

THE WESTMINSTER LOG

Holy & Unhindered

Poem by Rev. Sarah (Are) Speed

SANCTIFIEDART.ORG

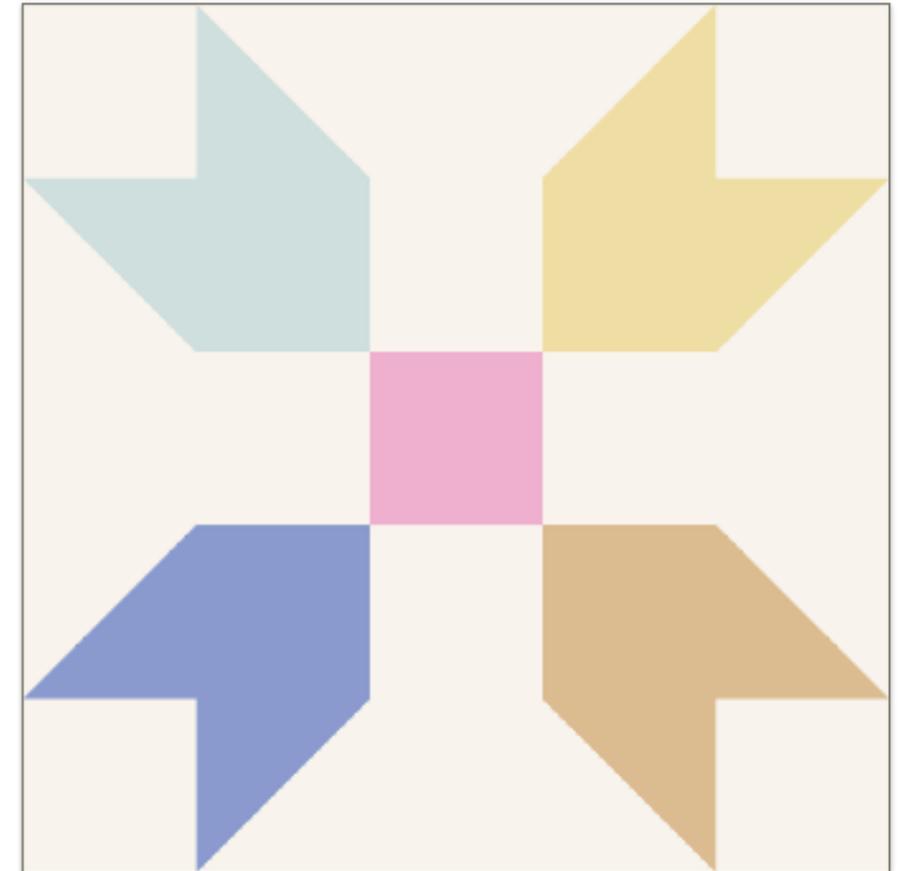
I am sure it is important to close your eyes, to pray on your knees, to fling yourself into deep reverence and even deeper humility. I am sure the Spirit is close when we dress up, when we sing the descant line, when we murmur the words with a sincere and hopeful heart.

And I am sure that when you moonwalk through your living room in soft wool socks, when you cackle loudly enough for the whole restaurant to hear, when you squeal into the phone and make pancakes for dinner, when you plunge your hands into the dirt and talk to the sparrows, when you make a mess of Communion breadcrumbs all around the Table, or when you allow yourself an undone, unhindered, unpolished sort of joy—that the Spirit loves that just as well.

The angel said, *Do not be afraid; I am bringing you joy.*

We humans have spent a lot of time focusing on the fear.

Don't forget: God is also in the joy.



