

Westminster Presbyterian Church

103 E. Midland Street  
Bay City, MI 48706

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DECEMBER 2025

ISSUE 205

THE WESTMINSTER LOG

The Christmas Gift

The holidays were here but disappeared as  
everything goes.  
The house is all messed with papers and bows.  
Toys are all scattered from room to room,  
You pick up and pick up with hand on the broom.  
It was fun while it lasted. The food was just great.  
You hop on the scales, the needle you hate.  
Our tempers are short, our nerves are shattered.  
Our purses are empty, the bills are all scattered.  
Now it's time to relax, and think about what you  
have seen.  
The smile of a loved one with a grin and a beam,  
As he opened a gift that came from the heart.  
The gift that took forever to buy, the one you liked  
from the start.  
You looked at a child, so precious and dear,  
As she opened a gift but nothing was clear.  
She giggled and laughed as she played with the toy.  
Through all the cleaning, cooking and shopping  
with time running out,  
Did we forget what the season was truly about?  
The birth of "the Christ child" on Christmas Day,  
Laying so peaceful and serene on a bundle of hay.  
Soon Christmas went and the New Year came,  
But our gift of the "Christ child" will always remain.  
Take time to remember the love around.  
And never forget your "Gift" that was found.  
The baby lying in the manger of hay,  
That will always be with us no matter what day.

Author, Elizabeth Dore



Important  
Dates:

Advent Dinner

November 30 6 p.m.

Parents' Night Out

December 12

Choral Cantata

December 14 — 10:30  
a.m.

Christmas Caroling

December 14 — 1 p.m.

Longest Night Service

December 18 — 6 p.m.

Christmas Pageant  
Rehearsal

December 20

Christmas Pageant

December 21 — 10:30  
a.m.

Christmas Eve  
Services

December 24 — 4 and 7  
p.m.

Service of Lessons  
and Carols

December 29

Epiphany of the Lord  
(2026 Star Words)

January 4 — 10:30 a.m.

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WWW.WPCBC.ORG

The Westminster Log is published monthly by Westminster Presbyterian Church, 103 East Midland Street, Bay City, Michigan, 48706. Articles must be submitted by the fifteenth day of each month before publication unless otherwise noted. We reserve the right to edit submissions for content and space. The Westminster Log is formatted to be printed in color.

Visit us on Facebook:  
Westminster Presbyterian  
Church - Bay City



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Office Hours:  
Monday through Thursday  
8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Pastor  
Rev. Jamie Milton (ext. 204)  
Parish Associate  
Rev. Linda Williams (ext. 203)  
Church Secretary  
Bill Petzold (ext. 201)  
Treasurer  
Pat Foster (ext. 206)  
Facilities Manager  
Harold Miller (ext. 205)  
Director of Children and Youth Ministry  
Leah Sneller (ext. 208)

THE WESTMINSTER LOG



# December

## Sundays

**8:45 a.m. Bell Choir Rehearsal**  
*for our Adults; the Bells play during Worship once a month*

**9:00 a.m. Adult Bible Study**  
*Our Adult Bible Study will also examine the themes of hope and fear in our "What Do You Fear?" Advent devotions. (See Page 2)*

**9:30 a.m. Fellowship**  
*Join us in Fellowship Hall for Coffee and Donuts and Conversation*

**9:45 a.m. Choir Rehearsal**  
*Pre-service Rehearsal*

**10:30 a.m. Worship**  
*Our Advent theme this year, "What Do You Fear?," focuses on hope and fear. (See Page 2.)*

**11:30 a.m. Fellowship**  
*Join us in the Chapel for Coffee and Cookies and Conversation*

**5 p.m. Youth Bells**  
*For Youth 5th-12th grade*

**5:30 p.m. Youth Dinner**

**6:00 p.m. Youth Group**  
*For Youth 5th-12th grade*

### Happy Birthday\*

JeAnne Hebner  
Joy Thompson  
Bill Shelt  
Lois MacPhail

Mary Nicholson  
George Greene  
Jan VanNostrand

Sunday	Monday
	1  5:30 p.m. Mission Mtg. 7:00 p.m. Deacons Mtg.
7 <i>Second Sunday of Advent</i>  Communion Sunday Choir Rehearsal after Worship 6 p.m. Pageant Rehearsal	8  4:30 p.m. Property Mtg. 5:30 p.m. Finance Mtg. 6:30 p.m. Stewardship Mtg.
14 <i>Third Sunday of Advent</i>  10:30 a.m. "Sing Noel" Christmas Cantata (See Page 12) 1 p.m. Christmas Caroling (See Page 1) 6 p.m. Pageant Rehearsal	15
21 <i>Fourth Sunday of Advent</i>  10:30 a.m. Christmas Pageant (See Page 8)	22
28  No Bells No Bible Study No Sunday School No Youth Group	29

Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Fri/Sat
2  10 a.m. Hearts & Hands Knitting 11:30 a.m. Do-All, Inc. Yoga 1:30 p.m. Book Study 5 p.m. Personnel Mtg.	3  4 p.m. Food Pantry until 6 p.m. 5:15 p.m. Contemporary Choir 6:30 p.m. Chancel Choir 7 p.m. Cantata Rehearsal	4  8:30 a.m. TOPS 10 a.m. Food Pantry until 12 p.m. 1:30 p.m. Caring Connections 5 p.m. Food of Faith 7 p.m. Zoom Bible Study	5  6 3 p.m. Eagle Scout Court of Honor
9  9 a.m. Matthew 25 10 a.m. Knitting 10 a.m. Staff Meeting 1 p.m. Lions Club 1:30 p.m. Book Study 6:30 p.m. Spiritual Growth Mtg.	10  4 p.m. Food Pantry until 6 p.m. 5:15 p.m. Contemporary Choir 6:30 p.m. Chancel Choir 7 p.m. Cantata Rehearsal	11  8:30 a.m. TOPS 10 a.m. Food Pantry until 12 p.m. 5 p.m. Food of Faith 7 p.m. Zoom Bible Study	12 Parents' Night Out (See Page 8)  13 10:00 a.m. Cantata Rehearsal
16  10 a.m. Hearts & Hands Knitting 11:30 p.m. Do-All, Inc. Yoga 12 p.m. Lunch and Laugh (See Page 9) 6:30 p.m. Session Mtg.	17  1 p.m. Out-to-Lunch Bunch at The Wanigan 4 p.m. Food Pantry until 6 p.m. 5:15 p.m. Contemporary Choir 6:30 p.m. Chancel Choir <b>LOG DEADLINE</b>	18  8:30 a.m. TOPS 10 a.m. Food Pantry until 12 p.m. 5 p.m. Food of Faith 6 p.m. Longest Night Service (See Page 3)	19  20 11:00 a.m. Pageant Rehearsal
23  10 a.m. Log Folding 4 p.m. Food Pantry until 6 p.m.	24  <i>Christmas Eve</i>  4 p.m. Worship Service 7 p.m. Worship Service Food Pantry closed	25  <i>Merry Christmas!</i>  No Food of Faith Church office closed Food Pantry closed	26  27
30  10 a.m. Hearts & Hands Knitting 11:30 a.m. Do-All, Inc. Yoga	31  4 p.m. Food Pantry until 6 p.m.	<div>Office Hours Monday – Thursday: 8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. Website: <a href="http://wpcbc.org">wpcbc.org</a> <a href="#">Join us on Facebook</a> Westminster Presbyterian Church - Bay City</div>	

\*Birthdays listed are for our 75+ Members



# Thank you for your contributions!

Westminster’s financial position for this year continues to be solid. Through generous giving and careful monitoring of expenses, we believe we will be able to balance the books without the need to take much, if any, from our investments. A generous church member covered the balance of the per capita that had not been paid, which was nearly \$4000. We are grateful!

The **Building Improvement Fund** received \$71 in contributions and incurred no expenses in October. At the end of the month, the Fund has a balance of \$9,627.47. The **Major Repairs Fund** received \$39 in contributions and incurred no expenses in October. Its October Fund balance is \$36,576.69.

**Giving envelopes for 2026** have been ordered and will be available in mid-December outside the sanctuary. The new envelopes are not dated, so you can use them at any time throughout the year and perhaps even into 2027.

GENERAL FUND	Month to Date thru November		Year to Date
	17		
Pledges & Other Giving	\$ 30,636	\$	392,767
One-time Gifts	\$ -	\$	31,000
Other Cash Received	\$ 199	\$	31,884
Total Income	\$ 30,835	\$	455,651
Expenses	\$ 18,384	\$	386,629
Net Income/(Loss)	\$ 12,451	\$	69,022

Budgeted expense total for the year is \$474,000.

If you have any questions about these numbers or anything else finance-related, please feel free to contact me.

