



THE REPORTER

WESTMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

533 South Walnut Street
Springfield, Illinois 62704

217-522-4415
www.wpcspi.org

February 2025

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. Confirmation
Adult Education Forum

5:00 p.m. Senior High Youth Group

February 2

FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY MISSION SUNDAY

Jeremiah 1:4-10; 1 Corinthians 13:1-13
The Rev. Dr. Blythe D. Kieffer
Tongues of Mortals

February 9

SACRAMENT OF COMMUNION FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY

Isaiah 6:1-8, (9-13); Luke 5:1-11
The Rev. Sarah A. Bishop
Yet If You Say So

February 16

SIXTH SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY

Jeremiah 17:5-10; Luke 6:17-26
The Rev. Dr. Blythe D. Kieffer
Tall and Resolute

February 23

SEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY

Genesis 45:3-11, 15; Luke 6:27-38
The Rev. Dr. Blythe D. Kieffer
Tapestry of Life

MISSION SUNDAY CELEBRATED FEBRUARY 2

LET THE DOOR OF THIS CONGREGATION BE A WAY TO SERVICE

On Sunday, February 2, Westminster mission will be highlighted during worship. This is the ninth Mission Sunday which began in 2016. A booklet including a comprehensive list of the 2024 mission supported by Westminster and the members of the committees who serve will be distributed.

The total Mission Giving for 2024 is **\$392,280**. This giving is divided among the Operating Fund, Special Offerings, Presbyterian Women, and the Support and Endowment Mission Funds.



SERVICE OF INSTALLATION FOR THE REVEREND BISHOP SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 2 AT 4:00 P.M.



On Sunday, February 2, at 4:00 p.m. the Presbytery of Great Rivers will install the Reverend Sarah A. Bishop as Westminster's Associate Pastor for Family Ministry.

The Rev. Ann Schwartz, Lead Presbyter will preach. Also serving on Sarah's commission are: Presbytery Moderator, Carol Sleeth (First Federated, Peoria), APNC Chair Elder Krista Steller, Rev. Chuck Goodman (Hope Presbyterian, Springfield), Rev. Dr. Adam Quine (First Presbyterian, Lincoln), and Rev. Jonathan Warren (First Presbyterian, Jacksonville).

The ministry of music presented by the Westminster Choir will be Mendelssohn's "How Lovely are the Messengers that Bring us the Gospel of Peace," and "One Faith, One Hope, One Lord," by Craig Courtney. The reception, hosted by Hospitality Coordinator Pat Hymans and team, will follow in Parish Hall.

190 YEAR ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION PRESENTS: A CONCERT OF SPIRITUALS AND HYMNS SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 9 AT 4:00 P.M.

A Concert of Spirituals and Hymns will be presented on Sunday, February 9 at 4:00 p.m. in our Sanctuary as we celebrate Westminster's 190 Years of Faith, Art, and Advocacy.

Dr. Alfonzo Cooper, Jr., tenor, who was featured in the 2024 musical program *Portraits of Peace* (remembering the lives of civil rights leaders C.T. Vivian and Rosa Parks) returns with his pianist Curtis Baum in a celebration of music of the African American Diaspora and the Oral Tradition.



Dr. Cooper has recently been appointed to the music faculty at the prestigious Tuskegee University in Tuskegee, Alabama. This program falls in the week of Abraham Lincoln's birthday and in Black History month.

Sermon manuscripts are located in the West Narthex and online at www.wpcspi.org.

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



Thank you for extending such a warm welcome on MLK Sunday to my friend and colleague, the Rev. Musengwa.

When I met Bobby at the Board of Pensions CREDO Conference in 2008, I was immediately drawn to him.

The two of us, along with the Rev. Michael Wicks, were affectionately referred to as “The Mod Squad.” It was my joy and privilege to introduce him to Westminster. He expressed deep appreciation for the warmth he received and the generous disaster assistance for his congregation, Maximo Presbyterian Church in St. Petersburg, FL, which was flooded following both the Helene and Milton Hurricanes.

