



THE REPORTER

WESTMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

533 South Walnut Street
Springfield, Illinois 62704

217-522-4415
www.wpcspi.org

December 2024

WORSHIP & EDUCATION CALENDAR

SUNDAY SCHEDULE:

10:00 a.m. In-person and
Livestream Worship Service

www.wpcspi.org

FAITH FORMATION:

9:45 a.m. Nursery
Children Birth – Age 3

10:15 a.m. Sunday School and
Confirmation Prep following

Children's Sermon

Children Pre-K – Grade 7

11:15 a.m. Adult Education Forum

December 1

FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Jeremiah 33:14-16, 1 Thessalonians 3:9-13

The Rev. Dr. Blythe D. Kieffer

Night and Day

December 8

SACRAMENT OF COMMUNION

SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Malachi 3:1-4, Philippians 1:3-11

The Rev. Dr. Blythe D. Kieffer

Determining What is Best

December 15

THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Isaiah 12: 2-6, Luke 3:3-14, 18

The Rev. Dr. Blythe D. Kieffer

Filled with Expectation

December 22

SUNDAY SCHOOL PROCESSIONAL

FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Micah 5:2-51, Luke 1:39-45

The Rev. Sarah A. Bishop

Blessed is She Who Believed

December 29

FIRST SUNDAY OF CHRISTMAS

Colossians 3:12-17 Luke 2:41-52

The Rev. Sarah A. Bishop

*Let the Peace of Christ
Rule in Your H*

ADVENT AT WESTMINSTER

FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT: DECEMBER 1

ADVENT WREATH

We begin the Season of Advent, the time of waiting and preparing, on Sunday, December 1 with the lighting of the Advent Wreath. Thank you to the new members, Doris Melvin Hildebrand, Michella and Ben Arnold, Linda Andrews and Claudia Nash, and Kathy Bacon for leading us in this Westminster tradition. An Advent introit will be presented each Sunday by Harper and Reese Huston, Maria Lafrenz, and Lily Swanson.

SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT: DECEMBER 8

CHILDREN'S CHOIR sings during 10:00 a.m. service

The 10:00 a.m. service will include special music by the Children's Choir (Grades K-5) under the direction of Katie Moore, Director for Children's Music.

ADVENT CELEBRATION at 11:15 a.m. in Parish Hall

A reception in Parish Hall will follow worship and include a festive brunch, the singing of Christmas Carols, the creating of ornaments, and the decorating of Christmas cookies. Children who were not in Sunday School on November 24 or December 1 will have the opportunity to create an advent wreath for home.

THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT: DECEMBER 15

Westminster's Chancel and West Narthex will be filled with red poinsettias. Following the service the Board of Deacons will deliver the poinsettias to members who have lost loved ones since Easter and shut-ins. Special music will be *Comfort Ye My People* from Handel's *Messiah*.

FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT: DECEMBER 22

SUNDAY SCHOOL PROCESSION during 10:00 a.m. service

The Sunday School children will recreate the Nativity in the Second Floor Classroom, process in their costumes during the closing hymn *Joy to the World* and join the pastors in the Chancel for the Charge and Benediction.

CHRISTMAS VESPERS at 4:00 p.m. in the Sanctuary

On Sunday, December 22 at 4:00 p.m. in the afternoon, Westminster's Christmas Vespers program will include choral music and carols sung by the Westminster Choir and the St. Andrew's Sisters, with Lucy Yockey, Oboe and Dale Rogers, Organist. Vespers will include the seasonal music of Mathias, Walther, Fedak, Main, Brunner, Whitacre, and more.

CHRISTMAS MUSIC AND DECORATION FUNDS

Members and friends are invited to make a suggested donation of \$25 to support Westminster's decorations funds, which includes the poinsettias. You may send a check or go online at www.wpcspi.org to donate. Donations of \$25 or more to the Special Music Fund are also accepted at this time. Please submit your donations with your desired wording and dedications by Monday, December 9. Thank you for your generosity!

