



Easter People

It has been said of the Church, that we are “Easter People.” What does that mean, I wonder? What do you think?



I think maybe it means that we are a people who have had an encounter with the risen Christ. Like the women who arrive at the tomb early in the morning wondering who will roll the stone away, we have expected obstacles, only to find the power of God has opened a way we could not have imagined (Mark 16:1-4). Like Mary, whose grief at Christ’s death has been compounded by the absence of his body, we have met Christ looking like a gardener (John 20:11-18), calling our name.

Like the disciples who denied him and abandoned him, Jesus meets us with forgiveness, saying, “Peace be with you” (John 20:19). Like Thomas, we have doubted, only to have Jesus offer us what we have needed to believe (John 20:24-29). Like the disciples walking home to Emmaus, we have met him in the ones who explain scripture to us, and we have met him in the breaking of the bread. (Luke 24:13-35).

Like Peter on the seashore, we are forgiven our denials, given the chance to declare our love, and pointed toward the work God has prepared for us. “Do you love me?” Jesus asked. “Then feed my sheep,” Jesus told him (John 21:15-17).

I think it means that we are a people who do not grieve like others do (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18), because we have hope in the resurrection, and the promises of Jesus. It means that we are a people who know that sometimes empty is a good thing. It means that we are a people with Good News to tell and good work to do!



During the six weeks after Easter, we Westminster Easter People will be taking a look at the Six Great Ends of the Church found in the *PC(USA) Book of Order* (F-1.0304). This foundation of our church polity* was adopted by the Presbyterian Church in 1910 and has since been a guide for the work of the church. You’ll find the complete list of the Six Great Ends on page 22, you’ll hear about them each week in worship, and you’ll find information about ways we’ll be digging deeper into a few of these ends through our Sunday Sustenance Meal in April and an art exhibit in May.

* the form of government of a religious denomination (*Merriam Webster*)

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The Six Great Ends of the Church describe the work we Easter People have been given to do, so that all might have an encounter with our Risen Lord!

With joy in our shared purpose, I am your pastor and friend,



Welcome, Happy Morning—Easter at Westminster

9:00 A.M.—Flowering and Fellowship

Gather in the courtyard for refreshments, music, and a time of festive fellowship. Bring flowers from your yard, or use those provided to cover the plain wooden cross with symbols of hope and new life (*see page 12*).

10:00 A.M.—Worship and Praise

Join together in the sanctuary or via live-streaming to sing Alleluias and give praise to our risen Lord! Special music will be provided by Elizabeth Watkins, singing “In Christ Alone.”

“Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the LORD rises upon you.”

Isaiah 60:1



Children’s Sunday School: Moving Into Easter

Submitted by Kathy Gillespie

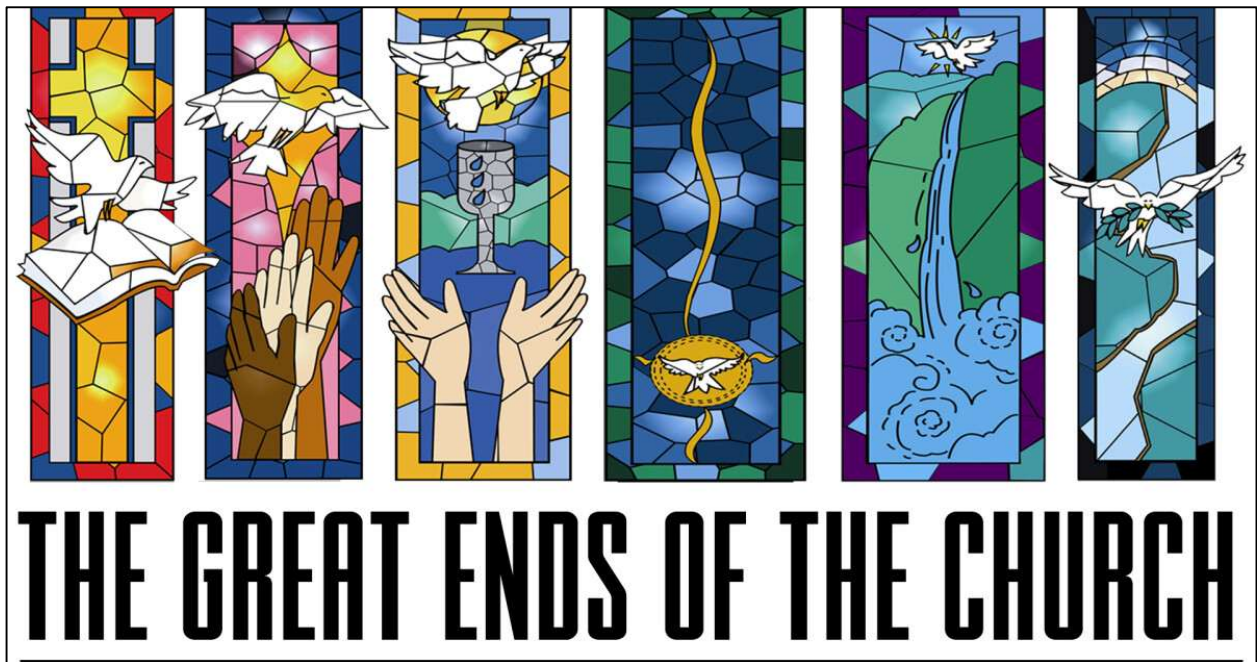
During March, the class read and discussed parables from the Gospel of Matthew. They also opened child-appropriate “resurrection eggs,” discussed the symbols hidden inside each egg, and then hung the symbol on a Lenten tree. As Easter drew near, they read about the days and events leading to the cross, including the Last Supper.

In addition to waiting and preparing for Easter, the class recognized “Mr. Roger’s Day,” with emphasis on showing compassion and kindness to others.

After Easter, the students will open the remaining eggs that celebrate the risen Christ. During April, the class will continue studying parables that Jesus told. They will read the actual scripture from the Bible, as well as illustrated versions from the book, *Favorite Parables from the Bible*.

The children are looking forward to Vacation Bible Camp in June. If you have children or grandchildren who would like to participate, look for dates and details in the newsletter or call the church office.





THE GREAT ENDS OF THE CHURCH

Eastertide Sermon Series: The Six Great Ends of the Church

The Westminster Catechism's first question is this: What is the chief end of [humanity]? And the answer is this: To glorify God and enjoy God forever! In 1910, Presbyterians sought to focus this question and expand the answer from the chief end of humanity to the chief ends of the Church. They identified six that are illuminated in the banners illustrated above and will be explored in our Easter Season worship series.

