

SPARE

WESTMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
Pittsburgh, PA

To endow is to provide with a quality, a resource, or an asset as in "God endowed her with the gift to sing." To endow is also to fund with financial resources to ensure future viability.

We rejoice in the ways members have endowed Westminster with their vision and talents. In 1995 a few visionary members of Westminster met to imagine an endowment fund and begin the work to secure funding, define fiduciary oversight, and work tirelessly to doubly bless our future with collective wisdom and a source of funding for those projects to further the mission and ministry of this church.

In April, the Endowment Committee recommended to fund the following projects, which were unanimously approved by Session.

- During the pandemic, Westminster leapfrogged forward to create online worship and spread the gospel through social media. To continue to build and strengthen our capabilities, four communications and information technology projects will begin: an upgrade to the software to support financial and program management; a design refresh of Westminster's brand and presentation in print and digital media; an upgrade to core technology for security and video conferencing; and an installation of audio equipment needed within the sanctuary and WROC.
- The Bridge continues its vital worship with in person and online engagement and will receive funds to improve signage to welcome worshipers to the WROC and to upgrade the lighting and furnishings.
- Mission remains vital to the intent of the endowment and funds will be distributed to support three initiatives dear to congregation members. Sangli Technical School in India may continue building construction for over 100 students served in vocational training.

The Homewood Oasis Pre-School will receive funds to seed a campaign for a critical early learning center, led by pastor John Wallace at the Bible Center Church. Ethiopia Small Business Grants for Vulnerable Women may fund women-owned, new small businesses that work cooperatively under Westminster's mission partner, Hawassa Hope.

In addition to these grants, made possible by the investment gains realized by the Endowment, the P.J. Dick family has authorized the P.J. Dick Bequest Fund to pay for the extensive and necessary renovations to the columbarium and south courtyard. The Property Commission may proceed to renovate masonry walls, replace courtyard doorways, create handicapped accessibility, and install new post lights.

The McClintock family has directed half of the Dorothy McClintock Memorial Library Fund to Westminster's operating account and will be earmarked to cover the monthly budgeted loan repayment to the endowment and any remaining amount to be applied to the principle.

Our cup runneth over with such generosity and practical leadership.

We express our deepest gratitude to all who imagined a bright future for Westminster in creating the Endowment and Special Gifts Fund as well as those who crafted the specific requests. We also extend our thanks to members of the Endowment Committee: Janis Davis, Brian Eccher, Carolyn Kerr, Phil Kocher, Jeff Rex, Ken Rapko, Bill Rogers, Linda Serene, Lois Singleton, and Rob Wagner (chair) for their prayerful work.

PASTORS

DR. JO FORREST, Senior Pastor, Head of Staff REV. LOUISE ROGERS, Associate Pastor for Congregational Care

ADMINISTRATIVE & BUSINESS SUPPORT

PEG KINSEY, Executive Assistant to the Pastors RICHARD MILLS, Church Financial Manager KIMBERLY DUNKOVICH, Associate Accountant

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

DEBB EGLI, Assistant Director of Children's & Family Ministry
ED SUTTER, Director of Youth Ministry & Family Counseling
LAURA ECKLIN, Associate Director of Youth Ministry

COMMUNICATIONS

ANNA HINER, Communications & Database Manager JEANNIE SCHOTT, Graphic Design & Print/Web Manager

MUSIC & ARTS

CHRISTINE HESTWOOD, Director LORRAINE MILOVAC, Assistant Director JIM BURNS, Organist EILEEN MURRAY, Administrative Assistant

PROPERTY

CHARLEY RICHARDSON, Property Manager WALTER GERODA, Head Custodian

VOLUNTEER MINISTRY

JAN BAUMANN, Volunteer Coordinator CARA DANIELE, Kitchen Coordinator

WESTMINSTER RECREATION & OUTREACH CENTER (WROC)

KATHY LONG, Director

WESTMINSTER EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION PROGRAMS (WECEP)

DENISE BURKE, Executive Director

NURSERY SCHOOL

412-835-2906

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CHILD DEVELOPMENT CENTER

Staff email addresses and phone extensions are available on our website, www.westminster-church.org.