FROM THE PASTOR by Rev. Dr. Blythe D. Kieffer

*For everything there is a season,
and a time for every matter under heaven: Ecclesiastes 3:1*

Dear Friends,

Westminster is excited to welcome the Rev. Sarah A. Bishop who as Associate Pastor for Family Ministry on December 1, 2024. We anticipate her ministry with great joy.

Celebrating Rev. Christian K. Choi's meaningful ministry following a Congregational Meeting to dissolve his pastoral relationship as Associate Pastor for Parish Life was bittersweet for all of us. The Choi Family appreciated the generous severance and outpouring of love. We continue to hold Christian in our prayers for healing and renewed strength.

Last week I announced my retirement date of October 1, 2025 (concluding 12 years as your Pastor) and Session's approval of a process and timeline to seek a co-pastor who will become head of staff upon my departure. Once we receive approval from the Committee on Ministry of the Presbytery of Great Rivers, we will move forward toward this endeavor.

Serving and leading this congregation has been the privilege of my life, and I am grateful to my beloved husband Peter who has been a partner in ministry as well as life. I anticipate our final year together to be productive and meaningful. What a joy to contribute to the rich and meaningful history of this remarkable congregation which will celebrate 190 years of Faith, Art, and Advocacy this spring.

THANK YOU TO THE REV. GERALD BOUTELLE



Rev. Boutelle has served as liturgist since May of 2024 when Rev. Choi began his disability. Additionally, Jerry has preached, taught Bible Study, provided pastoral care, and partnered in the Prayer Ministry. The support, experience, and wisdom he has provided on this unexpected journey has been greatly appreciated. How thankful we are for Rev.

Boutelle's presence on our staff as Parish Associate.

SUPPORT AND ENDOWMENT FUND LOAN RETIRED

On November 1, 2024, Westminster closed on the sale of 518 S. Glenwood. The purchase price was \$205,000 and Westminster's net proceeds after closing costs were \$190,358.27, which paid down the \$239,120.81 internal loan from the Westminster Support and Endowment Fund.



The remaining balance on the loan of \$48,762.54 was retired utilizing funds from the Equity Fund which currently has a balance of \$255,228.06. The Equity Fund originated as a \$150,000 gift from Alice Payne to provide a reserve from year to year for the annual budget. Both these motions were unanimously approved by Session at their November meeting.

This is amazing news with special thanks to Tim and Priscilla Kluge, Pete VanGieson, and Ed Caupert whose countless hours of gratis labor made this debt retirement possible.

2025 STEADFAST NEIGHBOR SERVICE WEEK JUNE 23-27



The dates for next year's neighborhood outreach are June 23-27. Once again, we will assist with exterior repair and improvement projects. Please consider joining us for one or more days of the fourth week of June as we spread goodwill

in the neighborhood! If you are interested, contact Todd Knox at hardknox1@mac.com.

MUSIC NOTES by Dale T. Rogers

WESTMINSTER CHRISTMAS VESPERS will be on Sunday, December 22 at 4:00 p.m. The program will include choral music and carols sung by the Westminster Choir and the St. Andrew's Sisters, with Dale Rogers, Organist. See details on page one.

THE WESTMINSTER CHILDREN'S CHOIR (Kindergarten - Grade 5) rehearses Wednesdays at 5:00 p.m. and is led by Katie Moore, our Director for Children's Music. They are preparing music for the Advent Celebration on December 8 and for Christmas Eve.



CHILDREN'S CHOIR sang *Happy Birthday Jesus* and *Noel* at Children of Abraham as we shared the celebration of Christ's birth within our faith tradition.

ADULT EDUCATION FORUM:

Join us Sundays 11:15 a.m. - 12 noon in Parish Hall.