EPIPHANY AND 2025 STAR WORDS

Join us on Sunday, January 12th receive your 2025 "Star" word! During worship, each person will receive a star cutout with a word written on it. This will be your own personal word for the new year. Inspired by the Magi following the star to Jesus, receiving a star word to meditate on throughout the



See STAR WORDS page 9



JANUARY 2025 ISSUE 194

WWW.WPCBC.ORG

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Visit us on Facebook:
Westminster Presbyterian
Church - Bay City



Phone: 989-686-1360
E-mail: office@wpcbc.org
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)

January

Sundays

9:00 a.m. Bell Choir Rehearsal
for our Adults; the Bells play during Worship once a month

9:00 a.m. Sunday School
For children PreK-4th grade

9:00 a.m. Adult Bible Study
This month, our theme and invitation will be "Living with Joy." Please see page 9 for more details

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

10:30 a.m. Worship
We will finish our Advent series on January 7th and begin the "Worship God" theme on January 14th

11:30 a.m. Fellowship
Join us in Fellowship Hall for Coffee and Cookies and Conversation

5:00 p.m. Youth Bells

5:30 p.m. Youth Dinner

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

Office Hours

Monday – Thursday: 8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Website: wpcbc.org

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Westminster Presbyterian Church - Bay City

Sunday	Monday
<p>Happy Birthday</p> <p>Molly Molyneaux Anne Remington John Butts Philip Reagh Bonnie Darling Martha Tapley</p> <p>* Birthdays are listed for our 75+ members</p>	
<p>5 <i>2nd Sunday of Christmas</i></p> <p>NO YOUTH GROUP OR ACTIVITIES</p>	<p>6</p> <p>5:30 p.m. Mission Mtg 7:00 p.m. Deacon Mtg.</p>
<p>12 <i>Baptism of the Lord</i></p> <p>11:45 a.m. Fellowship and Outreach Mtg.</p>	<p>13</p> <p>5:00 p.m. Property Mtg. 6:00 p.m. Finance Mtg. 7:00 p.m. Stewardship Mtg.</p>
<p>19 <i>2nd Sunday after Epiphany</i></p>	<p>20 January Series</p> <p>Birthdays of Martin Luther King Jr.</p>
<p>26 <i>3rd Sunday after Epiphany</i></p>	<p>27 January Series</p>

Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Fri/Sat
Church Office Closed	<p>1</p> <p>6:30 p.m. Chancel Choir Rehearsal</p>	<p>2</p> <p>5:00 p.m. Food of Faith at Messiah Lutheran</p>	3
			4
<p>7</p> <p>1:30 p.m. Book Study 6:00 p.m. Personnel Mtg. No Scouts tonight</p>	<p>8</p> <p>6:30 p.m. Chancel Choir Rehearsal</p>	<p>9</p> <p>Annual Reports Due</p> <p>8:30 a.m. TOPS 5:00 p.m. Food of Faith at Messiah Lutheran 7:00 p.m. Adult Bible Study via Zoom</p>	10
			11
<p>14</p> <p>10:00 a.m. Hearts & Hands Knitting 7:00 p.m. Boy Scouts 6:30 p.m. Spiritual Growth Mtg.</p>	<p>15</p> <p>5:15 p.m. Worship Mtg. 6:30 p.m. Chancel Choir Rehearsal</p>	<p>16</p> <p>8:30 a.m. TOPS 1:00 p.m. Lydia Circle 1:30 p.m. Coffee and Conversation 5:00 p.m. Food of Faith at Messiah Lutheran 7:00 p.m. Adult Bible Study via Zoom</p>	17
			18
<p>21 January Series</p> <p>10:00 a.m. Hearts & Hands Knitting 1:30 p.m. Book Study 6:30 p.m. Session Mtg. 7:00 p.m. Boy Scouts</p>	<p>22 January Series</p> <p>6:30 p.m. Chancel Choir Rehearsal</p>	<p>23 January Series</p> <p>8:30 a.m. TOPS 12:30 p.m. January Series group discussion 5:00 p.m. Food of Faith at Messiah Lutheran 7:00 p.m. Deborah Circle 7:00 p.m. Adult Bible Study via Zoom</p>	24 January Series
			25
<p>28 January Series</p> <p>10:00 a.m. Hearts & Hands Knitting 12:00 p.m. Lunch and Laugh 6:00 p.m. Boy Scouts</p>	<p>29 January Series</p> <p>6:30 p.m. Chancel Choir Rehearsal</p>	<p>30 January Series</p> <p>12:30 p.m. January Series group discussion 7:00 p.m. Adult Bible Study via Zoom</p>	31 January Series

In November, the Operating Fund had income of \$23,429.68 and expenses of \$31,278.64. Although there was a shortfall for the month, overall the Operating Fund is close to breaking even for the year. This is an improvement over prior years, in which it was necessary to use investment funds to cover church expenses.