Read the Spire online at:

www.westminster-church.org

The Spire is published monthly by the church staff from September through June. Contributions can be made by emailing a Word document to Spire editor Sara Kyle at sara@ruhlekyle.org. The deadline for submitting an article is the fifth day of every month for the following month's issue. Please include the author's name, telephone number, email address, and a title. All articles are subject to editing.

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Worship at Westminster

Please make a reservation in advance to attend in person worship services on Sunday mornings by visiting our website at www.westminster-church.org and clicking on the "Worship Reservations" button.

If you are not comfortable attending in person worship or are traveling, visit our YouTube channel at www.youtube.com/user/WestminsterUSC or our website for links to the livestream services at 9:45 and 11:00 a.m. Sunday mornings (no livestream at 8:30 a.m.), or watch anytime later on YouTube.

Bridge Contemporary Worship

Sundays

9:45 a.m.



Traditional Worship

Sundays

S:30 & 11:00 a.m.

Sanctuary & YouTube Livestream (11:00 a.m. only)

The Lord's Supper is celebrated the first Sunday of each month.



Eastertide Sermon Series — through May 23

The Surprising Acts of God

Christ's story did not end with an empty tomb; his resurrection set off a host of unexpected changes within individuals and the community. The Acts of the Apostles records these surprising events that gave birth to the early church. Still today, God surprises us as the story extends to the end of the earth.

Upcoming Events

13 Ascension of the Lord

Racial Wealth
Gap Simulation

16 Blood Drive MAY

22 World Vision 6K Walk/ MAY Run for Clean Water

23 Day of Pentecost

30 Trinity Sunday

Surprised by Joy

Are we surprised by joy or sadness? Our world in which we live wants to surprise us with sadness. News reports keep telling us about murders, conflicts between countries, the pandemic, political strife. You don't have to go far to see images of hatred, violence, and cruelty toward one another, often the more sensational the better. Indeed, the powers of darkness want to surprise us with human misery. These surprises stun us and serve to numb us to the extraordinary suffering of others.

One of the great challenges of faith is to be surprised by joy during our challenges. I remember last year, during the darkest days of the pandemic, prior to the vaccine, when the news kept rolling out the increasing numbers of infections and death with no hope in sight. After listening to the news one evening and seeing the frightening forecast with little optimism, I felt deflated and frightened. What was going to happen?

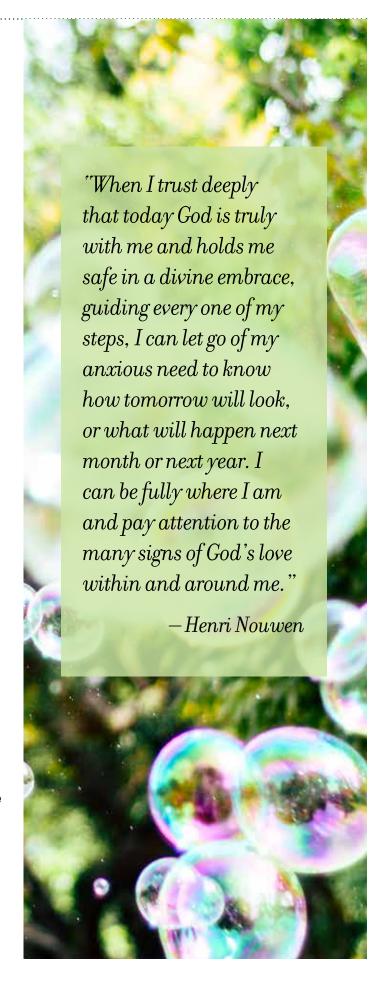
A family Zoom call was scheduled that evening for a special birthday. Once we were connected, a cupcake with a single candle appeared, we sang Happy Birthday from all points of the country. In those precious moments, the center of attention shifted from sadness to joy – the joy of celebration, the presence of family even on a remote Zoom call, the awareness of our blessings for health and even silly jokes. Love triumphed fear. We were surprised by joy!

