

Why Wait?

⁸ Now in that same region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. ⁹ Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. ¹⁰ But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid, for see, I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: ¹¹ to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. ¹² This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger." ¹³ And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying,

*¹⁴ "Glory to God in the highest heaven,
and on earth peace among those whom he favors!"*

¹⁵ When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us." ¹⁶ So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph and the child lying in the manger. ¹⁷ When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child, ¹⁸ and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them, ¹⁹ and Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. ²⁰ The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, just as it had been told them.

Luke 2:8-20



Advent is a season of waiting. Waiting for Christmas Day? Yes! Waiting for Christ to return? Yes! In this season we wait to celebrate something that has past, the birth of Jesus. And we wait for something in the future, the long-anticipated return of Christ. But what about Christ *here*? Christ *now*?

Could it be that we spend so much time looking backward and forward that we

are blind to what is here and now? Emmanuel, God with us in Hodges and Ware Shoals, Faith Home and Greenwood, Due West and Ninety Six?

In his book, *The Universal Christ: How a Forgotten Reality Can Change Everything We See, Hope For and Believe*, Richard Rohr writes, "A mature Christian sees Christ in everything and everyone else. That is a definition that will never fail you, always demand more of you, and give you no reason to fight, exclude or reject anyone."

Continued on page 2

Continued from page 1



This Advent season, we will be like the shepherds, to whom the angels said, "today is born for YOU in the city of _____ (fill in the blank) a Savior." We shall not wait, we shall go and see. Someone who saves us from abundance while others are in need. Someone who comforts us when we are distressed. Someone who brings estranged people together. Someone who brings hope, peace, joy, and love. And we shall return praising God and telling all who will hear! Today, we have seen Christ, in a most unexpected place.

Are you up for the challenge? Let's not wait! Let us go and see this thing that the angels have proclaimed. And then, like the shepherds, let us tell everyone about the surprising things we have seen!

Employ your Advent Devotional Booklet to remain with our scripture texts for each week as you look for Christ In Front of Us, Christ Between Us, Christ Above Us, and Christ Before Us. Report your discoveries by email to wpcgwd1@gmail.com or on Our WPC Facebook Page. A selection of your Christ sightings will be published each week in the Come Sunday email.

Your pastor and friend,



Kids Learn about Christmas Around the World

Submitted by Kathie Gillespie

During Advent and Christmas, the children's Sunday School class will learn about Christmas Around the World. Their journey will begin with Nazareth and Bethlehem, and the story of Jesus' birth. They will continue to Italy, where the first nativity scenes were displayed. Next, they'll learn the story of how Martin Luther (in Germany) started the custom of celebrating Christmas with an evergreen tree. They will study Christmas traditions in Great Britain, Mexico, and the Philippines.



Special emphasis will be on how the traditions of other countries relate to how we celebrate Christmas here in the USA. Their travels will include Egypt, when they are reminded of the visit of the Magi and the Holy Family's flight to Egypt. The children will learn that some places celebrate on January 6, instead on December 25. Their travels will end in Ethiopia with Timkat. *Timkat* is a major Ethiopian festival celebrating the baptism of Jesus in the River Jordan. It is held annually on January 19th.

A good Sunday school verse for "Christmas Around the World" is Luke 2:10-11:

"But the angel said to them, 'Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; He is the Messiah, the Lord.'"

This verse highlights that the celebration of Jesus' birth is a universal event, shared by "all the people," no matter where they live, which aligns with the theme of Christmas around the world.

Advent/Christmas Sermon Series: Advent Here. Advent Now.

The Gospel writer, Matthew, is fond of finding ways that Jesus fulfills ancient prophecies. Jesus himself says, “I came to fulfill the law, not to abolish it.” Through this season of Advent, Christmas, and Epiphany, prophetic readings and gospel readings will be paired, helping us to not only look for the Christ who has come in Bethlehem, and the Christ who is promised to come again, but especially the Christ who is fully present *here* and *now*.