FAITH, ART, ADVOCACY PART II: CIVIL RIGHTS

SUNDAYS, JANUARY 5 AND 12

During the 20th century, emerging technologies permitted musicians to develop new genres of Jazz, Rock and Reggae that would transform the music industry and lead this march of the civil rights movement. Dr. Peter Kieffer will lead the class.

WESTMINSTER WELCOMES REV. BOBBY MUSENGWA MLK SUNDAY, JANUARY 19

On MLK Sunday, January 19, the Rev. Godfrey (Bobby) Musengwa will preach and present a workshop following worship in Parish Hall. Rev. Musengwa serves as Pastor of the Maximo Presbyterian Church in St. Petersburg, FL.



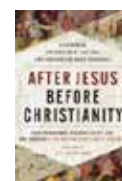
Bobby was born and raised in South Africa, educated at St. Andrews Presbyterian University (Laurinburg, NC), and received his Master of Divinity from Princeton Theological Seminary. He and his wife Veronique (who was born in France) have three daughters. Dr. Kieffer and Rev. Musengwa attended CREDO together in 2008 and have been friends and colleagues in ministry since that time. We are honored to welcome Rev. Musengwa to our pulpit.

THE 50TH ANNUAL MARTIN LUTHER KING BREAKFAST MONDAY, JANUARY 20

The 50th Annual MLK Breakfast hosted by Springfield Frontiers will be held Monday, January 20, 8:30 a.m. at the Wyndam Hotel. Westminster will be a Gold Sponsor, donating \$1,500 (\$1,000 from the Endowment Scholarship Fund and \$500 from the Peace and Global Witness collection for local ministry.) Justice Lisa Holder White, Illinois Supreme Court, will be the guest speaker. If you would like to join the pastors and attend, please contact Jennie Alt at jalt@wpcspi.org.

APOSTLES' READ LIBRARY BOOK GROUP

The Apostles' Read Library Book Group will not meet in December and will meet on Tuesday, January 28, 2025. The book for January is *After Jesus Before Christianity: A Historical Exploration of the First Two Centuries of Jesus Movements* by Erin Vearncombe, Brandon Scott, Hal Taussig, and the Westar Institute.



FAMILY MINISTRY by the Rev. Sarah A Bishop

YOUTH MINISTRY by Mary Ray

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 8

11:15 a.m. Advent Celebration: Following the 10:00 a.m. worship service, the youth are invited to Parish Hall for cookie-decorating, ornament-making, holiday brunch, and caroling!

12 noon – 1:30 p.m.

Jr. & Sr. High Youth – Shopping for Contact Ministries

After the Advent Celebration, youth will gather in the West Narthex and head out to Target to buy gifts for local youth who are a part of Contact Ministries using the money raised at the Spud Bake! We will not meet for our regular evening program.

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 15

11:15 a.m. – 12 noon

Children's Christmas Pageant Rehearsal (Sanctuary)

The Confirmand readers will review their scripts for the Children's Christmas Pageant Rehearsal during class.

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 22

11:00 a.m. – 12 noon

Children's Christmas Pageant Rehearsal (Sanctuary)

The Confirmand readers will gather with children after worship for the Children's Christmas Pageant Rehearsal.

12 noon – 12:45 p.m.

A Service of Lessons and Carols Rehearsal (Sanctuary)

Our Senior High will gather in the Sanctuary to rehearse for the traditional 7:00 p.m. Christmas Eve Service of Lessons and Carols.

5:30 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.

Christmas Party at the Home of Lily Swanson

Junior and Senior High are invited to Swanson Home (2201 Augusta, 62704) to enjoy a festive dinner and exchange white elephant gifts (max \$15).

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 24

4:30 p.m. Confirmation Participants meet early for Children's Christmas Pageant (Sanctuary)

Confirmands with speaking parts in the Children's Christmas Pageant meet early for the 5:00 p.m. service.