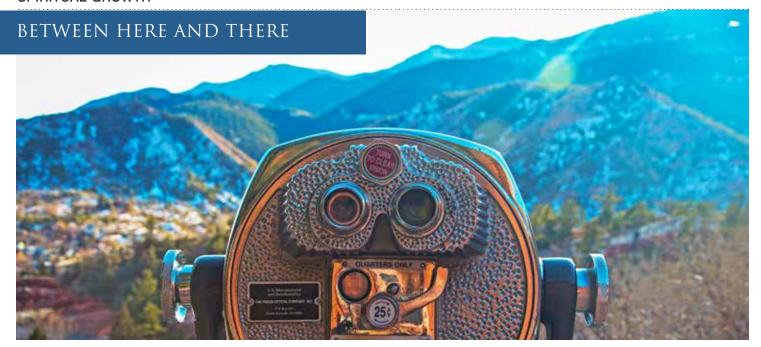
At Easter, Jesus was raised from the dead and appeared to many people filled with fear: the women at the tomb, the disciples huddled in the upper room, Peter fishing in Galilee carrying guilt for betraying the Lord. Jesus surprised them as he came to each of them breathing resurrected spirit of peace and joy. To their troubled hearts Jesus declared, "Be at peace," "feed my lambs," "love one another," "make disciples," "know that I am with you always."

Jesus is the reason for our joy! Will we trust him or keep saying, "Yes, but have you heard about...?" Henri Nouwen says this about joy: "When I trust deeply that today God is truly with me and holds me safe in a divine embrace, guiding every one of my steps, I can let go of my anxious need to know how tomorrow will look, or what will happen next month or next year. I can be fully where I am and pay attention to the many signs of God's love within and around me." May we all continue to discover glimpses of God's joy each day.

Together on the journey,

Louise





I'd like to invite you to join me in a project that I've embarked on over the past few weeks. I'll be very clear about this invitation: I would genuinely love for you to reach out to me. Perhaps you've noticed that I end each of these notes with a line something like, "I'd love to hear your thoughts..." Yes, I actually mean it. I'm hopeful that you'll join me in this.

Westminster is looking out at a brand-new landscape these days. Calendars are filling back up. The halls are a little bit louder. We've moved back to three worship services each week. Programs and groups of all kinds are meeting again in new ways. If you're excited and thankful to see things moving in this direction, you're surely not alone. That said, perhaps we ought to take a pause at this moment. It would be easy to fill the void of space that the pandemic created in our communal calendar, but let's ask a very important question.

Where are we going?

The youth ministry is fleshing out these ideas, too. I've worked hard to avoid the phrase "back to normal," so instead I've chosen the phrase "moving toward a full ministry calendar." The last time the youth ministry had a full ministry calendar, we lived in a very different landscape. As attractive and easy as it may be to autofill old answers to new questions, it simply wouldn't work. We need to identify the new needs that have arisen, and we need to take stock of our current resources that can meet those needs. We need to be intentional about the direction that we're moving.

It ought to be of no surprise that I think there's some wisdom in scripture for us here. In Matthew 9 Jesus says, "No one sews a patch of unshrunk cloth on an old

garment, for the patch will pull away from the garment, making the tear worse. Neither do people pour new wine into old wineskins. If they do, the skins will burst; the wine will run out and the wineskins will be ruined. No, they pour new wine into new wineskins, and both are preserved." In other words, we can't put new thoughts, ideas, needs, and directions into old systems. Some things will need to change. And if they don't? Get your mop ready.

I don't want you to misinterpret any of what I've said here. This is a message of hope. I've always had a bit of a pioneering spirit, and if you're anything like me you'll look at this new landscape in front of us with a twinkle in your eye and a spark in your heart. Do we have some work to do? Certainly. Can God use us to build something beautiful? Absolutely. First, we need to know where we're going.