*Pat Foster*

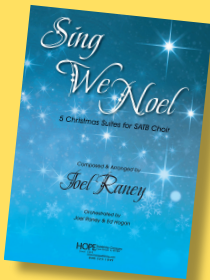
Financial Administrator  
[treasurer@wpcbc.org](mailto:treasurer@wpcbc.org)  
616-485-8272 (cell phone)

## CHRISTMAS CANTATA

Prepare to be renewed by the music of the Christmas season. Westminster’s Chancel Choir will be performing an amazing cantata during the worship service on **Sunday, December 14.**

*Sing We Noel* consists of six “suites” of traditional carols woven together with a uniquely modern sound, Bible verses, and a narrative. The carols include favorites such as “While Shepherds Watched Their Flocks,” “Silent Night,” “The First Noel,” “Sing We Now of Christmas,” “Mary Had a Baby,” and “It Came Upon a Midnight Clear.” Chancel Choir and accompanist Seth Cunningham have been working hard in rehearsals since September for this beautiful musical event. It will be enjoyed by all – so bring a friend or neighbor or your favorite cousins!

Dawn Auger,  
Chancel Choir Director



## Building our Family of Faith

The Outreach and Hospitality Committee is hosting a friendly competition this season, and now’s your chance to join in! When you bring a friend to worship or any church event this December, both you and your guest will earn entries into our raffle for fantastic prizes — including gift cards and a tabletop grill. Tickets and more information are available at the Wenona Street Welcome kiosk before and after worship every week.

The contest ends at the end of December, so there’s still plenty of time to participate! December is filled with wonderful opportunities to invite a friend—from Christmas caroling and pizza on December 14 at 1:00 p.m., to our comforting Longest Night Service on December 18 at 6:00 p.m., TWO Christmas Eve services on the 24th, and many other special gatherings. We love our church and want to share its joy and warmth with others. Help us grow our faith family, strengthen our community, and spread God’s love—one invitation at a time!

## A Heartfelt Thank You

**Our celebration of Westminster’s 160th Anniversary** (see photos on pages 6 and 7) was a beautiful reminder of God’s faithfulness and of the strength of this family of faith. From the special worship service to the abundant and joyful luncheon that followed, the day was a true success because of the many hearts and hands who gave their time, energy, and creativity.

Like with any big event, it takes many hands make the work happen! To all who planned, prepared, cooked, decorated, set up, cleaned up, sang, served, welcomed, shared stories, or quietly worked behind the scenes—thank you. Your dedication made this milestone not just an event, but a celebration of who we are and who God is calling us to be.

We are especially grateful to the 160th Task Force (Marilyn Bechtel, Pam Johnston, Mary Rose Davis, Sheri Young, Priscilla Cramer, Chris Thurman, Jan Witucki, and Jeff Rogers), along with the group work of the Deacons, the Fellowship Ministry and the Outreach and Hospitality Committee. Thank you to the Tech crew for making sure the service was streamed and recorded, and to Justin Heidtman for taking pictures. Our amazing Westminster staff also put in extra work for this exciting event. Of course, we risk missing a name or two, so if we did, please forgive us. Know that every contribution mattered, and we are deeply grateful for each of you.

## Thank you for helping our neighbors!

Church family!

My heart is overflowing with love and gratitude for your generosity with gifting families a special Thanksgiving meal. Between your monetary donations and food harvest, we exceeded more than \$3,000.

The families we gift are so appreciative. Thank you! Thank you!

— *Patti Wesenick*

## Christmas Caroling December 14 at 1 p.m.

Do you like to sing? Do you like to spread joy and Christmas spirit to friends? The Deacons are planning an afternoon of Christmas caroling to help spread Christmas cheer to some of our homebound and less mobile members. The more folks we have, the more folks we can visit! Join us after worship on Sunday, December 14 at 1:00 p.m. If you’d like to stay after church, we’ll order a couple of pizzas and eat before we head out. If you’d rather run home to change and then come back, feel free to do that as well! Don’t worry, we’ll be back to the church before the Lions kick off against the Rams at 4:25 p.m.



The Mission Partnerships Committee would like to thank Patti Wesenick and all of her volunteers for coordinating a successful Thanksgiving food drive this year. And thanks to Mr. Turkey (aka Pastor Jamie) for making a special appearance.



## Hope and fear

Our Advent theme this year invites us to think about how hope and fear are interwoven in our lives, much like it would have been for Jesus' family and their community at the time of his birth.

Luke's Gospel begins the story of Jesus with this opening line: "In the time of Herod..." This detail may seem minor to modern readers, however, it reveals layers of information about the fearful world Jesus entered, one filled with rampant oppression, economic disparity, uncertainty, and instability — a world not so unlike our own.