Celebrating 19 Years of Faith, Art, and Advocacy

On Founders’ Sunday, May 18, 2025, Westminster will celebrate the 190th milestone anniversary of our founding by ardent abolitionists in 1835. Former pastors and associate pastors will join us as we commemorate this anniversary.



A Concert of Hymns and Spirituals by Dr. Alfonso on Sunday, February 9 at 4:00 p.m. in our Sanctuary, will be presented as a part of our celebratory year. The Worship, Music and Arts Committee will host a Fine Arts Display on Sunday, March 23 following worship to highlight the many gifted artists in the Westminster faith community.

Faith, Art, and Advocacy Adult Education Forums have highlighted Westminster’s advocacy as we welcomed Portugal Refugees in 1849 (September) and how music and art enhanced the Civil Rights movement (January). A final Adult Ed Forum on our Abolitionism roots will be presented April 27 & May 11.

A Westminster Anniversary Retreat to Pere Marquette Lodge and Conference Center in Alton, Illinois is planned for May 1-3, as we celebrate Westminster’s enduring legacy of faith, art, and advocacy by tracing the journeys of our founding abolitionists and the sacrificial role of Elijah Parrish Lovejoy during the early nineteenth century. Details and registration will begin in March.

Other plans include creating an anniversary signage with the theme and adding to our 175th timeline to include the years from 2010 to 2025.

ENJOY A MYSTERY THRILLER AND SUPPORT A GOOD CAUSE

A child of Westminster and practicing radiation oncologist, Dr. Michael Stutz, has written a mystery novel with the pseudonym name Ray Roentgen. The book, Murder in Athens, IL: (pronounced Ay-thens) can be ordered on Amazon. 100% of the proceeds from the book will support Boys and Girls Club of Central Illinois in the Springfield area. A copy will also be available in the Ziegler Library.

NEW MEMBER CLASS

SUNDAYS, MARCH 2 AND 9 AT 9:00 A.M.

Friends and visitors are invited to a New Members Class on Sundays, March 2 and 9 at 9:00 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. The class will be led by the pastors. New members will be recognized at the 10:00 a.m. service on Sunday, March 16, following a Special Session meeting.



MUSIC NOTES by Dale T. Rogers

THE WESTMINSTER CHOIR Rehearsals have resumed on Thursdays at 7:00 p.m. to prepare for each Sunday morning’s service as well as for the Rev. Sarah Bishop’s installation service on February 2 at 4:00 p.m.

THE WESTMINSTER CHILDREN’S CHOIR meets on Wednesdays at 5:00 p.m. in the Music Room following Bridges. Katie Moore resigned as the Director of Children’s Music, so Dale Rogers will fill that position for the spring. We are pleased that Katie will continue to do the music for VBS in the summer. The Children’s Choir is preparing music for the Ash Wednesday service as well as for Palm Sunday and for the 190th Anniversary Celebration.

CHURCH MICE, a musical experience for infants through age four, meets on Saturday mornings at 11:00. Follow the pathway of cheese to music, fun and friends.

CELEBRATING 190 YEARS WITH A FINE ARTS DISPLAY SUNDAY, MARCH 23

On Sunday, March 23, the Worship, Music and Arts Committee will host a Fine Arts Display at 11:15 a.m. in Parish Hall. This event is in celebration of Westminster’s 190th anniversary and will provide an opportunity to highlight the work of Westminster’s gifted artists.

SING BY HEART CHOIR BEGINS WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 19



The Springfield Choral Society, in partnership with the Dale and Deborah Smith Alzheimer’s Center at SIU School of Medicine and Westminster Presbyterian Church, will continue this joyful musical experience for individuals with dementia and their caregiver, promoting social connection, creative expression, and overall well-being.

