiled, the car ride I spent stressing instead of being present in the moment.



Seneca, a Stoic philosopher of Ancient Rome, said, "We suffer more in imagination than in reality." Anxiety drags us into a future that doesn't exist, forcing us to live out worst-case scenarios that rarely happen. And yet, the time and energy anxiety steals are gone forever.

The good news? If anxiety comes from within us, we can choose to let it go. Marcus Aurelius put it simply: "Today I escaped from anxiety. Or no, I discarded it, because it was within me." And Seneca sums it up, saying, "He who suffers before it is necessary suffers more than is necessary."

Anxiety doesn't change the outcome—it only punishes me before anything has even happened. It's not easy to break free, but we can practice—by staying in the present moment, letting go of what we can't control, and reminding ourselves that anxiety is an expensive habit.

*As Christians guided by the lamp of the Word, we have very clear instructions in Philippians on how we are to deal with anxiety:*

*Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.*



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## Including, Abiding, Enjoying, Following, and Growing

*A series exploring Westminster's foundational statements and strategic intention*

To get 2026 off on the right foot, spend some prayerful time considering how you will help Westminster live fully into our Mission:

- We glorify and enjoy God by:
  - Expressing our gratitude to God through praise, prayer, and participation,
  - Gathering persons at every level of spiritual maturity in spirit-filled worship, and
  - Seeking to reflect the love, grace, and justice of God.
- We follow Jesus by:
  - Embodying the Gospel in our actions and our words,
  - Serving joyfully, and
  - Relying confidently on God's provision.
- We grow disciples by:
  - Engaging God's Word with our hearts, minds, and hard questions,
  - Reaching out broadly to all as neighbors, and
  - Gathering in closely as family in times of joy, sorrow, and personal growth.

## Let Us Pray...

*"My house shall be called a house of prayer"*  
Matthew 21:13a



### For Those in Our Church

*We share one another's joys and concerns:*

- Mary Corley
- Larry Dozier
- Kathy Felder
- Holly Hubbard
- Theresa Jacobs
- Kelli Lott & Gabby
- Savanah & Briar Rose
- Denise Waldrep
- Ed Watkins
- Kathy West
- Mary Anne Wilson
- Gail & Glenn Yonce, & Georgiana
- The Dennis family
- Our New Members
- Your Session

*We pray daily for our prayer partners and their special concerns. We pray for our sister churches: New Faith, Ware Shoals, First Presbyterian, Abbeville Presbyterian, and others.*

*We pray for the ministries of our church, especially:*

- Presbyterian Communities of SC
- Prison Ministry
- Thornwell Home
- Presbyterian College
- NAMI
- Pathway House
- Food Bank
- Soup Kitchen
- Meg's House
- Beyond Abuse
- GG United Ministries
- Healthy Learners
- Camp Fellowship
- Community Initiatives
- Toddler Learning Center
- Trinity Presbytery



### For Those in Our Hearts

*We pray for members of our wider community (and our connection to them):*

- Greg Anderson (*Theresa*)
- Dan Blimline (*Mary Anne*)
- Jeff Brown (*Kuhls*)
- Judy Buck (*Lucia*)
- Iris Bullard (*Mary Anne*)
- Jeff Crisp (*Hammonds*)
- Michaela Dean (*Sarah*)
- Tatum Foley (*Heather*)
- John Gettys (*Mary Anne*)
- Lib Grier (*many*)
- Lori Holloway (*Suzy*)
- Amy Jennings (*Denise*)
- Randy Kuhl (*Kuhls*)
- Katherine Martin (*many*)
- Dabney Mahanes (*Denise*)
- Susy Mitchell (*many*)
- Patricia Lytle (*Beth*)
- Tarri McKinney (*Suzy*)
- Rick McGee (*Kuhls*)
- Lillian Moneyhun (*many*)
- Cameron Murphy (*Sarah*)
- Richard Pinkney (*Len*)
- The Radas (*Joyce*)
- Lorene Waldrep (*Denise*)
- Elle Willis (*Rogers*)
- Blaire (*Doris*)
- Brian (*Laine*)
- Jodi (*Lucia & Laine*)



### For the World

*We pray for our neighbors everywhere who we are called to love:*

- For justice and mercy to prevail throughout the world—*thy* will be done
- For an end to violence, especially politically motivated attacks of all types
- For the safety of Christians in Nigeria, Pakistan, China, and other oppressive areas
- For real peace in Ukraine and Russia, in Israel and Palestine, Iran, Syria, and elsewhere
- For all children, especially those who lack loving, stable homes
- For persons affected by domestic violence
- For those living with mental, emotional, and/or physical illnesses

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## And God Saw That It Was Good



*Westminster brings Christmas joy to a Meg's House family (left) and to friends at Wesley Commons (above).*



*Bill Jacob's birthday provided an excellent excuse for coconut cake (homemade!!!), coffee, and conversation, thanks to hosts Caroline and Phillip.*