November 30: Christ in Front of Us

First Sunday in Advent

Hanging of the Greens

*We light the candle of **Hope***

† Isaiah 11:1-10

† Matthew 1:1-17

† Matthew 25:31-40

December 7: Christ Before Us

Second Sunday in Advent

Communion/Food Bank Collection

*We light the candle of **Peace***

† Isaiah 2:1-5

† Isaiah 7:10-17a

† Matthew 1:18-25

† Matthew 18:20

December 14: Christ Above Us

Third Sunday in Advent

*We light the candle of **Joy***

† Isaiah 60:1-6

† Matthew 2:1-12

December 21: Christ Between Us

Fourth Sunday in Advent

*We light the candle of **Love***

† Isaiah 9:1-7

† John 1:1-14 (MSG)

December 24: Christ is Here!

*We light the **Christ** Candle*

† Isaiah 35:1-10

† Luke 2:1-20



December 28: Christmastide Begins

Guest Preacher: The Rev. Anna Burch

January 4: Christ Within Us

Epiphany

Communion/Food Bank Collection

† Matthew 5:14-20

January 11: Baptism of the Lord

Baptismal Remembrance

† Isaiah 42:1-9

† Matthew 3:13-17

Beautiful Flower, Beautiful Thought



The **December 7th deadline** is fast approaching to participate in our traditional poinsettia display in honor or in memory of those we love and respect. You can place your order now by using the form in the narthex or order online from the Westminster website.

We are purchasing our plants this year through Piedmont Technical College. They provide their own home-grown plants, which are healthier and more beautiful than the grocery store options, and this also allows us to support our local college. The cost is \$20 per plant. Poinsettias will be in the sanctuary on December 15th and may be picked up after Christmas Day.

Westminster Happenings

**Monday
December 1**

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
December 2**

Presbyterian Women's Circle

Share a festive luncheon at Beth Hammond's home—details on page 8.

Enjoy good fellowship and lesson 4 from this year's study.

**Wednesday
December 3**

Books & Brown Bags Study Group

Come to the Joe Gettys Room at 6:00 P.M. (*see page 7*).

Gather for a reading of Truman Capote's "A Christmas Memory."

**Sunday
December 7**

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 Between Us

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

Enjoy God with others, knowing that your LORD is there enjoying you.

"For where two or three are gathered in my name,
I am there among them." Matthew 18:20

**Monday
December 8**

Prayer Time in the Upper Zoom

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

BEMA Bible Discussion Group

Meet at the Christie home (411 North Street) at 6:00 P.M.

**Wednesday
December 10**

Books & Brown Bags Study Group

Join in caroling and carousing at The Puppet Place starting at 6:00 P.M.

Toast marshmallows at the firepit, savor snacks, and share stories.

**Sunday
December 14**

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.

Christ Above Us

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

Prepare to welcome Christ Jesus, the source of our joy!

Westminster Happenings, *continued*

Sunday
December 14,
continued

Called Session Meeting

Meet to finalize the 2026 budget at 11:15 A.M. in the Je Gettys Room.

Ellery DeRosa Graduation “Classroom Shower”

Wish Ellery the best in the Fellowship Hall at 3:00 P.M. (*see page 19*).

Help her equip her new classroom by bringing school supplies.

Monday
December 15

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
December 17

Books & Brown Bags Study Group

Note: B&BB will resume on January 7.

Thursday
December 18

PFLAG Meeting

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

Find support with Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays.

Sunday
December 21

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.

Christ Before Us

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

Receive the love of God, who sends light of the Son.

Sunday Sustenance

Savor a tasty lunch provided by Chef Rob and his sous chefs.

Bring some extra cash to contribute to a good cause.

Monday
December 22

Prayer Time in the Upper Zoom

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

BEMA Bible Discussion Group

Note: BEMA will not meet this week.

“Lo, the virgin shall conceive and give birth to a son,
and they shall name him Emmanuel, ‘God with us.’”