The Sing by Heart choir will meet on Wednesdays beginning February 19 from 10:00-11:30 a.m. in Parish Hall and continue for eight weeks. The final session on Wednesday, April 9 will feature a small performance at 11:00 a.m. for family, friends, and the public

ADULT EDUCATION FORUM

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

LIFE IN THE KENNEDY ADMINISTRATION SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 2

Dr. Roy Wehrle will share some of his experience serving in the Kennedy Administration. Roy served as an Artillery Officer in the US Army, Economic Counselor to the US Ambassadors in Laos & Vietnam and Deputy and Associate Director for AID in both countries. He was a Senior Economist in President Kennedy’s Council of Economic Advisors, Social Policy Institute, Harvard University. Come, hear Roy’s first hand experience.

HOMOSEXUALITY AND THE BIBLE SUNDAYS, FEBRUARY 16 AND 23

The historical perspectives and biblical passages that have influenced discrimination based on race, gender, and sexual orientation will be presented. The primary source for this presentation is Jack Rogers’ book Jesus, the Bible and Homosexuality. Led by Dr. Peter and Rev. Dr. Blythe Kieffer.

APOSTLES’ READ LIBRARY BOOK GROUP

The Apostles’ Read Library Book Group will meet on Tuesday, February 25, 6:00 p.m. in the Ziegler Library. The book for February is *The Night Watchman* by Louise Erdrich.



FAMILY MINISTRY by the Rev. Sarah A. Bishop

YOUTH MINISTRY by Mary Ray

EGGTASTIC BREAKFAST FUNDRAISER THANK YOU!

Thank you to all who enjoyed the Egg-tastic Breakfast in support of the 2025 Youth Mission Trip. Prepared by Pat Hymans and her team and served by the youth attending the mission trip, to date we raised \$1,875.

Those who were unable to attend and who would like to donate to support our youth are welcome to do so.

THE SOUPER BOWL OF CARING

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 9

Support the hungry in Springfield by placing your donation in the large soup pots held by our youth following worship on Sunday, February 9. This is a program organized by the youth of the PC(USA).



JR. HIGH CONFIRMATION FEBRUARY SCHEDULE

GRADES 6-7 CONFIRMATION PREP meets during worship (10:15 – 11:00 a.m.) on Sundays, February 2 (The Church), February 16 (Signs and Wonders) and February 23. NO Class on February 9 (Communion and Souper Bowl of Caring).

GRADE 8 CONFIRMATION meets following worship (11:15 a.m. – 12 noon) on Sundays, February 2 (The Counter-Reformation), February 16 (Presbyterians in America), and February 23 (Divide and Reconcile). A Brief Confirmation parent's meeting will be held this Sunday, February 2 at the beginning of Class.

SR. HIGH YOUTH GROUP GATHERINGS

Senior High youth meet Sundays, February 2 (Attend Rev. Sarah's Installation Service at 4:00 p.m.) and February 16 (meal Beth and Tad Allen).

Eighth graders (especially those attending the 2025 Mission Trip) are invited to participate as we build community in preparation for our mission adventure. Leaders: Rev. Sarah Bishop, Cathy Brower, Susan Day, Kyle Duffy, and Mary Ray.

YOUTH MISSION TRIP

ASHEVILLE, NC - Saturday, July 12- Saturday July 19, 2025

We are so excited to announce the 2025's Mission Trip is to partner with Asheville Youth Mission (AYM) in Asheville, NC. Our mission trip is open to rising freshmen through graduating seniors as well as completed college freshmen as participants and adult chaperones. The cost will be: \$350 for youth and \$300 for adult chaperones.

The Intent to Participate forms are due by Sunday, February 9 to reserve your spot with a \$50.00 deposit. The full cost needs to be paid by April 30. Intent to Participate forms can be downloaded from the church website or see the most recent Youth News emails.

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY by Meleah & Aaron Berkowitz

BRIDGES MID-WEEK FELLOWSHIP

WELCOMES ADVOCATES ON FEBRUARY 5

Bridges Advocates are invited to join the Bridges children on Wednesday, February 5 at 4:00 p.m. in the Third Floor Chapel for a special Valentine's project and relationship building.