Here's the invitation: Open yourself up in prayer. It is critically important that we don't get our own ambitions confused for God's direction. Ask that God would illuminate the needs of this particular community as well as the ways in which you may be able to help. We all have a role in this, so don't discount your own gifts and abilities. Remember that lots of times God calls people forward into a huge expanse of unknown – you may not walk away from this time with anything concrete!

Finally, you guessed it, I'd love to hear your thoughts! Reach out and let me know what God is placing onto your heart for this community. I'd love to hear how you may be called to pioneer something new and beautiful. Let's talk soon.

Be well!

Ed Sutter

WESTMINSTER SEMINARS

Westminster Seminars Online

Welcome All!

Live on Sundays – NEW Time! 9:45 – 10:30 a.m. Zoom

The Zoom meeting opens at 9:30 a.m. for greetings and conversation. Find the link on the church website or in the Friday church email.

Want to catch the seminar online and attend in person worship? Bring your smart phone or tablet to Galbreath Chapel and join the seminar on Zoom. Seating will be limited to ensure your safety.

We extend a warm invitation to folks near and far to join us on Zoom or watch later on the Westminster website here: https://www.westminster-church.org/news-&-media/westminster-seminars.

MAY SERIES

May 2, 9, 16, 23

You might have heard people say that "precision medicine" will bring us big advances in personal health by tailoring your care to your precise needs. This is all about applying the science of genomics to the delivery of healthcare. Professor Lisa Parker will help us understand the human impact of this technology by taking us beyond the science and into the ethical considerations.

In Genomics, What Matters More Than Genes

Lisa S. Parker, University of Pittsburgh

May 2 – Personal Genomic Testing and Precision Medicine

May 9 - Who's Your (Fore)Daddy? Does It Matter?

May 16 - The Missing Link: It's Behavioral, Not Genetic

May 23 - Genomic Enhancement and the Level Playing Field Myth

Lisa Parker, a philosopher, is the Dickie, McCamey & Chilcote Professor of Bioethics, Director of the Center for Bioethics & Health Law, and Professor of Human Genetics in the Graduate School of Public Health at the University of Pittsburgh. She directs the university's interdisciplinary Master of Arts in Bioethics Program in the Dietrich School of Arts and Sciences, and is director of the Area of Concentration in Humanities, Ethics, and Palliative Care in the School of Medicine. She leads the university's Research, Ethics, and Society Initiative, designed to foster campus-wide discussion of research ethics and the social implications of scientific research and technology. She is also a faculty member in the university's Institute for Precision Medicine.

Dr. Parker has published extensively on ethical concerns related to the design and conduct of research, particularly genetic research and mental health research, as well as on aesthetic surgery, confidentiality, and informed consent. Read more about Dr. Parker here: https://bioethics.pitt.edu/people/lisa-s-parker-phd.



Special Seminar on May 30

Join Me in Prayer

To close out the month of May, we will look at the art of leading group prayer. How can we invite others to a spirit of prayer that is unique from our personal, private devotion? Louise Rogers will guide this discussion as we lead others in ways to talk with God.

Westminster Book Group

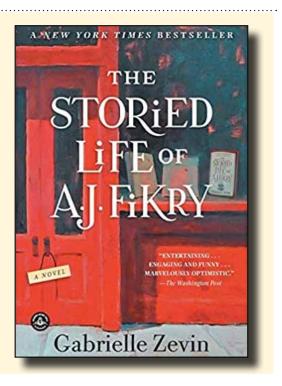
Wednesday, May 26 Noon – 1:15 p.m.

The next meeting of the Westminster Book Group will be on Zoom and in Room 238. The zoom link can be found in the meeting announcement on the church website. Our book this month is *The Storied Life of A. J. Fikry* by Gabrielle Zevin.

"A wonderful, moving, endearing story of redemption and transformation that will sing in your heart for a very, very long time."

- Garth Stein, author of The Art of Racing in the Rain

We invite you to join us either by Zoom or in person in Room 238.