Westminster Happenings, *continued*

**Wednesday
December 24**

Christmas Eve

Christ is Here!

Worship at 5:00 P.M. in person or via live streaming.
Come, let us adore him, Christ the LORD.

**Thurs/Fri
December 25
& 26**

Note: Church office closed for Christmas holiday

**Sunday
December 28**

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.

First Sunday in Christmastide

Guest Preacher: The Rev. Anna Burch (see page 8).

**Monday
December 29**

Prayer Time in the Upper Zoom

Look for the Monday prayer list email; no Zoom at noon.

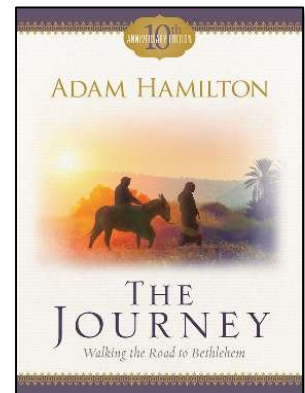
BEMA Bible Discussion Group

Note: BEMA will not meet this week.

Adult Sunday Study for Advent: The Journey

On November 30, the adult Sunday school class ventured out on *The Journey: Walking the Road to Bethlehem*, by Adam Hamilton. This study runs through December 28, led by volunteer teachers.

In *The Journey*, Adam Hamilton travels from Nazareth to Bethlehem in a fascinating look at the birth of Jesus Christ. Hamilton approaches a world-changing event with thoughtfulness. Using historical data, archaeological findings, and a personal look at some of the stories surrounding Jesus' birth, the most amazing moment in history will become more real and heart-felt as you walk along this road.



Looking ahead to January, the class members are planning to do a book study, exploring *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 during World War Two from his three previous books *The Case for Christianity*, *Christian Behavior*, and *Beyond Personality*, *Mere Christianity* provides an unequalled opportunity for believers and nonbelievers alike to hear this powerful apologetic for the Christian faith.

Any time is a good time to add scripture study to your personal spiritual disciplines. Plan to join us Sunday mornings at 9:00 A.M. Books are available in the Joe Gettys Room.

Why Do We Have an Advent Wreath?

Excerpted from BibleStudyTools.com



Since November 30th, the first Sunday in Advent this year, our sanctuary has been graced with a beautiful Advent Wreath, bedecked with greenery and holding five candles of different colors. So what does it mean?

Advent wreaths first appeared in Germany in 1839, created by a Lutheran minister to highlight this important season of awaiting and anticipating the coming of Christ. The circular shape reminds us of eternity, and the sure knowledge that “Jesus is the same yesterday, and today, and forever.”

Each colored candle on the wreath represents the coming of the light of Christ, and a designated theme for each Sunday. The purple candles remind us of royalty and repentance. Pink represents joy and triumph. And white signifies the purity and holiness of Jesus. The weekly theme is also represented in the scriptures that liturgical churches worldwide read on that day:

Advent Week 1: Purple Candle Means *Hope*—also called the Prophet’s candle, because one of the scriptures this day is from an Old Testament prophet about the coming Messiah.

Advent Week 2: Purple Candle Means *Faith*—also known as the Bethlehem candle; scripture today reminds us of Joseph and Mary’s arduous journey from Nazareth to Bethlehem where Jesus was to be born.

Advent Week 3: Pink Candle Means *Joy*—also referred to as the Shepherd’s Candle, we are encouraged to rejoice like the shepherds did on that first Christmas, according to the Bible.

Advent Week 4: Purple Candle Means *Peace*—also called the Angel’s Candle, encouraging us to sing, as the angels sang to the shepherds, “Glory to God in the highest.”

Christmas Eve: the White Christ Candle—represents the presence of Jesus Christ in this place, God incarnate, “God with us.”