The Building Improvement Fund received \$408 in contributions and spent \$660 for new parking lot signs. As of the end of November, the Fund has a balance of \$14,121.43. The Major Repairs Fund received \$222 in contributions and had no expenses. Thank you to those who continue to contribute to these Funds.

The Capital Campaign Fund received \$66,569.14 in contributions in November, including a very large and generous donation from a member who wishes to remain anonymous. Coupled with a \$20,000 out of existing Capital Campaign funds, we have been able to decrease the loan balance to only \$35,640.75. This means we have paid down nearly \$118,000 in loan principal in 2024! We are getting so close to paying it off and freeing up those funds to be used for other good works.

There has been a slight change in titles. The church treasurer must be a member of the church, so Heather will remain treasurer and I will have the title of Financial Administrator. Our roles remain the same.

I have also had a change to my schedule and will be in the church office after 4 p.m. on Tuesdays and Thursdays. I will be checking email at other times, so please feel free to message me at treasurer@wpcbc.org. You can also leave a message on my cell phone at 616-485-8272.

Happy New Year!

Pat Foster
FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATOR

Stewardship 2025

Similar to prior years, pledge/estimate of giving cards will be distributed after our annual meeting. This will give you an opportunity to hear from our Ministry chairs and Session members about their budgets for 2025 as you consider your giving plans. Both a narrative and a line-item budget will be available at that time. We want to continue the great programming that already exists, and expand into new areas. Your gifts will determine how we can show the love of Christ inside and outside our church.

Per capita for 2025 is \$30.69. This is per active, confirmed member.

Upcoming key dates

- January 19th
The 2024 Annual Report will be available
- February 2nd
Annual Meeting of the Congregation during worship
- February 16th
Stewardship Sunday



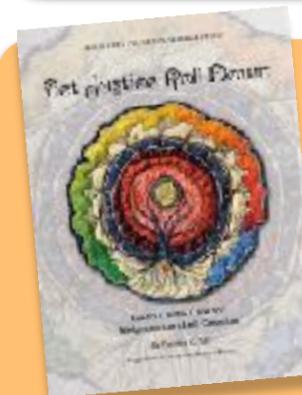
With Sympathy

Prayers and sympathy of the congregation are extended to the family and friends of George Estabrook. George passed away November 29, 2024.

With Sympathy



Prayers and sympathy of the congregation are extended to the family and friends of Hazel Kish. Hazel passed away December 15, 2024.



LYDIA CIRCLE
THURSDAY,
JANUARY 16
1:00 P.M.

Lydia Circle will meet monthly in person on the third Thursday at 1:00 p.m. in the Session room. We are using the *Horizons Bible Study*, "Let Justice Roll Down."

DEBORAH CIRCLE

Deborah Circle will meet at 5 p.m. Thursday, January 23 at the home of Sherry Holley. We will enjoy a potluck meal before we watch *The Chosen*. If anyone wants to join, please call Karen Schoeppach at 989-684-1322 or email her at kaysue@chartermi.net.

Parking Update

Please remember we are only allowed to use the parking lot across Dewitt Street (at Lake Effect Chiropractic) on Sunday mornings, Monday, Wednesday, and Friday evenings after 5:00 p.m. and Tuesday and Thursday evenings after 7:00 PM, when the businesses are closed. Our agreement does not allow us to park in their new parking lot off of Vermont Street. Thank you for helping us to be good neighbors!

Wings of Prayer

Karen Mitchell will be out of town from January 19, 2025 to February 13, 2025. If you have anyone that you would like to be added to the Wings of Prayer List, please contact Patti Wesenick at 989-737-6844.