PRE-SCHOOL SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASS

BEGINS FEBRUARY 2

Children ages 3-5 will begin attending Pre-School Sunday School starting Sunday, February 2. Pre-School age children will begin worship in the Sanctuary with their parents, and after the Children's Sermon they will head to the Pre-School classroom for a special Sunday School lesson drawn from the Frolic Pre-School curriculum. The children will share a Bible story, songs and prayers and have an opportunity for an activity or craft and free play. Teachers and Assistants are: Taryn Barnett, Lindsay and Juliet Boutelle, Kate Bryans, Cathy Brower, Maria DeJong, Dee Dee Duffy, Sara and Abigail Eldridge, Leigh Milward, and Katrina Opperman.

CHILDREN OF ABRAHAM

GATHERS WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 12

Children and Youth (Kindergarten through High School) are invited to Children of Abraham on **Wednesday, February 12, 4:30-6:00 p.m.** at Grace United Methodist Church (1612 E. Capital Ave.). Join us as we explore the celebrations within each of our faiths. We are collecting small shampoos (12-19 oz. and lotions (8-10 oz.) to support Midwest Mission (UMC mission partner). Families are welcome to drive directly there.



LENTEN FAMILY DEVOTIONS AND

ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING CALENDARS

Children and Families please be on the lookout for this year's Lenten mailing which will arrive the week of February 18 in preparation for Ash Wednesday, March 5. This year's Lenten Family Devotion will include a Lenten Family Photos Devotional as well as the OGHs calendars and Fish boxes. Begin your Lenten journey by being a part of the Daily Photos Challenge. This daily devotion will include a short scripture and a word of the day. You are invited to share a photo in the Facebook group on how your family experienced that word in your day. To be part of the Westminster Young Family Facebook group, please contact Jennie Alt in the church office.

DUNGEONS & DRAGONS

A group of eight intrepid adventurers have been meeting with Dungeon Master Aaron Berkowitz every other Wednesday night in the Ziegler Library to explore the 1st century AD ancient Near East. Right now, they are sailing down the Tigris river on a quest inspired by the deuterocanonical Book of Tobit.

WESTMINSTER CO-OP PRESCHOOL BY EMILY ROWLEY

Our Trivia Night is Saturday, March 1 at 6:30 p.m. (doors open at 6:00 p.m.). Join us for board game themed trivia, a great silent auction, and lots of fun at the Operating Engineers Local 695 Hall at 3517 E. Cook Street. If you know anyone who might sponsor a round or have a great donation for our silent auction, please let us know! For more information and to purchase a table visit <https://givebutter.com/c/WCPTTriviaNight2025>

On Wednesday, February 19th, we will have an Open House for prospective families. If you know anyone who might want to know more about our preschool, please share this information with them. We will have the classroom open for them from 6-7:30 to bring their children to tour the classroom, meet the teacher and board members, and ask any questions they might have. Early registration is open for our 2025-26 school year for current families, alumni families, and church members until February 28th. We will then open for general enrollment.

We have been loving the winter weather in the preschool. We've filled the sensory table with snow and finally been able to get outside and stomp around in it! In February, our study will involve friendship. We're looking forward to making boxes for our Valentine parties.

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY HIGHLIGHTS IN JANUARY



Children's Ministry is busy in 2025 at Westminster! On MLK, Jr. Sunday, Miss Julie Robbs shared her experiences of desegregation with the Sunday School children as they created celebration wands together. Our Sunday school learned about Jesus reading the Torah in the Temple with Miss Katrina Opperman.

Bridges children successfully moved the Ark of the Covenant to Jerusalem with Mrs. Berkowitz and Rev. Sarah.



YOUTH MISSION TRIP FUNDRAISERS BEGIN WITH EGGTASTIC BREAKFAST



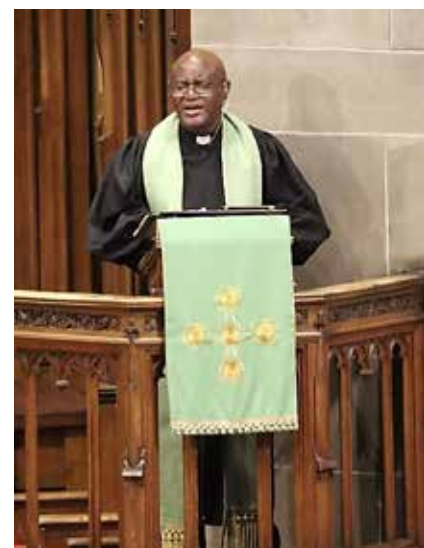
Our youth also had a productive January! The Mission Team served the Eggastic Breakfast before the Annual Meeting to raise funds for their 2025 Mission to Asheville, NC. Thanks to all who made and served a delicious breakfast. The waffles were a hit!