B&BB: Christmas and Beyond

The B&BB folks usher in the Christmas season on December 3 with a reading of “A Christmas Memory,” a delightful remembrance by Truman Capote. Participants will also share some of their own Christmas memories. The holiday fun continues on December 10, when the gang will gather at Susy Holloway’s Puppet Place, 502 Reynolds Avenue. Rumor has it that marshmallows and muchies will abound, as will stories around the firepit, including Phillip Dennis’s redention of the Drummer Boy story.



After a brief break, Books & Brown Bags resumes 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*—“A practical, heartfelt guide to the art of truly knowing another person and fostering deeper connections at home, at work, and throughout our lives.”

Circle Gathers for Festive Christmas Brunch

Westminster's Presbyterian Women will celebrate their annual Christmas Brunch on Tuesday, December 2.



Beth Hammond is opening her home for "the church ladies" luncheon. And because it's located a little off the beaten path, Beth suggests meeting at the church at 11:00 A.M. to carpool to their house at 504 Eagle's Harbor Drive in Hodges.

The program will be "The Prodigal," from the PW 2025-26 study book, *Finding Resilience, Joy, and our Identity in Jesus Christ*.

Please RSVP to Beth at 770.597.2059 so that the planners will know how many to expect.

Be an Angel for Meg's House

Once again, Westminster is adopting a Meg's House family to ensure they feel the love of Christ during this special season.



It's easy to be an angel!

Select an ornament from the angel tree in the narthex, shop to fulfill the wish noted on the angel, and then deliver the wrapped gifts back to our narthex on December 19.

Be sure to note on the package which family member should receive that gift.

The mission of Meg's House is to provide safe housing and supportive services that reduce the impact of domestic violence in our communities. Please give generously!

Celebrating the Perfect Gift: December 21st Special Offering

The Christmas Joy Offering has been a cherished Presbyterian tradition since the 1930s. The offering distributes gifts equally to the Assistance Program of the Board of Pensions and to Presbyterian-related schools and colleges equipping communities of color. The Assistance Program provides critical financial support to church workers and their families. Presbyterian-related schools and colleges provide education and leadership development while nurturing racial and ethnic heritage.

Westminster has proudly participated in this worthy work for many years. Thank you for your continued generosity.



Welcome Rev. Anna Burch



Guest preacher, The Rev. Anna Burch, will lead our worship on December 28th. She is a 2018 graduate of Iliff School of Theology with a Masters of Theological

Studies, and she is a 2010 graduate of Presbyterian College with a degree in Early Childhood Education.

While currently a third-grade teacher at Pinecrest Elementary, Anna has a background in both public education classrooms and ministry positions. She was the former Minister to Children at First Baptist Church Greenwood, where she was ordained, from 2016-2025. During her time at FBC, Anna didn't spend much time in the pulpit, but she is anxiously excited for the opportunity at welcoming Westminster to be a guest preacher.

Meet our Christmas Eve Guest Pianist, Bradley Fuller

Our Christmas Eve worship will be enhanced by the musical talents of Bradley Fuller, son of Janis Fuller, a frequent Westminster visitor. Originally from Greenwood, SC, Bradley has maintained a deep interest in classical music since the age of six. With



piano lessons throughout grade school and involvement in marching and concert bands on the saxophone, Bradley further developed musical abilities as

well as an appreciation for the importance of arts education.

After high school, he pursued a Bachelor of Arts in Music at the University of South Carolina, studying under Phillip Bush. Bradley also acquired an economics degree while there. During the summer months, he gained media experience working for the *McCormick Messenger* newspaper as a reporter and advertising sales representative. In his free time, Bradley likes to read, explore the outdoors, go thrifting, and play piano.



As you hustle out the door for your Christmas travels and holiday excursions, remember that it's to your advantage to catch up on your 2025 pledges *before* you go.

The year-end tax deadline is just around the corner. Your generous gift to the church helps your bottom line as well as Westminster's. Every gift, large or small, makes a positive difference for all.

Thank you always for your support!

Time to Celebrate!