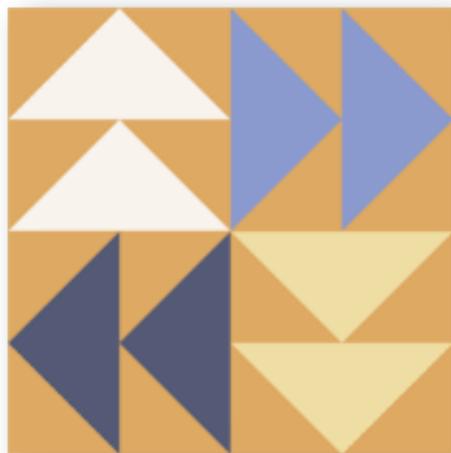
FELLOWSHIP TIME

Join your church family for a time of fellowship before and after Sunday's worship service. Coffee and donuts included!



Living with Joy (January Worship Series)

We're kicking off 2025 with the invitation to live with JOY! Based on stories from early in Jesus' life and ministry, we'll explore what it means to live a meaningful, joyful life. Beginning with the reminder to laugh, we'll touch on the themes of our identity in God's family, and our call to live as part of Christ's community. These four weeks will help us embrace the joy already present in our lives as we reflect on God's continuous presence and inspiration each and every day. Begin 2025 with your Westminster Church family!



January 5 - "Don't Forget to Laugh" The birth of Christ brings good news of great joy to all people, which is cause for celebration. On this Sunday after Christmas, we encourage you to be playful, to not take yourself too seriously, to laugh. For laughter is like hope—it has a ripple effect. It's one of many ways we live and share the good news. We'll gather around the Lord's Table for communion.

January 12 - "The Road Isn't Straight" Too often, we've been told that a successful life is a linear one. But in reality, our lives unfold with many unexpected twists and turns. The Magi follow a star, embarking on a long journey in a foreign land in order to honor the newborn Christ. Instead of returning to Herod as commanded, they trust their dreams and go home by another way. Their road isn't straight, but God "makes a way in the wilderness" (Isaiah 43:19) as they follow their intuition and diverge from the expected path. We'll receive our 2025 Star Words during this service.

January 19 - "Called to Delight" The importance of celebration is lifted up as we join Jesus' family and disciples at a wedding. We hear the good news that God persistently calls us to feast and delight in God's presence.

January 26 - "Blessed for Good" God invites us to share goodness with all. This is Jesus' own personal mission statement and one the church must take seriously.

Baptismal Anniversaries

January Baptismal Anniversaries:

- Camila Schmidt 1/25/2015
- Ryan Hildebrant 1/26/2014

their family to "guide and nurture them by word and deed, with love and prayer" and "encourage them to know and follow Christ and to be faithful members of Christ's church." We do this through worship, in our education

"Both believers and their children are included in God's covenant love. The baptism of our young children witnesses to the truth that God claims people in love even before they are able to respond in faith." PC(USA) Book of Order W-3.0402

Every time we baptize a child, we covenant with them and

classes, and in fellowship activities. We encourage you to pray for our children and youth regularly. Each month, the Spiritual Growth Committee prays for each child and sends them a card reminding them that they are loved. We encourage you to pray for them as well! You'll find a list of the names each month in the Log.



Thanks to Westminster Presbyterian volunteers and donors, the Mission Partnerships Committee provided Thanksgiving Baskets to 100 families in need. Shown here, volunteers help assemble the individual food bags that were distributed on Monday, November 25th.

2024 Project Angel Tree a Success!

Westminster has once again shown what a remarkable faith community we are. The Salvation Army reached out to Mission Partnership this year for help fulfilling gift requests



for children in our community who may not have anything this holiday. We accepted 75 Angel Tags knowing with the help of our church families, we could fulfill these wishes. Between those who selected tags and those who donated money, Westminster was able to successfully complete all requests and meet the deadline of December 15. A big thank you to everyone who made this Christmas a little brighter for our kids! Mission Partnership would also like to thank all the volunteers who helped coordinate, set-up, hang the giving tags, man the information table, shopped, tallied and organized the returned gifts for pick up.

2025 Westminster Ushering Schedule

Team 1: Phil Reagh (Captain), Penny Reagh, Tom Majchrzak, Tom Tolles, Larry Wilson. **Dates:** January 5, February 2, March 2 and 30, April 27, May 25, June 22, July 20, August 17, September 14, October 12, November 9, December 7.