And yet, throughout the stories of Christ's birth, we hear the whispers of angels delivering a surprising message: "Do not fear."

In our own time, we might ask: is it even possible to be fearless in a fearful world? When Mary, Joseph, the shepherds, and the magi are each called into God's redemptive story, they do not deny their fears — they move through them. They ask questions, hold fast to courage, trust in good news, and say, "Here I am, Lord." When we find ourselves in fearful times, can we acknowledge our fears while also insisting on hope?

During this season, we'll take seriously the angels' message and trust that Christ's birth truly is



good news of great joy for all people. We won't shy away from the fear and terror looming in the background during the time of King Herod and consider the fears we hold now.

Fear can divide and paralyze us, and even be used as a tool for oppression. But what if we formed a different relationship with fear? Can we acknowledge fear without letting it rule us? Might we catalyze our fears into love and action? What if naming our fears helps us see more clearly how God is breaking in and where God is at work?

This series gently invites us to identify where fear is present — both in the Advent story and in our lives — while also finding our way toward hope, with the angels' voices in our ears.

We light candles, sing carols, and pray for Christ's coming because we believe God entered a frightened world to bring good news. We hold onto hope because we believe that Christ did come—that's the promise of the season. Our hope is not flimsy or fleeting. It's gritty, resilient, and can endure—no matter what we fear or face. This season, let us insist on hope and trust that good news is greater than fear.

like Jesus and Isaiah, point to the places where God is at work in our world? How might we keep hope alive?

### December 14

#### Third Sunday of Advent

*Even In Our Fear, We Sing*  
LUKE 2:4-20; MATTHEW 2:1-11

This year's cantata is "Sing We Noel" arranged by Joel Raney. Through familiar choruses and beloved carols, we'll hear the good news of Christ's birth proclaimed in song and scripture.

**ADVENT continues on Page 3**

## Thank you to our community partners and volunteers!

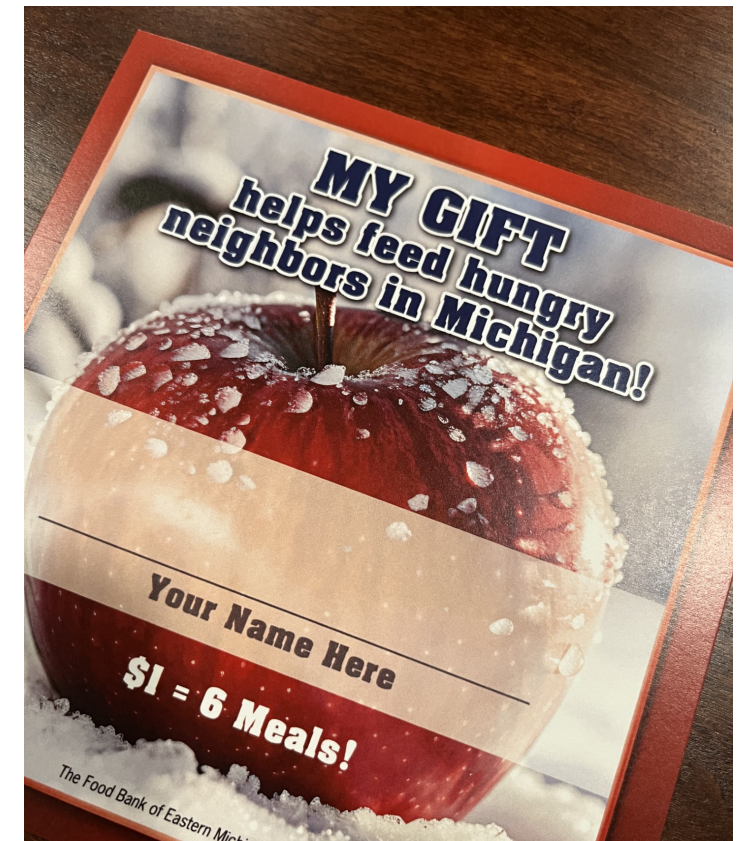
**Recent Statistics:** For three crazy weeks at the end of October and early November, we served 549 people from 202 families with 5,200 pounds of food. 76 of these families were new to our pantry. With the pause in SNAP benefits, it was clear that many Bay County families were worried that they would go hungry. But the community really stepped up! Many thanks to United Way, Bay Area Community Foundation, Lions Club of Bay City, Jack's Fruit and Meat Market, Sav-a-Lot, and other local businesses, along with people in our congregation and community, for donations of food, gift cards and cash. We are so grateful for your help in fighting hunger in our community!