CHURCH OFFICER RETREAT, ORDINATION & INSTALLATION



On Saturday, January 4, Church Officers gathered for worship, planning, and “getting to know” one another at their annual retreat prior to the ordination and installation of newly elected Elders and Deacons on January 5 and 26.

WESTMINSTER CELEBRATES MARTIN LUTHER KING



Rev. Bobby Musengwa brought intelligence, energy, insight, and love to our MLK Sunday worship with our children, in the pulpit, and the adult ed forum.

Westminster provided a Gold Sponsorship to the 2025 MLK Frontier's Breakfast. This \$1,500 donation provides scholarships for young men at risk in our community.



PARISH LIFE NEWS by Rev. Dr. Blythe D. Kieffer

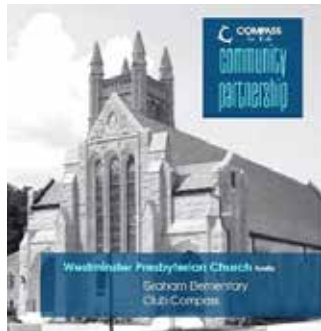
MISSION AND COMMUNITY SERVICE

MISSION SUNDAY CELEBRATED FEBRUARY 2

On Sunday, February 2, mission will be highlighted. Thanks to all in the WPC members who contribute time, effort, donations, and expertise to the church's mission. A comprehensive list of the 2024 mission supported by Westminster will be presented on Sunday, February 2.



COMPASS FOR KIDS



Compass for Kids is an after-school tutoring program to assist and nurture young people. Twenty-five Graham Elementary students spend Tuesday afternoons at Westminster. Compass staff and volunteers from the community are advocates for the children in the program. Currently Juliana Eastvold represents Westminster in this

ministry, and we are seeking more ministry partners to join this meaningful outreach.

On Sunday, February 2, Kieley Hendricker, Westminster Site Coordinator will give a ministry moment to share more about Compass for Kids and will field questions after worship in the West Narthex. Questions can be emailed to Vyvyan Wesley – vyvyan@compassforkids.org.

HUNGER MINISTRIES

HELPING HANDS: Thank you to Kris Gates, Keith Hamilton, Pat Hymans, Becky Martin, Mary Caroline Mitchell, Judy Prillaman, and Krista Steller for preparing the January bagged lunches. Kris Gates and Jeanne VanGieson prepared and delivered the hot meal on January 29.



WESTMINSTER'S LITTLE PANTRY: Thank you to all who stock Westminster's Little Pantry at Graham School. Please sign up on SignUp Genius. (<https://bit.ly/3C4s0vS>)

GIVE -A- MEAL -A- MONTH FEBRUARY MENU

Canned soups with pop tops, peanut butter, boxed crackers, applesauce, toothpaste and brushes, feminine hygiene products, diapers, toilet paper, and travel sized deodorant. (No baby food, please.)

FAIR TRADE SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 16



Join us on Sunday, February 16. Come check out our chocolate and other Equal Exchange items following worship! Becky Martin and Jeanne Van Gieson oversee this ministry.

CONTACT MINISTRIES ANNUAL FUNDRAISER

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 21

Each year Contact Ministries holds this major fund-raising event featuring dinner, dancing, and an auction. This year's event is Friday, February 21 at 6:00 p.m.



The theme is Hawaiian Luau, and it will be held at the Illini Country Club. Members of the Mission and Community Service Committee will represent Westminster at a table. If others are interested in purchasing tickets, contact Dr. Kieffer.