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

- ❖ 4th – Mary Frances Thompson
- ❖ 7th – Kathy Gillespie
- ❖ 12th – Ellery DeRosa
- ❖ 16th – Bill Jacobs
- ❖ 20th – Bill Kimler
- ❖ 23rd – Makena McCarson & Paul Agnew
- ❖ 24th – Suzy Holloway & Charleston Warner
- ❖ 26th – Licia Duncan & Irons
- ❖ 30th – Rick McCarson

Congratulations are also in order for these amazing couples celebrating their wedding anniversary:

- ❖ 28th – Larry & Nancy Dozier
- ❖ 29th – Nigel & Christy Irons

Did We Miss Your Special Day? 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



Westminster Traditions: Not Just Any Old Tree

When our hard-working “greens team” adorns our church for worship during Advent and Christmas, one of their biggest challenges is raising and decorating that spectacular tree at the front of the sanctuary. Our eyes are so accustomed to seeing decorated trees in secular settings, it’s easy to forget that this is *not* just any old holiday tree—it is a *Chrismon* Tree!

As with a traditional Christmas tree, the evergreen tree itself symbolizes for Christians the eternal life Jesus Christ provides; however, the Chrismon tree is decorated only with clear lights and ornaments made from white and gold material, the liturgical colors of the Christmas season.

Those special ornaments are called Chrismons. The word *Chrismon* is derived from the phrase “**Christ’s monogram.**” Every ornament features a symbol that represents one of the many names of Christ, along with ancient icons for some part of Christ’s ministry.



Chrismons were first introduced in 1957 when Frances Kipps Spencer, a Lutheran in Danville, Virginia, wanted decorations that were appropriate for her church’s Christmas tree. The Chrismon craze soon took over, and not just in Lutheran circles. Throughout the following two decades, making Chrismons was often a churchwide event in mainline denominations.

Thanks to some super sleuthing by Nancy Dozier, we know part of the story of where our glittering, glowing Chrismons originated. When Westminster decided to have our very own Chrismon tree, the youth and the ladies of the church took on the challenge of crafting enough ornaments to cover a towering fir tree.

The youth of the day (1980s) took it on as a group project. They can take pride in knowing that the many large Styrofoam Chrismons they made are still sparkling today.

The rest of the handiwork is attributed to a number of women who devoted their time and talent to the effort. Long-time members will recognize some of the names, including Pat Poole and Beth Armstrong.

Thanks to the loving generosity of these saints, we still enjoy the magnificence of Christ’s monograms on our very own tree from Advent through Epiphany!

***Special thanks to the Presbyterian Women for the
bright and beautiful new tree gracing our sanctuary this year!***



What is Christmastide?

Excerpted from Christianity.com

The Twelve Days of Christmas, also known as Christmastide or Twelvetide, is a festive Christian season celebrating the Birth of Jesus.

In 567, the Council of Tours "proclaimed the twelve days from Christmas to Epiphany as a sacred and festive season, and established the duty of Advent fasting in preparation for the feast." Christopher Hill, as well as William J. Federer, states that this was done in order to solve the "administrative problem for the Roman Empire as it tried to coordinate the solar Julian calendar with the lunar calendars of its provinces in the east." ...

Though a host of modern internet sites and some magazine articles have tried to reduce "The Twelve Days of Christmas" to little more than a silly Christmas carol, most scholars of the Catholic Church deem it a very important surviving example of a time when that denomination used codes to disguise their teachings (*see column at right*).

Originally a poem written by Catholic clerics, this song was transformed into a carol at a time when celebrating the 12 days of Christmas was one of the most important holiday customs. By understanding the meaning the clerics chose the 12 days as wrapping for their poem, the full impact of the tradition of the 12 days of Christmas can be understood.

During this Christmastide, offer special prayers for Christians around the world still being persecuted for their faith, especially in Nigeria, China, and Pakistan.