**Double Match Day at Meijer's is December 13:** It's almost here! Meijer's on Wilder Road will double match all Simply Give donations on Saturday, December 13. When you donate \$10, Meijer will match it with \$20, for a total of \$30. If you give \$100, that turns into a total of \$300 for our pantry. Simply Give cards are available at the church and at the store checkout lanes. All donations will come directly to our pantry in the form of Meijer gift cards we can use to purchase food. And remember, the Simply Give program continues at the Wilder Road location through December 27, so any donations made during that time still come to our pantry. Please share the news with your family and friends. With the help of the community, this can be a huge gift for the pantry! Questions? Talk to Janet Smylie or Janet Beattie.

**A BIG Thank You** to Charlie Case, Karen Brown-Fackler, Dave Crook, Kelly Larive, Karen Mitchell and Phil and Penny Reagh for picking up and/or stocking our shelves with a huge food delivery from the Food Bank of Eastern Michigan on November 17. We got six pickup truck loads of food, most of it free. And thanks to Bonnie Marsh for moving a lot of it into our storage room across the hall. The boxes and cans are heavy, and we appreciate everyone jumping in to help.

**Holiday Ornament Sales:** Local businesses are selling paper ornaments as a holiday fundraiser for our pantry. For \$1, you can hang an ornament at

## Westminster COMMUNITY PANTRY



Cops & Doughnuts, Eudici's Pizza, Lucky's Pub and Grill, Parlour Donuts, O'Hares Bar and Grill, River Rock Cafe, and the Westown Theater. We thank them for partnering with us and hope you will thank them with your business. All donations will be credited to our account at the Food Bank of Eastern Michigan.

**Holiday Boxes:** Thanks to a grant from the Bay Area Community Foundation and other donations, we are able to provide prepacked boxes of food for 150 families during the month of December. These boxes come from the Food Bank of Eastern Michigan and contain a holiday meal plus several days of food for just \$27 per box (\$34 per box for families 6+). These boxes were a big hit last year, and we are excited to offer them again this year.

### November 30

#### First Sunday of Advent

*In the Time of Herod, We Long for God to Break In*

LUKE 1:5-13; LAMENTATIONS 3:55-57

We begin the series by fleshing out what it might have been like to live in the days when Jesus was born—a time not all that different from our own.

Whether in exile, under the rule of a puppet king, or in the depths of personal pain, we long for God to break through the fear and bring us hope.

### December 7

#### Second Sunday of Advent

*When We're Running Out of Hope, God Is at Work*

MATTHEW 11:1-11; ISAIAH 43:19-21

John has spent his entire life preparing the way for Jesus, but from his prison cell, now certainly facing death, the future looks grim. Like John, even the most confident of us wonder from time to time: Is all this work worth it? Does anything I do matter? Am I on the right track? We can't always see the fruits of our labor, yet God is at work anyway. How might we,





On Sunday, November 23, Westminster held its annual Hanging of the Greens service, during which the Sanctuary and church building were decorated for the Advent and Christmas seasons.



## Help families in need

### Get Ready! Our Angel Tree began November 23!

Mission Partnership Committee once again invites you to help make Christmas a little brighter for families in our community. Working with our partners at **The Salvation Army**, we will receive 75 Angel Tags listing toys, gift cards, clothing items and bedding for kids ranging in ages 0 – 17-year-olds. Angel Tree tags will be available starting Sunday, November 23 until Sunday, December 7. Participants are encouraged to take an angel tag from the tree located in the Wenona Lobby. Write your name and contact number on the bottom portion of the tag and leave that section with representatives or gift box at the Angel Tree table. Purchase the gifts and return them in a gift bag (no tissue paper) to the church by Noon on Sunday, December 14. We suggest a spending limit of \$25-\$30 per item - one toy/"fun" and one clothing/textile. Don't forget to attach the angel tag to your gift!

If you prefer, you may choose to donate, and we'll do the shopping for you!

For questions or help, contact Darlene Kusterer at 989-385-4062.



## Keeping Vigil on the Longest Night

*A Service of Comfort, Reflection, and Hope*  
**Thursday, December 18, 6:00 p.m.**

As Christmas draws near, many people feel the excitement and joy of the season. But for others, this time of year carries a different weight. Grief can feel sharper. Memories can feel heavier. Some of us are carrying burdens we can't easily name. And even those who aren't grieving may simply need a quiet, gentle space in the midst of December's constant noise.