6:45 p.m. A Service of Lessons and Carols (Sanctuary)

Senior high participating in the service will gather in the East Narthex prior to the 7:00 p.m. service.



Senior High Youth gathered on October 20 and November 10 to create care packages which were sent to 19 college age students with a personal message and invitation the Holiday College-Age Brunch.

COLLEGE-AGE BRUNCH SUNDAY, DECEMBER 29 FOLLOWING WORSHIP AT BOONE'S

All College Age Youth are invited to brunch on Sunday, December 29. Hosted by the Rev. Sarah Bishop and Mary Ray at Boone's, plan to meet in the West Narthex at 11:15 a.m. before heading out.



CHILDREN'S MINISTRY by Meleah & Aaron Berkowitz

ADVENT CELEBRATION IS SUNDAY, DECEMBER 8

10:00 a.m. Worship

Children's Choir (Grades K-5)
will present Special Music.

11:15 a.m. Fellowship in Parish Hall

Following worship, we will gather in Parish Hall for a delicious brunch, cookie-decorating, ornament-making, and carol-singing. There will also be materials to make an advent wreath for those who missed out earlier.

SUNDAY SCHOOL CHRISTMAS PROCESSIONAL

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 22: 10:00 A.M.

The Sunday School children will experience the Christmas Story and Nativity in the Second Floor Classroom, process in their costumes during the closing hymn "Joy to the World," and join the pastors in the Chancel for the Charge and Benediction.

11:00 a.m. Christmas Pageant Rehearsal in the Sanctuary. Children participating in the Christmas Pageant on December 24 are invited to a rehearsal.

CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PAGEANT

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 24

4:30 P.M. ARRIVAL TIME, 5:00 P.M. CHRISTMAS PAGEANT

All our children are invited to arrive on Tuesday, December 24 at 4:30 p.m. in the Second Floor Classroom, where they will receive a costume and be given instructions for the 5:00 p.m. Christmas Pageant as the Confirmation Youth and Bridges Children narrate and present the Christmas story. Children will participate as shepherds and angels. Children ages three and under are invited to be lambs.

Please complete and return the postcard included in the Advent mailing to Meleah and Aaron Berkowitz no later than Sunday, December 22 to let us know if your children are joining us and their preferred parts. We hope you and your family will join us in celebrating this Holy Season! If you have questions, contact Meleah Berkowitz (berkowitz@wpcspi.org).

WESTMINSTER COOPERATIVE PRESCHOOL NEWS

by Emily Rowley

Each year in November at our Friendship Feast, we act out the story of Stone Soup for our parents because it contains an important lesson exemplified by our preschool. "When everyone works together, wonderful things happen!" It is always good to gather together and celebrate our friendships.



BAY WEEKEND WELCOMED PC(USA) STATED CLERK, THE REV. JINYUN OH – NOVEMBER 2-3



BAY WEEKEND: On Saturday, over 40 members gathered at Judy and Todd Knox's home to welcome the Rev. Jihyun Oh. Born in South Korea and raised in Kansas, musical presentations to honor Jihyun from the Wizard of Oz, included *Somewhere Over the Rainbow* to *If I Only Had a Brain, Heart, and Courage*, and *Changed for Good*. On Sunday, Rev. Oh preached and presented a thoughtful reflection on "The Church as the Body of Christ."

CHILDREN OF ABRAHAM: On November 13, over 70 children, youth, and adult leaders gathered in Parish Hall to build friendships and share in two service projects. We put together 30 birthday boxes for our Little Pantry and 50 Bundles of Joy for newborns in Springfield born into poverty. Pediatrician and Westminster member, Dr. Meredith Volle, shared the story of the non-profit her family founded in honor of her grandmother.