April 5: Resurrection in the Shadow of the Cross

Easter/Communion/Food Bank Collection

- † Isaiah 25:6-9
- † Luke 24:13-48

April 12: The Proclamation of the Gospel for the Salvation of Humankind

- † Psalm 107
- † Matthew 28:16-20
- † Ephesians 2:1-10

April 19: Shelter, Nurture, and Spiritual Fellowship of the Children of God

- † Psalm 23
- † Matthew 19:13-15
- † Ephesians 2:11-22

April 26: The Maintenance of Divine Worship

- † Psalm 150
- † Matthew 21:12-16
- † Ephesians 3:14-21

May 3: The Preservation of the Truth

Communion/Food Bank Collection

Guest Preacher: Brian Purcell

- † Psalm 25:4-5
- † John 8:31-38
- † John 14:15-17
- † Ephesians 4:1-16

May 10: The Promotion of Social Righteousness

- † Psalm 63:1-8
- † Matthew 25:31-46
- † Ephesians 4:25-32

May 17: The Exhibition of the Kingdom of God to the World

- † Psalm 19:1-4
- † Matthew 13:31-33
- † Ephesians 5:1-2

May 24: Worship on the Water Kickoff

Worship/Church Picnic at Camp Fellowship

Westminster Happenings

Wednesday
April 1

Lenten Pilgrimage Worship & Luncheon

Gather at Morris Chapel for worship at 12:30 P.M.
Enjoy lunch before or after.

Note: Books & Brown Bags is on break and will resume April 15th

Thursday
April 2

Maundy Thursday (see page 9)

Communion

Worship at 7:00 P.M. in person or via live streaming.
Experience again the power of the original Lord's Supper.

Friday
April 3

Good Friday (see page 10)

Remember Christ's agony and sacrifice for your sin.

Saturday
April 4

Holy Saturday (see page 11)

Mindful Meditation

Meet in the Fellowship Hall at 10:00 A.M.

Sunday
April 5

Easter!!

Flowering of the Cross (see page 12)

Gather at 9:00 A.M. in the Courtyard.

Celebrate Christ's resurrection with flowers, fellowship, and music.

Resurrection in the Shadow of the Cross

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

Echo the prophet, saying, "This is the Lord...let us be glad and rejoice...."

"Behold, this is our God; we have waited for him, that he might save us.

This is the Lord; we have waited for him;
let us be glad and rejoice in his salvation."

Isaiah 25:9

Monday
April 6

Notes:

- The church office is closed.
- Caroline is on vacation through April 11.
- Noon Prayer Time will not meet today.

BEMA Bible Discussion Group

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

Westminster Happenings, *continued*

Tuesday
April 7

Presbyterian Women's Circle (*see page 13*)

Share fellowship and Bible study via the venue that works for you:

- In the Joe Gettys Room at 11:30 A.M.—bring your lunch
- Online at 7:00 P.M. via <https://meet.google.com/dae-qynz-bim>

Lessons are taken from the 2025-2026 *Horizons* study guide, *Finding Resilience, Joy, and Identity in Jesus Christ*.

Wednesday
April 8

Note: Books & Brown Bags is on break and will resume April 15th

Thursday
April 9

Evening Study Group: Online

Link into <https://meet.google.com/dae-qynz-bim> at 7:00 P.M.

Dive into the Word wherever you are.

Saturday
April 11

Mindful Meditation

Meet in the Fellowship Hall at 10:00 A.M.

Sunday
April 12

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.

Westminster Inquirer's Mini-Series (*see page 14*)

Meet in the Fellowship Hall at 9:00 A.M.

Explore what it means to be a part of a PC(USA) congregation.

Proclamation of the Gospel for the Salvation of Humankind

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

Spread the Good News—"by grace you have been saved"!

Worship & Music Ministry Team Meeting

Gather in the Choir Room immediately following worship.

Plan for the wonderful ways Westminster will be worshipping.

Family Faith Formation Lunch

Assemble in the Fellowship Hall immediately following worship.

Bring your ideas for Summer and Fall activities for families and kids.

Westminster Happenings, *continued*

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| Monday
April 13 | <p>Prayer Time in the Upper Zoom
Look for the Monday prayer list email and join via Zoom at noon.</p> <p>BEMA Bible Discussion Group
Meet in the Joe Gettys Room at 6:00 P.M.</p> <p>Foster the City “Seeds of Hope” Informational Dinner (<i>see page 26</i>)
Come to Legacy City Church at 6:00 P.M.
Learn more about foster care systems and opportunities in the Lakelands.</p> |
| Tuesday
April 14 | <p>Business Affairs Ministry Team Meeting
Meet in the Parlor at 6:00 P.M.
Come see how church business works behind the scenes.</p> <p>Congregational Care & Fellowship Committee Meeting
Congregate at 7:00 P.M. in the Choir Room.
Bring your ideas for connecting, sharing, and celebrating.</p> |
| Wednesday
April 15 | <p>Books & Brown Bags Study Group
Come to the Joe Gettys Room at 6:00 P.M.
Engage with our new book, <i>Evidence Not Seen</i>, by Darlene Deibler Rose.</p> |
| Thursday
April 16 | <p>Evening Study Group: Online
Link into https://meet.google.com/dae-qynz-bim at 7:00 P.M.
Enter God’s expansive virtual classroom for fellowship and learning.</p> |
| Saturday
April 18 | <p>Mindful Meditation
Meet in the Fellowship Hall at 10:00 A.M.</p> <p>Larry Dozier Memorial Service
Remember and worship in the Sanctuary at 3:30 P.M.
Celebrate the long and significant Christian life of our dear friend.</p> |
| Sunday
April 19 | <p>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.</p> <p>Westminster Inquirer’s Mini-Series
Meet in the Fellowship Hall at 9:00 A.M.
Learn about Westminster’s history and traditions.</p> |

Westminster Happenings, *continued*

Sunday April 19, <i>continued</i>	Shelter, Nurture, and Spiritual Fellowship of the Children of God Worship at 10:00 A.M. in person or via live streaming. Experience the joy of being a member of the household of God. Sunday Sustenance Savor a tasty Thai lunch provided by Chef Rob and his sous chefs. Bring some extra cash to support Foster the City (<i>see page 26</i>). Mission Fair (<i>see page 13</i>) During lunch, explore displays from several of our mission partners. Learn more about Community Initiatives, Foster the City, and Thornwell.
Monday April 20	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 April 22	Books & Brown Bags Study Group Come to the Joe Gettys Room at 6:00 P.M. Continued discussing <i>Evidence Not Seen</i> , by Darlene Deibler Rose.
Thursday April 23	PFLAG Meeting Connect in the Joe Gettys Room at 6:00 P.M. Find support with fellow members of the LGBTQ+ community and friends. Evening Study Group: Online Link into https://meet.google.com/dae-qynz-bim at 7:00 P.M. Jump into the discussion wherever you are—your input is invaluable.
Saturday April 25	Sally H. Kauffmann Memorial Walk to Fight Hunger (<i>see page 13</i>) Register at the Jeff May Sports Complex at 7:30 A.M. Help raise awareness and critical funding for our Food Bank and Soup Kitchen. Mindful Meditation Meet in the Fellowship Hall at 10:00 A.M.