Our Longest Night Service is a special time set aside for prayer, reflection, comfort, and hope. Held near the winter solstice—when the night is literally at its longest—this worship service offers a space to acknowledge that not everyone feels “merry and bright” during the holidays. It is a space where we can be honest about our

weariness, our grief, our fear, or simply our longing for peace.

In words shaped by tenderness, we hear again God's promise to be present with us in moments of heartbreak, loneliness, and uncertainty. Through candlelight, Scripture, quiet music, and opportunities for personal prayer and remembrance, we are invited to gently name what we carry and rest in God's compassionate presence.

Whether you are grieving a loved one, navigating illness, struggling with depression or anxiety, feeling overwhelmed by the world, or simply craving a moment of stillness—this worship service is for you. Come and keep vigil with us. Come sit in the quiet. Come rest in God's gentle light that shines even — especially — in the deepest night.

All are welcome. A brief time of fellowship and light refreshments will follow the service.

### ADVENT from Page 2

#### December 21 Fourth Sunday of Advent

##### *The First Christmas Quilt*

Join us on the Sunday before Christmas as our children and youth share their talents with us in worship. We'll see and hear an original story by our own Judy Hudson, enacted by some of our youngest church friends. You won't want to miss this special service!

#### December 24 Christmas Eve

##### *Good News Is Louder*

##### *Than Fear*

**LUKE 2:1-20**

The Christmas season can be filled with images of Mary, meek and mild, with a quiet, sleepy Jesus in her arms. But the host of angels shouts to the skies, “Glory to God in the highest!” What would it look like for us to proclaim the good news loudly, with overflowing joy? Let us be loud and unruly, amplifying the good news like the shepherds running into the streets of Bethlehem. In a world where good news never feels loud enough to drown out fear,

let us shout with the angels, “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace!”

#### December 28 First Sunday after Christmas

Join us on the Sunday after Christmas for a service filled with your favorite Christmas carols!

#### January 4 Epiphany of the Lord

##### *Fear Doesn't Stop Us*

**MATTHEW 2:1-12, 16-18**

As we end the series, Herod is still in power. Christ is born, but it feels as if the world has not changed. The magi don't let Herod's fear-driven demands stop them from honoring the newborn Christ or returning home by a different way. They model for us what it looks like to be led by hope, moving through fear without letting it paralyze you. Our journey continues, and fear won't have the last word.

**Adult Bible Study** also will be examining these themes on Sunday mornings at 9 a.m. and on Thursday evenings at 7 p.m. via Zoom.



## A Gentle Request: How to Support Me in My Grief

Right now, I am living in a fog. My mind feels slow, my heart is heavy, and my energy and motivation are running on empty. I know you care. I know you want to help. Sometimes I'm too overwhelmed, I'm too tired, I don't know what I need, I don't know how to ask, or I just don't want to burden you.

This newsletter has been written as a sincere and gentle plea to lift the burden of asking. If you want to support me, here are some real ways you can help and provide comfort.



**1. Offer Help with Specific Tasks or Necessities: Focus is not my friend, and decisions have taken on a new weight. Please do not ask me what I need. Instead, tell me exactly what you are going to do and when you will do it. This removes the mental load from me.**

**No Request Needed:** Please don't ask, "Can I bring you a meal?" Instead call or send me a message: "I'm dropping off soup and bread on your porch at 6 p.m. No need to open the door. No need to reply." (The "no need to reply" is a priceless gift.)

**Handle a Specific Chore:** Offer to do a task you can complete entirely on your own. "I'm coming over Sunday night to take out the trash and recycling", or "Send me your grocery list. I'll drop the bags off on your front porch Tuesday between 3-4 p.m."

**2. You Have My Permission to Talk About Them: The silence surrounding their loss is one of the hardest parts of grieving. Please don't be afraid to talk about them.**

**Say Their Name:** This comforts me and reminds me that their life mattered and that they are not forgotten. It's okay to tell me, "I was thinking about \_\_\_\_\_ today and wanted you to know I'm thinking of you, too."

**Share a Memory:** Tell me a simple, positive memory. It doesn't need to be profound or dramatic. It can be short and funny. These stories are priceless to me and remind me I am not the only one missing them.

**Validate My Feelings:** Please avoid cliches like, "Everything happens for a reason", "They had a good long life," or "They're in a better place." Instead, simply validate my sense of loss and feelings. "I can see you are hurting and I'm so sorry." "I don't know what to say, but I want you to know I care about you." "I can only imagine how overwhelming all of this is."