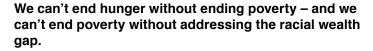


OUTREACH

Bread for the World

Racial Wealth Gap Simulation

Saturday, May 15 9:30 a.m. – noon on Zoom



You have probably heard the statistic that the ratio of White wealth to Black is on the order of 10 to 1. According to the Brookings Institution, the average White household wealth in 2016 was \$171,000; the same statistic for Black families is \$17,150. And the gap is growing. How did we get to the point of such enormous disparity? And what can be done to repair it?

Bread for the World, one of Westminster's mission partners, is organizing a Racial Wealth Gap Simulation via Zoom to help us answer these questions. As part of Bread for the World's Hunger Advocacy Workshop, this simulation will help us understand how policies affect Black and White families in very different ways. We will learn how this has



led us away from our vision of equal opportunity for all to a place where many people of color struggle for basic necessities.

You can sign up for the simulation as part of the Westminster group, or just as yourself. The event is free but it may cost you some peace of mind. Here is the link to sign up: http://bit.ly/breadworkshop2021.

We will also hear from the Rev. Dr. Angelique Walker-Smith, *Bread for the World* Senior Associate for Church Engagement, who will share details of the 2021 *Offering of Letters*, an opportunity for congregations to advocate to end hunger by reaching out to elected officials.

For more information, contact Bobbie Hartman at hartman1967@verizon.net. To learn more about *Bread for the World*, go to www.bread.org.

World Vision 6K Walk/Run for Clean Water

Family Fun, Global Impact on Saturday, May 22

Please join us here at Westminster to have fun, to be physical, to reconnect with friends you haven't seen in a while and live out God's love.

Nearly 1,000 children under the age of five die every day from poor sanitation, improper hygiene, and drinking contaminated water. Six kilometers (6K) is the average round-trip distance a person in the developing world must walk to find water that is often still unsafe to drink.

Every step you take on May 22 will be one they won't have to. People all over the world will be participating on this same Saturday.

The Global 6K is great because you can do it anywhere. Walk or run the distance – here at Westminster, by yourself, or with your family or friends – and be part of this global movement to change lives. Whether you join us at Westminster and walk our course starting from our playground parking lot, or you walk/run from the treadmill or your favorite trail, your neighborhood, or the track...when you and thousands of others around the world walk, jog, or stroller-run your way to 6K on May 22, you'll bring life-changing clean water to people who need it most.

World Vision is a Christian humanitarian organization helping children, families, and their communities overcome poverty and injustice.

Team name: Westminster Walk for Clean Water **When:** Saturday, May 22, beginning at 9:00 a.m.

Where: Westminster's Playground Parking Lot (start/finish)

Registration through the World Vision website: support with a financial contribution of \$50.00 per adult, \$25.00 if under 18. Enter under our team name (Westminster Walk for Clean Water). You will receive a World Vision participants T-shirt to wear on race day.

Registration through Westminster's website: support with your presence; you can join us without a financial contribution and choose to make a statement by sharing your time and energy. You will receive a plain T-shirt to wear on race day.







WESTMINSTER RECREATION & OUTREACH CENTER

The WROC is fighting back against Parkinson's disease with boxing and fitness classes.

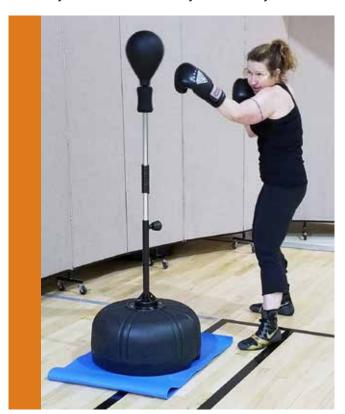
If you or someone you know has been diagnosed with Parkinson's disease, you already know it is a progressive neurological disorder that has a significant effect on mobility. It is believed that exercise programs that incorporate boxing skills may help manage symptoms of Parkinson's disease and improve quality of life.