They will hunger no more and thirst no more;
the sun will not strike them, nor any scorching heat,
for the Lamb at the center of the throne will be their shepherd...

Revelation 7:16-17a

Westminster Happenings, *continued*

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.

Westminster Inquirer's Mini-Series
Meet in the Fellowship Hall at 9:00 A.M.
Find out about ministry teams and their role in our church.

**Sunday
April 26** **The Maintenance of Divine Worship**
Worship at 10:00 A.M. in person or via live streaming.
Praise the Lord; praise him in his sanctuary...and everywhere.

Stated Session Meeting
Meet in the Joe Gettys Room immediately following worship.
Enjoy God and follow Jesus by tending to the business of the church.

**Monday
April 27** **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
April 29** **Books & Brown Bags Study Group**
Come to the Joe Gettys Room at 6:00 P.M.
Share your reactions to *Evidence Not Seen*, by Darlene Deibler Rose.

Creative Expressions Arts Exploration Event
Assemble in the Fellowship Hall at 5:00 P.M.
Create Your Contribution to Our May 17th Art Exhibit (*see pages 15-16*).

**Thursday
April 30** **Evening Study Group: Online**
Link into <https://meet.google.com/dae-qynz-bim> at 7:00 P.M.
Invite fellowship and study into your own space.

Save the Date

**Sunday
May 17** **"The Exhibition of the Kingdom of God to the World" Art Exhibit**
Worship at 10:00 A.M.—public reception at 2:00 P.M. (*see page 15*).
Explore the many ways Westminster artists see the Kingdom of God.

**Thursday
May 21** **Bobby Jo Valentine Concert (*see pages 21 and 28*)**
Come to Westminster at 7:00 P.M. and include all your friends.
Listen to an award-winning folk/pop artist share his God-given gifts.

Maundy Thursday: “I Give You a New Commandment”

Excerpted from *pcusa.org*

Maundy Thursday begins the Three Days (or *Triduum*), remembering the new commandment that Christ gave us in word and deed as he taught us how to love one another, washing our feet as a servant. We also celebrate the Lord’s Supper, remembering the meal Christ shared with his disciples before his death.



The name *Maundy* is taken from the Latin *mandatum*, which means *commandment*, one of the first words sung at the ceremony of the washing of the feet, “I give you a new commandment” (John 13:34); also from the commandment of Christ that we should imitate his loving humility in the washing of the feet (John 13:14-17).

The service of the Triduum is not inherently mournful. The penitential acts of Maundy Thursday have celebratory aspects as well: restoration through the bold declaration of pardon; the act of footwashing connoting humility and intimacy; the celebration of the Lord’s Supper embodying the mystery of Christ’s enduring redemptive presence. Maundy Thursday’s acts provide the paradox of a celebratively somber and solemnly celebrative service.

The final act of this service is the evocative stripping of the worship space. This is most effectively done in absolute silence, and in an unhurried, orderly fashion. The stark, bare, unadorned church now reflects Jesus’ abandonment during the night in Gethsemane. Refer to page 10 to get suggestions for bringing this service to life if you are live-streaming it

Experiencing Maundy Thursday Worship Online

The Maundy Thursday service on April 2 offers special challenges for the remote worshipper. The latter portions of the liturgy move toward the darkness of the Passion; therefore, the order of worship incorporates relatively long periods of quiet contemplation culminating in the ritual stripping of the altar, covering of the cross, and the dramatic slamming shut of the Bible. Then the congregation exits in silence.

In preparation for the intensity of these moments, consider lowering the lights in your home worship space. During the service, seven candles will be extinguished. Even if you don’t have that many, light your own Christ candle to focus on during times of prayer and meditation. And blow it out when the last sanctuary candle goes out.



Maundy Thursday recreates the original Last Supper. Be sure to have some

sort of bread and juice or wine available, so you can participate fully in the sacrament.

As the sacred symbols in the sanctuary are stripped or draped, perhaps you have a cross or religious art that you can cover or put away until Easter morning. Close your eyes or turn off your computer screen to experience the darkness more fully and listen more acutely.

At the appropriate moment, slam shut your own Bible. Then take a moment to sit in silence in your own sacred space, and ponder the magnitude of Christ’s sacrifice before you return to the workaday world. May you find blessing in this worship wherever you are.

What Could Possibly be *Good* about Good Friday?

Downloaded from <https://ourdailybread.org/three-days-that-changed-the-world/article1/>

We call the day that Jesus was crucified Good Friday. But what did happen on that day that we should deem it “good”? Let us re-visit that day to recall the series of seven sayings that Jesus spoke on the cross to understand why. These sayings are sometimes referred to as the *Seven Last Words*. Of these seven sayings, the first three describe Christ’s conclusion of His dealings with us—each statement can be summed up with a key word.



Forgiveness: But Jesus was saying, “Father, forgive them; for they do not know what they are doing.” (*Luke 23:34*)

Redemption: And He said to him, “Truly I say to you, today you shall be with Me in Paradise.” (*Luke 23:43*)

Compassion: When Jesus then saw His mother, and the disciple whom He loved standing nearby, He said to His mother, “Woman, behold, your son!” Then He said to the disciple, “Behold, your mother!” From that hour, the disciple took her into his own household. (*John 19:26-27*)

Having completed His earthly tasks, the Savior now turns His attention heavenward and to the ultimate task at hand. His final four statements engage His Father in the redemptive act that is occurring on the cross of Calvary. They express the spiritual aspects of Christ’s work as He progresses through these stages.

Abandonment: About the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, quoting Psalm 22:1, saying, “*Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?*” that is, “My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?” (*Matthew 27:46*)

Readiness: After this, Jesus, knowing that all things had already been accomplished, to fulfill the Scripture, said, “I am thirsty.” (*John 19:28*)

Fulfillment: Therefore when Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, “It is finished!” And He bowed His head and gave up His spirit. (*John 19:30*)

Release: And Jesus, crying out with a loud voice, said, “Father, into Your hands I commit My spirit.” Having said this, He breathed His last. (*Luke 23:46*)

When Jesus Christ died on the cross and then was resurrected, the power of evil, the power of darkness and sin, was broken once and forever, and no longer holds us in its grip. And He has made for us a new and living way to God, making us children of God with an eternal and unchanging identity, a day that is truly wonderful for us.