**3. Don't Forget to Remember Me: My life and calendar have changed. Please think of me and include me if you can.**

**Invite Me:** My days and nights look so different. My holidays and social calendar are different, too. Sometimes the thought of being alone is scary and overwhelming. I don't want to ask if I can join, and I don't want to put you out, but here I am wondering where my place is for these special days or lonely nights with my loved one no longer here.

**Please Be Patient with Me:** Low-pressured invitations are best. What I need today may not be what I needed yesterday, or will need tomorrow. I cannot tell you how I will feel the day of your invitation to that holiday meal, social gathering, or event. I may change my mind, arrive late, or need to leave early. Please know this has nothing to do with you and that I appreciate your love, thought, care, and inclusion.

**GRIEF continues on Page 5**

God Sighting  
Nancy Swantek

We are delighted to honor Nancy Swantek, our newest 50-year member at Westminster! Nancy is a lifelong Presbyterian, proudly tracing her roots back to generations of faithful Presbyterians, including some from Scotland.

Throughout her decades at Westminster, Nancy has actively participated in the life of our church and raised her daughter in our faith community. Her

## A 50-Year Legacy of Faith and Service



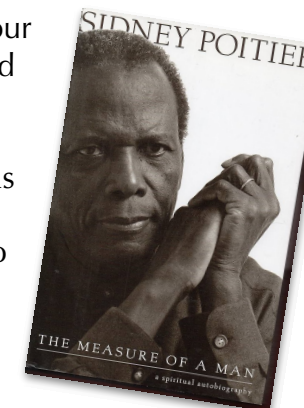
dedication shines through her service as a Deacon and her fond memories of supporting our senior members as part of the Young at Hearts program. Nancy has often expressed her deep gratitude for the loving support she has received from this congregation over the past 50 years. In turn, we are truly thankful for all Nancy's done

and for being such a steady, caring part of our church family.

Please join us in celebrating Nancy's remarkable milestone and her many contributions to Westminster!

## Winter Book Group

As we turn the final pages of Kate Bowler's thought-provoking memoir, *Everything Happens for a Reason and Other Lies I've Loved*, we're reminded of how personal experiences can challenge our beliefs about faith, hope, and trust in God in the midst of difficulties. Bowler's honest and forthright storytelling has encouraged us to reflect on and discuss what it means to find meaning and live with resilience in the face of life's struggles and messiness.



Looking ahead into the new year, we'll be starting Sidney Poitier's *Measure of a Man* on **Tuesday, January 6 at 1:30 p.m.** Poitier's autobiography promises an inspiring journey through a life shaped by perseverance, dignity, and a commitment to personal integrity. We anticipate lessons not only about overcoming obstacles, but also about maintaining one's values in the face of adversity.

Come join us in January. Books are available in the church office (\$5 donation). Any questions, please call the church office or Rev. Linda.

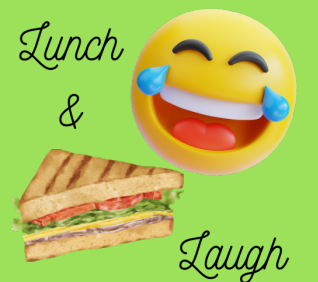
## Lunch & Laugh Winter Series

We're excited to announce the dates for our upcoming Lunch & Laugh gatherings this winter!

**Mark your calendars for Tuesdays December 16, January 27, and February 24.**

In December and January, everyone is encouraged to bring along their favorite table games to share some fun and friendly competition. Then, in February, we'll enjoy a movie together—do you have a favorite film you'd love to watch? Please let Rev. Linda know your suggestions!

We look forward to sharing food, laughter, and good company throughout the season. Come join us for these special afternoons! Bring your own brownbag lunch; beverages and a sweet treat are provided. Any questions, please call the church office or Rev. Linda.





## All Saints Remembrance

On November 16th, 2025, Westminster held a special ceremony to honor the loved ones we've lost in the past year.

This year we remembered:

### 2024

George Estabrook Jr.  
Hazel E. Kish

### 2025

Pamela Elaine Barnes  
Ross William Brown  
Ross Wayne Brown  
Mary Rose Jessup  
Carol K. Lange  
Betty Jean Lunger  
Thomas Robert Majchrzak  
Patricia M. Quantz



## Annual Christmas Pageant

I am *beyond excited* for this year's Christmas pageant which is *The First Christmas Quilt*! This one is truly special, and it's something you won't want to miss. Not only does it celebrate the joy and meaning of the season, but it was written by one of our very own church members, Judy Hudson, and it has been beautifully adapted from her book.



It's a unique gift to our whole congregation, and I can't wait for everyone to experience it together. Mark your calendars and be sure to join us on Sunday, December 21st.