REFUGEE MINISTRY UPDATE

In late December, the Alonso family moved to a new apartment to give both families more space, leaving the Velásquez family at 522 S. Glenwood. Both families continue to progress well in their English classes. All family members have acclimated to Illinois winter and the children have loved playing in the snow. We look forward to starting the green card application process for the Velásquez family as they approach one year in the U.S.

PRESBYTERIAN DISASTER ASSISTANCE

Donations are being received to provide relief for our neighbors in California, who are now facing a devastating disaster. The harrowing images of wildfires consuming parts of Los Angeles and Ventura counties have deeply impacted us all. Session designated \$5,000 from the Betty Smith Mission Endowment to the Presbyterian Disaster Assistance Fund. Additionally, Session designated \$1,000 for Maximo Presbyterian Church in St. Petersburg, FL, which experienced devastating flooding. This is the congregation our guest preacher, Rev. Bobby Musengwa, serves.

EARTH CARE TIP



When shopping or going to the grocery, let's consider not only what we buy but also the packaging. When possible, choose cardboard, paper, and aluminum packaging which are easier and cheaper to recycle with less dependence on fossil fuels. Triangle 1 and 2 plastics are more recyclable than all the rest. Avoid Styrofoam, which is difficult to recycle and breaks apart, sending plastic bits everywhere. Many times, we can save a nice box, jar, or plastic container to use again and again. - *Dr. Peter Kieffer, Chair*

2025 STEADFAST NEIGHBOR OUTREACH

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.



CONGREGATIONAL CARE

HOME COMMUNION - If you are unable to attend worship and would like to receive communion at home on February 9, please contact Jennie Alt at the church office. Thank you to Melanie and Bud Green, Kathy Kenyon and Bill Schlosser, and Mary Ray and Valerie Leonatti who made visits to five members on Sunday, January 12.

BLOOD PRESSURE CHECKS & CONSULTATION will be available on Sunday, February 2, by Parish Nurse, Ellen Carpenter.

FELLOWSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

KNIT 2 PURL 4 MISSION & FELLOWSHIP gathers on Tuesdays from 1:00 -2:30 p.m. in the Second Floor Classroom. For the time being knitters will not meet for their monthly brown bag lunch. Contact Mary Jo Jenkins at 217-622-8657.

ALL WOMEN'S BRUNCH

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 1 FROM 10:00 A.M. - NOON



PW will host All Women's Brunch on Saturday, February 1 from 10:00 a.m. - noon in Parish Hall. Dr. Roy Wehrle, Mary Caroline Mitchell, and Eleanor VanDeventer will present a program called "WPC Refugee Programs in the 20th Century." Please RSVP to the church office or our website

RUTH AND NAOMI CIRCLE meets Wednesday, February 5, 7:00 p.m. at the home of Judy Knox 2004 Maryknoll PL (62704). Mary Ray will lead the devotional by Frank Laubach entitled "Opening Windows to God" (pp. 101-107) from the book, Devotional Classics. RSVP to Judy Knox at 217-691-1057.

ELIZABETH CIRCLE meets Monday, February 10 at 1:00 p.m. in the Second Floor Classroom and will study Lesson 5 "Air Quality" from the PW Horizons Bible Study Let Justice Roll Down by the Rev. Dr. Patricia K. Tull. Call Eleanor VanDeventer at 217-341-4032.

LYDIA CIRCLE meets Tuesday, February 18 at 9:30 a.m. in the library and will study Lesson 5 "Air Quality" from the PW Horizons Bible Study Let Justice Roll Down by the Rev. Dr. Patricia K. Tull. Call Nancy Canady at 217-899-9890.

PRESBYTERIAN MEN'S BREAKFAST will be Thursday, February 13 at 8:00 a.m. at Le Peep (3232 Ginger Creek Dr) for fellowship Please RSVP on our website or by contacting the church office.

WESTMINSTER GATHERING AT CONCORDIA

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 20, 11:30 P.M.

Members & friends of Westminster will gather at Concordia Thursday, February 20 with the Pastors and the Director of Music and the Arts. We will gather for Holy Communion at 11:30 a.m. in the chapel followed by lunch at 12 noon in the New Harmony Room.