*Lord, in the darkest of times, Your death brings us courage, light, and hope.
Heal the brokenhearted, reconcile all the brokenness, and
set free those who have been released from bondage,
so that they too may experience
the wonder of this salvation.
Amen!*

Holy Saturday

Excerpted from <https://ourdailybread.org/three-days-that-changed-the-world/article2/>

The story of the crucifixion and resurrection is so familiar that we tend to jump too quickly into the resurrection, simplifying the tension and impact of the story and reducing the weight of Friday's crucifixion. What about Holy Saturday—what meaning does it hold for us?

We do not pay much attention to Holy Saturday, perhaps because we think that nothing happened on that day. But the fact that Jesus was lying still in the tomb on Holy Saturday means a great deal to us.

When Jesus was buried in the tomb, the disciples' spirits sank to their lowest point. The tomb symbolized death, grief, and despair. They no longer had Jesus with them! They must have felt that they had lost the most important pillar of their lives; there was no more direction or meaning. In short, their dreams had been shattered. But the truth is that in their hour of despair, Jesus was coming through death and darkness for them—He had descended to death and triumphed, and followers of Jesus Christ would never have to enter there!

When we feel disappointment, or despair, or a loss of direction, or even not feeling His presence, we may think that Jesus has left our world. We need to know that even in the tomb, Jesus *never* left His disciples. Instead, at our lowest point, His love for us is revealed more deeply.

It's a day for silence, fasting and prayer, a day to quietly identify with the buried Jesus, to realize all that He has done for us and to prepare us to embrace the joy of resurrection.

Holy Saturday Visio Divina & Prayer

From *The Presbyterian Outlook 2026 Lenten Devotional*



*God of the in-between days, meet us in this Holy Saturday silence.
Hold us in the tension between grief and hope, between what has been and what will be.
When the world feels hushed and heavy, draw us into your steady compassion.
Prepare our hearts for the dawn only you can bring. Amen!*

Easter Day! Christ Defeats Death—Beauty Defeats Ugliness

August 2026 marks the 45th anniversary of Westminster as a church. During those faithful, fruitful years, this congregation has established many meaningful traditions that are special to our worshipping community. Here's one we enjoy every Easter morning.



From the Cradle to the Cross

On Easter Sunday before worship, Westminsterites gather in the courtyard by the fountain to adorn a plain wooden cross with flowers. The flowers represent spring and the return to life that it brings. But what about that cross? Where did it come from and how did it become a tradition?

The story of Westminster's Easter cross actually begins shortly after Thanksgiving in 1996. With Christmas just around the corner, Lou Johnson and Nancy Dozier decided they'd better get busy and round up a big tree to decorate with Christmas ornaments in the sanctuary.



COVID-era Virtual Flowered Cross

Lou was Westminster's Certified Christian Educator, and was on staff from 1996 to 2000. She had a big job, wrangling lots of Sunday school classes, youth activities, and "other duties as assigned." Fortunately, she had a big heart and a lot of energy for all of the above!

Nancy and Lou piled into her car and drove to a Christmas tree farm not far away in search of the *perfect* evergreen. They settled on a magnificent specimen—a 12-footer!!—and delivered it to the church. With a lot of help from Larry Dozier, and an equal mix of grumbling and giggling, the three managed to get the tree into the sanctuary and onto a stand.

Fast forward to January 1997. Just as the tree was stripped of its ornaments and ready for retirement, Lou was struck with an inspiration! What if we used the wood from the tree to make a cross to decorate in the courtyard on Easter morning? Lou approached member and ace woodworker Tom Bryson with the idea. His response? "I love it! We can see the joy of Christmas and Christ's birth extended to the joy of Easter and Christ's resurrection!"



So this Easter morning, as we so gratefully gather once again to flower our cross, remember the creativity of Lou and Tom, and the joy of Christmas eternally linked with the joy of Easter.

Footnote: In 1996, the Greenwood City Fire Marshall had to deal with a serious church fire that was linked to their live tree. So live trees were banned, and our cross was made from the *last* live tree that Westminster ever had. *Thank you, Nancy Dozier, for sharing this delightful story!*

Wonderful Women of Westminster



Presbyterian Women's Circle Meets First Tuesdays September–May

In Person: 11:30 A.M. in Joe Gettys Room (bring your own lunch)

Online: 7:00 P.M. via <https://meet.google.com/dae-qynz-bim>

Our wonderful Presbyterian Women (PW) of Westminster had a busy month in March. They provided an elegant and much-appreciated bereavement luncheon for the family of The Rev. John Bacot following the service celebrating his life. The Circle, led by Camilla Cathcart McDevitt and Doris McInnes, and the Congregational Care Ministry Team facilitated the recent visit of the student mission group from Boston College, and the family night supper that was part of our welcome for them. Always good stewards of Westminster's hospitality equipment, the women are planning to clean the fabric tablecloths used for special events.

The April 7th meetings will feature lessons from the Presbyterian Women's study book, *Finding Resilience, Joy, and Our Identity in Jesus Christ*. All women of all ages are welcome—no prior PW experience required!

April 19 Sunday Sustenance and Mission Fair

Great Ends #2: Shelter, Nurture, and Spiritual Fellowship of the Children of God

At Westminster, we all know that we are COGS—Children of God, that is! From youngest to oldest, we all enjoy the “Time for All God's Children” in worship, and we all understand ourselves to be life-long learners as we participate in Bible studies, Sunday School classes, and special interest offerings. We not only understand ourselves to be COGS, but we also understand *all* people to be COGs, and we take seriously our call to care for as many of God's children as we can! To that end, we enjoy ministry partnerships with several organizations that we are pleased to welcome to worship and lunch with us on Sunday, April 19.

Come lend your support and learn more about the mission partners who help us fulfill our calling to provide “shelter, nurture, and spiritual fellowship for the children of God.” We are pleased to welcome representatives from **Community Initiatives**, parent organization of our Toddler Learning Center; **Foster the City**, recipient of our offering at this month's Sunday Sustenance Offering; and **Thornwell Children's Home**, our long-term partner in strengthening families throughout South Carolina, Georgia, and Florida.