Team 2: John Hegenauer (Captain), Joyce Hegenauer, Marilyn Bechtel, Nancy Berta, Jill Jean, Len Petroff. **Dates:** January 12, February 9, March 9, April 6, May 4, June 1 and 29, July 27, August 24, September 21, October 19, November 16, December 14.

Team 3: Sheri Young (Captain), Kathy Elzinga, Faith Sneller, Iain Harrelson, Carol Campbell, Bev Pacynski. **Dates:** January 19, February 16, March 16, April 13, May 11, June 8, July 6, August 3 and 31, September 3, October 26, November 23, December 21.

Team 4: Tim Rutzen (Captain), Irene Eskilsen, Jack Smylie, Chris Thurman, Pam Johnston, Sharon Costello, Jaden Call. **Dates:** January 26, February 23, March 23, April 20, May 18, June 15, July 13, August 4, September 7, October 5, November 2 and 30, December 28.

2025 Confirmation Class

Over the next few months several of our Westminster youth will be going through Confirmation Class. During their time in confirmation, they will be discussing what it means to be a follower of Jesus and a faithful member of the church. During our time together, it is our hope that the youth involved will develop a deeper sense of what their faith is and what it means to be a member of the body of Christ.

One of the final requirements for the class is for each of the youth to write a personal statement of faith. They will attempt to answer what it is they believe about God, Scripture, Church, and the Sacraments. This is a difficult thing for anyone to do. We understand that our faith really is a journey and we experience God in different ways at different points of our lives.

Please be in prayer for our young people as they begin this journey together. If you have a youth who is interested in joining the class and have not already let Pastor Jamie know, please do so!

Saginaw Spirit Faith Night

The Saginaw Spirit is hosting its annual Faith Night on Sunday, February 2, 2025 at the Dow Event Center. We've had a good group attend the last several



years and are looking forward to going again for a fun night of hockey and fellowship. Tickets will be around \$15 (depending on group size). The game against the Soo Greyhounds begins at 5:30 PM. Contact the Church Office to reserve your spot. Stay tuned for more details as the game draws closer!

Book Group to start new year with new books

What would happen if we called on God for help and God actually appeared? In Mitch Albom's profound new novel of hope and faith, a group of shipwrecked passengers pull a strange man from the sea. He claims to be "the Lord." And he says he can only save them if they all believe in him.

Start out the New Year with an inspiring book read among friends. Several books were looked at as possibilities and the choices were narrowed down to three.

On **Tuesday, January 7** we will begin with the book, **The Stranger in the Lifeboat: A Novel** by Mitch Albom.

Adrift in a raft after a deadly ship explosion, ten people struggle for survival at sea. Three days pass. Short on water, food and hope, they spot a man floating in the waves. They pull him in.

"Thank the Lord we found you," a passenger says.

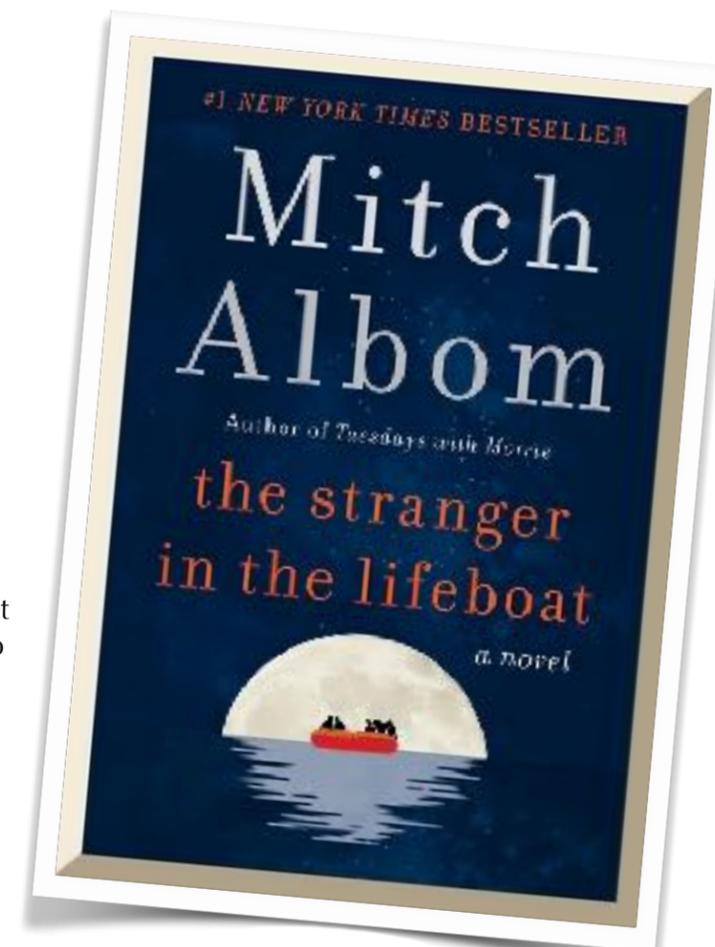
"I am the Lord," the man whispers.