Instructor Marta Phelps is Rock Steady Boxing Certified and USABoxing Green Level Coach Certified. She is uniquely qualified to guide participants through workouts that are adapted from boxing drills. Class combines non-contact boxing drills with a wide variety of fitness exercises to provide maximum positive impact on the management of Parkinson's disease (PD) symptoms and is for individuals who do not need any type of assisted device for safety. Classes include vigorous exercise combined with a focus on balance, agility, gait, and flexibility.

Participants are required to bring their own gloves and wraps. Visit our website at wroc.westminster-church.org for registration, class details, and guidance on purchasing gloves and wraps.

Mondays, Wednesdays, Fridays May 3 – July 2 9:45 – 10:45 a.m.

Mondays: \$49 Wednesdays or Fridays: \$56





The empowerment of hitting the heavy bag, the challenge of working the double end bag, and the hand eye coordination of the speed bag, as well as focus mitts, all provide outlets for physical release and emotional stress while challenging some of the most difficult aspects of PD.

Marta Phelps

Grow Living Stones

St. Catherine of Sienna in Beechview

This is yet another volunteer opportunity for our church to lend a helping and caring hand. This program provides both hot and cold meals to those in need. It also provide essential items such as coats, clothing, etc., depending on season and availability.

Whether you're preparing or serving meals or helping to set up, it is a humbling experience. It's those we serve that will save us. This is an ongoing program that St. Catherine provides. Thanks be to God.

- Randy and Lori Hino



As Christ's
living stones,
bound together
in faith, we
share his love
by feeding
those in need.

(see 1 Peter 2:4-8)



Introducing Mission on the Move

Mission agencies are doing so much good work around the corner and around the world. Each month Westminster's Outreach Commission will occupy a corner of the *Spire* to share stories about the impact your giving, time, and talents are having on our various mission partners' efforts.

Some of our partners, such as SHIM, Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank's *Produce to People*, and City Mission, engage in work close to home. And some, such as Sangli Industrial School in India, La Croix New Testament Mission in Haiti, and Maoni Orphan Care in Malawi, are ministering thousands of miles away.

No matter where they are at work, each group Westminster supports has **one or more** of these characteristics:

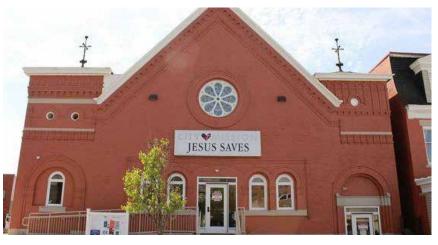
- They spread the gospel of Jesus Christ
- 2. They engage Westminster members in ministry activities
- 3. They provide a "hand-up" not a "hand-out"
- 4. They support the work of Pittsburgh Presbytery
- 5. They address emergency work in the world

So watch this space for stories about how God is leading us all to reach out to a world in need.

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Produce from SHIM Gilfillan Garden



City Mission Building in Washington, PA



La Croix Students lining up before school

Westminster Deacons Surprise and Delight

Through the Deacons' newly minted Surprise & Delight Committee, the church recently reached out to almost 100 extraordinary members of our congregation. The committee, with the help of the JAM students, created Easter bunny bags filled with spring treats, poems, puzzles, prayers, and words of encouragement to let these members know we are thinking of them and praying for them during this time when they are limited in meeting with us in person. The bags were delivered to their doorsteps during the Lenten season.



Treasures for Troops

Collection May 15 - 24

To honor our troops for Memorial Day, the Deacons are hosting a donation drive for Operation Troop Appreciation. OTA is a local organization dedicated to the active and veteran members of our Armed Forces by providing them with items that contribute to their morale and well-being. All donations are used for OTA's "Active-Duty Wish-List Program" and "Veteran Welcome Home Program."

Operation Troop Appreciation needs the following personal items:

- · men's & women's triple blade razors
- · body wash
- · body lotion
- · lip balm
- sunscreen
- · feminine hygiene products
- · athletic socks

Due to COVID-19, exercise facilities at the bases are closed. The following equipment is requested:

- jump ropes
- resistance bands/tubes
- · hand grip strengtheners
- · ab rollers

There is no size or weight restriction on any item.