Decoding "The 12 Days"

Excerpted from parade.com

Legend has it that the Catholic Church read the "12 Days of Christmas" lyrics with hidden meanings, where each of the twelve gifts represented something significant from the beliefs of Christianity:

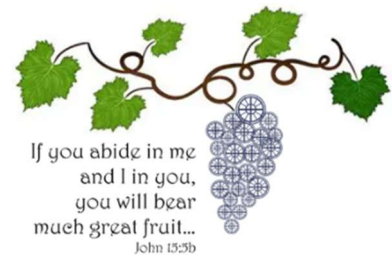
- † **A Partridge in a Pear Tree** represents Jesus Christ.
- † **Two Turtle Doves** symbolize both the Old and the New Testaments.
- † **Three French Hens** stand for faith, hope, and love.
- † **Four Colly Birds** are the four gospels: Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John.
- † **Five Golden Rings** represent the Pentateuch—the first five books of the Old Testament.
- † **Six Geese-a-Laying** are the six days of creation before the seventh day of rest.
- † **Seven Swans-a-Swimming** symbolize the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit: prophecy, serving, teaching, exhortation, giving, leading, and mercy.
- † **Eight Maids-a-Milking** are the eight Beatitudes from Jesus' Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5:1-10).
- † **Nine Ladies Dancing** represents the fruit of the Spirit according to Galatians 5:22-23: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.
- † **Ten Lords-a-Leaping** are the Ten Commandments.
- † **Eleven Pipers Piping** stand for the eleven faithful disciples.
- † **Twelve Drummers Drumming**, finally, symbolize the twelve points of belief stated in the Apostles' Creed.

Business Affairs Report

Submitted by Bill Kimler, Ministry Team Chair

Stewardship Goals

Thanks to God and the collective generous spirit of our Westminster Presbyterian family, we are happy to report that your Stewardship Covenants thus far have brought us to 90% of our desired budgetary goal for 2026. We see this as a positive reflection of our mission and your faith that together, we can meet that mission. If you've not yet submitted your Stewardship Covenant Form, please visit our website (wpcgnwd.org/giving) and click on "Stewardship Packet." You can print it, fill it out, and turn it in at the church office or at the next Sunday service. You can also email it to wpcgwd1@gmail.com.



A special thank-you to David Bell, Nancy Hart Wicker, Sarah Parks, and Bill Kimler for offering their personal testimonies about what Westminster Presbyterian Church of Greenwood means to them and the importance of being an active part of the church family.

We are grateful to all of those who demonstrate what it means "to church."



Photo by Tim Rogers

Building and Grounds

It has been a busy fall, with considerable labors of love put into our church campus. We had indoor workdays with the sanctuary and kitchen cleaned and tidied. We also held two different outdoor grounds workdays with bush and tree trimming, weeding, debris clearing, leaf-blowing, mulch and hay distribution—not to mention a complete tree and stump removal in the

courtyard! Many volunteers sacrificed their time and muscles to beautify our facilities inside and out, and it's truly appreciated by the entire church family! See more fun photos of our diligent volunteers on page 18.

David Hammond Elected Treasurer of WPC

We are blessed that David Hammond has accepted and been elected to the role of Treasurer of Westminster Presbyterian Church. Thank you, David, for accepting this critical role within our Church team!

Poetry Corner: I Found a Place

Submitted by Tim Rogers

I found a place
Where I am seen
By others there
It's really keen

Young and old
Living life today
The sun comes in
It feels OK

As Jesus showed
Give love to others
And experience peace
Like no other

I take my seat
No one stares
I feel like everyone
Really cares

Join me here
It's easy to do
And you will find
Your place too



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.



October 2025

	October Actual	Monthly Budget	Year-to-Date Actual	Year-to-Date Budget
Total Income	\$49,775	\$20, 295	\$233,419	\$202,947
Total Expenses	\$28,622	\$19,797	\$246,770	\$197,970
Net Gain/Loss	—\$9,345		—\$13,351	

Contributions for October were in line with the stated budget. Previously contributed funds (\$29,717) housed in the investment portfolio were transferred to the operating account to assist with increased monthly expenses. The increased expenses for the month were principally \$5,950 for annual Fair Share giving to the Presbytery, \$1,236 for the College of Elders dinner, \$823 for the Healthy Learners spelling bee (offset by donations), and a major capital expenditure of \$30,498 for HVAC issues.