CHILDREN OF ABRAHAM INTERFAITH FRIENDSHIPS STRENGTHEN AT NOVEMBER 13 GATHERING



CELEBRATING REV. CHOI'S MINISTRY – SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 17



FAMILY MATTERS – GYMNASTICS/NINJA NIGHT – SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 23



ST. ANDREW'S SUNDAY CELEBRATES OUR PRESBYTERIAN HERITAGE



CELEBRATING REV. CHOI'S MINISTRY was a time for members to express their gratitude and affection for his meaningful ministry since December 1, 2018 and to wish him renewed strength and healing as he continues to deal with Long-Haul Covid. Sophia, Diana, and Zacariah will continue to be a part of our faith community.

FAMILY MATTERS at the Gymnastic Center on November 23 was a time of tumbling and catching up as families enjoyed one another in a bi-monthly time of fellowship.

ST. ANDREW'S SUNDAY on November 24 was a festive service as we celebrated Christ the King Sunday and our Presbyterian Scottish heritage.

PARISH LIFE NEWS by Rev. Dr. Blythe D. Kieffer MISSION AND COMMUNITY SERVICE

CHRISTMAS GIVING OPPORTUNITIES

ADOPT A FAMILY: Westminster is sponsoring nine families in the Contact Ministries transitional shelter, providing Christmas gifts as they work their way toward independence. Each family has a wishlist online and a link can be found on www.wpcspi.org. Check to see if there are any remaining items to purchase. Please contact Jennie Alt with questions. Gifts can be placed under the Christmas tree in the elevator lobby and need to be at the church by December 11.



CONTACT MINISTRIES FOOD BASKET GIVEAWAY

On Monday and Tuesday, December 9 and 10 assistance is needed to distribute the annual Food Basket Giveaway at Contact Ministries located at 1100 East Adams Street. Westminster members have long supported the many ways Contact Ministries helps others in our community. Tasks include: setting up and breaking down the distribution room, sorting and bagging food, and assisting clients. Click the link below to sign up to help in 2-hour shifts. If you can serve at this event, please call their office at (217) 753-3939 or sign up at [Volunteers: CM Christmas Giveaway 2024](#)

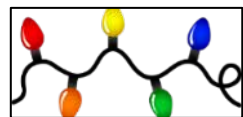
TOYS FOR TOTS box is in the West Narthex. Place unwrapped gifts in it for children of any age through January 1. This is a program of the Marine Corps Reserve.

THE MITTEN TREE for Contact Ministries is in the West Narthex. In addition to children's items, adult gloves, hats, and scarves are also needed and can be collected through January 1.

SPECIAL OFFERINGS

THE CHRISTMAS JOY OFFERING is an annual special collection of the PC(USA). It supports church workers and families in times of need, and it funds scholarships for racial/ethnic students. Please look among your offering envelopes for those specifically marked or on our website to give toward this special fund and nurture the promise of future leaders and those who serve the church.

DECEMBER EARTH CARE TIP



CHRISTMAS LIGHT RECYCLING - Last year's Christmas tree lights didn't work? If simply replacing a bulb or fuse doesn't solve the problem, reclaim valuable copper, plastic, and glass by recycling them (without bags or boxes) in the top bin at the southwest corner of Westminster's West Narthex. Consider purchasing more efficient LED lights! - Dr. Peter Kieffer

SING BY HEART CHOIR

On November 20 the Sing by Heart Choir sang for family members and friends during their sixth and final fall practice. Westminster funded this outreach of the Springfield Choral Society through their Endowment Mission Grants. The Sing by Heart Choir will resume on February 19.



HUNGER MINISTRIES

BREADLESS BREADLINE SUNDAY raised \$601 for the St. John's Breadline which serves hot meals 365 days a year to the underserved. Thank you to all who contributed.

HELPING HANDS MEALS

Thank you to Georgina Hudspeth, Sue Sawers, Sue Scaife, Krista Steller, & Jeanne VanGieson who

prepared the November 8 bagged lunches for 70. The November 27 hot meal for 70 included turkey and the makings was prepared by Pat and Al Hymans and Melanie and Bud Green.