Food Bank Hunger Walk Scheduled for April 25th



Westminster is once again a Water Station Sponsor for the Walk to Fight Hunger, benefitting the Greenwood Food Bank. This year, the Food Bank of Lakelands is proud to dedicate the walk in memory of Sally H. Kauffman, a long-time friend of Westminster.

This family-friendly event is designed to raise awareness and critical funding for our Food Bank and soup kitchen, and programs that directly support children, families, and seniors in need. The walk takes place on April 25, 2026, at the Jeff May Complex. Registration starts at 7:30 A.M. and the walk begins at 8:00 A.M. You can register by going to fbgc.charityproud.org/EventRegistration/Index/26979.

Things That Make You Go “Hmmmm...”

Welcome to Westminster Inquirer’s Mini-Series
Sunday mornings April–May
8:45 A.M. – 9:45 A.M.
Fellowship Hall

Looking out from the Westminster pulpit these days is incredibly exciting! We see welcoming hugs and handshakes, we hear laughter, and we experience the thrill of spotting many new faces among the familiar ones. Look at what God is doing at Westminster!

Sometimes, we also see puzzled expressions on those faces. “What are we doing?” “Why do we do that??” “That’s not what we did in my old church!” “I’m new to this church stuff—this just seems weird to me.”

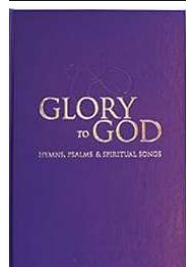
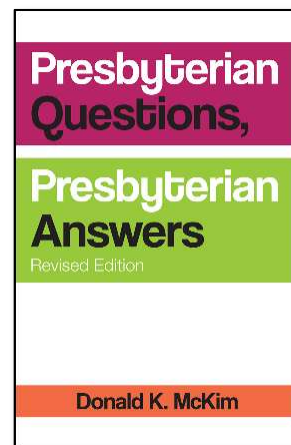
At Westminster, we love people who ask good questions, and we love coming together to find answers. To help do that, we are offering a special Welcome to Westminster mini-series on Sunday mornings throughout April and May (excluding Memorial Day weekend). The purpose of this series is to get to know you better, and for you to get to know us better.

Each session starts with fellowship time from 8:45 A.M. to 9:00 A.M. Then we’ll explore Presbyterian theology and practice, as well as learn about Westminster history and congregational life. This will be a time for you to get to know our mission and vision, our leaders, your classmates, and our building better. Pastor Caroline is the facilitator, and she will be assisted by guest presenters, including, among others, the elders currently serving on the Session. (“What’s an elder? What’s a Session?” Come to class and find out!)

As a focal point for our discussions about being Presbyterian, we’ll use *Presbyterian Questions, Presbyterian Answers*, by David McKim. This lively Q&A-style book will step us through core issues of our faith and practice, including our understanding of the Bible, of God and God’s relationship with Humanity, of the church and its role in individual and community life, and much, much more. Copies of the book are available at no charge. And Pastor Caroline is happy to provide you with the full syllabus on request.

If you are prayerfully discerning whether you are called to join Westminster, this series will be a valuable part of your process. And if you are simply curious and eager to learn, you are equally welcome and equally likely to come away with deeper insights and understanding about your relationship with God and church.

Put these dates in your calendar, and plan to set aside this time on Sunday mornings to dive more deeply into your faith and your faith family. Note that Sunday School for Children and Youth is always available on Sunday mornings.



Things That Make You Go “Hum!”

Be sure to let someone on the Worship & Music Ministry Team know what hymns you’d enjoy singing this summer. Browse through our new Glory to God hymnals to see what old treasures and new potential favorites you can find. Help us enjoy God by offering joyful, noisy praise! You might even leave worship humming something holy and happy!

“The Exhibition of the Kingdom of God to the World” Art Exhibit

*The heavens are telling the glory of God, and the firmament proclaims his handiwork.
Day to day pours forth speech, and night to night declares knowledge.
There is no speech, nor are there words; their voice is not heard;
yet their voice goes out through all the earth and their words to the end of the world.
Psalm 19:1-4*

*He put before them another parable: “The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed
that someone took and sowed in his field; it is the smallest of all the seeds,
but when it has grown it is the greatest of shrubs and becomes a tree,
so that the birds of the air come and make nests in its branches.”*

*He told them another parable: “The kingdom of heaven is like yeast
that a woman took and mixed in with three measures of flour until all of it was leavened.”
Matthew 13:31-33*

Where have you seen the kingdom of God exhibited by the church? Where have you seen the kingdom of God exhibited in the world? Can you show us with your art? With a photograph, a dance, a song, a poem, a painting, a sculpture?

We are now soliciting art from Westminster members and friends for our “Exhibition of the Kingdom of God to the World” Art Exhibit.

Exhibit: Sunday, May 17

- 10:00 A.M. – 11:00 A.M.
Art will be exhibited in the sanctuary as part of worship
- 2:00 P.M. – 4:00 P.M.
Public Exhibit and Courtyard Reception

Art Submissions:

- Any art form is welcome! (painting, sketching, sculpture, photography, poetry, dance, song...)
- All ages are welcome to submit
- Your art should complete the sentence, “The kingdom of God is like...”
- Deadline for submitting is Sunday, May 10. Submissions are to be display-ready and may be delivered to the church Monday – Thursday, 9:00 to noon or on Sunday mornings.
- With your submission, please include the following:
 - Artist’s full name
 - Description of your art medium (watercolor, photograph...)
 - Brief artist’s statement telling how your piece illustrates the theme



Drawing by Sarah Parks

Not sure how to get started? Participate in our Creative Expressions event—see page 16!

Creative Expressions Arts Exploration Event



Wednesday, April 29
5:00 P.M. – 7:00 P.M. in Fellowship Hall

Join us for a time of enjoying fellowship and creating art. Several of our resident artists will share their expertise and materials for you to create your own offerings to our “The Exhibition of the Kingdom of God to the World” Art Exhibit (*see page 15*).

The evening opens with demonstrations from our artists and an invitation to their station. Then you may choose one of the stations where you can create your own piece. Stations are: 1) Poetry, 2) Drawing, 3) Photography, 4) Watercolors, 5) Collage. Snacks and beverages will be provided.

Celebrate Good Times!

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

- ❖ 4th – Mary Corley
- ❖ 10th – Corban Irons
- ❖ 11th – Margaret Funke
- ❖ 17th – Anna Burch
- ❖ 21st – Phillip Dennis
- ❖ 25th – Callie Rose Watkins
- ❖ 26th – Macie Hale Watkins
- ❖ 27th – Claire Kuhl & Kim Purcell



Additionally, let's rejoice with these fine couples celebrating their wedding anniversary this month:

- ❖ April 10th – Emily & Walter Hughes
- ❖ April 12th – Richard & Mary Ann Wilson

When Passing the Peace...