So begins Mitch Albom's most beguiling novel yet.

Albom has written of heaven in the celebrated number one bestsellers *The Five People You Meet in Heaven* and *The First Phone Call from Heaven*. Now, for the first time in his fiction, he

ponders what we would do if, after crying out for divine help, God actually appeared before us?

In *The Stranger in the Lifeboat*, Albom keeps us guessing until the end: Is this strange man really who he claims to be? What actually happened to cause the explosion? Are the survivors in heaven, or are they in hell? The story is narrated by Benji, one of the passengers, who recounts the events in a notebook that is discovered—a year later—when the empty life raft washes up on the island of Montserrat. It falls to the island's chief inspector, Jarty LeFleur, a man battling his own demons, to solve the mystery of what really happened.



A fast-paced, compelling novel that makes you ponder your deepest beliefs, *The Stranger in the Lifeboat* suggests that answers to our prayers may be found where we least expect them.

The books have been ordered and are available in the church office for \$5.00.

The next two books have been tentatively chosen:

Help, Thanks, Wow: The Three Essential Prayers by [Anne Lamott](#)

The Little Liar: A Novel by [Mitch Albom](#)

For the past three years we have participated in the **January Series** of Calvin University, a free 10-day lecture series that takes place each year at Calvin University and aims to cultivate deep thought and conversations about important issues of the day in order to inspire cultural renewal and make us better global citizen in God's world. Thanks to the gift of technology, we need not travel to Grand Rapids to participate in this series on timely topics with its focus on culture and faith.

This year a diverse group of speakers have already committed to the two weeks – **January 20-24 and 27-31, 2025**. Each session is one hour long, from **12:30-1:30 p.m.** We will again provide the link so you can sign up yourself and be able to watch from home. On the two Thursdays – the 23rd and the 30th, we will gather in the Session Room to watch that day's speaker together and then



have the opportunity to discuss the week's speakers and presentations.

Just three of this year's speakers:

- On the 22nd, through conversation, **John Inazu** will teach us how to disagree better while shedding light on how we often view our adversaries not only as wrong but increasingly as evil, resist notions of forgiveness, and distrust institutions that try to mediate our disagreements. These are all themes of his latest book, "Learning to Disagree: The Surprising Path to Navigating Differences with Empathy and Respect."
- **Michaela O'Donnell** - Life in Flux - will teach us the

practical skills needed to navigate constant change: a life in flux. She'll show us how to face the pain and longings that come with change, embrace the unknown with confidence, and listen to God's guiding voice.

- The series concludes with **Hunter Woodhall**, who may be a familiar name to some after he won a gold medal at the 2024 Paralympics. He is an inspirational speaker – "They told me I couldn't walk, so I decided to run."

Any questions about the series, please call the church office or Rev. Linda with any questions.

During the December 8th Advent service, Judy Hudson read her children's book, "Ellie's Sewn Blanket: Grandma Makes Ellie a Quilt" during Time With Young Disciples.



Adult Bible Study

Back in the Fall someone remarked that one of their favorite Sunday Worship services is the yearly World Communion Sunday because it blesses her heart and spirit to know that Christian churches throughout the world are celebrating Holy Communion at the same time, or at least on the same day.