STEADFAST NEIGHBOR LITTLE PANTRY



In this season of Advent, let us share the love of Christ by giving people hope, a peace to not worry about empty plates, joy knowing other people care for them, and most importantly, love that they are beloved people and children of God.

Please sign up to fill the pantry using/clicking the QR code.

CHILDREN OF ABRAHAM RECEIVES ENDOWMENT MISSION GRANT

At their November meeting, the Mission and Community Service Committee approved a grant for Children of Abraham to prepare 30 Birthday boxes for our Little Pantry which were shared with other micro pantries through PEO's food drive coordinated by Ann Collins. Each box included: aluminum foil pan and lid, cake mix and frosting, can of Sprite, candles, decorations and handmade card from children



GIVE -A- MEAL-A- MONTH DECEMBER MENU

Pancake Mix and Syrup, Canned Hash, Oatmeal Packets, Canned Fruit in 100% juice/water. High-Demand Items: personal hygiene products, shampoo, conditioner, diapers & wipes size 3 & up, granola / nutri-grain / breakfast bars, individual cereal packs, soap.

FAIR TRADE SUNDAY, DECEMBER 8

Do you need sweet treats for stocking stuffers? On Sunday, December 8 following worship, Equal Exchange coffee, chocolate, tea, olive oil, nuts and other items will be sold in West Narthex. Thank you to Becky Martin and Jeanne VanGieson for leading this ministry.



CONGREGATIONAL CARE AT WESTMINSTER

HOME COMMUNION If you are unable to attend worship and would like to receive Communion at home on December 8, please contact Jennie Alt at the church office. Thank you to the two teams of elders and deacons who made visits to seven members on Sunday, November 10.

BLOOD PRESSURE CHECKS & CONSULTATION will be available on Sunday, December 8 by Parish Nurse, Ellen Carpenter.

POINSETTIA DELIVERIES will be made on Sunday, December 15 by the Deacons. Recipients are those who have lost a beloved family member since Easter and shut-ins.

FELLOWSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

KNIT 2 PURL 4 MISSION & FELLOWSHIP gathers every Tuesday at 1:00 p.m. in the Second Floor Classroom. A Celebration for the New Year will be held on Tuesday, January 14 in the Parish Hall. Knitters will knit at home December 24 & 31 and January 7. Contact Mary Jo Jenkins at 217-622-8657.

RUTH & NAOMI CIRCLE HOSTS A CHRISTMAS TEA FRIDAY, DECEMBER 6 FROM 12:00 - 2:00 P.M.

All women of Westminster and their guests are invited to enjoy an afternoon of tea sandwiches, salads, and desserts in Parish Hall with a musical program by the St. Andrews Sisters, accompanied by Dale Rogers.



RUTH AND NAOMI CIRCLE meets on Wednesday, December 4 7:00 p.m. at the home of Blythe Denham Kieffer (26 Island Bay Lane, 62712). Debbie Parker will lead the devotional by G.K. Chesterton "A Magical Universe" (pp. 333-338) from the book, Devotional Classics, edited by Richard J. Foster and James Bryan Smith. Please RSVP to Jennie at jalt@wpcspi.org.

ELIZABETH CIRCLE meets on Monday, December 9 12:00 – 2:00 p.m. at Papa Franks for their annual Christmas luncheon beverage. There will be a collection of hats and gloves to be donated to Contact Ministries. Please RSVP to Eleanor VanDeventer at 217-341-4032.

LYDIA CIRCLE meets Tuesday, December 17, 12 Noon for a Christmas luncheon in Parish Hall. Please RSVP to Nancy Canady at 217-899-9890.

DMA (DON'T MENTION AGE) will resume in March 2024.

PRESBYTERIAN MEN'S BREAKFAST will be Thursday, December 12 at 8:00 a.m. in Parish Hall. Bob Wire will speak on his family serving in the Civil War and their letters. Jay Kennerly will provide devotions and a member will provide breakfast. Please RSVP on our website or by contacting the church office.