Most Sunday mornings, shortly after we have confessed our sins and received God's gracious forgiveness, we participate in the passing of the peace. The words of this ritual are both simple and powerful:

“May the peace of Christ be with you.”
“And also with you!”

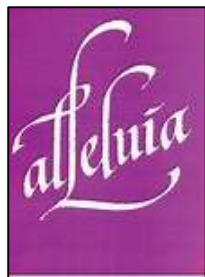


As you pass the peace to old friends and new in the pews, remember there are others eager to share Christ's peace as well—those in the balcony above, in the chancel up front, and those online. Take a moment to flash a peace sign and a smile to the camera, the balcony, and the chancel, so you are including everyone.

Sing Alleluia!

by Joyce Alexander

Vibrant and penetrating,
Alleluias float through the air,
A clarion call
Showing a new way.
The lilt of notes
Call to all who would
have ears
Come, join in, celebrate,
O dance and sing!
Alleluia! Alleluia!



WPC Needs YOU!

Our church abounds with opportunities for engagement and service. You don't have to be an Elder or even an “official” church member or ministry team vounteer to keep us moving forward.

Consider becoming a worship host or Tech Team member. Would you enjoy serving as liturgist? Perhaps you can help out in the nursery or the kitchen once in a while?

Sharing your special gifts enriches everyone...especially you!



News & Notes from N&CE

*Submitted by Ginny Cartee, Nurture & Christian Education
Ministry Team Chair*

Since the last newsletter, committee members have been working hard to keep activities and classes within the church on track.

Children and Youth Activities

Families with children and youth are invited to save the following dates:

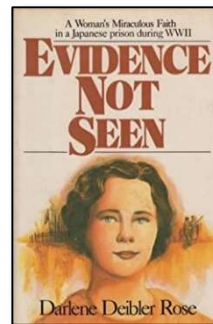
- **Sunday, April 12 Planning Meeting**—this get-together will include lunch, time for parents and young people to meet separately for brainstorming, and time for sharing ideas to organize summer and fall activities.
- **Monday, June 1 - Thursday, June 4 Vacation Bible Camp**—be on the lookout for details and opportunities to help with planning this popular event!

Adult Studies

Beth Hammond, Karl Schwarzmann, and Caroline Dennis report that Spring Adult Sunday School, BEMA, Presbyterian Women In-Person Group, and Wednesday night Books & Brown Bags session were all well attended.

Books & Brown Bags focused on *How to Know a Person*, by David Brooks. The group will take two weeks off and return on April 15 to discuss the book *Evidence Not Seen*, by Darlene Deibler Rose.

The “Better Together Healthy Living Class” spring session has concluded. Class members greatly appreciate the information from leaders Cathy and Susan.



Online Opportunities

Mary Frances Thompson and Ginny Cartee are serving as leaders for two new online study and fellowship opportunities. Both groups meet at 7:00 P.M.

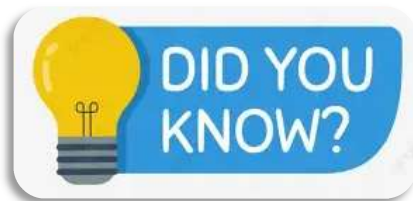
- **Thursday Evening Virtual Bible Study**—just wrapped up Will Willimon’s Lenten study, *The Last Supper*, and will continue to parallel the Sunday Morning study curriculum (currently under development)
- **Virtual Circle Presbyterian Women**—meets the first Tuesday of April and the first Tuesday of May.

Use this link for the Thursday Study and the Virtual Circle PW groups:
<https://meet.google.com/dae-qynz-bim>



On the Drawing Board

The N&E team is working on plans for the future including a Bible 101 Class, young adults activities, a Women’s Retreat during the Fall, and a work or service Camp. We’ll also be supporting activities for Summer Dinner Church.

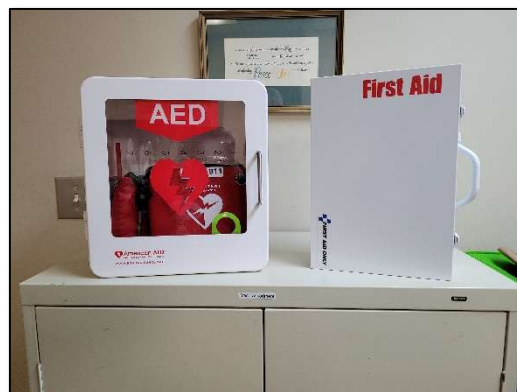


WPC Offers Support for Medical Needs

A series of tasty tidbits worth knowing about your church home

Being the Body of Christ means that churches have a responsibility to support the spiritual, emotional, *and physical* needs of their people. So Westminster offers support for your medical needs in several ways. First—you will be in our prayers! Beyond that, you have access to the following:

- **First Aid Kits.** If you are injured while on our campus, you can use one of our three first aid kits. One is located in the kitchen, mounted on the wall near the serving window. The second is hanging in the sacristy (the small room just off the chancel through the door behind the piano). The third kit is especially for use in significant trauma situations, and it is on top of the storage cabinet in the choir robing area.



- **AEDs.** In case of a cardiac emergency, Westminster has two Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs). They are mounted on the wall in distinctive white cabinets, and they are labeled with clearly visible signs. You will find one in the hallway near the church office, and one in the hallway between the kitchen and Fellowship Hall. In the cabinet with the AED, you'll also find emergency oxygen.

The AEDs are highly automated, designed to be used even by those with little or no training. South Carolina does have a “Good Samaritan” law that protects those who step in to help during a medical crisis.

- **NARCAN.** If you suspect someone is experiencing a drug overdose, NARCAN nasal spray is available in the two first aid kits, and also in the cabinet of the church office.
- **Transport Wheelchair.** If someone has mobility issues and needs a transport wheelchair to navigate around the building, one is available in a storage area on the office hallway, beneath the back stairs, near the elevator.
- **Medical Equipment Lending Library.** If you temporarily need crutches, a walker, a bedside toilet, or a transport wheelchair, contact the church office to borrow one that has been donated to the church.