PROPERTY UPDATE

NEW TOWER AND EDUCATION ROOFS AND THE INSTALLATION OF SOLAR PANELS

During November and December of 2024, the Education Wing and Tower roofs were replaced. Additionally, two new roof access hatch doors were installed for safer egress to the Tower Roof.



With a new roof on the Education Wing, the long-term goal of placing solar panels on new roofs became a possibility. Twenty-nine solar panels were installed by WindSolarUSA in December.

Thank you to Property Chair Dave Leonatti, Deacon Dr. Todd Lafrenz, Property and Building Manager Gary Warnick, and Financial Administrator Lisa Runkle for their great collaboration. The Betty Smith Mission Endowment funded the solar panels.

WESTMINSTER NEWS

MILESTONE BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES

Dr. Roy Wehrle celebrates 93 years on February 5.
Mary Ann Nation celebrates 95 years on February 11.
Harvey Stephens celebrates 91 years on February 17.
Jerry Davis celebrates 90 years on February 18.

IN MEMORIAM

Dale Huston died January 20. The prayers and sympathy of the congregation are extended to his wife, Judy, their children Dr. Chad Huston, (wife Kara), Dana Huston, and grandchildren, Samuel, Benjamin, and Callista (Calli) Huston.

The Memorial Service for Dr. James Singleton will be held Saturday, February 1 at 2:00 p.m. in Westminster's Sanctuary. Visitation begins at 1:00 p.m. and an hors d'oeuvres reception will follow the service in Parish Hall.

PRAYERS AND SYMPATHY EXTENDED TO

Paris and James Capler on the death of James' uncle, Johny Gordon, January 1 in Springfield and James' cousin, Bishop Dreyfus C. Smith, on January 4 in Springfield.

Angela and Kevin Simonson on the death his mother, to Sam Simonson on the death of his grandmother, Mary Elizabeth Simonson on January 24 in Chatham.

NEW ADDRESS

Gladys & James Hajek, 4101 W. Iles Ave Apt 3325, 62711

PH.D. DISSERTATION SURVEY

Laura O'Reilly, a member of Westminster, is completing her Ph.D. dissertation which includes research on the possible relationship between the political "us versus them" mentality, also known as organizational affective political polarization, and the potential connection between psychological safety at work. This research aims to provide valuable information about how political polarization affects people in their everyday lives. Laura needs participants to complete this anonymous brief 5-minute survey. If you're willing to help, please use the link below:

https://adler.col.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_cvFjFs62o8SNWYK

2024 YEAR-END FINANCIAL REPORT BY LISA RUNKLE

We are grateful that Westminster's Operating Fund ended the year in the black by more than \$65,000. Total income exceeded the budget by \$18,122, and total expenses were under budget by \$46,950. Thank you to those who completed their pledge or made donations this year to further the ministry of Christ at Westminster.

2024 Operations	Actual	Budget	Difference
Income	\$ 1,140,972	\$ 1,122,850	\$ 18,122
Expenses	\$-1,075,900	\$-1,122,850	\$ 46,950
Net Total	\$ 65,072	\$ 0	

2024 SUPPORT AND ENDOWMENT PLAN: The year-end market value of the Plan assets was nearly \$9,217,800. Total income received was \$612,668. Income from donations, campaign receipts, and memorials was \$29,887, and investment income totaled \$582,781 with a 22% total annual return. Expenses of \$637,041 included the Sanctuary HVAC upgrade, roofing, and other church support totaling \$383,457, and \$250,975 in community, regional and international mission support.

PER CAPITA: This year Westminster will pay \$38.50 per member as a part of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to support the work of our denomination in the Presbytery, Synod, and General Assembly. Your special per capita contribution of \$38.50 for each confirmed member in your household will help to offset this cost in Westminster's budget.