The same can be said for the use of the common lectionary readings – a three-year cycle in which many Christian churches throughout the world read, study, and worship on a Sunday morning using the same Gospel, epistle, and Hebrew scripture readings.

Over the next several weeks here at Westminster our theme and invitation will be **"Living with Joy"** as we wrap up the Advent/Christmas readings and then move into the lectionary cycle study. **Feasting on the Word Bible study curriculum** follows the Lectionary and allows anyone interested in doing so to explore the same Bible passage in our two Bible study gatherings – **Sunday morning at 9 a.m. in the Conference Room or Thursday evening at 7 p.m. via Zoom** – as we are focusing on in our worship services. In our gatherings, we will explore the "what;" "where;" "so what?;" and "now what?" of each Bible passage. This helps connect our intentional spiritual growth and education offerings with our worship service.

The weeks of January 5 and 12 we will be completing the Words For The Beginning Advent-Christmas season. And then during the weeks of January 19 and 26 we will study a Gospel passage from John ("Called to Delight") and from Luke ("Blessed for Good").

Any questions, please call the church office or see Rev. Linda.



Westminster members and friends were treated to a wide variety of nativity scenes during the Advent Dinner on December 1st.



STAR WORDS from the cover

new year can deepen your self-reflection and prayer practices. Take it with you and place it somewhere where you will see it everyday. Reflect on this word. Ponder what significance this word has in your life and how God might be speaking to you through that simple word. Epiphany is the celebration of God's presence breaking through to shine as a light in the darkness. The hope is that this word will find its way into your heart and help you to discern God's presence all around you in new ways. For those who choose to worship online or might miss worship on January 12, the star cutouts will be available in the Dewitt Street lobby.



I am extremely proud of all the children and youth! They really worked hard on this program, and everything was beautiful. Thank you again to all that helped and made this a success!
 ~ Leah Sneller



NOVEMBER 2024 FOOD PANTRY STATISTICS

154 Households that utilized the Pantry in November.

441 Individuals helped

60 New Households
 Of the 154 households, 39% utilized the pantry for the first time

2,426 Pounds of food distributed

Since the Westminster Community Pantry opened in June, we have served:
809 households (436 new) (average 135 per month; average 30 per week)
2,485 people (1,348 new) (average 414 per month; average 92 per week)
25,625 pounds of food (average 4,270 per month; average 912 per week)

Thank you for being so generous providing our Pantry Items of the Month. Thanks to you, our Pantry guests have enjoyed receiving cooking oil, butter or margarine and flour. These are all items that we can not get for them through our resources.

The **JANUARY ITEM OF THE MONTH** is chunky soup, again something that is very popular with our clients and greatly appreciated!

Annual Congregational Meeting scheduled for February 2

This year's **Annual Meeting** will again be held as a part of our 10:30 am worship service, which gives us the opportunity to recognize God at work in our community and look ahead to where God is leading us in the new year and beyond.

The **2024 Annual Report** will be available online and in print beginning on Sunday, January 19.

During the service on February 2, we will also elect a new class of Elders and Deacons, the 2025 Nominating Committee, and vote on the Pastoral Terms of Call for Rev. Jamie.

The **2025 Congregational Budget** will be presented, and we will be invited to consider the ways in which we can help support God's work through Westminster.

Following the worship service, the annual **Souper Bowl of Caring** offering and a soup lunch will be served in the Fellowship Hall.

Each month the Spiritual Growth and Faith Formation Ministry will share in the Log, a few thoughts on the journey of grief that we all experience. We hope these brief thoughts will be of help and support to all.

“Grief never ends. But it changes. It’s 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.”

~ Unknown

As we enter into this New Year, many of us might be thinking about new resolutions or changes we want to see in the future. When embarking on a new year, it’s natural to wonder how we can make this year different. You might feel hope. Hope that things will be brighter and warmer than they have been. You might feel fear. How can we move forward through the fog when we still don’t know what comes around the corner? When we experience a loss it’s common to experience an increased fear of the unknown. We can feel a loss of safety and a loss of control over what happens to us. We might feel deeply aware of how little control we have.