Fortunately, we are blessed to count in our congregation several medical professionals and a few folks trained in first aid and CPR. **If you are trained in first aid/CPR or would like to be, please notify the church office.** When an emergency strikes during worship or other activities, knowing who has the right skills can save time and therefore save a life! **Scholarships are available for individuals interested in completing Red Cross training.**

In the Spotlight: Wendy & Richard Whiting

This month, the getting-to-know-you spotlight falls on Wendy and Richard Whiting, who return to Westminster after several years at another local church. You may feel like you already know Richard from his years leading *The Index-Journal* and delivering his Whiting's Writings column on the op-ed page. Or perhaps you've seen him steal scenes on stage at the Greenwood Community Theatre. While Wendy keeps a lower profile, she has a quick wit, a ready laugh, and a deep devotion to her kids, grandkids, and yes—even her crazy husband. Here are the Whiting's answers to our five traditional silly questions.



Wendy

- 1. What gives you joy?** To have all my sweet family together. One daughter and her family live here in Greenwood and the other is in New York. So getting together is very special to me.
- 2. What drives you crazy?** Richard!! <Ha ha ha ha ha!> Seriously, I can say that my life would not be the same without him. I treasure (*almost*) every day we've shared together.
- 3. What's your favorite piece of music?** "Here Comes the Sun," by The Beatles.
- 4. What's your favorite thing to do when you have spare time?** Go to the ocean.
- 5. What's your favorite meal?** Italian is my favorite meal, and bread is my favorite food.

Richard

- 1. What gives you joy?** Mainly, my family and watching our grandchildren grow up. Traveling to see places and friends is another joy. And yes, there is joy in returning to WPC nearly 20 years to the day from when we first joined. Also, much of what beauty the world offers brings me joy.
- 2. What drives you crazy?** I won't give you the entire list, but here are a few: Drivers who drive below the speed limit while in the left lane of a 2-lane highway, horrendous typos and misspellings (did I spell that correctly?), when things—especially expensive things—are left precariously and unnecessarily positioned on a table or counter in such a way as they can be easily knocked off and broken, pictures left hanging crooked on the wall (who are you calling OCD?!), having to repeat something I just said, waiting for that last bit of (insert liquid here, such as ketchup or shampoo) to finally emerge from the bottle. Oh, and also having to repeat something I just said.
- 3. What's your favorite piece of music?** Tough one here. I have an eclectic collection. Among my favorite musicians who produce many of my favorite pieces are Yes, Genesis, Diana Krall, ... never mind. It's a long list.

Continued on page 20

Continued from page 19



4. What's your favorite thing to do when you have spare time? That can vary. A good cigar and a good single malt or small-batch bourbon are near the top.

5. What's your favorite meal? Don't really have a favorite. Love a good ribeye, medium rare, with a baked potato, mushrooms, asparagus and salad. With a glass of good red wine. But I also enjoy chicken and many seafood dishes. Perhaps my favorite meal is the one I last ate.

It's in the BAGS!

Submitted by Bill Kimler and Richard Whiting

Last month, a new team was formed to identify, prioritize, and address the full constellation of needs and opportunities related to our facility. Under the leadership of Building & Grounds chair Richard Whiting and Business Affairs chair Bill Kimler, this dedicated bunch choose a new name and continues their good work.



The BaGS team (Buildings and Grounds Stewardship) held our second review of a lengthy and deliberative list of desired improvements and repairs for the Westminster Presbyterian facilities. Our Pastor started us off with prayerful deliberation to look not only at what *needs to be done* but also at *what could be done* to better serve the community and to our mission statement to grow disciples.

The group has begun prioritizing long-term, near-term and regularly scheduled items. Soon, with the Session's blessing, we'll embark on that journey to make the changes we want to see!

Many thanks also to David Hammond for leading the BaGS members on a pair of very informative walking tours of the buildings. We received history as well as practical facts about the buildings in which we meet, plan, discuss, and worship.

So far, we now have the new sink for the kitchen, and have to find a right and appropriate faucet for it (not your standard sink faucet on this behemoth!), get a person lined up to cut out countertop and cabinetry to install the sink, and then—praise the Lord!—get the plumber to attach and replace plumbing where needed (both sinks) and install the new dishwasher. We should have a special ceremony to mark the occasion when all is done. [From Richard:] I'll provide a bottle of champagne we can break—or not.

Foster the City presents Seeds of Hope



This event is for those who want to learn more about foster care in the Lakelands. Hosted at Legacy City Church on April 13 at 6:00 P.M., the evening includes free dinner and childcare, foster licensing agencies on site, stories from former and current foster families, and the opportunity to discover how you might be able to plant seeds of hope for kids in need. Register at legacycity.church/fosterthecity.

Man Pulling Weeds

Submitted by Tim Rogers

I see him there, like a hare
Pulling weeds from here and there

On his stool, close to earth
Like a bird on his perch

In his work, and not "out there"
Wonder why he has that stare?

A life unfolded, on its own
Was it recorded like a poem?

Did he travel, where'd he go?
Maybe stayed here long ago

As a child, did he do this?
Maybe because his dad
was missed?

Bet his mother loved the ground
Shared her love of this old town

Did a girl find him a catch?
Cause he liked to go and fetch.

Was his work inside or out?
Was he stuck inside, no doubt!

And at this time, and near the end
Found his peace in weeds, Amen!



Bobby Jo Valentine Bio

Bobby Jo Valentine's music exists outside the lines of any genre, but the music's thoughtful, spirit-focused lyrics and catchy melodies reach listeners across all walks of life. He's found a voice with original, hopeful songs about the gentle everyday spiritual awakenings of an open-hearted life.

Growing up and emerging out of a Baptist Church of strict lines and sharp edges, Bobby Jo Valentine has emerged into a larger, kinder, more welcoming faith...one that is excited to learn, open to growth, and focused on love.

His music has won Song of the Year twice at West Coast Songwriter's Association, and his work has appeared on radio, TV, and feature films. He has performed artist residencies, hosted songwriting workshops, and been involved in helping communities of all types use their spaces and voice in more creative and powerful ways.

Bobby is ecstatic any time he can discuss the big questions, challenge the easy answers, and inspire people to move closer to love. Visit www.bobbyjovalentine.com for videos and more information.



Display Your Tartan with Pride

Submitted by Gloria Christie

The 2026 Kirkin' service will be held on Sunday, September 20th, which means you still have time to be a part of the celebration. Please prayerfully consider how you might volunteer your time or purchase some or all of the items needed to fully represent your (or another) family's tartan.

Some of the supplies we need to purchase are flagpole kits (\$210), tartan fabric for flags (\$75-\$100), and tassels (\$15). We could also use some volunteers to sew flags to sew flags (simple seams only).



To pledge your support for Kirkin' please fill out the **WPC Kirkin' Support Form** at bit.ly/WPC-kirkin or use the QR code at left. For those who prefer, paper copies will be available in the narthex." If you have questions, contact Gloria Christie: ggchristie716@gmail.com or 864-379-5034.