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



Accessing Worship Online

Submitted by Arthur Gillespie

We have a new website feature that you may not know about. When we are live-streaming, you can watch the service either on Facebook or on the church web page.

Simply go to wpcgnwd.org and choose the drop down menu item under the Worship tab that shows Worship Online and click. Down the page will be a live-action view of the service if it has started. If it's too early, the window will display, "This event hasn't started yet." Typically 1 or 2 minutes after the start time, the window goes live.

If you want to watch an earlier service, click the Back arrow in the window (It looks like a triangle pointing at a lowercase *l*) until you come to the one you want. You can also click the Facebook link above it. You don't have to join Facebook to watch the video, but FB will make you think you do.

If this seems confusing, don't feel bad. This was working for 3 months before I noticed it. If you have any questions about any of this, just ask me. Sometimes I descend from the balcony(G).

I am: Arthur Gillespie (AKA webmaster)
kj4uau@gmail.com
(864)993-3807

(3 months is a gross exaggeration. Gillespies exaggerate. It's how we were raised!)

Navigating Grief in All Its Holiday Guises

by Peggy Haymes, Pinnacle Church Consulting Associate

Thankfully, many churches recognize that the holiday season isn't universally joyful for members of their congregation. Last year I decided on the spur of the moment to attend my church's Service of Remembrance on a Wednesday night during Advent. I'd had no significant losses last year and yet during the holidays I felt a welling of grief for a previous loss.



Grief is like that.

No one would have offered me a special invitation, yet being there was healing for me. Not every heavy heart comes from a recent loss. It doesn't mean people haven't done the work of healing. It just means that grief is coming around again, as it randomly does.

Grief can come in other ways.

Not every heavy heart comes from grief related to a death. Now more than ever, family estrangement is affecting holidays plans. A divorced parent may face the grief created by custody agreements that mean they may miss being with their children first thing Christmas morning or seeing them in the program on Christmas Eve.



Sometimes they are confused. They don't know why that family member has cut off communication. Sometimes the reason is all too evident and even more painful because it seems so unnecessary. Families split over estate or caregiving disputes. Families split over political differences, especially when those differences are deeply tied to one's view of the world or practice of faith.

It's not unusual for families to avoid mentioning this fracture because it somehow feels like a failure and the failure brings with it shame.

Asking a church member, "So, when's your family coming in?" feels like an innocuous question, especially if it reflects the reality of past years. But for a person who is grieving the dynamics of a family split, it can be a bitterly painful one.

This year, think about the assumptions behind your conversational questions. It's just as easy to ask, "Do you have any special plans?" The person may or may not choose to share with you the realities they are facing, but at least they won't feel the need either to correct you by sharing that painful truth on the spot or to stay silent, knowing that their pretending is covering a terrible brokenness.

Sometimes as we think about grief-sensitive responses we can tie ourselves up into anxious knots, worried about saying the wrong thing. It doesn't have to be that hard. It simply requires one adjustment: being willing to throw out our assumptions about what the holidays look like for other people and in so doing, creating a space where they can be however they are without judgment.

When you don't assume that you know the picture of their lives, it opens the door for them to be honest with you about their grief, whether it is during this holiday season or later.



Including, Abiding, Enjoying, Following, and Growing

A series exploring Westminster's foundational statements and strategic intention

As 2025 draws to a close, so does this series on the three strategic directions we have been pursuing all year. When your Session gathers for its kickoff retreat in January 2026, they will again consider our Mission and our Vision as the basis for either continuing the current strategic directions or perhaps crafting new ones.

Right now is an excellent time for **you** to review Westminster's progress throughout the year, just as they will. Then share your observations, your hopes, and your calling with the Session and Pastor to guide their work in January.

So...how'd we do?