CONCORDIA COMMUNION AND LUNCH THURSDAY, DECEMBER 12, 11:30 AM

Members and friends of Westminster who live at Concordia will gather Thursday, December 12 at 11:30 a.m. for communion followed by lunch with the pastors and the director of music and the arts in the Patriot Dining room. This is a great opportunity to introduce Rev. Sarah Bishop to our family members at Concordia.

NEW MEMBER CLASS, DECEMBER 1 AND 8



Friends and visitors are invited to a New Member Class on **Sundays, December 1 and 8, 9:00 – 9:45 a.m.** in the Pastor's Study. Anyone who has been visiting and would like to learn more about the church, its mission, and becoming a member is invited.

New members will be received at the 10:00 a.m. service on December 15 following a Special Session meeting at 9:30 a.m.

FAITHFUL, HOPEFUL, LOVING STEWARDSHIP UPDATE

As of Monday, November 25, we have received **201 pledges** toward our 2025 annual budget totaling **\$813,660** which is **90%** of the **\$902,870 goal**. Thank you to all who pledged. If you have not made a pledge, please do so soon.



2025 Stewardship Committee: Jim Dolan, Chair, Marc Anderson, Ellen Carpenter, Dr. Tanya DeSanto, Tara Fritsch, Harold Hale, Jay Kennerly, and Julie Robbs

WESTMINSTER NEWS

MILESTONE BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES

Dan Dees celebrates 91 years on December 1.

Louise Cragoe celebrates 100 years on December 5.

Dorothy Wire celebrates 95 years on December 11.

Elsie & Bob Fox celebrate 63 years on December 23.

Bobby McCormick celebrates 91 years on December 29

Marilyn & Jerry Davis celebrate 62 years on December 30.

IN MEMORIAM

Christopher Caupert died November 2 in Springfield. The prayers and sympathy of the congregation are extended to his parents, Linda and Ed Caupert, his sister Cara Barnett (husband Chris), and niece Taryn Barnett.

Charlaine T. Barker died on November 7 in Springfield. The prayers and sympathy of the congregation are extended to her children, Charlie Hitt (wife, Karen), Libby Shelley (husband, Bill), Ben Hitt, Mary Davis (husband, John), and their families.

Ruth Robert-Roland died November 14 in Springfield. The prayers and sympathy of the congregation are extended to her daughters, Susan Robert, Ann Robert, and Jane Robert, her grandchildren Christopher Sobo, Emma Trapp and Benjamin Trapp, and her great grandchildren, Oscar and Calvin Sabo. A service honoring her life will be held at a later time.

PRAYERS AND SYMPATHY EXTENDED TO

Deborah Coontz on the death of her sister, and Drew Coontz on the death of his aunt, Barbara Johnson, on October 29 in Tampa, Florida.

Susan and Scott Day on the death of her brother, Maggie and Josh Pinke and Spencer Day on the death of their uncle, and Arthur and Robin Pinke on the death of their great uncle, Jonathan Lefferts on November 20 in New York.

CONGRATULATIONS TO

Jocelyn Victoria Nester on her December 12 graduation from Embry Riddle Aeronautical University in Daytona Beach, FL with a B.S. in Aerospace Engineering and a minor in Naval Science. On December 23, she will be commissioned into the U.S. Navy as a 2nd Lieutenant Officer and begin flight training as a Naval Aviator at the Naval Air Station in Pensacola, FL.

OCTOBER FINANCIAL REPORT by Lisa Runkle

At the end of October, the Operating Fund income is slightly more than our budget by \$2,808, and expenses are under budget by \$76,352. Our net total is \$79,160 income over expenses year-to-date.