PASTOR NOMINATING COMMITTEE
HOSTS CONGREGATIONAL GATHERING ON SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 9

The Pastor Nominating Committee will host a **Congregational Gathering on Sunday, February 9 at 11:15 a.m. in Parish Hall** to invite feedback from members in prioritizing characteristics and leadership skills for the Co-Pastor they will recommend who will transition to Head of Staff upon Dr. Kieffer's retirement.



COMMITTEE MEMBERS INCLUDE:

M. BROWNELL (BROWNIE) ANDERSON grew up at Westminster and returned to Springfield following her retirement. Brownie's career in medical education began at SIU School of Medicine, then she spent 30 years at the Association of American Medical Colleges in Washington, D.C. and for 10 years at the National Board of Medical Examiners in Philadelphia. Brownie is an elder and recently served as co-moderator of PW.

GEORGE BOTANGA is a Clinical Engineer with BCJ Healthcare at Memorial Hospital. He previously worked with G. E. Healthcare at Silver Cross Hospital. George grew up Presbyterian in Cameroon, Africa and moved to the United States in 2009. He joined Westminster in 2019 and serves on the Board of Deacons.

DR. SCOTT DAY is a Professor Emeritus in the Department of Educational Leadership at the University of Illinois at Springfield. Scott teaches advanced wheel throwing at the Springfield Art Association. At Westminster, Scott is an elder, chair of the Worship, Music, and Arts Committee, co-chair of the Landscape Committee, and a member of the Memorial Garden Committee.

DR. TODD KNOX is a retired anesthesiologist who practiced at Memorial Hospital. He served as chair of the Strategic Planning Committee from 2019-2022. Under his leadership, the Steadfast Neighbor Endeavor was initiated, which included both a Site and Landscape Plan and a Neighborhood Outreach. Todd has led the Steadfast Neighbor Service Week and Matching Grant program from 2020-2024.

CHRISTY POUND has served as a leader of her family farming operation, Grigsby Farm, since 2012. Christy worked for the Illinois Commerce Commission for 18 years leaving full-time state employment in 2017. At Westminster, Christy serves on the Support and Endowment Committee and Personnel Committee (which she chaired from 2022-2024).

LUCY STAFFORD 's professional career focused on the family hardware businesses which, until their recent sale, served multiple communities across central Illinois. In her retirement Lucy enjoys spending more time with family, racing her horses cross country, and assisting her husband John in reclaiming the natural prairie grasses and forbs that once dominated central Illinois. Lucy is a lifelong member of Westminster Presbyterian Church. Lucy has served as an elder and currently serves on the Support and Endowment Committee.

GREG SWANSON is an architect for the Capital Development Board. Greg joined Westminster with his family in the late 1990's and served one year as a youth elder and three years as a deacon. He and his wife, Megan, were married in 2009 and attended a Lutheran Church. Their daughter, Lily, was born in 2011. Greg, Megan, and Lily joined Westminster in 2021, and Greg serves as an elder on Session.

JESS WEITZEL works as a community development finance professional supporting affordable housing, small businesses, and community-focused real estate projects. Jess serves on the Springfield Urban League Board of Directors. She married her wife, Kayla, in 2016 and they welcomed their daughter, Ryan, into the world in 2022. Jess served on the Board of Deacons and co-chairs the Refugee Committee.

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
Co-Directors for Children's Ministry
berkowitz@wpcspi.org

Kara Milward, Erin Winn
Nursery Coordinators

Emily Rowley, Keri Tate
Cooperative Preschool Teachers
emily@westminster-preschool.org
keri@westminster-preschool.org

Ellen Carpenter
Parish Nurse
ranell@comcast.net

Pat Hymans
Hospitality Coordinator
alnpat5@yahoo.com

Lisa Runkle
Financial Administrator
lrunkle@wpcspi.org

Jennie Alt
Church Administrative Assistant
jalt@wpcspi.org

Krista Steller
Communications Coordinator
ksteller@wpcspi.org

Gary Warnick
Building and Property Manager
gwarnick@wpcspi.org

**Braden Barton, James Capler,
Terry Gietl, Javier Velásquez**
Part-time Custodians

**The Reporter folding and mailing will be
Wednesday, February 26.**