We welcome checks made out to WPC with "Treasures for Troops" on the memo line or you can donate on the WPC website at https://secure. accessacs.com/access/oglogin.aspx?sn=90879&f=8. Collections will take place May 15 through May 24. Camouflage collection boxes will be stationed on the porch at the church office entrance.

OTA includes a collection of homemade cards inside each donation box sent to troops. These cards are treasured by the troops. Your cards are welcomed along with your donations. There will be a manilla envelope inside of each camouflage collection box for you to place your cards.

Thank you for your generosity.





COMMITTED TO OUR COURAGEOUS MEMBERS OF THE US MILITARY, PAST AND PRESENT





Blood Drive

Sunday, May 16 8:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. Fellowship Hall

Westminster Deacons are hosting their second blood drive of the year on Sunday, May 16. We invite everyone in the congregation who is 18 and over to consider donating for this worthy cause. Our doors are also open to the community, and we welcome additional donors for this event. The Westminster Deacons thank you for your continuing support in the worthy mission of donating blood.

Vitalant will provide staff and supplies to handle 40 or more donors and they are now requiring all donors to:

- · Make an appointment.
- · Wear a mask.
- · Get a temperature check on site.

Read more about Vitalant's precautionary measures at www.vitalant.org. **Please preregister for your appointment** by using sponsor code G0010171,

in order to secure a time slot. Registration is easily done by phone or online at www.vitalant.org, or by calling Candy Kottyan at 412-860-3534.

In order to donate, you must:

- Be 18 years or older (17 with parental consent)
- · Weigh at least 110 lbs.
- Not have donated within the last 56 days
- · Be in good health

Medications such as insulin, aspirin, and high blood pressure treatments do not prevent you from donating. If you have any medical questions, please call Vitalant at 877-258-4825.

For those planning to donate, please remember to eat a good breakfast and drink plenty of noncaffeinated beverages. There will be snacks and goodies available for all donors!

The Westminster Deacons thank you for supporting this worthy mission.

Financial Report

As of March 31, 2021

MARCH 2021			2021 YTD	
	Actual	Budget		Actual
Income	\$186,528	\$148,800	Income	\$550,556
Expense	\$170,517	\$144,592	Expense	\$482,051
Variance	\$16,011	\$4,208	Variance	\$68,505

Outreach Update

Approved Outreach Expenditures

First Quarter 2021

Creater Dittelement Food Book	ф0
Greater Pittsburgh Food Bank	\$3,
La Coupe Teachers	\$3,
Maoni Orphan Care - Malawi	\$4,
Meals on Wheels	\$1,
Medical Benevolence Foundation	\$2,
Pittsburgh Presbytery	\$3,
Prabhat Tara Sanstha	\$2,
Rebuilding Together Pittsburgh	\$4,
Schenley Heights Development Program	\$2,
SHIM	\$4,
Vadeketh Development	\$3,

Deaths

Alice Smith
March 31

Sally Johnson

April 6

Charles R. Hauth
April 21





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DATEDMATERIAL—PLEASE DELIVER PROMPTLY

This *Spire* was printed on paper that contains 30% recycled post-consumer fiber, is EcoLogo certified, and was manufactured in Canada using biogas.

Thank you for helping to care for God's creation by recycling this *Spire*.









www.facebook.com/Westminster.Pittsburgh



www.youtube.com/user/WestminsterUSC



Like the murmur of the dove's song, like the challenge of her flight, Like the vigor of the wind's rush, like the new flame's eager might:

Come, Holy Spirit, come.

To the members of Christ's body, to the branches of the Vine, To the church in faith assembled, to our midst as gift and sign:

Come, Holy Spirit, come.

With the healing of division, with the ceaseless voice of prayer, With the power to love and witness, with the peace beyond compare:

Come, Holy Spirit, come.

Carl P. Daw Jr., 1982, alt. Glory to God: The Presbyterian Hymnal, No. 285