It can be easy to feel lost when we don’t feel empowered. Empowerment is the process of becoming

Ideas for Increasing Empowerment

Increase engagement in hobbies and self care activities: This looks different for everyone. It might mean that you take a nap when you feel like it, just because you choose to. It might mean that you make yourself breakfast and sit in the sun without being rushed. It could mean making things or taking space to build a new routine. Asking ourselves what choices we do have that can impact the outcome of the day ahead can increase feelings of freedom and control, even through small actions.

Carve out space and limit feelings of being rushed:

This might mean sitting in your car enjoying a quiet moment before going into a crazy work day. It might look like taking a few deep breaths after a busy morning. Finding pockets of time that are yours and that offer you space to get in touch with yourself can help strengthen that feeling of connection with oneself.

Seek out things that feel comforting to you:

This could be time with a friend you trust. Investing in your living spaces to make them more aligned with what you like. It might also mean limiting the things you feel you “should” do and prioritizing the things that actually feel good to engage in.

Seek out mental health support:

While we always encourage outreach to our grief counselors, we also want to take this time to stress the value of mental health support during times of grief. Grief can take a toll on our mental health from ongoing experiences of isolation, exhaustion, depression and anxiety. It’s important to know that mental health support and seeing someone weekly can be used as an uplifting tool towards self care, rather than a last resort in an emergency.

stronger and more confident, specifically related to controlling one’s life. This is an ongoing process that takes time, effort and support to engage in. This is never more true than after a loss when our feelings of control have been taken away from us.

How can we feel more empowered? Often empowerment comes over

time, from lots of little acts that make us feel like we have choices and are free to make the choices that best serve our needs. This can give us a sense of control and greater peace.

So what can we control? Maybe we can control the way we make a meal, preparing it just the way we

See GRIEF, page 7

Coffee and Conversation for those who are grieving

From Guideposts: “Hopeful stories are windows into the wonderful possibilities life has to offer. Stories of hope bring to life the ways in which people support each other; miracles make lives better, and individuals find new roads through challenging times. Turn to stories about hope whenever you need an encouraging boost on your path toward your best life.”

Last month when we gathered – the company of those grieving – we considered how keeping company with others who are experiencing grief – hearing their stories - has the power to help us find hope and encouragement. Over this past year we have found that to be true. It is true that we all grieve individually – grief is a very personal thing – yet there is help in sharing this journey with others, no matter if our grief is new or not so new.

Join us on Thursday, January 16 at 1:30 p.m.

Any questions, please call the church office or Rev. Linda.

GRIEF from page 6

like it. Maybe we can reach out and call a friend. Maybe we can commit to going for a walk every day, even on the coldest days. Maybe we can decide to learn how to lower our anxiety with deep breathing. Maybe we can seek the support of a therapist and deepen our understanding of ourselves. The beauty of starting a journey of self empowerment is that it is an ongoing practice and it looks different for everyone.

The start of the new year can encourage us all to seek spaces that make us feel empowered and to ask ourselves the tough questions about how we can take on the enormous task of building lives that serve our hopes, rather than feed our fears.

Provided by St. Luke’s Hospice Bereavement Program, Bethlehem, PA

Lunch & Laugh

As we often say, Presbyterians love learning and love lunching. So for the past several years, folks have been meeting in Fellowship Hall on the fourth Tuesday of the month to hear a variety of speakers from the community while bringing in our own bag lunches.

But Presbyterians also love laughing, so in this new year we are continuing our new series – Lunch & Laugh.

On **Tuesday, January 28th at noon**, we will gather in Fellowship Hall to lunch and play games. A variety of games and a variety of lunches. You are



welcome to bring you own bag lunch or if you want you can order your own favorite individual sandwich from Wanigans. (Details on that to follow). Please bring your favorite card game or board game – a few suggestions so far include Bunco, Golf, Apples to Apples. What’s yours?

If the weather is inclement that Tuesday, we will postpone until February.

Plans are also underway for our upcoming speakers - someone from the library, a local author, and a Physical Therapist to give us some safety and wellness tips.

Any questions, please call the church office or Rev. Linda.