Parents, please mark your calendars for December 20th for Dress Rehearsal starting at 11:00 a.m.

### Christmas Program Rehearsal Schedule

Dec. 7 - During Youth Group - 6 p.m.  
Dec. 14 - During Youth Group - 6 p.m.  
Dec. 20 - Dress Rehearsal - 11:00 a.m.  
Dec. 21 - Christmas Program - 10:30 a.m.

## Parents' Night Out

Friday, December 12th  
5:00 - 8:00 p.m.

We want to give our parents a night off during this holiday season.  
Bring the kiddos over to the church where we will have dinner with them, play games, make a craft, and watch a movie.

Please see Leah Sneller or call the church office to register your children for the event.

## Caring Connections

### Have you ever want to attend a grief support meeting, but ...

Many people would love to find help in dealing with their grief, but are hesitant to attend a meeting. Walking through that door the first time is probably the hardest thing about attending a grief support meeting. They have so many questions that might hold them back. Is it a large group of people? Would I have to tell my whole grief story? Would I feel left out? What's the atmosphere like? Would I cry? Would I be opening old wounds? Is it only for the newly bereaved? These are concerns people have attending a grief support meeting.

Remember, first of all, every person in that room has suffered a loss, so you already have something in common. But every story is different.

Your loss may have been recent or many years ago, and you've never come to terms with it. You keep pushing it aside hoping it will go away, but honestly, it does not. It's never too late to start working on a new normal for yourself.

It seems the holiday times are the hardest to get through when we have that void in our lives. We will be discussing ways to cope and maybe start new traditions. Most of all, it's important to take care of ourselves, and we will talk about methods and suggestions to help with that also.

*"Grief never ends, but it changes. It is a passage, not a place to stay. Grief is not a sign of weakness nor a lack of faith. It is the price of love."*

— Linda McDonald, author

The atmosphere of our meetings is very informal and relaxed. No pressure. You will be surprised to learn how much you can learn just by being with other people feeling the same emotions you feel.

This was shared with me recently, and I want to share it with you: "Grief never ends, but it changes. It is a passage, not a place to stay. Grief is not a sign of weakness nor a lack of faith. It is the price of love." — Linda McDonald, author.

Looking forward to our next meeting on Thursday, December 4, 2025 from 1:30 to 3 p.m. If you have questions or concerns, please contact Rev. Linda or Mary Nicholson.

God bless you on your journey,

*Mary*

### GRIEF from Page 4

**4. Keep Checking In: The flood of support quickly ends, but I am learning all too well that grief is a marathon.**

**Call, Text, or Write:** Please mark your calendar to reach out to me in 3 months, 6 months, a year, etc. Birthdays, Anniversaries, Holidays, and the date they died each year can be hard. It's nice to know you are thinking of me and care.

**Please do not be offended if you do not hear back from me:** I'm receiving your calls, texts, and cards, and they continue to warm my heart.

Sometimes, I just don't have the words to say or the energy to respond.

**5. My Particular Need Is...**

**6. I Just Want You to Know...**

Thank you for loving me enough to read this. Your unwavering, non-judgmental presence is the most powerful comfort you can offer me. Your efforts to be there for me are seen, felt, and appreciated more than words can express. Thank you.

*Reprinted from St. Luke's Hospice, Bethlehem, PA*





### 50-year Members

1952  
Elizabeth Dore

1954  
Alma Watton

1955  
Neil Everson  
Margaret Hanson

1958  
Peggy Hawkins  
Janice VanNostrand

1959  
JeAnne Hebner  
Joyce Hegenauer

1960  
Joyce Grigg

1961  
Thomas Kayner  
Philip Reagh

1962  
Donna Horn

1963  
Colleen Schmidt  
Sharon Hignite  
Joy Thompson

1964  
John Hegenauer  
Karen Schoeppach

1965  
Marie Capp  
Elaine Edwards  
Marilyn Kayner  
Judy Randall

1966  
Robert Merritt

1967  
Dianne Young  
John Young

1968  
Jean Manning  
Penny Reagh

1970  
Sue Armstrong  
William Capp  
Leslie Frontjes  
Richard Frontjes  
Ruth Ostrander

1972  
Priscilla Cramer  
Shirley Howell  
Julie Kelly  
Randy Thibo

1973  
Janet Beattie  
Irene Eskilsen  
Janet LaFave

1974  
Sally Calvo  
Marilyn Lapham  
Christine Thurman  
Patti Wesenick

This year's 50-year member:

1975  
Nancy Swantek