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.



February 2026

	February Actual	Monthly Budget	Year-to-Date Actual	Year-to-Date Budget
Total Income	\$16,089	\$17,707	\$90,805	\$93,410
Total Expenses	\$25,267	\$21,283	\$43,779	\$49,068
Net Gain/Loss	-\$9,178		\$47,026	

Unrestricted pledge contributions received were under budget. This, combined with higher than budgeted expenses resulted in a deficit of \$9,178 for the month. Increased expenses were largely centered in Duke Energy, buildings maintenance and repairs (gutter cleaning) and pastor expenses.

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



Including, Abiding, Enjoying, Following, and Growing

A series exploring Westminster's foundational statements and strategic intention

When your Session evaluated our Mission Statement before adopting it, we made sure that it was in full alignment with scripture and with The Great Ends of the Church, as stated in the *PC(USA) Book of Order*, section F-1.0304:

The great ends of the Church are:

- the proclamation of the gospel for the salvation of humankind;
- the shelter, nurture, and spiritual fellowship of the children of God;
- the maintenance of divine worship;
- the preservation of the truth;
- the promotion of social righteousness; and
- the exhibition of the Kingdom of Heaven to the world.

One commentator suggests that the last great end—the exhibition of the Kingdom of Heaven to the world—is the greatest of the great, and that the other five all support that ultimate aim. By embodying the Gospel through proclamation, fellowship, worship, truth, and social righteousness, we are making the Body of Christ visible and active a hurting world.

As we investigate these statements more deeply throughout our Eastertide series, consider how Westminster is *and should be* living into our mission, and helping to move the Church Universal toward achieving these great ends.

Next month: observations about progress and ideas regarding our Vision elements

Let Us Pray...

“...whatever you ask in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours.”
Mark 11:24



For Those in Our Church

We share one another's joys and concerns:

- David Alexander
- Mary Corley
- The Dozier family
- Kathy Felder
- Holly Hubbard
- Theresa Jacobs
- Kelli Lott & Gabby
- The Blanchett Family
- Ed Watkins
- Kathleen Watkins
- Joan Wilkins
- Kathy West
- Gail & Glenn Yonce, & Georgiana
- The Dennis family
- 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 in our community, especially:

- Presbyterian Communities of SC
- Thornwell Home
- Presbyterian College
- NAMI
- Pathway House
- Food Bank & Soup Kitchen
- Meg's House
- Beyond Abuse
- GG United Ministries
- Healthy Learners
- Camp Fellowship
- Montreat Center
- 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):

- Elaine Alderman (*Kaitlin*)
- Rhea Bollinger (*Tracey*)
- The Boltons (*Mary Anne*)
- Jeff Brown (*Kuhls*)
- Judy Buck (*Lucia*)
- Iris Bullard (*Mary Anne*)
- Jack Cauley (*Mary Anne*)
- Jeff Crisp (*Hammonds*)
- Mary Davidson (*Joyce*)
- Frances Garren (*Wilson's*)
- Lib Grier (*many*)
- Randy Kuhl (*Kuhls*)
- Gayle Love family (*Joyce*)
- Katherine Martin (*many*)
- Susy Mitchell (*many*)
- Rick McGee (*Kuhls*)
- Lillian Moneyhun (*many*)
- Bruce Muller (*Tracey*)
- Elle Willis (*Rogers*)
- Patsy Wilson family (*Joyce*)
- Nancy, Jean, & Barbara (*Purcells*)
- Jodi (*Lucia, Laine*)
- Morgan (*Laine, Doris*)
- Wendell (*McInneses*)



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 wisdom and grace to inform all decisions of those in positions of power
- For those affected by natural disasters, including floods, fire, and weather dangers
- 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

And God Saw That It Was Good



We welcome new members Kaitlyn Simson, Catie McKee, and Kim & Brian Purcell.



Aerabella McCarson shows us her "heart-work" on display at The Museum.



←Westminster once again hosted the mission team from Boston College, in Greenwood to help build houses.↓



So Much to Celebrate!



Our BEMA group honors Theresa Jacobs on her birthday



Kaitlyn is baptized!



Caroline joins Tracey and Gary Jackson in celebrating Spring by preparing and planting our backyard raised bed.

Community Connection: Learn About Foster Care

Foster the City presents


Seeds of Hope

An event for those who want to learn more about foster care in the Lakelands

APRIL 13

6PM

**More than 3,000 kids in foster care in South Carolina
Hope Starts with You**




This event includes:

- Free dinner & on-location childcare
- Foster licensing agencies on-site
- Stories from former and current foster families
- The opportunity to find out how you might be able to plant seeds of hope for kids in need.

Hosted at **Legacy City Church**
1560 Parkway Greenwood, SC

contact@legacycity.church

Register at legacycity.church/fosterthecity



Community Connection: Camp Fellowship



TASTY & EASY MEAL PREPPING FOR BETTER EATING

CREATING BALANCE IN YOUR LIFE.

Tuesday, April 7th at 10:30a.m.

Participants will:

- Receive expert tips for meal prepping
- Get a take-home booklet with delicious portioned make-ahead recipes
- Participate in a tasting and live demo on how to keep frozen meals fresher until you are ready to enjoy them

The Learning Current

fellowship
CAMP & CONFERENCE CENTER

The Conference Center
457 Camp Fellowship Rd.
Waterloo, SC 29384



fellowship
CAMP & CONFERENCE CENTER
www.campfellowship.org

FIND YOUR balance

APRIL 21, 2026
10:00 AM - 3:30 PM

Join us for our next
RED LETTER DAYS
A Day of Fellowship & Wholeness for Cancer Survivors



Visit <https://www.campfellowship.org/home> to learn more about Camp Fellowship and the many programs that are offered there...including Worship on the Water, beginning on Memorial Day, May 24.

Save the Date!

BOBBY JO VALENTINE

HEART-OPENING, AWARD-WINNING FOLK/POP



**THURSDAY,
MAY 21
7:00 PM**

WESTMINSTER
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
2330 COKESBURY RD
GREENWOOD, SC

FREE WILL OFFERING
RECEIVED AT THE
CONCERT

"Bobby Jo has both the spirit and songs that bring us back to believing. Whatever our faith, he has the humor, compassion, words, and music to help us believe again."

-Dar Williams

"Catchy songs with good tunes and intelligent, thoughtful lyrics in the tradition of Bob Dylan, Cat Stevens, and Bruce Hornsby."

-Stephen Schwartz, Tony award-winning creator of *Godspell, Wicked, and Pippin*