In what ways did you find your church leaders and congregation members **being [more] foundational**? Did you and your family gain a deeper understanding of and appreciation for critical fundamentals such as Holy Scripture? Reformed theology? The history and traditions of our own Westminster worshipping community? What additional areas would you like to learn more about?

Did you observe our church family **being [more] Matthew 25**? In what ways have we built congregational vitality, becoming more effective as light and salt in Greenwood and the world? Have we made strides against racism and poverty? Have we made a positive difference in our neighbors' lives? When and in how many ways did we feed the hungry, visit the sick and lonely, welcome strangers, provide basic necessities like clothing and shelter? How do you envision us contributing even more significantly to the health and well-being of everyone in our community?

Finally, do you sense our congregation **being [more] connectional**? Interestingly, progress in this area is almost totally in *your* hands. Your staff and lay leaders can create some opportunities for building relationships, but ultimately, each of us is responsible for both reaching out and being open to receiving new connections. Christianity is a team sport! (And *not* a spectator sport, by the way.) Perhaps during Advent, you can adopt a personal spiritual discipline to nurture existing friendships and forge new ones. To inspire you, here and on page 17 are some images of Westminster being [more] connectional.



Let Us Pray...



For Those in Our Church

We share one another's joys and concerns:

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

- 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):

- Dan Blimline (*Mary Anne*)
- Jeff Brown (*Kuhls*)
- Judy Buck (*Lucia*)
- Iris Bullard (*Mary Anne*)
- Jeff Crisp (*Hammonds*)
- Michaela Dean (*Sarah*)
- Tatum Foley (*Heather*)
- Lib Grier (*many*)
- Lori Holloway (*Suzy*)
- Amy Jennings (*Denise*)
- Randy Kuhl (*Kuhls*)
- Katherine Martin (*many*)
- Dabney Mahanes (*Denise*)
- Susy Mitchell (*many*)
- Tarri McKinney (*Suzy*)
- Rick McGee (*Kuhls*)
- Lillian Moneyhun (*many*)
- Cameron Murphy (*Sarah*)
- Richard Pinkney (*Len*)
- The Radas (*Joyce*)
- Lorene Waldrep (*Denise*)
- Elle Willis (*Rogers*)
- 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 those recovering from natural and man-made disasters, especially in Jamaica
- For all children, especially those who lack loving, stable homes and basic necessities
- For persons affected by domestic violence
- For those living with mental, emotional, and/or physical illnesses
- For unity through the whole Body of Christ, that we may serve God as one

And God Saw That It Was Good



Bill Jacobs donates historical family pieces to the Thornwell Museum



Doris McInnes and Mary Frances Thompson join the Westminster family (*photo by Tim Rogers*)



↑ Tori Miller and Macie Watkins set up the Nativity scene while Rob Graves wrangles a window wreath →



To Workers Working on B&G Workday—Thank You!



Presbyterian Women worked with the Business Affairs Ministry Team to remove a diseased, overgrown tree from the courtyard. Thanks to our fearless volunteers, the church did *not* have to invest the \$1,000 or so that tree and stump removal usually cost.

Thank you, faithful stewards!





IN LOVING MEMORY OF
**LEONARD JOHN
BORNEMANN**

May 21, 1946 – November 10, 2025

Len is survived by his loving family: daughter Deborah Dunn and son-in-law George; son Lee Vartanian and spouse Ivy; son David Bornemann and spouse Cecelia; four grandchildren, Connor and Katie Dunn and Owen and Mays Vartanian; brother Larry Bornemann; as well as many cherished nieces, nephews, cousins, and in-laws.

He was preceded in death by his beloved wife Lynn Bornemann with whom he shared an unwavering love and bond that few couples ever achieve (he often remarked that their 1979 marriage was “The best decision I ever made”) and his parents Leonard (Bud) and Marge Bornemann.

A wonderful husband and father, tremendous leader in the community, and loyal friend—
Len’s presence enriched countless lives, especially his beloved Westminster family.