2024 Operations	Actual	Budget	Difference
Income	\$ 938,516	\$ 935,708	\$ 2,808
Expenses	\$-859,356	\$-935,708	\$ 76,352
Net Total	\$ 79,160	\$ 0	

YEAR-END 2024 CONTRIBUTIONS

As the end of the year approaches, we want to thank all of those who have made donations to the church, and especially to those who have already fulfilled their 2024 pledge. If you need assistance determining the amount you have donated compared to the amount of your pledge, just call the office, and Lisa Runkle would be happy to help. **Be sure any donations for the 2024 tax year are dated 2024 and received no later than 5:00 p.m. Thursday, January 2, 2025.**

STOCK DONATIONS Please contact Lisa Runkle, Financial Administrator, for instructions to make a stock donation and to alert us to watch for the stock transfer at our brokerage firm.

**CHRISTMAS EVE AT WESTMINSTER
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 24**

5:00 P.M. CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PAGEANT

The Confirmation youth and Bridges children will narrate the Christmas story in a more elaborate pageant with special music by the Children's Choir. We welcome Kelly and Edison Zohfonyl with newborn son Jace as our Holy Family. All children are invited to participate as shepherds, angels, and lambs.

5:30 – 7:00 P.M. ANNUAL CHRISTMAS EVE DINNER

HOSTED BY THE BOARD OF DEACONS

Don't miss this special event which includes a delicious meal of roast turkey, baked ham, vegetable, garden salad, cheesy potatoes, rolls, and fresh fruit pies. Adults are \$25.00, children 6-12 are \$14.50 and children ages 5 and under are no charge. **Reservations and payment must be made no later than Thursday, December 19.** Please send your payment and number attending to the Church Office or use our website www.wpcspi.org. Reservation forms will be in the bulletins on December 8 and 15. Large families are encouraged to reserve tables this year.

7:00 P.M. SERVICE OF LESSONS AND CAROLS

The Westminster Choir will provide the choral music and our Senior High will read the Christmas Story in this Annual Service of Lessons and Carols. Dr. Kieffer will give the meditation. In ancient times, the bells of churches were silenced during the season of Advent. Yet, at the singing of the angel's song, "Gloria in Excelsis Deo" (Glory to God in the Highest) the bells were rung. We follow that tradition by ringing bells during the singing of the closing carol.

*BRING YOUR SILVER BELLS, BRASS BELLS,
JINGLE BELLS, AND EVEN COW BELLS
TO THIS SERVICE AND BE PREPARED TO RING OUT IN PEALS OF JOY!*

**10:00 A.M. SUNDAY, DECEMBER 29
FIRST SUNDAY OF CHRISTMAS**

We will continue the celebration of Christmas as we contemplate the peace Christ's birth means in our lives with Rev. Sarah Bishop preaching!

**PASTORS BEGIN TWELFTH YEAR
OF PRAYER MINISTRY**

As Advent approaches and we enter a new cycle of the Christian year, we are delighted to begin the twelfth year of Prayer Ministry at Westminster Presbyterian Church. It is a privilege and honor, as your pastors, to gather each week in our Chancel for prayer. Throughout the year, each member of our congregation is lifted in prayer.

A letter is mailed three weeks prior to the week members are being lifted in prayer to provide an opportunity to share prayer requests.

Westminster Staff

The Reverend Dr. Blythe D. Kieffer
Pastor and Head of Staff
bkieffer@wpcspi.org

The Reverend Sarah A. Bishop
Associate Pastor for Family Ministry
sbishop@wpcspi.org

The Reverend Gerald W. Boutelle
Parish Associate

Dale T. Rogers
Director of Music and the Arts
drogers@wpcspi.org

Mary A. Ray
Director for Youth
zkarmar.mr@gmail.com

Meleah and Aaron Berkowitz
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Part-time Custodians

Church Offices will be closed at Noon on December 24 & 31.

We are closed Christmas and New Year's Day.

The Reporter folding and mailing will be Monday, December 30.